First Grade intermediate Teachers' Evaluation of the Textbook Entitled (English for Iraq)

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Abstract

The current research aimed at evaluating the first grade intermediate textbook entitled *English for Iraq* (student's book) from the point of view of English teachers who are teaching it in General Directorate of Education in Baghdad Al-Rusafs/1 intermediate schools. The research's two questions were the following:

1- What are the 1st grade intermediate teachers' viewpoints and evaluation of the English textbook entitled (English for Iraq) "student's book"? 2- Are there any significant differences at (a=0.05) in the degree of the teachers' evaluation of the 1st grade intermediate English textbook entitled "English for Iraq"(student's book) according to the gender variable?. Sixty two first grade intermediate English teachers working in the intermediate schools of the General Directorate of Education in Baghdad- Al-Rusafa/1 during the academic year 2015-2016 was the sample of the research. Data were collected through a checklist. The responses were analyzed by using the proper statistics. The research findings indicated that the textbook in question is almost in harmony with the criteria mentioned in the used checklist, and can be used as an acceptable textbook to be taught to the students of the mentioned grade. This does not mean neglecting the diagnosed weaknesses identified by the present findings. It was also found that there were no significance differences in the degree of evaluation according to the gender variable. Finally, some recommendations and suggestions were presented by the researcher to support the evaluation process of other stages English textbook in Iraq.

Keyword: *evaluation, English for Iraq textbook evaluation, evaluating checklist, English teachers' viewpoints.*

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Section One: Introduction

1- 1- The Problem and its Significance: italicize

The educational process is traditionally composed of three main elements in particular the teacher, the student, and the curriculum and the textbook, but for many years, the two elements, teachers and students and their roles were investigated thoroughly, and less attention was given to the issues regarding textbooks. Textbook is believed to be an essential part of the classroom, McGrath (2006:171) states that "course books tend to dictate what is taught, in what order, and to some extent, how and what learners learn". Teachers regularly use a lot of class time on using the textbook, it is an important resource for them in supporting students to learn variety of subjects. Garinger (2002:1) points out that "A textbook can serve different purposes for teachers: as a core resource, as a source of supplemental material, as an inspiration for classroom activities, even as the curriculum itself.". For that, the textbook can be considered the most important part of teaching, and evaluating textbooks as a task of great importance to the future success of programs.

Evaluation is widely acknowledged as a powerful means of improving the quality of education and evaluation studies played many roles in education. In the field of textbook evaluation, it is regarded as an educational necessity because it shows how a textbook can be improved or justified. This task was given importance by many scholars in order to improve its quality as well as to facilitate the teachers' work and the teaching/ learning process. Sheldon (1988:237-239) affirms that "we need to evaluate textbooks for two reasons. First, the evaluation will help the teacher or program developer in making decisions on selecting the appropriate textbook. Second, evaluation of the merits and demerits of a textbook will familiarize the teacher with its probable weaknesses and strengths". Tomlinson (1996 cited in Abdel Wahab, 2013:55) states that "the process of materials evaluation can be seen as a way of developing our understanding of the ways in which it works and, in doing so, of contributing to both acquisition theory and pedagogic practices. It can also be seen as one way of carrying out action research." McGrath (2002, cited in

Shirazi& Zamanian,2015:13) believes that textbook evaluation is also of an important value for the development and administration of language learning program. The main purpose of evaluation studies is not merely to evaluate , but rather to obtain information useful in improving the curriculum and textbooks. Therefore, teachers as well as material designers have to make use of the area of textbook evaluation so that they can question and form their opinions about textbooks. Other benefits of textbook evaluation are identifying their weak and strong points, utilizing their strong points and improving their weak points by either modifying or replacing them with other books (Cunningworth, 1995).

   English textbook plays a very important role to facilitate language acquisition in the classrooms. For most teachers, textbooks provide the foundation for the content of lessons, the balance of the skills taught, as well as the kinds of language practice the students engage in during class activities. For the EFL learners, the textbook becomes the major source of contact they have with the English apart from the input provided by the teacher. Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004:1) believe that "to evaluate English materials or more precisely textbooks the value or potential value of a set of learning materials (textbooks) have to be measured by making judgments about the effectiveness of the materials on the learners using them". Therefore, English textbook is considered an essential component of any English course and thus the selection of the best suitable textbook for a particular context demands careful investigation.

      The present research focuses on the evaluation of English textbook (English for Iraq) for the first intermediate grade of secondary stage in Iraq. Since this textbook is being utilized by students in the first intermediate grade, it is important that it passes through close inspection, and this is the only way that parents, teachers and students will be assured of reliable and good learning.

   These reasons motivated the researcher to evaluate the mentioned English textbook. The significance of this choice is that this textbook was published and adopted only recently and implemented for the first time in the academic year (2014-2015), and evaluating it will be an urgent need and of a great value and an educational necessity. The evaluation can provide a reference for the subsequent revisions and

improvement of certain aspects of this fundamental textbook and related material as well. Another reason behind the choice is that this book constitutes the building block for secondary stage students in English. Finally, the researcher believes that evaluating English textbooks in Iraq is a task of great importance to the future success of English learning efforts. Therefore, this makes such evaluation a matter of high significance. So, the main questions of the present research are: 1) What are the 1st grade intermediate teachers' viewpoints and evaluation of the English textbook entitled (English for Iraq) "student's book"? 2- Are there any significant differences at (a=0.05) in the degree of the teachers' evaluation of the 1st grade intermediate English textbook entitled "English for Iraq"(student's book) according to the gender variable?

1- 2- Value of the Study:

  The evaluation of the English textbook is considered to function as a kind of educational judgment. From what have been explained above, the researcher assumes that it is important to do an evaluation on the new English textbook (English for Iraq). The evaluation of such textbook is considered important because of its benefits. The results of the present evaluation will help to provide a perspective of the reality of the textbook contains for English teachers, especially first grade intermediate English teachers about the nature of the textbook, so that they can take more control over its use. Bano (2005:5) confirms that "textbooks are considered as the sole and legitimate source of knowledge both for students and teachers". Therefore, to some extent the value of the present research can be summarized in the following points:

1- The research in evaluating English 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.

3- The current English textbook evaluation may prove to be a valuable input to the Ministry of Education by serving as a possible guide for similar future textbook evaluations.

4- The present research will help teachers to enhance the effectiveness of the use of textbook by helping to understand what areas of the textbook need further modification.

5- In actuality, the present research would benefit not only teachers and students, which is always in the forefront of every educational improvement, but also textbook designers, and ultimately decision makers.

1-3- Aims:

1- Evaluating the first grade intermediate English textbook entitled (English for Iraq) "student's book" which has been prescribed to be taught in Iraq, from the EFL teachers' point of view.

2- Identifing the differences at the significance level (0.05) in evaluating first grade intermediate EFL textbook entitled (English for Iraq) "student's book" according to the gender variable.

1-4- Limits:

The present research is limited to:

1. The English textbook entitled "English for Iraq" (student's book) of the first grade intermediate for the academic year (2015-2016).

2. First grade intermediate English teachers at the intermediate schools in the General Directorate of Education in Baghdad-Al-Rusafa/1.

1-5- Definitions of Basic Terms:

- **Evaluation:**

Hutchinson and Waters (1987:96) define evaluation as a "matter of judging the fitness of something for a particular purpose". According to Nunan (1992:185), evaluation "involves not only assembling information but interpreting that information – making value judgments".

-Textbook Evaluation:

Textbook evaluation is an applied linguistic activity through which teachers, supervisors, administrators and materials developers can make judgments about the effect of the materials on the people using them" (Tomlinson, 2001: 15).

- **English Textbook:**

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines a 'textbook' in general as: A book that teaches a particular subject and that is used especially in schools and college (2000: 1343). English textbook in particular is a book which has a clear organizational structure and contains careful balanced and graded grammar, vocabulary, skills work and task. Topics and themes are selected with attention to what

is likely to be of interest to the presumed users of the book (Senior, 2006:144).

-First Grade Intermediate:

  It refers to the class which is the first step in the secondary stage according to the educational ladder in Iraq in which students who study EFL by the newly prescribed text book entitled "*English for Iraq*" beside other different subjects.

-English for Iraq Textbook:

  It refers to the English curriculum (English for Iraq) series for the first grade intermediate published by the Iraqi Ministry of Education; it was implemented for the first time in the academic year 2013-2014. The components of this series are: a) Student's book, b) Activity book, c) Teacher's book, and d) Audio.

Section Two: Theoretical Background

2-1- English Textbook in Iraq

  Ministry of Education in Iraq has been trying to improve English teaching-learning process, and it takes into account all the latest changes in language teaching approaches over the last few years. The Ministry adopted the *English for Iraq* series**,** and it was implemented in the academic year 2013-2014. This series embraced Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLTA), which is 'an approach (and not a method) that aims to (a) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and (b) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication'. (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 155)**.** This series of textbooks take Iraqi students from primary to more advanced levels. This new series is for primary and secondary stages. Up to now it is implemented in the primary stage (1st, 2nd, and 3rd) grades only. In the secondary stage this book is implemented in the intermediate (1st and 2nd), and preparatory (4th, 5th, and 6th) grades. As far as the present research is concerned with the first grade intermediate English curriculum which contains *Student's book, Activity book, and Teacher's book*, the evaluation will cover the (student's book) only. This book is organized into six theme-based learning units and two review units. Following is the vertical and horizontal syllabus of the (student's book) content:

*Vertically***:**
- There are (8) units in this book. Each unit contains (10) lessons, except units (4) and (8) contain (7) lessons each. If we don't find any lessons in the student's book, we can find them in the activity book.
- We can find TRANSCRIPT for each unit.
- We can find also Unit Word List at the last pages of the book.
- We can find project work (a scrapbook) in units (1, 2,3,5,6, and 7).

*Horizontally***:**
- Lexical areas.
- Communicative activities.
- Language learning activities.
- Grammatical area.
- Pronunciation and phonology.

Unit 4:
- Advice on and practice in …. .
- Vocabulary learning.
- Speaking with expression.
- Working out meaning of unknown words from the context.
- Making your writing more interesting.

Unit 8:
- Advice on and practice in …. .
- Concentrating when listening.
- Pronunciation of Yes/No questions and answers.
- Using titles, headings and pictures to predict content of texts.
- Scanning a text for direct information, reading more carefully for indirect information.

2-2- General and Specific Educational Objectives for Teaching English in Iraq

All countries over the world have focused on studying foreign languages since ancient times, and learning of those languages flourished in the twentieth century especially after the end of the second world war, and the ultimate goal of teaching foreign languages (English in particular) is the communication, which means the use of language for various purposes and attitudes. The communicative approach plays a vital role in teaching foreign languages, including English, and it brought about a strategic change in the perception

toward language first, in the perception of the learning / teaching techniques and the bases governed them secondly, and in the learning / teaching content thirdly. Following are the general and specific (intermediate stage) educational objectives of teaching English:

1- General objectives:

1. Enabling students to communicate linguistically with their peers in the classroom environment or in the community in which they live with English by its various skills (listening and comprehension, speaking, reading and writing).

2. Having access to cultures and literatures of other nations and benefiting from them.

3. Avoiding the narrow regional thought and the intolerance and ethnic discrimination.

4. Broadening the students' horizons through encouraging them to read in English and consequently acquire knowledge from the newest books and international publications.

5. Emphasizing the importance of the English language role in solving some problems among the countries for the purpose of improving the relations among the various countries.

6. Obtaining versed generation of the most important living languages in the world, which helps to raise the efficiency in all aspects of the life whether political, social, and economic (the labor market) in our country Iraq.

7. Promotion of human rights principles and ideas and not overtaking on human rights, and this is done through the creation of a communication means among individuals, namely the language.

8. Enabling students to gain first-hand experience through direct contact and visit the developed countries and learn their language.

2- Specific objectives (intermediate stage):

1- Consolidating and developing all goals set within the primary stage.

2. Helping students learn English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in different life situations, taking into account the gradation in the scientific material.

3. Adding expertise concerning the possibility of communicating with others in English through its three core activities (comprehension, conversation, and writing).

4. Enabling students to build correct sentences by using basic vocabulary and requisite grammatical rules for the purpose of achieving the two principles of language, fluency and accuracy.
5. Enabling students to use English dictionaries.
6. Broadening their experiences to enable them to use the means of modern learning technology, including the Internet and the basic computer skills.

The copy of the stated objectives was obtained from the General Directorate of Curriculum / English Unit in the year (2015), it was in Arabic (Appendix 1), the researcher translated it into English in order to benefit from in the current research.

2- 3-Textbook Evaluation Approaches:

Many researchers tackled this area of evaluation with a variety of criteria or methods. Weir and Roberts (1994:11) state two main reasons for evaluating teaching materials. First, it provides evidence which can inform theoretical disputes about directions to be followed in language teaching or in teacher education. Second, it is a tool to indicate the suitability of particular approaches or techniques under given conditions and whether they meet the claims made for them. Ornstein and Hunkins (1998:320) define curriculum evaluation as "a process or cluster of processes that people perform in order to gather data that will enable them to decide whether to accept, change, or eliminate something- the curriculum in general or an educational textbook in particular". There are different criteria or approaches for evaluation of the textbook in the literature. Some of them will be presented briefly.

2-2-1. Morrow's Criteria:

Morrow suggests four simple comprehensive and direct criteria to be considered while evaluating a textbook they are:
• What is my material about?
• Why was my material produced?
• Who was my material produced for?
• How was my material produced?

2-2-2. Predictive and Retrospective Evaluation by Ellis:

The *predictive evaluation* is designed to make a decision taking into consideration what materials to use in respect to their suitability to the objectives. The evaluation can either rely on evaluations made by

expert reviewers and published in specialized magazines, or carry on personal evaluations using several checklists and guidelines as helping tools. While the *retrospective evaluation* occurs after the textbook has been used to determine its strengths and weaknesses and to what extent it needs modifications, the retrospective evaluation can also be a tool for assessing the degree of success of a predictive evaluation and improving its means. The retrospective evaluation can be impressionistic or empirical. There are two levels of planning and collecting the necessary information: Macro-level and Micro-level. While micro-evaluation deals with the overall assessment of the suitability of the materials to the target group, the macro-evaluation tries to evaluate the tasks in detail.

2-2-3. Tomlinson's Criteria:

Tomlinson claims that material evaluation is a procedure that involves measuring some or all of the following:

1- The credibility of the materials to learners, teachers, and administrators.
2- The validity of the materials.
3- The reliability of the materials.
4- The ability of the materials to interest the learners and the teachers.
5- The ability of the materials to motivate the learners.
6- The value of the materials in terms of short-term learning.
7- The value of the materials in terms of long-term learning. 8- The learners' perceptions of the value of the materials.
9- The teachers' perceptions of the value of the materials.
10- The assistance given to the teacher in terms of preparation, delivery and assessment.
11- The flexibility of the materials.
12- The contribution made by the materials to teacher development.
13- The match with administrative requirements.

He also defines three types of materials evaluation that vary in purpose, in formality and in timing. These are pre-use evaluation, whilst-use (in-use) evaluation and post-use evaluation. Pre-use evaluation involves making decisions about the potential value of materials for their users. Whilst-use evaluation involves measuring the value of materials whilst using them or whilst observing them as being used. Post-use evaluation which is the most valuable as it can measure

the actual effect of the materials on the users (Morrow, 1977, Ellis, 1997, Tomlinson, 2003, as cited in Guellai, 2012: 22-26).

2-4- **Good English Textbook's Features:**

   According to Richards (1990:15), Tomlinson (1998:7-21), and Crawford (2002: 84-87) conceptions of what constitutes effective language teaching materials. A very good EFL textbook should have a novelty, variety, attractive layout, and appealing content. The layout of presentation, tasks and activities, and text and illustrations should look friendly to the students. It helps to build up students' confidence by providing tasks or activities that students can cope with. Also, it should meet the learners' needs and background. It provides opportunities for authentic language use. Moreover, it should provide the students with opportunities to use English to achieve communicative purposes. It is important for textbooks to provide frequent and ample exposure to the instructed language features in communicative use. It should contain variety of tasks, activities, and learning styles. A good textbook should accommodate different attitudinal and motivational background as much as possible. Finally, it presents functional language in a context.

2-5- **Role of EFL Textbook in Language Teaching**:

   Many researchers addressed the role of the textbook due to its importance in the teaching/learning process. Richards (2001) asserts that:

> Textbooks act as a key component in most language programs. They provide the learners with the necessary input that the learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the class. They also serve as the basis for the language content and skills to be taught and other kinds of language practice that the learners take part in.

Azizfar, et al. (2009:36) consider textbooks as:

> essential resources for teachers to aid students in the learning process of every subject, which plays a rudimentary role in school instruction. They argue that for the EFL learners, the textbook becomes the major source of contact they have with the language, apart from the input provided by the teacher.

According to Hutchinson and Torres (1994, as cited in Al-Akraa, 2013:14), the role of the EFL textbook can be summarized in five points.

1. A textbook provides a basis for negotiation. The textbook not only represents concrete subjects of dialogues, but it provides a strong structure for controlling and managing social interaction inside the classroom.

2. Textbooks provide a flexible framework for learning process, and they can enable both teachers and students to develop their creativity through a secure and structured outline.

3. Textbooks can also be freely negotiated. In this case, textbooks provide a subject that can be debated clearly in classroom interaction.

4. Textbooks develop teaching skills, and they can bring different skills and practices to the classroom, so they provide teachers with an opportunity to develop their teaching skills and instructions.

5. Textbooks cannot be more than a workable compromise. They fail to accommodate all students' needs.

2-6 - Previous Studies:

Akef, H. (2011): This study aimed at evaluating the English Textbook "IRAQ OPPORTUNITIES" for the second Intermediate stage by teachers' perspective. The sample included (60) English teachers working in the public and private intermediate schools at Baghdad/ AL-Karkh/1, during the academic year (2010-2011). The instrument of the study was a checklist. Results of the study revealed that there is a big lack in English textbook in most of its domains such as: objective domain, general shape domain, teaching aids domain, book content domain respectively. The textbook's objectives do not meet the individual differences among students and the contents do not enhance free writing opportunities.

Awad (2013): This study aimed at evaluating the Palestinian 12th grade English textbook from the teachers' perspectives. The study examined the role of gender, qualification and experience on the degree of evaluating the chosen textbooks. The instrument of the research was a questionnaire (evaluation checklist), the sample of the study consisted of 26 male and female teachers who teach English for the 12th grade in Nablus. The

researcher found out that these books could be suitable for the Palestinian students, their culture and religion.

Mukundan & Kalajahi (2013): The objective of this study is to evaluate the general attributes of the textbooks and to evaluate the learning-teaching content in Malaysia. In this study, the sample is 944 male and female English teachers (Year 1 to Year 6 & Form 1 to Form 5). The instrument is the checklist. The results showed that Year 1 to Year 6 teachers reported that the current textbooks are 'highly useful' to the students, whereas Form 1 to Form 5 teachers contended that the school books are only 'moderately useful'.

Naseem, et al. (2015): The study aimed at evaluating the English text-book for matriculation program (9th class) in Pakistan. The main purpose was to investigate the suitability of the textbook to contribute in the improvement of the English language programs in Pakistani schools. The instrument was a checklist. Evaluation was done at two levels. First level-Glance evaluation involved an analysis of different activities of the textbook. In Second level: Close-evaluation examined separately and more analytically general appearance, layout and design, visuals, objectives, teaching aids and methods, table of contents, exercises and social and cultural context provided through the book. The results showed that the relevant textbook did not fulfil the general objectives of target language. The problematic areas were related to integration of skills, nature of activities and some general features of the textbook.

Akbari & Pourabbas (2015): The aim of this study was to evaluate Iranian second-grade English textbook based on needs analysis approach. The questionnaire was the main instrument of the study which was prepared in the light of the students' language needs and wants. The sample was (120) second-grade male high school students. The obtained results indicated that although all language abilities and elements were approximately significant for most of the learners, the textbook couldn't satisfy the students' foreign language needs. It was proposed that the textbook needs to be improved or completed by means of other learning materials in order to be more efficient for the students.

As far as the aim is concerned, the present research is in line with the previous studies, which evaluated English textbooks of different stages. Concerning the kind and number of the involved samples, each of the previous studies includes a certain number of subjects that the

researcher thinks is needed for her or his research, whereas the sample of the present research consists of (62) first intermediate grade English teachers. In the related studies the main instruments were questionnaires and checklists used as tools for collecting data. In the current research a checklist was used as a research main instrument. Regarding the results, three out of the presented previous studies concluded that the evaluated textbooks did not meet the individual differences and couldn't satisfy the students' foreign language needs, and they did not fulfill the general objectives of target language, while two out of them concluded that the textbooks could be suitable and useful for the students, and their culture and religion. Regarding the conclusion of present research, it reached the positive result regarding the first intermediate English textbook, and this result is to some extent consistence with Awad (2013), and Mukundan & Kalajahi (2013) studies' conclusions. Most of the previous mentioned studies evaluated Arab and foreign textbooks. There was only one study (Akef, 2011) that evaluated English textbook for the second intermediate stage (Iraq Opportunities) in Iraq. The current research at the best knowledge of the researcher is the first study concerned with the evaluation of the new first intermediate English textbook (English for Iraq)**.**

Section Three: Procedures and Methodology

1- Procedures

To achieve the aims of the present research, the following procedures are adopted: Collecting the required data from different sources in order to design the tool of the research. Then, the researcher reviewed the (student's book) thoroughly, and obtained content and face validity of the tool by giving it to a group of experts in the fields of English, EFL teaching methods, and assessment and evaluation. After that, the researcher selected a sample of (non- core sample) 1st grade intermediate EFL teachers to estimate the reliability of the questionnaire (checklist), followed by statistical treatment of data. Finally, analysis and discussion of results have been done.

2- Methodology

A survey was done to gather the information needed. This is a method of data gathering from the sample which is representative of the population. Brown & Rogers (2002:142) affirm that "Surveys are

any procedures used to gather and describe the characteristics, attitudes, views, opinions and so forth of students, teachers, administrators or any other people who are important to a study".

The *English for Iraq* series of the first grade intermediate (student's book) was selected for evaluation purpose. It was evaluated in the present research by first grade intermediate EFL teachers who have been teaching this textbook for two years. So, the "in-use evaluation" type was used, because this type focuses on the use of the course book in the classroom to determine whether it is relevant or not, and this type involves the actual users of the textbook. It is usually undertaken by the teachers themselves who are directly dealing with the particular textbook (McGrath, 2002, as cited in Aftab, 2011: 95). To meet the objectives of the current research, the methodology the researcher undertook is the descriptive one. A checklist instrument was employed.

2-1- Population and Sample:

The size of the population of the present research is (208) English teachers who are teaching first grade in the (104) intermediate schools in the General Directorate of Education in Baghdad/Al- Rusafa/1 in the academic year 2015-2016. The sample was chosen randomly and it consisted of (62) English teachers (male and female) as seen in Table (1) which represents (30%) of the population. These data were obtained from Educational Planning Department/ Statistical Unit in the above General Directorate of Education in year 2015.

(Table: 1)
Sample number according to gender

General Directorate of Education	Male	Female	Total
Al-Rusafa/1	29	33	62

2-2- Description of the Instrument:

The checklist was developed primarily from Mukundan, et al. (2011), and Abdel Wahab's (2013) checklists after tailoring it specifically for the present research. Based on the mentioned review of literature, the researcher developed a checklist with (50) items. Sheldon (1988: 21-27) states "that evaluation checklists should cover some criteria related to characteristics of textbooks such as layout, organization, methodology, aims, and the degree to which a set of

materials is not only teachable, but also fits to the needs of the teachers' approaches as well as the organization's general curriculum". This method of selecting items from two checklists or more can assist in conducting a descriptive-evaluative content analysis and determine the problematical issues distinctly, and can help in evaluating the textbook more broadly. The items of the checklist were grouped under two domains: 1) *General attributes* (14 items; 1-14), and 2) *Learning-teaching content* (36 items; 15-50). The first domain was further divided into three sub-categories; 1) *Methodology* (3 item; 1-3), 2) *Suitability to learners* (3 items; 4-6), 3) *Layout and design* (8 items; 7-14). The second domain was divided into nine sub-categories; 1) *General* (7 items; 15-21), 2) *Listening* (4 items; 22-25), 3) *Speaking* (3 items; 26-28), 4) *Reading* (4 items; 29-32), 5) *Writing* (3 items; 33-35); 6) *Vocabulary* (4 items;36-39), 7) *Grammar* (4 items; 40-43), 8) *Pronunciation* (4 items; 44-47), and 9) *Activities* (3 items; 48-50). The evaluative system is a 5-point scale: 5–1 (5: strongly agree; 4: agree; 3: undecided; 2: disagree; 1: strongly disagree).

2-3- Validity

Everitt (2002: 388) defines validity as "the extent to which a measuring instrument is measuring what was intended". The checklist of the present research was displayed to (6) specialists in the fields of English teaching methods, English, applied linguistics, and assessment and evaluation in order to ensure the content and face validity of the instrument (Appendix: 2).They agreed that it was suitable for the purpose of the current research, with minor modifications. Thus, to achieve the validity, the percentage method was used to check the agreement and disagreement of the jury members about the checklist items. The result was (80%), and this achieved the content validity. So, the instrument is appropriate for evaluating the 1st grade intermediate English textbook (student's book).

2-4- Reliability

Wijnen-Meijer et al. (2013:1012) say that "reliability refers to consistency of scores across repeated measurements". The researcher in the current research used the test-retest reliability which is a way of thinking about reliability in terms of consistency over time. A reliability test was conducted by using the checklist which was piloted to (20) 1st intermediate English teachers from outside of the main

sample as a first test. Then, after two weeks, the checklist was re-administered to the same sample group as a second test. Frequencies and reliability coefficient have been found between the first and the second responses for all items of the checklist. The reliability was calculated by using Pearson correlation coefficient, and was found to be (0.81) which can be considered a reasonable indication of the reliability of the checklist.

2-5- Statistical Means

In the present research the researcher used the statistical methods, Pearson correlation coefficient, Two sample (independent group) t-Test, Fisher equation to analyze the collected data.

Section Four: Results analysis and Discussion

1- Results analysis

The data of the present research gathered with respect to the view points of (62) first intermediate English teachers both male and female who are working in Baghdad/ General Directorate of Education/Al-Rusafa-1 regarding the evaluation of 1st intermediate English textbook entitled "English for Iraq" (student's book). The data gathered through distributing the checklist, and has been treated statistically. The results are analyzed quantitatively through computation of descriptive statistics. Following is the analysis of the checklist's items according to their rank-order organization.

1-1- Results of the First aim:

The first aim of the current research is: evaluating first grade intermediate English textbook entitled (English for Iraq) "student's book" which has been prescribed to be taught in Iraq from the teachers' point of view. To achieve the analysis of this aim, means and percentages of each domain's items were used. Table 3 provides the results of the statistical treatment of the items under two domains: First) General attributes, and Second) Learning – teaching content, each domain contains sub-domains.

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Table (2)
Means and percentages of the two domains evaluation

Rank	Item No.	Items	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentage
		Ⅰ. General attributes		
	A.	*Methodology*		
1	3	The method used is student- centered.	2,931	97,712
2	2	Activities can work well with methodologies in EFL.	2,882	96,078
3	1	The activities can be exploited fully and can embrace the various methodologies in an EFL context.	2,794	93,137
	B.	*Suitability to learners*		
4	4	It is compatible to the age of the learner.	2,765	92,157
5	5	It is compatible to the needs of the learner.	2,686	89,542
6	6	It is compatible to the interests of the learner.	2,618	87,255
	C.	*Layout and design*		
7	7	It includes a detailed overview of the functions and structures that will be taught in each unit.	2,608	86,928
8	13	An adequate vocabulary list or glossary is included.	2,569	85,621
9	8	Adequate review sections and exercises are included.	2,510	83,660
10	9	It is durable.	2,471	82,353
11	10	The visuals are functional.	2,421	80,718
12	14	The visuals are compatible with students' own culture.	2,275	75,817
13	11	It includes a detailed overview of vocabulary that will be taught in each unit.	2,157	71,895
14	12	The visuals stimulate students to be creative.	2,078	69,281
		ⅠⅠ. Learning- teaching content		
	A.	*General*		
15	17	The language in the textbook is natural and real.	2,901	96,915
16	16	Activities move from simple to complex.	2,686	89,542
17	20	The content displays different traditions and customs.	2,618	87,255
18	18	The topics encourage students to express their own view.	2,588	86,275
19	19	The topics allow students to think critically.	2,147	71,569
20	15	Most of the tasks in the book are interesting.	2,127	70,915
21	21	The topics of the content cope with the criteria of the students' culture.	2,029	67,647
	B.	*Listening*		
22	23	The listening passages help students develop their listening comprehension skills	2,126	84,653
23	25	Listening material is accompanied by background information, questions, and activities.	2,490	83,000
24	22	The book has appropriate listening tasks with well-defined goals.	2,314	77,124
25	24	Activities are authentic or close to real situations.	2,117	72,951

	C.		*Speaking*		
26	28	Speech activities encourage students to talk about their concerns and interests.		2,129	87,097
27	26	Activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication.		2,100	84,147
28	27	Activities are balanced between individual response, pair work and group work.		2,147	69,235
	D.		*Reading*		
29	31	Some reading passages are easy for most of the students to deal with.		2,250	75,343
30	32	The textbook uses authentic (real world) reading material at an appropriate level.		2,102	72,960
31	29	Texts are interesting.		2,004	70,105
32	30	The content helps students develop reading comprehension skills.		2,422	69,058
	E.		*Writing*		
33	35	The textbook leads students from simple controlled writing activities to guided writing activities.		2,178	69,182
34	33	Activities have achievable goals and take into consideration learner capabilities.		2,214	65,338
35	34	Activities are interesting.		1,745	58,552
	F.		*Vocabulary*		
36	37	There is a good distribution (simple to complex) of vocabulary load across the whole book.		2,097	71,086
37	38	Words are efficiently repeated and recycled across the book.		2,900	70,888
38	36	The load (number of new words in each lesson) is appropriate to the students' level.		2,910	68,102
39	39	The sentences and examples use words that are known by students.		2,770	65,200
	G.		*Grammar*		
40	43	Grammar lessons are often derived from the listening or reading passages.		2,093	82,015
41	41	The grammar is contextualized.		2,098	81,000
42	42	Grammar is introduced explicitly and reworked incidentally throughout the book.		2,323	76,101
43	40	The spread of grammar is achievable.		1,314	43,790
	H.		*Pronunciation*		
44	46	There are cassettes /CDs for practice.		2,083	88,068
45	47	The textbook includes adequate material for pronunciation work.		2,087	85,146
46	45	It is learner-friendly with no complex charts.		2,343	83,235
47	44	It is contextualized.		1,007	54,112
	I.		*Activities*		
48	48	The book provides a variety of meaningful and mechanical activities to practice language items and skills.		2,045	75,168
49	50	The activities enable students to be creative.		2,046	69,340
50	49	The book provides communicative activities that help students carry out their communicative tasks in real life.		2,211	62,061

1- General attributes domain's results:

The results of general attributes domain's sub-domains presented in table (2) above show means, percentages, and the acute degree as follows:

A- Methodology: Item 3 (the method used is student-centered) ranked number one got weighted means of (2,931) with weighted percentage of (97,712). Item 2 ranked number, two got weighted means (2,882) with weighted percentage of (96,078). While item 1 ranked number three which got weighted means of (2,794) with weighted percentage of (93,137).

B- Suitability to learners: Item 4 (It is compatible to the age of the learner) with ranked number four got weighted means of (2,765) with a weighted percentage of (92,157). Item 5 ranked number five got weighted means of (2,686) with a weighted percentage of (89,542). Item 6 ranked number six, got weighted means of (2,618) with a weighted percentage of (87,255).

C- Layout and design: Item 7 (it includes a detailed overview of the functions and structures that will be taught in each unit) ranked number seven got weighted means of (2,608) with a weighted percentage of (86,928). Item 13 (an adequate vocabulary list or glossary is included) ranked eight got weighted means of (2,569) with a weighted percentage of (85,621). Item 8 ranked nine got weighted means of (2,510) with a weighted percentage of (83,660). Item 9 ranked ten got weighted means of (2,471) with a weighted percentage of (82,353). Item 10 ranked eleven got weighted means of (2,421) with a weighted percentage of (80,718). Item 14 ranked twelve got weighted means of (2,275) with a weighted percentage of (75,817). Item 11 ranked number thirteen got weighted means of (2,157) with a weighted percentage of (71,895). Finally, item 12 ranked number fourteen got weighted means of (2,078) with a weighted percentage of (69,281).

2- Learning- teaching content domain's results:

A -General: Item 17 (The language in the textbook is natural and real) ranked number fifteen got weighted means of (2,901) with a weighted percentage of (96,915). Item 16 (Activities move from simple to complex) ranked number sixteen received weighted means of (2,686) with a weighted percentage of (89,542). Item 20 ranked number

seventeen got weighted means of (2,618) with a weighted percentage of (87,255). Item 18 ranked eighteen, gained weighted means of (2,588) with a weighted percentage of (86,275). Item 19 ranked nineteen got weighted means of (2,147) with a weighted percentage of (71,569). Item 15 ranked twenty got weighted means of (2,127) with a weighted percentage of (70,915). Finally, item 21 ranked number twenty with weighted means of (2,029) with a weighted percentage of (67,647).

B- Listening: Item 23 (The listening passages help students develop their listening comprehension skills) with ranked number twenty two, got weighted means of (2,126) with a weighted percentage of (84,653). Item 25 (Listening material is accompanied by background information, questions, and activities) ranked twenty three received weighted means of (2,490) with a weighted percentage of (83,000). Item 22 ranked twenty four got weighted means of (2,314) with a weighted percentage of (77,124). Item 24 ranked number twenty five got weighted means of (2,117) with a weighted percentage of (72,951).

C- Speaking: Item 28 (Speech activities encourage students to talk about their concerns and interests) with ranked number twenty six got weighted means of (2,129) with a weighted percentage of (87,097). Item 26 ranked twenty seven, received weighted means of (2,100) with a weighted percentage of (84,147). Item 27 ranked number twenty eight, got weighted means of (2,147) with a weighted percentage of (69,235).

D- Reading: Item 31(Some reading passages are easy for most of the students to deal with) with ranked number twenty nine got weighted means of (2,250) with a weighted percentage of (75,343). Item 32 ranked thirty received weighted means of (2,102) with a weighted percentage of (72,960). Item 29 ranked thirty one got weighted means of (2,004) with a weighted percentage of (70,105). Item 30 ranked thirty two, and got weighted means of (2,422) with a weighted percentage of (69,058).

E- Writing: Item 35 with ranked number thirty three got weighted means of (2,178) with a weighted percentage of (69,182). Item 33 ranked number thirty four received weighted means of (2,214) with a weighted percentage of (65,338). Item 34 ranked number thirty five

got weighted means of (1,745) with a weighted percentage of (58,552).

F- Vocabulary: Item 37 (There is a good distribution (simple to complex) of vocabulary load across the whole book) with ranked number thirty six got weighted means of (2,097) with a weighted percentage of (71,086). Item 38 ranked thirty seven received weighted means of (2,900) with a weighted percentage of (70,888). Item 36 ranked number thirty eight got weighted means of (2,910) with a weighted percentage of (68,102). Item 39 ranked number thirty nine got weighted means of (2,770) with a weighted percentage of (65,200).

G- Grammar: Item 43 (Grammar lessons are often derived from the listening or reading passages) with ranked number forty got weighted means of (2,093) with a weighted percentage of (82,015). Item 41 (The grammar is contextualized) ranked number forty one received weighted means of (2,098) with a weighted percentage of (81,000). Item 42 ranked number forty two got weighted means of (2,323) with a weighted percentage of (76,101). While item 40 ranked number forty three got weighted means of (1,314) with a weighted percentage of (43,790).

H- Pronunciation: Item 46 with ranked number forty four got weighted means of (2,083) with a weighted percentage of (88,068). Item 47 (The textbook includes adequate material for pronunciation work) ranked forty five received weighted means of (2,087) with a weighted percentage of (85,146). Item 45 ranked forty six got weighted means of (2,343) with a weighted percentage of (83,235). Item number (44) ranked number forty seven, got weighted means of (1,007) with a weighted percentage of (54,112).

I- Activities: Item 48 (The book provides a variety of meaningful and mechanical activities to practice language items and skills) with ranked number forty eight got weighted means of (2,045) and a weighted percentage of (75,168). Item 50 ranked number forty nine received weighted means of (2,046) with a weighted percentage of (69,340). Item 49 ranked number fifty got weighted means of (2,211) with a weighted percentage of (62,061).

1-2- Results of the second aim:

The second aim of the current research is to identify the differences at the significance level (a= 0.05) in evaluating first grade intermediate English textbook entitled (English for Iraq) "student's book" according to the gender variable. To achieve the analysis of this aim, an independent- samples t-test was used to compare the means on a dependent variable for two independent groups, see (Table 4).

Table (3)
Results of t-test for the differences in the degree of evaluation according to gender

t-Test		Gender& number	
		Male:29	Female:33
Mean		55,125	66,098
Variation		227,014	177,715
t-test Value	Calculated	1,893	
	Tabulated	2,000	
	Level of Significance (a=0.05)	Statistically no Significance	

In order to find the function of difference in the degree of evaluation according to the gender variable, Table 3 shows that there is no significant differences at a=0.05 level in the degree of evaluation of 1st stage intermediate English textbook according to gender, with the degree of freedom (60) between the average of males and females, as the t-test calculated value was (1, 893) which was smaller than t-test tabulated value (2, 000). This result is consentient with Awad (2013).

2- Discussion

2-1- Discussion of the first aim:

1- General attributes domain:

For this domain, in the category of *methodology* the results revealed that the method used in the textbook is student-centered, this method is consistent with the modern trend of the student-centered teaching strategies as Felder and Brent (1996:43-47) point out that "student-centered teaching increased motivation to learn, greater retention of knowledge, deeper understanding, and more positive attitudes toward the subject being taught" , but the activities need to be developed according to the evaluators' point of view. Regarding the *suitability of*

the textbook to the learners, the findings revealed that it is suitable to their age with reference that it needs to be compatible to the students' interest in order to help them to engage with the material. The results of the *layout and design* showed that the textbook includes an overview of the functions and structures that will be taught in each unit, and a sufficient vocabulary list, whereas it needs to include a detailed overview of vocabulary in each unit, and to strengthen the visuals in order to motivate the students to be creative. In general this domain can be regarded well according to the mentioned results, but some points need to be modified. These results are in accordance with Awad (2013), and Mukundan & Kalajahi (2013) findings.

2- Learning- teaching content domain:

Regarding the *general* content of the textbook, it uses natural and real English, and there is a good arrangement for the activities where they are go from easy to difficult, while a large number of tasks need to be reconsidered to be interesting, and the criteria of the students' culture require support. For the skills, *listening* passages are good and they help students to get benefit from them to develop their listening skill, because such material is accompanied by sufficient information, questions and activities, but such activities need to be authentic to promote stronger communication. *Speaking* skills' activities play a good role in developing speech skills of the students, but there is a lack of balance between individual response, pair work, and group work. As far as *reading* skill is concerned, the passages of this skill were distributed between easy and less easy for the students, while the reading content is good but requires more improvement. *Writing* skill activities in general need to be considered, such activities are important because they are a good way to reinforce what a student has learned as they will benefit from seeing new vocabulary in written form. *Vocabularies* have been distributed fairly well from simple to complex across the whole textbook, and there is a need to use more well-known words. For the *grammar*, it has been handled well regarding the lessons where they are derived from listening or reading passages and it is contextualized, but its spread is not achievable, where it is preferable to start from basics to more complex construction ranging from simple present and past tense to future continuous and modal perfect . Regarding the availability of the audio/

visual materials for the purpose of *pronunciation*, they are available for practice. There is adequate material for pronunciation work, but it is not contextualized, so this can be attributed to not using words contextually displaying the roles of stress in words. Finally, the textbook provides opportunity of diverse *activities* to practice English items and skills, while there is shortage in the provision of communicative activities that assist students in carrying out their communicative tasks in real life, and enable them to give and receive information and convey their ideas and opinions with those around them with trust and cooperation. In general, this domain can be regarded adequate according to the mentioned results, but some points need modification. The mentioned results are compatible to some extent with many of the results of Awad (2013), Akbari, & Pourabbas (2015), Akef (2011) and Mukundan & Kalajahi (2013).

2-2- Discussion of the Second Aim:

  Second aim is: Identifying the differences at the significance level (0.05) in evaluating first grade intermediate English textbook entitled (English for Iraq) "student's book" according to the gender variable.

   Findings of this aim show that there was no significance difference at a=0.05 level in the degree of evaluation of 1st stage intermediate English textbook according to gender. The researcher believes that this result can be attributed to the opinion that the teachers of both sexes have a clear vision of the nature of the textbook they use, which enabled them to evaluate the material they teach as seen in the results of the first aim.

3- Conclusion and Suggestions

  In the light of the findings of the present research, it can be concluded that 1st intermediate English textbook "English for Iraq"(student's book) is almost in harmony with the criteria of the checklist used in the current research, and can be used as an acceptable textbook to be taught to the students of the mentioned grade. This does not mean ignoring the gaps identified by the present findings. Thus, modifying some parts of the book can be beneficial to cover all the course goals and encourage students to improve their language knowledge and skills. The researcher believes that the findings of the present research bear significant implications for materials developers, and teachers specifically in applying

appropriate supplementary materials to compensate for those areas which need modifications.

Recommendations:

   These findings can be used as a reference for improving or modifying the textbooks of other stages. Ministry of Education can use the findings of the research to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluated textbook and other English textbooks, updating English teaching-learning material along with considering their suitability to the learners constantly. Finally, we can say that the gender variable had no effect on the nature of the students' understanding of the subject material.

Suggestions:

   The researcher suggests the following for further studies:

1-Researches can be carried out by observing the methods in which the English textbooks are used in the classrooms in the preparatory stage.

2-Further researches can be conducted in the field of evaluating the usefulness of English textbooks while they are used in the preparatory and primary stages.

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(Appendix:1)

الأهداف العامة لتدريس مادة اللغة الانكليزية

لقد اهتمت جميع بلدان العالم بدراسة اللغات الأجنبية منذ قديم الزمان، وازدهر تعلم تلك اللغات في القرن العشرين خاصة بعد انتهاء الحرب العالمية الثانية، وأصبح الهدف النهائي لتعليم اللغات الأجنبية (الانكليزية بشكل خاص) هو التواصل والذي يعني استخدام اللغة في مختلف الأغراض والمواقف.

ولعبت الطريقة التواصلية دورا كبيرا في تعليم اللغات الأجنبية ومنها الانكليزية وأحدثت هذه الطريقة تغييرا استراتيجيا في النظرة إلى اللغة أولا، وفي النظرة إلى أساليب التعلم والتعليم والأسس التي تحكمها ثانيا، وفي محتوى التعلم و التعليم ثالثا. وفي ما يلي ندرج الأهداف التربوية العامة لتدريس اللغة الانكليزية:

1- تمكين الطلبة من التواصل اللغوي مع أقرانه في البيئة الصفية أو في المجتمع الذي يعيش فيه باللغة الانكليزية بمهاراتها المختلفة (السماع والفهم، التحدث، القراءة، الكتابة).

2- الإطلاع على ثقافات وآداب الأمم الأخرى والإفادة منها.

3- تجنب الفكر الإقليمي الضيق والعصبية والتمييز العرقي.

4- توسيع آفاق الطلبة من خلال تشجيعهم على المطالعة باللغة الانكليزية وبالتالي الحصول على المعرفة من احدث الكتب والمطبوعات العالمية.

5- التأكيد على أهمية دور اللغة الانكليزية في حل بعض المشكلات بين البلدان لغرض تحسين العلاقات بين مختلف البلدان.

6- الحصول على جيل متقن لأهم اللغات الحية في العالم مما يساعد على رفع الكفاءة في وطننا العراق في جميع مرافق الحياة سواء السياسية والاجتماعية والاقتصادية (سوق العمل).

7- إشاعة مبادئ وأفكار حقوق الإنسان وعدم التجاوز على حقوق الآخرين ويتم ذلك من خلال خلق وسيلة التواصل بين الأفراد ألا وهي اللغة.

8- تمكين الطلبة من اكتساب الخبرات المباشرة عن طريق الاحتكاك المباشر وزيارة البلدان المتقدمة وتعلم لغتها.

الأهداف الخاصة لتدريس مادة اللغة الانكليزية للمرحلة المتوسطة:

1- ترسيخ وتنمية جميع الأهداف الموضوعة ضمن المرحلة الابتدائية.

2- مساعدة الطلبة على تعلم اللغة الانكليزية إصغاءً وكلاماً وقراءةً وكتابةً في مواقف حياتية مختلفة مع مراعاة التدرج في المادة العلمية.

3- إضافة خبرات تخص إمكانية التواصل مع الآخرين باللغة الانكليزية من خلال النشاطات الأساسية الثلاث (الاستيعاب، المحادثة، والكتابة).

4- تمكين الطلبة من بناء جمل صحيحة من خلال استخدام المفردات الأساسية والقواعد النحوية الضرورية لغرض تحقيق مبدأي الطلاقة والدقة اللغوية.

5- تمكين الطلبة من استخدام القواميس الخاصة باللغة الانكليزية.

6- توسيع خبراتهم لتمكينهم من استخدام وسائل تكنولوجيا التعلم الحديثة ومنها مهارات الحاسوب الأساسية والانترنت.

(Appendix:2)
Jury Members

No	Name and Scientific degree	Specialization	Place of work
1	Prof. Al-Rifa'i , Fatin, K.(Ph.D)	Methods of teaching English	Psychological and Educational Sciences Department/ College of Education (Ibn-Rushd)/ Baghdad University
2	Asst. Prof. Jamil, Abdulkarim, F. (Ph.D)	English Language	English Department/ College of Education (Ibn-Rushd)/ Baghdad University
3	Asst. Prof. Sundus M. Ali Al-'Ubaidy(Ph.D)	English Language	English Department/ College of Art / Baghdad University
4	Asst. Prof. Dr.Baida' Faisal Noori (Ph.D)	English Language	English Department/ College of Art / Baghdad University
5	Asst. Prof. Khalid, J, Jasim (Ph.D)	Evaluation and Measurement	College of Education (Ibn-Rushd)/ Baghdad University
6	Dr. Nassier Al-Zubaidi (Ph.D)	English Language	English Department/ College of Art / Baghdad University

تقويم مدرسي الصف الأول المتوسط لكتاب اللغة الانكليزية (الانكليزية لأجل العراق)

م. د. فاخر محي محمود

وزارة التربية /المديرية العامة لإعداد المعلمين والتدريب والتطوير التربوي

ملخص البحث

هدف البحث الحالي إلى تقويم كتاب اللغة الانكليزية للصف الأول المتوسط "الانكليزية لأجل العراق" (كتاب الطالب) من وجهة نظر مدرسي اللغة الانكليزية الذين يقومون بتدريسه في المدارس المتوسطة في المديرية العامة للتربية في محافظة بغداد– الرصافة/1. وكان سؤالي البحث هما: 1) ما هي وجهة نظر المدرسين في تقويم كتاب اللغة الانكليزية للصف الأول المتوسط "الانكليزية لأجل العراق"(كتاب الطالب)؟ 2) هل هناك فروق ذات دلالة عند (0.05) في درجة تقويم كتاب اللغة الانكليزية للصف الأول المتوسط "الانكليزية لأجل العراق"(كتاب الطالب) طبقا لمتغير الجنس؟ تكونت عينة البحث من (62) مدرسا للغة الانكليزية من العاملين في المدارس المتوسطة في المديرية العامة للتربية المذكورة للعام الدراسي 2015–2016. تم جمع بيانات البحث من خلال استخدام استبانه تقويم. تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام ألوسائل الإحصائية المناسبة. أشارت نتائج البحث إلى أن الكتاب المستهدف متوافق تقريبا مع معايير استبانه التقويم المستخدمة في البحث الحالي ويمكن القبول به ككتاب مناسب لطلبة الصف الأول المتوسط، وهذا لا يعني تجاهل نقاط الضعف التي شخصتها نتائج البحث الحالي. ووجد أيضا انه لا توجد هناك فروق في تقويم الكتاب طبقا لمتغير الجنس. وأخيرا قدمت بعض التوصيات والمقترحات من قبل الباحث لأجل تعزيز عملية تقويم كتب اللغة الانكليزية للمراحل الدراسية الأخرى في العراق.