

An Evaluation of “Sunrise 9” from EFL Teachers’ and Students’ Perspectives in Northern Region of Iraq

Burhan Omar Mahmud
Sulaimaniyah, Iraq

Abstract

Textbooks are one of the essential types of materials that are extensively used in English as a second language classroom instruction. The current study tries to evaluate the textbook *SUNRISE 9* based on six categories. This study intends to cover how those categories are represented in *SUNRISE 9*. The categories are the layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content and conclusion. The present study aims at answering the questions about *SUNRISE 9* from teachers’ and students’ opinions and finding out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the teachers’ and students’ responses with regard to the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook which are used in language classrooms in all basic schools in the Northern Iraq. Two data collection tools were carried out in the current study. The quantitative data were obtained using questionnaire for teachers and students with a total number of 375 9th grade students and 40 9th grade teachers. They were chosen randomly from Sulaimanyah city in the North of Iraq. The qualitative part of the study, semi-structured interviews were held among 13 teachers to gather more necessary data. The findings reveal that the teacher participants have negative opinions towards most of the sections of the textbook and some others have not stated any opinions but the student participants generally have positive opinions about *SUNRISE 9*. For this English textbook *SUNRISE 9*, an empirical evaluative study and an in-depth method evaluation are also suggested to be conducted to find out more important results.

Keywords: evaluation, material, material evaluation, textbook, textbook evaluation

Cite as: Mahmud, B. O. (2018). An Evaluation of “Sunrise 9” from EFL Teachers’ and Students’ Perspectives in Northern Region of Iraq. *Arab World English Journal*, 9 (1).

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no1.27>

Introduction

A textbook is basically one of the essential types of materials that are extensively used in English as a foreign language or English as a second language classroom instruction. More importantly; a textbook can be seen as the most excellent source for practical users (teachers and students) and also plays a vital role in the process of English Language Teaching.

However, it can be argued that the role of a textbook in classroom instruction is more challenging to be defined. According to Cunningsworth, (1995) a textbook can be seen as a guide in achieving learners’ and teachers’ needs. Cunningsworth (1995) states that “Course books should correspond to the learner’s needs. They should match the aims and objectives of the language-learning program” (p. 35). Furthermore, Allwright (1990) has a different view to defining what a textbook is? He defines textbooks as “resource books for ideas and activities rather than as instructional material” (p. 46).

Ur (1996) claims that a textbook needs to be exemplified; the positive and the negative points should be taken into consideration. Therefore, the content of the textbook might be easy. In this case, the textbook should be substituted by another one or it might need extra sources or further information. On the other hand, it may not be satisfactory for a specific level of learners. Owing to the lack of valuable or meaningful content, it will not be effective to use it in the process of teaching and learning.

Cunningsworth (1995) indicates that “materials evaluation is a complex matter” (p.35) because from the textbook that is going to be used in a specific institution, it can be stated that many different factors affect or determine the success or failure of the textbook. Consequently, a textbook evaluation is unquestionably beneficial in the development of teachers’ and students’ knowledge; it also specifically helps teachers to get a useful and understandable vision of the materials that are going to be used.

Materials Evaluation

Jones (1999) enunciates that “evaluation in LL (Language Learning) and LT (Language Teaching) generally refers to the theoretical or empirical assessment of the curriculum itself and its components from various perspectives: assessment of teacher performance, learner achievement and materials and so on” (p. 21). Furthermore, after selecting the textbook for a particular language learning program, the next stage that should be included is the evaluation. In addition, Tomlinson (2003) states that “materials evaluation is a procedure that involves measuring the value (or potential value) of a set of learning materials” (p. 50).

Moreover, it can be mentioned that evaluation is a thorough and systematic process with regard to the aim and the objectives of the materials which are being used by the learners. Tomlinson (2003) also describes three types of evaluation: (1) pre-use evaluation which focuses on finding out the potential value of the materials, (2) while-use evaluation, which particularly gives a special attention to the learners while using the instructional materials in the classroom setting, and (3) after-use evaluation which is describing and selecting what will happen after using the materials.

Methods of Textbook Evaluation

It becomes essential for the researchers to ascertain which particular methods of textbook evaluation can appropriate for a particular social context in the first place, due to the fact that, there are a lot of methods of textbook evaluation which the experts explicated and illustrated.

McGrath (2002) mentions three types of textbook evaluation methods. The first one is an impressionistic method, which refers to the whole impression of the textbook, and it includes general criteria of the textbook. It does not provide a specific glance at the textbook. The second one is an in-depth method that deals with the detailed or thorough evaluation. It refers to a large-scale of evaluation, and also it deals with some kind of learning and valuable assumptions that the materials are based on. Thirdly, the checklist method, which refers to a set of items, criteria and a list of activities as a discipline to decide the worth of evaluation.

Arguments and Counter Arguments for Using a Textbook

To begin with, it can be stated that many studies have been carried out in the ESL and EFL classroom instructions to explain the advantages and disadvantages of using a textbook. On the other hand, one can argue that there is debatable discussion in terms of using a textbook or not in the process of teaching and learning. Whilst there has been an argument for and against using a textbook amongst the experts and researchers, as Grant (1987) states that “the perfect book does not exist” (p. 8). This means it is a difficult task to select a better textbook for a particular group of learners; especially it will be of great importance to try to choose a textbook that meets teachers’ and learners’ needs. It can be stated that amongst the studies that have been conducted in the ELT programs so far, they made known that there are a number of experts supporting the importance of using a textbook and there are some who have counter claims for using a textbook. However, Sheldon (1988) explains that the use of a textbook has three major significant advantages, which are:

1. Developing their own classroom materials is an extremely difficult, arduous process for teachers.
2. Teachers have limited time in which to develop new materials due to the nature of their profession.
3. External pressures restrict many teachers. (p. 25)

Further, Richards (1993) has some positive viewpoints about using the textbook. He asserts that many important resources such as videos, teacher’s book, activity book, and CDs which provide a great chance to the teachers and students in the classroom instructions. It might be difficult and it takes a long time for the teachers to prepare the materials in the process of teaching. This is why a textbook can help teachers to save time and also it can be seen as a helpful way for novice and less experienced teachers as well.

Allwright (1982) sheds light on some issues that make the use of a textbook more problematic. One of them is biases of the authors. This means that the language which is used in the textbook is external language; the students’ level and the language used in the textbook might not be taken into account. On the other hand, it imposes an inflexible way of teaching that may not be preferable in classroom instruction also, it would be a great issue which is not helping and giving an opportunity to the teachers to conduct a new method of teaching.

Criteria for Textbook Evaluation

Textbook evaluation is considered to be the most reliable resource of knowledge in the English language teaching and English as a second language program; additionally, it is doubtlessly a great source of knowledge which provides a clear perception of selecting the most appropriate textbook for classroom settings. Thus, it is not an easy task; according to the researchers, it is a complex matter.

Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979) present a checklist which includes five main categories: subject matter, vocabulary and structures, exercises, illustrations and physical make-up. They also organize a special section for teachers that contain four main categories: general features, type, and the amount of supplementary exercises for each language skill, methodological/pedagogical guidance, and linguistic background information. The assessment process is based on a 5-point scale: excellent, good, adequate, weak, and totally lacking.

In addition, Griffiths (1995) proposes a list of questionnaires for textbook evaluation. He mentions twelve characteristics of materials which have been used in that process: the match between materials and learner objectives, learner-centered materials, facilitative interactive learning, socio-cultural appropriateness, gender sensitivity, up-to-date materials, well-graded vocabulary and comprehensible input, age-appropriate materials, interesting and visually attractive material, relevance to real life, easy to use material, and ethnocentric material.

International Textbook Analysis Studies

Textbooks play a key role in the English Language Teaching program. They are to be considered as the most beneficial materials for the teachers and students in the classroom settings.

Coskuner (2002) evaluates an ESP textbook '*English for Business Studies*' at English Language School of Baskent University. The purpose of the study is to find out the strengths and the suitability of the textbook. Teachers' and students' questionnaires were carried out on the basis of nine categories as follows: *aims and needs of the students studying English, layout and physical appearance, language and readability, design and organization, content and coverage, developing four language skills and communicative abilities, encouraging learner interaction in the classroom, presentation and practice of vocabulary and developing learner autonomy*. The participants of the study are 189 students and 10 teachers. The findings indicate that the respondents have positive views towards the layout and physical appearance, language and readability, design and organization, content and coverage, and presentation and practice of vocabulary. The participants think that the developing listening skills amongst the four language skills and developing learner autonomy in studying are not effective.

Textbooks in TESL/TEFL have been evaluated by the authors and researchers in worldwide. Litz (2000) evaluates an English language textbook '*English Firsthand 2*' at *Sung Kyun Kwan University in Suwon, South Korea in 2000-2001*. The main significant purpose of this study is to find out the appropriateness and usefulness of the textbook in relation to the university language program. Teachers' and students' questionnaires were administered. The questionnaires contain seven categories as follows: *practical consideration, layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content and conclusion/overall consensus*. The results indicate that teachers and students have positive attitudes towards most of the sections in the textbook. They

conclude that the textbook is organized clearly and the four language skills in the textbook have been integrated effectively. On the other hand, they claim that the textbook has many shortcomings in which the activities cannot be easily changed and updated and the activities do not promote a sensible practice.

Textbook Analysis Studies in Iraq

Textbooks can be seen as one of the most brilliant materials in the teacher’s hands. It can be stated that some practical studies which have been conducted in Iraq. AL-AKRAA (2007) evaluates an EFL textbook *‘Iraq Opportunities 3’*. The purpose of this study is to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook on the basis of three criteria: *grammar, vocabulary, and culture*. A survey of the questionnaire is selected and the views of English language teachers and the researcher’s personal evaluation are studied. The results indicate that the grammar rules are clearly explained with examples and all the parts of speech have been explained clearly. Then, in terms of vocabulary items in the textbook, the findings demonstrate that new vocabularies are consecutively repeated to make it easier to learn and they are compatible with the students’ abilities. Finally, the results conclude that the textbook has enough clarified that inclines the teachers and students to understand the cultural differences of the targeted language.

Akef (2015) evaluates an English language textbook *‘Iraq Opportunities 6’*. The participants of the study are 60 English teachers at public and private intermediate school in Baghdad. The researcher uses a questionnaire which was contained ten categories as follows: *general shape, objectives, content, reading and writing, structure and vocabulary, listening and speaking, teaching aids, general features, background information and methodological guidance*. The purpose of the study is to examine the perceptions of 2nd intermediate English teachers about the suitability of the textbook at public and private intermediate school in Baghdad. The results show that some of the sections of the textbook such as general shape, objectives, content and teaching aids are not conveniently effective. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that the students’ needs are not taken into consideration. Finally, the results report that the contents and subjects of the textbook are not reflecting students’ abilities.

Research Design

The research design of the current study is a descriptive study. It describes the teachers’ and students’ opinions. A survey was carried out to obtain the opinions of 9th grade EFL teachers and students in the basic schools in the North of Iraq. Brown & Rogers (2002) claim that “Surveys are any procedures used to gather and describe the characteristics, attitudes, views, opinions and so forth of students, teachers, administrators or any other people who are important to a study”. (p. 142)

Research Population and Sampling

Sheldon (1988) states that both teachers and students are the practical users of the textbook; this is why they have to be taken into consideration in the case of textbook evaluation. The participants in this study were 375 ninth grade EFL students and 40 EFL teachers that were chosen randomly in Sulaimanyah city in the North of Iraq. Moreover, with regards to the data which they have been given by the General Directorate of Education of Sulaimanyah city, there are 305 basic schools in Sulaimanyah, but only 82 of them have ninth grade. Thus, in these 82 basic schools, 41

schools have been chosen randomly for this study. Furthermore, the number of the English teachers who are teaching *SUNRISE 9* in these 41 basic schools is 81. On the other hand, 1435 students study *SUNRISE 9* in these 41 basic schools. Therefore, 40 teachers and 375 (approximately 20% of the population) students, 235 females and 140 males have been chosen as the sample for the present study. The questionnaires were carried out for both teachers and students. Moreover, through conducting interviews with 13 EFL English ninth grade teachers, further data and findings were collected.

Data Collection

Two data collection tools were resorted to in the current study. The teachers’ and students’ opinions on *SUNRISE 9* were studied by using a student questionnaire and a teacher questionnaire. Questionnaires and interviews are encompassed in surveys. Furthermore, the questionnaires are the most helpful tool to gather information and data because it is a systematic and organized way to elicit information and data. In addition, it makes the process of evaluation easier and accomplishes the task more effectively. (McGrath, 2002)

Students’ Questionnaire

The students’ questionnaire consisted of 20 items, all of which were taken from the teachers’ questionnaire. Moreover, the statements were given to 375 students who were chosen randomly from 41 basic schools in the North of Iraq. In the students’ questionnaire, the items dealt with five categories which are the layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content and conclusion. The responses were selected from a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly disagree, Disagree, Not sure, Agree, Strongly agree”. The questionnaire was translated into student’s mother tongue by the researcher. Then, a language expert analyzed it and minor points that could lead to misunderstandings were corrected. As a next step, it was back-translated into English and controlled by a native speaker of English.

Teachers’ Questionnaire

The teachers’ questionnaires encompassed 40 items, which were addressed to 40 teachers. Furthermore, the statements dealt with five sections, which are the layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content and conclusion. The responses were again selected from a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly disagree, Disagree, Not sure, Agree, Strongly agree”. Moreover, the teachers’ questionnaire was equivocally translated by the researcher. Then, a language expert analyzed it to correct the minor points so that the participants could respond to each item properly. Teachers’ questionnaires used in the current study were selected and adapted from the checklists by Litz (2005), Cunningsworth (1984), Sheldon (1988) Matthews (1985), Breen, Candlin, Williams (1983) and R. Williams (1981).

The Questionnaire Pilot Testing

It is highly significant to mention that, to find out the reliability of both the students’ and teachers’ questionnaire, a pilot testing was conducted with a total number of 190 students that were chosen randomly amongst 375 students that participated in the main study and 20 teachers that were also chosen among 40 teachers that participated in the main study .

Furthermore, it can be stated that the five-point-Likert scale to analyze the data was also carried out with regard to the piloting. Despite the piloting, some of the items have been clarified based on the comments by the students and teachers, but the items were not modified.

Moreover, in this study to find out the reliability of the questionnaires for all of the sections in the questionnaires, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to be .856 for the students' questionnaire. For the teachers' questionnaire, it was found to be .885. Therefore, we can assume that the questionnaires that we used for the current study are highly reliable.

Interviews

In this study, for the qualitative part of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 EFL teachers amongst the 40 teachers participants as a better way of gathering the necessary data. Cannell and Kahn (1960) claim that the research interview:

A two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information, and focused on him on content which specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation. (p. 45)

Therefore, all the interviews were conducted over a period of time, during which the researcher made repeated visits to the schools to meet with the participants at times as a group if further detail was necessary to obtain the responses from the participants.

Gray (2004) identifies three major reasons to use interviews as the most basic instrument to gather information and data, the reasons are:

1. There is a need to attain highly personalized data.
2. There are opportunities required for probing.
3. A good return rate is important. (p. 214)

Moreover, to analyse the qualitative part which is encompassed in the interviews, a deductive content analysis was employed. It is also significant to mention that a deductive content analysis is studied in a context when the researcher wants to re-examine the present data gathered (Catanzaro, 1988). Moreover, Gulati (2009, p.42) states that "deductive means reasoning from the particular to the general". It is highly significant for the researcher to use deductive content analysis to elucidate the responses in the interview section so as to be able to obtain and find the results objectively and systematically (Holsti, 1969).

Data Analysis

The items in the questionnaires in the current study were all coded into the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Additionally, to find the results about the teachers' and students' opinions, a descriptive statistic has been used. Moreover, to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the teachers' and students' opinions, Independent T-test sample was administered. More importantly, for the teachers' textbook evaluation questionnaire and the students' textbook evaluation questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was employed by the researcher as one of the most significant measures for the estimation of the reliability of the questionnaires.

Findings**Section 1: Layout and Design****Table 1 T-test Findings for Section 1: Layout and Design**

Section 1		N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Layout and Design	Teachers	40	2.90	1.03280	413	-.097	.923
	Students	375	2.91	.89677			

As seen in Table 1, there is not a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($t = -.097$, $df = 413$, $p = .923$ ($p > .05$)). When the mean scores of both groups are compared, (Teachers (Ts) = 2.90, Students (Ss) = 2.91), it can be seen that the two groups have negative opinions and they do not think the layout and design of the textbook are clear and well designed. The two groups have different views towards the organization of the textbook. Teachers believe that the textbook is not conveniently organized. However, students think that 'the textbook is organized effectively'.

Section 2: Activities**Table 2 T-test Findings for Section 2: Activities**

Section 2		N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Activities	Teachers	40	3.01	.95567	44.290	1.183	.243
	Students	375	2.82	.75117			

The T-test findings in Table 2 demonstrate that there is not a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($t = 1.183$, $df = 44.290$, $p = .243$ ($p > .05$)). Considering the mean scores of both groups (Ts = 3.01, Ss = 2.82), it can be concluded that teachers find positive appreciations that the activities in the textbook meet the teachers' and students' needs and expectations. On the other hand, the students have negative attitudes in relation to the activities in the textbook. They claim that the activities do not cover enough practicing skills and discussion fields.

The students also state that the activities do not bring about constructing, independent and original answers. The two groups also have similar opinions and they indicate that 'the activities in the textbook incorporate individual, pair and group work'. In terms of the clarification of the grammar points and vocabulary items, both groups concluded different ideas. Teachers believe that through playing games, songs, and narrating stories, the grammar points, and vocabulary items have been clarified. Nevertheless, the students have stated negative opinions and they claim that the grammar points and vocabulary items have not been explained through games, songs and storytelling.

Section 3: Skills

Table 3 T-test Findings for Section 3: Skills

Section 3		N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Skills	Teachers	40	3.05	.90861	413	-.509	.611
	Students	375	3.12	.82463			

It can be seen that in Table 3, there is not a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($t = -.509$, $df = 413$, $p = .611$ ($p > .05$)). The comparison of the mean scores of both groups ($T_s = 3.05$, $S_s = 3.12$) reveals that the two groups have different opinions towards the language skills of the textbook. Teachers claim that the materials of the textbook focus more on the skills that teachers and students need to improve and practice. On the other hand, students state that the materials of the book do not focus more on the skills that students and teachers like to work upon. Teachers demonstrate that there is not a right balance amongst the four language skills in the textbook (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Nonetheless, the students think that 'the materials provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills'. The two groups have a different point of view in relation to the sounds and natural pronunciation. Teachers do not think the textbook works on the 'natural sounds and pronunciation (i.e. Stress and intonation)'. However, the students state that 'the textbook highlights and practices natural pronunciation (i.e. Stress and intonation)'.

Section 4: Language Type

Table 4 T-test Findings for Section 4: Language Type

Section 4		N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Language Type	Teachers	40	2.71	.70740	413	-5.223	.000
	Students	375	3.40	.80751			

Table 4 indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($t = -5.223$, $df = 413$, $p = .000$ ($p < .05$)). Concerning the mean scores of the groups ($T_s = 2.71$, $S_s = 3.40$), the majority of the teachers think that the language used in the textbook is not common and it is not compatible with the students' abilities. They explain that the textbook does not work on a specific language that teachers and students want to use. They also indicate that the subjects, grammar points, and vocabulary items are not well organized in the textbook. Nonetheless, the students find positive attitudes towards the language of the textbook. They believe that it is the common English language that is used in the textbook and the language used in the textbook suits the actual level of their English. The students also state that the textbook has worked on a specific language that the students like to further their knowledge in. The students also claim that the subjects, grammar points, and vocabulary items are convincingly clear. The two groups have similar opinions that the grammar topics are clearly and with examples further clarified.

Section 5: Subject and Content

Table 5 T-test Findings for Section 5: Subject and Content

Section 5		N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Subject and Content	Teachers	40	3.08	.85182	413	-1.255	.210
	Students	375	3.25	.84608			

According to Table 5, the mean scores of the two groups reveal that there is not a statistically significant difference between both groups ($t = -1.255$, $df = 413$, $p = .210$ ($p > .05$)). The mean scores of the groups (Ts = 3.08, Ss = 3.25) show that teachers and students have positive attitudes towards the subject and content of the textbook. They claim that 'the subject and content of the textbook are generally realistic'. The two groups have supported the multitudinous topics in the subject and content of the textbook. Teachers think that the subject and content of the textbook do not match the students' needs, but the students have stated different opinions. They indicate that the subject and content of the textbook go with the students' needs like a learner of English Language.

Section 6: Conclusion

Table 6 T-test Findings for Section 6: Conclusion

Section 6		N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Conclusion	Teachers	40	3.25	1.16024	413	.696	.487
	Students	375	3.11	1.14502			

Table 6 demonstrates that there is not a statistically significant difference between both groups ($t = .696$, $df = 413$, $p = .487$ ($p > .05$)). When the mean scores of the two groups are compared, (Ts = 3.25, Ss = 3.11), it can be seen that the two groups have similar opinions and they think that the textbook increases the students' desire to learn English. Teachers state that they would choose that textbook again to teach. Nonetheless, the students claim that they would not choose this textbook again to use and study.

Discussion

The findings of the current study have been rigorously achieved from two different opinions of teachers and students. The findings were compared to find the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook *SUNRISE 9*. Therefore, by using the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, the basic concern of this study is to explain about whether the textbook components such as the *layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content and conclusions* meet 9th grade students' and teachers' expectations and needs. The findings indicated multitudinous views from both respondents about the textbook in question.

In terms of the layout and design of the textbook, the analyses of the teachers’ and students’ questionnaire findings illustrated that the two groups have similar attitudes and find out that the textbook is not clear and well designed. The different results have been found by Hassan and Ghafor (2014). In their study which has been conducted in the North of Iraq, they found that the layout and design of the textbook are clear. Additionally, the teacher and student participants both have negative opinions in relation to the textbook organization. They stated that the textbook is not organized conveniently and effectively. It can effortlessly be noticed that in the interview findings similar opinions can be found by the majority of the teacher participants. They claimed that the textbook does not meet the teachers’ and students’ expectations in terms of the layout and design.

In terms of the activities in the textbook, teachers and students have different views. The current study demonstrated that the teacher participants have positive ideas and they think that the activities encompass enough time for discussion and meaningful practice. The students, on the other hand, have negative attitudes and they believe that the activities do not cover enough practicing skills and discussion fields. The students also think that the activities cannot encourage the students’ abilities to communicate and use the language properly. On the other hand, the findings showed that the teacher participants have positive views and they believe that ‘the activities incorporate individual, pair and group work’.

The language skill is another section that the present study has gathered data about it. Teachers and students have different opinions. The teacher participants think that there is not a right balance amongst the four language skills in the textbook (speaking, listening, reading and writing). Surprisingly, the different results have been found by Al-Akraa (2007). Quite the contrary, the students think that there is a right balance amongst the four language skills in the textbook. In the interview findings, similar responses have been given by the majority of the teachers. They claim that the four language skills in the textbook are not at a right level. Some of the language skills are studied more than the others.

In terms of the subject and content of the textbook, the teacher participants think that the subject and the content of the textbook are interesting but they do not go with the student’s needs as an English language learner(s). The same results have been found by Akef (2015). In his study, the teacher participants claim that the contents and subjects of the textbook are not reflecting students’ abilities. Nevertheless, the students have opposite opinions. They explain that ‘the subject and content of the textbook are relevant to the students’ needs as an English language learner(s)’. In the interviews, similar findings can be seen by the majority of the teachers. The majority of the interviewees claimed that the subject and the content of the textbook are not at a right level of the students.

Conclusion

The research findings show that the teacher participants have negative appreciations towards most of the aspects of the textbook *SUNRISE 9*. The language of the textbook, the grammar points, the layout and design, vocabulary items and the natural sounds and pronunciations can be seen as the most common shortcomings of *SUNRISE 9* by the teacher participants. However, the activities in the textbook can be seen as the strengths section of the textbook by the teacher participants.

The student participants have positive attitudes towards most of the sections of *SUNRISE 9* except the activities that the students have difficulties with it. It is necessary to show that the students appeared to have problems with regard to some of the items of the questionnaire because they do not have enough knowledge and information about the English language textbooks. They do not have experience with similar and different types of ELT textbooks.

About the author:

Burhan Omar Mahmud was born in Sulaimanyah in 1987. He is a graduate of Sulaimanyah University - College of languages – Department of English Language and Literature (2009). He also has a 'Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language' (TEFL) obtained from London Humanities College (2013). He has an MA degree in English Language Teaching at Gaziantep University in Turkey.

References

- Akef, H. (2015). Evaluating the English Textbook "IRAQ OPPORTUNITIES" Book 6 for the 2nd Intermediate Stage. *AL-USTATH*, No 215.
- AL-AKRAA, S. (2007). *Teaching English in Iraq: an analysis of an EFL textbook* (MA). University of Baghdad.
- Allwright, R. L. (1982). Perceiving and pursuing learners' needs. In M. Geddes & G. Sturtridge (Eds.), *Individualisation*, (p. 24-31) Oxford: Modern English Publications.
- Allwright, R. L. (1990). What do we want teaching materials for? In R. Rossner & R. Bolitho (Eds.), *Currents in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Breen, M. & Condlin, C. (1987). Which Materials? A Consumer's and Designer's Guide in ELT Textbooks and Materials: Problems in Evaluation and Development. Modern English Publication in association with the British Council.
- Brown, J., & Rodgers, T. (2002). *Doing second language research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Catanzaro M. (1988) Using qualitative analytical techniques. In Nursing Research: Theory and Practice (Woods P. & Catanzaro M., eds), C.V. Mosby Company, New York, pp. 437–456.
- Charles, C., & Robert, K. (1960). The dynamics of Interviewing: Theory, Techniques, and Cases. New York: New York.
- Coskuner, P. D. (2002). *Evaluation of effectiveness of an ESP textbook. A case study* (MA). Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1984). Evaluating and Selecting EFL Teaching Materials. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your textbook*. Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann.
- Daoud, A.M. & Celce-Murcia, M. (1979). Selecting and evaluating textbooks. In Celce Murcia, M. & McIntosh, L. (Eds.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (p.302-307). New York: Newbury House.
- Fatimah, R. H. & Omar, F. GH. (2014). Assessing the suitability of “sunrise” programme to the Kurdish learners of the seventh basic grade in the schools of Erbil city. *Journal of Teaching and Education*, 03(03):469–482.
- Grant, N. (1987). *Making the most of your textbook*. London: Longman.
- Gray, D. (2004). *Doing research in the real world*. London: Sage Publications.

Griffiths, C. (1995). Evaluating materials for teaching English to adult speakers of other languages. *ELT forum*. Vol:33 no:3 Retrieved from: <http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol33/no3/p50.htm>

Gulati, PM. (2009). *Research Management: Fundamental and Applied Research*. Global India Publications.

Holsti, O. (1969). *Content analysis for the social sciences and humanities*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.

Jones, N. (1999). *The role of materials evaluation in language teaching training with special reference to Turkey* (PhD).The Institute of Social Sciences. Hacettepe University. Bursa, Turkey.

Litz, D.R.A. (2000). Textbook evaluation and ELT management: A South Korean case study. *Asian EFL Journal*. Retrieved from: http://www.asian-efljournal.com/Litz_thesis.pdf

Matthews, A. (1985). *Choosing the best available textbook*. London: Edward Arnold.

McGrath, I. (2002). *Materials evaluation and design for language teaching*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Richards, J. (1993). Beyond the Text Book: the Role of Commercial Materials in Language Teaching. *RELC Journal*, 24(1), 1-14. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/003368829302400101>

Rivers, W. (1981). *Teaching foreign-language skills*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, 42(4), 237-246. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/42.4.237>

Tomlinson, B. (2003). *Developing materials for language teaching*. London: Continuum.

Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press.

Williams, D. (1983). Developing criteria for textbook evaluation. In İnözü, J. (1996). *Criteria in selecting English language teaching coursebooks: teachers’ and students’ point of view* (MA). Çukurova University. The Institute of Social Sciences. Adana, Turkey.

Appendix A. Teacher Textbook Evaluation Form

TEACHER TEXTBOOK EVALUATION FORM

Dear colleagues,

This questionnaire is designed to identify your perceptions about the English Textbook for grade 9th (*Sunrise 9, Grade 9th*) with a range of issues from *layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content to conclusion*. Your answers to the questionnaire will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. Read the statements below and put a tick (✓) next to the item which best reflects your perception.

Thanks for your contribution.

BURHAN OMAR MAHMUD

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Teacher’s Name (optional): _____

School: (Optional): _____

Qualification: **Diploma** **B.A** **B.Ed** **M.A** **M.Ed**

Experience in teaching English

First year **2-5 years** **More than 5 years**

Textbook Evaluation Form			Strongly disagree	disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
A. Layout and Design							
	1. The textbook includes a detailed overview of the functions, structures and vocabulary that will be taught in each unit.						
	2. The layout and design is appropriate and clear.						
	3. The textbook is organized effectively.						
	4. An adequate vocabulary list or glossary is included.						
	5. Adequate review sections and exercises are included.						
	6. An adequate set of evaluation quizzes or testing suggestions is included.						
	7. The Teacher’s Book contains guidance about how the textbook can be used to the utmost advantage.						
	8. The materials objectives are apparent to both the teacher and student.						
	9. The textbook meets the long and short term goals specific to my learners.						
	10. The workbook includes appropriate supplementary activities.						
	11. There is an adequate explanation to enable teachers to understand the cultural differences of the target language.						
B.Activities							
	12. The activities encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.						
	13. The activities incorporate individual, pair and group work.						
	14. The grammar points and vocabulary items are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts through games, songs and storytelling.						
	15. The activities promote creative, original and independent responses.						
	16. The tasks are conducive to discovery learning and to the internalization of newly introduced language.						
	17. The textbook's activities can be modified or supplemented easily.						

18. There are interactive and task-based activities that require students to use new vocabulary to communicate.					
---	--	--	--	--	--

C. Skills

19. The materials include and focus on the skills that I/my students need to practice.					
20. The materials provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills.					
21. The textbook highlights and practices natural pronunciation (i.e.- stress and intonation).					
22. The practice of individual skills is integrated into the practice of other skills.					

D. Language Type

23. The language used in the textbook is authentic - i.e. like real-life English.					
24. The language used is at the right level for my (students’) current English ability.					
25. The progression of grammar points and vocabulary items is appropriate.					
26. The grammar points are presented with brief and easy examples and explanations.					
27. The language functions exemplify English that I/my students will be likely to use in the future.					
28. The language represents a diverse range of registers and accents.					
29. The new vocabulary words and language structures are repeated in subsequent lessons to reinforce their meaning and use.					

E. Subject and Content

30. The subject and content of the textbook is relevant to my (students’) needs as an English language learner(s).					
31. The subject and content of the textbook is generally realistic.					
32. The subject and content of the textbook is interesting, challenging and motivating.					
33. There is sufficient variety in the subject and content of the textbook.					
34. The materials are not culturally biased and they do not portray any negative stereotypes.					

35. Students learn about the customs and cultures of English-speaking countries.					
36. The textbook is methodologically in line with the current worldwide theories and practices of language learning.					
37. Compared to texts for native speakers, the content includes real-life issues that challenge the reader to think critically about his /her worldview.					
38. The subject and content of the textbook is designed in accordance with the theory of Multiple Intelligences.					

F.Conclusion					
39. The textbook raises my (students') interest in further English language study.					
40.I would choose to study/teach this textbook again.					

Appendix B. Student Textbook Evaluation Form

STUDENT TEXTBOOK EVALUATION FORM

Dear students,

This questionnaire is designed to identify your perception about the English Language Textbook for grade 9th (*SUNRISE 9, Grade 9th*) you have been using. Your answers to the questionnaire will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. Read the statements below carefully and put a tick (√) next to the item which best reflects your perception.

Thanks for your contribution.

BURHAN OMAR MAHMUD

Textbook Evaluation Form		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
A. Layout and Design						
	1. The layout and design is appropriate and clear.					
	2. The textbook is organized effectively.					
B. Activities						
	3. The activities encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.					
	4. The activities incorporate individual, pair and group work.					
	5. The grammar points and vocabulary items are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts through games, songs and storytelling.					

	6. The activities promote creative, original and independent responses.					
C. skills						
	7. The materials include and focus on the skills that I need to practice.					
	8. The materials provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills.					
	9. The textbook highlights and practices natural pronunciation (i.e.- stress and intonation).					
D. Language Type						
	10. The language used in the textbook is authentic - i.e. like real-life English.					
	11. The language used is at the right level for my current English ability.					
	12. The progression of grammar points and vocabulary items is appropriate.					
	13. The grammar points are presented with brief and easy examples and explanations.					
	14. The language functions exemplify English that I will be likely to use in the future.					
E. Subject and Content						
	15. The subject and content of the textbook is relevant to my needs as an English language learner.					
	16. The subject and content of the textbook is generally realistic.					
	17. The subject and content of the textbook is interesting, challenging and motivating.					
	18. There is sufficient variety in the subject and content of the textbook.					
F. Conclusion						
	19. The textbook raises my interest in further English language study.					
	20. I would choose to study this textbook again.					

Appendix C. Interview Questions

1. Do the aims of the coursebook correspond closely with the aims in the teaching program and with the needs of learners?
2. Does the course include examples of authentic language and materials?

3. Is the coursebook flexible? Does it allow different teaching and learning styles?
4. Are all four skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing) adequately covered at an appropriate level?
5. What opportunities exist for children to interact using English?
6. What components does the teacher’s book include?
 - A. Are there guidelines for evaluating how well lessons went?
 - B. Does it explain any methodological issues regarding teaching young learners?
7. What is your overall opinion about the textbook you have been using?