

Iranian New Junior High School Book (Prospect 1) Weighted against Material Evaluation Checklist from Teachers' Perspective

Touran Ahour^{*1}, Farhad Golpour²

^{1,2} Department of English, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran
*corresponding author: ahour@iaut.ac.ir

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to evaluate the new version of Iranian EFL junior high school textbook (Prospect1) from the teachers' perspectives. The participants included 90 experienced English teachers (42 females and 48 males) randomly selected from different junior high schools in different districts of Gilan province, Iran. The evaluation of the textbook was conducted quantitatively through a 5-point Likert scale with seven criteria including subject and content, activities, skills, physical layout, practical consideration, language and general criteria. However, it was accompanied by some open-ended questions that solicited teachers' views about each criterion and the book in general. The descriptive statistics including standard deviation, mean, percentage and frequency were used in the data analysis. The findings revealed that teachers have positive perceptions toward this book. They had a positive view about the prospect1 because of its content and topic relevancy to learners' needs, including real life situations, enjoying challenging subject, having communicative pair and group works and attending to four skills equally. However, they intensified some problems in their open ended questions such as insufficiency of teaching time that is 1.5 hour during a week, not focusing on explicit presentation of some words and grammatical points and not paying attention to some sub-skill strategies. These findings can be helpful for curriculum designers and textbook writers to design some valuable textbooks for other levels and to consider correspondence between time of teaching and volume of the book.

Keywords: Junior High school, Evaluation checklist, syllabus, Criteria

Introduction

A text book is an important component in any program and without which teachers encounter many challenges. Sheldon (1987) defined textbook as a published book planned to expand learners communicative and linguistics capabilities. Nunan (1999) called textbook as an essential part of any teaching program. The importance of textbook has been intensified by many other scholars. Torres and Hutchison(1994) believed that without having a textbook teaching condition is incomplete. Textbook selection is a difficult job for both administrators and instructors. Skierso (1991) declared that importance of a textbook in education causes its selection crucial. Garinger (2002) stated that selecting a textbook is based on personal preferences of instructors and it may not be related to education. Textbook selection for Iranian EFL learners started in 1937 by initiation of teaching English as foreign language. Since then different books have been taught including Eckersley's (1952) Essential English, Hornby's (1954) Oxford series, Dorry's(1950) Modern English, Birjandi's(1991) Right Path to English ,and the last one being Alaviet.al's.(2013) Prospects.

Textbook evaluation based on established and well-prepared checklist is very important to provide invaluable information for any educational system. In this line, Sheldon (1988) emphasized the importance of evaluation by some reasons. He stated that because of financial and professional investment, selection of ELT textbook is a crucial educational decision. Moreover, evaluation can help instructors of institutions or organization to differentiate appropriate books. It can help educators to get more familiar with content of the textbooks and distinguish weakness and strength of the books in order to use strong points, determine problematic points in any task or exercise, and as Grant, (1987) mentioned, respond to the learners' needs and learning situations.

It is essential to mention that textbook plays an important role in success or failure of any educational system. Therefore, textbook evaluation has attracted researchers ' attention. Some researchers evaluated textbooks taught at Iranian private institutions such as Azizipour and Baghelani (2014), Sahragard, Rahimi, and Zaremoayeddi (2008) and Shin(2012); some studies were done on those taught at junior and senior high school levels

such as Ansary (2004), Jahangard (2007), Ghorbani (2011), Ahour, Towhidian and Saeidi (2014) And the last study done by Golpour (2012) on junior high school book series (Right Path to English). Finally by designing another textbook (Prospects), Right path to English was banded to be used. So the main purpose of this study was the evaluation of prospect 1 (new published book for junior high school book) based on Litz (2005) questionnaire to gather precise views of teachers about its different features.

There have been several studies that investigated textbooks taught at private institution, junior high school and high school levels. Raseks et.al (2010) evaluation on four elementary textbooks of Headway, Top Notch, Interchange and On Your Mark taught at English language institutions based on Shaw and McDonough external and internal evaluation indicated that Top Notch book enjoys more motivating topics and themes than other three ones. However, its units were not arranged according to table of content.

Upper-intermediate level of New Headway was analyzed by Ranalli (2002) according to Cunningsworth's model. His findings showed that the textbook sticks to presentation –practice and production approach and language pattern includes some controlled exercises. Moreover, methodology of the textbook emphasizes on developing analytical knowledge and expanding grammatical rules and it does not prepare learners for using language on unexpected situations and unplanned discourse. Kayapinar (2009) evaluated two textbooks of English File and Opportunities through a survey gathered 134 Iranian teachers' views on these books. The result of his study showed that teachers do not have positive views on these books since they believed that above-mentioned textbooks do not satisfy learners' interests and needs at national scope.

Dominguez (2003) evaluated New Interchange Intro to investigate the gender representation in dialogue and to find its appropriateness for different multinational inhabitants of Canadian cities. He found that this book considered multicultural settings, needs of learners and offers a balance in both genders; therefore, it is an appropriate source for teachers to use.

In Iran, recently, many researchers have turned to evaluate different textbooks taught at school levels. In a study, Safarnavadehet.al. (2009) evaluated three high school books and found that the aforementioned books

focus was on structure and main purpose of book was to guide learners to be fluent in some language components with specific attention on grammar. Writing skill got more attention for improving learners' grammatical structures. Moreover, content and exercises were arranged based on traditional methods. They concluded that main problem of these books related to theoretical issues that books are based.

In a study done by Jahangard (2007), three high school books and one pre-university book were inspected. He discovered that pre-university book help learners to lean some strategies.

In another study, Riazi and Mosalanejad (2010) evaluated three high school books and pre-university book to find the objectives entrenched in them by using Bloom's model. They discovered that in pre-university book higher order objectives embedded. Kiyani et al. (2011) studied the national foreign language curriculum. They uncovered some merits that were increasing teaching time and giving more responsibilities to teachers and demerits such as not attending to the needs of learners and not participation of experts in book preparation also was recounted.

Iranian High school English textbooks were examined by Ansary (2004) and the results of his study revealed that the design of the books lacks enough illustrations to make the books attractive and to motivate students. Moreover, the given instruction does not guide learners how to do the exercises, and the difficulty level of the reading comprehension texts of three textbooks does not correspond to learners' background knowledge. Ahmadi (2002) examined high school text books and discovered some problems such as not attending to learners' needs, inadequate time of teaching, not available teachers' guide, artificial and not authentic conversational texts, no cultural points represented, dull reading texts and words not found in the succeeding lessons.

Ahmadpoor's (2004) evaluation of high school book revealed some inadequacies of these books including boring and outdated text, inappropriate pictures, lack of coherence among lessons, lack of time for teaching, inadequate activities, extra emphasis on grammar and vagueness of the purpose of the books. Ahour et.al.also (2014) evaluated "English Textbook 2" to determine it appropriateness according to Litz's (2005)

checklist. Their findings revealed that the book is not appropriate for the high school students in many aspects such as not being interesting for learners, lack of authenticity and communicative and meaningful practice. Indeed, its disadvantages outweighed its advantages.

Finally, there have been some studies that evaluated previous series of junior high school book taught at junior high school (Right Path to English) or compared it with some international textbooks. Amerian's (1987) Comparison of Graded English and Right Path to English uncovered that Graded English focus was on grammar, and that the amount of drills were inadequate. Soodmand (2008) compared New Interchange series with Right path to English. He concluded that Right Path to English suffers from authenticity, various tasks and interesting topics, valuable instruction and interesting topics. Golpour (2012), by evaluating the Right Path to English according to Tucker's(1992) questionnaire, discovered that these series(book 1,2 &3) suffer from problems including inappropriate physical layout, lack of recycled materials, no consideration of all skills, artificial recording, no attention to learners needs, shortage of a teacher manual and no involvement of communicative activities. However, lots of oral drills exist that make grammar learning easier. The main purpose of this research is the evaluation of the new book (Prospect 1); published in 2013, to see to what extent its different features are appropriate on the teachers' views. Therefore, the following questions were posed:

- 1) Is Prospect1 appropriate for Iranian junior high school students in terms of the practical consideration?
- 2) Is Prospect1 appropriate for Iranian junior high school students in terms of the layout and design?
- 3) Is Prospect1 appropriate for Iranian junior high school students in terms of the activities?
- 4) Is the prospect1 appropriate for Iranian junior high school students in terms of the skills?
- 5) Is Prospect1 appropriate for Iranian junior high school students in terms of the language type?
- 6) Is Prospect1 appropriate for Iranian junior high school students in terms of the subject and content?

- 7) Is Prospect1 appropriate for Iranian junior high school students in terms of the general conclusion?

Method

Participants

The participants of the study included 90 experienced teachers including 42 female and 48 male teachers who were selected through stratified sampling from different junior school educational districts of Gilan Iran. They had different degrees in English; 58 teachers (66%) had BA and the other 32 teachers (35%) had MA and Ph.D degrees. They had different teaching experience years: 32 teachers (33%) had between 1-10 years of experiences, 16 teachers (17%) had 10-20 years of experience, and 44 teachers (48%) had between 21-30 years of experience. All these teachers had passed in-service classes one month before teaching this book and had experienced teaching this book for one year.

Instrumentation and Material

Litz (2005) textbook evaluation checklist was used in this study. His checklist consists of seven main criteria that included practical consideration: items 1-5, layout and design: items 6-13, activities items 14-20, language type: items 26-31, subject and content: items 32-36, and conclusion: items 37- 40. All these criteria were considered the since researchers intended to know teachers' opinions on the new developed textbook after one year of teaching. In this study, 5points likert scale (Completely Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Moderately Agree = 3, Agree = 4, Completely Agree = 5) was utilized. The checklist was reviewed by two experts in education and two experienced English teachers for checking the validity of the checklist. To check to what extent the checklist was clear to participants, a pilot study was done with 15 teachers. The internal reliability of items was calculated by Cronbach Alpha coefficient which came out to be 0.92.

The English textbook (Prospect 1) written by Alavi (2013) was examined in this study since this book has been taught for one year, the researchers decided to investigate experienced teachers views on it. it consists of 8

lessons, each lesson including 1. One conversation, 2. Two practices, 3. one sound and letter conversation, 4. Listening and reading, 5. speaking and writing, and 6. your conversation

Procedure

This study was a descriptive one. The data gathered through a checklist distributed among 90 (male=48 and female=42) randomly selected teachers in Gilan educational districts in the last month of the academic year of 2013-2014. The teachers were informed in advance about the purpose of the study. After the data collection, SPSS 20 was used to analyze the data which included measuring the frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Results

Practical Consideration

The first question asks about some practical aspects of the textbook which consists of five items. The descriptive statistics related to practical considerations are provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Practical Consideration

Textbook evaluation scales	1		2		3		4		5			
Practical consideration	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	M	SD
Item 1	4	4.4	10	11.1	32	35.5	32	35.5	12	13.3	3.42	0.01
Item 2	6	6.7	14	15.6	18	20	42	46.7	10	11.1	3.40	1.09
Item 3	2	2.2	2	2.2	22	24.4	38	42.2	24	26.6	3.37	1.11
Item 4	6	6.7	6	6.7	18	20	46	51.1	14	15.6	3.62	1.05
Item 5	10	11.1	14	15.6	28	31.1	18	20	20	22.2	3.26	1.28

Note: Completely Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Moderately Agree = 3, Agree = 4, Completely Agree = 5

As Table 1 shows, the first item questions the reasonability of the textbook price. The majority of the participants, that is, around 85% considered it realistic and the rest (15%) did not agree with the statement. The second statement declares views of teachers on textbook accessibility. 80% of the teachers stated their satisfaction about this matter and the other 20% did not agree with this book. About 95% of the teachers declared their

agreement with the statement indicating newness of publication since this book was published in 2013. One interesting point that was seen about this volume in comparison to the textbook taught before was the positive view of the higher number of teachers (82%) about the availability of teacher's guide, workbook, and CDs. Only 18% complained about unavailability of the mentioned items; they indicated that many students have not received the CD with this book. The previous series (Right Path to English) was investigated by Golour (2012). He found that all teachers (100%) confirmed unavailability of none of the aforementioned requirements. As a matter of fact, a teacher guide is necessary for teachers to track a suitable way for material presentation. Although no blurb was observed on the back of book, 66 (75%) teachers agreed that both methodology and language used in the text book adjust their own view.

As the teachers' ideas about practicality were between “moderately agree” and “agree” and the mean was between 3.2667 and 3.6222, it can be concluded that, in this respect, Prospect 1 is appropriate for junior high school level. Thus, the answer to the first question is positive.

Layout and design

In order to answer the second question that asks whether layout and design of the textbook are appropriate or not, the following detailed description was provided.

Table 2
Layout and Design of the textbook

Textbook evaluation scales	1		2		3		4		5			
Layout and Design	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	M	SD
Item 6	4	4.4	20	22.2	38	42.2	18	20	10	11.1	3.11	1.02
Item 7	2	2.2	14	15.6	30	33.3	34	37.8	10	11.1	3.40	.09
Item 8	2	2.2	6	6.7	32	33.3	28	31.1	22	24.2	3.55	1.10
Item 9	6	6.7	6	6.7	18	20	46	51.1	14	15.6	3.62	1.05
Item 10	0	0	18	20	16	18.1	48	54.1	6	6.7	3.14	1.01
Item 11	8	9.8	16	18.1	30	33.3	26	28.2	10	11.1	3.01	1.00
Item 12	2	2.2	12	13.3	44	48.2	22	24.4	8	9.8	3.62	1.06
Item 13	0	0	14	15.6	32	36.2	26	28.2	18	20	3.24	1/02

As shown in Table 2, the first item of this category which indicates whether the textbook includes an overview of the whole book or not, around 26% of the teachers stated their disagreement and the rest of 74% agreed that the general overview indicates what in the textbook covers. The second item that asks about the appropriateness of the textbook design is confirmed positively by 82% of the participants but 18% rejected its appropriateness. Around 91% of the teachers gave positive responses to item three, that is, the effectiveness of the textbook organization, and only 9% did not agree with this item. The fourth item regarding vocabulary list and glossary also attracted teachers' attention with 92% positive answers and just 8% negative answers; however, the vocabularies of each lesson are not represented in the form of new words; just some limited words are embedded within the language function parts, and there is a glossary at the end of the book with colored pictures. The fifth item which is about review sections and exercises provided 80% of teachers' satisfaction. It indicates that teachers recognize that these parts are enough for this book. Regarding the next item that asks if quizzes included in the textbook are adequate or not, 70% of the participants believed that the given quizzes are sufficient and the rest (30%) found these quizzes insufficient. This is the only EFL textbook in Iran with a teachers' guide within which everything has been elaborated clearly to help teachers teach. This item is confirmed by 85% of the teachers but the

other 15% of them rejected this item and considered this teachers' guide inadequate. The last statement in the layout section is about the clarity of the objectives to learners and teachers. The investigation showed that 85% of the teachers agree with this item and 15% disregarded this statement. In general, the average of the responses ranged between 3.01 and 3.62 so that the answers were clustered around "agree" and it can be claimed that positive response was given to the second question.

Activities

The responses to the third question that asks about the appropriateness of the textbook activities elaborated through detail statistical description. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table.3
Activities in the textbook

Textbook evaluation scales	1		2		3		4		5		M	SD
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Activities	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	M	SD
Item 14	6	6.7	20	22.2	32	36.2	32	36.2	6	6.7	3.02	1.03
Item 15	4	4.4	28	31.1	24	26.2	20	22.2	8	9.8	3.04	1.02
Item 16	10	11.1	26	28.2	24	26.2	18	20	14	15.6	2.92	.90
Item 17	2	2.2	12	13.3	36	40.2	18	20	16	18.1	3.24	1.04
Item 18	2	2.2	8	9.8	28	31.1	32	40.2	16	18.1	3.33	1.06
Item 19	4	4.4	2	2.2	28	31.1	44	48.2	14	15.6	3.84	1.06
Item 20	4	4.4	16	18.1	26	28.2	32	36.2	12	13.3	3.26	1.04

The first item in this part which is about balanced activities (free and controlled) were answered by 76% of the teachers in a positive way but the other 24% ones did not agree. However, more emphasis is on the controlled activities which may be allocated to the level of the learners who were beginners. The writers of the textbook have tried to include some communicative and meaningful practices in each lesson throughout this textbook; the second item probed the teachers' ideas about this point. 70% of the participants gave positive answer to this item but others (30%) disagreed which may refer to inadequacy of the related practice. The next item (item

4) asked about the incorporation of individual, pair and group work. Actually, these three kinds of activities were considered in this textbook. As individual activities were incorporated in the workbook, 60% of the teachers confirmed the incorporation of all kinds of activities but the rest (40%) declared their dissatisfaction with the equality of three types of activities. Among the teachers 85% approved that grammar and vocabulary items were introduced in realistic contexts but not in separate parts, as it was asked by item five, and the other 15% disagreed with the issue. In case of the other item (item5) that asks whether activities lead to creative responses or not, most of the teachers (88%) agreed with this item since there are some questions in the textbook such as personal information that elicit original and creative questions, but others (12%) rejected this matter. Item six which indicates that tasks can internalize language was adjusted by 92% of teachers but 8% of them did not accept it. There are some activities that implicitly are conducive to learning new items. Skehan (2003) stated that using communicative activities is necessary for those who are learning language rather learning about language. Learners can internalize language through conversational texts. The last item of the activity part states that activities can be modified easily; this item also attracted the teachers' attention positively with 78% agreement and 22% disagreement. To sum up, In the case of activities, the lowest mean of the items was 2.92 and the highest one was 3.84. Therefore, most of the answers were between "moderately agree" and "agree", and in general, teachers gave a positive response to appropriateness of activities.

Language skills

The fourth question asks whether skills presented in this textbook are appropriate or not. The descriptive statistics related to language skills are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Language skills in the textbook

Textbook evaluation scales	1		2		3		4		5		M	SD
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
language skills												
Item 21	4	4.4	4	4.4	32	36.2	32	36.2	16	18.1	3.92	1.00
Item 22	4	4.4	26	28.2	16	18.1	28	31.1	16	18.1	3.04	1.01
Item 23	24	26.2	26	28.2	16	18.1	16	18.1	8	9.8	2.53	1.00
Item 24	24	26.2	12	13.1	24	26.2	20	22.2	10	11.1	3.02	1.04
Item 25	8	9.8	2	2.2	32	36.2	36	40.2	12	13.3	3.42	1.24

The first statement declares that the book includes the skills that learners need. 92% of the teachers agreed that existing materials help their learners' skill development but 8% of them did not agree with others. 68% of teachers agreed with the second item within skill category which states that there is equal attention to all skills. The other 32% of teachers rejected this statement and believed that speaking and listening skills outweighed the other skills. The next item that states about sub-skills presentation was rejected by 54% of the teachers but other 46% of the participants agreed with the statement. The greater number of disagreement refers to lack of sub-skills in this book. However, this may be interpreted in terms of low language proficiency level of the learners. The item that considers natural pronunciation was confirmed by 58% of the participants but not accepted by 42% of them. Actually in this book, there is not any specific part dedicated to pronunciation but the texts are natural and were recited by native or native-like speakers. The last item related to skill part is about integration of skills. Indeed, skills are integrated in this book and this matter was confirmed by 89% of the teachers and the other 11% of the participants did not accept this point. Generally, in the skill part, the lowest mean was 2.53 and the highest one 3.92, and most of the answers were between "agree" and "moderately agree", so, the answer to the fifth question, which is about appropriateness of skill, is positive.

Language type

The fifth question asks about the appropriateness of language type, the answers to which are represented in Table 5.

Table 5
Language type in the textbook

Textbook evaluation scales	1		2		3		4		5		M	SD
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Language type												
Item 26	4	4.4	12	13.3	20	22.2	48	52.1	6	6.7	3.16	1.05
Item 27	2	2.2	2	2.2	36	40.2	44	48.2	6	6.7	3.83	1.03
Item 28	4	2.2	16	18.2	44	48.1	16	18.1	10	11.1	3.00	0.90
Item 29	28	31.1	30	33.3	18	20	12	13.2	2	2.2	2.44	1.20
Item 30	-	-	2	2.2	24	26.2	56	57.2	8	9.8	3.92	1.62
Item 31	24	26.7	40	44.4	8	8.9	8	8.9	10	11.1	1.68	0.47

The first item related to this part is about the authenticity of the language presented. Since the conversational texts are represented and acted out by native-like speakers and they originated from what happens in real situations, the texts enjoy authenticity. This was confirmed by 82% of the participant but the other 18% denied its authenticity. Interestingly, 96 % of the teachers considered the presented language at their learners' level (beginners) which is the content of the second item. In Prospect1, the progression of grammar and vocabulary is from simple to complex but they are situation-related items which makes their learning easier. Among the participants, 80% agreed with the statement three but 20% of them disagreed with it. The forth item states that grammar presented through examples and explanation, which was approved only by 44% of the teachers; the other 66% had different idea. Actually no grammatical point has been explained or exemplified throughout this book. This means that, learners must infer grammatical points embedded in conversational contexts. The fifth item in language type was confirmed by almost all teachers (92%). This high percentage showed that, in the case of language functions, this book is rich. The last item in the category of language type

states that diverse accents and registers are given in the textbook. As a matter of fact, in this book both American and British accents have been integrated, some texts recited by American speakers and some by speakers of other accents, but no specific register was considered. 71% of the teachers believed that the writers must be consistent in one accent. The other 29% of the teachers agreed with presenting various accents and registers. The answer to the fifth question that was about appropriateness of language type seemed positive; although the lowest means of the items was 1.68 and the highest was 3.83, the average was between "moderately agree" and "agree".

Subject and content

The sixth question asks about the appropriateness of the subject and content. In order to clarify its appropriateness the following explanations are provided and the results of the descriptive statistics are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6
Subject and Content

Textbook evaluation scales	1		2		3		4		5			
Subject and content	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	M	SD
Item 32	-	-	20	22.2	20	22.2	40	44.4	10	11.1	3.13	1.17
Item 33	4	2.2	8	8.9	24	26.7	38	42.2	16	18.1	3.80	1.10
Item 34	-	-	12	13.3	26	28.8	24	25.2	28	31.1	3.64	1.12
Item 35	-	-	8	8.9	40	44.4	28	31.1	14	15.5	3.89	1.12
Item 36	24	26.7	12	13.3	28	31.1	16	18.1	10	11.1	3.08	1.08

The first item of the subject and content part is about the connection of content and subject with learners needs. 80% of the teachers admitted that topics of the lessons correspond to the learners' needs; the rest (20%) disagreed this statement. Since the topics of the lessons in the textbook are related to learners' daily life and interest, a high percentage of the teachers agreed with it. The second item indicates that subject and content are

realistic, which was approved by 89% of the teachers since the subjects were about what happens in real communication and learners' milieu, however, 11% denied this matter. The next item, which states that the topic is interesting and challenging, was confirmed by 86.7% of the participants and the other 13.3 % rejected this statement. The fourth item of the subject and content part asks teachers' views on the variety of subjects and topics of the textbook; this matter attracted teachers' attention in a positive way since 91.1% of them admitted that topics enjoy variety in contrast to other 8.9% that gave negative response. The last item, that is a controversial subject, indicates that materials are not culturally-biased. Yet, in this book, Iranian cultural issues are incorporated to a great extent, as Krasner (1999) suggested, language and culture are interrelated and teaching English without culture is not possible; however, teaching a familiar culture instead of a target culture seems to be more helpful for learners. Among teachers, 40% believed that it is not culturally-biased and the other 60% indicated that it is designed based on Iranian culture by using some local names and some other issues. In the interview, teachers mentioned that their students can understand English language through their own culture better. The answer to the sixth question seems to be positive since the lowest mean was 2.68 and the highest mean was 3.89 with the most of the answers gathered around "moderately agree" and "agree" choice.

The last question is about the appropriateness of the book in general, the answer to which is described and shown in Table 7.

Table 7
Conclusion: Description of the book in general

Textbook evaluation scales	1		2		3		4		5		M	SD
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
conclusion												
Item 37	-	-	4	4.2	16	18.1	48	53.3	26	28.8	4.12	1.67
Item 38	-	-	16	18.1	38	42.2	16	18.1	16	18.1	3.20	1.60
Item 39	8	8.9	4	2.2	32	35.5	32	35.5	14	15.5	3.94	1.32
Item 40	4	4.4	4	4.4	30	33.2	32	35.2	20	22.2	3.66	1.02

The first item in this domain is about the appropriateness of this book for language learning aims at junior high school level. 95.8% of the teachers stated their agreement in this aspect, which indicates that it is appropriate for their learners, but the other 5% disagreed with this issue. The second item indicates that this book is good for small classes, which was confirmed by 81.9% of the teachers in contrast with the rest (19.1%) of the teachers. The third item, stating that this book encourages learners for further learning, was approved by 89.2% of the teachers. This is noticeable in teachers' interview as well since they expressed that their learners were eager to continue the process of language learning for the next years, yet, 10.8% rejected this statement. The last item considers teachers' views on reselection of the same textbook for teaching which was approved by 88.2% of the teachers but 11.8% of them did not accept this view. The answer to the seventh question was positive since the lowest mean was 3.20 and the highest was 4.12, and most of the teachers' selections were within "moderately agree" and "agree".

Conclusion

In this study, the new junior high school English Text book, entitled "Prospect 1" was investigated from different aspects such practical consideration, layout and design, activities, skills, language type, content and subject and conclusion. Interestingly, on the whole, English teachers had a positive view toward this book. They believed that from practical point of view, it has one outstanding advantage, that is, having teachers' guide, as compared to other school level text book that are weak in this aspect. The second category that is about design and layout and its subcategories were viewed positively by teachers, which indicates that the organization of the book is arranged appropriately and language functions, structures and vocabularies are provided adequately. The third category is about activities and teachers stated that both free and controlled activities, communicative and meaningful practice, realistic and motivating contexts and pair and group work are noticeable in this book. About the skill, which is the concern of the fourth question, the analysis determined that teachers have various views on different items. About using different sub-skills and

natural pronunciation, they believed little attention was paid; however, the integration of all skills and equal attention to them were the items that most of the teachers admitted. The fifth item is language type; teachers generally viewed this category in a positive way and confirmed that texts are authentic and language with its function are presented in an appropriate way although they disconfirmed that various accents were represented and that grammar was presented in an explicit way. The other category is about subject and content. The items that expressed subject are challenging, interesting, realistic and need-based, which were approved by teachers but they believed that the book is culturally-biased. The last category, that is conclusion and a general view on the book, was considered to be appropriate by teachers.

According to the findings of this study, the Prospect 1 is an appropriate book for the first grade junior high school students. Actually, this book was published in 2013, and this study is the first study done on this book; however, there have been some studies done on similar books by some researchers such as Dominguez (2003), Karimi (2004), Al-Yousef (2007) Safarnavadeh et al. (2009) Riazi and Mosalanejad (2010). These studies evaluated textbooks such as Top notch, Interchange, Headway and so on, taught at private institutions. Some other studies are done in this field by Iranian researchers, who mostly examined textbooks used by Iranian teachers at high school and junior high school levels such as Ranalli (2002), Ahmadi (2002), Ansary (2004), Ahmadpoor's (2004), Soodmand (2008), Kayapinar (2009), Golpour (2012), Ahour et al. (2014). By looking at these studies, it can be concluded that the whole structure of Prospect 1 follows the well-established books taught at private institutions. Although this book was distinguished an appropriate one for this level by teachers, teachers suggested that both implicit and explicit presentation of grammar will be more helpful in situation that English is taught as a foreign language. Moreover, one important point that all teachers agreed upon was that two hours a week is too short to teach this book at high schools.

The implication of this study can be helpful for teachers, material writers and curriculum designers. Curriculum designers can design the whole curriculum by consideration of the time of the study and the general planning of the textbook, and material writers can write the text according to the needs of learners and use materials that are appropriate and at the level

of learners, providing them with more pair work and group work activities. Finally, teachers should be careful in providing appropriate situation that learners practice activities included in the textbooks.

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Biodata

Touran Ahour is an assistant professor, academic staff member of English Department at the Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch, Iran. She has received her PhD degree in TESL from the University Putra Malaysia. She has published several books and articles in international scholarly journals. Her research interests include writing assessment, materials evaluation, reading-writing connection, and ELT issues.

Farhad Golpour is a Ph.D. candidate in TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Tabriz branch. He is teaching at Teachers' university. His research interests include language teaching, writing, and material development. He has published some books and articles on some international journals and has presented some papers in both international and domestic conferences.