A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXT BOOKS IN ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

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Abstract

English Language Teaching is very important because of the global status of English. English Language Teaching is a process that requires great efforts on the part of all the participants. Textbooks are the most important elements of teaching process for the aims and objectives of a course. In view of the importance of English as a foreign language in Andhra Pradesh, the researcher has examined the existing textbooks and system of teaching English in order to point out the shortcomings which have been hindering the Andhra Pradesh students from mastering the English language.

The teachers of English should also be equipped with an up-to-date knowledge of ELT. The main data collection instrument was the questionnaire for class 6th of state. The student's questionnaire was arranged on multi-option questions pattern and open-ended questions. The responses were obtained from both male and female. The aim of this questionnaire was to collect information about textbooks and teachers' attitude towards ELT in AP. Analysis of for 6th secondary grade at the state schools. The planning is important for preparing a relevant curriculum. It should be planned according to what students need to learn. Some recommendations are made for improving the Textbooks of English as a foreign language in AP.

Key words: Textbooks, English Language Teaching.

Introduction

The use of EFL published materials is more widespread than ever before since textbooks provide EFL teachers with guidelines concerning syllabus, teaching methodologies and the materials to be taught. They are considered an essential component of any EFL course and thus the selection of the best suitable book for a particular context demands careful investigation. This paper focuses on the analysis and evaluation of a recently developed textbook addressed to native speakers of AP learning English as a Foreign Language at the 6th class of upper

primary/secondary school. It is important to note that the book was published by the APBSE and its use was compulsory to all state primary schools.

The necessity to analyses and evaluate the textbook was imposed by the fact that it was used on a large national scale, it was recently developed and its strengths or weaknesses would have a high impact on AP students learning of English. The analysis of the textbook would yield insights as to its suitability; whether it actually did what it claimed to be doing and whether it accomplished its set goals. It was therefore important to examine whether it corresponded to the learners needs of the particular situation, whether it promoted communicative language, learner autonomy, made use of problem solving approaches and whether it allowed for differentiated instructions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Textbook based teaching

According to McGrath (2002:9) there has been vigorous debate concerning the desirability of basing teaching on course books. Opponents of textbook based teaching claim that even the best textbooks take away initiative from teachers. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994:315) state that the danger with ready-made texts is that they can seem to absolve teachers of responsibility… they make it easy to sit back and operate the system, secure in the belief that the wise and virtuous people who produced the textbook knew what was good for us. Unfortunately this is rarely the case. Some of the dangers of textbook use listed by Graves (2000) include the irrelevance or in appropriacy of content with the students, exclusion of important items, imbalanced variety of task-types, unmotivating or outdated activities and unrealistic proposed timetables.

As Tomlinson (2001:67) states proponents of the course book argue that it is the most convenient form of presenting materials, it helps to achieve consistency and continuation, it gives learners a sense of system, cohesion and progress and it helps teachers prepare and learners revise. Garinger (2001) commenting on the usefulness of textbooks emphasises that using a textbook is one of the most effective and readily available ways to relieve some of the pressures put on teachers, lessens preparation time, provides ready-made activities and finally provides concrete samples of classroom progress through which external stakeholders can be satisfied. McGrath (2002) asserts that textbooks can set the direction, content and they can propose ways in which the lesson is to be taught.

2.2. Why Evaluation of Textbooks

Textbook evaluation, according to Cunnings worth (1995), would involve the careful selection of materials examining whether they reflect the needs of the learners, the aims, methods and values of a specific teaching program. Textbook evaluation helps the teachers move beyond impressionistic assessments and it further facilitates them to acquire useful, accurate, systematic and contextual insights into the overall nature of textbook materials (Cunningsworth, 1995; Ellis, 1997). Through the evaluation of a textbook, teachers know the content of the book, its strengths and weaknesses which will facilitate them to adapt it to suit the course aims, learners' needs and teachers' beliefs. As Littlejohn (1998) observes, textbook evaluation serves the purpose of examining whether the methodology and content of the materials are appropriate for a particular language teaching context. The evaluation would test out the claims materials make for themselves: whether they truly develop autonomy, whether they truly involve problem solving and if they indeed are learner centred.

2.3. Types of Textbook Analysis

Prior to the analysis of textbooks, it is necessary to conduct a preliminary analysis of the context in which the material is going to be used and a survey of the learners needs. This need originates from the realisation that there is a distinctive line between the analysis of the textbook and its valuation According to McGrath (2002:22) 'analysis is a process which leads to an objective, verifiable description whereas evaluation involves the making of judgments'. Evaluation is feasible when a comparison is made between the descriptions of a context with the description of the textbook. Therefore, the analysis of textbooks should be made by looking at specific required elements or set of criteria.

Evaluation of teaching materials can be divided in three types according to the literature in the field of English Language Teaching.

1. **Pre-use or predictive evaluation** by (Ellis, 1997; McGrath, 2002; Tomlinson, 2003), involves making decisions about the potential value of materials for their users.

2. **In-use or whilst-use evaluation** by (McGrath, 2002; Tomlinson, 2003), which involves measuring the value of materials while using them or observing them as being used.

3. **Post use evaluation** by (McGrath, 2002; Tomlinson, 2003). According McGrath, measures the actual effect of the materials on the users. As Tomlinson (2003:25) states post use evaluation can measure the actual outcome of the use of the materials and thus provide the data on which reliable decisions about the use, adaptation or replacement of materials can be made.

2.4. Levels of Textbook Analysis

According Littlejohn (1998) proposes a three level analysis.

1. At the first level of analysis the focus is on the physical aspects of materials and how they appear as a complete set or book.

2. At the second level the focus of analysis is on the actual role of learners in the classroom activities, whether language form or meaning is focused, forms of activities and classroom participation and finally the contents of the tasks.

3. The third level examines the implications derived by evaluating the overall aims of the materials, content, task selection and sequencing, teachers and learners' roles, demands of learner knowledge, effects, skills and abilities and the role of materials as a whole.

McDonough and Shaw (2003) and McGrath (2002) provide a two-level model for the comprehensive evaluation of textbooks.

1. The first level proposed by McDonough and Shaw involves a brief external evaluation which includes criteria concerning the organizational foundation of the textbook, as stated explicitly by the author/publisher through the cove r, introduction and table of contents statements.

2. The second level proposed by McDonough and Shaw (2003) involves an in-depth

internal investigation of the textbook, „to see how far the materials in question match up to what the author claims as well as to the aims and objective s of a given teaching program." McDonough and Shaw propose a close investigation of at least two units of a textbook in order for effective internal inspection to take place.

2.5. Previous Research on textbook evaluation

It is crucial to note that although there is extended amount of literature on the evaluation of ELT materials, there is not a substantial body of published action research in analysing EFL textbooks. One study conducted by Azizifar, Koosha and Lotfi (2009) attempted to make an analytical evaluation of locally produced Iranian high school ELT Textbooks from 1970 to the present. The study sought to investigate how pronunciation points, content, and grammar were dealt with the second books in "Graded English" (GE) series published by the Iranian Ministry of Education in 1984 and in "Right Path to English" (RPE) by Birjandi, Nowrozi, and Mahmodi in 2002. The researchers followed Tucker's (1975) evaluating model and used the ideas and suggestions of different experienced persons in the field of textbook evaluation both in Iran and abroad, including Brian Tomlinson (1998), and provided a modified version of Tucker's (197 5) evaluating model for the study.

3. Analysis of textbook
3.1. Design of textbook evaluation
Although the textbook under scope in the present study was being used by AP state schools, pre-use analysis was used due to limitations of the researcher to obtain information of the actual use of the book and the way it was received by teachers and students. The pre-use analysis would serve to examine the textbook as it is, with the content and ways of working which they propose and not with what may actually happen in classrooms. Apart from being a limitation, this could also be seen as a positive aspect since as Littlejohn (1998:191) notes what happens in classrooms and what outcomes occur when materials are brought into use will depend upon numerous further factors, thus exclusion of other variables can be achieved through pre-use evaluation.

The levels of analysis used in the evaluation of the textbook include two levels:
Level 1: First-Glance evaluation which involves an overall presentation and analysis of the textbook related to its design, table of contents, distribution of units, lessons and sections in the book.
Level 2: Close-evaluation which examines separately and more analytically the treatment of the different skills, reading, listening, writing and speaking and the ways of assessment practices provided through the book.

Checklists were selected as the main instrument of the study because it offered the most economical and reliable means of reaching a decision concerning the relative suitability of the textbook under scope.

Furthermore as McGrath (2002) states checklists are considered to be the most effective way of gathering comparable data systematically. Although checklists are convenient, they can encourage rather superficial judgments since not everything can be contained and examined in the checklists. Hence, checklists need to be carefully constructed according to the needs of learners and the teaching context. Ready-made checklists would fail to be used in different contexts and it is necessary to be modified and adapted for the purposes of their use. They

should be able to utilize rating and weighting scales which would provide an adequate indicator as to the relative suitability of the materials and serve to highlight any particular defects or deficiencies.

### 3.2. Findings from Analysis Level 1

3.2.1. General organisation of the book

After a first glance on the contents of the book it could be noticed that the book was divided into three parts, each part consist ten units in their respective part to further. There was a workbook, Supplementary and English reader which are included in the one book with the name called new English Reader. It also seemed to be following a pattern in its organization of the lessons. The first page of every unit presented the aims of the unit to the students; the first lesson started with a reading section and then moved on to a grammar section, the final section of lesson presented practice materials. The second part began with a listening section followed by grammar and practice sections. The third supplementary part was spread over referred to a previous parts/units related to the topic and language taught in previous parts.

3.2.2. Distribution of language skills

The overall weighting of the sections devoted to skills in the textbook it was evident that there was an imbalance between writing and the other skills (graph 1). Writing seemed to be given more importance throughout the book with 10 sections of the book focusing on writing. Furthermore, by comparing the number of speaking sections to the number of listening sections and the number of writing sections to reading sections, it could be inferred that productive skills received greater attention than receptive skills.

Graph 1: Distribution of language skills throughout the textbook
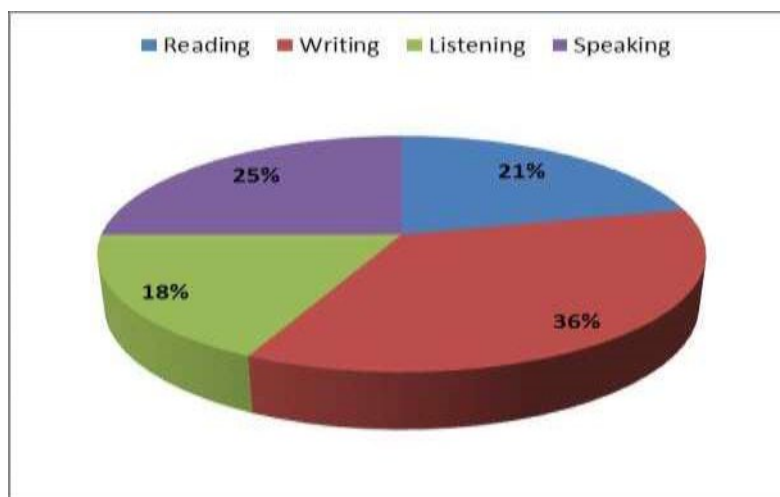
3.2.3. Other sections in the textbook:

Apart from sections dedicated to skills, the textbook also contained sections for grammar,

vocabulary, projects and portfolios. It also included appendices at the end of the book which provided extra material for the units. As it can be seen from table 1 there was unequal distribution of language focus in the sections contained in the units of the book. More particularly, grammar seemed to be given more attention than vocabulary. Previous research on English textbook evaluation previous research on English textbook evaluation Vocabulary/Lexis which was not found to be a section on its own most of the times was nevertheless included in the description of the contents.

This first glance evaluation though, might be misleading since vocabulary was perhaps embedded in activities of other sections dedicated to skills which would be more thoroughly investigated in the second level of analysis. Another issue worth commenting on is the fact that strategies and language functions were listed in the table of contents as part of the units and were also described whilst they were not labeled inside the units/lessons. Strategies were randomly found in the units as small boxes providing tips to learners but not as a separate section in which they could be further developed by students. What could be inferred from this first level analysis was the inconsistency between the table of contents of the book and what was actually contained as sections in the book. This posed the question of whether what it was claimed to exist by the authors could actually be found in the textbook, challenging the reliability of the book.

3.3.2. Analysis of reading sections
3.3.2.1. Types of Reading tasks

Reading tasks were overall at a suitable level for the learners with the average of the tasks at level 2 of the Common National Framework which is the corresponding level for EFL learners of the 6th grade of AP upper primary/secondary schools. The native language of the learners was not used in any occasion throughout the tasks; English was used as the language of instruction of tasks and comprehension questions. This was probably due to the effort of the authors to maximise the exposure to the target language and minimise the presence of L1. It is worth noting that the teachers' book did not make any explicit suggestion to teachers to use L1 in order to explain the reading tasks. Graph 2 demonstrates the types of tasks used in reading sections throughout the book. As it can be observed most tasks used in the reading section required students to provide a selected response and did not involve them in producing long answers. Authors justified their choice of these types of tasks as a way of enabling learners to understand, build up and retrieve vocabulary. Hence, once more it was evident that building of vocabulary was embedded in the reading sections. This is further reinforced by the presence of tasks (19%) in which students are asked to provide synonyms.

Graph 2: Types of reading tasks
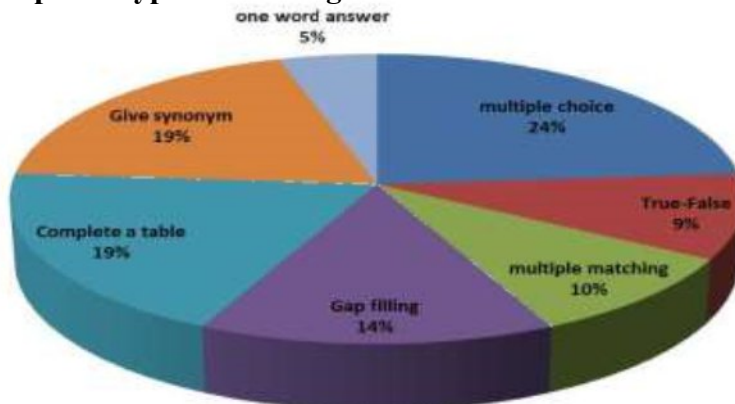
The absence of longer productive tasks such as answering comprehension questions on the reading texts might on the one hand focus solely on the development of reading abilities without placing further demands on learners and the teachers would be more easily able to asses s the learners reading abilities without any other skills intervening. On the other hand though, this absence deprived students from developing autonomy since their choices were very limited and also failed to integrate other more productive skills such as writing or speaking.

Some of the reading sections functioned as complementary reading texts on the topics of the units and others offered extra practice. There was also one text which was a simplified version of the text in a unit probably addressing students with difficulties allowing opportunity for differentiated instruction. The tasks included in the appendices were multiple choice activities and writing reports to summarise key points of the texts. The activities included in the appendices show an effort of the writers to integrate skills. Nevertheless, these activities were very limited and not present in the main body of the textbook posing the question as to whether teachers would actually use them in their teaching context.

3.3.3. Analysis of Listening Sections

3.3.3.1. Types of Listening tasks

Listening tasks were also at a suitable level for the learners with the average of the tasks at levelb2 of the Common National Framework. Again, the native language of the learners was not present in any of the tasks; the target language was used in the questions and instructions of the task, showing the consistency of the authors to avoid L1 interference. The listening texts could be heard more than once giving students the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the texts. It is important to note that the success of learners in listening tasks involves awareness raising and strategy training tasks as suggested by Goh (2010). The authors did make an effort to raise students' awareness by including pre -listening tasks in all listening sections providing visual and verbal clues to stimulate their background knowledge, thus assisting the learners' cognitive processes. However, there were not any pre-listening activities in which building up of strategies take place. There was variety of tasks involved in the listening sections as can be seen from graph 3 below.

Graph 3: Types of listening tasks
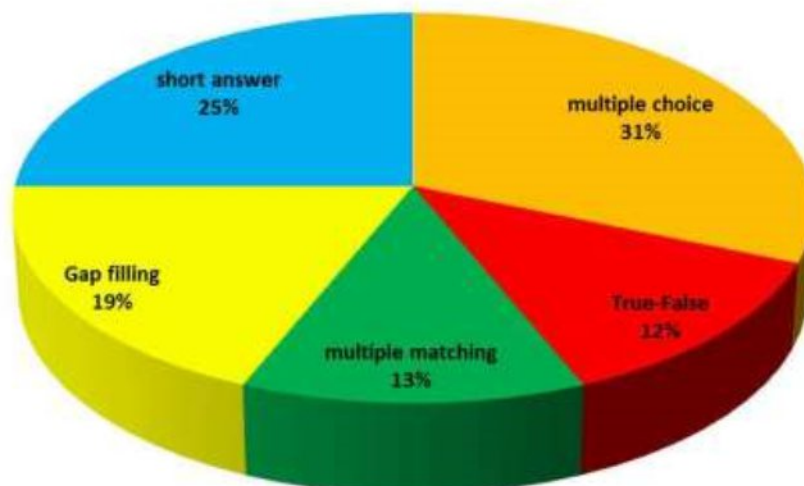
Similarly to reading tasks, listening tasks included mostly selected response items and the tasks involving production by the students were only of limited response. According to the authors of the textbook, learners would need to justify any of their answers orally, thus giving opportunity for a more productive and extended response. This could also help learners develop their strategies through justification of their choices and the teachers in understanding the cognitive processes involved in their students responses.

3.3.4. Analysis of Writing Sections

3.3.4.1. Types of produced text in writing

Writing sections were mostly found towards the end of each unit which could suggest that the writers intended to provide oral and written input to students with tasks on reading and listening which opened the first two lessons of the units prior to the undertaking of writing texts. The most frequent texts students were asked to produce were personal letters or emails as it can be seen in Graph 4.

Graph 4: Produced text types in writing
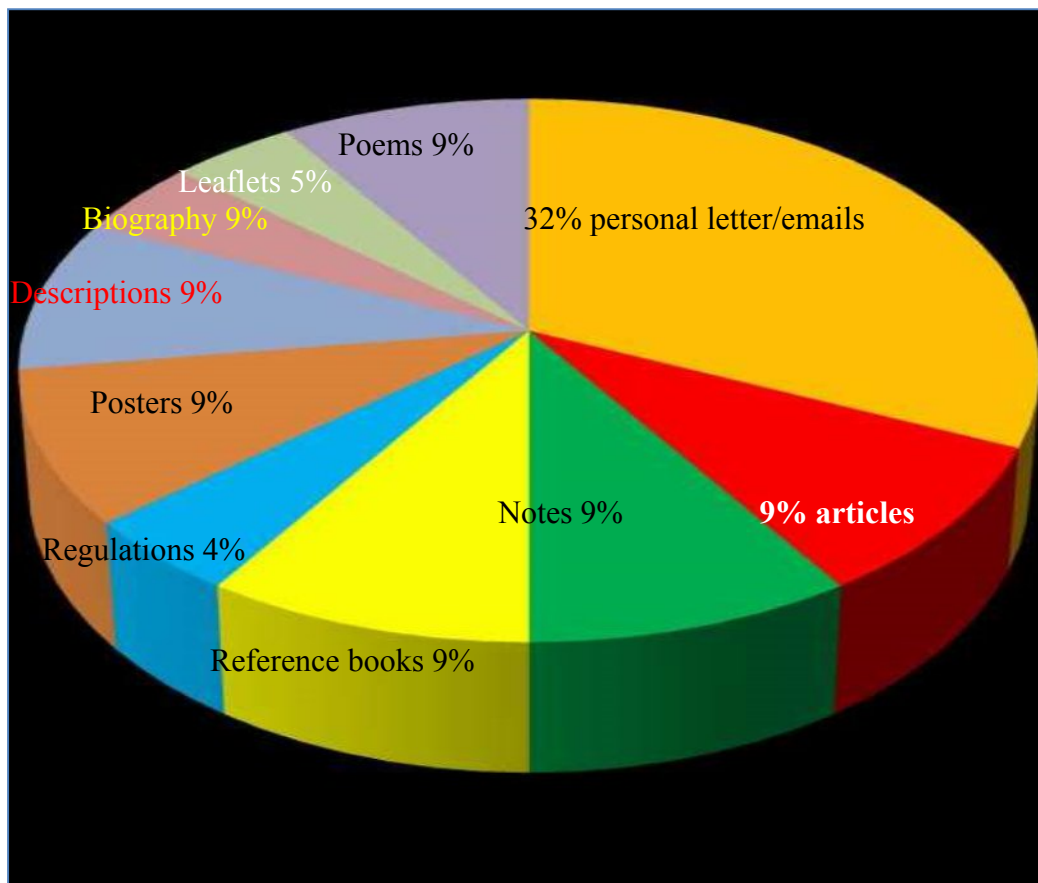
It was also evident that the texts students were asked to produce included variety of genres such as poems, articles, posters and leaflets, note taking, reference book entries and even a biography. According to Tribble (2010:162), students need to gain experience of genres that

are relevant to their needs and to ensure that they are able to draw on the linguistic resources that are relevant to complete a task. Thus, it was necessary to examine whether these variety of genres asked by students to use in writing actually accorded to topics of their interest and their needs as learners.

3.3.5. Analysis of Speaking Sections

3.3.5.1. Characteristics of speaking tasks

In most cases speaking was very structured and controlled by the task without leaving space for original thought (33%) while in some others there was no input given and learners were left completely alone to accomplish the task (22%) as it can be seen in table 9. When input was provided, this was mostly textual in the form of instructions or with written dialogues as models in which learners substituted words to perform the dialogues. Other forms of textual input included tables appended at the end of the book in which students had to fill in information while talking with each other. Input was provided through pictures as well and students usually had to describe a picture, compare and contrast pictures or give their opinions about famous people whose photograph was the input for the speaking task. The absence of oral input could be partly because listening activities preceded speaking sections and the topics and language involved in speaking were previously encountered in the listening sections. The nature of content of speaking tasks was mostly concrete allowing students to express themselves in content they would more easily relate to and comprehend. The vocabulary and structures students would use to perform the tasks derived from the lexical items and grammatical structures they had encountered in the previous sections. Thus, students were not asked to use unfamiliar vocabulary or grammar in order to perform the tasks. The language of instructions was again in the target language at the same level as the tasks. Most of the time students were given some minutes to organise their thoughts as to what they would have to talk about.

Table: Characteristics of speaking tasks

Students speech	Controlled		Partially controlled	No control
	33%		45%	22%
Production of the text	Oral	Pictorial	Textual	Iconic
	0%	69%	4%	27%
Language type	Simple words	Simple phrase	Isolated sentence	Longer text
	5%	50%	17%	28%
Task practice	Pair role	Group work	Role-play	Dialogue with teacher
	61%	17%	11%	11%

The level of the task corresponded to the level of the students, L2, where students had to communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. They mostly produced simple phrases (55%) or isolated sentences (17%) and in some occasions longer texts (28%). There was a limited variety of task types, consisting of discussions, dialogues, role-plays and mostly pair work. Through pair work

and group work effective speaking skills could be promoted based on collaboration among language users as Hughes (2010) suggests. Overall, the speaking tasks did not seem artificial, learners were engaged in discussion and dialogues with their peers on topics they would find interesting.

3.3.6. Analysis of Self-Assessment Sections

Self-assessment sections were included at the end of this unit. Although these sections were labeled as self-assessment there were no guidelines as to how the learners would be able to assess themselves and the teachers book did not provide any answer keys. Thus, it was le ft entirely on the teacher to decide how self-assessment would work in the classroom.   As it can be seen from Graph 5 these sections included tasks on reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar. There were no activities on listening or speaking and the majority of tasks related to vocabulary items (35%) the students encountered in the lessons of the units.

Graph 5: Skills representation through tasks in self-assessment section


As mentioned previously, vocabulary was rarely a section in the units but embedded in the context of other sections such as reading. This was reflected also in some activities in which vocabulary could not be assessed alone but in combination to reading and vice versa. Grammar obtained a lot of attention throughout the textbook and this was again reflected in the self-assessment tasks as can be seen in graph 5. What could be inferred concerning the distribution of skills in the self-assessment sections was that listening and speaking were marginalised and the claim for communicative instruction made by the authors of the textbook was questioned since the two most basic communicative skills were absent. The content of the sections was derived from the topics of the units and ensured content validity for the assessment of the students, since unknown language items were not present.

After the analysis of the types of tasks that were included in the self-assessment sections it was observed that there was some variety of task types. Graph 6 exemplifies the types of activities included in reading. Matching activities comprised the majority (50%) of tasks and other types of tasks included information transfer, sequencing and one word answer.

The types of tasks chosen for reading corresponded with the activities learners were asked to perform in the while-reading sections. In both cases the majority of tasks included selected response activities, showing the consistency of the authors to test the skill in the same way they attempted to develop it.
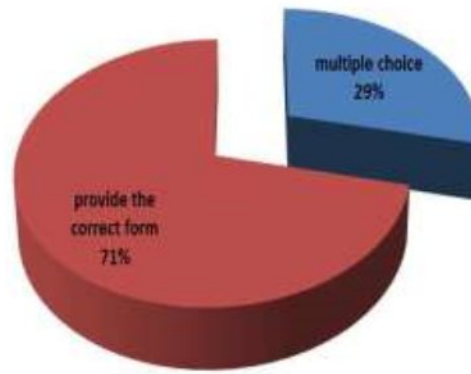
Graph 6

Vocabulary tasks types in self assessment sections
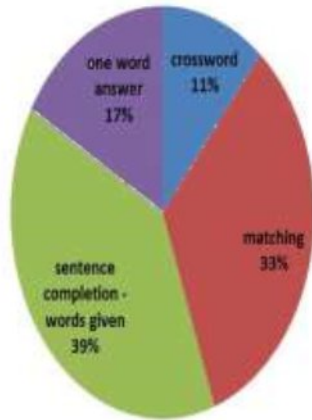
Graph 7

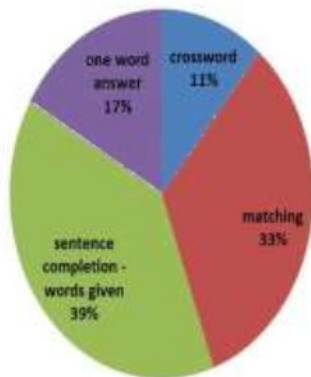
Grammar task types in self assessment sections

Writing activities in the self-assessment section did not resemble the writing learners had to perform in the units. As it can be seen in graph 7, learners were usually asked to write isolated sentences and this usually involved using a specified grammatical structure and in effect writing was assessed mostly for the correct application of a grammatical rule. The input that was given to learners was either textual or a picture as stimuli to write the sentences.

Vocabulary tasks as suggested by graph 8 included mostly sentence completion activities with the words given (39%) and matching activities (33%). They also included crosswords and one word answers. Again vocabulary activities were intertwined with the reading skills of the learners since the words did not appear isolated from context. Similarly to reading activities, tasks on vocabulary were mostly selected item response types.
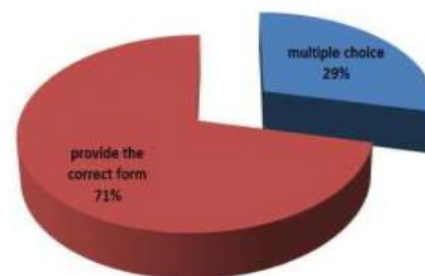
Graph 8

Vocabulary tasks types in self assessment sections

Graph 9

Grammar task types in self assessment sections

As it can be observed from graph 9, grammar tasks were of limited variety and in contrast with other activities discussed previously, the majority of the tasks were productive activities with only 29 per cent of activities with selected response format. These activities involved the production of the correct form of either verbs when examining tenses or adjectives and adverbs when examining the comparatives. Overall, what could be noticed in the self-assessment sections was the exam-like format of language involving learners to perform tasks which did not have a real like purpose but rather used language to test particular language features. The assessment sections failed to embed the language features into a communicative context.

3.3.7. Analysis of Revision tests

The textbook contained three revision tests which could be found in the teachers' book and online on the downloadable form of the teachers' book. The number of the tests suggested that formal assessment by teachers would be done three times through the school year. There was no extra information in the teachers' book regarding the tests except for the answer key provided after each test. The tests were summative in nature and aim e d prim aril y to assess the students performance on vocabulary and grammar.

The tests were divided into two sections, grammar and vocabulary whereas writing appeared once as a section and once as part of grammar in which students had to write a summary of a film using the passive voice. The contents of the writing sections were derived from the topics in the book and related to similar tasks the students had performed in class: writing an email and a film review. Vocabulary sections included mostly selected response answers (matching and cross the odd one out) and giving one word answers. Tasks on grammar included mostly providing the correct form of a word to show their knowledge on tenses or comparatives and selected response items such as matching, multiple-choice and filling the gaps with the words provided.

The lack of skills was apparent in these three tests which did not include any activities on reading, listening or speaking. Although the format of the whole textbook attempted to take in new methodologies and focused on the four language skills the learners needed to develop and claimed to be following the guidelines of NCERT, the design of the tests resembled a very traditional and out-dated approach. The authors could have based their tests on formats of contemporary validated tests for A2 levels in which grammar and vocabulary did not appear as sections but were rather assessed through the use of the four language skills in a communicative context. Finally, an issue of content validity of the tests could arise here, since learners were not given the opportunity to be assessed on the skills the textbook claimed to develop and the tests would fail to examine whether the learners had developed their language skills.

3.4. Findings from Analysis of Grammar Sections
3.5.

Grammar sections appeared in two lessons of every unit and it was considered important to examine how grammar was treated in the textbook in terms of contents, presentation and task types included in the grammar sections.

3.5.1. Content of Grammatical areas

Since the textbook addressed learners at A2 level of NCERT it was necessary to examine

whether the grammatical areas to be covered really corresponded to that level. Through first glance evaluations, the material to be covered seemed extensive for the learners at this level; however, closer analysis of this aspect would substantiate the reality of this impression. The description of the NCERT levels did not make any explicit reference to grammar and the areas to be covered; therefore, it was necessary to compare the grammatical areas to be covered in the textbook to a validated test at this level which illustrated the grammatical areas that EFL learners of L2 levels were required to know.

The present perfect continuous and past perfect simple tense require the appropriate previous knowledge of past simple and present perfect so that learners would be able to compare and contrast among those tenses without creating confusion. The tenses however, were provided to students in an immediate sequence without allowing time for students to sufficiently consolidate the newly presented grammatical item before moving to the next one. Passive voice could also create problems and confusion since learners would have to use the past participle of the verbs which is also used for the present perfect and past perfect. Finally, it was questionable whether the teachers and learners would be able to cover this extensive list of grammatical items in the proposed 75-80 classroom hours.

3.4.2. Presentations of Grammar

The analysis of the presentations of grammar in the textbooks would allow the researcher to investigate whether the claims the authors made regarding grammatical awareness raising from both inductive and deductive approaches were valid. The grammar presentations were based on sentences extracted from the reading or listening texts which preceded grammar sections. Thus, learners were first provided with a holistic experience in which they could learn implicitly without focusing conscious attention on any particular feature of the experience, conforming to the principled approaches for EFL learning materials proposed by Tomlinson (2010). The learners would revisit and reflect paying conscious attention to the grammatical features after the grammar presentation. In many occasions the learners were asked to derive the rules on their own by noticing features provided in examples, thus including inductive methods for grammar learning. The graph below illustrates the activities learners were engaged to during the presentation of a new grammatical feature.

Graph 10 Meta-language activities in grammar awareness activities

- Write sentence
- Tick the correct
- Short answers

22%
29%
59%
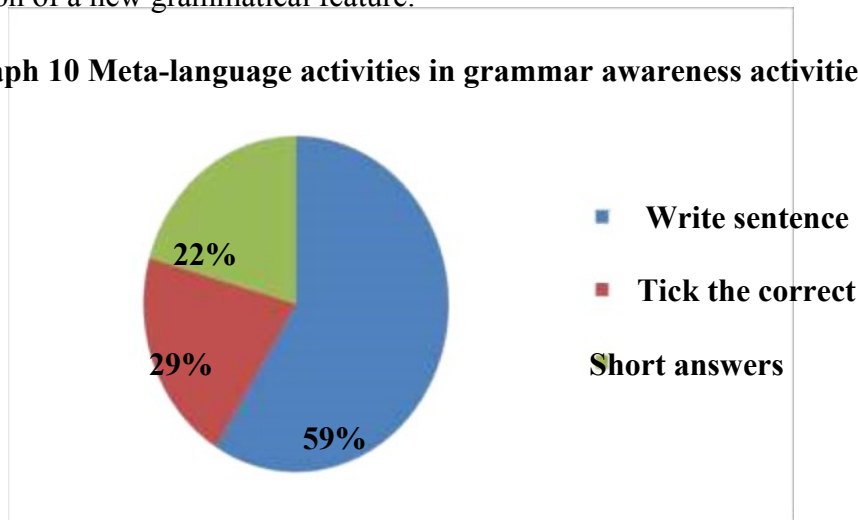
As it was observed, learners were engaged in meta-language activities such as completion of a grammatical rule, choosing the correct explanation for the use of a grammatical feature or providing a short answer to a meta-language questions demonstrating their understanding of the use of the grammatical feature based on the examples provided in the book. The input of these activities included tables or timelines which were presented to the learners prior to the activities and contained sentences derived from the reading or listening texts. They had to read the sentences carefully and then try to derive the rule and complete the meta-language activities.

3.4.3. Task types in grammar sections
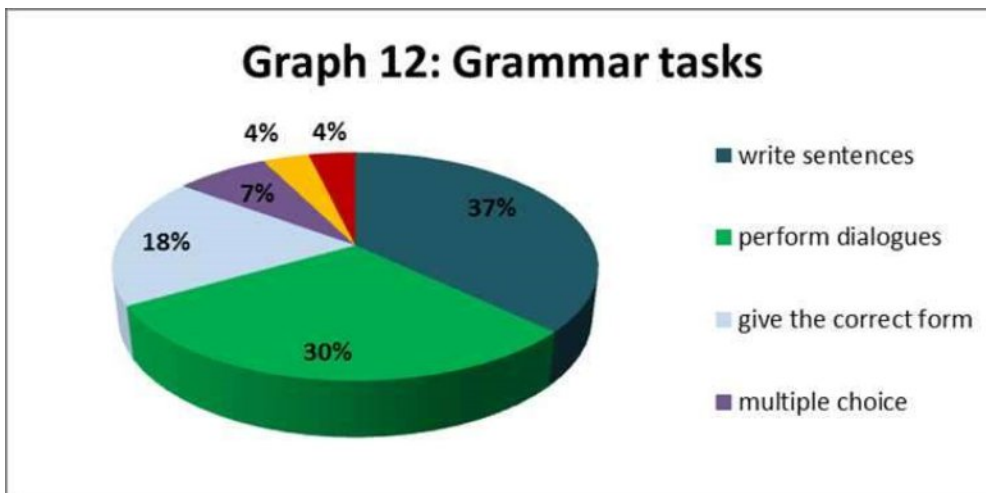
What was also observable was that the model Presentation-Practice-Production which was a traditional approach to teaching grammar was not followed in the book; the rules were not presented to complete the rule the students but rather discovered by the learners and there were very few activities following this consciousness raising awareness.

Most of the times, learners were involved in the productive skills in order to use the new grammatical phenomenon. These tasks though, were not communicative in nature, they did not have a real purpose and as suggested by Ellis (2010) the data for concsiousness raising tasks should be authentic, mostly oral and should involve learners in meaningful communication using grammar as the medium and not the goal. The tasks included in the textbook did not focus on meaning but on form and failed to lead to real-world processes of language use. Finally, these tasks were very short and limited in the textbook and did not provide the time learners needed to internalise the new grammar, it was rather a mere exposure to these structures.

4. Conclusion

This study focused on the evaluation of the textbook used in 6th AP grade upper/secondary state schools for EFL learners. It was motivated by the fact that the textbook was used on a large national scale, it was recently developed and it s strengths or weaknesses would have a high impact on AP students learning of English. After the close evaluation of the components of the book, the findings suggested that the overall organisation of the textbook and the themes included were satisfactory; the authors' intention to use real-like situations and explore all four language skills in an integrated way was apparent and elements of differentiation

of instruction were also found in the textbook. However, many problematic areas were detected as to the practicality of the book, its contents, use of authentic language, integration of the four skills, the nature of the tasks, autonomy of learning and assessment practices. The findings also suggested that the textbook had not been piloted prior to its implementation which was essential in order to ensure that the textbook would actually work for its addressed market.

The textbook followed a thematic approach for the organisation of its units and the four skills were promoted through a context based approach which could help students in developing their language skills. The topics and themes selected were overall appropriate to the students' interests and age resembling topics they would encounter in real life either in the social, personal or educational domain.

Furthermore, the colourful illustrations contained in the textbook made the book more appealing to young earners. The overall organisation and layout of the students' book showed a well -structured work that could work with young learners of this age. Another aspect concerning practicality is the layout of the teachers' book; although there were useful guidelines for the teacher, it was difficult to use two books while teaching. Instead, a students book edition with the pages for the teacher interleaved would have been a more practical and useful format for the teachers book.

The appendix of the book contained new vocabulary extra material for the students in order to allow for differentiated instruction. These materials included extra activities for reading and writing or simplified versions of writing and listening. There were also more challenging options for stronger students. Thus, the textbook catered for the individual learners needs. However, the use of appended sections was not provided for each lesson and this differentiation in instruction did not occur systematically. Moreover, the fact that this differentiation of instruction was kept outside the main textbook showed that it was optional to be used.

There was an effort to develop the four language skills in an integrated way in the units, trying to include every skill in each unit and the activities for receptive skills were usually used as input for the activities of the productive skills. Nevertheless, the tasks which were involved for each skill section did not integrate all four skills. Furthermore, throughout the book, grammar sections were overemphasized with every unit containing two sections on grammatical features. The findings of the close analysis on the textbook sections indicated that instruction of grammar was form focused and language in the tasks was rarely used for real communicative purposes involving problem solving approaches. The claim of the authors for authenticity in the reading and listening texts was rejected since it was evident that both reading and listening texts were mostly adapted or developed specifically for pedagogic purposes, with careful attention to the grammatical structures and lexical items in order to correspond to vocabulary and grammar goals of each unit. Furthermore, the majority of the tasks in the productive skills seemed to be controlling the students as to what they were going to produce and there was not much opportunity given for learners' autonomy or negotiation on the tasks themselves.

The assessment practices in the book included the self-assessment sections in every unit and 3 revision tests. These practices revolved mainly around grammar and vocabulary and completely excluded listening and speaking assessments. The teachers' book was not particularly helpful since there were no guidelines as to how the self-assessment would be done and there was no answer key for students to be able to assess themselves. On the other hand though, it could be left on the teachers' judgment as to how self-assessment could be done, thus allowing freedom of choice to teachers. Nevertheless, it would have been useful for inexperienced teachers to have guidelines concerning this section. The number of tests was not

sufficient for a whole year and suggested a summative evaluation of the students in every 3 units. The teachers would need to design and implement their own tests for formative and summative purposes and many alterations concerning the tests contents would have to be made to include the four skills which were not present most of the time.

After having identified the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook, it is important to consider the way forward. This book has already been implemented and used by teachers in primary education. Teachers need to perform a similar task of evaluation of the book before using it in the classroom and find ways to combat with its defects. Teachers are the ones who will finally decide how to use the book and in these cases, teachers do not have the option to choose any other coursebook. Therefore, they should use the textbook as their core material, make adaptations and supplement it with other materials according to their learners needs and their teaching situation. Furthermore, the developers of the textbook should make a retrospective evaluation of their book and make the necessary changes to improve its contents. Finally, regular revised editions of the book should be made in order to constantly update the contents according to t he learners needs and teaching context.

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