

Evaluation of a Neo-Classical Language Teaching Method and Related Textbooks: A Case of ETP (English through Persian)

Marzieh Souzandehfar^{1*}, Khatereh Honarvar², Kowsar Saberi³

¹Assistant Professor of TEFL, Jahrom University, Jahrom

^{2,3}BA Student of Translation Studies, Jahrom University, Jahrom

Corresponding Author: Marzieh Souzandehfar E-mail: souzandeh@jahromu.ac.ir, mzsouzandeh@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Received: January 08, 2019

Accepted: February 18, 2020

Published: February 28, 2020

Volume: 3

Issue: 2

DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2020.3.2.6

KEYWORDS

ELT, EFL, translation, ETP, localization, textbook evaluation

ABSTRACT

ETP (English through Persian) is a newly-proposed method of second language teaching based on Vygotsky's sociocultural model of EFL teaching in the context of Iran which has focused on localization as well as the influential role of L1 in L2 learning. Rahimi and Izadpanah (2015), proposers of ETP method, developed ETP course books which were the first localized English book series for Persian speakers. The present study attempted to investigate both ETP method and the related books in order to distinguish whether it is appropriate enough to help Iranian EFL learners acquire English competence. To this end, four sessions of ETP classes, from different levels, were observed. In addition, four sessions were dedicated to semi-structured interview with a sample of three teachers as well as five learners. Finally, two books, ETP 1 & 2, were evaluated based on an eclectic checklist proposed by Yusuf Demir and Abdullah Ertaş (2014). The findings of the study demonstrated a paradox between the interviewees' positive feedback and the results of the two textbooks' evaluation. Although ETP, as a method, was supported by both students and teachers, textbook evaluations revealed that translation could only be helpful in some situations like clarifying complex grammar points and explaining new words. Moreover, ETP books needed more consideration and revision.

Introduction

In today's global village, English language has provided the best means for universal communications in such a way that every day, an increasing number of people, from all around the world, are being greatly encouraged by its beneficial results to learn English, particularly in a short time. On the other hand, there has always been a triangular net of crucial factors which have bolded the key roles of the teacher, learner and textbooks in the process of learning (Akbari Kelishadi & Sharifzadeh, 2013). Thus, as Riazi and Mosalanejad (2010) proposed, textbooks have always been an indispensable component of learning English and "play a very crucial role in the realm of language teaching and learning and are considered the next important factor in the L2 classroom after the teacher" (p. 3). Even though some researchers claimed that the frequent usage of textbooks in L2 classrooms is not essential, the multiplicity and variety of available books have been more than common expectation.

Textbooks have always been considered as a means of reciprocal knowledge exchange between teachers and students. Banegas (2011) suggested, "local, localized or international textbooks should be seen as learning materials to emphasize the fact that they are mostly addressed to learners" (cited in Tomlinson, 2008, p. 3-4). As a result, book designers gave rise to some publications which were riveted a central attention to the usage of L1 in order to ease the learning process and help learners to retain mostly whatever teachers have presented. Utilizing mother tongue has even altered the style of teaching methods. Although some of them like the strong version of CLT focused on acquiring language through communication, other ones such as ETP (English Through Persian) regarded L1 as a tool to strengthen the bases of learning from elementary levels by means of teaching L2 (English) through L1 (Persian). Moreover, this method was founded on two theoretical bases; i.e. socio-cultural theory and semiotics. Izadpanah, an ETP proposer, mentioned the theoretical base behind ETP model more accurately in his research proposal (in press):

ETP also stands for the methodology (here methodology means the actual teaching practice) the researcher is going to employ to minimize the teaching process and hopefully to maximize learning. The psychological foundation of the

methodology is tried to be mainly constructed upon sociocultural conceptions such as Mediation, ZPD, Affordance, Scaffolding, inner speech, assisted performance, and dynamic assessment. On the other hand, the linguistic basis is attempted to be semiotics and ecology linguistics. (p. 10)

ETP series were the first localized books for Persian speakers which initially started from what the learners have already known and then as the learners have reached a stage of development, the use of L1 became less. Besides, their ability to convey the meaning in L2 improved. As a result of the large number of available textbooks, teachers confront a bewildering amount of choices. Ansary and Babaii (2002) suggested that

Teachers, students, and administrators are all consumers of textbooks. All these groups, of course, may have conflicting views about what a good/standard textbook is. However, the question is where they can turn to for reliable advice on how to make an informed decision and select a suitable textbook. (p. 2)

For this reason, an accurate evaluation can pave the way for not only teachers but also students to do their best. Textbook evaluation becomes even more important when the books are newly published. According to Abdelwahab (2013), textbook evaluation can be carried out in three basic approaches: impressionistic, in-depth and checklist. In the present study, the researchers utilized checklist evaluation which was considered to be more accurate, systematic, and well-organized. While most of EFL textbooks are debated over regarding the issue of how a textbook can facilitate learning process, ETP books, as the first localized materials for Persian learners, considered that the role of L1 in learning a foreign language was crucial. As a result, they tried to teach English through Persian.

Owing to the novelty of ETP books, this study intended to carry out a systematic textbook evaluation in order to examine whether they were appropriate enough to be taught in Iranian context or not. Moreover, this study attempted to reveal whether different sections of the two ETP books were efficient enough to fulfill learners' needs in the realm of foreign language teaching. Finally, the study aimed to elicit the attitudes of teachers and learners using the ETP method and textbooks in their classes.

Literature Review

Today, English language is considered as a lingua franca and a kind of bridge across variable nations. Hence learning English as a second language is of considerable importance in different fields and areas. On the other hand, textbooks play a key role in the process of language teaching and learning. Garinger (2002) has argued that "a textbook can serve different purposes for teachers: as a core resource, as a source of supplemental material, as an inspiration for classroom activities, and even as the curriculum itself" (p. 29). According to Ansary and Babaii (2002), some of the merits of using textbooks could be described as arranging a regulatory framework, providing ready-made teaching texts, and learning tasks besides creating a level of security for those teachers who are novice. In addition to these advantages, the extent of progress could be monitored as well (Lawrence, 2011). In spite of some experts' arguments on the necessity of skipping textbooks in EFL classrooms, as they stifle teachers' creativity and restrict both teachers and students regarding syllabi and topics, numerous textbooks are being published every year.

Some textbook developers have recently argued that the use of L1 in the process of teaching L2 is advantageous to help students achieve TL proficiency. This method was debated all over the world by some experts, including Tang (2002) who carried out an empirical investigation on 100 first-year English major students at the intermediate level. Twenty faculty members at Beijing University were the participants as well. This study revealed that using L1 (Chinese) in teaching L2 is time-saving and effectual. Another study on the use of L1 was conducted in Saudi Arabia under the aegis of Alshammari (2011) who asserted that EFL teachers should only utilized L1 (Arabic) in unexplainable situations like baffling grammar concepts or vocabularies. In the Vietnamese context, Kim Anh (2010) conducted a survey using semi-interviews and questionnaires. The results revealed that all the 12 teacher participants were advocate of using L1 effectively in various situations especially when explaining new abstract words and terminologies. Investigations on the L1 usage in teaching L2 has also expanded into the context of Iran. Nazary (2008) worked on 85 EFL students who were studying English at Tehran University as an extra curriculum course. The majority of participants rejected the use of L1, but this study concluded that the final aim of teaching should be training well-educated L2 users rather than defective native speakers.

The use of L1 in the process of SLA is not something new. In the past, different methods employed learners' mother tongue for teaching the second language. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) provided an effective illustration regarding those methods

which emphasized L1 utilization efficiency. Desuggestopedia is a method in which mother tongue could be used in order to explicate the meaning of dialogues (p.80). Another example is Community Language Learning which provides a level of security by using learners' native language and at the same time, providing a link between the familiar (L1) and unfamiliar language (L2) (p.97). Also, in classes based on the Silent Way Method, L1 comes into light whenever essential (p.64). Finally, Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), could be recognized as the most representative method regarding using students' native language in SLA process (pp.17-18). However, contrary to GTM, which is a theory less method, ETP method, proposed by Rahimi and Izadpanah in 2015, is based on socio-cultural theory, as its psychological groundwork, as well as semiotics as the linguistic base. Also, along with the emergence of this method, the related textbooks have been developed for different levels of proficiency.

As a result, the present study attempted to investigate both ETP method and the related textbooks in order to distinguish whether it is appropriate enough to help Iranian EFL learners acquire English competence.

Methodology

Participants

To elicit the attitudes of teachers and learners using the ETP method and related textbooks in their classes, five Iranian EFL students, comprising of 4 males and 5 females aged between 22 and 34 participated in this study. Furthermore, 3 teachers, including 2 females and 1 male who had been teaching at an institute in Shiraz were interviewed. Due to the fact that ETP was a newly-released method, the researchers had limitations in providing a larger sample.

Instruments

Data collection was carried out through two instruments. A semi-structured interview (Appendix 1) was set up to inquire the participants' attitudes about the merits and demerits of ETP method and textbooks. Furthermore, a checklist (Appendix 2) was drawn up to establish the basic frameworks of ETP textbook evaluation. The evaluation checklist was proposed by Demir and Ertaş (2014). The checklist contains 56 items under four main titles (subjects & contents, skills & sub-skills, layout & physical make-up and practical considerations) without discriminating elements like gender, culture, race and so on. The draft of this checklist was first examined at the conference of English language conference in Turkey. After receiving the feedback some items were altered. In addition, thirty evaluation forms and checklists were examined and twenty-three of them were utilized in designing the final checklist.

Data collection procedures

First of all, four sessions of ETP classes with different levels of competence in English were observed at an EFL institute in Shiraz, Iran, in order to make the results of method and book evaluation more reliable. Besides, observations helped researchers not only experience real ETP classes' environment but also become familiar with this method principles and techniques. Each session approximately lasted for two hours. Moreover, only 2 sessions were audio-recorded as well as significant principles were written. Then a semi-structured face-to-face interview was held through 4 sessions with a small sample of three teachers and five learners consisting of both males and females. After all interview sessions were audio-recorded, the data were transcribed and analyzed to depict users' satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Each interview lasted about ten to fifteen minutes in which first participants mentioned their age and the duration of teaching or learning through ETP method, and then they gave their opinions by means of 6 questions. After becoming familiar with ETP method and gathering personal opinions about ETP classes and books, three evaluators, i.e. two B.A English translation students and a PhD candidate of English Literature, carried out objective systematic book evaluations using an eclectic checklist. According to Demir and Ertaş (2014), if the number of YES answers is more than 80%, the book is perfect for your context. If between 60-80%, it can be used in your context but needs adaptation. If below 60%, the book is not suitable for your context. There were rational explanations behind all YES/ NO answers and all three evaluators had written their own comments for each part of the checklist.

ETP course books

ETP book series were designed in four volumes, i.e. ETP1, 2, 3 and 4 but only two of them were published between 2015 and 2016. The two other volumes third ones were to enter the market soon. The names of the books were selected based on four basic steps, the first two of which were respectively Motivation and Leap. The cover page described ETP, an acronym for English Through Persian, well by means of some relevant pictures in both English and Persian contexts. Each volume of the books was accompanied by a non-native English speaker CD recording. In ETP1, each unit sequentially consisted of eleven parts i.e. cover page or motivational point, structure, examples and drills, vocabulary, conversation, listening, reading, writing+, Pic-Dic (picture dictionary), U-Dic and answer key. As the name of the first part revealed, a short paragraph was written in order to motivate

students to see how much learning a foreign language can be accessible. After motivational point, some sentences were mentioned to make learners devote close attention to a specific topic. Then in structure part, grammar rules were presented by means of explaining Persian equivalents. After providing the rules, examples and drills helped students to understand the structure better and also there were four boxes on the left side of each exercise which suggested students to first look, second guess, then check and at last write the answers. From unit three on, vocabulary section was added through which students began to make words based on Persian equivalents. In the conversation part, for the first time learners listened to a brief dialogue through the CD with closed book then they themselves started to create as well as role-play a similar conversation. The next part was listening in which learners should answer to ten multiple-choice questions and fill in the blanks while they were listening. The reading part comprised a short paragraph which was related to grammar and vocabularies of the lesson. Since the paragraph was too short, learners had to present a summary of the text the next session. Through the speaking part students started to talk about themselves by answering some personal questions. The writing skill was fulfilled via a Persian text with some chunks that learners had to translate into English. Two kinds of dictionaries, Pic and U dic, were embodied in the last pages of each unit. At the end of each chapter, answer keys were arranged to avoid error-fossilization. In addition to the above-mentioned sections in ETP1, two new parts including crossword puzzle and picto writing were added to help students reach higher levels gradually. Along with writing+, picto writing was considered as a part of practicing writing skill but at this stage, students started to write their own opinions according to the given pictures apart from a fixed Persian texts. In ETP2 included the same sections but all parts, especially listening, reading and pic dic became longer.

Results and Discussion

Interview

The results of the interviews revealed that all of the participants, especially ETP learners supported the use of Persian in ELT classes. According to student participants, reasons for the importance of utilizing L1 were different. For instance, interviewee A believed that it could help students rely on themselves as well as make them more confident. Also, they felt close connection with those books corresponded with the source culture (Interviewee B).

The findings also revealed a lot of situations in which Persian should be used particularly at elementary levels. Among them, clarifying complex grammar points, explaining new words and providing tangible introductions were the three situations which the teacher participants suggested with the most frequency. According to teacher A, learning was much more important than teaching, thus teachers had to do whatever possible in order to stabilize the process of learning. Moreover, he argued that “based on comprehensible input, proposed by Krashen, nothing could be more comprehensible than Farsi?” Teacher A also suggested that teachers should move from known (Persian) to unknown (English). Not only had this kind of shift decreased the burden of teaching process, but also it had related new lessons to the students’ background knowledge and old memories by which learners could gain a real sense of understanding in relation to mind information system (MIS). Teacher A also explained handover process which had been ETP books standpoint. As so-called teacher said,

I am a teacher and you are a student. I do, you watch. I do, you help. You do, I help. You do, I watch; therefore, ETP books tried to give students both content and context due to learners’ inappropriate language command.

In terms of noticing merits and demerits of ETP books, all five students chose grammar as the most positive aspects of ETP series. They stated that by means of ETP method and books not only could they learn all tenses through few sessions, but also they could make frequently-used English sentences in order to communicate with each other. Among student participants, only one of them came up with a recommendation for improving ETP series. He had a problem with adverbs and propositions which were not listed in an organized way. So, he recommended providing some lists in upcoming editions.

Among teachers, teacher A stated that by means of ETP method and books, students might face danger of overgeneralization, but it depended on teacher performance. Also, the teacher added that ETP books suffered from some typographical errors. He added that the large number of the exercises might make students bored and consequently depended on teachers’ creativity. Both teachers A and B had been teaching English for more than four years; hence, they could well compare ETP books with Teaching English through English (TETE) textbooks such as American English File, Top Notch and Interchange, and even more accurately than students.

According to teacher B, on the one hand, students perceived grammatical points better through ETP and made useful sentences more easily than TETE students. On the other hand, TETE learners performed better regarding their listening and vocabulary

knowledge. In addition to comparing ETP books with TETE ones, teacher B argued that on key words, speaking, grammar and pic dic sections were the strong points of ETP series, but the conversations were vague for students because of including grammar as well as expressions related to advanced levels. Teacher B added that lack of emphasis on listening and class activities could be considered as the weak points of ETP1. Teacher A asserted that TETE books were designed to help students who had just started to speak, but ETP ones were to make students reach a level of understanding and language production. In fact, ETP series were considered to be more structure-based than TETE textbooks.

Textbook Evaluation

Evaluator 1

Table 1 illustrates the results provided by the first evaluator. Subject and contents of ETP series gained the highest percentage of 70%, showing the fact that they were the most appropriate of all the book sections for the Iranian context. On the other hand, practical considerations had the lowest percentage (28.57%), indicating the least suitable section of the books. Skills and sub-skills were divided into seven parts among which grammar achieved the highest percentage (50%), unlike listening and writing trailed off virtually in comparison with other sections. Besides, speaking reached 66.66% which was twice as much as reading. Finally, evaluator1 gave the average score of 44.64% for the whole sections.

Table1. ETP 1 &2 coursebooks evaluation results 1

ELT Coursebook Evaluation Checklist				
		Yes	No	Total
Subjects & Contents		7	3	70%
Skills & subskills	Reading	1	2	33.33%
	Listening	-	3	0%
	Speaking	2	1	66.66%
	Writing	-	3	0%
	Vocabulary	3	2	60%
	Grammar	4	1	80%
	Pronunciation	1	1	50%
	Total	11	14	44%
Layout & Physical Make-up		4	3	57.14%
Practical Considerations		4	10	28.57%
Total		25	31	44.64%

*The total questions in Skills &Subskills part was twenty five including 3 reading, 3 listening, 3 writing, 5 vocabulary, 5 grammar, 2 pronunciation and an extra question about other sub-skills.

Evaluator 2

As can be seen in table 2, the results show that subjects & contents, skills & subskills, layout & physical make-up and practical considerations had percentages of 80%, 56%, 57.14% and 42.85% respectively. As opposed to the listening part which bottomed out the percentages considerably (0%), grammar hit a peak of 100%. In terms of skills, reading, speaking and writing the same results were obtained; moreover, speaking remained steady when comparing the second evaluation with the first one. According to the following table, the average percentage is 57.14%.

Table2. ETP1 &2 coursebooks evaluation results 2

ELT Coursebook Evaluation Checklist				
		Yes	No	Total
Subjects & Contents		8	2	80%
Skills & subskills	Reading	2	1	66.66%
	Listening	-	3	0%
	Speaking	2	1	66.66%
	Writing	2	1	66.66%
	Vocabulary	2	3	40%
	Grammar	5	0	100%
	Pronunciation	1	1	50%
	Total	14	11	56%
Layout & Physical Make-up		4	3	57.14%
Practical Considerations		6	8	42.85%
Total		32	24	57.14%

*The total questions in Skills & Subskills part was twenty five including 3 reading, 3 listening, 3 writing, 5 vocabulary, 5 grammar, 2 pronunciation and an extra question about other sub-skills.

Evaluator 3

Table3 demonstrates that, like the previous evaluation, the highest percentage belong to subjects and contents of ETP books. In skill & subskills section, like the second evaluation, reading, speaking and writing accounted for 66.66%, which were considered as the most competent skills. In terms of the four principal checklist sections, practical considerations fell to 35.71%, approximately half of the peak. As estimated by the third evaluator, the total result was only derived half of satisfaction from all parts of the checklist.

Table3. ETP1 &2 coursebooks evaluation results 3

ELT Coursebook Evaluation Checklist				
		Yes	No	Total
Subjects & Contents		7	3	70%
Skills & subskills	Reading	2	1	66.66%
	Listening	-	3	0%
	Speaking	2	1	66.66%
	Writing	2	1	66.66%
	Vocabulary	2	3	40%

	Grammar	3	2	60%
	Pronunciation	1	1	50%
	Total	12	13	48%
Layout & Physical Make-up		4	3	57.14%
Practical Considerations		6	8	35.71%
Total		28	28	50%

*The total questions in Skills & Subskills part was twenty five including 3 reading, 3 listening, 3 writing, 5 vocabulary, 5 grammar, 2 pronunciation and an extra question about other sub-skills.

According to class observations, both ETP classes and course books had provided quite fast rhythm for language learning process. Also, ETP teachers had created a friendly as well as funny environment in order to make students interested in learning English. However, when the students make a habit of using L1 in class, it might become really difficult to prevent them from using it in advanced levels. The good point is that ETP series consisted of helpful vocabulary items as well as expressions. Students might feel more secure when they find making useful sentences not too hard. Moreover, students were able to learn new facts through ETP examples such as “the average temperature of the universe is minus 270 degrees centigrade” (ETP1, p.10). Also, they became more confident when they could produce such sentences by learning just simple present tense.

Although most of ETP teachers and learners agreed with ETP books, in some areas both researchers’ views were different from them. For instance, teacher A believed that by means of ETP books, students could achieve a level of language understanding and production. There is no doubt that they can make sentences, but it seemed that they might have just memorized them. So, when they themselves were going to produce some sentences independently, they might face problems such as pronunciation errors as well as dependence on teachers in terms of error correction. Although student participants accounted localization as a positive point for ETP textbooks, as Choudhury (2014) argued, “In EFL or ESL classrooms the students should be taught English with the culture associated with it so that the students can acquire the target language with cultural background and correspond in real life situations.” In fact, language and culture have been closely tied together. Thus, if students intend to learn English to migrate to English-spoken countries or exchange ideas with native speakers, learning target language and culture simultaneously may yield more satisfactory results.

Furthermore, learning all tenses in few sessions, teaching new words irregularly, and listening to non-native CDs could all be matters of problem. As class observations revealed, teaching grammar compactly might make students feel confused, especially those who already had an acceptable level of English background. In terms of non-native recordings, on the one hand, ETP students might speak well after passing all four series, but on the other hand, if they want to communicate with native speakers in the future, they need to be familiar with native pronunciation. It is predicted that due to non-native listening materials, ETP students might face problem in real context.

The results of interview and ETP 1 & 2 evaluations were somehow contradictory. This might be due to some factors, such as the novelty of ETP books, limited number of participants, as well as inexperienced students who had not been in the real context yet. Besides, teacher A stated that a suitable checklist might have not been chosen for the current research. Anyway, all three evaluators reasoned that ETP has been one of those books in which the teacher needs to play the most important role in the class, since the textbook itself might have not provided an appropriate order of exercises. Furthermore, as all three tables revealed, ETP books are more based on sub-skills. Even though a good array of correlated vocabulary items as well as topics such as sport, travel, education, etc. have been presented in these books, there is a sudden jump to production. So, if control practice and free practice were added, the vocabulary section would improve. The matter of localization could be another debatable issue regarding ETP textbooks. On the one hand, students might have a better connection with the book; however, English culture is missing.

Besides, in terms of grammar as another sub-skill, teaching has been mainly deductive through translation or “reformulation” with lots of drills, in which the role of teacher has become absolutely significant. As previous tables illustrated, the listening part

of the textbooks might need to be revised because there were not many different tasks except for gap-filling. Also, recordings are not much authentic so students might face some difficulties in real-life situations. In brief, ETP books could be somehow useful for everyday English speaking but as final checklist results disclosed, some parts might require careful revisions.

Conclusion

This study intended to carry out a systematic textbook evaluation in order to examine whether they were appropriate enough to be taught in Iranian context or not. Moreover, this study attempted to reveal whether different sections of the two ETP books were efficient enough to fulfill learners' needs in the realm of foreign language teaching. Finally, the study aimed to elicit the attitudes of teachers and learners using the ETP method and textbooks in their classes.

Although ETP 1&2 evaluations did not gain considerable results (less than 60%), feedbacks from interviewees revealed that use of L1 in cases such as explaining abstract concepts could ease the learning process providing that students did not make a habit of using L1 (Persian) in such classes. In the evaluation section, all the three evaluators reasoned that ETP has been one of those books in which the teacher needs to play the most important role in the class, since the textbook itself might have not provided an appropriate order of exercises. Furthermore, as all three tables revealed, ETP books are more based on sub-skills. Regarding the results of the interview, although most of ETP teachers and learners agreed with ETP books, in some areas both researchers' views were different from them. At last, researchers wish that more accurate empirical research with vast array of participants on using L1 would be conducted in near future to compensate the shortcomings of the current paper.

About the author (s)

Marzieh Souzandehfar is an Assistant Professor of TEFL at Jahrom University, Jahrom, Fars, Iran. She received her PhD and MA in TEFL from Shiraz University. She teaches undergraduate English translation courses at Jahrom University. Her research interests include Multiliteracies, CDA, Testing, and Teaching Second Language Speaking. She has published more than 10 articles in scholarly journals and has presented papers at national conferences.

Khatereh Honarvar has received her BA in Translation Studies from Jahrom University, Fars, Iran. She has been a translator and English language teacher for four years.

Kowsar Saberi has received her BA in Translation Studies from Jahrom University, Fars, Iran. She has been a translator and English language teacher for four years.

References

- [1] Abdelwahab, M. M. (2013). Developing an English Language Textbook Evaluative Checklist. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 1(3), 55-70.
- [2] Alshammari, M. M. (2011). The use of the mother tongue in Saudi EFL classrooms. *Journal of International Education Research*, 7(4), 95.
- [3] Ansary, H., & Babaii, E. (2002). Universal characteristics of EFL/ESL textbook: A step towards systematic textbook evaluation. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 2, 1-8. Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Ansary-Textbooks/>
- [4] Banegas, D. L. *From International Coursebooks to Teacher-Produced Materials*1.
- [5] Choudhury, R. U. (2014). The Role of Culture in Teaching and Learning of English as a Foreign Language. *Express, an International Journal of Multi Disciplinary Research*.
- [6] Demir, Y., & Ertas, A. (2014). A Suggested Eclectic Checklist for ELT Coursebook Evaluation. *Reading*, 14(2). Retrieved from <http://readingmatrix.com/files/11-1n844ug7.pdf>
- [7] Garinger, D. (2002). *Textbook Selection for the EFL Classroom*. Washington DC: ERIC Digest (Dec.).
- [8] Kelishadi, A. A., & Sharifzadeh, A. (2013). An evaluation of Top Notch series. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, 4(4), 60-73.
- [9] Kim Anh, K. H. (2010). Use of Vietnamese in English language teaching in Vietnam: Attitudes of Vietnamese university teachers. *ELT Journal*, 3(2).
- [10] Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, M. (2011). *Techniques and principles in language teaching*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [11] Lawrence, W. P. W. (2011). *Textbook Evaluation: A Framework for Evaluating the Fitness of the Hong Kong New Secondary School (NSS) Curriculum*. M.A. thesis, CityUniversity of Hong Kong, China, Hong Kong. Retrieved from <http://www.asian-efljournal.com/Thesis/Thesis-Wong.pdf>
- [12] Mukundan, J., Hajimohammadi, R., & Nimehchisalem, V. (2011). Developing an English language textbook evaluation checklist. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 4(6), 21. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/openview/5d524c1734c294ff25a7923cf6a45c55/1?pq-origsite=gscholar>
- [13] Nazary, M. (2008). The role of L1 in L2 acquisition: Attitudes of Iranian university students. *Novitas-ROYAL*, 2(2), 138-153.
- [14] Rahimi, A., Izadpanah, M. A. (2015). *English through Persian (ETP) 1*, Shiraz: Ideh Deraxshan Press.
- [15] Rahimi, A., Izadpanah, M. A. (2016). *English through Persian (ETP) 2*, Shiraz: Ideh Deraxshan Press.

- [16] Riazi, A. M., & Mosalanejad, N. (2010). Evaluation of learning objectives in Iranian high-school and pre-university English textbooks using Bloom's taxonomy. *TESL-EJ: The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 13(4). Retrieved from <http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume13/ej52/ej52a5/>
- [17] Roshan, S. (2014). A Critical Comparative Evaluation of English Course. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 173.
- [18] Tang, J. (2002). Using L1 in the English classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, 40(1).

Appendix 1: interview questions

- Sex: Intended duration:mins
 Age: Interview began:
 Date: Interview finished:
 Location: Actual duration:mins
1. How long have you learned/ taught English through ETP?
 2. Should teachers use Persian in EFL classes?
 3. If not, could you please explain your answer?
 4. If yes, in what situations teachers should use Persian? Why?
 5. How often teachers should use Persian in classes?
 6. Have you ever read/taught another English textbook? (name it please)
 7. If yes, could you please compare and contrast those books with ETP series?
 8. Which parts of ETP books have been vague/clear? (give reasons please)
 9. Which sections of ETP textbooks have been efficient enough? / Which parts need to be worked on?

Appendix 2: checklist

ELT Coursebook Evaluation Checklist

		Yes	No	
Subjects & Contents	Does the content serve as a window into learning about the target language culture (American, British etc.)? (23)			
	Are the subject and content of the coursebook interesting? (2)			
	Is the content of the coursebook challenging enough to foster new learnings? (5)			
	Are the subject and content of the coursebook motivating? (2)			
	Is the thematic content understandable for students? (3)			
	Is there sufficient variety in the subject and content of the coursebook? (2)			
	Is the thematic content culturally appropriate? (3)			
	Are the topics and texts free from any kind of discrimination (gender, race etc.)? (5)			
	Is there a relationship between the content of the coursebook and real-life situations(society)?(6)			
	Do the topics and texts in the coursebook include elements from both local and target culture?(5)			
Sub-skills & Skills	Reading	Are there adequate and appropriate exercises and tasks for improving reading comprehension? (6)		
		Is there is a wide range of different reading texts with different subject content? (7)		
		Are the reading selections authentic pieces of language? (1)		
	Listening	Does the coursebook have appropriate listening tasks with well-defined goals? (8)		
		Are models provided for different genres? (11)Is the listening material well recorded, as authentic as possible?(9)		
		Is the listening material accompanied by background information, questions and activities which help comprehension? (9)		
Speaking	Does the coursebook include speech situations relevant to students' background? (10)			

		Are the activities developed to initiate meaningful communication? (8)		
		Does the coursebook include adequate individual and group speaking activities? (5)		
	Writing	Are models provided for different genres? (11)		
		Do the tasks have achievable goals and take into consideration learner capabilities? (8)		
		Is practice provided in controlled and guided composition in the early stages? (10)		
	Vocabulary	Does the vocabulary load (i.e. the number of new words introduced every lesson) seem to be reasonable for the students of that level? (12)		
		Is there is a good distribution (simple to complex) of vocabulary load across chapters and the whole book? (11)		
		Do the vocabulary exercises promote internalization of previously and newly introduced items? (13)		
		Are the new vocabulary words repeated in subsequent lessons to reinforce their meaning and use? (1)		
		Is the new vocabulary integrated in varying contexts and situations? (14)		
	Grammar	Are the grammar points presented with brief and easy examples and explanations? (15)		
		Is the primary function of new structures for interaction and communication? (14)		
		Do the structures gradually increase in complexity to suit the growing reading ability of students? (12)		
		Are the new structures presented systematically and in a meaningful context? (16)		
		Are the grammar points recycled in the following units? (4)		
	Pronunciation	Is there sufficient work on recognition and production of stress patterns, intonation and individual sounds? (17)		

	Are the pronunciation points repeated and reinforced in subsequent lessons? (13)		
Layout & Physical Make-up	Does the coursebook cover other sub-skills like note-taking, skimming, scanning, inferring meaning, listening for gist, etc.? (4, 2)		
	Is the printing quality high? (11)		
	Does the coursebook look interesting and fun? (18)		
	Does the coursebook include a detailed overview of the functions and structures that will be taught in each unit? (22)		
	Does the coursebook reflect learners' preferences in terms of layout, design, and organization? (19)		
	Does the coursebook contain enough pictures, diagrams, tables etc. helping students understand the printed text? (14)		
	Are the illustrations informative and functional? (13)		
	Do the size and weight of the coursebook seem convenient for students to handle? (14)		
	Is the coursebook up-to-date (e.g. published within the past 10 years)? (20)		
	Is the coursebook easily accessible? (2)		
Is the coursebook affordable? (21)			
Practical Considerations	Does the coursebook have supplementary materials (tapes, visuals etc.)? (5)		
	Does the coursebook have supporting online materials/tests and e-format? (5)		
	Does the book address different learning styles and strategies? (4)		
	Do the activities and exercises introduce the main principles of CLT? (22)		
	Does the coursebook include self-assessment parts? (5)		
	Can the activities be exploited fully and embrace various methodologies in ELT? (11)		
	Is / are the type/s of syllabus design used in the book appropriate for learners? (4)		
	Can the coursebook easily be integrated into technology, thereby allowing for individual study outside the school? (5)		
	Does the coursebook fit curriculum/goals? (3)		
Are the objectives specified explicitly in the coursebook? (22)			

	Is the coursebook designed by taking into account the learners' socially and historically English-free status? (5)		
	EXTRA COMMENTS/CRITICISMS ON THE BOOK:		