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Screening EFL Teachers' Perception on 'Prospect 1': The Case of Internal and External Evaluation

Hossein Isaee[1*], Hamed Barjesteh[1], & Atefeh Nasrollahi Mouziraji[1]

* Correspondence:
hossein_isaee@yahoo.com
The department of English Language and Literature, Ayatollah Amoli Branch, Islamic Azad University, Amol, Iran

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Abstract

Since 2012, the ELT experts of Iran's Ministry of Education have developed and published series titled 'Prospect' which includes three successive textbooks designed for teaching English to the students of grades 7th, 8th and 9th of junior high schools of Iran. It is a fact that the key components of all educational programs are the textbooks, the efficiency of which contributes to the accomplishment of the pedagogical goals of the curriculum. With the goal of helping Iranian materials developers modify 'Prospect' series and improve the overall quality of the very textbooks, this study aimed to conduct evaluation over one of the series namely 'Prospect 1' through screening EFL teachers' perception who have been incorporating the textbook in their online and conventional classrooms at least during the last five years. By emulating a model provided by McDonough and Shaw (1993) on the basis of external and internal evaluation of textbooks, a 55-five-point Likert scale questionnaire was adapted by the researchers and the required data were gathered from 46 female and 58 male English teachers in urban and rural junior high schools of Gilan and Mazandaran provinces of Iran. The findings revealed that EFL teachers were relatively dissatisfied with some important facets of 'Prospect 1.' Our respondents believed that the textbook is really poor in printing quality, and it lacks attractive and motivating pictures and illustrations. Moreover, not incorporating variant dialects and authentic language, not using modern techniques such as typography and perceptual saliency, and not considering the needs of the learners or different learning styles, are among other shortcomings that seem to be in dire need of modification.

Keywords: external evaluation, internal evaluation, perceptual saliency, textbook, typography

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1. Introduction

Incorporating English teaching in educational system of Iran dates back to 1939 when the first bilingual textbook series was published and put to use in high schools. Those pioneering textbooks included 6 books for 6 consecutive grades of high school and were based on traditional methods such as GTM and Reading based approaches. In fact, the 6-book series were not designed based upon any official curriculum, nor did the series follow the same design and procedure in all the lessons. In addition, the textbooks were not accompanied by any workbooks, any audio files or CDs, any teachers' manual or teachers' guide. Grammar drills and reading skill were the main focus of the series and hence, the students were completely passive and the teacher was considered the absolute authority in the classrooms and insufficient attention was given to the role of materials in language teaching Harwood (2010).

Fortunately, thanks to the emergence of CLT approach and the importance and necessity of adopting a humanitarian approach to language teaching and learning, the significance of the needs of the learners, the importance of student-teacher relationship, the taking account of learner factors, the versatile benefits of error correction, the crucial role of problem solving and task based activities, and fostering communicatively competent learners lead to the publication of the series called 'Prospect' which have been developed and released by the ministry of education of Iran since 2012. The series include three consecutive textbooks designed for grades 7th, 8th and 9th of junior high school. As highlighted by Hutchinson and Torres (1994), textbooks are part of every educational system on which the social, cultural, scientific, and mental growth of learners depend. Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p. 4) further suggest that "the textbook is an almost universal element of teaching."

Textbooks are psychologically necessary for both students and teachers as they make the basis upon which the progress and achievement of the learners can be built. In addition, textbooks play a crucial role in language teaching and learning and are considered as the next important element in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms after the teacher and this is commonly believed by both English language teaching theoreticians and practitioners. Besides, textbook is the main component of any instructional program as it is difficult to imagine a class without it (Khandaghi Khameneh & Hashamdar, 2021; Nunan, 1989).

Nunan (1999) argues that textbooks provide ready-made materials to both teachers and students, so they are said to play a significant role in EFL teaching and learning. A key element of all educational programs are the "textbooks" the efficiency of which greatly contributes to the accomplishment of the pedagogical goals of the curriculum and such significance necessitates its rigorous evaluation (Tomlinson, 2008). Nowadays, one of the most omnipotent tools for pushing both teachers and learners towards teaching and learning English language throughout the world are the textbooks. Therefore, selecting proper and appropriate textbooks for teaching language in classrooms could be assumed as one of the most important tasks of language teachers (Tomlinson, 2008). As Hutchinson and Torres (1994 p. 315) maintain "the textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching and no teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook."

Considering the brief review of the scholars and practitioners' perspectives on the importance of the textbooks in educational programs, it is quite evident that the evaluation of such a key component of education is of crucial significance in any educational context (McGrath, 2002). In a different distinction, English Language Teaching (ELT) materials can be evaluated at the 'macro' and the 'micro' levels (McGrath, 2002, p.14). Macro evaluation has also been termed 'external evaluation' (McDonough & Shaw, 2003, p. 61). McGrath (2002, p. 25) claims that "macro-level evaluation is concerned about obtaining a general impression of the material." Micro-level evaluation has also been termed 'internal evaluation' (McDonough & Shaw, 2003, p. 66). According to McDonough & Shaw (2003, p. 67), "the essential issue at this stage is for us to analyze the extent to which the factors in the external evaluation stage match up with the internal consistency and organization of the materials as stated by the author."

Therefore, in order to elicit the positive and negative aspects of 'Prospect 1' which has been developed for 7th grade students of junior high school in Iran, we have tried to evaluate the textbook internally and externally through screening EFL teachers' perspectives as well as reviewing the related studies previously conducted. As literature suggests, several studies have previously been conducted to evaluate Iranian high school EFL textbooks which were based on the traditional teaching methods (i.e., Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Azizifar, 2009; Jahangard, 2007; Riazi & Aryashokouh, 2007), and some more studies have been spotted which embarked on examining the overall evaluation of the newly developed series (i.e., Ahmadi & Derakhshan, 2014; Ahmadi Safa & Karampour, 2020; Ahour & Golpour, 2013; Sadeghi, 2020; Salehi & Amini, 2016) which are definitely a great asset and support to the current study in order to compare the findings and to interpret the results more accurately.

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2. Review of the Related Literature

Literature and studies show that textbooks are very common in ELT contexts and ELT professionals use textbooks for daily teaching as textbooks provide ready-made materials to both teachers and students teaching (Byrd, 2001; Litz, 2005; McDonough & Shaw, 1993). When a textbook is developed and put to use for an ELT context, its evaluation is even of more importance because its pedagogical value needs to be determined before long-term use. In this regard, textbooks are evaluated, modified, revised, and republished and even sometimes new books are developed to meet the precise focuses of instruction as well as meeting language needs of the learners.

Evaluation is defined as "the systematic attempt to gather information to make judgments or to pass decisions" (Lynch, 1996, p. 18), and once applied to the realm of educational materials, it largely concentrates on the needs of the materials users and makes subjective judgments about their influences on the same materials users (Tomlinson, 2012). In fact, the evaluation of educational materials and textbooks began in 1970s and most of the primary materials evaluation projects and studies claim that "materials analysis and evaluation enable us to look inside the materials and to take more control over their design and use" (Chang, 1996, p. 88).

McDonough and Shaw (2003) maintain that materials need to be evaluated in two situations. First, the situation in which the teachers might be allowed to adapt or develop their own materials. Second, the situation in which teachers are determined as the consumers who use the others' products. McDonough and Shaw (2003) suggest a model for textbook evaluation which involves three stages. First, *External Evaluation* that examines the organization of materials stated by the author or the publisher including claims made on the cover page and information in the introduction and table of contents. This kind of evaluation gives information about the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context of use, presentation and organization of materials, authors' opinion about language and methodology, use of audio-visual materials, vocabulary list and index, cultural aspects, tests and exercises included in the book. Second, *Internal Evaluation* (or detailed evaluation) in which the following factors are examined:

(1) the presentation of the skills,

(2) the grading and sequence of the materials,

(3) the authenticity or artificiality of the listening materials,

(4) the authenticity or artificiality of the speaking materials,

(5) the appropriateness of tests and materials, and

(6) the appropriateness of the materials for different learning styles and claims made by the authors for self-study.

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

The role of the textbook in the program

The objectives of the course, the role of the textbook as the core of the program or as a peripheral textbook of the course, availability of workbooks for the practice, and the size of the class should be considered.

The role of the teacher in the program

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

The role of the learners in the program

The expectance of learners from a textbook, their needs, and the way in which they use the book are really important. But another point before evaluating of the textbook is that no commercial textbook will ever be a perfect fit for language program (Richard, 2001). Two factors are involved in the development of commercial textbooks: those representing the interests of the author, and those representing the interest of the publisher (Byrd 1995; Werner et al., cited in Richards, 2001).

Tomlinson (2001, p. 15) maintains that material developers and teachers can make judgments about the effect of the materials on the people using them through careful evaluation of the textbooks. In addition, as textbooks are the most essential component of an EFL classroom, the evaluation of the textbooks is of great importance. Many researchers

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and scholars have emphasized the importance of post-use evaluation of a textbook, since it can provide us with data concerning the actual effect of the textbook on the users (Tomlinson, 2003; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2004). Besides, studies show that textbooks are very common in ELT contexts and ELT professionals use textbooks for daily teaching (Byrd, 2001; Litz, 2005; McDonough & Shaw, 1993).

Given the significant role of textbooks in educational programs and their cognitive, affective, and educational impacts on second or foreign language learners (Nunan, 1988), teachers are recommended to choose "only those materials which are developed based on sound linguistic and pedagogical principles" (Williams, 1983, p. 255). It is quite evident that such a critical choice entails careful materials evaluation as "a procedure which involves measuring the value (or potential value) of a set of learning materials" (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 15). Materials evaluation is mostly carried out through different methods including checklists, in-depth interview, and integrated methods which make a combination of the two previous procedures (McGrath, 2002), and provided that the evaluation process is carried out systematically, it helps teachers to get effective, accurate, systematic, and contextual perceptions about the whole nature of textbook (Ellis, 1997).

As mentioned earlier, this paper tries to elicit the positive and negative aspects of 'Prospect 1' from experts' and teachers' point of view and recommendations. In fact, 'Prospect 1' has been published and put to use based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach by the ministry of education of Iran since 2012 and it is a part of a six-year program that is designed to help Iranian students learn English for communicative purposes using all language skills namely listening, speaking, reading, writing, and various sub-skills. It also claims that the learners are required to do lots of pair/ group tasks. As the researchers of this study aim to report the findings of a textbook evaluation on different aspects of 'Prospect 1', reviewing some of the studies and articles which have previously been published on 'Prospect 1' sounds inevitable since the literature is replete with textbook evaluation studies.

The main gap that convinced the researchers to conduct an evaluation on 'Prospect 1' was that many studies had focused on the previous high school and Junior high school textbooks in Iran which were based on the traditional teaching methods (GTM) for many years (Aryashokouh, 2007; Azizifar, 2009; Jahangard, 2007; Riazi, 2003), and only a few studies have been spotted to have embarked on an attempt to examine the evaluation of the newly developed titled 'Prospect' in Junior high schools. In addition, Shabani and Nejad (2013) analyzed the Junior high school textbooks and supported this claim that there have not been slight changes in the textbooks for many years even in the pictures. Moreover, some of the students use other communicative textbooks to learn English at foreign language institutes.

Sharabian et al. (2013) stated that the textbook 'Prospect 1' was designed to help students to learn English for communicative purposes using all the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Alternatively, it was believed that the previous textbooks suffered from lack of communicative skills, and the students were unable to use the language in real situation, so we were interested to find the teachers' perceptions in this regard. Similarly, Bemani and Jahangard (2014) evaluated 'Prospect 1' which is developed for the first grade of junior high schools in Iran. Their study explored the perspectives of 102 EFL teachers through Litz (2005) evaluation checklist. The results revealed that the teachers were partially satisfied with 'Prospect 1.' They concluded that the presentation of skills and cultural norms in the textbook needs to be revised.

Ahmadi Safa, Ghonche Poor, Mohamadi, Seifi, and Zekrati (2017) evaluated the English textbook of Iranian junior high schools titled 'Prospect2.' Subjects of this study were 236 EFL school teachers from seven provinces of Iran. A 65-item researcher-made Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect the required data. In addition, 38 teachers participated in a semi-structured interview. The findings indicated that the EFL teachers enjoyed positive attitudes and perceptions towards linguistic aspects of the book. However, the EFL teachers held a negative attitude towards authentic contextualization of the language, cultural points, and the physical aspects of the text itself.

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

Finally, Sadeghi (2020) evaluated 'Prospect 3.' To this end, 25 teachers from different High schools in Minab city took part in the study. The selection of participants was based on convenient sampling. In order to collect relevant data for the study, a textbook evaluation checklist consisting of 42 items on four aspects of textbooks, including: Aims

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and achievements, Skills, Language type, and Technical considerations were administered to teachers. Findings indicated that although the book has some strong sides, teachers pointed to major weaknesses in textbook in terms of lack of glossary list, shortage of time to cover the stated objectives, and a need to recycling the newly learned vocabularies in subsequent lessons. Finally, the result of the study revealed that with respect to this new formed ELT textbook, teachers had more positive attitudes towards aims and achievements, skills, and technical considerations of the book. The findings also revealed that EFL teachers showed the least positive attitude towards language type, and this study can be important for EFL teachers and learners in Iran.

Having reviewed the related literature as well as the empirical studies, it is definitely apparent that the first member of the 'Prospect Series' had comparatively been ignored and received less attention and deserves further evaluative studies. Hence, as a partial attempt to address the need, the present study focuses on EFL teachers' perspectives on 'Prospect 1' which is the main English textbook of 7th grade junior high school in educational system of Iran. Henceforth, present researchers make an endeavor to find the answer to the following question, considering internal and external evaluation of Iranian 7th grade English textbook namely 'Prospect 1':

What are the experienced Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes and perspectives towards different aspects of 'Prospect 1' in terms of the physical appearance, layout and general theme; illustrations; supplementary materials; exercises, tasks and activities; language components such as structures and vocabulary; language types; content and language skills; and methodology?

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

A sample of 104 Iranian EFL teachers were conveniently chosen from junior high schools of Mazandaran and Guilan provinces of Iran. They were 46 female and 58 male teachers with an average age of 29 and 38 for the female teachers and male ones respectively (see Table 1). All the teachers have been teaching 1th grade English textbook at various rural and urban junior high schools of Mazandaran and Guilan provinces at least for the last five years. Their teaching experience ranged from 5 to over 20 years.

According to Table 1, the average years of teaching experience of teachers was determined 16. In terms of teachers' academic degree, 15% had an associate Art (AA) degree, 37.5% held a BA degree, 41 % held an MA degree, and 6.5% held a Ph.D. degree. In addition, 56% percent of the teachers were involved in teaching in urban areas and 44.0% in rural areas.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

	Gender		Age	Teaching Experience				Workplace		Degree			
	Female	Male	21 -52	5 - 9	10 - 14	15 - 19	20 - over	City	Village	A.A	BA	MA	PhD
Number	46	58	104	25	33	29	17	56	44	15	37.5	41	6.5

3.2 Instrumentation

In order to determine the specific criteria relevant to the study, some checklists by different researchers were, prior to starting the study, collected and analyzed among which, an EFL Textbook Evaluation Questionnaire, was developed by Ahmadi Safa and Karampour (2018) was taken into precise consideration. In fact, it consisted of 60 five-point Likert scale items addressing different aspects of EFL textbook. Besides, the construct validity of the questionnaire was assured in the original study through expert judgment and exploratory factor analyses; meanwhile, Cronbach Alpha analysis was applied as a measure on the internal consistency of the scale, and the estimated reliability index of the questionnaire was found to be (α= 0.90).

Considering Ahmadi Safa et al. (2018) EFL Textbook Evaluation Questionnaire on the one hand, and the different checklists of Byrd (2001), Brown (2001), Skierso (1991), and Ur (1996) on the other hand, the researchers of this

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study intermingled the mentioned checklists and developed a new 55 five-point Likert scale checklist addressing different aspects of 'Prospect 1' as the main data collection instrument in this study which was verified and assured by 3 faculty members who are associate professors in TEFL at the department of English language and literature of Ayatollah Amoli Azad University, Iran. No need to say that Cronbach Alpha analysis was also applied as a measure on the internal consistency of the scale, and the estimated reliability of the questionnaire was revealed to be (α= 0.89). It contained 55 items in eight multi-item scales focusing on characteristics of 'Prospect 1.'

The adapted questionnaire contained two main sections: One section for gathering demographic information of EFL teachers such as age, gender, workplace, teaching experiences, and academic degree, and the other section was allocated to evaluation scheme of 'Prospect 1' including eight criteria, the first category of which evaluates the very textbook externally and the rest seven categories do a detailed evaluation (also known as micro-evaluation or internal evaluation) which are as follows:

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

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

In order to achieve the main aim of this study (i.e., internal and external evaluation of Prospect 1), the EFL Textbook Evaluation Questionnaire was submitted to 150 ELT teachers either in hard copy, in a face to face contact, or posted virtually through Whats App messaging application and email correspondence because of the limitations caused by the unexpected pandemic of Covid 19. Out of 150 target respondents, 104 responded to the questionnaire. In fact, the data were collected from 46 female and 58 male EFL teachers working at public and private junior high schools in various rural and urban schools of two provinces of Iran–Mazandaran and Guilan. Finally, the completed questionnaires were analyzed via SPSS statistical software version 24 in order to find out the answers to the main research question. Accordingly, descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were employed, bearing in mind that the 5-point Likert scale is considered an interval scale in which the mean is very significant (i.e., The mean scope from 1 to 1.80 shows strongly agree, from 1.81 to 2.60 means agree, from 2.61 to 3.40 means neutral, from 3.41 to 4.20 means disagree, and from 4.21 to 5 means strongly disagree). At last, based on the teachers' perspectives and attitudes, the results of the evaluation of Junior high school textbook 'Prospect 1' revealed that although the newly published textbook enjoys some privileges, it is to some extent in dire need of revision and modification.

3.4 Data Analysis and Results

In order to find the answer to the research question regarding the perspectives and attitudes of Iranian EFL junior high school teachers towards external evaluation as well as internal evaluation (i.e., detailed evaluation) of 'Prospect 1', descriptive statistics including Mean, Percentage, and Standard Deviation was used and tabulated in 9 tables. As mentioned earlier, 'Prospect 1' evaluation scheme included eight criteria the first of which evaluated the very textbook externally and the seven more categories did a detailed evaluation (also known as micro-evaluation or internal evaluation) of the same textbook which are depicted in 9 tables and are as follows: The physical appearance, printing quality, general theme as well as the layout of the textbook, as you can observe in Table 2, were measured through ten items (i.e., 1-10) of the questionnaire.

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

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
1. The book has a good appearance.	104	4.71	1.877	1.30	12.7	1.0	39.1	47.8
2. Hard cover of the book is attractive.	104	4.78	.939	1.9	1.8	1.7	27.0	67.3
3. The colors of the pages are appealing.	104	4.79	1.309	1.7	1.6	1.8	29.2	65.5
4. The book has a high printing quality.	104	4.70	1.326	1.8	1.04	1.6	35.5	57.7
5. The book is well organized.	104	4.81	1.761	1.60	4.60	2.7	37.4	44.6
6. The book has a good layout.	104	4.69	1.630	9.5	2.60	1.1	60.4	27.3
7. The table of contents is quite comprehensive and useful.	104	4.11	1.331	24.2	12.7	2.1	24.2	36.6
8. List of words at the end of the book is useful.	104	4.29	1.254	11.8	10.2	5.6	25.9	46.5
9. A list of references is provided at the end of the textbook.	104	4.88	.531	1.9	1.10	1.8	32.9	62.2
10. Useful and helpful index/s is/are included.	104	4.76	1.642	1.20	1.40	7.6	27.6	62.3
layout	104	4.65	0.626					

As you can see in Table 2, the mean score and standard deviation for the teachers' evaluation of the physical appearance, layout, printing quality, and general theme of the textbook are 4.65 and 0.626 respectively. It reveals that more than two third of the EFL teachers were dissatisfied with the overall layout and physical appearance of Prospect 1. The mean scores of the first ten items of the questionnaire ranged from 4.11 to 4.88. In this regard, item 7 of the questionnaire gained the least rate of disagreement (*M*= 4.11), whereas item 9 enjoyed the highest rate of disagreement. In addition, more than two third of the EFL teachers (about 27 % strongly disagree and 60 % disagree) believed that the textbook does not have a good layout (item=6) and 86.9 % in total showed dissatisfaction with the physical appearance of the textbook (item=1).

In addition, more than half of the teachers (37.4 % disagree and 44.6 % strongly agree) thought that the textbook is not appropriately well-organized (item=5). Except 60 percent that did not vote for the appropriateness and comprehensiveness of the table of contents at the beginning of the book, around 37 percent of the EFL teachers believed that the table of contents provides sufficient guidelines about how to use it. Besides, most of the teachers (around 26% disagree and 46 % strongly disagree) did not find the list of words at the end of the textbook useful (item 8). However, when it came to the hard cover of the newly published textbook (item2, *M*=4.78), the color of its pages (item 3, *M*= 4.79), and its printing quality (item 4, *M*=4.70), nearly all of the EFL teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed as they were not pleased with these aspects of Prospect 1. Nonetheless, the least satisfaction was allocated to item 9 (*M*=4.88) since it is believed that there is no useful reference at the end of the textbook and nearly more than two third of the EFL teachers were dissatisfied

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with the usefulness of index/s (i.e., item 10, *M*=4.76). Concerning the second evaluated aspect of the 7th grade English textbook (i.e., the illustrations) descriptive statistical results, which were measured through five items of the questionnaire (i.e., 11-15), are summarized and shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for illustrations items

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
11. Images in the book are attractive and of high quality.	104	3.73	1.614	13.1	7.8	1.7	9.7	67.7
12. Images and figures are clear and not confusing.	104	1.98	1.350	43.8	16.3	8.8	19.3	11.7
13. Images, charts, shapes and tables are relevant.	104	2.29	1.313	21.9	16.5	33.9	7.8	8.2
14. Images make the input more comprehensible.	104	1.62	1.308	53.8	29.6	1.9	3.5	11.1
15. Perceptual salience and typography are used to draw students' attention.	104	3.24	1.655	16.9	1.8	8.5	26.7	46.1
Illustrations	104	2.57	.766					

As indicated in Table 3, the teachers' mean score and standard deviation for illustrations of the textbook is 2.57 and 0.766 respectively, showing that EFL teachers were a little bit satisfied with the illustrations of the textbook but not entirely. The mean scores of the items ranged from 1.62 to 3.73. More than half of the teachers (around 55 percent in total) believed that the images, charts, figures, and tables are clear, relevant and not confusing (items 12 and 13), 9.5 percent of them disagreed and 67.7 percent strongly disagreed that the pictures are attractive and maintain very high quality (item 11, *M*=3.73) and hence, the least value was allocated to item 11 as shown in Table 3.

Concerning the 14th item of the questionnaire that illustrations make the input more comprehensible, 53.8 and 29.6 percent of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with this aspect of 'Prospect 1' as illustrations are said to be relevant to the topics of the textbook. In contrast, many of the respondents (25.6 % disagree and 46.1 % strongly disagree) did not verify that specific techniques such as *Typography* or *Perceptual saliency* are employed in the textbook to enhance the process of learning (item 15, *M*=3.24) since the mean fell into 'neutral' range. The supplementary materials of a textbook such as teacher's guide-book, work-book, flash cards, and CDs were investigated through five items (i.e., 16-20) of the questionnaire. Table 4 summarizes the descriptive statistical data obtained in this regard.

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Table 4. Descriptive statistics for supplementary materials

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
16. There is a useful Teachers' Guide for both novice and experienced teachers.	104	1.30	0.985	61.9	28.3	1.8	4.8	3.8
17. Recommended practices in the Teachers' Guide are based on the latest research findings in the field of language teaching and learning	104	4.59	1.634	5.8	3.6	3.3	19.8	67.3
18. Appropriate techniques are provided in the Teachers' Guide to enable students to activate their background knowledge.	104	1.97	1.001	46.9	40.0	2.7	6.50	3.8
19. Useful tasks and relevant exercises are provided in The workbook.	104	2.01	1.719	32.7	50.0	3.9	11.4	1.9
20. In addition to the original textbook, complementary materials such as CDs, video clips, flash cards are also provided for the students.	104	2.78	1.628	34.6	26.9	1.5	29.3	7.8
Supplementary Materials	104	2.53	.701					

The teachers' mean score and standard deviation for availability and acceptability of supplementary materials of newly-published Iranian 7th grade English textbook are 2.53 and 0.701 according to Table 4, indicating that EFL teachers were fairly pleased with the supplementary materials and teacher's guide. The mean scores for the items of this criterion (items 16-20) ranged from 1.30 to 4.59. Enjoying the highest rate of disagreement (*M*=4.59), item 17 addressed the recommended practices in the Teachers' Guide are based on the latest research findings in the field of language teaching and learning and enjoying the highest rate of agreement (*M*=1.30), item 16 addressed the availability of helpful guidelines for both novices and experienced teachers in the teacher's guide.

In this regard, nearly 62 and 28 percent of the participants strongly agreed and agreed respectively which shows a high rate of agreement. Besides, according to teacher's point of view around 40 % agreed and 46 % strongly agreed that appropriate techniques are provided in the Teacher's Guide to enable students to activate their background knowledge (item 18, *M*=1.97). Most of the respondents also believed that useful tasks and relevant exercises are provided in the workbook (item 19, *M*=2.01), and complementary material including CDs, video clips, and flash cards are sufficiently provided (item 20, *M*=2.78). Language Components such as grammar and vocabulary were measured

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through seven items (i.e., 21-27) of the questionnaire and the results of the analyses are summarized and depicted in Table 5 below.

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

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
21. The number of Vocabulary introduced in the book, is appropriate to students' level of proficiency	104	1.61	.953	47.3	40.5	1.8	4.8	5.7
22. The Grammar rules are chosen based on their frequency of usage in daily conversations.	104	3.84	1.329	13.3	11.7	12.5	41.6	20.9
23. Words are distributed from easy to hard in each unit of the book.	104	2.56	1.530	33.8	34.5	3.8	9.5	9.4
24. Recycling vocabulary has been done effectively	104	2.09	1.316	44.4	32.5	1.1	14.4	7.6
25. Considering the students' needs, the grammar rules are appropriate to students' level of language Proficiency.	104	1.51	1.067	38.5	51.9	2	1.1	6.5
26. The grammar rules are presented in authentic sentences or short passages.	104	3.92	1.386	3.4	7.5	1.6	37.9	49.9
27. Grammar is presented and explained clearly but Implicitly and practiced throughout the book.	104	4.08	1.374	20.9	6.01	1.9	56.7	20.5
Components of Language	104	2.90	.639					

As displayed in Table 5, the mean score and standard deviation for the teachers' evaluation of grammar and vocabulary are 290 and 0.639 respectively, showing sort of dissatisfaction and sort of satisfaction of EFL teachers (i.e., neutral) on grammar and vocabulary section of 'Prospect 1.' As shown in Table 5, the mean scores for the participants' evaluation of the grammar and vocabulary items ranged from 1.51 to 4.08. Item 25 with the mean of 1.51 received the highest agreement since around 90 percent of junior high school teachers agreed that considering the students' needs, the grammar rules of the textbook are appropriate to their language proficiency level. In contrast, item 27, with the mean of 4.08 received the lowest agreement since 56.7 percent of the participants disagreed and 20.5 percent strongly disagreed that the grammar is presented and explained clearly but implicitly and practiced throughout the book.

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Moreover, around 89 percent of the teachers verified that the grammatical points are not presented in authentic sentences or short passages (item 26, *M*= 3.92), indicating high disagreement of EFL teachers. Item 24 with the mean of 2.09, indicates that respondents are relatively satisfied with the recycling vocabulary. Considering items 21 and 23 of the questionnaire, almost all the participants declared a high satisfaction and strongly agreed or just agreed that the number of vocabulary introduced in the book is appropriate to students' level of proficiency (item 21, *M*=1.61), and the fact that words are distributed from easy to hard in each unit of the book (item 23, *M*=2.56). Table 5 further indicates that 41.6 percent of the high school teachers disagreed and another 20.9 percent strongly disagreed that grammar rules are chosen based on their frequency of usage in daily conversations (i.e., item 22, *M*=3.84). Therefore, we can observe moderate disagreement of E F L teachers on vocabulary and grammar section as explained according to the results of Table 5. Exercises, tasks and activities were measured through six items (i.e., 28-33) of the questionnaire, which are summarized and shown in Table 6 below.

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

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
28. A balanced range of exercises is seen in the book.	104	4.67	1.057	2.7	4.90	3.2	36.5	53.7
29. Individual, pair and group work are included.	104	2.30	1.437	64.1	19.1	3.6	6.6	3.50
30. Activities of the text book encourage students to respond creatively, innovatively and independently.	104	3.22	1.366	5.50	1.50	2.8	30.00	60.2
31. Activities of the text book are designed in such way that lead students to meaningful communication	104	2.14	1.226	73.8	11.1	1.6	5.7	7.8
32. Students' learning new things is evaluated through tasks and activities.	104	2.40	1.861	58.1	28.7	1.3	1.13	8.7
33. The tasks help students learn grammar by creating real and actual situations.	104	4.81	1.208	1.6	1.50	16.1	42.9	37.9
Exercises, Tasks, and Activities	104	3.25	.679					

According to participants' point of view, the mean score and its standard deviation for the acceptability of the exercises, tasks and activities was 3.25 and 0.679 as depicted in Table 6. It clearly indicates that EFL teachers were partly dissatisfied with these important facets of the textbook. According to Table 6, the mean scores for the participants' evaluation of the Exercises, Tasks, and Activities items ranged from 2.14 to 4.81. More than two third of the teachers (86 percent) agreed that the learners' learning of new content is evaluated through different tasks and activities (item 32, *M*=2.40). Furthermore, more than half of the teachers (19% and 64% respectively agree and strongly agree) believed that the activities of the book provide a good range of individual activities, pair works,

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and group activities (item 29, *M*=2.30).

Besides, around 11 percent of the respondents agreed and 73 percent strongly agreed that activities are designed in such a way that lead students to create meaningful communications (item 31, *M*=2.14). In contrast, around 60 % disagreed and 20 % strongly disagreed that the activities of the book, encourage students to respond creatively, innovatively, and independently (item 30, *M*=3.22). Besides, some of the respondents revealed dissatisfaction with items 28 and 33. They thought that the textbook does not provide a balanced variety of exercises and activities (item 28, *M*=4.67), nor do the tasks help students learn grammar by creating real and actual situations (item 33, *M*=4.81). Therefore, these aspects of 'Prospect 1' enjoyed a rate of disagreement and dissatisfaction. The descriptive statistical data of the analyses of the language types of the textbook 'Prospect 1' was evaluated and measured through four items (i.e., 34-37) of the very questionnaire and hence, is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for language types items

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
34. The language used in the book is real and expresses the language that is used in real life.	104	4.97	.935	0.00	1.7	0.0	38.8	59.5
35. The language used in the book is in accordance with the language proficiency level of the learners.	104	4.55	.921	4.2	8.8	1.7	27.8	57.5
36. The language used in the book covers a variety of dialects and vocabulary types.	104	4.92	.927	1.8	0.0	1.7	56.9	39.6
37. The language functions contain language applications that the learners will use in their daily interactions	104	4.65	.930	1.1	6.6	1.3	39.7	54.3
Language Types	104	4.77	1.19					

As displayed in Table 7, the mean score for the teachers' evaluation of language types is 4.77 and the standard deviation is 1.19 which clearly shows that EFL teachers were to a great deal, dissatisfied with the language types of the textbook. As indicated in Table 7, the mean score for the teachers' evaluation of the items ranged from 4.55 to 4.97. Item 34 (*M*=4.97) gained the highest rate of disagreement as 97 % of the respondents in total did not believe that the language used in the book is real and expresses the language that is used in real life. In other words, we could say that 38.8 percent of the teachers disagreed and 58.2 percent of them strongly disagreed to this item.

In contrast, item 35 (i.e., Language used in the textbook is in accordance with the language proficiency level of the learners) with the lowest mean of 4.55, enjoyed the highest rate of satisfaction compared to other items of this category, since 13 percent of the respondents had a positive view and around 80 percent had a negative view in this regard. The same EFL teachers did not show high satisfaction concerning items 36 and 37 because nearly 87 % disagreed and 91 % strongly disagreed, in total, that the language used in the book covers a variety of dialects and vocabulary types (item 36, *M* =4.92), nor do the language functions contain language applications that the learners will use in their daily interactions (item 37, *M* =4.65). Hence, it could be concluded that most ELT teachers were not satisfied with the textbook's language types at all. The content and language skills of the English textbook

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entitled 'Prospect 1' was done by analyzing the data obtained from 13 items of the questionnaire (i.e., 38-50) which are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for content and language skills

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
38. The content of the book presents real-life issues and encourages critical thinking.	104	4.15	1.053	1.8	9.8	3.9	40.4	44.2
39. Topics and contents of the book are consistent with the needs, interests and age of the students	104	3.40	1.082	1.9	23.5	3.0	19.1	42.5
40. There is sufficient variety in subjects in the content of the book.	104	1.77	1.221	55.4	21.5	1.8	16.4	5.0
41. Explanations and examples of the book are understandable for the students.	104	2.50	1.608	52.2	23.2	3.9	7.02	13.5
42. Conversations are attractive to students and as close as possible to real life tasks.	104	4.35	1.342	3.6	2.9	2.8	25.3	65.5
43. Instructions to various sections are clear enough for the learners.	104	2.27	1.366	69.2	11.5	1.9	7.7	9.6
44. Gradation of the content including vocabulary and grammar in terms of the level of difficulty is appropriate.	104	2.41	1.351	69.3	19.5	1.3	3.8	7.0
45. All four language skills are covered in the book in an appropriate way.	104	2.92	1.269	53.4	16.4	3.9	11.5	14.8
46. Miscellaneous listening and reading assignments with audio files present different dialects of English to students.	104	3.99	1.178	1.6	1.7	2.6	43.4	50.5
47. The conversations are well-designed to enable students to use them for real purposes.	104	4.13	.982	3.3	9.9	2.0	29.3	55.2

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48. The grammar rules are presented in authentic sentences or short passages.	104	3.64	1.142	10.4	8.3	1.8	25.8	53.8
49. Activities that are used before, during and after addressing four language skills and sub-skills are engaging and helpful.	104	3.77	1.012	5.2	13.9	3.4	41.6	35.9
50. Useful writing tasks are included.	104	4.61	.701	1.1	.09	1.3	29.1	67.6
Content and Language Skills	104	3.99	.587					

As shown in Table 8, the mean score and the standard deviation for the teachers' evaluation of content and language skills are 3.99 and 0.587 respectively. It shows that our respondents were partly dissatisfied with the representation of the content and four main language skills in 'Prospect 1.' Ranging from 1.77 to 4.61, the mean scores of the items tell us that item 50 with the mean of 4.61 enjoyed the highest rate of disagreement as 96% of EFL teachers in total had negative attitudes and didn't believe that useful writing tasks are included in the textbook. Whereas item 40 with the mean of 1.77 enjoyed the highest rate of teachers' agreement and satisfaction as they had rather positive attitudes that there is sufficient variety in subjects in the content of the book. In addition, from participant's point of view, the instructions to various sections are clear enough for the learners (item 43, *M*=2.27) and explanations and examples of the book are understandable as well (item 41, *M*=2.50).

Concerning the gradation of the content including vocabulary and grammar in terms of the level of difficulty most respectable respondents were satisfied too (item 44, *M*=2.41). Moreover, our respondents also believed that all four language skills are covered in the book in an appropriate way (item 45, *M*=1.92), and 21.5 % of them agreed and another 55.4 % strongly agreed that there is sufficient variety in subjects in the content of the book (item 40, *M*=1.77).

As displayed in Table 8, there are some disadvantageous aspects of the content and skills part of the textbook from the EFL teachers' attitudes concerning items 38 and 39, in which respondents couldn't agree that the content of the book presents real-life issues and encourages critical thinking (item 38, *M*=4.15), nor are the topics and contents of the book consistent with the needs, interests, and age of the students (item 39, *M*=3.40). EFL teachers also confessed that the 46th item of the questionnaire with the mean of 3.99 could not satisfy them as they didn't believe that miscellaneous listening and reading assignments with audio files present different dialects of English to students (i.e., 43.4 % disagreed and 50.5 % strongly disagreed).

In regard to the conversations of the 7th grade textbook, teachers were not satisfied either as they strongly opposed to items 42 (*M* =4.35) and 47 (*M* =4.13). In fact, EFL teachers believed that the conversations are not attractive to students and are not close to real life tasks and do not enable students to use them for real purposes. Furthermore, 77 % of the EFL teachers in total didn't agree that activities that are used before, during and after addressing four language skills and sub-skills are engaging and helpful (item 49, *M*=3.77). The obtained descriptive data regarding the methodology aspect of 'Prospect 1' was measured through five items of the questionnaire (i.e., 51-55), and are presented in Table 9 below.

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Table 9. Descriptive statistics for methodology

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
51. The text book seems applicable to different methods of English language teaching.	104	3.62	1.384	3.5	11.5	11.6	34.5	38.9
52. The textbook is designed based on Communicative Teaching Approach (CLT).	104	1.10	.688	77.7	19.8	2	0.3	0.2
53. Different learning styles and strategies of the learners are considered in this book.	104	4.66	1.211	1.4	1.8	1.8	55.8	39.2
54. Activities are deigned in a way to let student's take responsibility of their own learning.	104	4.57	1.344	5.00	2.00	1.8	34.7	56.5
55. The paradigm shift from GTM to CLT can be seen clearly in this textbook compared to the old version of the 7th grade textbook.	104	1.61	.899	86.9	9.6	0.9	1.5	1.1
Methodology	104	3.11	.552					

According to Table 9, the mean score and standard deviation for the teachers' evaluation of methodology endorsed in the 7th grade textbook are 3.11 and 0.552 respectively, testifying that EFL teachers maintained a negative view about this aspect of the textbook. As shown in Table 9, the range of mean scores for the participants' evaluation of this aspect was from 1.10 to 4.66. Item 53 received the highest rate of disagreement, that is, only 1.8 percent of the participants agreed and 1.4 percent of them strongly agreed that different learning styles and strategies of the learners are considered in this book. In contrast, item 52 (*M*=1.10) enjoyed the highest rate of agreement and satisfaction (i.e., around 97%), that the textbook is designed based on Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT).

In regard to item 54 (i.e., activities of the book are designed in such a way that enables learners to take responsibility for their learning) nearly 34.7 percent of the respondents disagreed and 56.5 percent of them strongly disagreed (*M*=4.57). Table 9 further indicates that nearly all of the junior high school teachers either agreed or strongly agreed (i.e., item 55, *M*=1.61) that the paradigm shift from GTM to CLT can be seen clearly in the newly published textbook compared to the old version of the 7th grade textbook. Finally, our respondents didn't think that the textbook seems applicable to different methods of English language teaching as 34.5 and 38.4 present disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively (item 51, *M*=3.62). At last, descriptive statistics for comparing all the eight subcategories of 'Prospect 1' are shown in Table 10.

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Table 10. Descriptive statistics for all subcategories

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.Physical Appearance & Layout	104	4.65	.626
2.illustrations	104	2.57	.766
3.Supplementary Materials	104	2.53	.701
4.Components	104	2.90	.639
5.Exercises, Tasks & Activities	104	3.25	.679
6.Language Types	104	4.77	.537
7.Skills	104	3.99	.587
8.Methodology	104	3.11	.552
Total	8	3.47	

As you can see in Table 10, the mean scores of all evaluated subcategories are compared together which range from 2.53 to 4.86. While (6) Language Types items gained the highest rate of disagreement (Mean=4.77), (3) Supplementary Materials items enjoyed the highest rate of agreement (Mean=2.53). Besides, the mean score of the subcategory (2) Illustrations, indicates that EFL teachers' responses fall into 'agree' area (*M*=2.57). Moreover, the mean scores of (4) Components of Language and (5) Exercises, Tasks & Activities and (8) Methodology items were detected as *M*=2.90, *M*=3.25 and *M*=3.11 respectively, indicating that most respondents were neutral or simply not satisfied about these aspects of 'Prospect 1.' On the other hand, second to Language types, (1) Physical Appearance and Layout gained some deal of disagreement (Mean=4.65) which testifies the partial dissatisfaction of the teachers. Finally, the mean score of the 7th subcategory (i.e., Skills items) was 3.99, indicating that most respondents were dissatisfied with the Skills items since EFL teachers' responses fall into 'disagree' area. To sum up, the mean score for all items or subcategories was 3.47 which shows that Iranian EFL junior high school teachers were relatively dissatisfied and not pleased with 'Prospect 1.'

5. Discussion

Considering a model provided by McDonough and Shaw (1993) on the basis of external and internal evaluation of textbooks, this study intended to investigate the English textbook entitled 'Prospect 1' which is being taught at **7th** grade junior high schools of Iran, via screening EFL teachers' perception from eight different but interrelated aspects including: 1) physical appearance, layout and general theme, 2) illustrations, 3) supplementary materials, 4) Language components including structures and vocabulary, 5) exercises, tasks and activities, 6) language types, 7) content and language skills, and 8) methodology which will be discussed in the following lines.

Sheldon (1988, p. 8) maintains that "textbook is a physical artifact, and the author needs to recognize that lay out, format, typography, and graphics are also essential for a successful course book." Based on the findings and results of this study, more than 80% of the EFL teachers were dissatisfied with the overall layout and physical appearance of 'Prospect 1.' The respectable respondents testified that the textbook is not well-organized, nor does it maintain a good layout or an acceptable physical appearance either. They also regretted about the hard cover of the textbook, its printing quality, the color of its pages, and the lack of useful reference and indexes at the end of the textbook. Such disappointment or dissatisfaction with the layout and physical appearance aspect of 'Prospect' series was also reported in some earlier studies as well. For instance, Ahmadi Safa et al. (2017) showed that participants' attitude was quite negative towards the physical aspects of the textbook. EFL teachers were moderately, but not entirely, satisfied with the illustrations of the textbook. Although they believed that the images, charts, figures, and tables are clear, relevant and not confusing, they believed that the pictures are not attractive and do not maintain very high quality at all. Moreover, they declared that material developers could use modern techniques such as typography and perceptual saliency to make the input more comprehensible for the learners. In this regard, Sheldon (1988) put a big emphasis on the importance of text and graphical material once mixed.

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From our respondents' point of view, the most meritorious aspects of ' Prospect 1' were supplementary materials and Teacher's Guide which enjoyed moderate satisfaction of teachers who were also pleased with the availability of helpful guidelines for both novices and experienced teachers in the Teacher's Guide. In addition, they agreed that appropriate techniques are provided in the Teacher's Guide to enable students to activate their background knowledge. However, respondents revealed a high rate of dissatisfaction and believed that recommended practices in the Teachers' Guide are not based on the latest research findings in the field of language teaching and learning and this piece of finding is similar to Tavakoli Gheinani et al. (2017) which reported a negative attitude of the teachers towards this aspect of prospect series. Finally, our respondents declared that supplementary materials including, video clips, CDs, and flash cards are effective, available, and attractive, and this piece of finding is in contrast to Ahmadi Safa et al. (2017) which reported the teachers' negative attitudes towards the lack of supplementary materials of 'Prospect 1.' However, our findings are similar to Tavakoli Gheinani et al. (2017) which generally reported a positive attitude of the teachers towards supplementary materials of prospect series.

The junior high school teachers were partly satisfied and partly dissatisfied with the vocabulary and grammar aspect of 'Prospect 1', since two third of them agreed that considering the students' needs, the grammar rules of the textbook are appropriate to the language proficiency level of the students. In contrast, two third of them disagreed that grammar is explained clearly but implicitly in the textbook and around 80 percent of the teachers didn't verify that the grammatical points are presented in authentic sentences or short passages, indicating high disagreement of EFL teachers. In contrast, most participants showed a high satisfaction on the number of vocabulary introduced in the book and maintained that it is appropriate to students' level of proficiency, and agreed that the words are distributed from easy to hard in each unit of the textbook. Therefore, we could say that EFL teachers were kind of dissatisfied and kind of satisfied (i.e., neutral) on vocabulary and grammar section as explained according to the results.

Regarding the significance of communicative exercises and activities, Nunan (1991, p. 210) emphasized that "the way materials are organized and presented, as well as types of content and activities will help to share the learner's view of language." Our respondents were almost dissatisfied with the exercises, tasks, and activities of the textbook and nearly 90 percent of them revealed dissatisfaction as they thought that the textbook does not provide a balanced variety of exercises and activities, nor do the tasks help students learn grammar by creating real and actual situations, nor do the activities of the book encourage students to respond creatively, innovatively, and independently.

Nonetheless, most of them agreed that the learners' learning of new content is evaluated through different tasks and activities which are, in turn, designed in such a way that lead students to create meaningful communications. Therefore, these aspects of 'Prospect 1' enjoyed disagreement of the respondents rather than their agreement based on the results and frankly, this piece of finding is in contrast to Ahmadi Safa et al. (2017) which reported the teachers' positive perspectives upon the exercises, tasks, and activities of Prospect. Regarding the suitability of the exercises for the four language skills, McDonough and Show (2003) maintain that any materials should enable the students to see effective use of the four skills in an appropriate context because in this way we can involve the learners in authentic tasks and increase their motivation.

Although the presence of authentic conversations might be considered as the strength point of the 'Prospect' series (Widdowson, 2007), it could be predicted that there is no guarantee whether they suit the beginners' level or not. According to Nunan (2003, p. 589), the critical problem of Asian countries is "…disjunction between curriculum rhetoric and pedagogical reality", which can be obviously observed in Iranian EFL context in public sector (Kiany, Mahdavy, & Ghafar Samar, 2011). According to our findings, the language types of the textbook were endorsed with the highest rate of dissatisfaction which could be considered as the most disadvantageous aspect of 'Prospect 1.' In fact, nearly all of the respondents did not believe that the language used in the book is real and expresses the language that is used in real life. Moreover, they strongly disagreed that the language used in the book covers a variety of dialects and vocabulary types, nor do the language functions contain language applications that the learners will use in their daily interactions.

McDonough and Shaw (2003) maintain that any materials should enable the students to see effective use of the four skills in an appropriate context because in this way we can involve the learners in authentic tasks and increase their motivation. Moreover, McDonough and Shaw (2012) further indicate that materials should arouse students to learn collaborative integration of all language skills. However, concerning the content and language skills of 'Prospect 1', the experienced EFL teachers of this study were moderately dissatisfied since they didn't believe that miscellaneous listening and reading assignments with audio files present different dialects of English to students, nor are the content

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and language skills consistent to the students' interests, needs or age. On the other hand, respondents couldn't disagree more that the content of the book doesn't presents real-life issues and doesn't encourages critical thinking. They also confessed that the conversations are not attractive either and thought that useful writing tasks are not included.

As highlighted by Littlewood et al. (1981), one of the fundamental principles of communicative pedagogy is to teach language skills in an integrated way. Most of the EFL teachers declared that activities which are used before, during, and after addressing four language skills and sub-skills are not engaging and helpful, and in this regard, a similar result was previously reported in Tavakoli Ghenani et al. (2017). So, third to language types and second to physical appearance and layout, we could observe the highest rate of dissatisfaction among EFL teachers towards the content and language skills of 'Prospect 1.' Nonetheless, concerning the gradation of the content including vocabulary and grammar in terms of the level of difficulty, incorporating various subjects in the book, and the presence of the four language skills in the book, are amongst those aspects that enjoyed moderate satisfaction of the EFL teachers.

The respondents' evaluation of the methodology endorsed in 'Prospect 1' revealed that EFL teachers were relatively dissatisfied with the final aspect of the textbook as they strongly disagreed that different learning styles and strategies of the learners are considered in this book. They also believed that the activities are not designed in a way to let students take responsibility of their own learning, nor does the textbook seems applicable to different methods of language teaching. However, they strongly agreed that the textbook is designed based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the paradigm shift from GTM to CLT could be clearly seen in the textbook compared to the old version.

Finally, comparing the teachers' attitudes and perspectives on eight aforementioned aspects of the textbook, it could be concluded that 'Prospect 1' enjoys some drawbacks as well as some meritorious aspects. EFL teachers were strongly dissatisfied with the Physical Appearance and Layout, Language Types and Content and Language Skills. Furthermore, EFL teachers were partially dissatisfied with the Methodology endorsed in the textbook and Exercises, Tasks and Activities. In fact, they thought that these aspects are in dire need of revision and modification. In contrast, Iranian EFL teachers were partially satisfied with other aspects of 'Prospect 1' which are Illustrations, Supplementary Materials and Vocabulary and Grammar. Overall, according to the results of the present study, we would say that the most remarkable advantageous aspect was determined as Supplementary Materials whereas the most disadvantageous aspect was determined as Language Types. At last, it could be inferred that junior high school EFL teachers had a rather negative attitude towards 'Prospect 1.'

As literature suggests, several studies have previously been carried out in Iran to evaluate Iranian high school EFL textbooks. For instance, Rahimpour and Hashemi's (2011) study, which is the evaluation of 'Prospect' series. They declared that English language textbooks that are being taught at high schools of Iran, do not meet teachers' expectations. Jahangard (2007) also evaluated four EFL textbooks which had been prescribed to be used in Iranian high schools by retrospective or post-use procedure. The required data to determine the merits and demerits of the textbooks was gathered according to a checklist. In the results section of his study, he declared that final objectives are not clearly specified and the ultimate goals of the curriculum are not clarified either. Ansary and Babaii (2002) was another evaluative study which reported the same results as EFL teachers were fairly dissatisfied with 'Prospect 1.'

6. Conclusions

Nowadays, international communication is essential and English is used as the dominant international language and developing efficient and appropriate textbooks for EFL students is very significant which will definitely enable learners to apply the language correctly. As the results and findings of this study show, the newly-published **7th** grade EFL textbook which is based on CLT approach is far more efficient than the previous one which was based on GTM since many teachers and practitioners participating in the study have found 'Prospect 1' a considerable step forward. Nonetheless, as the textbook has been developed and published in Iran, some revisions and modifications are definitely required to improve the strengths and to lessen the drawbacks. In this regard, it is essential for both researchers and teachers to constantly evaluate the textbook from different facets not only to meet the needs of the students, but also to maximize and enhance English teaching in Iran.

The findings of this study could be useful for series designers, authors, scholars and the policy makers in Iran's ministry of the education. This study aimed to evaluate 'Prospect 1' via screening EFL teachers' perception and to meet such purpose, an EFL textbook evaluation questionnaire was employed to collect the required data. It is worth

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mentioning that the present study had some limitations which might restrict the generalizability of the findings and should be taken into consideration. Firstly, the present study evaluated only one of the English textbooks of Prospect series. Secondly, the students' opinions and attitudes were not considered in this study. Thirdly, this study was not accompanied by an interview and the collected data were limited to a quantitative questionnaire-based body of data, and the results would have been more precise if we had used both quantitative as well as triangulated approaches of data collection.

To sum up, the findings of this study have some implications, in particular, for the respectable textbook developers and dedicated curriculum designers in the Ministry of Education of Iran and, in general, for other educational organizations so that they can modify the textbooks to improve their overall efficiency. As a conclusive statement, this study revealed that Iranian EFL teachers were not pleased with 'Prospect 1' and some significant aspects of the textbook are in dire need of revision and modification.

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