Journal of Studies in Language Learning and Teaching

Paper Type: Original Article

Screening EFL Teachers' Perception on 'Prospect 3': The Case of Micro and Macro Evaluation

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Abstract

'Prospect' is the name allocated to three consecutive ELT textbooks designed for three grades of junior high schools in Iran. As Richards (2007) maintains, when a textbook is developed and used for an ELT context, its evaluation is even more important because its pedagogical value needs to be determined. In order to help material developers of Iran's Ministry of Education modify 'Prospect' series and lessen the probable shortcomings, this study aims to evaluate one of the series according to a model provided by McDonough and Shaw (1993) based on external and internal evaluation through screening the attitudes of EFL teachers (230 female and 290 male) who have been incorporating 'Prospect 3' in their classrooms during the last five years in four provinces of Iran-Fars, Mazandaran, Golestan and Gilan. A 55-five-point Likert-scale questionnaire was adopted to gather data. The researchers employed SPSS to analyze the data, and it was revealed that the respondents were relatively satisfied with some crucial aspects of 'Prospect 3', and it has met its pedagogical objectives. However, it was evaluated very poor in printing quality and did lack motivating illustrations. Not considering the needs of the learners, not incorporating authentic language and variant dialects, and not using specific techniques to make the input more comprehensible, were among other recommended shortcomings that need modification.

Keywords: EFL Learners, ELT, External Evaluation, Input, Internal Evaluation, Textbook.

I | INTRODUCTION

As Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p.315) maintain, "The textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching and no teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook". Textbook is "the main component of any instructional program as it is difficult to imagine a class without it" (Nunan, 1999, p. 98).

Textbooks provide ready-made materials to both teachers and students, and play a significant role in EFL teaching and learning. A significant component of all educational programs are the textbooks, the efficiency of which greatly contributes to the accomplishment of the pedagogical goals of the curriculum (Tomlinson, 2008), and English textbooks are used as the most important tools for pushing both teachers and learners towards teaching and learning English language throughout the world; hence, selecting proper and appropriate textbooks for teaching language in the classroom can

be one of the most important tasks of language teachers. Studies show that textbooks are very common in ELT contexts, and ELT professionals use textbooks for daily teaching (Byrd, 2001; Litz, 2005; McDonough & Show, 1993).

According to Nunan (1999), textbooks are psychologically necessary for both students and teachers as they make the basis upon which the progress and achievement measurement of the learners can be built. English language teaching theoreticians and practitioners commonly agree that textbooks play a crucial role in language teaching and learning and consider them as the next important element in the EFL/ESL classroom after the teacher. Textbooks are crucial in the classroom, particularly in developing countries where teachers and students have limited resources. According to Richards & Rodgers (2002), textbooks are inevitable aspects of the ELT curriculum.

Considering the brief review of the scholars and practitioners' perspectives on the importance of textbooks in ELT context, it is obviously evident that the post evaluation of such a component of education is significantly crucial (McGrath, 2004). When a textbook is developed and used for an ELT context, its evaluation is more important as its pedagogical value needs to be determined before long-term use (Richards, 2007), and in this regard, current textbooks are evaluated, modified, revised and republished. Sometimes new books are developed to meet the precise focuses of instruction, and to meet language needs of the learners (Ansary & Babaii, 2002).

Although textbooks are seen as an essential instrument for language teaching, they are scarcely tested for their usability, flexibility and suitability to satisfy the needs and interests of teachers and students (Jahangard, 2007), and despite extensive studies on course book assessment, the literature in general, and the ELT textbook evaluation in particular, remains unconvincing (Shahmohammadi, 2018). As a result, the significance of textbooks in the ELT context necessitates its rigorous evaluation (Tomlinson, 2004) by teachers, especially in formal language teaching settings. Accordingly, this study focuses on the evaluation of an ELT textbook (i.e., Prospect 3) which is taught at junior high schools of Iran.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

1. Textbook Evaluation Methods

According to Lynch (1996), *evaluation* is defined as "the systematic attempt to gather information to make judgments or to pass decisions". As highlighted by Tomlinson (2012), once evaluation is applied to the realm of educational materials, it largely concentrates on the needs of the materials users and makes subjective judgments about their influences on the same materials users.

The evaluation of ELT materials and textbooks began in 1970s (e.g., Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Manuchehri, 1971; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Sheldon, 1988; Tucker, 1975). Most of the primary materials evaluation projects and studies claim that materials analysis and evaluation could enable us to look inside the materials and to take more control over their design and use (Chang, 1996). McDonough & Shaw (2003) maintain that materials need to be evaluated in two situations. First, the situation in which the teachers might be allowed to adapt or develop their materials. Second, the situation in which teachers are determined as the consumers who use others' products. Given the significant role of textbooks in educational programs and their cognitive, affective, and educational impacts on second or foreign-language learners (Nunan, 1999), teachers are recommended to choose "only those materials which are developed based on sound linguistic and pedagogical principles" (Williams, 1983, p. 255). It is quite evident that such a critical choice entails careful materials evaluation as "a procedure which involves measuring the value (or potential value) of a set of learning materials" (Tomlinson, 2012, p. 15).

Textbook evaluation is mostly carried out through different methods, including checklists, in-depth interviews, and integrated methods which make a combination of the two previous procedures (McGrath, 2004), and provided that the evaluation process is carried out systematically, it helps teachers to get effective, accurate, systematic, and contextual perceptions about the whole nature of textbook (Ellis, 1997). The literature is replete with different checklists and schemes proposed by leading experts and various authors, and successful assessment, as mentioned by Cunningsworth (1995), is based on asking the right questions and interpreting the responses (Samoudi & Mohammadi, 2020). Cunningsworth's evaluative checklist includes 45 questions that cover goals, style, language material, expertise, and technique, as well as realistic requirements, including cost and availability. Sheldon (1988) presented a detailed checklist of fifty-three questions grouped into seventeen main categories that assess content variables, including usability, content, style, and validity. These and other checklists (Breen & Candlin, 1987; Brown, 2001; Byrd, 2001; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Skierso, 1991) suggest that material developers seek thoroughness in their assessment procedures.

2. Micro and Macro Evaluation

Different scholars have offered different opinions regarding various approaches to material evaluation. Ellis (1997) proposes two types of materials evaluations: 1) a *predictive evaluation* which is designed to make a decision regarding which materials to use, and 2) a *retrospective evaluation* which is designed to examine what has actually been used. In addition, ELT materials can be evaluated at the 'macro' and 'micro' levels (McGrath, 2002, p. 14). McGrath (2002, p. 25) maintains that "macro-level evaluation is concerned about obtaining a general impression of the material and has also been termed external evaluation". Micro-level evaluation has also been termed internal evaluation (McDonough & Shaw, 2003, p. 66). According to McDonough & Shaw (2003), the essential issue at this stage is to analyze the extent to which the factors in the external evaluation stage match up with the internal consistency and organization of the materials.

McDonough & Shaw (2003) suggest a model for textbook evaluation which involves *three stages*. First, *external evaluation* examines the organization of materials stated by the author or the publisher, including claims made on the cover page and information in the introduction and table of contents. This kind of evaluation gives information about the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context of use, presentation and organization of materials, authors' opinion about language and methodology, use of audio-visual materials, vocabulary list and index, cultural aspects, tests and exercises included in the textbook. Second, *internal evaluation* in which the textbook is submitted to an in-depth investigation to see "how well the content in question add up to what the author says as well as the goals and priorities of a given teaching program" (McDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 64), and such a rigorous investigation, demands the following factors to be examined:

(1) the presentation of the skills,
(2) the grading and sequence of the materials,
(3) the authenticity or artificiality of the listening materials,
(4) the authenticity or artificiality of the speaking materials,
(5) the appropriateness of tests,
(6) the appropriateness of materials for different learning styles and self-study.

Third is the *overall evaluation* in which usability, generalizability, and flexibility factors are examined. According to Richards (2007), the basic criterion for evaluating such a determining educational element should be appropriateness and ideal usability of the textbook in specific situations with some specific learners. He claims that before evaluating a textbook, the following information should be taken into account:

2.1. The Role of the Textbook in the Program

The role of the textbook as the core of the program, the availability of workbooks for the practice, and the objectives of the course should be taken into consideration.

2.2. The Role of the Teacher in the Program

The teacher's experience, proficiency in the target language, obedience to the course book, and the teacher's role in selecting textbooks for a particular course should be considered.

2.3. The Role of the Learners in the Program

Expectations of learners from a textbook, their needs, and how they use the book are important. But another point before evaluating the textbook is that no commercial textbook will ever be a perfect fit for a language program (Richard, 2001, p.257) since two factors are involved in the development of commercial textbooks: those representing the interests of the author, and those representing the interest of the publisher (Byrd, 2001; Richards, 2001).

3. Related Studies on Prospect Series

Brown (2001, p. 2) suggests that it is essential to study the available non-survey data before developing any new data collection instrument. He further implies that non-survey data could be gained through literature review.

Isaee et al. (2023) evaluated 'Prospect 1', which is the main

English textbook for 7th-grade of junior high schools in Iran. The study participants comprised 104 EFL teachers from two provinces in Iran-Mazandaran and Gilan. The researchers adopted a 55-item Likert scale questionnaire which was submitted to the respondents in person and virtually. The results manifested that 'Prospect 1' was really poor in printing quality, and it lacked attractive pictures and illustrations. Moreover, not incorporating variant dialects and authentic language, not using modern techniques such as typography and perceptual saliency, and not considering the needs of the learners were among other reported shortcomings.

Bemani & Jahangard (2014) evaluated 'Prospect 1' and explored the perspectives of 102 EFL teachers through Litz (2005) evaluation checklist. The results revealed that the teachers were partially satisfied with 'Prospect 1'. They concluded that the presentation of skills and cultural norms needs to be revised. Later, they conducted another evaluative study to investigate the pros and cons of 'Prospect 3'. In effect, a researcher-made questionnaire was administered to 100 high school English teachers who were chosen from seven provinces of Iran conveniently. Moreover, 146 teachers sat for a semi-structured interview. The analyses revealed that the participating teachers were not satisfied with several aspects of the text, including layout and design, the exercises and activities, the integration of the four skills, the teachers' book, grammar, vocabulary, language functions, and the teaching methodology of the text.

Ahmadi Safa et al. (2017) evaluated 'Prospect 2' the 8th-grade English textbook of Iranian junior high schools. The study participants comprised 236 EFL school teachers from seven cities in Iran. A 65-item researcher-made Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect the required data. In addition, 38 teachers participated in a semi-structured interview. The findings indicated that the EFL teachers held positive attitudes and perceptions towards linguistic aspects of the book. In contrast, the same EFL teachers had a negative attitude towards authentic contextualization of the language, cultural points, and physical aspects of the text.

Alavi et al. (2015) stated that the textbook 'Prospect 3' was designed to help students to learn English for communicative purposes using all four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. He claimed that the ELT textbooks, which were previously taught in junior high schools in Iran, suffered from a lack of communication skills, and the students were unable to use the language in real situations. He concluded that teachers were satisfied with the newly published series.

Similarly, Tavakoli et al. (2017) conducted a critically evaluated Iranian junior high school textbooks (i.e., Prospect 1, 2 & 3) from teachers' point of view. This questionnaire-based study explored the English teachers' attitudes on 'Prospect' series, and any probable differences among their attitudes. The results revealed that the participants had positive attitudes toward these textbooks. However, a significant difference between teachers' attitudes towards 'Prospect 3' was reported.

III. AIM OF THE STUDY

When a textbook is developed and used in an ELT context, its evaluation is more important as its pedagogical value needs to be determined before long-term use (Richards, 2007). In this regard, current textbooks are evaluated, modified, revised and republished, and even sometimes, new books are developed to meet the precise focuses of instruction as well as meet the language needs of the learners.

Having reviewed the related literature and the empirical studies, it is obvious that the third member of 'Prospect' series has received relatively less attention and deserves further evaluative studies. Therefore, the present study focuses on internal and external evaluation (i.e., retrospective evaluation) of 'Prospect 3' which is the main English textbook of 9th-grade junior high school in the educational system of Iran by screening Iranian EFL teachers' perception via a 55-five-point Likert Scale questionnaire to find the answers to the following research questions, considering the fact that ELT teachers' perceptions regarding a particular textbook may differ based on their teaching experience or academic degree:

RQ 1: What are the Iranian EFL teachers' perspectives towards different aspects of 'Prospect 3' in terms of the physical appearance, layout, general theme, and illustrations?

RQ 2: What are the Iranian EFL teachers' perspectives towards different aspects of 'Prospect 3' in terms of supplementary materials, exercises, tasks, and activities?

RQ 3: What are the Iranian EFL teachers' perspectives towards different aspects of 'Prospect 3' in terms of language components (i.e., structures and vocabulary), language types, content and language skills, and methodology?

RQ4: Are there any statistically significant differences between EFL teachers' perceptions towards different aspects of 'Prospect 3' regarding their academic degree?

IV. METHODOLOGY

1. Participants

A sample of 520 Iranian EFL teachers were randomly selected from junior high schools in Mazandaran, Gilan, Golestan and Fars Provinces in Iran and invited to participate in this study. Holding an average age of 28 and 33.5 for the female teachers and male ones respectively, the study participants comprised 230 female and 290 male EFL teachers. All the teachers have been teaching 9th-grade English textbooks at various rural and urban junior high schools for at least five years.

According to table 1, their teaching experience ranged from 5 to over 20 years. The average years of teaching experience of the EFL teachers was determined to be 14. Regarding teachers' academic degrees, 7% held a Ph.D. degree, 28.9% held an MA degree, 47.5% held a BA degree, and 16.6% had an associate Art (AA) degree. 68% percent of the teachers were involved in teaching in urban areas and 32.0% in rural areas. In addition, as ELT teachers' perceptions regarding a particular textbook may differ based on their academic degree or their teaching experience, all the participants of the study were divided into 2 groups of 1) ELT teachers with a PhD or MA degree (i.e., 200 participants), and 2) ELT teachers with a BA or AA degree (i.e., 320 participants), in order to see any probable (non)alignment between their attitudes.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants.

	Gender		Age	Teaching Experience				Workplace		Degree			
	Female	Male	25 -50	5 -9	10 - 14	15- 19	20-over	City	Village	PhD	MA	BA	AA
Number	230	290	520	100	200	140	80	360	160	50	150	230	90

2. Instrumentation

Before conducting the study, various checklists by different pioneers were collected (i.e., Ahmadi Safa et al., 2018; Breen & Candlin, 1987; Brown, 2001; Byrd, 2001; Litz, 2005; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Skierso, 1991) and analyzed to determine the specific criteria relevant to the study. In 2018, an EFL textbook evaluation questionnaire was developed by Ahmadi Safa et al., which consists of 55 five-point Likert scale items addressing different aspects of the textbook. Moreover, the construct validity of the questionnaire was assured in the original study through expert judgment and exploratory factor analyses. Meanwhile, Cronbach Alpha analysis was applied as a measure of the internal consistency of the scale, and the estimated reliability index of the questionnaire was found to be (α=0.90), it was assured by 3 faculty members, and delivered to the respectable respondents as the main data collection instrument in this study. It contained two main parts: one for gathering demographic information of the EFL teachers, and the second part allocated to the textbook 'Prospect 3' evaluation scheme, including eight criteria as follows:

(1) appearance, layout and general theme,
(2) illustrations,
(3) supplementary materials such as teacher's guide, workbook and CDs,
(4) language components, including structure and vocabulary,
(5) exercises, tasks and activities,
(6) language types,
(7) content and language skills,
(8) methodology.

3. Data Collection Procedure

The data were collected from 520 female and male EFL teachers of public and private junior high schools in different urban and rural schools of Mazandaran, Gilan, Golestan, and Fars Provinces in Iran. As mentioned earlier, the EFL questionnaire was submitted to the teachers either in hard copy in a face-to-face manner or posted virtually through the Telegram messaging application and email correspondence because of the limitations caused by the unexpected pandemic of COVID-19. Finally, the completed questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS Statistical Software version 22 in order to find the answers to the research question. In this regard, descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were employed because the 5-point Likert scale is an interval scale in which the *mean* is very significant in that the mean score from 1 to 1.80 shows strongly agree, from

1.81 to 2.60 means agree, from 2.61 to 3.40 means neutral, from 3.41 to 4.20 means disagree and from 4.21 to 5 means strongly disagree. Secondly, as ELT teachers' perceptions regarding a particular textbook may differ based on their academic degree, the participants of the study were divided into 2 groups of 1) ELT teachers holding a PhD or MA degree (i.e., 200 participants), and 2) ELT teachers holding a BA or AA degree (i.e., 320 participants), to see any probable (non)alignment between their attitudes.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

1. Descriptive Statistics

In order to find the answer to the first three research questions of the study regarding the perceptions of Iranian EFL junior high school teachers on main aspects of 'Prospect 3', descriptive statistics including mean, percentage, and standard deviation were used and tabulated in 9 tables which are as follows:

As observed, Table 2 depicts the descriptive statistical data on the physical appearance, printing quality, general theme as well as layout of the textbook. It is worth mentioning that these aspects of the 9th-grade textbook were measured through ten items (i.e., 1-10) of the questionnaire.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for physical appearance, layout and general theme items.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
1. The book has a good appearance.	520	3.96	5.868	17.3	32.7	0	23.1	28.8
2. Hard cover of the book is attractive.	520	4.46	.939	1.9	5.8	1.9	25.0	65.4
3. The colors of the pages are appealing.	520	4.17	1.309	7.7	9.6	1.9	19.2	61.5
4. The book has a high printing quality.	520	4.08	1.326	5.8	15.4	1.9	19.2	57.7
5. The book is well organized.	520	3.08	1.758	34.6	9.6	3.8	17.3	34.6
6. The book has a good layout.	520	2.13	1.633	61.5	9.6	0	11.5	17.3
7. The table of contents is quite comprehensive and useful.	520	2.10	1.332	44.2	32.7	0	15.4	7.7
8. List of words at the end of the book is useful.	520	2.19	1.253	30.8	46.2	7.7	3.8	11.5
9.A list of references is provided at the end of the textbook.	520	4.63	.5205	0	0	1.9	32.7	65.4
10. Useful and helpful index/s is/are included.	520	3.41	1.648	21.2	15.4	7.7	13.5	42.3
Layout	**520**	**3.42**	**.661**					

As observed in Table 2, the mean score and standard deviation for the teacher's evaluation of the physical appearance, layout, printing quality and general theme of the textbook are 3.42 and 0.661, respectively. It testifies that more than half of the EFL teachers were partially dissatisfied with the overall layout and physical appearance of 'Prospect 3'. The mean scores of the first ten items of the questionnaire ranged from 2.10 to 4.63. More than two third of the teachers (about 61 % strongly agree and 10 % agree) believed that the textbook has a good layout (item=6) as well as an acceptable physical appearance (item=1). However, when it comes to the hardcover of the newly published textbook (item2), its printing quality (item 4), and the color of its pages (item 3), a totally 16 and 62 percent of the very teachers disagreed and strongly disagreed as they were not pleased with these aspects of 'Prospect 3'. Nonetheless, the least satisfaction was allocated to item 9 (M=4.63) since there is no useful reference at the end of the textbook and nearly more than half of the EFL teachers were dissatisfied with the usefulness of index/s (i.e., item 10, M=3.41).

Concerning the second evaluated aspect of the 9th-grade English textbook (i.e., the illustrations) descriptive statistical results, which were measured through five questionnaire items (i.e., 11-15) are summarized and shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for illustrations items.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
11. Images in the book are attractive and of high quality.	520	3.71	1.719	23.1	7.7	1.9	9.6	57.7
12. Images and figures are clear and not confusing.	520	1.98	1.260	53.8	17.3	7.7	19.2	1.9
13. Images, charts, shapes and tables are relevant.	520	2.19	1.401	1.9	36.5	36.5	1.9	11.5
14. Images make the input more comprehensible.	520	1.63	1.205	73.1	9.6	1.9	11.5	3.8
15. Perceptual salience and typography are used to draw students' attention.	520	3.35	1.655	26.9	5.8	9.6	21.2	36.5
Illustrations	**520**	**2.57**	**.762**					

As indicated in Table 3, the teachers' mean score and standard deviation for illustrations of the textbook are 2.57 and 0.762, respectively showing that EFL teachers were a little satisfied with the textbook illustrations but not entirely. The mean scores of the items ranged from 1.63 to 3.71. Although more than half of the teachers (around 54 percent in total) believed that the images, charts, figures and tables are clear, relevant and not confusing (items 12 and 13), 9.6 percent of them disagreed and 57.7 percent strongly disagreed that the pictures are attractive and maintain very high quality (item 11, M=3.71) and hence, the least value was allocated to item 11 as shown in Table 3. Many of the respondents (21.2 % disagree and 36.5 % strongly disagree) did not verify that specific techniques such as *Typography* or *Perceptual saliency* are employed in the textbook to enhance the process of learning (item 15, M=3.35) since the mean has fallen into 'neutral' range.

The teacher's guidebook, work-book, flashcards, and CDs are addressed as the supplementary materials of a textbook which were investigated through five questionnaire items (i.e., 16-20). Table 4 summarizes the descriptive statistical data obtained in this regard.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for supplementary materials items.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
16. There is a useful Teachers' Guide for novice and experienced teachers.	520	1.52	1.190	71.2	17.3	3.8	3.8	3.9
17. Recommended practices in the Teachers' Guide are based on the latest research findings in the field of language teaching and learning.	520	2.48	1.421	34.6	26.9	1.9	28.8	7.7
18. Appropriate techniques are provided in the Teachers' Guide to enable students to activate their background knowledge.	520	2.19	1.121	26.9	50.0	3.8	15.4	3.8
19. Useful tasks and relevant exercises are provided in the workbook.	520	2.00	1.010	32.7	50.0	3.8	11.5	1.9
20. In addition to the original textbook, complementary materials such as CDs, video clips, flashcards are also provided for the students.	520	4. 27	1.254	5.80	9.6	3.8	13.5	67.3
Supplementary Materials	**520**	**2.49**	**.480**					

The teachers' mean score and standard deviation for availability and acceptability of supplementary materials of newly-published Iranian 9th-grade English textbooks are 2.49 and 0.480, according to table 4, indicating that EFL teachers were fairly pleased with the supplementary materials and teacher's guide. Language Components such as grammar and vocabulary were measured through seven items (i.e., 21-27) of the questionnaire, and the results of the analyses are summarized and depicted in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for language components, including grammar and vocabulary items.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
21. The number of vocabulary introduced in the book is appropriate to student's level of proficiency.	520	1.92	1.218	48.1	32.7	5.8	5.8	7.70
22. The Grammar rules are chosen based on their frequency of usage in daily conversations.	520	3.58	1.363	11.5	13.5	11.5	32.7	30.8
23. Words are distributed from easy to hard in each unit of the book.	520	2.44	1.514	34.6	32.7	5.8	7.7	19.2

	N	Mean	Std. Dev	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
24. Recycling vocabulary has been done effectively.	520	2.10	1.332	44.2	32.7	3.8	11.5	1.90
25. Considering the students' needs, the grammar rules are appropriate to students' level of language Proficiency.	520	1. 65	1.083	59.6	30.8	0.0	3.8	5.8
26. The grammar rules are presented in authentic sentences or short passages.	520	1.92	1.370	59.6	17.3	1.9	13.5	7.7
27. Grammar is presented and explained clearly but implicitly and practised throughout the book.	520	2.29	1.377	30.8	46.2	1.9	5.8	15.8
Components of Language	**520**	**2.27**	**.974**					

As displayed in Table 5, the mean score and standard deviation for the teachers' evaluation of grammar and vocabulary are 2.27 and 0.974, respectively, showing moderate satisfaction and agreement of EFL teachers on the grammar and vocabulary section of 'Prospect 3'. As shown in Table 5, the mean scores for the participant's evaluation of the grammar and vocabulary items ranged from 1.65, to 3.58. Item 25, with a mean of 1.65 received the highest agreement since 90 percent of junior high school teachers agreed that considering the student's needs, the grammar rules of the textbook are appropriate to their language proficiency level. In contrast, item 22, with a mean of 3.58, received the lowest agreement since 32.7 percent of the participants disagreed, and 30.8 percent strongly disagreed that the grammar rules are chosen based on their frequency of usage in daily conversations.

Concerning the fifth aspect of the textbook (i.e., exercises, tasks & activities), descriptive statistical results are summarized and shown in Table 6 below (i.e., items 28-33).

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for exercises, tasks and activities items.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
28. A balanced range of exercises is seen in the book.	520	3.96	1.066	5.80	3.80	11.5	46.2	32.7
29. Individual, pair and group work are included.	520	2.13	1.428	50.0	19.2	9.6	9.6	11.5
30. Activities of the textbook encourage students to respond creatively, innovatively and independently.	520	1.96	1.386	55.8	21.2	5.8	5.8	11.5
31. Activities of the textbook are designed in such way that lead students to meaningful communication	520	1.73	1.206	63.5	19.2	3.8	7.7	5.8
32. Students' learning of new things is evaluated through tasks and activities.	520	2. 10	1.763	48.1	32.7	1.9	7.7	7.7

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
33. The tasks help students learn grammar by creating real and actual situations.	520	3.50	1.306	9.6	15.4	17.3	30.8	26.9
Exercises, Tasks and Activities	**520**	**2.56**	**.536**					

According to participants, the mean score and standard deviation for the acceptability of the exercises, tasks and activities was 2.56 and 0.536, as depicted in Table 6. It indicates that EFL teachers were partly satisfied with these important facets of the textbook. According to Table 6, over two third of the teachers (80 percent) agreed that the learners' learning of new content is evaluated through different tasks and activities (item 32, M=2.10). As observed in Table 6, more than half of the teachers believed that the activities of the book provide a good range of individual activities, pair works, and group activities (item 29, M=2.13). Nonetheless, some of the respondents revealed dissatisfaction with items 28 and 33. They thought the textbook does not provide a balanced variety of exercises and activities (item 28, M=3.96), nor do the tasks help students learn grammar by creating real and actual situations (item 33, M=3.50), and these two aspects of 'Prospect 3' enjoyed the highest rate of disagreement and dissatisfaction.

The descriptive statistical data of the analyses of the language types of the textbook 'Prospect 3' was evaluated and measured through four items (i.e., 34-37) of the very questionnaire and is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for language types items.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
34. The language used in the book is real and expresses the language that is used in real life.	520	4.25	.905	0.00	5.8	13.5	30.8	50.0
35. The language used in the book is in accordance with the language proficiency level of the learners.	520	2.17	1.424	44.2	28.8	5.8	7.7	13.5
36. The language used in the book covers a variety of dialects and vocabulary types.	520	3.77	1.113	5.8	11.5	5.8	53.8	23.1
37. The language functions contain language applications that the learners will use in their daily interactions.	520	4.12	.963	0.0	7.7	17.3	30.8	44.2
Language Types	**520**	**3.57**	**.468**					

The mean score for the teachers' evaluation of language types is 3.57, and the standard deviation is 0.468, as displayed in Table 7, and it shows that EFL teachers were partially dissatisfied with the language types. As indicated in Table 7, the mean score for the teacher's evaluation of the items ranged from 2.17 to 4.25. Item 34 (M=4.25) gained the highest rate of disagreement and item 35, with the lowest mean of 2.17, enjoyed the highest rate of satisfaction since 75 percent of the respondents had a positive view in this regard. So, most participants were not pleased with the language types aspect.

Investigation into the 7ᵗʰ criterion of the evaluation (i.e., the content and language skills) of 'Prospect 3' was done by analyzing the data obtained from 13 items of the questionnaire (i.e., 38-50), which are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for content and language skills items.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
38. The content of the book presents real-life issues and encourages critical thinking.	520	4.10	1.053	1.9	11.5	3.8	40.4	42.3
39. Topics and contents of the book are consistent with the needs, interests and age of the students	520	4.10	1.071	1.9	13.5	0	42.3	42.3
40. There is sufficient variety in subjects in the content of the book.	520	1.77	1.198	65.4	11.5	3.8	19.2	0
41. Explanations and examples of the book are understandable for the students.	520	2.37	1.509	42.3	23.1	3.8	17.3	13.5
42. Conversations are attractive to students and close as to real life tasks.	520	4.21	1.333	9.6	5.8	3.8	15.4	65.4
43. Instructions to various sections are clear enough for the learners.	520	1.77	1.366	69.2	11.5	1.9	7.7	9.6
44. Gradation of the content, including vocabulary and grammar in terms of difficulty level is appropriate.	520	1.79	1.377	67.3	13.5	3.8	3.8	11.5
45. All four language skills are covered in the book in an appropriate way.	520	1.92	1.370	59.6	15.4	7.7	7.7	9.6
46. Miscellaneous listening and reading assignments with audio files present different dialects of English to students.	520	3.98	1.196	7.7	5.8	7.7	38.5	40.4
47. The conversations are well-designed to enable students to use them for real purposes.	520	3.94	.998	3.8	9.6	0	61.5	25.0
48. The grammar rules are presented in authentic sentences or short passages.	520	1.65	1.046	59.6	28.8	1.9	5.8	3.8

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation					
49. Activities that are used before, during and after addressing four language skills and sub-skills are engaging and helpful.	520	2.88	1.003	15.4	3.8	63.5	11.5	5.8
50. Useful writing tasks are included.	520	4.50	.728	1.9	0	1.9	38.5	57.7
Content and Language Skills	**520**	**2.99**	**.372**					

As shown in Table 8, the mean score and the standard deviation for the teachers' evaluation of content and language skills are 2.99 and 0.372 respectively. It shows that our respondents were partly satisfied, and partly dissatisfied (i.e. neutral) with the representation of the content and four main language skills in 'Prospect 3'. Ranging from 1.65 to 4.50, the mean scores of the items tell us that item 50, with a mean of 4.50, enjoyed the highest rate of disagreement as 95% of EFL teachers had negative attitudes and didn't believe that useful writing tasks are included in the textbook. Whereas item 48 with a mean of 1.65, enjoyed the highest rate of teacher's agreement and satisfaction as they had rather positive attitudes that the grammar rules are presented in authentic sentences or short passages.

The methodology aspect of the textbook was measured through five items of the questionnaire (i.e., 51-55), and the obtained descriptive data are presented in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Descriptive statistics for methodology.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
51. The textbook seems applicable to different methods of English language teaching.	520	3.56	1.392	13.5	11.5	11.5	32.7	30.8
52. The textbook is designed based on the Communicative Teaching Approach (CLT).	520	1.37	.793	75.0	19.2	1.9	1.9	1.9
53. Different learning styles and strategies of the learners are considered in this book.	520	3.3	1.173	7.7	11.5	3.8	53.8	23.1
54. Activities are designed in a way to let students take responsibility for their learning.	520	2.87	1.358	17.3	34.6	3.8	32.7	11.5
55. The paradigm shift from GTM to CLT can be seen clearly in this textbook compared to the old version of the 9th-grade textbook.	520	1.42	.997	80.8	7.7	1.9	7.7	1.9
Methodology	**520**	**2.58**	**.448**					

According to Table 9, the mean score and standard deviation for the teachers' evaluation of the methodology endorsed in the 9th-grade textbook are 2.58 and 0.488, respectively, testifying that EFL teachers had a positive view about this aspect of the textbook. As shown in Table 9, the range of mean scores for the participants' evaluation of this aspect was from 1.37 to 3.73. Item 53 received the highest rate of disagreement. That, only 11.5 percent of the participants agreed, and 7.7 percent of them strongly agreed that different learning styles and strategies of the learners are considered in this book. In contrast,

item 520 (M=1.37) enjoyed the highest rate of agreement and satisfaction (around 95%); that, the textbook is designed based on the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT). Regarding item 54 (i.e., activities of the book are designed to enable learners to take responsibility for their learning) nearly 17 percent of the teachers strongly agreed, and 34 percent of them agreed (*M*=2.08). Table 9 further indicates that nearly all junior high school teachers either strongly agreed or agreed (*M*=1.42) that the paradigm shift from GTM to CLT can be seen clearly in the newly published textbook compared to the old version of the 9th-grade textbook. Finally, descriptive statistics for all subcategories of 'Prospect 3' are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Descriptive statistics for all subcategories.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Physical Appearance & Layout	520	3.42	.661
2. Illustrations	520	2.57	.762
3. Supplementary Materials	520	2.49	.480
4. Components	520	2.27	.974
5. Exercises, Tasks & Activities	520	2.56	.536
6. Language Types	520	3.58	.468
7. Skills	520	3.00	.372
8. Methodology	520	2.58	.499
Total	**8**	**2.81**	**.594**

As observed in Table 10, the mean scores of all evaluated subcategories are compared together ranging from 2.27 to 3.58. While (6) Language types items (Mean=3.58) gained the highest value, (4) Components of language items gained the lowest value (Mean=2.27). Besides, the mean scores for three subcategories, i.e., (2) Illustrations, (5) Exercises, Tasks & Activities and (8) Methodology, were nearly the same (*M*=2.57, *M*=2.56, *M*=2.58 respectively), indicating that EFL teachers' responses fall into 'agree' area. On the other hand, second to Language types, (1) Physical Appearance and Layout enjoyed the highest value (Mean=3.42), which shows partial disagreement of the teachers. Also, the mean scores for another subcategory, i.e., (3) Supplementary Materials, was detected as 2.49, which testifies partial agreement of the teachers. Moreover, the seventh subcategory mean scores were 3.00, indicating that most respondents were neutral about the Skills items. In the end, the mean score for all items or subcategories was 2.81, which is a moderate value showing that EFL junior high school teachers were relatively pleased and satisfied with 'Prospect3'. For a better grasp of the data, they are visually depicted in Figure 1.
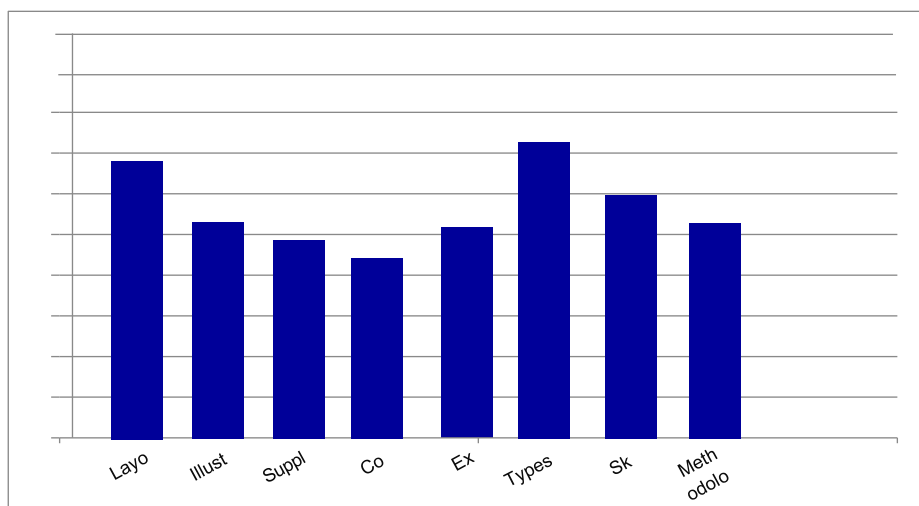
Figure 1. Mean scores of all subcategories.

As depicted in Figure 1, the data obtained from the self-report questionnaire helped researchers gain a general profile of the participants' attitudes; however, ELT teachers' perceptions regarding a particular textbook may differ based on their academic degree or even their teaching experiences. In this regard, participants' responses were compared to each other in the second phase of the study, as follows.

2. Inferential Statistics

In order to find the answer to the fourth research question of the study, the data from the questionnaire were categorized into two groups based on the participants' academic degree (i.e., 200 respondents with MA or PhD degree, and 320 respondents with AA or BA degree), and a series of independent samples t-tests were run to discover any probable (non)alignment between the EFL teachers' perceptions. The results are presented in Table 11 and Table 12, as follows.

Table 11. Group statistics for the differences between perceptions of two groups of teachers.

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
1. Physical Appearance & Layout	MA & PhD	200	30.72	4.63	.32
	AA & BA	320	45.98	3.83	.37
2. Illustrations	MA & PhD	200	29.86	3.71	.25
	AA & BA	320	25.90	2.84	.27
3. Supplementary Materials	MA & PhD	200	49.21	6.31	.37
	AA & BA	320	48.21	4.29	.42
4. Components	MA & PhD	200	21.94	2.81	.18
	AA & BA	320	24.34	2.32	.22
5. Exercises, Tasks & Activities	MA & PhD	200	15.53	1.28	.08
	AA & BA	320	10.72	1.41	.16
6. Language Types	MA & PhD	200	23.95	2.28	.39
	AA & BA	320	22.54	4.09	.23
7. Skills	MA & PhD	200	17.90	2.46	.14
	AA & BA	320	21.21	1.89	.16
8. Methodology	MA & PhD	200	19.28	2.65	.18
	AA & BA	320	14.87	1.83	.13

Table 11 shows the means and standard deviations for the perceptions of both groups of EFL teachers (200 teachers with MA/PhD, 320 teachers with AA/BA degree), regarding the micro and macro evaluation of 'Prospect 3'. According to the results, the mean and standard deviation for the MA/PhD teachers for the Physical Appearance and Layout (i.e., category 1) were $M=30.72$, $SD=4.63$, and the same measure for the AA/BA teachers were $M=45.98$, $SD=3.83$ (mean difference= -15.26), which revealed the highest rate of difference between the perceptions of both group of teachers compared to other categories.

Table 12. Independent samples t-test for the differences between EFL teachers' perceptions.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
1. Physical Appearance & Layout	Equal variances assumed	6.99	.006	-31.23	22.0	.000	-15.26	.53	-17.11	-15.01
	Equal variances not assumed			-32.32	39.1	.000	-15.26	.49	-17.04	-15.08

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Std. Error	Lower	Upper
2. Illustrations	Equal variances assumed	20.96	.000	5.01	323.0	.000	3.96	.41	-2.88	-1.23
	Equal variances not assumed			5.42	269.9	.000	3.96	.37	-2.79	-1.32
3. Supplementary Materials	Equal variances assumed	7.01	.011	1.28	321.0	.210	1.00	.79	-.560	2.57
	Equal variances not assumed			1.33	270.0	.150	1.00	.71	-.410	2.41
4. Components	Equal variances assumed	7.91	.006	-3.98	311.0	.000	-3.60	.50	-1.99	-.79
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.91	231.2	.000	-3.60	.58	-1.95	-.83
5. Exercises, Tasks & Activities	Equal variances assumed	.52	.523	7.31	321.0	.000	1.38	.16	1.07	1.72
	Equal variances not assumed			7.31	204.5	.000	1.38	.16	1.07	1.72
6. Language Types	Equal variances assumed	6.02	.010	1.48	331.0	.000	1.41	.51	-.560	1.98
	Equal variances not assumed			1.37	286.8	.144	1.41	.61	-.410	1.82
7. Skills	Equal variances assumed	4.83	.031	-12.5	321.0	.000	-4.69	.26	3.04	4.09
	Equal variances not assumed			-13.6	248.5	.000	-4.69	.24	3.08	4.06
8. Methodology	Equal variances assumed	.53	.530	7.01	320.0	.000	4.41	.15	1.09	1.74
	Equal variances not assumed			7.21	204.2	.000	4.41	.15	1.10	1.69

As to Table 12, a statistically significant difference could be observed between both groups' evaluation of Physical appearance and Layout, t (239.1)= -32.3, p =.00< .05, and Illustrations, t (269.9)= -5.42, p=.00 <.05. However, no significant difference was found between MA/PhD and AA/BA group's evaluation of the Supplementary Materials, t (270.0)=1.33, p=.15>.05. Concerning Components, t (231.2)= -4.91, p=.00<.05, a statistically significant difference between both groups attitudes was

revealed. As for the Exercises, Tasks and Activities, t (204.5)= 7.31, p=.00<.05, a statistically significant variation was discovered, too. Language Types, t (286.8)=1.37, p=.144>.05, no significant difference was found between two group's perceptions. With respect to the textbook's language Skills and Methodology, a statistically significant discrepancy was also found between both groups, t (248.5)=13.6, p =.00<.05, and t (204.2)=7.21, p =.00<.05, respectively. So, it could be inferred that there is a statistically significant difference between the perceptions of two groups of EFL teachers regarding various aspects of 'Prospect 3'. For a better grasp of the data, they are visually depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Differences between perceptions of two groups of teachers.
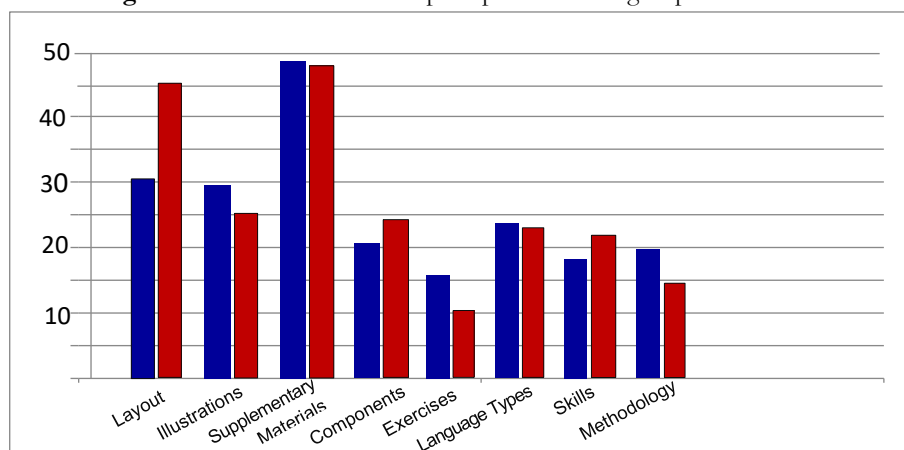
VI. DISCUSSION

In order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of textbooks, Richards & Renandya (2002) consider material evaluation as a helping asset. Therefore, in the current study, attempts have been made to evaluate the overall quality of Iranian 9th-grade EFL textbook (i.e., Prospect 3) based on a model provided by McDonough & Shaw (1993) based on two stages: macro and micro evaluation through screening EFL teachers' perceptions from eight different but interrelated aspects, including 1) physical appearance, layout and general theme, 2) illustrations, 3) supplementary materials, 4) Language components including structures and vocabulary, 5) exercises, tasks and activities, 6) language types, 7) content and language skills and 8) methodology. Furthermore, based on the participants' academic degree, the EFL teachers' perceptions were compared together to discover any probable (non)alignment between their attitudes, which will be discussed in the following lines.

Regarding the first research question of the study, Sheldon (1988, p. 8) asserts that "textbooks are physical artifacts, and the author needs to recognize that layout, format, typography, and graphics are also essential for a successful course book". Bearing that in mind, based on the results and findings of this study, over half of the EFL teachers were dissatisfied with the overall layout and physical appearance of 'Prospect 3'. Such dissatisfaction with the layout and physical appearance aspect of 'Prospect' series has been reported in some earlier studies (e.g., Ahmadi Safa et al., 2017; Isaee et al., 2023). The EFL teachers were moderately satisfied with the illustrations of the textbook. Although they believed that the images, charts, figures and tables were clear, relevant and not confusing, they believed that the pictures were not attractive and did not maintain very high quality at all. Moreover, they declared that material developers could use modern techniques such as typography and perceptual saliency to make the input more comprehensible for the learners. This piece of finding supports Isaee et al.'s (2023) findings, which reflected the EFL teachers' negative attitudes towards the physical appearance of 'Prospect 1'.

Regarding the second research question of the study, supplementary materials and teacher's guide also enjoyed partial satisfaction, and the EFL teachers were fairly pleased with the availability of helpful

guidelines for both novices and experienced teachers in the teacher's guide. They also agreed that appropriate techniques are provided in the Teacher's Guide to enable students to activate their background knowledge. However, respondents believed that supplementary materials, including CDs, video clips and flashcards are not attractive, not available and not effective, and this piece of finding supports Ahmadi Safa et al.'s (2017) and Ahmadi Safa et al.'s (2018) findings, which both reflected the EFL teachers' negative attitudes towards the lack of supplementary materials of 'Prospect 1' and 'Prospect 2', respectively. However, our findings are in contrast to Tavakoli Gheinani et al. (2017) which generally reported a positive attitude of the teachers towards 'Prospect 3'.

Cunningsworth (1995) maintains that ELT textbooks have multiple roles, such as serving as a reference of vocabulary and grammar, acting as a source for classroom activities and offering self-access work or self-directed learning. Based on the findings of this study, from the teachers' point of view, the most advantageous and meritorious aspect of the textbook was the vocabulary and grammar aspect. Almost, all of the junior high school teachers agreed that considering the student's needs, the grammar rules of the textbook are appropriate to their language proficiency level. In addition, two-third of them agreed or strongly agreed that grammar was explained clearly but implicitly in the textbook. Moreover, around 77 percent of the teachers verified that the grammatical points are presented in authentic sentences or short passages, indicating high agreement among EFL teachers. On the other hand, almost all the participants declared a high satisfaction and strongly agreed or just agreed that the number of vocabularies introduced in the book is appropriate to students' level of proficiency and the fact that words are distributed from easy to hard in each unit of the textbook. Therefore, we can observe the highest agreement among EFL teachers on vocabulary and grammar sections as explained according to the results.

Regarding the suitability of the exercises, McDonough & Shaw (2003) maintain that any materials should enable the students to see the effective use of the Four skills in an appropriate context. This is how teachers can involve the learners in authentic tasks and increase their motivation. Furthermore, "the way materials are organized and presented, as well as types of content and activities, will help to share the learner's view of language" (Nunan, 1999, p. 210). Based on the findings of this study, teachers believed that the activities of the book provide a good range of individual activities, pair works, and group activities. Besides, our respondents strongly believed that the activities are designed to lead students to create meaningful communications, and declared that the activities of the book, encourage students to respond creatively, innovatively, and independently. As highlighted by Safdari & Farzi (2018), teachers should always give encouragement to students to maintain their responsibility in learning and/or further increase their confidence level by providing specific tasks at the right level of difficulty which challenges but does not defeat them. Nonetheless, some respondents revealed dissatisfaction as they thought that the textbook does not provide a balanced variety of exercises and activities, nor do the tasks help students learn grammar by creating real and actual situations. Therefore, these two aspects of 'Prospect 3' enjoyed the highest rate of disagreement and dissatisfaction.

Regarding the third research question of the study, language types of the textbook was another aspect, which was endorsed with partial dissatisfaction from EFL teachers' perspectives. In fact, eighty percent of the respondents did not believe that the language used in the book is real and expresses the language that is used in real life. Moreover, most of the respondents strongly disagreed that the language used in the book covers a variety of dialects and vocabulary types, nor do the language functions contain language applications that the learners will use in their daily interactions. In contrast, they declared that the language used in the textbook is in accordance with the language proficiency level of the learners. Language types are the most disadvantageous aspect of 'Prospect 3' based on our findings. Goodarzi et al. (2020) examined the Cognitive, Communicative, and Creative potentials of 'Prospect' series utilizing a CLT model. They found that while the textbooks aimed to follow the CLT approach, they could have been more successful in fulfilling communicative, cognitive, and creative potentials adequately and some crucial elements of CLT, for example, strategy instruction, use of authentic

materials, and skills integration should have been addressed. Moreover, their results indicated that the emphasis on Iranian culture had damaged the sociocultural aspects of CLT.

Fortunately, in the introduction section of 'Prospect 3', it has been claimed that the textbook developers have paid attention to all four language skills and none of them has been ignored. Concerning this aspect of 'Prospect 3', participating EFL teachers of this study were either dissatisfied or neutral about the content and language skills since they believed that the content and language skills are not consistent to the student's interests, needs and age, and the content does not provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills. For instance, ninety-five prevent of them believed that useful writing tasks are not included in the textbook and listening and speaking skills are occasionally neglected, and respondents couldn't agree less that the content of the book presents real-life issues and encourages critical thinking, nor did they believe that miscellaneous listening and reading assignments with audio files present different dialects of English to students. Concerning the gradation of the content, including vocabulary and grammar, in terms of the level of difficulty most respondents were relatively satisfied though. Krashen (1982) says that "the next teaching item should be just above the current competence of the learner".

During the recent decades, language educators have manifested a steady shift from teacher-centered to more learner-centered approaches (Safdari & Farzi, 2018; Maftoon & Safdari, 2018) in the realm of English language teaching. Accordingly, The EFL teachers' evaluation of the methodology endorsed in the 9th-grade textbook testified that they had a positive view about this aspect of the textbook as they believed it is designed based on learner-centered Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT). However, they strongly disagreed that different learning styles and strategies of the learners are considered in this book. Rahimpour & Hashemi (2011) evaluated ELT textbooks of Iranian high schools and declared that 'Prospect' textbooks that are taught at Iranian high schools do not entirely meet teachers' expectations.

Regarding the fourth research question of the study, the analysis of both data sets manifested the inevitable influence of academic degree on how ELT teachers perceive and evaluate a particular textbook. In this regard, both groups of participants (i.e., 320 EFL teachers holding AA/BA degrees, and 200 EFL teachers holding MA/PhD degrees) showed identical perceptions regarding Supplementary Materials and Language Types; however, in terms of Layout, Illustrations, Exercises and tasks, Content, Skills, and Methodology a statistically significant discrepancy was observed between their perceptions, which reminisces the findings of some previous studies (Ahmadi & Derakhshan, 2016; Ahmadi Safa & Karampour, 2020).

Finally, comparing all the teachers' perspectives on eight aspects of the textbook, 'Prospect 3' enjoys some meritorious aspects and some drawbacks. EFL teachers were partially satisfied with illustrations, supplementary materials, vocabulary and grammar, exercises, tasks and activities, and methodology. However, the teachers believed that the physical appearance and layout, content and language skills, and language types needed revision and modification. On the other hand, Iranian EFL teachers believed the most meritorious aspect of this textbook was vocabulary and grammar items. In contrast, the most disadvantageous aspect was determined as the printing quality and unattractiveness of the illustrations. At last, according to the results of the present study, it can be inferred that junior high school EFL teachers have a rather positive attitude towards 'Prospect3'. In Iran, several projects have previously been carried out to evaluate 'Prospect' series in which similar data were found, which consolidate our findings (e.g., Ahour & Golpour, 2013; Ahmadi & Derakhshan, 2014; Ahmadi Safa et al., 2018; Ahmadi & Karampour, 2020; Isaee et al., 2023; Salehi & Amini, 2016). However, Sheldon (1988) argues that there is no such thing as an infallible or perfect book, and the instructor can use the book in a manner that helps him or her evaluate its strengths and shortcomings.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study revealed that Iranian EFL teachers were relatively pleased with 'Prospect 3' and it has successfully met its pedagogical objectives to a great deal; however, some aspects of the textbook are in dire need of revision and modification in order to lessen the drawbacks and improve the strengths. Both researchers and teachers need to evaluate the textbook constantly from different facets to meet the needs of the students, and therefore, they can maximize and enhance English Language teaching in Iran, as highlighted by Zarrabi & Brown (2015, p. 3491), a "one-for-all recipe" is becoming a prevalent trend in textbook development in Iran; in this way, plenty of students and contexts are neglected.

The present study had some limitations that might restrict the generalizability of the findings and should be considered. The first limitation was that the present study evaluated only one of the Iranian Junior English textbooks of the Prospect series (i.e., Prospect 3). The second limitation of the study was that the students' opinions were not considered in this study. Thirdly, this study was not accompanied by an interview and the collected data was limited to a quantitative questionnaire-based data. The results would be more precise if we could use both qualitative and triangulated data collection approaches. In addition, the participants were divided into 2 groups based on their academic degrees in order for the researchers to find out any statistically significant difference between their perceptions regarding macro and micro evaluation of 'Prospect 3', and their teaching experiences were ignored in this classification. Undoubtedly, more accurate results would be generated if the researchers incorporated the participants' teaching experiences while categorizing them.

The findings of this study have some implications for textbook developers, designers and the curriculum committee in the Iranian Ministry of Education in particular, and other educational organizations in general so that they can modify the textbook to improve its efficiency. This study could also be illuminating for future textbook evaluation research.

As a conclusive statement, English functions as the international lingua franca, which is used for the sacred purpose of communication; therefore, textbooks are more important than ever before as an essential component of the language teaching career (Richards, 2001), particularly in developing countries where teachers and students have limited resources. So, as an inevitable duty on the shoulders of the ELT community, developing appropriate and efficient textbooks for EFL/ESL learners and their post-use evaluation is of highly significant, enabling learners to apply the international language correctly. Finally, ELT teachers' perceptions regarding a particular textbook may differ based on their teaching experience or academic degree.

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