The Development of a Localized ELT Textbook Evaluation Checklist: A Case Study from Thailand

Niwat Wuttisrisiriporn
Siriluck Usaha
The Language Institute
Burapha University, Thailand

Abstract

In language teaching and learning, a textbook is one of the key resources/materials that helps language teachers and learners to achieve particular teaching and learning outcomes. Evaluating a textbook using an appropriate evaluation checklist will assist teachers in choosing the most suitable textbook for their students. This paper, therefore, presents a new textbook evaluation checklist specifically developed for English language education in the context of Thailand. This localized textbook evaluation checklist was partly revised from some existing textbook evaluation checklists (e.g. Ahmed, 2016; Böcü & Razi, 2016; Hamidi et al, 2016; Harbi, 2017; Khoo & Knight, 2015; Laabidi & Nfissi, 2016; Litz, 2005). The newly localized checklist, consisting of eight different evaluation categories (70 items in total), is found useful as a systematic guideline for textbook evaluation at all stages, i.e. pre-use evaluation, in-use evaluation, and post-use evaluation. Hence, teachers can prepare additional teaching materials for their students to achieve the learning objectives.

Keywords: textbook evaluation checklist, communicative language teaching (CLT), Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), Thai context

Introduction

English language textbooks are the second most important resource, following English language teachers, in ESL/EFL teaching and learning (Riazi, 2003). Teachers use this valuable resource to productively lead teaching and learning activities and to assist students in achieving particular learning objectives more effectively (Hamidi et al, 2016). In principle, a textbook provides a systemic structure for teaching and learning, and every lesson is carefully designed in a harmonious organization throughout the textbook (Byrd & Schueman, 2014; Tomlinson, 2012). As pointed out by Ur (2012), the information covered in a textbook can be applied as a syllabus of a language course since it pinpoints detailed explanations, additional learning exercises for students at the same learning level but of different proficiency backgrounds. That is, this is helpful especially for ELT (English language teaching) in Thailand in that students and most teachers have the same L1 background. Further, publishers/author(s) of a series or a single textbook provide teacher users with a practical

teacher's handbook which allows the users to save time preparing lessons and to create supplementary exercises/activities for students' learning motivation and achievement.

Up to the present, there has been an increase in number of global commercial ELT textbooks published by leading publishers. This reflects a variety of users' demands for a particularly designed textbook meeting their particular needs. In the current Thai EFL context, Communicative Language Teaching or CLT (a language teaching approach emphasizing the ability to communicate in the target language) and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or CEFR (a current international standard describing language ability) play a prominent role in the English language education. Thus, CLT and CEFR-based ELT textbooks tend to be more in demand in the market since the official adoption of the CEFR for English language education implementation in 2014 (Ministry of Education, 2014). The majority of ELT textbooks are mapped with a proficiency level of CEFR which is clearly shown on the cover page. Hence, apart from the copyrights of ELT textbook collections purchased and transferred to a local publisher in Thailand for further publishing and marketing processes, there are a large number of ELT textbooks written by independent ELT textbook writers. However, every ELT textbook is required to be approved by the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC) before use in schools. All the approved ELT textbooks, and other subjects, are publicly listed on the OBEC textbook database website (http://academic.obec.go.th/textbook/web/).

It is noticeable from the above statements that selecting an ELT textbook suitable for the Thai EFL context is fundamentally crucial. Persons in charge of the ELT textbook selection process need to take various factors into consideration, namely teaching and learning objectives, student interests, proficiency level, authenticity of language, cultures, textbook organization, learning activities, or even textbook price. Thus, to help best facilitate English teaching and learning, selecting a working ELT textbook using a practical and comprehensive textbook evaluation checklist will definitely allow teachers to choose one of the most suitable teaching and learning materials from the existing choices. The checklist will also reflect some weaknesses of the selected textbook so that teachers further create additional teaching materials as well as learning activities and apply the most potential teaching methodologies. However, since the adoption of CEFR into the national English language education in 2014, there have been no ELT textbook evaluation checklists especially localized to the Thai context. It is, therefore, a pressing need to develop such a textbook evaluation checklist.

MOE and the Current English Teaching and Learning Policy

Being tremendously aware of the importance of English as a lingua franca (ELF), the Ministry of Education (MOE) has been promoting the entire nation's English language enhancement. The prospective outcomes of the English language development within the nation will lead the country to a better move onto the global competition. Therefore, the Ministry officially

issued its Notification on English Language Education Reform Policy as of 14 January, 2014. To achieve the prospective goals, MOE has set out the six sub-policies at the Basic Education level (Ministry of Education, 2014) as follows:

1. CEFR is adopted as a fundamental conceptual framework for the English language teaching in all aspects, e.g learning objectives, curriculum development, testing and assessment, etc;

2. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) or the communicative approach is focused;

3. Educational institutions can adopt various teaching approches or methods of instruction which follow the core framework, depending upon their readiness and student interests;

4. English language proficiency enhancement is implemented in forms of extensive English language teaching/learning projects, special English language programs- with emphasis on language skills for social, academic, and professional communication, as well as a wide range of learning activities and learning environment of English as intensive course and free elective course;

5. ELT teachers' English proficiency is assessed for further systemic English laguage proficieny development; and

6. The use of ICT-based materials is increasingly promoted for teachers and students' English proficientcy enhancement.

In order to achieve the sub-policies mentioned above, OBEC issued the Notification on Practice for English Language Education Reform as of 22 April 2014 (Office of Basic Education Commission, 2015). The Notification details the implementation practices based on CEFR, classifying language learners into three broad levels: Basic User (A level); Independent User (B level); and Proficient User (C level). Based on the six CEFR reference levels, i.e. A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2, MOE has determined the expectations of CEFR-based English language development outcomes for Thai school students of the three basic education stages, namely elementary school (grades 1-6), lower secondary school (grades 7-9), and upper secondary school (grades 10-12) as briefly detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 MOE's expected CEFR-based proficiency levels for Thai students at the basic education level

Student level	Proficiency level	CEFR level
Elementary school graduates (grade 6)	Basic User	A1
Lower secondary school graduates (grade 9)	Basic User	A2
Upper secondary school graduates (grade 12)	Independent User	B1

To conclude, CEFR, on which the Ministry of Education puts great emphasis, is the central framework for implementing English language education pratices. All current English language education curricula across the nation are based on CEFR, including content, instruction activities, as well as English language testing and assessment at all basic education levels.

Theoretical framework of textbook evaluation for the present study

Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) classified the textbook evaluation into three types: pre-use evaluation (before use), in-use evaluation (during use), and post-use evaluation (after use). The first type, pre-use or predictive evaluation, is aimed at assisting teachers or persons in charge of selecting appropriate textbook(s) for students to best achieve a set of learning objectives of a particular course. The in-use evaluation allows teachers to observe strengths and weaknesses of the textbook being used. The other type (post-use evaluation) focuses on assessing the overall quality after the textbook having been used throughout the course. Apparently, an ELT textbook evaluation at all the three stages of a course implementation helps foresee, assess, and review the overall quality of a textbook which is used as a teaching and learning tool for students' English language development.

Although an ELT textbook evaluation was introduced during the early 1970s, there were no systematic evaluations due to lack of adequately detailed criteria (Harbi, 2017). Later during 1980s, a considerable interest in textbook evaluation increased, which led to the start of foregrounded textbook evaluation checklists. This also allowed researchers in the field to evaluate textbooks more critically. During 2011-2013, however, in spite of an increase in evaluating primary and high school ELT textbooks (both an individual book and a whole series), those evaluations occurring mainly concentrated on either a specific evaluation category or some evaluation categories.

Dweilkat (2011) investigated teachers and students' opinion towards learning activities and exercises in an ELT course book for tenth grade entitled *English for Palestine*, while Al-Qazaq (2011) evaluated the content of a tenth-grade textbook series called *Action Pack* if it well developed students' lifelong learning and academic skills. Alshehri (2012) assessed intermediate school EFL textbooks used in Saudi Arabia on the aspects of learning objectives, content, grammar, vocabulary, and the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Phonhan, Prapan, and Chaiyasuk (2012) examined the applications of language teaching methodologies after using *My World* course books 1-3 and found that the teaching methodologies used were based on Content-based Instruction Method (CBI). They also investigated teachers' perceptions toward CBI theoretical framework, types of CBI-based activities and course design, lesson planning, as well as the applications of the CBI method. Later in 2013, Alosaimi (2013) studied how successfully a textbook entitled *KSA Primary EFL* promoted the Active Learning principles, whereas Al-Thubaiti (2013) evaluated how the

teaching and learning activities in *KSA Intermediate* textbook supported a student-centered classroom. Besides, Srakang and Jensen (2013) focused on an investigation into teachers' perceptions towards a tenth grade ELT textbook. Revised from Ur's (2012) criteria and Wongkaew's (2009) questionnaire, the researchers developed a 5-point Likert scale of 35 evaluation items covering three main categories: textbook evaluation (22 items), roles of textbook (7 items), and teachers' perceptions towards textbook (6 items).

It is now crystal clear that an ELT textbook evaluation checklist is considered a major tool allowing teachers or persons in charge to select a quality textbook for their students. The textbook selected provides appropriate language inputs for students to develop their English language skills. Additionally, we agree with Gutiérrez Bermúdez (2014) that a prospective evaluation checklist must promote structured qualitative evaluation having a descriptive nature but being defined as a specific guideline. This will encourage teachers to express their ideas on different evaluation aspects by following the language learning objectives primarily based on an international framework or standard (which refers here to the CEFR). Therefore, these ideas have been prominently adopted into a number of ELT textbook evaluation studies from 2014 up to the present time.

Existing textbook evaluation checklists in previous studies from 2014 to the present

Many researchers in the field of textbook evaluation have developed or revised an evaluation checklist for their studies since 2014. We found that each checklist is effectively applicable to its local context of country. In contrast, those checklists might not be well suited for other countries' context despite similar language teaching and learning attainments. However, the evaluation checklists used in previous related studies can be adopted as a good guideline for the development of localized textbook evaluation checklist in the context.

Gutiérrez Bermúdez (2014) assessed the quality of New English File: Elementary course book. The 3-point Likert scale evaluation checklist used in the study covered five evaluation categories: book design, curriculum design, task design, usability, and versatility. However, only five evaluation items were used in the checklist and the evaluation descriptions seem overly broad. Later, Khodabakshi (2014) evaluated Skyline textbook used in Iran. The researcher followed the criteria suggested by Litz (2005) which consisted of 40 evaluation items covering seven evaluation categories, i.e. practical considerations, layout and design, activities, skills, language types, subject and content, and conclusion. Despite a quite number of items, some evaluation categories, especially Skills, should be focused more on sub-skills

(listening, speaking, reading, and writing). This can foresee the extent to which the textbook can further develop students' English language skills.

Khoo and Knight (2015) examined the characteristics of KBSM Form 4 and KBSM Form 5 used in Malaysia. The researchers developed a 5-point Likert scale checklist entitled Checklist for Textbook Evaluation revised from the checklist proposed by Mukdan and Nimehchisalem (2012). This 36-item revised checklist involved six evaluation categories: general attributes in relation to syllabus and curriculum; methodology; suitability for learners; physical and utilitarian attributes; efficient outlay of supplementary materials; and learning-teaching content. However, ten items are heavily devoted for the first evaluation category (general attributes in relation to syllabus and curriculum), while the other 26 items seem insufficient for the evaluation of the other aspects of textbook.

Effective Communication Skills, a CEFR-based textbook used in Malaysia, was evaluated by Ahmed (2016) using a 5-point Likert scale checklist revised from the criteria proposed by Litz (2005). Ahmed's (2016) revised checklist included 40 evaluation items for teachers and 25 evaluation items for students assessing seven evaluation categories: the textbook-value, content, and methodology; layout and design; activities; skills; language types; subject and content; and overall consensus. One of the strengths of this checklist involved the focus on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, which is also the main teaching approach promoted in English language education in Thailand. Besides, the checklist emphasized on the four skills of the English language.

Hamidi et al. (2016) investigated the characteristics between *New Interchange 2* and *Four Corners 3*, widely used in Iran. The 5-point Likert scale textbook checklist developed by Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979) was employed for evaluation. The 25 evaluation items in total covered five evaluation categories: subject matter, vocabulary and structure; exercises; illustrations; and physical make-up. This checklist, however, failed to emphasize on the four language skills. As a result, a textbook evaluation using this checklist might not be able to predict how well a textbook will help develop students' four skills of the English language.

Laabidi and Nfissi (2016) assessed the characteristics of a textbook entitled Visa to the World, a middle school course book used in Morocco. A 45-evaluation item checklist was used to evaluate seven evaluation categories: physical appearance and format of the textbook; accompanying materials; content and topics; exercises and activities; cultural presentation; four language skills; and language teaching methods. The checklist used in this study featured detailed evaluation of the language skills, especially listening (6 items) and reading (5 items).

However, a focus on writing and speaking skills seemed insufficient (3 items each) with broad descriptions.

Böcü and Razi (2016) investigated intercultural communication competence found in *Life A1* and *Life A2*. A revised questionnaire was employed to elicit teachers' and students' perceptions towards five cultural elements: source culture; target culture; international culture; big C (e.g. politics, history, economy, etc.), and little c (e.g. food, holiday, lifestyle, etc.). This evaluation of the cultural elements reflected one of the objectives of learning English as a world language. It further pointed out that learners of English are required to understand world cultures apart from their source cultures.

Harbi (2017) studied teachers' opinions towards *Traveler Series Book 3* and *Traveler Series Book 4*, high school course books in Saudi Arabia. The researcher developed a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire for data elicitation. The questionnaire covered five evaluation categories (49 items in total): layout and design (10 items); objectives of the target EFL textbooks (6 items); teaching methods and activities (13 items); language skills (12 items); and evaluation (7 items). The evaluation items of the five categories were relatively detailed. Furthermore, exercises and activities, lesson reviews, as well as quizzes were included under the category of evaluation. Nevertheless, the questionnaire seemed to disregard the evaluation of culture. It also put more emphasis on layout and design (10 items) but less on language skills (12 items).

From the brief reviews of checklists in previous textbook evaluation studies above, it is totally important for teachers and persons in charge to rely on an adequate textbook evaluation checklist when choosing a suitable ELT textbook. An evaluation checklist to be adopted into textbook evaluation must feature all necessary evaluation categories with sufficiently detailed items and clear descriptions to reflect language skills and sub-skills in a textbook. Most importantly, that textbook evaluation must be well suited for a particular teaching and learning context. However, as Sheldon (1988) stated that a global evaluation checklist applicable to all local contexts does not exit, it is necessary to develop a localized evaluation checklist for the English language education context of Thailand. The checklist will significantly play a pivotal role in selecting a suitable ELT textbook for students' English language development.

The Development of the Localized ELT Textbook Evaluation Checklist: the process and the product

The researchers aimed to develop an ELT textbook evaluation checklist that is applicable to the local Thai context. With response to the English language education reform announced by MOE, this newly developed checklist is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) which promotes the Communicative Language Teaching

(CLT) approach. The following details list the development process for the localized ELT textbook evaluation checklist for the Thai context.

Stage 1 – The researchers reviewed ELT textbook evaluation-related studies from 2014 to 2017, particularly looked at the textbook evaluation criteria used in those previous studies, and critically synthesized the evaluation criteria.

Stage 2 – The researchers developed a preliminary draft of the localized ELT textbook evaluation checklist based on the current national English language education objectives, CEFR, and CLT. This preliminary draft was developed and revised from the promising ELT textbook evaluation criteria proposed by Ahmed (2016), Böcü and Razi (2016), Hamidi et al. (2016), Harbi (2017), Khoo and Knight (2015), Laabidi and Nfissi (2016), and Litz (2005). At this stage, the draft of the evaluation checklist covered eight evaluation categories with 91 evaluation items which are briefly listed below.
1. Layout, design, and physical makeup (10 items)
2. Unit organization (7 items)
3. Content, topics, and language (15 items)
4. Language teaching methods and activities (15 items)
5. Four language skills (of listening, speaking, reading, and writing) (26 items)
6. Vocabulary (6 items)
7. Grammar (9 items)
8. Accompanied/supplementary materials (3 items)

Stage 3 – At this stage, content validity and construct validity of the preliminary draft of the localized textbook evaluation checklist were measured. This preliminary draft was critically and individually evaluated by two experts, Thai university lecturers with a doctoral degree in applied linguistics and a related field, who fully understand CEFR, CLT approach, and the context of English language education in Thailand. Following the experts' comments and feedback, the researchers revised the checklist hereafter entitled *EFL Textbook Evaluation Checklist*. This revised checklist was 5-point Likert scale with 70 evaluation items. The revised checklist allows an EFL textbook evaluator to read each item and indicate a level of agreement by marking from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) on each item. The following details show the overall information of the revised *EFL Textbook Evaluation Checklist*.
1. Layout, design, and physical makeup (7 items)
2. Unit organization (6 items)
3. Content, topics, and language (10 items)
4. Language teaching methods and activities (11 items)
5. Four language skills (of listening, speaking, reading, and writing) (24 items)
6. Vocabulary (5 items)
7. Grammar (4 items)

8. Accompanied/supplementary materials (3 items)

Stage 4 – At the final stage, the revised checklist was piloted by the researchers, who have a good understanding of CEFR and CLT approach. The researchers discussed the descriptions of each evaluation item of the checklist prior to the piloting process. Later, the researchers piloted the revised checklist evaluating a 12th grade English language course book which was approved by the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC). The results of the piloting evaluation showed that the researchers agreed with each other on all evaluation items. The researchers also discussed and shared their opinions by using the textbook information when marking a score. As a result, the piloting results totally promoted the reliability and practicality of this finalized *EFL Textbook Evaluation Checklist* (see Appendix A) that is well suited for the English language education in the local Thai context.

Discussion

It is undeniable that English textbooks are the main sources of language input for Thai students of all school levels under the Office of Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education, Thailand, from A1-B1 of CEFR, where almost all of the instructors of English are native Thai speakers, whose English proficiency levels are rather unsatisfactory. Based on the assumption that the teachers and/or people directly responsible for selecting the textbooks are knowledgeable about the CEFR as well as CLT, the present paper presents the *EFL Textbook Evaluation Checklist* of a 5-point Likert scale of 70 items under eight categories: layout, design, and physical makeup; unit organization; content, topics, and language; language teaching methods and activities; four language skills (of listening, speaking, reading, and writing); vocabulary; grammar; and accompanied/supplementary materials (see Appendix A).

Based on the CEFR and CLT theoretical frameworks and a critical review of recent studies conducted in various EFL countries, the checklist was constructed by two experienced English instructors from a Thai state university, reviewed by two experts from two of the Thai state universities, revised accordingly, and tried with a 12th grade English textbook by one of the best known, international publishing houses before the actual evaluation of A1, A2, and B1 level textbooks most used by the sample schools from the eastern region of Thailand. It was found that the proposed EFL Textbook Evaluation Checklist not only gave a clear picture of the quality and suitability of the textbooks being evaluated but also helped the teachers find or create additional materials to support the learners to achieve their learning objectives. In addition, the teachers can also use this proposed checklist to re-evaluate the selected textbook during the course (in-use evaluation) and/or after the course (post-use evaluation) in order to gauge its quality and practicality in real use.

It must be emphasized that the proposed *EFL Textbook Evaluation Checklist* can be used to evaluate textbooks for all CEFR proficiency levels provided that the evaluators clearly

understand each level in details. It is highly recommended that at least 2-3 evaluators should work together to ascertain that they understand the checklist categories and items before beginning the process. At the end, their evaluation results must be shared and discussed before a final decision is made. However, the checklist items are not exhaustive; they can be adopted or modified to serve the local needs.

Further Recommendations

Future ELT researchers can conduct EFL textbook evaluation research studies using the *EFL Textbook Evaluation Checklist* to assess the appropriateness and quality of those selected EFL textbooks. Future studies in this area will well reflect how the selected textbooks can support the learners' learning and how the learners can achieve their learning objectives. In addition, this checklist can be used as a prospective construct for EFL textbook or material development. Potential textbook or material developers at local educational institutions or local publishing houses can develop localized EFL textbooks that can be well suited for Thailand's English language education context using the checklist as a conceptual structure.

Acknowledgements

References

Ahmed, S. (2016). An evaluation of effective communication skills coursebook. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies, 7*(3), 57-70. doi: 10.7575/aiac.alls.v.7n.3p.57

Alosaimi, M. N (2013). *Evaluating KSA Primary State English Language Course in the Lights of Active Learning principles*, (Master's thesis, Taif University: Saudi Arabi. Retrieved from http://search.mandumah.com /Record/653336.

Al-Qazaq, M. B. (2011). *An Evaluation of the Action Pack Textbook Series for the Jordanian Upper Basic Stage Students in Light of Lifelong Learning and Basic Academic Competencies and the English Teachers' Views*, (Master's thesis, Amman University: Jordan).

Alshehri, A. A. (2012). An evaluation of EFL textbooks used for teaching in Saudi intermediate schools. *College of Education Journal*, *147*(1), 849-892.

Al-Thubaiti, L. K. (2013). *Evaluating Activities of KSA Intermediate English Language Course in the Lights of the Principles of Learner-Centered Instruction*, (Master's thesis,

Taif University: Saudi Arabia).

Böcü, A. B. & Razi, S. (2016). Evaluation of textbook series 'Life" in terms of cultural components. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *12*(2), 221-237.

Byrd, P. & Schuemann, C. (2014). English as a second/foreign language textbooks: How to choose them how to use them. In M. Celce-Murcia, D. Brinton & M.A. Snow (Eds.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 380-393). Boston: National Geographic Learning.

Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing Your Coursebook*. Oxford: Heinemann.

Daoud, A. & Celce-Murcia, M. (1979). Selecting and evaluating a textbook. In M. Celce-Murcia & L. McIntosh (Eds.), *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* (pp. 302-307). Cambridge, MA: Newbury House Publishers.

Dweikat, K. A. (2011). Investigating teachers' and students' attitudes towards the activities and exercises of EFL textbook for tenth grade in Palestine. *Journal of Al-Quds Open University for Research and Studies*, *23*(1), 27-79.

Ellis, R. (1997). The empirical evaluation of language teaching materials. *ELT Journal*, *51*(1), 36-42. doi: 10.1093/elt/51.1.36.

Gutiérrez Bermúdez, J. F. (2014). An exercise in course-book evaluation: Strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations regarding New English File: Elementary. *Latin American Journal of Content and Language Integrated Learning, 7*(1), 98-111. doi: 10.5294/laclil.2014.7.1.6

Hamidi, H., Bagheri, M., Sarinavaee, M., & Seyyedpour, A. (2016). Evaluation of two general English textbooks: New Interchange 2 vs. Four Corners 3. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 7*(2), 345-351. doi: 10.17507/jltr.0702.13

Harbi, A. A. (2017). Evaluation study for secondary stage EFL textbook: EFL teachers' perspectives. *English Language Teaching, 10*(3), 26-39. doi: 10.5539/elt.v10n3p26

Khodabakhshi, M. (2014). Choose a proper EFL textbook: Evaluation of "Skyline" series. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 98*, 959-967. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.03.505

Khoo, H. S., & Knight, P. (2015). Teachers' evaluation of KBSM Form 4, 5 English textbooks used in the secondary schools in Penang, Malaysia. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies, 6*(4), 128-150. doi: 10.7575/aiac.alls.v.6n.4p.128

Laabidi, H., & Nfissi, A. (2016). Fundamental criteria for effective textbook evaluation. *EFL Journal, 1*(2), 141-159. doi: 10.21462/eflj.v1i2.13

Litz, D.R.A. (2005). Textbook evaluation and ELT management: A South Korean Case Study. *Asian EFL Journal*, *48*(1), 1-53.

Ministry of Education. (2014). *Notification on English Language Education Reform Policy*. Retrieved November 15, 2017, from http://english.obec.go.th/english/2013/index.php/th/ 2012-08-08-10-26-5/60-2014-04-05-08-29-13 (in Thai)

Office of Basic Education Commission. (2015). *Handbook of New National English Language Teaching Aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*. Bangkok, Thailand: The War Veterans Organization of Thailand

Printing House.

Phonhan, P., Praphan, P. W., & Chaiyasuk, I. (2012). An evaluation of My World textbooks regarding the EFL teachers' perceptions and classroom applications: A Case study of Thai teachers. *RMUJ (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, *6*(2), 17-27.

Riazi, A.M. (2003). What textbook evaluation schemes tell us? A study of the textbook evaluation schemes of three decades. In W.A. Renandya. (Ed.), *Methodology and Materials Design in Language Teaching* (pp. 52-68). Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Center.

Sheldon, L.E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, *42*(4), 237-246.

Srakang, L. & Jansem, A. (2013). A study of teachers' perceptions toward using English textbooks: A case study of 10th grade English teachers in Maha Sarakham province. *FLLT Conference Proceedings*, *2*(1), 49-58.

Tomlinson, B. (2012). Materials development for language learning & teaching. *Language Teaching*, *45*(2), 143-179.

Ur, P. (2012). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wongkaew, A. (2009). *An Analysis of Teachers' Textbook Use Behaviors and the Effects on Students' Behavior: Mixed Method Research*. (Unpublished master's thesis) Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.

Appendix A

<div align="center">

EFL Textbook Evaluation Checklist

</div>

Instructions: The purpose of this EFL textbook evaluation checklist is to assist teachers in deciding whether a textbook is appropriate for their students. The checklist, which consists of 70 items, is divided into 8 main categories, each of which explores a certain aspect of the textbook. These categories include (1) Layout, design, and physical makeup, (2) Unit organization, (3) Content, topics, and language, (4) Language teaching methods and activities, (5) Four language skills (of listening, speaking, reading, and writing), (6) Vocabulary, (7) Grammar, and (8) Accompanied/supplementary materials. Read the items in the checklist about the textbook and indicate the level of your agreement by marking 0-4.

     0 = strongly disagree
     1 = disagree
     2 = uncertain
     3 = agree
     4 = strongly agree

Book Title: _____

Publisher: _____

Author(s): _____

Year of Publication: _____

Student Level (e.g. Grade 6): _____ Equivalent CEFR level (e.g. A1): _____

Note: The student's level = the expected level of language proficiency described in CEFR (A1, A2, B1, etc.).

EFL Textbook Evaluation Checklist					
1. Layout, design, and physical makeup					
No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
1	The textbook's appearance and layout (i.e., title, cover, size, font style, harmonious composition of textual and non-textual information, and high-quality printing) is attractive.					
2	The blurb in the back of the book provides CEFR-related information on language skills to be achieved, target users, key features of the book, the other books in the series, accompanied materials (either online or offline resources), and the book's level (A1, A2, B1, etc.).					
3	There is a page that describes objectives of the book and guides the students on how to use it (or Notes to the students) to promote independent learning.					
4	The textbook contains a detailed list of contents (e.g., unit titles, language functions, language skills, grammar, and vocabulary).					
5	The textbook contains periodic reviews (e.g., after every 3-4 units) for the purpose of diagnostic assessment and reinforcement.					
6	Illustrations and other non-textual materials are purposeful, clear, and diverse.					
7	The textbook has an adequacy of vocabulary list, audio scripts, and/or additional useful materials (e.g., glossary, grammar reference, etc.).					
Total score = _____ out of 28		Mean score = _____ out of 4				

2. Unit organization					
No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
8	Each unit has a title.					
9	Objectives of each unit (e.g., language skills, vocabulary, grammar, etc.) are clearly stated at the beginning.					
10	Objectives of each unit are achievable within the given time.					
11	Based on the stated objectives, the content and learning activities are well-organized and well-sequenced with clear headings, subheadings, and/or instruction icons.					
12	Instructions for each activity/task are clearly stated for the students to follow.					
13	Each unit offers a variety of exercises and activities to practice the target language skills to help the students to communicate in English in real life.					
Total score = _____ out of 24		Mean score = _____ out of 4				

3. Content, topics, and language					
14	The content and topics are challenging and motivating to the students.					

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
15	The content is relevant to the students' needs, authentic, and up-to-date.					
16	There is a sufficient variety of the content and topics.					
17	The content of the text book covers all four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing with an appropriate balance.					
18	The content develops higher skills (e.g., critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving).					
19	The content embraces "the whole person" concept, not just only for the sake of leaning English.					
20	The content and topics are not culturally biased and do not portray any negative stereotypes.					
21	The content and topics incorporate information about various cultures, not only the cultures of native speakers of English, but also those of others, to help students to observe cultural values and develop enough understanding of the distinctions between several civilizations.					
22	The language used in the textbook is authentic.					
23	The language used is at the right level for the students based on CEFR.					
Total score = _____ out of 40		Mean score = _____ out of 4				

4. Language teaching methods and activities

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
24	The teaching methods used in the text book are student-centered.					
25	Learning activities allow for various ELT methodologies.					
26	The methods used focus on both fluency and accuracy with the emphasis on learning language for communicative purposes.					
27	The activities provide authentic situations to encourage student participation and enable them to appropriately use language for different purposes and functions.					
28	The activities help to develop the students' learning strategies as well as communication strategies.					
29	There is incorporation of individual, pair, group, and the whole class work to improve students' real-life language use as well as their fluency and accuracy and, at the same time, enhance their whole language learning.					
30	The activities enhance the students' autonomy, that is, to become independent learners responsible for their own learning.					

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
31	There is an even distribution and integration of controlled, less controlled, and free activities, all of which should lead towards a product.					
32	A content-based instruction (CBI) approach is used because the content provides a coherent framework that can be used to link and develop all of the language skills. That is, the content dictates which language skills are needed to understand the material.					
33	The activities help the students to acquire their language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing through ICT application.					
34	The activities provide different types of learning assessment (e.g., formal/informal, alternative, and peer assessments) to provide washback for the enhancement of the students' language acquisition.					

Total score = _____ out of 44	Mean score = _____ out of 4

5. Four Language Skills:

5.1 Listening

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
35	The textbook's listening tasks are appropriate for the students' level with well-defined objectives.					
36	The textbook's listening materials are authentic both in terms of content and language.					
37	The textbook has a variety and sufficiency of listening texts.					
38	The activities help students to develop different sub-skills in listening (e.g., listening for main idea, listening for details, drawing inferences, etc.).					
39	The pre-, while-, and post- listening activities are used.					
40	The practice of the listening skills is integrated into the practice of other language skills.					

Total score = _____ out of 24	Mean score = _____ out of 4

5.2 Speaking

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
41	The textbook's speaking tasks are appropriate for the students' level with well-defined objectives.					
42	The textbook covers different forms of oral communication required of the students (e.g., conversations in different situations, meeting, discussion, debate, presentation, etc.).					
43	The textbook's speaking materials are authentic both in terms of content and language.					

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
44	The textbook has a variety and sufficiency of materials to help the students to develop the speaking skills needed for effective communication.					
45	The textbook's activities provide practices in lexical and grammatical choices depending on the situation, the participants involved, and the functions of the language in the discourse.					
46	The textbook's activities provide practices in the use of different and appropriate communication strategies (e.g., responding, initiating, turn-taking, introducing a new topic/idea, agreeing/disagreeing, repair and repetition, etc).					
47	The learning activities are integrated to lead to the expected learning outcome, that is, expected speaking skills.					
Total score = _____ out of 28	Mean score = _____ out of 4					

5.3 Reading

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
48	The textbook's reading tasks are appropriate for the students' level with well-defined objectives to enhance the students' sub-skills in reading (e.g., making predictions, guessing the meaning in context, skimming, scanning, understanding the organization of the text, drawing inference, etc.).					
49	There is a wide range of authentic reading texts with different subject contents that help students to relate English language learning to real life.					
50	Pre-, while-, and post-reading activities are provided to help students to become effective readers.					
51	Pre-reading activities include language preparation in terms of vocabulary and grammatical structures needed to understand the reading texts.					
52	Various exercises, from controlled to free, are provided in pre-, while-, and post-reading activities.					
Total score = _____ out of 20	Mean score = _____ out of 4					

5.4 Writing

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
53	The textbook's writing tasks are appropriate for the students' level with well-defined objectives.					
54	The textbook encourages the use of a process approach to writing (i.e., idea generation, planning, drafting, and revising).					
55	The activities help the students to identify the writing purpose and audience of different text-types.					

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
56	The activities help the students to understand different organization patterns of written texts, that is, how the ideas are put together to serve the writing purpose.					
57	The activities prepare the students in terms of vocabulary, grammatical structures, cohesive devices, and punctuation needed for effective writing.					
58	The textbook provides a clear writing assessment checklist for self-, peer-, and teacher-feedback on the students' writing to promote autonomous learning.					

Total score = _____ out of 24	Mean score = _____ out of 4

6. Vocabulary

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
59	The vocabulary items in the textbook are appropriate for the students' level.					
60	The vocabulary load (i.e., the number of new words introduced in every unit) is appropriate for the students' level.					
61	There is a good distribution (simple to complex) of vocabulary load across units and the whole book.					
62	The new vocabulary is repeated in subsequent units for reinforcement.					
63	Various exercises are provided to help the students understand the meaning of vocabulary items and use them correctly in context.					

Total score = _____ out of 20	Mean score = _____ out of 4

7. Grammar

No	Items	0	1	2	3	4
64	The main grammatical items are appropriately and sufficiently chosen for the students' level.					
65	The grammatical items are introduced explicitly in meaningful contexts with clear examples and explanations.					
66	The grammatical items gradually increase in complexity to suit the growing ability of the students.					
67	The grammatical exercises help the students to see the connection between forms and functions.					

Total score = _____ out of 16	Mean score = _____ out of 4

8. Accompanied/Supplementary materials		0	1	2	3	4
No	Items					
68	The accompanied materials with high quality (e.g., teacher's handbook, student workbook, cassettes/audio CDs, VDO activity books, writing resource packs, grammar resource packs, suggestive multimedia resources, etc.) are available for teachers.					
69	Class audio/VDO files and/or online resources needed are available for the students to promote autonomous learning.					
70	Supporting learning materials encourage the use of technology in learning English.					
Total score = _____ out of 12		Mean score = _____ out of 4				

Suggested interpretation of an evaluation category mean score

3.50 – 4.00	=	strongly agree
2.50 – 3.49	=	agree
1.50 – 2.49	=	uncertain
0.50 – 1.49	=	disagree
0.49 or lower	=	strongly disagree

Author's biography
Niwat Wuttisrisiriporn is a lecturer of English at the Language Institute, Burapha University, Thailand. He is now undertaking a PhD in Applied Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. His research interests include second language writing, vocabulary teaching and learning, English corpus linguistics, and ESP.

Contact information
Name: Niwat Wuttisrisiriporn
Institution: Burapha University, Thailand
Mailing address: The Language Institute, Burapha University, 169 Long-Hard Bangsaen Road, Saen Sook Sub-district, Mueang District, Chon Buri Province, Thailand, 20131.
E-mail address: niwatw@go.buu.ac.th

Author's biography
Siriluck Usaha is an Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics. She has a PhD in Education from Southern Illinois University Carbondale, USA. Her research interests involve second language writing, language testing and assessment, and teaching methodologies.

Contact information
Name: Siriluck Usaha
Institution: Burapha University, Thailand
Mailing address: The Language Institute, Burapha University, 169 Long-Hard Bangsaen Road, Saen Sook Sub-district, Mueang District, Chon Buri Province, Thailand, 20131.
E-mail address: siriluck@sut.ac.th