

Checklists in Material Selection: Developing Criteria for ESL Learners at University in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Instructional materials are a very significant aspect of the learning-teaching process, and in the field of foreign language learning, it is generally known that students learn well when they are enthusiastically engaged with the material. In order to make the learning process successful for the many stakeholders, a checklist approach has been developed. This provides a set of standards for the selection of instructional materials that ensure greater quality and consistency of the material to be exploited in the classroom. In this study, an attempt is made to design a checklist for selecting course materials for compulsory English as a Second Language course for all first-year undergraduates in a state university in Sri Lanka. This is to pinpoint a sustainable method for developing teaching materials that might be beneficial for many English as a foreign language programmes since checklists are expected to provide material developers with design guidelines on which course materials can be prepared. This study comprised three main phases: the exploration of existing checklists, the design of a tentative checklist based on the comments received via a questionnaire administered to the sample and lastly, a review of the developed checklist by the sample. The participants were intentionally sampled from the most senior members of the staff at the English Language Teaching Unit of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka, with more than fifteen years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language at university. With the expert views of the participants, the tentative checklist was revised. The final verified checklist ensures validity, reliability, and teacher satisfaction for the material selection process and can be used as a professional selection tool when developing instructional materials. The findings report that the top teacher-preferred criteria focused on relevance and authenticity of the content, contextualization of grammar structures, and

importantly, accommodating different proficiency levels with comprehensive and communicative tasks. It is concluded that teaching materials immensely contribute to English as a foreign language learners' progression, to the professional development of material designers, and to the success of English as a foreign language programmes in general.

Keywords

Checklists, English as a Second Language, Validity, Reliability, Authentic Materials, Contextualization

1. Introduction

ELT material evaluation checklists are instruments that help designers choose the most appropriate book for their learners. In fact, in the field of applied linguistics, many attempts that have been made to closely examine the language contents of textbooks have given birth to extensive evaluative checklists. Today, this checklist approach has become a common method of evaluating English language teaching (ELT) materials. Skierso (1991) explains the systematicity behind the checklist approach as:

“A textbook evaluation checklist should consist of a comprehensive set of criteria. ...These criteria should be exhaustive enough to insure assessment of all characteristics of the textbook.”

(Quoted in McGrath, 2002)

1.1. Materials in the EFL/ESL Classroom (in Sri Lanka)

Apparently, English language classrooms in Sri Lanka are mostly occupied by students who often use their mother tongue. In this bilingual setting, catering to the needs of the L2 learner is obviously a complex task. In this context, the selection and evaluation of materials for the ELT classroom has always been the subject of much argument. In fact, there seems an imbalance between the course book's language contents and the academic context in which it is determined to be used. In the researcher's teaching context, in order to make teaching materials effective, a new task-based curriculum, catering to learners with different proficiency levels, has been developed by the staff.

1.2. The Research Context

This study involves the design of a checklist to be used in the selection of a set of materials for a compulsory English Course for 1st-year undergraduate students at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka. In fact, material selection has always been a challenge for the staff of the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura where this study was conducted since such textbooks need to cater to students with different proficiency

levels in the same programme. Interestingly, this research involves second language (L2) teachers who have much authority and direct control over material selection in this particular department.

This study includes four main areas. The first section involves a description of the subject matter under investigation. The second is an account of related literature on the significance of the checklist approach in the EFL learning-teaching material evaluation. The third is research methodology and theoretical framework that highlights the methods of data collection and analysis. The fourth is the analysis of data and discussion of findings followed by conclusions and implications.

1.3. Research Question

Are checklists useful tools for ELT material developers, evaluators and curriculum developers?

2. Theoretical Background

This provides an account of related literature on the area of study under investigation. This focuses on materials in the EFL classroom, checklist approach to material evaluation, and research on the said approach in ELT.

2.1. Materials in the ELT Classroom

The principle users of materials are teachers and learners. Teachers basically from formal teaching contexts use teaching and learning materials for a variety of reasons and are known as “the route map of any ELT programme”, states [Sheldon \(1988\)](#) Therefore, materials should provide appropriate guidance for both teachers and learners who are not native speakers English. Some linguists argue against this text-based teaching and claim that “the teacher’s role is trivialized and marginalized to that of little more than a technician” ([Richards, 1998](#)). However, the common assumption is that the whole learning-teaching process can be either less effective or more effective based on how well the book suits the context in which it is going to be exploited. According to McGrath’s interpretation of the best book, there is no perfect book for language teaching, “...but the best book available for you and your students certainly does” (p. 41). As he illustrates, a book that is best suitable for a particular context should fulfil learner needs and satisfy the needs of that particular teaching syllabus. [Sheldon \(1988\)](#) depicts the vital role of textbook in the ELT classroom as “the visible heart of any ELT programme”. To make the whole learning process an interactive, pleasant and fruitful experience, the contents of a book should be well integrated into the context. Therefore, in order to explore the context from a broader perspective, a thorough and practical approach for choosing EFL materials need to be followed.

2.2. Checklist Approach to Material Evaluation

The number of textbooks published for foreign language (FL) teaching has

shown the rapid growth of textbooks publishing industry though the changes caused by recent research, methodological explorations and classroom investigations are hardly taken into consideration in the whole process. There is always "...a substantive mismatch between what is produced and what teachers would like to have" (Sheldon, 1988). Evaluating the appropriateness of EFL learning-teaching materials is an applied linguistic activity and as Rea-Dickens and Germaine (1994) states:

"Evaluation is a very dynamic process which investigates the suitability and appropriateness of an existing practice" (Soori, 2011).

It explores how appropriate an existing language practice has been and how it should be modified constantly. Carefully selected language teaching materials should obviously meet learner's needs or goals. Therefore, the process of selecting the most appropriate materials is not an easy task. A considerable body of research (Cunningsworth, 1995; Ellis, 1997; Mukundan, 2007) has been conducted regarding when material evaluation should take place. These experts' intuition identified three different stages at which materials can be evaluated: re-use, in-use and post-use. As McGrath (2002) states, all three bear their own significance. Ellis (1997) claims that the first provides a predictive evaluation of a textbook which aims at determining its appropriateness for a specific learning-teaching setting. Pre-use checklists are often conducted using checklists and guidelines. Evaluation of materials at the in-use stage aids the tutor to explore the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook while being used. The post-use helps both teachers and learners reflect on the quality of the textbook already been used in a particular context. This shows how effective the textbook has been in the EFL classroom (Tomlinson, 2003). In Breen & Candlin (1989) terminology, these are "tasks-as-work plans", "tasks-in process", and "tasks-as-outcomes" (Tomlinson, 2003).

Since a textbook can have a great impact on the FL learning-teaching process, much emphasis must be placed on developing valid and reliable evaluative instruments. The literature on materials evaluation provides information on three basic methods proposed for material evaluation: impressionistic, checklist, and in-depth method.

The primary aim of a checklist is to choose the most appropriate materials that best suit the context concerned. A carefully structured evaluation checklist clarifies the criteria need to be considered when evaluating materials in a particular setting. Practically, a checklist can highlight the strengths and deficiencies of a particular book and make a difference in the FL learning-teaching process. Realistically, a checklist should be revised at least once. This revision process can identify the strengths and weaknesses of a checklist. In fact, a checklist can be considered a survey of learner needs: a form of analyzing the contexts. Here, it is important to show the distinction between analysis & evaluation. Analysis is a part of evaluation (McGrath, 2002).

According to McGrath, checklists may differ from each other in terms of their specific settings, form, and goals, but they all have a general focus. Ur (1996) dis-

tinguishes between general criteria and specific criteria as: “essential features of any good teaching-learning material and context-related.” (McGrath: 31) this distinction is important because consumers have been placing much emphasis on how relevant textbooks are to their unique settings. Similarly, in the researcher’s local teaching setting, checklists should evolve from specific objectives and goals.

2.3. Research on Checklists

This section consists of five studies conducted to explore the significance of checklist approach to material evaluation around the world. Based on supposed evaluative criterion, many checklists have been designed by writers and Williams (1983); Sheldon (1988); Skierso (1991); Cunningsworth (1995); and Ansary & Babaii (2002) are some. All these checklists focus at broader level on design, language content, subject matter and practical considerations (McGrath, 2002). These have become extremely important to probe information regarding different TL learning-teaching contexts and cover a wide range of aspects to be covered in this study.

The textbook evaluation criteria developed by Williams (1983) provides guidance as to how FL teachers can develop their own evaluation checklists that suit their unique settings. The sample checklist proposed for material evaluation includes items grouped under logical sequence and according to him, these can be adapted and utilized when developing checklists in different settings.

Sheldon (1988) proposed a set of elements which can be used in designing ELT material evaluation checklists. His framework is very expansive and attempts to assess all aspects of contents regarding different FL learning settings such as physical characteristics and flexibility. According to him, without considerable modification, checklists that include global criteria do not suit most local settings.

The most comprehensive and detailed checklists for EFL/ESL material evaluation have been designed by Cunningsworth (1995) and Skierso (1991). Although the headings included in these two frameworks appear to be different, the characteristic features discussed under these sections in Skierso’s checklist are mostly in line with those proposed by Cunningsworth in 1995. They both deal with elements related to language content, aims & goals, methodology, and practical considerations.

Ansary and Babaii’s study (2002) suggests a scheme/criterion for a universal systematic textbook evaluation. Based on a set of universal characteristics of EFL textbooks, they have attempted to discover what material designers often consider as important features in EFL materials. They assert that their attempt has initiated universal material-evaluation schemes to be used in departments for in-house material assessments.

3. Method

This study followed a descriptive qualitative method. It was qualitative because it

allowed the researcher to gain a deep understanding of the English language teaching context under investigation and simultaneously, descriptive since it provided an accurate and systematic description of a unique setting.

3.1. Instrumentation

This study comprised two significant instruments for data collection and was equally important. In order to gain an in-depth understanding of the English language learning and teaching in general and the role of instructional materials in this unique academic setting in particular, a questionnaire was utilized in this study. Further, the tentative checklist developed by the researcher also provided much insight into the significance of checklists in this context.

Based on the information gathered from the said questionnaire administered to the senior lecturers involved in the material designing process in this setting for a better understanding of the EFL learning-teaching process, the newly developed ELTU curriculum and a review of literature on designed checklists, a tentative checklist (TC) was created by the researcher and administered to the research sample. To ensure the construct validity, the present checklist takes elements from the criteria designed by Williams (1983), Sheldon (1988), Ansary & Babaii (2002), Miekley (2007), and Mukundan, Hajimohammadi & Nimeh-chisalem (2011). The TC was used to collect many types of data related to this unique learning-teaching background and was then modified to have a more systematic and reliable evaluation criteria for this setting. Analytical procedure follows an amalgamation of the frameworks used by Soori (2011) and Mukundan (2011).

3.2. Participants

The sample included 10 senior academic members involved in designing materials for the said compulsory English course. They have had more than 15 years of experience in teaching non-native speakers of English and developing materials for such ELT classrooms.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

At the initial stage, the researcher gained some background knowledge in depth regarding the process of EFL material evaluation in this particular setting via a questionnaire (**Appendix A1**) and a review of literature, and this knowledge was extremely helpful in developing a checklist that would help select the course materials that best suit this FL learning-teaching context. This revealed the characteristics of an effective textbook from these experienced material writers' perspectives and helped the researcher better in improving the quality of the checklist. The participants brainstormed on the criteria to be considered when evaluating English language materials in this unique teaching context. On the one hand, the informants revealed valuable information regarding their local ELT environment and on the other hand, expressed that evaluation schemes

must look for universal characteristics in materials since their learners are all in the process of EFL learning. The discussions with the sample led to the inclusion of five comprehensive concepts as the major criteria in the TC: appearance, layout and design, appropriateness of the materials, learning-teaching context, and general impressions. The (TC) included 53 items and were rated on a scale from 1-strongly disagree to 4-strongly agree.

At the second stage, the focus group participants were each provided with a copy of the TC and were asked to comment on its validity, reliability and teacher satisfaction. The results of the TC revealed important evaluative criteria to be taken into consideration when evaluating materials. The respondents had shown much insight into what suits best their EFL textbook selection process and as a result, some modifications to the checklist were thought highly necessary. Findings provide an account of the elements already in the checklist in general and emphasize on ten important elements which require permanent status in the checklist in little detail.

4. Results

This study is an attempt to make the material evaluation process in a local setting a coherent, sustainable and fruitful activity. It is expected that material designers in the researcher's teaching context will be able to use the newly produced checklist in order to make decisions in the teaching material selection process. The characteristics described in this checklist would be operative in this unique setting and may or may not lead to the development of material evaluation schemes for different situations with modification. The researcher discusses the modifications made to the checklist as a result of this case-study. The data collected from the tentative checklist (TC) show that these experts' views on important criteria need to be considered in the material evaluation process.

4.1. Elements before Revision

The participants revealed that this checklist should particularly focus on their learners' language proficiency level when selecting materials, and also, stated that such materials should promote communicative English in the classroom and largely follows task-based language teaching (TBLT) activities: main focus of the new curriculum. They all stressed the importance of using authentic materials in the TBLT classroom. Further, they placed much emphasis on all four language skills because in general, a majority of their learners' language proficiency is very low and needs to be brought up to a satisfactory level. Also, they insisted that the textbooks need to have some sequencing of grammatical structures and tasks and shouldn't lack integration between language skills. They made it clear that the grammar structures and vocabulary items should be contextualized closely into the context involved. Moreover, the discussions with the sample revealed the importance of having a teachers' guide since the book caters to students with different proficiency levels and to provide clear instructions for

each lesson in order to ensure when & where they can alter and use their own diplomacy in the classroom. Also, they all were resolute that extremely interesting tasks/exercises should be included since they are an important motivational factor in this EFL learning process. **Appendix A2** shows the elements proposed by the above discussion.

4.2. New Items

4.2.1. Promoting Communication among Students

In reference to the participants' statements, this is perhaps the most desirable characteristic which these experienced teachers look for when choosing materials for their learners. In fact, the previous curriculum of the ELTU followed a traditional grammar-based methodology. According to the new curriculum, materials need to have activities that are well-defined tasks which require them to communicate in order to enable their communicative competence. In this setting, L2 teachers are looking for communicativeness in the textbook. One respondent has stated that the textbook should enable learners' communicative competence in order to achieve future professional targets. This discussion justifies why the element promoting communicative competence has been given priority by the sample.

4.2.2. Informative and Aesthetic Quality

The experts involved suggested two items which concerned the general appearance of materials and both seem to possess significant status in the checklist because they have been proposed as the first two elements under this criterion. As it has been argued by some scholars like [Sheldon \(1988\)](#) and [Williams \(1983\)](#), evaluative criteria of the checklist should suit the specific needs & goals of the FL learner and teacher in this local learning-teaching context. Considering such local requirements, many respondents have insisted that the textbook which is best suitable for the target group should be informative and have visual imagery of high aesthetic quality in order to make the content comprehensible and approachable for the learner.

4.2.3. Promoting Independence Study

The respondents also stated that students need to be provided with sufficient opportunities for independent study. The tutors insisted that the textbook which suits best their EFL learning-teaching environment should provide sufficient opportunities for their learners' independent study. This element seems to require careful consideration during the materials selection process.

4.2.4. Authentic Materials, Variety of Topics & Fun Elements

Similar to the findings of [Mukundan \(2011b\)](#), both authentic materials & variety of topics seem to play significant roles when selecting materials for this local setting. They have stated that different topics make the learners exposed to diverse linguistic elements which may be required from them in their prospective academic fields of study. Similar to [Willis \(1996\)](#), the respondents claimed that ma-

materials to be selected should provide students with opportunities to apply grammar structures to situations similar to those of the real-world. Many participants have stressed the importance of fun elements in the materials such as songs, jokes, and riddles. As [Cunningsworth \(1995\)](#) states, no matter how pedagogically sound the materials are, if the materials are not interesting, the learner will lose enthusiasm.

4.2.5. Grammar and Vocabulary Contextualized

The participants had stressed that the grammar structures and vocabulary items in the textbook need to be contextualized and sequenced appropriate to the proficiency level, similar to [Williams \(1983\)](#). These well-experienced teachers had focused much on this element since teaching these two in isolation in the classroom has been proved ineffective. The literature on EFL vocabulary instruction states that contextualization of new items is of crucial importance and can result in superior retention of newly acquired vocabulary items ([Qian, 1996](#)).

4.2.6. Activities to Enable Authentic & Meaningful Communication

As these tutors claim, effective speaking tasks motivate students to take part in authentic communication. As [Gardner \(2001\)](#) states, the issue of motivation is one of the major factors affecting learners' success in the EFL/ESL learning process. One tutor pointed out the learners often loose enthusiasm towards learning if extensive use of unauthentic dialogues in a particular book. This issue was given much consideration when designing and revising the checklist.

4.2.7. Clear Instructions

Similar to the universal characteristics proposed by [Ansary and Babaii \(2002\)](#) for their checklist, these respondents insisted that the checklist should consider whether the textbook contains precise instructions listed for each lesson and activity in order to see that the learner is not confused with his/her low level of proficiency. The elements included in the final checklist focus on both general and specific criteria related to this local EFL learning-teaching setting. As it could be seen from the responses of the sample, the tutors seemed to agree with all the characteristics proposed by the researcher. However, they had added 10 more items to the checklist.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

In this study, an attempt was made to develop a checklist and ensure its reliability, validity and teacher satisfaction for material selection to be used in a unique EFL learning-teaching environment. This answers the research question:

How helpful checklists can be for English language teachers, ELT material developers, evaluators and curriculum developers?

Checklists are useful evaluation instruments that can help material developers before, while and after using materials in an EFL learning-teaching background ([Cunningsworth, 1995](#); [Ellis, 1997](#)). The present checklist can be useful for all

pre-use, in-use and post-use evaluation purposes with slight modifications.

5.1. Reliability, Validity and Level of Teacher Satisfaction

In the development of the checklist, the researcher had to consider the above three important points. In order to ensure the checklist's construct validity and reliability, this checklist was created based on a review of earlier instruments and the requirements of the compulsory English programme conducted in this particular academic context. As suggested by Tomlinson (2003), vague, large and dogmatic statements were avoided when developing the checklist since such elements could decrease the validity and reliability of the instrument. The goal of this research was to come up with a relatively concise instrument for material evaluation in a particular setting. The ratings assigned by the respondents to each of the elements in the checklist indicate a high level of validity and reliability. The results indicate a significant correlation between the scores assigned to each element by the participants which in turn propose this as an evaluation instrument suitable for the researcher's setting. This proves Ansary and Babai's (2002) perception about evaluation checklists: teachers can turn for reliable advice on how a suitable book should be selected. The teacher satisfaction with the checklist was determined by both the questionnaire and the TC administered to them. Their positive responses to all the items and suggestions about new items imply the accuracy of the checklist. The final checklist seems extremely useful since it totally agrees with what these respondents perceive as suitable for their learning-teaching environment.

5.2. General Assumptions

In fact, there are many factors to be accounted when evaluating materials for use with the EFL learners in this context. In this local setting, textbooks can facilitate the TL learning process as a motivational factor. In fact, such materials will enable TL learning in this setting as they focus on how these local learners can benefit from using materials. Similar to Tomlinson (2003), course books need to account for the actual needs of learners. In view of the above, it is of utmost importance to evaluate EFL materials to ensure that they can effectively facilitate the attainment of learning-teaching goals. As Sheldon (1988) states, incorrect choice of materials can negatively affect both learning and teaching.

The results conclude that the designed checklist can be a valid, reliable and practical instrument for the selection of EFL materials. Although the checklist designed in this particular setting is based on a set of teachers' experience and views about FL learning & teaching in one unique academic context, English language teachers, material developers and curriculum designers may find the result of this study insightful. This can provide them with useful ideas according to which the materials being evaluated can be improved. In fact, such forms of evaluations like this can be useful in making substantial educational and administrative decisions.

The ever-growing number of textbooks makes formulating the right choice difficult for teachers. As Williams (1983) states, textbooks are language learning tools. L2 teachers should know the art of using them and how useful they can be for the whole EFL learning-teaching process. Despite the fact that different evaluation schemes and checklists have been proposed for material evaluation, most of them are not based on the contextual needs of the stakeholders. Designing a checklist to select/evaluate materials in a particular setting is a challenge because a checklist as an evaluation scheme needs to help bring about a quality evaluation of a textbook. This study claims that checklists as material evaluating instruments can show EFL teachers the book that best suits their students. The researcher insists that teachers would best be able to give feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the books that have so far been used in the FL teaching classroom via checklists. Overall, a checklist needs to examine local priorities and preferences of the context in which the checklist is used. Material evaluation checklists need to consider the implications that using a set of materials might have for the EFL classroom. A checklist should account for the appropriateness and adequacy of materials for specific situations with regard to learner-teacher needs, institutional expectations, curriculum, and socio-cultural context. The present checklist at this stage can be used confidently for evaluating ELT materials in the researcher's learning-teaching environment and may be useful for many other EFL settings too. However, this checklist can be further refined through qualitative and quantitative research since such instruments need to undergo field-test to ensure their validity and reliability. Also, the relative importance of criteria and interpretation assigned to each category can undergo changes over time.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Appendix A

A1. Questionnaire for the Focus Group Participants

- 1) How would you describe your ESL/EFL teaching context?
- 1.1) Describe your target population in particular?
- 2) Describe the goals and objectives of the old ELTU curriculum?
- 3) Describe the goals and objectives of the new ELTU curriculum?.....
- 4) How would you describe the material selection/evaluation process in your setting?.....
- 4.1) Are you evolved in the above evaluation process? If yes, describe your involvement. If no, give reasons.
- 5) Do you look for universal characteristics in materials when selecting/evaluating materials? If yes, give reasons. If no, give reasons.
- 6) Do you look for specific features when selecting/evaluating materials? If yes, give reasons. If no, give reasons.
- 7) Do you consider your ESL/EFL learning-teaching context when evaluating/selecting materials? If yes, give reasons. If no, give reasons.
- 8) Describe the changes that have taken place in terms of learning-teaching materials in the development of the new ELTU curriculum?
- 9) Are such changes based on the needs of the target language learner? If yes, describe such learner needs. If no, give reasons.
- 10) Will the target language learner benefit from the materials to be selected according to the new curriculum? If yes, give answers. If no, give answers.....

A2. Tentative Checklist for Material Selection & Evaluation

This checklist is designed for use by *the ELTU staff* in the materials selection and evaluation process.

Rating – To respond to the statements, please mark (x) the appropriate choice as follows:

- 1) *strongly disagree* 2) *disagree* 3) *agree* 4) *strongly agree*

All categories should be completed to contribute to the final mark. Grading is between 1 and 4.

Completed forms are confidential documents.

Criteria for material selection & evaluation

1. TEXTBOOK

A. General Appearance	1	2	3	4
1. Do the contents and additional material look interesting and appealing to the learner?				
2. Is it durable?				
3. Is the font size and type used in the book appropriate for the target group?				
<i>Comments</i>				

Continued**B. Layout & Design**

4. Does the book contain a detailed overview of the functions, structures and vocabulary to be taught in each unit?
5. Are the instructions clear and precise?

Comments:

C. Appropriateness of the Materials

8. Does it enlighten the needs and interest of the learners?
9. Is it culturally accessible?
10. Is it compatible to the socio-economic context?
11. Are vocabulary items and comprehensible input levels well-graded?

Comments:.....

D. Learning – Teaching Content

13. Is the approach used in the book consistent with the syllabus?
14. Does it reflect current knowledge and culture and to what extent?
15. Are most of the tasks in the book interesting?
16. Are task objectives achievable?
17. Is it appropriate for local situation?
18. Does the book provide a balance of the four language skills?
19. Is there an appropriate balance between listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills development in the book and the learner and learning situation?

II.I. Listening

20. Are listening materials well recorded?
21. Are instructions clear and precise?
22. Are they as authentic as possible and has listening tasks with specific goals?

II.II. Speaking

23. Is the development of fluency skills given sufficient consideration?
24. Are activities developed to initiate meaningful and authentic communication?

II.III. Reading

25. Are the tasks interesting and graded according to the level of the learner?
26. Is the length appropriate for the level of the course?

II. IV. Writing

27. Are tasks interesting and suitable in terms of difficulty and amount of guidance?
28. Are tasks created taking into consideration learner capabilities?

II. V. Grammar & Vocabulary

Continued

- 29. Are the grammar rules presented in a logical manner and sequenced appropriately from simple to complex?
- 30. According to the level (learner's), are these grammar structures achievable?
- 31. Are the new vocabulary items presented in a variety of ways?
- 32. Is the load (word number in each lesson) appropriate to the level?
- 33. Are these vocabulary items repeated in subsequent lessons?

Comments:.....

III. Activities and Exercises

- 34. Does the book include sufficient interactive and task-based activities which are interesting in themselves?
- 35. Are these structures and vocabulary items presented in meaningful contexts?
- 36. Do these activities facilitate students' use of new vocabulary words and grammar structures by creating situations in which these are required?
- 37. Can these activities be modified or supplemented easily?
- 38. Do they reinforce what students have already learned and maintain a progression from simple to complex?
- 39. Do they include sufficient work on pronunciation practice?
- 40. In general, are these activities neither too easy nor too difficult for the learners?

Comments:

IV. Supplementary Materials

- 41. Is there a teacher's manual available for the book?
- 42. Does the teacher's guide provide complete and clear instructions, along with additional or authentic activities?
- 43. Does it provide teachers with instructions on how to incorporate audio-visual material produced for the book?

Comments:.....

II. Teacher's Manual/Guide

A. General

- 44. Does the teacher's manual help teachers understand the objectives and methodology of the text?
- 45. Does the design of the materials allow teachers to edit and use them differently according to the level of the learner?
- 46. Does it include correct or suggested answers given for the exercises in each lesson?

Comments:

B. Methodology

Continued

47. Is the suggested methodology learner-centered & appropriate for the learner's proficiency level?

48. Does the manual suggest a clear, concise method for teaching each lesson?

Comments:

E. General Impressions

49. Is the book appropriate for the curriculum?

50. Does it coincide with the course objectives?

51. Are the examples and explanations comprehensible?

52. Will the book contents meet students' felt needs for learning English?

53. Does the cultural tone of the textbook sound appropriate for use in this particular setting?

Comments:.....

A3. Final Checklist for Material Selection & Evaluation

This checklist is designed for use by *the ELTU staff* in the materials selection and evaluation process.

Rating – To respond to the statements, please mark (x) the appropriate choice as follows:

1) *strongly disagree* 2) *disagree* 3) *agree* 4) *strongly agree*

All categories should be completed to contribute to the final mark. Grading is between 1 and 4.

Completed forms are confidential documents.

Criteria for material selection & evaluation.

1. TEXTBOOK**A. General Appearance**

1 2 3 4

1. Do the contents and additional material look interesting and appealing to the learner?

2. Is it durable?

3. Is the font size and type used in the book appropriate for the target group?

Comments:.....

B. Layout & Design

4. Does the book contain a detailed overview of the functions, structures and vocabulary to be taught in each unit?

5. Are the instructions clear and precise?

6. Is the book clearly structured and sequenced?

7. Does it include adequate review sections and exercises?

Comments:

Continued

C. Appropriateness of the Materials

- 8. Does it enlighten the needs and interest of the learners?
- 9. Is it culturally accessible?
- 10. Is it compatible to the socio-economic context?
- 11. Are vocabulary items and comprehensible input levels well-graded?

Comments:

D. Learning – Teaching Content

I. General

- 12. Are the contents aligned with UTEL level benchmarks?
- 13. Is the approach used in the book consistent with the syllabus?
- 14. Does it reflect current knowledge and culture and to what extent?
- 15. Are most of the tasks in the book interesting?
- 16. Are task objectives achievable?
- 17. Is it appropriate for local situation?

Comments:

II. Language Skills

- 18. Does the book provide a balance of the four language skills?
- 19. Is there an appropriate balance between listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills development in the book and the learner and learning situation?

II.1. Listening

- 20. Are listening materials well recorded?
- 21. Are instructions clear and precise?
- 22. Are they as authentic as possible and has listening tasks with specific goals?

II.1.1. Speaking

- 23. Is the development of fluency skills given sufficient consideration?
- 24. Are activities developed to initiate meaningful and authentic communication?

II.1.1.1. Reading

- 25. Are the tasks interesting and graded according to the level of the learner?
- 26. Is the length appropriate for the level of the course?

II.1.1.1.1. Writing

- 27. Are tasks interesting and suitable in terms of difficulty and amount of guidance?
- 28. Are tasks created taking into consideration learner capabilities?

II.1.1.1.1.1. Grammar & Vocabulary

Continued

29. Are the grammar rules presented in a logical manner and sequenced appropriately from simple to complex?
30. According to the level (learner's), are these grammar structures achievable?
31. Are the new vocabulary items presented in a variety of ways?
32. Is the load (word number in each lesson) appropriate to the level?
33. Are these vocabulary items repeated in subsequent lessons?

Comments:

III. Activities and Exercises

34. Does the book include sufficient interactive and task-based activities which are interesting in themselves?
35. Are these structures and vocabulary items presented in meaningful contexts?
36. Do these activities facilitate students' use of new vocabulary words and grammar structures by creating situations in which these are required?
37. Can these activities be modified or supplemented easily?
38. Do they reinforce what students have already learned and maintain a progression from simple to complex?
39. Do they include sufficient work on pronunciation practice?
40. In general, are these activities neither too easy nor too difficult for the learners?

Comments:.....

IV. Supplementary Materials

41. Is there a teacher's manual available for the book?
42. Does the teacher's guide provide complete and clear instructions, along with additional or authentic activities?
43. Does it provide teachers with instructions on how to incorporate audio-visual material produced for the book?

Comments:.....

II. Teacher's Manual/Guide**A. General**

44. Does the teacher's manual help teachers understand the objectives and methodology of the text?
45. Does the design of the materials allow teachers to edit and use them differently according to the level of the learner?
46. Does it include correct or suggested answers given for the exercises in each lesson?

Comments:

Continued

B. Methodology

- 47. Is the suggested methodology learner-centered & appropriate for the learner's proficiency level?
- 48. Does the manual suggest a clear, concise method for teaching each lesson?

Comments:

E. General Impressions

- 49. Is the book appropriate for the curriculum?
- 50. Does it coincide with the course objectives?
- 51. Are the examples and explanations comprehensible?
- 52. Will the book contents meet students' felt needs for learning English?
- 53. Does the cultural tone of the textbook sound appropriate for use in this particular setting?

Comments:

II. Teacher's Manual/Guide

A. General

- 53. Does the teacher's manual help teachers understand the objectives and methodology of the text?
- 54. Does the design of the materials allow teachers to edit and use them differently according to the level of the learner?
- 55. Does it include correct or suggested answers given for the exercises in each lesson?

Comments:.....

B. Methodology

- 56. Is the suggested methodology learner-centered & appropriate for the learner's proficiency level?
- 57. Does the manual suggest a clear, concise method for teaching each lesson?

Comments:.....

E. General Impressions

- 58. ***Does it promote communication among students?***
- 59. Does it coincide with the course objectives?
- 60. Is the book appropriate for the curriculum?
- 61. Are the examples and explanations comprehensible?
- 62. Will the book contents meet students' felt needs for learning English?
- 63. Does the cultural tone of the textbook sound appropriate for use in this particular setting?

Comments:.....
