Ideal and Reality of Textbook Selection: An interview- and questionnaire- based investigation in the Taiwanese tertiary context

by

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Declaration

I, Shu-er Huang, am the sole author of this research thesis submitted in completion of the EdD in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics at the Centre for Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick. This thesis represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made. It has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

Shu-er Huang

Abstract

This mixed-methods study looks at the theory and practice of textbook selection, describing the criteria that teachers say they actually use when selecting textbooks in the Taiwanese tertiary context, exploring the reasons associated with these criteria, asking teachers to prioritize overall among these criteria, and finally comparing these with the suggestions for teachers which are put forward in the literature.

To my knowledge, no studies have either systematically investigated teachers' *actual* criteria or, indeed, the reasons for these criteria and priorities among them. It is therefore not clear whether the criteria recommended in the literature are appropriate for helping teachers select a textbook for their own learners – indeed, the needs, objectives, backgrounds and preferred styles of learners will differ from context to context, and it is therefore likely that the criteria that have been suggested cannot necessarily be applied to different teaching contexts.

This study employed an exploratory mixed-methods design, which first attempted to explore Taiwanese teachers' criteria and reasons for selecting a textbook through three-phase interviews, and second, based on the three-phase interview data, sought to assess what degree of importance teachers attach to the different evaluation criteria through an online questionnaire. The interviews were conducted with twenty-five teachers in six selected Taiwanese tertiary contexts in Phase One and nineteen from the same group in Phase Two. Also 138 questionnaires were completed and returned by a large group of teachers (15.5 per cent return rate).

The main findings of this study are, first, that the use and role of the textbook described by teachers in this context match quite well with what has been previously identified in the literature. Second, the interview results show that the degree of teachers' involvement in evaluating and selecting textbooks varies. Their degree of involvement and procedures for selection vary from university to university and from individual to individual. Teachers do conduct pre-, in-, and post-use evaluation individually. However, they do not conduct in-use and post-use evaluation systematically and/or in a formal way. In some universities, post-use and pre-use evaluation as well as in-use and post-use evaluation even overlap. Third, I systematically investigated teachers' actual stated criteria in this context and explored reasons for their criteria in an in-depth

manner. 70 criteria were identified as particularly important after being prioritised by teachers in the survey. The criteria in the categories of Authenticity, Self-instruction, and Cultural Issues attract considerable attention from teachers when they evaluate materials. The most important individual criteria were also identified. Finally, it was revealed that many teachers in this context have little or no training in evaluating materials.

The significance of the study is, first, that this is the first study to systematically investigate teachers' own criteria for textbook selection with their associated reasons and priorities. Second, by reviewing the literature, I have provided a comparative analysis and, on this basis, an original synthesis of published materials evaluation criteria. This functioned to help me investigate the possible gaps between what teachers actually consider when evaluating materials and what it is suggested teachers *should* consider. The main gaps are in the category of Practical Concerns, which indicates that the set of criteria teachers employ for selecting a textbook must come from within the teaching context itself. Finally, the sequential exploratory mixed-methods design employed for this study provided a more comprehensive view than would any one method alone. This not only improved the quality of the final results in the present study, but can also serve as a model for future researchers to explore the issues of materials evaluation in their own, unique teaching contexts.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Materials, teachers, students and technology are the four main elements producing opportunities to learn in a language classroom. Particularly materials, as Nunan (1991) indicates, can put flesh on the bones of linguistic and experiential content, even 'in the absence of a syllabus' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Hutchinson and Waters (1987:37) suggest that 'materials are not simply the everyday tools of the language teacher; they are an embodiment of the aims, values and methods of the particular teaching-learning situation'. Of the various types of materials, the textbook seems to be the most widely used resource in EFL classrooms. The selection of a textbook, as Sheldon (1988) points out, involves a vital educational decision in which there is considerable professional, financial and even political investment. Accordingly, knowing how to evaluate materials has become a very important aspect of professional knowledge and skill for all language teachers. Evaluation also helps teachers to develop their awareness of their own teaching-learning situation and philosophy (Hutchinson, 1987).

Among the different evaluation approaches available, evaluation checklists can be very useful for helping teachers evaluate materials systematically, acting 'as a facilitator in the process of materials selection' (Mukundan and Ahour, 2010:336). They can also help maintain 'evaluative consistency' (Roberts, 1996); for example, using a checklist can ensure that a group of evaluators who have to evaluate, say, ten textbooks apply the same evaluative measures. However, there is little empirical research about how effectively the criteria in suggested checklists can be applied in terms of teachers selecting an appropriate textbook. This study, therefore, employs a mixed-methods approach, specifically qualitative interviews conducted to elicit teachers' criteria and

associated reasons followed up by a quantitative survey to invite teachers to prioritize their criteria. The study attempts to first understand the role of the textbook in the research context and discuss important issues in relation to materials evaluation, for example, by whom, when and how evaluation is conducted. In addition, it attempts to explore the criteria employed by teachers for selecting a textbook and associated reasons for these criteria. Finally, it attempts to investigate how teachers prioritize overall among their criteria. All of these areas are under-researched in the field of materials evaluation. An additional beneficial outcome of this research study is an original comparative analysis of published materials evaluation criteria (contained in the Literature Review). Based on this analysis, I was able to find out the gaps between how teachers are urged to evaluate materials and how they *actually* conduct their evaluations. Last but not least, the employment of a mixed-methods design is expected to benefit future researchers in terms of exploring the issues of materials evaluation in their unique teaching contexts.

In this chapter, I first explain my motivation for undertaking this research, which arises from my own teaching experience, my personal research interest, and my knowledge in this field (section 1.1). I then present a statement of the problem to be investigated in section 1.2. The purpose of the study and research questions are explained and identified in section 1.3. After that, I summarize the research design in section 1.4 and the chapter ends with an explanation of the structure of the thesis (section 1.5).

1.1 Motivation for the research

My initial interest in this topic developed from my teaching experience in one of the Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. I had taught English as well as being involved in selecting and using teaching materials in this university for seven years. I had experienced the change from no freedom to complete freedom to limited freedom in textbook selection, and I had experienced different ways of selection. All experiences regarding selecting and using materials led to different results in the language classroom.

I started using a textbook assigned by the University. I was restricted by the prescriptive textbook which provided long literary reading texts, a long list of vocabulary, and not very interesting topics. Due to the fact that the majority of students' level of proficiency was low, for example, many students were unable to differentiate and use the verb 'to be' (am, are, is), and both my students and I felt frustrated by using the selected textbook, I had to make my own teaching handouts to simplify the level of difficulty of the content. After that, I was allowed to freely select a textbook which I thought would meet my students' and my own needs and interests, for example, a textbook providing interactive activities and real-life topics. I then selected different textbooks for different classes according to students' level and interests in different classes. Teaching and learning seemed to become more enjoyable. The comprehensive packages also saved me lots of preparation time. However, two years later, my University was successfully awarded a Promoting Foreign Language Project from the Ministry of Education. The project aimed to help students to improve their level of English proficiency through various sub-projects, and to help students to pass the GEPT exam at elementary level. I had to select a textbook which met what would be tested in the GEPT exam and decided on the textbook in conjunction with other teachers. Publishers actively demonstrated

and promoted their textbooks in a textbook-selection meeting; teachers then discussed in personal conversations and in the meeting to decide what teaching materials we were going to use. I was not satisfied with the poll result as we decided to use an English magazine which was not well-organized and was, it seemed to me, difficult in terms of classroom use. I had to prepare my own teaching materials to bridge the gaps between lesson and lesson. However, I noticed that there were some teachers who liked using this magazine. As one teacher commented, the texts in the magazine were about current issues, so she was able to teach more advanced grammar rules appearing in the up-to-date texts, rather than teach the basic grammar rules in the artificial texts designed for elementary level which were spread throughout the whole book. Therefore, although we made a collective decision, still we seemed to have different criteria and perceptions when we selected teaching materials. For example, some teachers focused on the presentation of grammar, others looked at the design of communicative activities. I also noticed that if the selected textbook was not satisfactory to teachers, teachers would adapt it in different ways to fit their preferable ways of teaching. As such, as Grant (1987) suggests, even when teachers are not allowed to select a textbook they like, it is still important for teachers to be able to evaluate the textbook they are using on some sensible and principled basis. The process of evaluation is the first step towards deciding how a textbook should be most profitably used in the classroom, and how it should be adapted.

In addition, results in recent years have shown that the textbook chosen by teachers seems to be too difficult to meet the students' actual proficiency levels. Since access to universities is now easier, students' proficiency levels are often much lower than that which teachers expect. Therefore, the textbook chosen by the teachers is still inappropriate, even though teachers have tried to do their best. This, in turn, is likely to

affect teachers' criteria for evaluating future materials to use. As Rubdy (2003:38) observes, existing advice to teachers as to how to evaluate and select materials tends to be only 'on the basis of [the] overtly observable properties that reside in the texts, tasks, and activities'. There is no evidence that shows whether or to what extent teachers take such advice. As Tomlinson (2003) suggests, understanding the *actual* criteria for evaluating materials and the reasons for different views would help teachers make vital discoveries about material being evaluated and learn a lot about materials, about learning and teaching and about themselves. This might reduce teachers' subjectivity when determining and carrying out the procedures of the evaluation and enable textbook choice to become rational and just. McGrath (2002) further suggests that if a set of criteria can be developed by peers from their reflection on their practice, the decision made will be based on a variety of perspectives and the responsibility for such decisions would also be shared. Tomlinson (2003) concludes that evaluations (both formal and informal) are likely to be more systematic, rigorous and, above all, principled. Mistakes made from predictions might be reduced. Eventually, doing evaluations formally and rigorously will contribute to the development of an ability to conduct principled informal evaluations quickly and effectively when the occasion demands.

My motivation is finally stimulated from my reading of related literature in which most of the writing in this field attempts to provide universal criteria to cover most of the aspects of materials evaluation for language teachers (e.g. McDonough and Shaw, 1993; Ansary and Babaii, 2002). However, I realized that most of the suggestions are subjective and idealistic and fail to take different teaching contexts into consideration. As McGrath (2002) comments, the choice of criteria for selecting textbooks is often a very local decision. For example, I had to select a textbook to meet the aims of the GEPT exam for a few years. I am curious about researching as to what extent the

suggested criteria in these publications match the criteria *actually* used in my teaching context and what the specific criteria derived from my teaching context are. These differences should be recognised and valued. One benefit of doing so might be revised content for teacher education on the basis of investigation of different priorities in or constraints on evaluating materials. One possible practical outcome might be to add depth to manuals for evaluating materials, helping them become more practical for teachers and appropriate to local education environments. Moreover, most of the research about materials evaluation in Taiwan is related to primary schools and high schools due to the liberalisation of the curriculum since 1999 (e.g. Chen, 2006; Lee, 2002). The field of materials evaluation is however neglected in relation to Universities and Institutes of Technology.

1.2 Statement of the problem

According to different theories, foci and purposes, writers suggest a variety of evaluation instruments such as checklists, questionnaires, or models to help language teachers select a textbook systematically from the vast amount of commercial materials on the market which are either developed on the basis of their own criteria (e.g. Breen and Candlin, 1987; Cunningsworth, 1995; Ellis, 1997; McDonough and Shaw, 1993; McGrath, 2002; Tomlinson, 2003; Ur, 1996) or adopted and adapted from other writers' criteria (e.g. Skierso, 1991; Peacock, 1997; Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Rubdy, 2003). However, these recommendations are essentially based on the writers' knowledge, experiences, and training. This 'armchair' basis for evaluation might be subjective, prescriptive, and not context-related, although some checklists leave room for evaluators to add or modify their own criteria (e.g. Grant, 1987; Sheldon, 1988; Ur,

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1996). Also, some of these suggested criteria might be outdated (e.g. Tucker, 1975) or might not be sufficient to cover the parameters in some contexts. Others might be too simplified to understand (e.g. Tucker, 1975) or too lengthy or too complicated to use (Sheldon, 1988; Skierso, 1991).

Although in some contexts, authorities might decide on a textbook to use for teachers, Teachers are still able to use and adapt the selected textbook according to their preferred ways. Exploring teachers' *actual* criteria for selecting a textbook might be able to reflect what teachers think and understand about their students and about their attitudes to language teaching. There has been little research which examines the recommendations given within teacher training and in teacher training manuals to teachers for textbook selection. It is therefore not clear whether the criteria recommended are actually appropriate for helping teachers select a textbook for their own learners– indeed, the needs, objectives, backgrounds and preferred learning styles of students are different from context to context, and it is therefore likely that the criteria that have been suggested are not necessarily universally appropriate. In addition, the reasons for these suggested criteria are rarely given in depth, while there has been next to no research into factors which actually affect teachers' decision. Finally, although Tucker (1975), Cunningsworth (1995), and Ur (1996) suggest that teachers should prioritize among the criteria provided in their checklists before using them, the criteria suggested in the literature seems to be treated equally, but there is no way of knowing whether they are in fact of equal relevance to teachers. Therefore, it is worth investigating how teachers prioritize overall among their criteria.

1.3 Purpose of the study and research questions

This study looks at theory and practice of textbook selection, describing the criteria that teachers *actually* use when selecting a textbook in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. At the same time the study examines why teachers use these criteria, in other words it uncovers the theoretical and pedagogical assumptions which underlie their decisions. It further attempts to invite teachers to prioritize overall among the criteria derived from interviews through the use of an online questionnaire. The results of the survey provide general principles for teachers to select a textbook in this context, and hopefully can raise teachers' awareness with regard to their own sets of criteria which reflect their perceptions of language teaching-learning. The survey also serves the purpose of inviting teachers to contribute criteria which might be ignored in the interviews as well as eliminating any criteria which are not considered important by the majority of teachers. Finally, the study compares the Taiwanese teachers' criteria with the recommendations which are made in the literature, as any gaps might be expected to reveal Taiwanese teachers' considerations relating to teachers' and students' needs, socio-cultural issues, educational or institutional policy and environment, or technology development. In addition, in this under-researched area, the methodological approach I take might be adapted or adopted by other researchers to explore the criteria used by teachers in other contexts, and this might reveal teachers' theoretical and pedagogical assumptions about language teaching in these other contexts. Therefore, the criteria derived from specific users can serve as a guide for writers of materials to develop more learner- and context-oriented materials to fit the needs of a specific context. It is worth noting that this study neither attempts to customise what is being suggested in evaluating materials to Taiwanese teachers nor provides a universal set of

criteria for evaluation. Instead, it aims to adopt a bottom-up approach to describe the criteria used by teachers who *actually* select and use materials.

Given the purpose of this study discussed above, this study must inevitably involve the investigation of the following research questions.

RQ1: What is the role of textbooks in English teaching in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan?

RQ2: What kind of materials evaluation occurs in this context?

- Who conducts it?

- When is it conducted?

- How is it conducted?

RQ3: What aspects of materials do teachers focus on when they evaluate them?

RQ4: What reasons underline teachers' evaluation criteria?

RQ5: What degree of importance do teachers attach to different evaluation criteria?

1.4 Research design

The research design of this study is an exploratory, sequential and four-phase mixed methods design. The first phase in this research used preliminary interviews to test the feasibility of the interview guide in the actual research settings before the main interviews were conducted. The second phase elicited and generated Taiwanese teachers' criteria for selecting a textbook with associated reasons by using face-to-face interviews in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. It also explored issues related to evaluating materials. The third phase involved follow-up interviews to validate the collected data and examine deeper reasons if they had not been clearly explained in Phase Two. It further explored broader criteria which might emerge while using or after

using the materials. Then, in the final phase, findings from these qualitative phases were used to develop an online questionnaire for all Taiwanese teachers to prioritize overall among these criteria in this context. The survey sought to confirm whether other Taiwanese teachers shared similar perceptions. The quantitative result did not attempt to provide a 'customized' evaluation checklist for Taiwanese teachers to use. Instead, it attempted to provide general principles for selecting a textbook from a large Taiwanese teacher population.

1.5 Structure of the study

In the present Chapter, I have explained my motivation for the research, issues and purpose of the study, and research deign. In Chapter 2, I introduce the context for the investigation, which focuses on technological and vocational education at university-level in Taiwan. In Chapter 3, I review the literature to set up the study and to look critically at issues of textbook evaluation, that is, to justify the research focus on *teachers'* criteria. In Chapter 4, I present a substantial comparative analysis of previously published criteria for materials evaluation. This comparative analysis and synthesis focus the basis for comparison with Taiwanese teachers' own criteria later in the thesis. In Chapter 5, I explain the approach and procedures taken to collect and analyse the qualitative and quantitative data. The three-phase qualitative data are presented in Chapter 6 and 7. I present the findings in relation to the current situation concerning materials evaluation in Taiwan in Chapter 6, and Taiwanese teachers' criteria and reasons for these in Chapter 7. The quantitative data are then presented in Chapter 8. Finally, in Chapter 9, the findings are discussed in relation to the research aims and research questions, and the existing literature. A concluding chapter rounds up the study (Chapter 10).

Chapter 2 Context for the Investigation

2.0 Introduction

This study focuses on the evaluation of materials used in Technological and Vocational Education in Taiwan, where a published textbook (and associated supplementary materials) seems to be the main teaching and learning guide and resource for all purposes in language classrooms. In this chapter, I will provide a brief introduction to the context for the investigation. To begin with, I will introduce the types of institutions concerned (section 2.1). I will then discuss the current situation of English language teaching in this context (section 2.2). Finally, I will identify issues which might affect evaluating materials in this context (section 2.3).

2.1 Types of Institutions

Technological and Vocational Education in Taiwan starts from senior vocational schools and continues to Universities and Institutes of Technology at university level (see Appendix 1: Taiwan Educational System). The curriculum and course design in Universities and Institutes of Technology are career-oriented, with a declared aim of training students to be skilled in their professional fields. The courses of study, such as Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Business Studies, Child Care and Family Studies, Tourism and Leisure, Cosmetics application, Digital media design, Health Nutrition and Biotechnology, are intended to supply a large labour force for Taiwan's economic development. In the past, Technological and Vocational Education in Taiwan has

contributed considerably to the development of the country (Technological and Vocational Education Reform Project- Expertise Training, 2004).

2.2 English Language Teaching in Technological and Vocational Education in Taiwan

English is one of the predominant languages of international communication for the purposes of commerce, tourism and knowledge transmission. However, English is a foreign language in Taiwan and the use of the English language to communicate with people in real life is still limited. The Ministry of Education in Taiwan aims to enhance students' English proficiency in order to equip them to be able to communicate with other professionals from all over the world. General English, which 'tends to teach learners conversational and social genres of the language' (Hamp-Lyons, 2001: 127), is a required subject for all University and Institute of Technology students. In addition, since Technological and Vocational Education is oriented towards students' subsequent careers, English for specific purposes (ESP) has gradually been gaining attention.

The prevalence of higher education (there are 171 Technological and Vocational institutions in Taiwan, according to the Higher Education, Technological & Vocational Education Newsletter, 2008) and the trend towards a lower birth rate and a smaller population have resulted in easier access for students to study in higher education. English is tested in all the entrance exams to higher education so the importance of English has increased considerably in Taiwan since around 1990. Easier access to higher education has also resulted in a much wider range of students' English proficiency levels and lower overall academic performance than in previous years. It is widely reported that 80% of first-year University and Institute of Technology students

fail to meet the English proficiency level that is required in junior high school. Kao and Huang (2005) confirm that students do not make significant improvement in English even after receiving many years of English education in schools. This is according to a series of reports aimed at examining and evaluating the English proficiency of students of technology conducted by The Language Training & Testing Centre (LTTC), beginning in 2001.

In 1994, the Taiwanese Ministry of Education declared that universities are granted 'autonomy' and 'academic freedom' (see The History of the Ministry of Education: Higher Education [1994]). The Ministry of Education gave individual universities the freedom to select teaching methodologies and materials. This has been also widely reported in the minutes of Textbook Selection meetings (e.g. Textbook Selection Rules, 2003). Teachers are assumed to have their own freedom to select their preferred materials. However, this may not be the case in some universities or institutes as they might have different considerations due to their own departmental aims or policies.

The Executive Yuan, which is the highest executive body in Taiwan, further announced the *Challenge 2008 Six-Year National Development Plan* (2002) to prepare Taiwan for global competition and industrial transformation. This plan sets out three reforms - in the political, financial, and fiscal spheres - and ten key individual plans. The e-Generation Manpower Cultivation Plan, as one of the key individual plans, attempts to develop an internationalized living environment and enhance people's English proficiency in terms of the following aspects: developing English living environment, balancing urban and rural English education resources, internationalizing college education, enhancing government employees' English proficiency, and promoting international cultural exchange. This plan encourages Universities and Institutes of

Technology to promote language learning projects, such as the Promoting Foreign Language (PFL) Project, the Industry-University Cooperative (IUC) Projects, and language competitions, according to their own students' needs, utilising the facilities and resources that each university has with financial support from the government. For example, students are encouraged to pass the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) exam in the PFL Project and participate in various competitions to promote their English proficiency levels. Universities are encouraged to set up bilingual websites including materials for the GEPT exam and the ESP. The GEPT exam was developed in 1999 to test students' general English ability in the four skills, being commissioned by the Taiwanese Ministry of Education. Students in non-English major departments are strongly encouraged to get this certificate as a main objective in language learning. This certificate acts as an important reference for employers and educational institutions in selection and placement. This plan seems to have influenced the selection of textbooks in that, in order to meet one of the requirements in the PFL Project, for example, the textbook selected might be perceived as needing to help students to pass the GEPT exam. Having discussed the current situation of English language teaching in general, I will now move on to discuss further issues related specifically to evaluating materials in more detail.

2.3 Issues relating to materials evaluation

While both General English and ESP have gradually gained attention in Universities and Institutes of Technology in recent years, there are some issues which need to be mentioned relating specifically to materials evaluation.

First, vocational students' English proficiency levels and motivation to learn are generally considered to be low. According to Liu (2002), teachers in vocational school tend to use the traditional grammar-translation method to teach English because of these low levels of proficiency and motivation, because English is taught in large classes, because the teaching hours for English are not sufficient. Also, only vocabulary, grammar, and reading are tested in the entrance exams to Universities or Institutes of Technology and so many students in Universities and Institutes of Technology have suffered from previous unpleasant learning experiences in English, resulting in the fact that they have not managed to acquire the amount of vocabulary and understanding of basic grammar that they are 'supposed' to have mastered previously. Writing, for example, is a skill that is seldom taught according to my teaching experience. Accordingly, the majority of University and Institute of Technology non-English major students in Taiwan are often said to have a passive attitude towards language learning, with limited motivation and confidence (Promoting the Internationalization of University Project, 2006). Also, most students come to Universities and Institutes of Technology with pragmatic goals to learn skills and obtain a degree rather than having a strong desire to learn a language, although they are well aware of the importance of learning English for their careers. Initially, students might try to make a concerted effort to learn English when they start to study at university level, but both motivation and confidence are difficult for them to maintain over a longer period of time. There is a difference between what students *want* to achieve and what they *actually* do. Therefore, it is a challenging task for teachers to select an appropriate textbook for General English to meet the majority of students' needs, levels, interests, and preferences. Particularly, students with a low level of English proficiency and low motivation to learn might feel it is too difficult for them to survive in an ESP class.

Second, traditional English teaching methodology, that is, where the teacher talks and students listen and take notes, seems to be used for most non-English major students. Although communicative language teaching is claimed as the mainstream teaching methodology, teachers mainly seem to follow the textbook to teach. This could be attributed to some teachers having specialized knowledge in English but having taken few or no teaching training courses, for example those who majored in literature or IT. Thus, they may adopt teaching methodologies from their previous learning experience. In addition, English is taught in large classes with student numbers ranging from 50 and above, as well as with mixed levels, so that teachers might feel challenged if conducting pair or group work. As a result, some teachers might not favour a textbook that provides too many communicative activities but prefer grammar rules and explanations.

Third, teaching hours for language teaching are insufficient. In most Universities and Institutes of Technology, the time available for the study of General English is limited to three hours per week per year. The length of General English can be from one year to four years depending on individual universities. ESP is only taught as an elective course in a very few Universities and Institutes of Technology. In the current market for textbooks, it may be difficult to find teaching materials which appropriately match the teaching hours, and teachers may just select parts of the content which students seem to be most interested in.

Fourth, a brief survey of online information regarding the teaching materials in Taiwan Universities and Institutes of Technology reveals that most of the textbooks are imported from Britain, North America, or Australia ('BANA-contexts' as defined by Holliday, 1994). Only a very few are written by writers who are native speakers of English but have lived in Taiwan for years, or who are natives of Taiwan who possess

related background knowledge. As Liao (2007) indicates, the contents of the textbooks imported from the BANA-contexts possibly fail to consider contextual factors. Also, the teaching methodologies offered in the imported textbooks might not be suitable to the local educational policy, culture or contexts. Liao (ibid.) suggests that teachers can introduce different cultures through different textbooks imported from different countries. However, teachers still need to be aware of the 'ideologies' mediated by textbooks from BANA-contexts.

Finally, the GEPT exam and the Projects are likely to have a strong influence on most English university teachers' selection of teaching materials. In the Promoting Foreign Language Projects financial support is given to universities to set up more hardware and software facilities, such as computers, graded readers, or online materials for language learning. Teachers are encouraged to develop multimedia and other materials for specific purpose lessons, such as the field of the automotive industry, the fashion world, agriculture and hospitality; all with the aim to motivate students and meet their career needs (Materials of English for Specific Purposes, 2006). However, this development depends on whether or not the school has been awarded funding for language learning projects by the Ministry of Education. Certain sets of textbooks, particularly in Promoting Foreign Language Projects, claim to help students pass the exam at 'Elementary level' to meet the policy of the Ministry of Education. This often takes priority over all other teaching materials which can be selected from the market. In addition, teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan are strongly encouraged to 'integrate industrial demand with school teaching and shorten the gap between school education and practical application in order to train students for the job market, increase their employment qualification, and raise Taiwan's competitiveness' (Technological and Vocational Education Reform Project - Expertise Training (2009).

Thus, they are strongly encouraged to participate in Industry-University Cooperative Projects as part of the universities' programme. These projects have an influence whereby Institutes of Technology are promoted to Universities of Technology, and financial support is received from the Ministry of Education or industries for universities. Teachers will get credits for participating in projects which enhance their career prospects. Publishers often offer projects to teachers in an attempt to promote their products. A series of textbooks may often be chosen for all students from the same publisher. As a result, the selection of textbooks can seem to be linked to the Projects and/or particular publishers.

To sum up, all the issues raised above affect one another. We need to consider all the factors and clarify the priorities among students' and teachers' needs in this context.

Chapter 3 Literature Review (1): Issues in relation to materials evaluation

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I will develop a framework for the research by discussing previous work on materials evaluation, accompanied by discussion of the related issues with specific reference to Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. To begin with, I will explain the uses and roles of the materials (section 3.1). I will move on to define materials evaluation (section 3.2), explain why we conduct evaluation (section 3.3), explore who conducts evaluation (section 3.4), describe when evaluation is conducted (section 3.5), and how evaluation is conducted (section 3.6), and investigate the possible factors which affect teachers' choices in evaluating materials (section 3.7.) Finally, issues for research and previous research studies (section 3.8) will be discussed.

3.1 What are materials and the role of materials?

Materials for language learning and teaching refer to any sources which are 'deliberately used to increase the learners' knowledge and/or experience of the language' (Tomlinson, 1998:2). They can be textbooks in the form of different media and other supplementary resources such as workbooks, teacher-made worksheets, authentic materials, graded readers, magazines, newspapers, audio/visual materials, tasks written on cards, online interactive materials, and a comprehensive teaching guide. The term 'materials' used in this study mainly refers to the use of textbooks, which serves as

systematic guidance and a curriculum for teacher and students, and is widely used in most EFL classrooms in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. Some of the related discussions in the literature might use 'coursebooks' or 'teaching materials' (McDonough and Shaw, 1993; Allwright, 1981). However, all of these terms are used interchangeably to refer to the same thing.

According to Mariani (1983), materials can be considered as one of the most important links between our teaching programme and the teaching situation. Materials themselves also help in defining the roles of teachers and students (Wright, 1987), for example, a teacher is the instructor and students are the 'doers' in an activity. Using published teaching materials, particularly textbooks, is seen as having a positive impact on the following aspects. The summaries are drawn from Bell and Gower (1998), Cunningsworth (1995), Littlejohn (1998), Richards (2001), and Ur (1996). First, it is a syllabus to reflect determined learning objectives. As Ur (1996:184) explains, 'if it is followed systematically, a carefully planned and balanced selection of language content will be covered'. Second, it serves as the foundation for much of the language input and models students receive, and the language practices that occur in the classroom. It especially benefits those teachers whose first language is not English and who may not be able to generate accurate language input on their own. Third, it is a route map or a measure of progress and achievement for language teaching and learning, classroom time and classroom interaction. Therefore, it provides and stimulates ideas on how to plan and teach, as well as being a support for those lacking in training or less experienced teachers who have yet to gain in confidence and security. This also helps teachers focus their time on teaching itself rather than spending time producing materials. Fourth, it is an introduction of current theoretical approaches and methodological practices, and a linguistic and cultural support. Fifth, it can motivate

students and teachers in terms of content and visual design. Finally, as McGrath (2002) points out, apart from official syllabuses, an inspectorial system and public examinations, using a set of textbooks can be one way of ensuring there is some degree of standardisation and continuity in relation to what is taught, and can facilitate curricular change to those in positions of authority. As Crawford (2002:80) concludes, it 'can be a useful form of professional development for teachers, and foster autonomous learning strategies in students'.

However, some researchers retain reservations as regards these views. For instance, we have to be aware that relying on materials could constrain teachers' initiative and creativity, and lead to boredom and lack of motivation in learners (Ur, 1996). As Crawford (2002) warns, published materials deskill teachers and rob them of their capacity to think professionally and respond to their students. Also a textbook cannot meet everyone's needs, interests, levels of ability and knowledge, or be suitable for all learning styles and strategies (Ur, 1996). They might contain social and cultural biases (Clarke and Clarke, 1990; Renner, 1997) as well as unnatural and inappropriate language models and dialogues which might have little to do with reality (Yule, Mathis, and HopKins, 1992; Bell and Gower, 1998; Crawford, 2002). To sum up, Sheldon (1988) indicates that students often believe published materials have more credibility than teacher-generated or home-grown materials. Crawford (2002) therefore concludes that the issue is not so much whether teachers should use published teaching materials, but rather what form these should take so that the outcomes are positive rather than restrictive for teachers and students.

Clearly the situation described above might have changed and information may need to be updated. With the growth of computer-assisted language learning, the Internet can be

used as a materials resource, as a classroom tool and as a textbook (Teeler and Gray, 2000; Warschauer, 2001). Self-access materials (Cooker, 2008:110) are also increasing in their importance for language learning. Rubdy (2003:41) points out that reduced reliance on the use of textbooks provides 'greater teacher and learner freedom, creativity and choice thus contributing to the desirable educational goals of independence and autonomy for both'. She (ibid) also mentions that attention is being focused again on teacher-generated materials, (promoted by Block, 1991), 'learner-involved' materials (see Clarke, 1989b), and locally-designed textbooks (Sheldon, 1988) which may make materials more relevant and motivating to students' actual needs and levels and to teachers' preferences. For example, English language teaching in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan has just been the focus of greater attention from the Ministry of Education, but the innovation related to materials development has not been researched yet. It will be useful to investigate the current use of materials and the role of materials as a starting point for this study. Now, I shall move on to discuss the definition of materials evaluation to clarify my research area.

3.2 What is materials evaluation?

Before discussing the evaluation of materials and its rationale, I would like to make a distinction between the evaluation of materials and their selection. As Rubdy (2003:41-42) points out, evaluation and selection both judge the fitness of something for a particular purpose. The difference between them is that the selection of materials involves a process of evaluation. Evaluation can be undertaken for a variety of purposes and carried out in a variety of ways, whereas selection considers student needs and

interests and how these are to be addressed. Therefore, the materials chosen are the most appropriate rather than the best. In addition, the evaluation of materials can be undertaken before, while and after classroom use to assess how effective and useful the materials are found to be in *actual* use by a specific group of teacher and students, whereas the selection of materials takes place before classroom use and concerns the *potential* that a set of materials may have in effectively and efficiently supporting learning. As a result, the framework I intend to propose in this research will be oriented towards the evaluation of materials, with a particular focus on necessary criteria. As McDonough and Shaw (1993:79) indicate, 'materials evaluation is one part of a complex process and materials once selected can only be judged successful after classroom implementation and feedback'.

According to Sheldon (1988), materials evaluation has generally proved to be a subjective and rule-of- thumb activity. McGrath (2002) defines materials evaluation as a procedure that involves making value judgements about a set of learning materials. It concerns discovering whether what one is looking for is there and if it is, to put a value on it. However, he also warns that it is possible to miss the unusual or the innovative as we look selectively during the process of evaluating. Rubdy (2003) further explains that it involves comparing and matching the given materials against the teaching context and the needs and interests of teachers and learners in order to find the best possible fit between them. This demands that evaluators make decisions based on informed judgement and professional experience as well as forcing them to identify their priorities in their teaching contexts. Subjectivity may be minimised. The rationale of materials evaluation will be followed to form the basis for the main study.

3.3 Why do we conduct evaluation?

Obviously no matter how inflexible, inappropriate or biased they might be, textbooks still represent for both students and teachers the visible heart of any ELT programme (Sheldon, 1988) and still maintain enormous popularity (Litz, 2005). Therefore, Cunningsworth (1995) suggests that the materials need to be selected carefully and reflect closely the needs of the learners and the aims, methods and values of the teaching programme. A thorough evaluation, as Litz (ibid) indicates, can help teachers to select potential materials which might be appropriate for their students and identify the particular strengths and weaknesses of textbooks in use and after use. It can also be a form of professional empowerment and improvement for teachers. Hutchinson (1987) explains further that materials evaluation can develop teachers' awareness in the following ways: it obliges teachers to analyse their own presuppositions with regard to the nature of language and learning so that it ultimately helps teachers to get a better concordance between their theoretical knowledge and their practice. It also forces teachers to establish their priorities since this helps them to focus their views on language learning and makes them more aware of the needs and expectations of other people involved in the teaching-learning situation. Finally, it helps teachers to see materials as an integral part of the whole teaching-learning situation. So teachers can look not just at what materials do, but what they make possible. Indeed, there is a strong need for teachers and administrators to be aware of the principles of evaluating materials, as well as the available evaluation checklists and schemes (Riazi, 2003).

After justifying the reasons for evaluating materials, I shall continue to identify who gets involved in the process of evaluation. This might affect how much freedom teachers have in terms of selecting a textbook. Different evaluators' decisions might have a considerable effect on the process and the outcome of teaching and learning.

3.4 Who conducts evaluation?

As McGrath (2002) points out, materials evaluators, such as a Ministry of Education, a state board, a school principal, a Head of Department, a Director of Studies, or a group of teachers or students within the institution, could all be involved in the process of selection. The assumption seems to be that different institutes might have their own concerns or policies. In addition, apart from when teachers conduct their evaluation individually, Grant (1987:125) asserts that

> it is a very good idea if all teachers take part in the process of selection. If teachers feel that books are just imposed on them without consideration of their views, they may resent them. An exchange of views about textbooks, and methods, is very healthy.

McGrath (2002:52) supports Grant's view, he says that

> group evaluation has obvious advantages. The vested interests of all concerned make it likely that any decision will be based on consensus and the discussion of the pros and cons that precede that decision ensure that the materials will be thoroughly examined from a variety of perspectives; the responsibility for such decisions is also shared.

Chambers (1997), McGrath (ibid) and Tucker (1975) all suggest the way of conducting group evaluation. With respect to this, McGrath (ibid:52) warns that 'anyone who has not been involved in the design of the checklist will need some time and help to get 'inside' the categories and the evaluation system'.

In reality, however, it is not necessarily the case that teachers have an important role to play in textbook selection. For instance, some administrators might arbitrarily assign a textbook, so teachers have no choice. Or teachers might have limited freedom to select the textbook they like according to the requirements of certain projects or a shortlist provided by the authority or committee. Or teachers might have maximal freedom to select a textbook as they wish. Even though teachers have different levels of freedom for selecting a textbook, as McDonough and Shaw (1993:65) point out, evaluation is

> a useful process in its own right, giving insight into the organizational principles of the materials and helping them to keep up with developments in the field. This in turn can help the teacher to focus on realistic ways of adapting the materials to a particular group of learners where pertinent.

However, there seems to be little previous research showing who actually conducts evaluation and in what way in different contexts. Further investigation appears to be needed.

Although this is not the focus of this study, we need to be aware that teachers might even invite students to participate in selecting a textbook (Dougill, 1987; Chambers, 1997; Litz, 2005). Different participants and different levels of freedom in selecting a textbook could contribute various views on evaluating materials and further could see different decisions being made. For example, as McGrath (2006:179) indicates,

> the comparison of teacher and learner images may reveal a reassuringly high level of uniformity, or it may lead to the realisation that there are important differences of attitude or belief which demand some form of action.

Therefore, Dougill (1987:26) suggests that learners' evaluation of materials 'can be channelled towards the collective refinement of materials in use'.

What is worth mentioning here is that, as Garinger (2001) observes, 'most teachers have not been adequately trained in this selection process and may be unaware of how to judge which texts best suit their situation'. Pennycook (2009:78), for example, indicates that 'how to identify and address the cultural messages explicitly and implicitly conveyed via coursebooks has not formed part of most teachers' training'. According to my work experience, teachers who teach English to non-English major students are the teachers who have been awarded at least a Master of Arts in the field of English Literature, TEFL/TESOL, Linguistics, Education, or Computer Science, or are teachers in other departments who have experience of studying in English speaking countries. This also reveals that some of them may have little or no training in how to evaluate materials, for example, those teachers who majored in Computer Science. However, even where teachers have no direct control over textbook selection, it is still important that they are capable of evaluating and adopting the material that they are expected to use so that they can meet the needs of the students and the objectives of the class. Next, I would like to move on to explore *when* the evaluator(s) (should) conduct the evaluation.

3.5 When is evaluation conducted?

Most checklists are designed mainly for pre-use evaluation (e.g. Tucker 1975; Davison, 1976; Haycraft, 1978; Sheldon, 1987; McDonough and Shaw, 1993; Cunningsworth, 1995; Ur, 1996; Littlejohn, 1998, and Rudby, 2003). It is possible that 'any pre-use

evaluation is subjective, both in its selection of criteria and in the judgments made by the evaluators', as Tomlinson (2001:81) warns. According to McGrath (2002:179), 'to establish whether materials really are suitable (and in what ways and to what extent), two further stages of evaluation are necessary'. Writers such as Grant (1987) and Nunan (1991) propose in-use evaluation. Nunan (1991) explains that the questions for the appropriateness of a textbook can only be answered with reference to their actual use, and Grant (ibid:121) asserts that it is 'only by constant evaluation that one can ensure that the teacher is the master, and not the slave, of the textbook'. More recently, writers, such as Tomlinson (2003), add a post-evaluation phase relating to 'materials in action' (Rubdy, 2003:42). The complete evaluation will be illustrated in detail as follows according to Ellis (1998), McGrath (2002), and Tomlinson (2003).

Pre-use evaluation involves making predictions about the potential value of materials for their users. As Ellis (1998) explains, not only can it help evaluators to choose materials that will be relevant and appropriate for their particular group of learners, but also it can possibly identify specific aspects of the materials that require adaptation. Yet, mistakes made from predictions can be made by the subjective nature of evaluation and the uncertainty of prediction. McGrath (2002) further explains that inputs to evaluation in pre-use evaluation can be feedback from other users (e.g. teachers in other similar institutions), prior trialling by students, or armchair evaluation.

In-use evaluation involves measuring the value of materials whilst using them or observing them being used. It can be more objective and reliable than pre-use evaluation as it makes use of measurements such as observations. This type of evaluation, as McGrath (2002) points out, can become part of every lesson based on a textbook, notes made following each lesson on the suitability, or periodic meetings for teachers who are

using the same materials to check the generalizability of individual experiences and brainstorm ways of adapting and supplementing materials. Although McGrath (2002:15) believes that observation contributes to the evaluation of the effectiveness of materials, and 'afford[s] general insights into how teachers use materials (Torres, 1993; Richards and Mahoney, 1996) and therefore suggest[s] directions both for materials development and professional development activities', Tomlinson warns that it is limited to measuring what is observable and cannot claim to measure what learners are thinking.

Post-use evaluation involves measuring the actual effects of the materials on the users. The actual outcomes provide the data on which reliable decisions about the use, adaptation, or replacement of the materials can be made. It is probably the most valuable type of evaluation as it can measure the short-term effect (such as motivation) and long term effect (such as durable learning and application). McGrath (2002:15) emphasises that post-evaluation is most reliable 'when it draws on the experiences of several teachers and several groups of learners'. Yet, it takes time and expertise to measure post-use effects reliably.

McGrath (2002) concludes that materials should include pre-, in-, and post-use evaluation as a cyclical process.
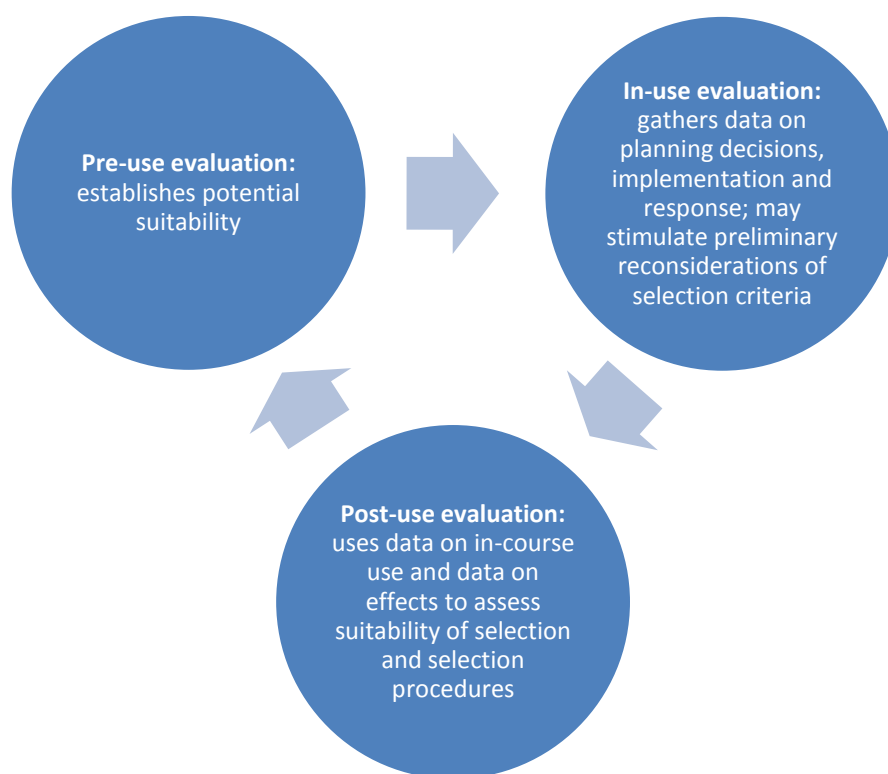
Figure 3.1 Closing the circle (McGrath, 2002:180)

Riazi (2003:53) further added the fourth type of material evaluation, in terms of a research dimension of textbook evaluation, as stated below.

> Contribution to the knowledge of the field of second/foreign language education by unfolding the underlying structure and methodology used in the textbooks and their efficiency and effectiveness on students' learning.

In reality, however, Tomlinson (2003) indicates that 'it is possible to apply the basic principles of materials evaluation to all types of evaluation, but it is not possible to make generalizations about procedures which apply to all types'. In-use and post-use

evaluation gain very little attention in the literature, except for Jolly and Bolitho's case studies (1998) and Ellis' study (1998). McGrath (2002:179) further points out that 'what was said took the form of exhortation rather than concrete suggestions concerning method'. There is no information that indicates when teachers conduct their evaluation. It is therefore worth exploring the situation, comparing the suggestions from the literature in order to advise a more reliable and effective evaluation for a specific teaching context. I will continue to explain how the evaluation is conducted.

3.6 How is evaluation conducted?

As McGrath (2002) suggests, three distinct approaches, the impressionistic method, the checklist method, and the in-depth method can be identified in the literature on evaluating textbooks. The impressionistic method involves browsing the publisher's comments, and the contents page, and then skimming through the book looking at its organisation, topics, layout and visual images. It can also be done by looking at representative features, such as the design of a unit or lesson, or more specific features, such as the treatment of particular language items (Cunningsworth, 1995), or the author's view of learning (Hutchinson, 1987). Johnson (1986) suggests that teachers can start with the 'guided browsing' described above, and then follow with both analysis of a single unit and examination of the treatment of the language skills across the book as a whole. The checklist method, on the other hand, uses a list of items which is referred to for comparison, identification or verification. The checklist method, as McGrath (ibid: 26-27) suggests, is systematic, cost effective, easily usable to compare competing sets of material, and explicit to all evaluator(s) when making decisions. It is more objective and systematic than the impressionistic method. Finally, the in-depth method involves

analysis of, for example, the kind of language description, underlying assumptions about learning or values, on which the materials are based, or whether the materials seem likely to achieve the claims that are being made for them. The procedures include a focus on specific features (Cunningsworth, 1995), close analysis of one or more extracts (Hutchinson, 1987), or thorough examination of two units using predetermined questions (Johnson, 1986). However, McGrath (2002) points out that these three methods all have their own limitations. The impressionistic method is wide-ranging but relatively superficial. A checklist in the checklist method has to be relevant to the specific context in which it is to be used and should be up-to date. The disadvantages of the in-depth method are issues to do with representativeness of samples, partiality, and time and expertise required. It would seem to be the case that many teachers use the impressionistic method, however, unless we investigate, we have no evidence for which method(s) teachers *actually* use.

In this study, while investigating which method(s) teachers actually adopt, I would like to focus on the checklist method as my own framework for exploring teachers' criteria. Considering the pros and cons of the three methods, using a checklist to evaluate an overwhelming amount of commercial materials on the market seems to be a more effective and efficient approach by contrast with some other instruments. For example, Breen and Candlin's (1987) inventory of open-ended questions might be too time-consuming. Also, checklists are the most generally recommended way of evaluating materials in the literature (e.g. Tomlinson, 1998). Finally, I am aware that some of Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan have started to use checklists to evaluate the textbooks they use. Based on this method, I can compare criteria among different checklists as well as compare the criteria suggested in the literature with teachers' *actual* criteria in order to find the differences and gaps among

them. The former might reveal writers' different perceptions of the theory concerning language teaching; the latter might show how effective are the suggestions made to teachers. However, we still have to be aware that

> checklists in the literature should be regarded as illustrative and suggestive only, and never as decretory…perhaps their most valuable aspect is that they stimulate thought about the *system* of evaluation and the *modus operandi* to be adopted. (Roberts, 1996:381)

Roberts (1996:382) further suggests that writers of evaluation instruments and evaluators should work together as this

> can establish that they "speak the same language" and can ensure that when criteria and questions are entered into a checklist, all concerned share an understanding of what these criteria and questions mean, and what the consequences of possible responses to them will be for a given set of materials.

Stufflebeam (2000:1) adds that 'checklists are useful for both formative and summative evaluations' which help in-use and post-use evaluation. As McDonough and Shaw (1993:66) conclude,

> the evaluation process is never static; when materials are deemed appropriate for a particular course after a preliminary evaluation, their ultimate success or failure may only be determined after a certain amount of classroom use (summative evaluation).

I will then focus on the criteria provided in the checklists. Previous writers have advocated numerous systematic sets of criteria and standard procedures to apply evenly to evaluate different materials for teachers (Breen and Candling, 1987; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Littlejohn, 1998; McDonough and Shaw, 1993; Sheldon, 1988; Cunningsworth, 1995; McGrath, 2002; Rubdy, 2003; Tomlinson 1998). As Rubdy (ibid) explains, these criteria and procedures attempt to make the decision-making process more objective and enhance the value of teachers' professional judgement. They are determined by 'the reasons, objectives and circumstances of the evaluation' (Tomlinson, 2003:27).

With all the benefits, however, the previous published lists of criteria and procedures for materials evaluation seem to be idealistic in reality. First, criteria suggested in most evaluation checklists are either developed by the writers themselves (e.g. Tucker, 1975; Davison, 1976; Haycraft, 1978; Daoud and Celce-Murcua, 1979; Mariani, 1983; Williams, 1983; Matthews, 1985; Grant, 1987; Dougill, 1987; Sheldon, 1988; Harmer, 1991; McDonough and Shaw, 1993; Richards, 1993; Cunningsworth, 1995; Ur, 1996; Savignon, 1997; Harmer, 1998; Byrd and Celce-Murcia, 2001; McGrath, 2002) or adapted and/or adopted by other writers' criteria (e.g. Skierso, 1991; Griffiths, 1995; Ansary and Babaii, 2002; Riazi, 2003). In particular, some checklists adapted or adopted either recent research or previously developed checklists to suit their own teaching context. For example, Kao and Huang (2005) propose a set of textbook selection criteria based on Byrd and Celce-Murcia's checklist (2001) for EFL teachers in technological colleges in Taiwan. Jupri (1994) adapts Tucker's (1975) and William's (1983) textbook evaluation scheme with the Malaysian teachers to suit the Malaysian Form One (KBSM) educational context. However, most checklists, as Karamoozian and Riazi (2008) analyse, are not piloted by the writers and/or the writers have not provided

an organized set of guidelines that facilitates its use (e.g. Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979; Williams, 1983; Sheldon, 1988, Harmer, 1998). In practice, as Garinger (2002) observes, the process of selection is often based on personal preference and may be affected by factors unrelated to pedagogy, such as limited awareness of available texts, budget restrictions, and limited availability of some textbooks. Therefore, Tomlinson (2001:69) indicates that 'what is measured and valued is often determined by the subjective nature of many of the instruments of evaluation with the views of the researcher', that is, checklist writers' viewpoints. Some of these checklists might be prescriptive rather than flexible for teachers to use (e.g. Matthews, 1985; Harmer, 1991; Byrd and Celce-Murcia, 2001).

Second, some writers, such as McDonough and Shaw (1993) and Ansary and Babaii (2002), attempt to provide a set of universal criteria for evaluating materials, whereas Roberts (1996) indicates that the local context will determine the criteria for evaluation. Therefore, universal criteria do not exist; instead, systematic procedures would ensure that evaluators were speaking the same language.

Finally, operating with so many criteria suggested by the literature advice seems to be too complicated and often not very practical (e.g. 104 criteria in Skierso's checklist). Teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan often have a heavy workload. Some teachers may pay less attention to selecting a textbook or they just follow the decision which other teachers have made according to my experiences. In order to save time and effort, Cunningsworth (1995) suggests that it is best to identify our own priorities and draw up our own checklist. Reasonable criteria should be explored and developed to match the specific circumstances of our particular evaluation. Roberts (1996:385) therefore suggests that 'a really user-friendly checklist might not

only arrange criteria in descending order of priority, but might also provide "exit points" at various places for materials not fulfilling expectations on crucial parameters'.

These all reveal that the suggested criteria may not be appropriate for certain teaching contexts as checklists produced for global use are not necessarily locally relevant. As McGrath (2002:18) points out, 'evaluation needs to be learner- and context-related'. Therefore, in my study, I would like to draw teachers' *actual* criteria from their teaching context, rather than determine the criteria by myself or have anyone else determine it. In doing so, the criteria presented will be non-judgemental and practical. Next, I will explore the factors which may affect teachers' choices in evaluating materials as what teachers do reveals what they think.

3.7 What factors affect the decision-making process in evaluation?

McGrath (2002) identifies three types of factors which need to be taken into consideration by summarising a number of different writers' suggestions (see McGrath, ibid:19-21 for detailed discussion). The three types of factors are *learner factors and needs* such as proficiency level in the target language and language-skill emphasis, language-system emphasis and language forms; *teacher factors* such as beliefs about teaching-learning, preferred teaching style, preferred method; and *institution(s) and the specific programme* for which the materials are intended, for example, decision-making mechanisms and freedom given to teachers, aims of education and so on.

In this section, I would like to focus on exploring *teacher factors* as I have introduced the other factors in section 1.1, and teachers, even if they are not the ones who make the

final decision, at least play a core role in evaluation. According to McGrath (2002:20), 'teachers are the mediators between published materials and learners; and can choose to work with its intentions or challenge them'. This is a good reason for 'not only listening to what they have to say if they choose to voice their views but actively researching those views' (McGrath, ibid:20) so that, as Tomlinson (2003:17) suggests, if evaluations are conducted by a set of principles and these principles are articulated by the evaluator(s) prior to the evaluation, greater validity and reliability can be achieved and fewer mistakes are likely to be made. In order to achieve this aim, it is helpful to consider the evaluator's theory of learning and teaching, learning theory, and second language acquisition research (see Tomlinson, 2003 for detailed discussion).

Facing different backgrounds, aims, needs and English proficiency levels of students in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan, teachers might have varying views or attitudes towards language teaching and learning. This will be reflected in their choice of materials. Understanding their theories and the factors that inhibit their criteria will benefit the clarification or discovery of their ways of thinking about their students and language teaching. McGrath (ibid) also refers to Bruder (1978) and Cunningsworth (1995) in suggesting that the teacher factors which influence the range and multiplicity of criteria in the literature typically relate to language competence, familiarity with the target language culture, methodological competence and awareness, experience of teaching the kind of learner for whom the materials are being selected, attitude to teaching and to learners, time available for preparation, beliefs about teaching-learning, preferred teaching style, and preferred method. According to my work experience, these differences in perceptions possibly come from the following influences:

- Teachers have different educational backgrounds: such as in the field of TESOL, English Literature, Linguistics, Education or others.

- Teachers have different teaching-learning experiences: such as teaching different groups of students, for example in different departments where different learning styles are required, and having different teaching attitudes to students of low academic ability.

- Teachers have different teaching goals: such as assisting students to pass the GEPT exam; helping students to have the ability to communicate with people in their daily life.

- Teachers use different teaching methodologies or styles: for example, some focus on language form and language practice, so they analyse the structures of the texts in detail; some focus on use, so they use the activities to help students to practise listening and speaking skills.

- Teachers' own preferences/interests/creativity influence textbooks used: for example, some teachers prefer to select reading texts which focus on literature, others prefer the texts which relate to daily life.

- Teachers' willingness to face changes or their own needs may influence use of a textbook: for example, some teachers are reluctant to change the textbook they have used for years even if they are allowed to do so; some are willing to try out new teaching materials.

- Teachers might consider the use of technology. For example, if the university provides audio-visual equipment, a textbook which includes a CD/CD-ROM might have priority in terms of selection.

The factors discussed above seem to me to have a direct or indirect impact on teachers' viewpoints of language teaching and learning. However, little attention has been given

to what *actually* affects teachers' choices in evaluating materials and I will therefore seek to investigate teachers' reasons in this study.

3.8 Issues for research, and previous empirical studies

In this section, I would like to synthesize all the issues raised in the sections above. These issues will then lead to the research questions for this study. Also the research focus is justified in relation to the notion of 'appropriate methodology' and I will critique previous research in order to ascertain appropriate research methods.

As I have described above, there are many suggestions concerning evaluating materials in the literature, however, not much information about the 'reality' of materials evaluation. For instance, we know little about the role of textbooks in different contexts; who conducts evaluations; when evaluations are conducted; how evaluations are conducted; what factors affect the decision–making process in evaluations, and how teachers prioritize their criteria. I would like to explore these issues in depth, in other words, to look at whether teachers use checklists or not, what criteria they apply, why they use these criteria and how they prioritize these criteria. In addition, as Holliday (1994:1) argues, 'any methodology in English language education should be appropriate to the social context within which it is to be used'. However, the methodology for English language teaching is often dominated by ideas from Britain, North America and Australia (BANA-contexts), and fails to either acknowledge or address considerations in the state English language education provided in the rest of the world (TESEP-contexts). This is likely also to be reflected in most published checklists suggested in the literature for evaluating materials, since these also tend to be exported

from BANA-contexts. The criteria suggested in the published checklists from BANA-contexts might not be able to represent teachers' views and needs in TESEP-contexts (e.g. in Taiwan). It is admittedly difficult for checklist writers to thoroughly take into account all possible cultural, social, political factors in local teaching situations. For example, Pennycook (2009) points out that conventional approaches to materials evaluation have tended to avoid cultural issues. However, Wharton (2009:79) reports that Tanaka and Basabe (2005) both found that 'even in local or localised materials, western culture was portrayed as desirable' when they investigated materials published in Japan and an Argentinean version of a global textbook. Therefore, even though the literature provides numerous models and checklists of how to and what to evaluate, unless we investigate, understand and acknowledge what teachers actually consider when they evaluate materials within the social context they are working in, we are unable to claim that the suggested published lists of criteria reflect the needs of individual contexts. Understanding this can help teachers select an appropriate textbook for their own students. The overall intention of the study is to elicit and explore Taiwanese teachers' own criteria with a view to comparing these with existing checklists and potentially developing principles for selection which are more appropriate to this context.

Despite the above arguments in favour of eliciting teachers' criteria, after considerable review of books and journal articles, as well as Web-browsing, I have come across only a handful of empirical studies that have investigated teachers' own criteria for textbook selection. Johnson, Kim, Liu, Nave, Perkins, Smith, Soler-Canela, and Lu (2008) conducted a project based on teacher evaluation of a textbook using think-aloud protocols in Lancaster University. Law's MA dissertation (1995) explores 'Teacher's Evaluation of English Textbooks' in Hong Kong secondary schools and finally, a small

scale project carried out in Sweden by Fredriksson and Olsson (2006) looks at 'English textbook evaluation: an investigation into the criteria for selecting English textbooks'. These studies provide a starting point for understanding teachers' own criteria for textbook selection; however, they have some limitations.

To begin with, the study of Johnson *et al.* (2008) investigates the textbook evaluation techniques of both novice and experienced teachers. Three teachers were chosen to evaluate a newly-released ELT textbook using the technique of the Think Aloud protocol. The findings show that the three teachers adopted different evaluation strategies to evaluate the textbook: the impressionistic method (T1 and T2) and the in-depth method (T3). The implication of this study is that it is important for the development of teacher education to provide training in evaluating materials.

The study clearly describes the teachers' sequence of evaluation. However, it does not systematically and thoroughly present the three teachers' actual criteria for evaluating a textbook. This small-scale study also cannot be generalized. In addition, the research instrument of the Think Aloud protocol used in this study cannot be applied in the teaching context I am researching. As Johnson *et al.* recognize, first, the think-aloud protocol can be criticised as the research does not take place in a natural situation. Second, the researcher has greater control of some of the variables among the participants, such as first language, range of experience (measured in years) and the particular textbook to be evaluated, all of which add to the reliability of the study but reduce its validity. Third, not all participants are good at thinking aloud, or like doing it. Finally, thinking aloud may distort the very thinking process that is under investigation, since it places a burden on the memory, especially as the participants are asked to analyse their thought processes, rather than just to report them. However, the aim of my

study is to allow all the information to emerge from natural settings to achieve validity. For example, I would like to invite teachers to talk about any textbooks they like or dislike rather than limit themselves to a particular one as designed in their study. Also time for teachers is valuable so it is difficult to conduct a training course for this instrument in advance.

In a further study, Law (1995) investigates how teachers evaluate English textbooks in Hong Kong secondary schools under the Curriculum Development Institute (CDI), Education Department. As she mentions, all textbooks have to be reviewed by specialists in the CDI before they can be put on the recommended textbooks list for schools, then the principal or the teachers will make the final decision. She compares the two sets of criteria from four subject specialists from the English Unit of the CDI and 101 English teachers from 10 secondary schools in order to shed some light on the development of a textbook evaluation model.

Possible criticisms of Law's study are that the criteria she provided are prescriptive as they do not emerge from teachers' *actual* criteria. In addition, while it is true that the Taiwan Ministry of Education allows teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology to have the freedom to select textbooks, how much freedom teachers can actually have depends on individual universities. The scope of my research is broader in comparing Taiwanese teachers' criteria with the suggested criteria in the literature, rather than just seeking the similarities and differences of criteria among the panel chairpersons, CDI, and experienced and inexperienced teachers.

Finally, Frederickson and Olsson (2006) carried out a small-scale study in Sweden. The participants in this interview-based study were four teachers at an upper secondary school. They were asked to describe their procedure when selecting a new textbook and

what criteria they applied in the process. Also they were asked the most important criteria to consider when selecting a textbook. However, since there were only four participants, the criteria collected by Frederickson and Olsson (2006) might not be able to cover all the criteria which teachers employ in different teaching contexts. In particular, the participants stated that they did not conduct a thorough evaluation because this was time-consuming and the concept of 'materials evaluation' was unknown to them. The interviews were conducted by Frederickson and Olsson's (2006) interview guide which was categorised into Background, Criteria, Purchase, and Information on current textbook. The teachers' criteria were led under the category of 'Criteria', it consisted of (1) Finance, (2) The syllabus for English, (3) Textbook package, (4) Content, (5) Layout, structure and practicality, (6) Student factors and pedagogic perspectives. Therefore, the criteria did not emerge as naturally as the researchers had claimed. I intended to adopt a similar interview-based approach in my research; however, I would allow themes to emerge from natural settings. This would also help me to investigate the reasons for teachers' criteria in depth. In addition, due to the limitations of this small-scale study, I would like to conduct both interviews and a questionnaire survey for my own research. The two methods aim to support each other and provide a fuller picture of Taiwanese teachers' criteria for selecting a textbook.

The research questions (RQ) therefore are formed according to the issues discussed above.

RQ1: What is the role of textbooks in English teaching in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan?

RQ2: What kind of materials evaluation occurs in this context?

   - Who conducts it?

- When is it conducted?

- How is it conducted?

RQ3: What aspects of materials do teachers focus on when they evaluate them?

RQ4: What reasons underline teachers' evaluation criteria?

RQ5: What degree of importance do teachers attach to different evaluation criteria?

After considering the issues for my research and from previous empirical studies discussed above with reference to appropriate methodology, in this study, first, I would like to invite teachers with or without experience and training in evaluating materials in order to gain teachers' views from a wider population. Second, interviews and a questionnaire survey will be conducted to elicit teachers' *actual* criteria with reasons and to ask teachers to prioritize these criteria in a wider population. Finally, this set of Taiwanese teachers' criteria can be principles for helping teachers to select a textbook and it is further used to make a comparison with the criteria suggested in the literature.

To summarise, the discussions above have explored the literature and related research on the issue of evaluating materials with specific reference to Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. Now, I shall move on to presenting the criteria I collected from the literature in order to compare these with Taiwanese teachers' criteria to compare the similarities and differences between them in a later chapter.

Chapter 4 Literature Review (2): A comparative analysis of published materials evaluation criteria

4.0 Introduction

In this section, I aim to provide a comparative analysis and, on this basis, an original synthesis of published materials evaluation criteria. This will be based on a comprehensive review of the literature and will have an important function in my overall study as a basis for comparison of published criteria with the criteria Taiwanese teachers say they *actually* use. To begin with, I explain the rationale for selecting particular checklists for comparison (section 4.1). I then give a brief overview of the checklists I collected by comparing and contrasting their general attributes (section 4.2). I continue by explaining the method I followed to comparatively analyse these checklists (section 4.3), and finally I compare criteria contained in the eighteen published lists of criteria and present findings for this comparison (section 4.4), referring to tables in Appendix 2.

4.1 Rationale for selecting checklists

Having confirmed that my focus will be on the checklist approach, I shall now explain how I selected the checklists for initial review. I attempted to review comprehensively and extensively all available published lists of criteria advising on the subject of evaluating ELT materials from relevant books, papers in conference proceedings, theses, and published journal articles, beginning in the early 1970s and continuing up until the

present. While I was reviewing the checklists, I found three similar studies. Riazi (2003) reviews eight textbook evaluation checklists with the objective of presenting their similarities and differences and describing their underlying assumptions and structures over three decades (1970-1990). Karamoozian and Riazi (2008) review seventeen textbook evaluation checklists in terms of their content and specifically their practicality over four decades (1968-2007). Mukundan and Ahour (2010) review forty-eight textbook evaluation checklists across four decades (1970-2008). The checklists selected for Riazi's review, apart from Davison's (1976), are all included in Mukundan and Ahour's (2010) review. These three studies examined the content of the checklists such as the format, scope, and weighting/rating systems. However, none of these studies clearly state how these checklists were selected.

After reviewing the checklists selected in these three studies and others in the literature, I discovered that quite a large number of checklists were simply adopted from other more influential lists; or were too simplified (e.g. Dubin and Olshtain, 1986; Griffiths, 1995); or focus on use for a specific area, such as for ESP/EAP purposes (e.g. Canado and Almagro Esteban, 2005; Chan, 2009; Rahimy, 2007), for reading skills (e.g. Miekley, 2005), for communicative tasks (e.g. Ellis, 1998), for teacher's manuals (e.g. Coleman, 1985; Cunningsworth and Kusel, 1991; Gearing, 1999), for cultural issues (e.g. Kilickaya, 2004), for self-access (e.g. Reinders and Lewis, 2006), for students in high schools (e.g. Hu, 1998) or for specific context (e.g. Litz, 2005).

Therefore, to make the overview less complicated, I decided that, first, checklists included in my comparison should be confirmed as original ones (e.g. Tucker, 1975; Cunningsworth, 1995; Ur 1996), but not Skierso (1991) (based on sixty-five checklists), and Rubdy (2003) (adapted from Sheldon, 1988), for example. In other words, not

stated as being adapted from another one. Second, frequent referencing by other researchers may provide some evidence about whether the checklist provides good and consistent measures. Therefore, the checklists selected in this comparison are those widely cited by other writers or ones which can otherwise be identified as influential (Thus, for example, Benevento (1984), Griffiths (1995), Peacock (1997), and Garinger (2002) are excluded). Third, in order to compare the views derived from BANA-contexts with 'locally-oriented' Taiwanese teachers' criteria, a further criterion is that the checklist should have been devised by native speaker(s) from Britain, North America or Australasia. Fourth, my focus is on English for general, not specific purposes, thus checklists which only focus on specific aspects such as these cited above will not be selected. Finally, open-ended questions might be able to elicit more information; however, they are time-consuming for teachers to complete (e.g. Breen and Candlin, 1987). A further criterion was therefore that the checklist should be based on closed (yes/no) questions, not open-ended questions (wh-questions).

It is worth noting that, among these existing published checklists, Skierso (1991) provides a comprehensive and flexible checklist which is based on sixty-five writers' suggested checklists. She suggests that teachers should choose from the criteria depending on their individual teaching contexts. I wish to end up with a similar outcome in my research and Skierso's study can provide useful insights. However, her evaluation checklist has its own limitations. First, it is out of date. The suggested checklists the writer collected start from the 50s and were mainly published on the 70s and 80s. I will add more recently published checklists. Second, the method Skierso used for her comparison is not very explicit or rigorous. Third, it is potentially subjective. The criteria selected may be based on the writer's viewpoint alone. I would like to be explicit and systematic in the way I compare checklists and elicit criteria from what

teachers *actually* use without making any judgements. Finally, Skierso's checklist includes checklists from both BANA-contexts and TESEP-contexts. In my research, I would like to compare what the BANA literature suggests and what teachers *actually* use to see if the suggestions are appropriate to individual contexts or not.

Based on the criteria discussed above, eighteen checklists for evaluating materials were selected as qualifying for in-depth review as presented in Table 1. I shall give a general overview of these checklists in the next section.

Decade	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000~present
Checklists	Tucker (1975) Davison (1976) Haycraft (1978) Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983) Williams (1983) Matthews (1985) Grant (1987) Dougill (1987) Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991) McDonough & Shaw (1993) Richards (1993) Cunningsworth (1995) Ur (1996) Savignon (1997) Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001) in Byrd (2001)

Table 4.1: Textbook evaluation checklists over four decades

4.2 The checklists

Most previous studies reviewing published checklists present the checklists chronologically for each decade and summarize them separately (e.g. Riazi, 2003;

Karamoozian and Riazi, 2008; Mukundan and Ahour, 2010). Instead of summarizing the eighteen selected checklists one by one in the same way as previous reviewers, in Table 3.2 below I would like to provide an overview enabling a more systematic comparison in terms of (1) Aims and contexts (2) Type of approach (3) Stage of evaluation (4) Overall categories (5) Coverage of supplementary materials, and (6) Number of criteria. I will then explain these different aspects in more detail.

Checklist Writers	Aims and context	Type of approach	Stage of evaluation	Overall categories	Coverage of supplementary materials	No of criteria
Tucker (1975)	General	Quan	Pre-use	- Pronunciation - Grammar - Content - General	-Teacher's manual - Supplementary materials	18
Davison (1976)	General	Qual	Pre-use	- Student/text - Curriculum/text - Class size/text - Teacher/text - Internal construction of the text	- Teacher's manual	23
Haycraft (1978)	General	Qual	Pre-use	- Some general considerations - Student's point of view - Teacher's point of view	- Cassettes - Additional materials	25
Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	General	Quan	Pre-use Post-use	The textbook - Subject matter -Vocabulary and structures - Exercises - Illustrations - Physical	- Teacher's manual	47

				make-up The teacher's manual: - General features - Type and amount of supplementary exercises for each language skill - Methodological/ pedagogical guidance - Linguistic background information		
Mariani (1983)	General	Qual	Pre-use	n/a	- Teacher's manual - Tape - Recording - Workbooks -Test packs -Wall charts	12
Williams (1983)	General	Quan	Pre-use	- General - Speech - Grammar - Vocabulary - Reading - Writing - Technical	n/a	28
Matthews (1985)	General	Qual	Pre-use	n/a	- Teacher's manual - Audio & visual cassettes - Recording songs - Workbooks	25

| | | | | - Wallcharts |
| | | | | - Test packs |

Grant (1987)	General	Quan	Pre-use In-use	- Does the book suit your students? - Does the book suit the teacher? - Does the textbook suit the syllabus and examination?	- Teacher's manual - Tapes - Workbooks - Visuals	30
Dougill (1987)	General	Qual	Pre-use	- Framework - The unit - Subject-matter - Form - Course components	- Teacher's manual - Cassettes - Test - Laboratory drills - Workbooks	34
Sheldon (1988)	General	Qual/ Quan	Pre-use	- Rational - Availability - User definition - Layout/graphics - Accessibility - Linkage - Selection/ grading - Physical characteristics - Appropriacy - Authenticity - Sufficiency - Cultural bias - Education validity - Stimulus/ practice/revision - Flexibility	- Teacher's Manual - Workbook - Tests - Cassettes - Video - CALL	53

				- Guidance		
				- Overall value for money		
Harmer (1991)	General	Qual	Pre-use	- Practical considerations - Layout and design - Activities - Skills - Language type - Subject and content - Guidance	- Teacher's manual - Tapes	23
McDonough & Shaw (1993)	General	Qual	Pre-use	- External evaluation - Internal evaluation	- Teacher's manual - Audio/video material - Tests	24
Richards (1993)	General	Qual	Pre-use	- Teachers factor - Learner factors - Task factors	n/a	29
Cunningsworth (1995)	General	Qual	Pre-use	- Aims & approaches - Design & organization - Language content - Skills - Topic - Methodology - Teacher's books - Practical considerations	- Teacher's manual - Workbooks - Cassettes	45
Ur (1996)	General	Quan	Pre-use	n/a	- Teacher's manual - Audio cassettes	19

					- Visual materials	
Savignon (1997)	General	Qual	Pre-use	n/a	- Teacher's manual - Workbook - Visual aids	20
Harmer (1998)	General	Qual	Pre-use	- Price - Availability - Layout & design - Methodology - Skills - Syllabus - Topic - Stereotyping -Teacher's guide	All components	23
Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001) in Byrd (2001)	General	Qual	Pre-use	- Fit between the textbook and the curriculum - Fit between the textbook and the students - Fit between the textbook and the teachers	- Teacher's manual - Audio tapes - Workbooks	14

Table 4.2 Comparison of textbook evaluation checklists over four decades

4.2.1 Aims and context

Selection of the eighteen published lists of checklists was made from journal articles, chapters in edited books, and authored books. All the checklists are intended to be applied to a broad range of teaching and learning contexts for ESL/EFL teachers. The criteria are broad in scope and used for general purposes.

■   Authored books

Cunningsworth (1995) presents a handy checklist under eight categories (see Table 3.2) for textbook evaluation and selection according to his own priorities. He advises that teachers can identify their own priorities and draw up their own checklist, based on their concerns and priorities. Ur (1996) offers nineteen general criteria selected from ideas given in a number of books and articles on the subject for assessing a textbook. She suggests that teachers prioritize these criteria first, and then examine the relevant features of a textbook by applying the criteria. Teachers compare these two results to make their final decision. Both Cunningsworth's (1995) and Ur (1996)'s checklists are flexible for teachers to use; teachers are able to add, delete, or amend any criteria they feel significant according to their context. Harmer (1998) provides nine main areas (see Table 3.2) which teachers need to consider when selecting a textbook. At the same time, he suggests that teachers should try to follow a four-stage procedure: analysis of the various textbook available, piloting the textbook with a class, consultation with colleagues, and gathering opinions from the publisher and bookshop owners, colleagues, friends and/or students.

■   Journal articles:

Tucker's (1975) checklist consists of a set of consistent criteria, a flexible rating scale for judging the comparative weightings of a textbook's' merits, a rating chart and a visual comparison between the evaluator's opinion of the book and a hypothetical ideal. Davison's (1976) checklist considers the relationship between the student and textbooks, the curriculum and textbooks, the class size and textbooks, the teacher and textbooks, and finally the internal construction of the textbook. Davison (1976:311) stressed that 'the relative importance of each of the selection factors must be judged according to

local circumstances'. Williams (1983) suggests a framework for evaluation which takes, first, a number of assumptions about second (foreign) language teaching, and second, the linguistic, pedagogical and technical criteria related to these assumptions into account. This checklist consists of three categories: general considerations, language, and technical considerations. The category of 'General' is concerned with global considerations of methodology, the needs of the learner, the teacher, and the community. The category of 'Technical' includes the quality of editing and publishing, the availability of supplementary materials, price and durability of the textbook, authenticity of language and style of the writer. It can be adapted to suit particular contexts. Grant (1987) suggests a textbook should suit students, the teacher, and the syllabus and examination. He proposes three stages of evaluation: initial evaluation, detailed evaluation and in-use evaluation. However, As Mukundan and Ahour (2010) observe, Grant's checklist analyses questions of the yes/no type. This seems to be easier for evaluators to use; however asking two or more questions based on one criterion (e.g. Is it attractive? Given the average age of your students, would they enjoy using it?) may confuse the evaluator. Sheldon's (1988) checklist adopts both a quantitative and a qualitative approach to evaluating a textbook. The criteria are considered as most frequently used in deciding whether or not a textbook is selected by reviewers, administrators, teachers, learners, and educational advisors. The checklist consists of two parts: factual details which offer information about the textbook such as author, level, and target learners, as well as factors which contain the criteria which need to be considered. It can be used for teacher-produced materials. Richards (1993) proposes a macro level evaluation (e.g. criteria that could be used with any kind of textbook), and a micro level evaluation (e.g. criteria for a specific kind of textbook).

- Chapters in edited books

Haycraft (1978) provides a general checklist for evaluating a textbook in terms of general considerations, students' point of view, and teacher's point of view. Daoud and Celce-Murcia's (1979) checklist suggests gathering preliminary information before beginning to evaluate the textbook. They also provide a procedure for textbook evaluation: survey, analysis and judgement. Detailed analysis of the teacher's manual is emphasised. Mariani (1983) then proposes an approach for EFL teachers to evaluate and supplement textbooks based on every day teaching experience, and take local situations into account. Dougill (1987) organizes the checklist into two phases: phase one poses some initial questions as to the usefulness of materials, and phase two evaluates these questions more closely and suggests some criteria for the choice and use of materials with teachers' particular groups of learners and teachers' actual classroom situations in mind. Based on a student needs profile, Harmer (1991) proposes an evaluation checklist under seven major headings: practical considerations, layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content, and guidance. McDonough and Shaw (1993) advise evaluating a textbook in two stages: an external evaluation which offers a brief overview of the materials from the outside (cover, introduction, table of contents), and an internal evaluation which looks at the materials closely and in more detail. They claim their checklist is flexible and can be used in ELT contexts worldwide. Savignon's (1997) checklist considers the theory and practice of communicative language teaching. Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001) provide a textbook evaluation system which addresses the fit between the materials and the curriculum, the students, and the teachers.

4.2.2 Type of approach

Roberts (1996) illustrates how different approaches can be applied in evaluating materials. In the quantitative approach ('quan.' in Table 3.2), checklists answered numerically are often quickly dealt with and facilitate comparison of the answers of different evaluators. Therefore, some checklists employ elaborate systems using a variety of scoring methods which include a rating and weighting scale (e.g. Tucker, 1975; Williams, 1983; Ur 1996). Some only include a rating scale (e.g. Daoud & Celce-Murcia, 1979; Grant, 1987). This quantitative approach can save time and effort. However, Roberts (1996: 384) warns that if the checklist 'contains no questions to be answered descriptively, they do not leave space for discerning reactions to materials on parameters which the checklist writer has not foreseen. They may also look misleadingly objective'. In addition, as Sheldon (1988:240) indicates,

> the criteria and key questions central to such schemes partly depend on the swings of linguistic fashion. Nowadays, one would probably not rate 'adequacy of pattern inventory' (Tucker, 1975: 360) as highly as a few years ago. Such decisions would, however, depend on one's own local priorities and preferences. Over the years, the relative importance of different criteria would change, along with the interpretation given to the scores assigned in each category.

He further identifies the fact that in some cases the categories would be very difficult to quantify. For example, 'competence of the author' (Tucker, 1975:360) and whether or not a textbook is 'based on a contrastive analysis of English and L1 sound systems' (Williams, 1983:255) might present problems of clarification and scoring. It is worth noting that teachers are suggested to prioritize the criteria in Tucker's (1975) checklist, Cunningsworth (1995), and Ur's (1996) checklist.

On the other hand, in the qualitative approach ('qual.' in Table 3.2), Roberts (1996) points out that checklists give evaluators the opportunity to express themselves freely and to describe reactions to materials on points overlooked by the checklist writer. Some checklists therefore adopt a qualitative method (e.g. Davison, 1976; Haycraft, 1978; Mariani, 1983; Matthews, 1985; Dougill, 1987; Harmer, 1991; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Richards, 1993; Cunningsworth, 1995; Savignon, 1997; Harmer,1998; Byrd and Celce-Murcia, 2001). The comments would allow us to understand in more depth how teachers think and consider. However, as Roberts (ibid:384) reminds us, it could be a tiring job for evaluators to complete. Particularly when several evaluators are involved, it might be very difficult to form a coherent description if they express themselves in different ways.

4.2.3 Stage of evaluation

All checklists I collected can be used for pre-use evaluation. Some of them suggest two stages of evaluation. For example, Grant (1987) proposes an initial evaluation and a detailed evaluation in pre-use evaluation. McDonough & Shaw (1993) share a similar view to Grant, but use different terms (e.g. an external evaluation and an internal evaluation). Grant (1987) explains that the initial evaluation aims to filter out obviously unsuitable materials and detailed evaluation looks at the checklist itself in detail. In addition, Grant (1987:121) suggests an in-use evaluation. As he says,

> the evaluation process should be continuous, even in situations where you do not plan, for financial or other reasons, to replace the textbook for some time. For it is only by constant evaluation that one can ensure that the teacher is the master, and not the slave of the textbook'.

However, he does not provide information on how to conduct the in-use evaluation. Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979) further propose a post-use evaluation by using the identical checklist, so that the selected textbook could be re-evaluated on the basis of classroom experience. They argue that 'the ultimate evaluation of a text comes with actual classroom use' (ibid:306). Finally, although Cunningsworth (1995) proposes pre-use, in-use, and post-use evaluation, again, he does not give any guidelines on how to conduct evaluation in these three stages.

4.2.4 Overall categories

The categories in each checklist reflect the writers' priorities and preferences in language teaching-learning. The writers' views might be affected by the development of research and academic enquiry as well as by consideration of contexts. For example, according to McGrath (2002), Tucker's checklist (1975) focuses on pronunciation and grammar and this reflects the period in which the checklist was designed, and it is out of date. Cunningsworth's (1995) checklist, on the other hand, provides general guidelines and focuses on linguistic theory, most notably in the area of Pragmatics (Sheldon, 1987). He emphasises language as a system. Language forms and function, skills, and methodology are examined in detail to meet learners' needs in their target situations. Savignon's checklist (1997) reflects the development of the communicative approach in language teaching. Mariani (1983), Matthews (1985) and Dougill (1987) mention the use of presentation, practice and production. Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979) pay considerable attention to the content of teacher's manuals, whereas Dougill (1987) puts emphasis on course components. Karamoozian and Riazi (2008) also point out that

Williams (1983) considers local differences and first language effects important in language learning. Richards (1993), meanwhile, highlights the task factors.

Also, under the same category, writers might emphasise different criteria. Tucker's (1975) checklist, Haycraft's (1978) checklist and William's (1983) checklist pay more attention to general considerations. Tucker (1975) focuses on authenticity, supplementary materials, guidance for non-native teachers, author competence, level of integration, durability, editing and publishing, and price and value. Haycraft (1987) pays attention to the length of the course, the audience, teaching hours, structural grading, useful vocabulary, interesting reading and visual matters. Williams (1983) then emphasises global considerations of methodology, the needs of the learner, the teacher, and the community. Or the same criterion could be put in a different category, for example, Haycraft (1978) considers cultural issues under the category related to student's point of view, whereas Tucker (1975) regards cultural issues as falling under the appropriateness of contexts and situations in the content criteria.

However, some writers do not group their criteria into categories (e.g. Mariani, 1983; Ur, 1996; Savignon, 1997). Some provide broad features of criteria (e.g. Williams, 1983; Sheldon, 1988; Byrd and Celce-Murcia, 2001) which might underestimate or overestimate the value of a textbook. For example, it is difficult to define 'good pronunciation explanation and practice' in Sheldon's checklist. The terminology 'communicative' and 'teachability' in Grant's initial evaluation (1987), for example, are difficult to apply without close examination of the materials. Also the terms of 'right level of maturity' and 'right conceptual level' in Sheldon's (1988) checklist need further explanation. Tomlinson (2003) reminds us that these kinds of questions require the knowledge exhibited by expert evaluators. Finally, some important criteria are taken for

granted and so are not included in the checklists, for example, the criterion 'price' (e.g.

Doaoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979; McDonough and Shaw, 1993; Tucker, 1975; Williams,

1983; Matthews, 1985; Sheldon, 1988).

4.2.5 Coverage of supplementary materials

Teacher's manuals are widely included in the checklists. Workbooks, audio/video

materials, and tests are also included in some of the checklists (e.g. Mariani, 1983;

Matthews,1985; Grant, 1987; Dougill, 1987; Sheldon,1988; McDonough & Shaw, 1993;

Cunningsworth, 1995; Ur, 1996; Savignon, 1997). Sheldon (1988) mentions the use of

CALL. However, Williams (1983), Harmer (1991) and Richards (1993) do not consider

these components in their checklists.

4.2.6 Number of criteria

The number of criteria in these checklists range from twelve to fifty-three. The length of

a checklist could affect teachers' motivation as regards using it. Furthermore, Grant's

three-category checklist (1987) devotes an equal proportion to each category. McGrath

(2002) argues that this may lead either to the exclusion of important questions or the

inclusion of trivial questions, just to make up the number. However, the number of

criteria can still be flexible and various. Grant (1987), Sheldon (1988), and Ur (1996)

suggest that a global list of criteria can never really apply in most local environments,

without considerable modification which reflects our own particular teaching situation.

4.3 Method for comparative analysis

Previous reviews of checklists (Riazi, 2003; Karamoozian and Riazi, 2008; Mukundan and Ahour, 2010) did not discuss criteria in detail. In order to compare actual criteria in the eighteen checklists, I first retyped all criteria from each checklist into a single word document, I then analysed the criteria according to the following steps.

Step 1: I went through all the criteria in each checklist. I highlighted the key words in each criterion in colours. They were then labelled by the key words from each criterion. For example, if the criteria included words such as 'realistic', 'real-life', and 'authentic', I labelled them as 'materials (authenticity of)'. In addition, if the criteria included 'realistic' and 'exercises' or 'tasks' and 'real-world', I labeled them as 'Tasks (authenticity of)'. The example of Cunningsworth (1995) is given to illustrate the process as the checklist is widely cited by other writers (see Appendix 3).

Here I would like to explain some issues that arose while I was coding these criteria, and how I solved the problems. First, some of the criteria included more than one feature such as 'Is the language of the reading and listening texts appropriate?' (Harmer, 1998). In this case, I divided them into different statements: 'Is the language of the reading texts appropriate?' and 'Is the language of listening texts appropriate?' Second, some criteria are vague, unclear or difficult to understand, for example, 'Rate and manner of entry and re-entry' (Tucker, 1975). This involves the number of vocabulary and grammatical structures presented in each lesson and the recycling of both in different dialogue and narrative contexts. I classified this item in the category of 'Appropriacy of grading' with the other statements which have the same narratives, rather than using Tucker's own term. Finally, some criteria were difficult to categorize, for example, 'Are [the illustrations] childish, sexist or culturally offensive?' I classified

this item in 'illustrations' rather than 'sensitivity to socio-cultural issues' as 'illustrations' is the main subject of this statement.

Step 2: After coding the eighteen published lists of criteria, I used the function for sorting in Microsoft Office Excel to reorganize the criteria. All the criteria with the same label were grouped together. All the criteria with the same label were then integrated into a category according to their attributes. For example, I integrated 'materials (authenticity of)' and 'tasks (authenticity of)' into the category of 'Authenticity'. The process continued until I finished analysing all the criteria (see Appendix 3). The whole set of criteria from the eighteen checklists came to 552 criteria in total.

Step 3: I read the criteria under the same category several times to check if they were categorized appropriately. I went back to read the explanation of the original checklists again if I had any doubts about the meanings of criteria. All the issues that arose during the coding and analysis process were discussed with my supervisor for clarification. After that, I summarized the criteria which were under the same category. The language I used for summarizing the criteria attempted to be as close as possible to the language used in the criteria, as I wanted to stay close to the original meaning. The findings will be presented in the next section.

4.4 Findings

This section presents a summary comparison of the selected lists of criteria. This summary is structured according to the thirteen overall categories which emerged from analysis, as described above. They represent overall suggestions given to teachers as

aspects to take into consideration when they evaluate materials. The headings are (1) Teaching contexts and situations, (2) Authenticity, (3) Sensitivity to socio-cultural issues, (4) Organization of the materials, (5) Methodology, (6) Textbook content, (7) Skills, (8) Tasks (Exercises, activities), (9) Self-instruction, (10) Supplementary materials, (11) Visual Design, (12) Practical Concerns, and (13) Quality of the textbooks. Under each heading I present the labels which make it up (see above and Appendix 4) together with an attempt to summarize and synthesise the criteria generated by various writers under this label. The precise number of writers who mention criteria under the same label is provided in Tables 4.3- 4.14 below. For complete information, see Appendix 1. The eighteen checklists consist of 552 criteria in total; therefore, the overview below will be very lengthy.

4.4.1 Teaching contexts and situations

Table 4.3 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Teaching contexts and situations' in terms of (1) Role of the textbook, (2) Aims and objectives, (3) Syllabus, (4) Time available, (5) Appropriateness to learners, (6) Suitability for teachers, (7) Class size, and (8) Suitability to mixed ability classes.

Writers / Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Role of the textbook												*							1

Aims and objectives		*						*	*	*		*	*	*			*	8
Syllabus					*		*	*	*					*		*		6
Time available		*	*				*	*	*		*							6
Appropriateness to learners		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	15
Suitability for teachers														*			*	2
Class size		*				*												2
Suitability to mixed ability classes											*							1

Table 4.3 Teaching contexts and situations

Role of the textbook

According to McDonough and Shaw (1993), there is a need to define if the materials are to be used as the main 'core' course or to be supplementary to it.

Aims and objectives

The objectives of the textbook should be clearly stated for both students and teacher (Harmer, 1991). The aims of the textbook should correspond closely with the aims of the teaching programme (Cunningsworth, 1995), the curriculum/goals (Byrd & Celce-Murcia, 2001), the skills to be taught (Davision, 1976), and with the needs of the learners (Cunningsworth, 1995). These can be laid out in an introduction and implemented in the material (Ur, 1996).

Syllabus

The teaching objectives of the syllabus consider what type it is (e.g. structural, functional, multi-syllabus, etc.), how comprehensive it is, and how relevant to the stated

aims (Dougill, 1987). The syllabus of the textbook also states clearly how the language has been selected, graded, organized and presented (Mariani, 1983) in the right order (Harmer, 1998).

Time available

According to Davison (1976), for a textbook to be effective it should provide materials which will fill the amount of time allotted to the class in terms of the number of class-hours per week, month, term, or year. McDonough and Shaw (1993) explains further that the language should be presented and organized into teachable unit/lessons, that is, the length of each unit/lesson should fit in well with the timetable (Haycraft, 1978).The textbook material should be written in a style which provides students with sufficient time to devote to specific courses in the textbooks (Davison, 1976).

Appropriateness to learners

A textbook should cater for the target learners' interest, motivation, and variety (Mariani, 1983), age range (Davison, 1976), culture, assumed background, probable learning preferences, educational expectations (Sheldon, 1988), individual differences in L1 background (Williams, 1983), different learning styles (McDonough and Shaw, 1993) and prior experience with the language is assumed (Savignon, 1997). For example, Ur (1996) suggests that topics and tasks in the materials should be interesting to 'both students and teachers' (McDonough and Shaw, 1993). Grant (1987) also suggests that students should be able to use the textbook to help them prepare for the exam and the textbook should provide methods, or hints on exam technique. The subject and content of the textbook are then able to engage and hold the learners' interest and motivation (Sheldon, 1988), rather than serve as a vehicle for language work (Dougill, 1987).

As regards age-appropriateness, the materials should be consistent with learners' age level with regard to layout, design, illustrations, choice of vocabulary, activities involving learner attitudes and feelings (Savignon, 1997), and 'the social settings and the topics' (Matthews, 1985). The content of textbook should not be too mature or too young for the group (Harmer, 1991) to ensure that they enjoy the learning experience (Grant, 1987).

The level of the textbook should be appropriate to learners' proficiency level (McDonough and Shaw, 1993) in terms of the maturity, language, and the conceptual level (Sheldon, 1988). According to Sheldon (1988), entry/exit language levels should be precisely defined, for example 'by reference to international 'standards' such as the ELTS, ACTFL or Council of Europe scales, or with reference to local or country-specific examination requirements'.

Suitability for teachers

Savignon (1997) points out that we need to know what the role which has been assigned to the teacher is and what special skills this role requires. It is then likely that a textbook will be selected which is suitable for teachers in terms of their language skills needs and preferences and which is knowledge-based (Byrd and Celce-Murcia, 2001).

Class size

A textbook should consider class size (Matthews, 1985). Davison (1976) explains that the objectives and methodology of the text should be reasonable, given a situation where there are large classes.

Suitability to mixed ability classes

Richards (1993) suggests that the textbook can 'be used with classes of mixed ability'.

4.4.2 Authenticity

Table 4.4 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Authenticity' in terms of (1) Authenticity of materials, (2) Authenticity of tasks.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Authenticity of materials	*		*	*				*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*			11
Authenticity of tasks				*						*									2

Table 4.4 Authenticity

Authenticity of materials

The subject and content of the materials should be realistic at least some of the time (Harmer, 1991), and seem as they have been taken from L1 material not initially intended for ELT purposes (Sheldon, 1988). The context should be sufficient to convey meaning (Savignon, 1997) and motivate students (Harmer, 1991). It is also important that materials used in spoken English activities (dialogues, role-plays, etc) incorporate what we know about the nature of real-life interactions (Cunningsworth, 1995) rather than offer simplified or artificial dialogues (Sheldon, 1988; McDonough and Shaw, 1993), for instance, in the use of whole-sentence dialogues (Sheldon, 1988). Materials for listening, such as recordings, need to be as authentic as possible, accompanied by

background information, questions and activities which help comprehension (Cunningsworth, 1995).

Authenticity of tasks

Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979) indicate that the exercises should promote meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations. Sheldon (1988) shares the same view.

4.4.3 Sensitivity to socio-cultural issues

Table 4.5 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Sensitivity to socio-cultural issues' in terms of (1) Socio-cultural issues, (2) Politics, (3) Religion, (4) Sexism, (5) Racism, and (6) Equality.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Socio-cultural issues			*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	13
Politics		*	*																2
Religion		*								*									2
Sexism							*		*	*		*		*			*		6
Racism									*	*	*						*		4
Equality										*	*			*			*		4

Table 4.5 Sensitivity to socio-cultural issues

As Williams (1983) points out, the textbook should relate its content to the learners' culture and environment, and select structures with regard to differences between L1 and L2 cultures. The content should allow learners to 'focus on problems of usage related to social background' Williams (1983). Harmer (1998) further indicates that the textbook should make it clear if there is more than one L2 culture. The materials need to reflect 'the multicultural nature of modern society' (Harmer, 1991). Savignon (1997) finally mentions that acquiring a second language is acquiring a new perspective on interpersonal relations. However, cultural bias needs to be treated carefully. As Sheldon (1988) warns, 'students' expectations in regard to content, methodology, and format should be successfully accommodated. At the very least, the textbook should be able to wean students away from their preconceived notions'. Sheldon (1988) reminds us that the author's sense of humour or philosophy needs to be obvious or appropriate. It is important that the textbooks used are not all about a different culture, for example all about British or American culture, as the topics and situations included may be of little relevance and of less interest to the students (Matthews, 1985). Nor should text be solely focused on 'uncomfortable social realities (e.g. unemployment, poverty, family breakdowns, racism' (Sheldon, 1988) but rather aim to make the learning experience enjoyable for the student.

Haycraft (1978) advises that it is important that textbooks do not include too many political statements. Sheldon (1988) also suggests that different and appropriate religious environments should be catered for; both in terms of the topics/situations presented and of those omitted. Furthermore, according to Harmer (1998), a textbook should present people and situations, 'with reference to ethnic origin, occupation, disability, etc' (Cunningsworth, 1995) in a fair and equal way (Harmer, 1998). As Cunningsworth (1995) points out, women should be portrayed and represented equally

to men. The materials should avoid presenting harmful stereotypes of different races (Harmer, 1991) or certain nationalities (Harmer, 1998).

4.4.4 Organization of the materials

Table 4.6 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Sensitivity to socio-cultural issues' in terms of (1) Clarity of organization, (2) Clarity of instructions and explanations, (3) Clarity of presentation, (4) Ease of adaption, (5) Ease of navigation, (6) Grading, (7) Recycling and revision, (8) Balance, (9)Variety and regularity of each unit, (10) A series of textbooks, and (11) Evaluation for learners' progress.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Clarity of organization					*		*	*		*		*		*					6
Clarity of instructions and explanations		*					*								*	*		*	5
Clarity of presentation					*		*		*										3
Ease of adaption												*	*						2
Ease of navigation		*					*	*	*	*			*	*			*		8
Grading		*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		13

Recycling and revision		*		*	*		*	*	*	*				*	*			9
Balance							*	*		*						*		4
Variety and regularity of each unit			*					*										2
A series of textbooks				*		*			*									3
Evaluation for learners' progress			*	*					*		*			*				5

Table 4.6 Organization of the materials

Clarity of organization

Sheldon (1988) advises that the material should be clearly organized so that the learner is given clear advice about how the textbook and its contents could be most effectively exploited. For example, the section of the textbooks that requires student input should be in close proximity to the relevant supporting exercises (Sheldon, 1988). Language work should be interesting, with a systematic development of the language system included in the textbook (Mariani, 1983). The content can be organized according to structures, functions, topics, skills (Cunningsworth, 1995), grammatical/lexical progression (Sheldon, 1988), or a story-line (Matthews, 1985).

Clarity of instructions and explanations

Savignon (1997) indicates that the explanations given should be clear and appropriate to the level of instruction and the age of the learners. Use of professional jargon should be avoided when talking about language and communication. As Byrd and Celce-Murcia

(2001) advise, examples and explanations need to be understandable and usable for learners.

Clarity of presentation

The language should be presented in a clear manner and in an interesting way (Dougill, 1987). Mariani (1983) suggests that the various stages in a teaching unit, e.g. presentation, practice and production, should be adequately developed. Also the new teaching points should be clearly presented within a reasonably convincing context (Matthews, 1985).

Ease of adaption

McDonough and Shaw (1993) suggest that parts of the textbook should be easily added/extracted/used in another context/modified for local circumstances to 'fit individual class needs' (Richards, 1993).

Ease of navigation

According to Sheldon (1988), indexes, vocabulary lists, section headings, and other methods of signposting the content should be provided in the textbook with a view to the student using it easily, especially for revision or self-study purposes. Also that 'the teaching points are easy to identify' (Richards, 1993), so teachers can use the textbook in the classroom without constantly having to turn to the teacher's guide (Grant, 1987).

Grading

A well-graded textbook gives well-structured and systematic coverage of the language (Grant, 1987). The teaching points are arranged so that they proceed from easier to more difficult levels (Davison, 1976). It should be able to be entered at different points/used in different ways (McDonough & Shaw, 1993). The learners can then 'be taught what they want to know in the right order, with the right priorities' (Haycraft, 1978). In

addition, the content can be graded 'according to the needs of the students or the requirements of the existing syllabus' (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979), 'by topic or themes that are arranged in a logical fashion' (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979), or 'on the basis of complexity, learn-ability, and usefulness' (Cunningsworth, 1995). Also we need to consider whether the progression of the course is linear or cyclical and how steep or shallow the progression is compared to other courses (Dougill, 1987). Finally, the amount of new material each unit contains, the speed of progression and the size of the learning load all need to be taken into consideration (Matthews, 1985). For example, useful phrases, such as 'How are you?', 'Can I have' should be introduced early enough (Haycraft, 1978).

Recycling and revision

According to Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979), a textbook should provide a pattern of review within lessons and cumulatively test new material. For example, new vocabulary should be 'regularly revised and used again in different contexts' (Grant, 1987) for 'reinforcement' (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979). Therefore, the material is likely to be retained/remembered by learners (Sheldon, 1988).

Balance

A textbook should hang together as a whole and achieve an appropriate balance between each aspect in the textbook (Dougill, 1987). There should be a good balance between knowledge about the language and practice in using the language; between what the examination requires and what the students need; between the relevant language skills. All this should be integrated so that work in one skill area helps work in the others (Grant, 1987); and finally a balance of activities should be provided that is appropriate for our students (Harmer, 1991).

Variety and regularity of each unit

According to Dougill (1987), each unit should follow the same format so that 'the student always knows what to expect' (Haycraft, 1978). In order to achieve this, a textbook should have sufficient variety to maintain student interest, and sufficient regularity for teacher and students to establish a working pattern (Dougill, 1987).

A series of textbooks

A textbook should fit in with other textbooks used for the same course, and/or with the textbooks adopted for the following course (Mariani, 1983). A series of textbooks should 'cohere both internally and externally' (Sheldon, 1988).

Evaluation for learners' progress

Sheldon (1988) suggests that the textbook should make allowance for revision, testing and on-going evaluation/marking of exercises and activities, especially in large-group situations. For example, the textbook should provide ready-made achievement tests and/or self-checks. The exercises should help students develop comprehension and test their knowledge of what has been taught (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979). As Sheldon (1988) indicates, students can then have a clear view of the progress that they have made, and how much still needs to be covered. In addition, the learning progress should be able to be evaluated and the testing guidelines should be consistent with the stated and implicit objectives of the program (Savignon, 1997).

4.4.5 Methodology

Table 4.7 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Methodology' as a whole.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Methodology		*	*		*	*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*	*	*	13

Table 4.7 Methodology

The recommended methods and approaches are up-to-date (Haycraft, 1978), easy to adapt (Grant, 1987), and suitable to the learning/teaching situation (Cunningsworth, 1995). The principles underlying the materials should be explicitly stated (Mariani, 1983). For example, the textbook helps students to develop the communicative abilities that underlie all language use. Students should be encouraged to use the L2 in the daily conduct of class activities (Savignon, 1997). Also we need to know what type of methods are adopted in the textbook, for example, whether it is structurally or functionally organized, or topic based, or a mixture of all three (Matthews, 1985) or whether it adopts an inductive or deductive approach (Dougill, 1987) Likewise whether it distinguishes between receptive and productive skills in vocabulary teaching (Williams, 1983) or whether it uses pair work, group work, and/or work with a whole class (Savignon, 1997). Finally, advice and help on study skills and learning strategies should be included for students (Cunningsworth, 1995). These all reflect the author's views on language and methodology (McDonough and Shaw, 1993).

4.4.6 Textbook content

Table 4.8 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Textbook content' in terms of (1) Content, (2) Topics, (3) Vocabulary, (4) Grammar, and (5) Pronunciation.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Content	*		*	*						*	*	*		*			*		8
Topics				*										*	*		*		4
Vocabulary			*	*		*								*	*				5
Grammar	*			*		*	*			*				*	*			*	8
Pronunciation	*					*								*	*				4

Table 4.8 Textbook content

Content

The textbook should provide accurate and up-to-date materials (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979), cover comprehensive content (Cunningsworth, 1995) to meet students' needs (Harmer, 1991), and be suitable for the local context and situation (Tucker, 1975). The structuring and conventions of language use should be above sentence level, for example, how to take part in conversations, how to structure a piece of extended writing, how to identify the main points in a reading passage (Cunningsworth, 1995). Furthermore, the content should be self-sufficient so that it is not necessary for the teacher to produce or use supplementary materials because of practical constraints, such as the lack of audio-visual equipment (Sheldon, 1988). The

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content should be able to stimulate the teacher to use the techniques s/he feels are necessary and provide for good and lively teaching plans (Haycraft, 1978). It should be flexible for different teaching and learning styles (Cunningsworth, 1995).

Topics

Variety and range of topics can be provided for different student levels, learning styles, and interest (Ur, 1996). This further helps expand students' awareness and enriches the experience (Cunningsworth, 1995). The teacher should be able to respond to the topics well (Harmer, 1998).

Vocabulary

Quantity and range of vocabulary should be selected on the basis of frequency and functional load (Williams, 1983) which suits students' levels (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979) and ages (Haycraft, 1978). Also vocabulary should be presented in appropriate contexts and situations, (Williams, 1983) and given good explanations and practice models (Ur, 1996). Vocabulary development and strategies for individual learning should be emphasized (Cunningsworth, 1995).

Grammar

Grammar should be introduced in meaningful situations to facilitate understanding and ensure assimilation and consolidation of language (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979). It should be presented appropriately for both teachers' purposes (Sheldon, 1988) and students' needs (Cunningsworth, 1995). For example, the drill models and pattern display (referring to judgments about how readily students can discern a form and about how much practice is required to guarantee this adequacy) are taught by following the appropriate sequence of grammar points (Tucker, 1975). Also 'the sentence length should be reasonable for the students of that level' (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979).

Pronunciation

Pronunciation work should be presented completely and appropriately (Tucker, 1975), and practice models should be provided appropriately (Tucker, 1975; Ur, 1996) in the textbook. It should cover individual sounds, word stress, sentence stress and intonation (Cunningsworth, 1995). It should be based on a contrastive analysis of English and L1 sound system and allow for variation in the accents of non-native speakers of English (Williams, 1983).

4.4.7 Skills

Table 4.9 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Skills' in terms of (1) Coverage of four skills, and (2) Integration.

Label / Writers	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Coverage of 4 skills	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*			*		*		*	*		12
Integration of skills	*		*			*			*					*					5

Table 4.9 Skills

Coverage of four skills

The textbook should cater for the four skills (Matthews, 1985) according to 'the course aims and syllabus requirements' (Cunningsworth, 1995) as well as students' aims

(Mariani, 1983). Reading texts should be sufficient (Cunningsworth, 1995), and associated activities should be suitable to students' background (Williams, 1983), levels and interests (Cunningsworth, 1995). Also the reading texts selected need to be within the vocabulary range of the students (William, 1983) and beyond the sentence level (McDonough and Shaw, 1993). Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979) adds that the sentences and paragraphs need to follow one another in a logical sequence. Furthermore, Williams (1983) indicates that the reading texts should reflect a variety of styles of contemporary English and 'match to social situations' (Cunningsworth, 1995). The registers used should be appropriate to the students' needs (Davison, 1976) and the distinction made between written and oral discourse should be taken into consideration (Savignon, 1997).

In terms of speaking and listening, a textbook should suggest ways of demonstrating and practising speech items, as well as include speech situations relevant to the students' background (Williams, 1983). The language of the listening texts should be appropriate (Harmer, 1998).

Finally, as for writing, the textbook should relate written work to the students' age, interests and environment. It also needs to demonstrate techniques for handling aspects of composition teaching (Williams, 1983).

Integration

Dougill (1987) suggests that teachers should consider if there is an integrated skills approach in the textbook. If so, then all the secondary skills teachers would like to teach their students can be brought out (Haycraft, 1978). For example, the textbook might relate written work to structures and vocabulary practised orally (William, 1983). The level of integration should also be of an appropriate skill level (Tucker, 1975).

4.4.8 Tasks (Exercises, activities)

Table 4.10 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Tasks (Exercises, activities)' in terms of (1) Rationale for exercise types and their objectives, (2) Appropriateness, (3) Clarity of instructions, (4) Sufficient communicative activities, (5) Interesting practice, and (6) Level of difficulty.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Rationale for exercise types and their objectives													*			*			2
Appropriateness of practice						*								*				*	3
Clarity of instructions						*							*						2
Sufficiency in linguistic items and skills	*	*					*	*	*		*								6
Variety of exercises		*		*	*		*		*						*				6
Sufficient communicative activities			*					*		*	*				*	*			7
Interesting practice											*						*		2
Level of difficulty													*						1

Table 4.10 Tasks (Exercises, activities)

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Rationale for exercise types and their objectives

A clear rationale for exercise types and their relation to both the short-term and long-term goals of the learners should be provided (Savignon, 1997) and 'the tasks should achieve their objectives' (Richards, 1993).

Appropriateness

The activities should be appropriate for students (Byrd and Celce-Murcia, 2001). For example, the exercises should involve vocabulary and structures which build upon the learner's repertoire (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979). Cunningsworth (1995) also advises that writing activities should be appropriate in terms of amount of guidance/control, degree of accuracy, organization of longer pieces of writing (e.g. paragraphing) and use of appropriate styles. Practice in controlled and guided composition should be given in the early stages (Williams, 1983).

Clarity of instructions

The tasks should be 'self-explanatory' (Richards, 1993). The kinds of responses required in drills (e.g. substitution) should be shown clearly (Williams, 1983).

Sufficiency in linguistic items and skills

The exercises should include sufficient focus on vocabulary (Davison, 1976), grammar, pronunciation (Tucker, 1975) and the four skills (Davison, 1976). The practice of an individual skill should be integrated into the practice of other skills (Harmer, 1991). Moreover, the exercise should ensure enough learning has been provided in relation to the examination (Grant, 1987).

Variety of exercises

A textbook should provide various exercises for different learner levels, learning styles, and interests (Ur, 1996). It should both consider how to use controlled exercises for

accuracy practice and freer, more creative ones for fluency practice (Matthews, 1985). Variety can be provided from unit to unit (Matthews, 1985). The practice should be meaningful or personalized rather than being presented just as a mechanical exercise (Dougill, 1987), that is, the textbook should provide sufficient opportunities for contextualised language practice and for personal, creative language use (Mariani, 1983). Davison (1976) suggests that various drill types could be substitution and transformation drills in addition to repetition drills. Also Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979) suggests different types of written exercises which could be sentence completion, spelling and dictation and guided composition.

Sufficient communicative activities

Grant (1987) suggests that sufficient communicative activities enable the students to use the language independently. They should 'allow for free production' (Dougill, 1987) 'in all four skills' (Ur, 1996). Therefore, 'effective consolidation takes place' (Sheldon, 1988). All exercises and activities, as Savignon (1997) suggests, should 'give equal attention to the conveyance of meaning and the creative use of language'.

Interesting practice

According to Harmer (1991), the materials should encourage practice, and the practice should motivate students. For example, the speaking and writing tasks should *engage* the students' interest (Harmer, 1998).

Level of difficulty

Richards (1993) suggests that the tasks should progress from simple to more difficult throughout the course.

4.4.9 Self-instruction

Table 4.11 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Self-instruction' as a whole.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Self-instruction			*						*			*		*	*	*			6

Table 4.11 Self-instruction

As Cunningsworth (1995) points out, students are expected to take a degree of responsibility for their own learning (e.g. by setting their own individual learning targets), therefore a textbook should be suitable for individual study. The practice should ensure that students will be able to generate language on their own outside the classroom (Dougill, 1987). Students are encouraged to develop their own learning strategies and become independent in their learning (Ur, 1996). Students are also encouraged to look for language samples outside the textbook and outside the classroom (Savignon, 1997), for example, using homework, cassettes, (Haycraft, 1978) and/or reference sections for grammar (Cunningsworth, 1995).

4.4.10 Supplementary materials

Table 4.12 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Supplementary materials' in terms of (1) Availability of supplementary materials, and (2) Availability of a teacher's manual.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Availability of supplementary materials	*		*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		13
Availability of a teacher's manual	*	*		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	14

Table 4.12 Supplementary materials

Availability of supplementary materials

The supplementary materials of a textbook should be available (Tucker, 1975). A full range of supplementary aids, such as students' books, teachers' manuals, workbooks (Cunningsworth, 1995), audio and visual materials (Grant, 1987), test packs (Mariani, 1983), can be used effectively (Haycraft, 1978) and set as homework (Matthews, 1985). Dougill (1987) further stresses that cassettes should be clear, and include a tape script. The length of recordings of conversations should be appropriate to hold the students' attention.

Availability of a teacher's manual

A textbook should include an 'easy-to-use' teacher's manual (Harmer, 1998) that requires little or no time-consuming preparation for teachers (Grant, 1987). A teacher's manual helps the teacher understand the rationale of the textbook (objectives, methodology) and guides the teacher through any set syllabus for that level (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979). A comprehensive and supportive teacher's manual guides teachers to get the best advantage of using a textbook (Harmer, 1991). Tape scripts, answer keys, technical notes, vocabulary lists, structural/functional inventories, and lesson summaries are provided in the teacher's manual (Sheldon, 1988). It also provides teaching techniques (Cunningsworth, 1995), methodological/pedagogical guidance, and supplementary exercises for each language skill as well as linguistic items. It advises the teacher on the use of audiovisual aids (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979). Adequate guidance in a teacher's manual can not only help inexperienced teachers (Dougill, 1987) but can also prove to be invaluable to non-native teachers (Tucker, 1975).

4.4.11 Visual design

Table 4.13 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Visual design' in terms of (1) Page layout and design, (2) Illustrations, (3) Font size, and (4) Note-taking space.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Page layout and design			*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		12

																	Total
Illustrations			*	*		*		*	*						*		6
Font size			*					*	*								3
Note –taking space						*			*								2

Table 4.13 Visual design

Page layout and design

The general layout and design of a textbook should be attractive and clear (Matthews, 1985). The textbook should be visually alive and well presented (Haycraft, 1978). The overall impression of the textbook should be attractive to the teacher and students in terms of appearance, design, size and layout (Matthews, 1985). In addition, Mariani (1983) advises that the format, distribution of materials on the page, diagrams, tables, and other graphic devices help students to read easily. The pages read better if they are not too dense (Matthews, 1985).

Illustrations

According to Dougill (1987), a textbook should provide extra tables, lists, or explanations for learners. There should be a sufficient number of illustrations (Dougill, 1987) which are clear, simple, and free of any unnecessary details that may confuse the learner (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979). They should be printed close enough to the textbook and directly relate to the content to help the student understand the printed text.

Illustrations should also be attractive (Savignon, 1997). As Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979) indicate, the illustrations can create a favourable atmosphere for practising reading and spelling as they can depict realism and action. Savignon (1997) advises that photographs, drawings, charts, and colours may invite the students to browse, ask

questions, and start a conversation. However, as Dougill (1987) warns, the illustrations need to be appropriate and not be seen as childish, sexist or culturally offensive.

Finally, illustrations should serve a pedagogic purpose rather than being merely intended as decoration (Mariani, 1983). They should be useful (Dougill (1987) and 'can be exploited in ways other than those suggested by the textbook' (Mariani, 1983).

Font size

The font size in a textbook should 'aid the purpose of the material' (Dougill, 1987) for the intended learners (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, (1979). We need to consider if it is functional, colourful, or appealing (Sheldon, 1988)

Note –taking space

Sheldon (1988) suggests that a textbook should provide space for note-taking. Matthews (1985) explains that if students are expected to write in their books (in boxes, tables, etc.), the textbook should provide sufficient space for students to write.

4.4.12 Practical concerns

Table 4.14 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Practical concerns' in terms of (1) Availability of textbooks, (2) Price, (3) Competence of the author, (4) Recommendation by authorities, (5) Consensus of colleagues, (6) Equipment (7) Piloting, and (8) From the publisher.

Writers \ Label	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Availability of textbooks							*							*	*		*		4
Price	*		*			*	*				*		*	*			*		8
Competence of the author	*																		1
Consensus of colleagues								*											1
Equipment													*	*					2
Piloting					*		*			*									3
Recommendation of authorities								*											1
From the publisher										*									1

Table 4.14 Practical concerns

Availability of textbooks

Textbooks should be 'readily available locally' (Ur, 1996). As Matthews (1985) advises, textbooks and further supplies should be easy to obtain in good time for the start of the school year. Teachers also need to be aware of the availability of the next level of textbook (for the next term/semester) (Harmer, 1998).

Price

The price of the whole package of materials should be acceptable for students (Harmer, 1991). The teacher also needs to consider if s/he is able to pay for the teacher's manual

and tapes (Harmer, 1998). Cunningsworth (1995) further indicates that the cost of the whole package should represent good value for money.

Competence of the author

According to Tucker (1975), the question of the author's competence is largely answered through an examination of her/his product, the textbook.

Recommendation by authorities

Grant (1987) points out that the textbook should be recommended or approved by the authorities.

Consensus of colleagues

Grant (1987) suggests that a textbook should be appropriate for, and liked by, colleagues.

Equipment

When selecting a textbook a teacher should consider it is not dependent on the use of equipment (Richards, 1993). Cunningsworth (1995) suggests that there is a need to consider if any parts of the package require particular equipment, such as a language laboratory, listening centre or video player, so that the equipment is available for use and is reliable.

Piloting

A textbook should be properly and extensively piloted in a local context before use (Matthews, 1985). The teacher's notes and suggestions for use, or accounts of how the textbook has been used or tested should also be piloted in the classroom before publication (Mariani, 1983).

From the publisher

Sheldon (1988) suggests that teachers can contact the publisher's representatives easily in order to obtain sample copies, support material for inspection, and further information about the content, approach, or pedagogical detail of the textbook.

4.4.13 Quality of the textbook

Table 4.15 summarizes the criteria under the category of 'Quality of the textbook' in terms of (1) Quality of editing and publishing, (2) Quality of production, and (3) Size and weight of textbook.

Label / Writers	Tucker (1975)	Davison (1976)	Haycraft (1978)	Daoud & Celce-Murcia (1979)	Mariani (1983)	Williams (1983)	Mattews (1985)	Grant (1987)	Dougill (1987)	Sheldon (1988)	Harmer (1991)	McDonough & Shaw (1993)	Richards (1993)	Cunningsworth (1995)	Ur (1996)	Savignon (1997)	Harmer (1998)	Byrd & Celce-Murcia (2001)	Sum
Quality of editing and publishing	*			*		*				*									4
Quality of production	*			*		*		*		*				*					6
Size and weight of textbook				*						*									2

Table 4.15 Quality of the textbook

Quality of editing and publishing

A textbook should show good quality editing & publishing (Williams, 1983). For example, the cover, typeface, illustrations (Williams, 1983), page appearance and binding of the textbook should be attractive (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979) and the spine should also be labelled (Sheldon, 1988).

Quality of production

When selecting a textbook, consideration should be given to the quality of production. The textbooks should be strong and long-lasting (Cunningsworth, 1995) and/or reusable (Sheldon, 1988). Williams (1983) also recommends that the textbook needs to be up-to-date both in terms of its technical content and in relation to production and design.

Size and weight of textbook

The size and weight of the textbook should be not too large and/or too heavy (Sheldon, 1988). It should be convenient for students to carry (Daoud and Celce-Murcia, 1979).

In summary, I have provided a comparative analysis of published materials evaluation criteria. In the next chapter, I would like to explain how I developed a mixed-methods research design for eliciting Taiwanese teachers' criteria and perceptions.

Chapter 5 Methodology

5.0 Introduction

I attempted to engage in a mixed-methods research design due to the nature of my study. A sequential exploratory design which embarked on a three-phase interview followed by a survey was adopted. Below I will explain the aims of the study and research questions (section 5.1), the overall considerations for selecting appropriate research instruments (section 5.2), the rationale for using mixed methods design (section 5.3), the methods by which I collected and analysed the qualitative data (section 5.4), and finally the methods by which I collected and analysed the quantitative data (section 5.5).

5.1 Aims of the study and research questions

The main aim of this study is to explore how Taiwanese teachers evaluate materials, that is, what aspects they pay attention to when deciding which materials to use and why. A questionnaire based on teachers' stated criteria aimed, further, to provide information on how teachers prioritised overall among these criteria. By these means the study attempts to develop a set of locally appropriate principles/guidelines for evaluating a textbook rather than aiming to develop a fixed set of criteria for Taiwanese teachers to use. The results will help teachers to reflect on their own criteria and their perceptions in relation to teaching-learning. The study also aims to investigate the possible gaps between what teachers say they *actually* consider when evaluating materials and what it is suggested teachers consider. Finally, the methods I adopt in this research could be beneficial to others who are interested in finding out about the criteria that teachers apply in their own teaching contexts.

According to the research aims, research questions are set up as follows.

RQ1: What is the role of textbooks in English teaching in Universities of Technology
and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan?

RQ2: What kind of materials evaluation occurs in this context?

- Who conducts it?

- When is it conducted?

- How is it conducted?

RQ3: What aspects of materials do teachers focus on when they evaluate them?

RQ4: What reasons underline teachers' evaluation criteria?

RQ5: What degree of importance do teachers attach to different evaluation criteria?

Having identified the aims of the study and research questions, I would like to explain
how I selected the research instruments according to overall considerations.

5.2 Overall considerations

At the method-designing phase, I had planned the research instruments for my study to
be interviews with teachers and observations in the textbook-selecting meetings as this,
I thought, would allow my research to develop through exploration and discovery.
These two instruments, as Johnson and Christensen (2008) suggest, would gather rich
and in-depth details about participants' worldviews and their personal meanings, and
the reasons for a phenomenon occurring in naturalistic settings, and would help provide
a more holistic insight into educational processes that take place in specific settings.

However, in my initial liaison with some universities, I realized that they no longer held meetings which solely focussed on textbook selection. Instead, teachers were advised to individually consider the different textbooks in advance rather than during meetings, which would thus save time. Teachers were then asked to vote in the meetings after reviewing the textbooks. In addition, I was not allowed to sit in the staff meetings that did take place, to listen to these discussions or to observe what happened, because teachers discussed other departmental affairs at the same meeting. As I was not an employee of the universities it was felt that my presence in meetings could make teachers feel uncomfortable, or feel unable to voice their views or opinions. This meant that I was not able to collect rich and detailed information using observations. Therefore, after considering the constraints on using observations, a mixed methods research design using interviews and a survey was adopted as more feasible in terms of collecting data for my research. Interviews would allow me to explore views by listening to participants, and identify themes actually drawn from those involved in the study rather than predetermined by myself or anyone else. In employing them as a research tool, I could elicit and generate teachers' *actual* criteria and the reasons for them. I also attempted to conduct interviews in three phases: pre-use, in-use and post-use phases as suggested in the literature (see section 3.5). Also it seems that individual criteria are treated equally in each published checklist. The criteria are grouped in terms of categories but not prioritized. A survey, based on the qualitative data, further enables me to understand the importance of each criterion from a large Taiwanese teacher population. As Dörnyei (2007:172) suggest,

> combining a qualitative interview study with a follow-up survey can offer the best
> of both worlds, as the questionnaire can specifically target the issues uncovered in

the first phase of the research and investigate the generalizability of the new hypotheses in a wider population. Alternatively, or in addition to this, the questionnaire can also be used to test certain elements of the theory emerging from the qualitative phase.

Accordingly, a questionnaire to be analysed quantitatively was used to provide a systematic and objective measurement to supplement qualitative results.

5.3 Mixed methods design

A review of the literature shows that most published lists of criteria for selecting a textbook seem to have been suggested by writers in a relatively subjective and top-down manner. There is little empirical research using a qualitative approach to elicit teachers' *actual* criteria, and in particular there is no research exploring the reasons for their criteria. There is also little empirical research which asks teachers to prioritize overall among criteria. In reality, the decisions made for selecting a textbook must be affected by practical constraints or considerations, for example, price. The selectors must prioritize their criteria from the perspective of how important each one is to them. Some criteria are more essential than others.

After assessing the feasibility of a mixed approach to data collection, a sequential exploratory mixed methods design was used. As Creswell (2008) explains, the purpose of using a mixed design of exploratory methods is to first gather qualitative data to explore a phenomenon, followed by collecting quantitative data to explain relationships found in the qualitative data. Using this combination would provide a better understanding of the research problems than would be possible using only one method.

The strengths of exploratory design, as Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) suggest, is easily applied to multiphase research studies as well as to single studies. It is also straightforward to describe, implement, and report because it is conducted in separate phases. Last but not least, the inclusion of a quantitative component can make the qualitative approach more acceptable to quantitative-biased audiences, although this design typically emphasizes the qualitative aspect. As Dörnyei (2007:164) confirms, mixed data collection methods can 'reach audiences that would not be sympathetic to one of the approaches if applied alone'. Rossman and Wilson (1985:627) conclude that a mixture of data collection methods can be beneficial to 'corroborate (provide convergence in findings), elaborate (provide richness and detail), or initiate (offer new interpretations) findings from the other method'.

Following this design, I developed a four-phase mixed methods model which prioritizes the qualitative aspect. I started with preliminary interviews to test the feasibility of the interview guide in the actual research settings in Phase One. After that, I conducted interviews to explore teachers' criteria with associated reasons in Phase Two and Phase Three. Based on the qualitative data, an online questionnaire was developed to investigate how teachers' criteria might be prioritized. The procedures adopted are illustrated below with corresponding aims in Figure 2. The notation 'QUAL→quan' used in this visual model indicates that the methods were used in a sequence, with the qualitative methods being used before the quantitative methods, and the qualitative methods emphasized in the study (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007).

Timeline	Procedures	Aims

Phase 1

QUAL data collection: Preliminary interview (n=2)

-To test the feasibility of the interview guide in the actual research settings

QUAL

Phase 2

QUAL data collection: Interview 1 (n=23)

-To elicit teachers' criteria with associated reasons

- To explore issues related to evaluating materials

QUAL data analysis: Interview 1

Phase 3

QUAL data collection: Interview 2 (n=19)

-To validate the collected data
-To elicit deeper reasons if they are not clearly explained in Phase Two
-To explore if there are any criteria which emerge while using or after using the materials
- To explore if there is a need for teacher training in evaluating materials

QUAL data analysis Interview 2

Develop a questionnaire

quan

Pilot the questionnaire: (n=6)

To refine the questionnaire

Phase 4

quan data collection: (n=138)

To prioritize the criteria (by teachers)

quan data analysis

Overall results and interpretation

Figure 5.1 The procedures and aims for the exploratory mixed methods design

I considered there to be a number of challenges involved in using this exploratory mixed-methods design. The process for collecting data in this design was time-consuming. Also I needed to make decisions about the most appropriate themes generated from the qualitative phase to measure in the quantitative phase of the study. I was aware that 'the vast majority of researchers lack methodological skills to handle both QUAL and QUAN data' as Dörnyei (2007:46) reminds us. However, this design, as Johnson and Christensen (2008) suggest, enabled me to integrate the qualitative and quantitative results during data analysis and interpretation to provide a full picture of the phenomenon being studied. In short, it was worth trying. Next, I will explain how I collected and analysed the qualitative and quantitative data.

5.4 Collecting and analysing the qualitative data

The qualitative data were collected in three phases. In Phase One, the semi-structured interviews were tested in two preliminary interviews in an Institute of Technology. In Phase Two, twenty-three Taiwanese teachers were interviewed in six selected Universities and Institutes of Technology at the beginning of the academic year in October 2008. This aimed to elicit teachers' criteria with associated reasons. Also it aimed to explore issues related to evaluating materials (see discussions in Chapters 3). In Phase Three, nineteen teachers from the same group in Phase Two were interviewed at the end of the academic year in June 2009. I thereby aimed to validate the collected data and to elicit deeper reasons if they had not been clearly explained in Phase Two. I also aimed to explore if there were any additional criteria which would emerge in using or after using the materials. Ethical issues related to this research were taken into consideration from the start and throughout this research, as suggested by Creswell

(2008) and Richards (2003), and will be addressed below in my description of each stage of data collection where appropriate. Content analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data.

5.4.1 Collecting the qualitative data: Phase One to Phase Three

According to Creswell (2008), the process for collecting qualitative data is comprised of the following steps: identify the participants and sites, gain access, determine the types of data to collect, develop the data collection forms, followed by a preliminary interview, and finally administer the process in an ethical manner. I will describe the process in detail as follows.

Step 1 Selecting participants

The participants in the interviews were identified through the researcher's social connections with individual teachers, as they met the requirements of the study and were recruited as being appropriate, willing, and able participants. Each participant identified and suggested other potential participants who were willing to participate in the research. These teachers were selected from six Universities and Institutes of Technology in middle and northern Taiwan. All have past or present experience of selecting or helping to select a textbook for a General English course for non-English major students. Two Institutes I contacted in southern Taiwan refused to participate in this research as they were having an annual evaluation by the Ministry of Education.

As a result, two teachers were involved in the preliminary interview in Phase One. Twenty-three teachers were interviewed in the Phase Two and nineteen of these were interviewed in the Phase Three. Four participants originally selected and involved in Phase Two interviews did not complete the research process because they were not

available for reasons of lack of time or due to changes in their career. The participants (including two teachers from the preliminary interview) were ten males and fifteen females, and they were awarded at least Masters of Art in the fields of Education (n=3), ELT/TEFL/TESOL (n=3), Linguistics (n=4), Literature (n=12), and others (n=3), e.g. American Culture (n=1) and Computing and Information Technology (n=2) (see Appendix 5). Thirteen of them have experienced studying abroad, including two teachers who majored in Computing and Information Technology. The number of years of teaching varied from 0-4 years (16%), 5-9 (12%), 10-14 (56%), 15-19 (8%), 20-24 (4%), and 24 years above (4%). The participants also included three teachers in Universities of Technology (12%) and twenty-two teachers in Institutes of Technology (88%). All, but one, are full-time teachers.

Step 2 Obtaining permissions

The authorities within the Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan are supportive of teachers undertaking research that will impact upon and develop language teaching. It was, therefore, not too difficult to gain access to teachers to request their participation in the study and I did not have to go through application procedures which involved gaining the authorities' permissions. I made contact with teachers in advance by phoning, or talking to them face to face, to obtain their prior verbal informed consent concerning participation and the use of data. It was more appropriate to introduce myself; as opposed to having participants initially sign a piece of paper before meeting me. My experience suggests that a participant is more likely to share information freely in the study if they have had prior introductory contact with the researcher.

The participants were informed of the purpose of the research, the time the interview would take to complete, the plans for using the results from the interview, and the availability of a summary of the study when the research was completed. Anonymity

was guaranteed to the participants at the onset. The names of the schools and participants remained anonymous and were given pseudonyms for the thesis and publication. I also conveyed to the participants that they had the option to withdraw from the study for any or no reason, and at any time.

Step 3 Selecting semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were selected as a major technique for collecting data. The interview process was guided by open-ended questions (see Appendix 6.1 & 6.2). The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed into a computer file for analysis. According to Borg (2006:203),

> semi-structured interviews are typically based around a set of topics or a loosely defined series of questions; they are flexible, allowing the conversation a certain amount of freedom in terms of the direction it takes, and respondents are also encouraged to talk in an open-ended manner about the topics under discussion or any other matters they feel are relevant.

I would like to elaborate further on the benefits of using semi-structured interviews based on this definition. First, a series of open-ended questions can be identified and logically presented in advance in outline form. This helps the interviewer to record, summarize and analyse the responses more easily (Bell, 2005).

Second, Creswell (2008) points out that open-ended questions allow participants to best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the interviewer or past research findings. An open-ended response to a question also allows the participant to create the options for responding, although the responses may be deceptive and provide the perspective the participant wants the interviewer to hear. Furthermore, the

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interviewer can ask specific questions to elicit certain information, so s/he has better control over the types of information received. As a result, the interviewer can explore implicit or unobservable aspects of participants' lives. However, this requires the researcher to have skilful interviewing skills to be able to encourage participants to talk freely. Also, any misunderstandings between the participant and interviewer can be clarified straightaway. For example, interviewers may need to rephrase questions to suit participant levels of understanding, or participant responses may not be articulate, perceptive, or clear.

The flexibility in semi-structured interviews allows participants themselves to 'raise[d] additional or complementary issues, and these form an integral part of the study's findings' (Beardsworth and Keil, 1992:261-2). A weakness is 'interviewer flexibility in sequencing and wording questions can result in substantially different responses from different perspectives, thus reducing the comparability of responses' (Patton, 1987: 116-117).

Finally, individual interviews are beneficial for this study. According to my experience, many Taiwanese teachers are not necessarily forthcoming about expressing their opinions in public, for example, they might fear to be judged by the researcher or their colleagues. Therefore, they might feel more comfortable sharing their feelings, ideas and thoughts in individual rather than group interviews. The use of individual interviews may allow me to obtain richer and more detailed data for my research, which aims to find out individual teachers' criteria of evaluating materials and to seek a deeper understanding of individual teachers' insights, perspectives, experiences, and beliefs regarding to their criteria. However, in all interviews I am aware that I have to be careful to avoid my subjective views, judgment and any bias as this could affect a

participant's opinions. Silverman (1997:100) states that 'objectivity exists not as an absolute but as an accomplished aspect of human lived experience' in qualitative research.

Step 4 Developing the data collection forms

An interview guide was formulated based on my research questions. It aimed at structuring how the data was to be collected and recorded. There was also consultation with my supervisor concerning the questions. The guide contains instructions as regards the process of the interview, the questions to be asked, and space to take notes of any responses from the interviewees (see Appendix 6.1 & 6.2). According to Creswell (2008), audio-taping an interview provides a detailed record of the interview, however, taking notes during the interview and having the questions ready to be asked can be used as a backup, especially if the participants are reluctant to be audio-taped. The written procedures also help to standardise the interview process.

Step 5 Conducting preliminary interviews: Phase One

After preparing the interview guide, I conducted preliminary interviews with two teachers (TA and TB) who I believed were in teaching posts which most closely corresponded to the participants of the study. Chinese was used in the interviews as required by the teachers. According to my own experience, this could help teachers to express themselves naturally and with ease.

Aims

The preliminary interview would enable me to validate the feasibility of the interview questions so that I could be assured that the questions elicited sufficiently rich data. It also gave me the opportunity to practise my techniques of eliciting information, rather than dominating the flow of the conversation. Therefore, conducting the preliminary interviews would enable me to improve the quality and efficiency of the main research.

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Setting

The teachers involved in the preliminary interviews were both from the same department but had different roles. TA was Head of Department of Applied Foreign Languages and TB was an EFL teacher from the same department. I recruited two teachers from the same department but with different positions as I felt this might provide an opportunity to see if they expressed different viewpoints on evaluating materials. The preliminary interviews were carried out with the Head in the staff office and the EFL teacher in the library. Each interview lasted for 30 minutes. Recording equipment was prepared in advance of the interviews. Recordings were checked at the beginning of interviews to make sure the recorder functioned properly.

Procedure

The procedure for the preliminary interview followed the questions in the interview guide step-by-step. Through content analysis, the interview guide was able to elicit the answers for my research questions. Therefore, I did not revise the questions and the sequence of the questions for the main study. I will discuss the procedure in detail in the Phase Two interviews.

Results

The results of the preliminary interviews are summarized as follows. First, as the interview progressed, I realised that the two teachers were not teaching a General English course to non-English major students in this academic year. They were not sure about how this textbook had been selected for this academic year. However, they had still had the experience of teaching a General English course and of selecting the textbooks in previous years, so they could respond to the interview questions accordingly by talking about their previous experiences. They started to explain their criteria and their views by giving me examples from the textbooks they were using at

that time, for example, the textbook for teaching writing or grammar to English major students. I reminded them to talk about the textbooks which they had used for a General English course. Although some of the data might not have been suitable for incorporation into the main study, it seemed that the sequence of interview questions was logical and could help gather information from the participants. What is worth pointing out here is that TA considered whether the textbook was better in terms of covering the *Standard Curriculum for English Language Teaching* laid down by the authorities when he selected a textbook, whereas TB was concerned about whether the textbook provided lots of meaningful pictures to meet the needs of the methodology he employed.

Second, a similar teaching context that existed between these two teachers and myself, as the researcher, helped us to build rapport and trust quickly. In conversations, I respected the teachers' values, perceptions and decisions, as well as listening to their responses in an attentive way. The teachers shared their ideas with ease. Probes and prompts were also practised to clarify the meaning or to obtain deeper information from the teacher being interviewed. I summarized what they said immediately, and they then confirmed or explained further to me if there was any uncertainty in my understanding of their discussion. Taking brief notes during the interviews allowed the teachers to have more time to think and to contribute more. These notes also helped me speed up the transcribing process when analyzing the data later. One thing to be mentioned here is that even though I tried to make sure the teachers understood exactly what I was asking them, sometimes they responded but used examples from other issues which were not directly relevant to the research questioning, for example, issues centring on the school policies of language teaching. I had to focus on maintaining control of the interview and keeping the interview focused on the research area.

Finally, the preliminary interviews led to a modification of the research design. I moved away from involvement in the process of materials evaluation: pre-use, in-use, and post-use phase viewpoint and towards researching the general criteria according to which teachers evaluate materials at whatever phase. This was due to the fact that throughout the course of the interviews the teachers talked interchangeably about materials they had previously used or designed, and materials they were currently using and those that they might use in the future. It seemed that their thinking related to their past and present experiences and future expectations emerged spontaneously. Evaluation therefore seems to be a continuous process. Also at the end of the academic year, when teachers are selecting a textbook for use in the next academic year, they often refer back to the experience of using the textbook which they are using or have just used, that is, the post-use phase and the pre-use phase as well as the in-use and post-use phase seem to overlap to some extent. It was not necessary to separate the evaluation process into three distinct phases, as was suggested in the literature. As a result, the design of this research has changed to interview teachers in two phases- at the beginning and at the end of an academic year to obtain the sufficient depth and breadth of the participants' stories. The aims for these two phases will be discussed next.

Step 6 Administering data collection- Phase Two and Phase Three interviews

This section describes how Phase Two and Phase Three interviews were conducted, and provides a rationale for each question. Most of the teachers selected Chinese to be used in the interviews, although there were a few teachers who would have preferred to take this opportunity to practise their English. However, Chinese was still used in order to maintain consistency.

■ *Phase Two: Interview 1*

Aims

The aim of conducting Phase Two interviews was to understand how Taiwanese teachers select a textbook for their students, that is, what teachers' criteria are. The procedure further asked teachers the reasons for these criteria in order to understand the linguistic, psychological and pedagogical principles underlying the English language teaching methods of each teacher.

Setting

After conducting the preliminary interview with two teachers, the interviews were conducted with twenty-three Taiwanese teachers. Individual interviews took place at six selected Universities and Institutes of Technology in either the teachers' private offices or staff offices. Each interview lasted between thirty minutes to one hour. The interviews with teachers, apart from on two occasions, were audio-taped, with prior agreement, and were transcribed for analysis.

Procedure

The procedure for conducting the interviews followed the sequence of the interview guide, with a description of the rationale for each question provided.

1. What is the role of textbooks in your teaching context?

The question is intended to ask teachers to define the role of the textbook in their teaching context; since teachers might have different perceptions according to their different teaching needs.

2. Could you describe how you select a textbook usually?

This question served as a warm-up question to motivate teachers to talk. It also aimed to understand how teachers select a textbook; to what extent teachers have freedom in their choice of materials, who is involved in the process of selection, when evaluation is conducted, and what factors might affect each teacher's selection process, as it was felt that this could provide background information for the research.

3. What kind of criteria do you apply when you select a textbook? Please think about times when you actually select one. And why do you think these criteria were important?

I wanted to gain overall knowledge of what aspects teachers focus on when they choose materials for their students and why they make these decisions, as this might reveal their views of language teaching and learning in their contexts. I advised the teachers to start from talking through the materials that they are familiar with. I then asked the reasons for the criteria they identified. The teachers all had materials in their offices. Therefore, they were able to freely access the materials during the interview to demonstrate their views. This technique was inspired from the interviews with the teachers in the preliminary interview. One further question developed during the interviews: if you had the opportunity to write a textbook, what should it be like? Why do you think this? I attempted to encourage the teachers to be more involved in understanding their own thoughts and ideas in relation to their experiences within their own teaching context rather than being confined to the published materials, which were mostly published in the BANA-contexts.

4. Do you use any other teaching materials, apart from the textbook? In what way(s) do you use these?

I intended to understand how other teaching materials have been used and what their functions were. It was hoped this might also reveal the teachers' viewpoints of language teaching and learning. I asked the teachers if they used any other teaching materials inside or outside of classroom, the reasons for using them, the ways they use them and the benefits they find from using them. The teachers were encouraged to show me the contents and the components of these teaching materials, including any materials they may have devised themselves, if they had any at hand.

5. Have you ever used any teaching materials which you liked/disliked? What aspects of this teaching material did you like/dislike and why?

Finally, the question here aimed to elicit more detailed or specific information related to evaluating materials by talking about other materials. In the preliminary interview, I noticed that the teachers mainly talked about the textbooks they were using. The teachers' discussion may have been influenced by what the textbooks being used offered, and this would not therefore cover every aspect of language teaching, as some criteria may have been omitted. I suggested that the teachers talked about other teaching materials that they liked and/or disliked and discussed why they liked or disliked these materials. I felt that this might stimulate the teachers' ideas and help to uncover more criteria and viewpoints, as different textbooks might be based on different theories and therefore have different foci. Follow-up questions were used to gain clarity of responses, as well as to ensure that I had a clear understanding of the depth of each individual's responses.

Results

Arranging a convenient time for the teachers to attend the interviews helped me to recruit more participants. Teachers whom I am acquainted with suggested that all

teachers were at school on Wednesdays for meetings; therefore it was easier for me to recruit teachers who were available and willing to participate in the research on these days. It was also important that I established a good rapport and trust with the teachers as they would be more willing to answer my questions and share their honest perceptions of the real world. I had the opportunity of knowing a mutual acquaintance who introduced me to the teachers. I also ensured I was professional, polite and patient at all times. At the end of interviews, I expressed my appreciation and my hope to continue the professional relationships once the research was completed.

However, there were some unexpected challenges experienced whilst I was collecting the interview data. For example, one teacher was fixing his chair whilst I was interviewing him, and therefore his approach and involvement was very different to that which I had expected. Another teacher's supervisor came into the room at the end stage of the interview and this had an effect on her answering one of my final questions. Another teacher had to deal with an unexpected problem for one of his students, and another was interviewed by the evaluators from the Ministry of Education before my interview, so they seemed unable to concentrate fully in my interviews. In addition, I had to interview four teachers in one school on the same day; it was a challenging task to maintain the full attention that each interviewee deserved. Although these unexpected issues might have an effect on the quality of the collected data, they were unavoidable as I had to respect the teachers' valuable time. Finally, I noticed that my participants were greatly concerned about the threat of redundancies during the interviews. They referred to this issue very often, particularly those who work in Institutes of Technology. Indeed, this proved to have an impact on Phase Three interviews later on. Some of the teachers were unavailable for interview due to the redundancy.

■ *Phase Three: Interview 2*

Aims

The aim of conducting the Phase Three interviews was first to validate the collected data in Phase Two by asking the teachers to confirm, add, modify, and/or delete the transcribed data item by item. Second, it also aimed to elicit deeper reasons for the criteria they identified in Phase Two if they were not clearly explained. Third, it aimed to explore broader criteria if there were any emerging while using or after using the selected textbook. Finally, it explored if there is a need for teacher training in evaluating materials.

Setting

The Phase Three interviews were conducted with nineteen of the teachers from the Phase Two interviews. Four teachers withdrew from the Phase Three interviews because they were unavailable. The interview procedures were conducted and sites were selected in the same way as in the Phase Two interviews. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes to one and a half hours. All the interviews, except one, were audio-taped with agreements and were transcribed for analysis.

Procedure

The participants first received a copy of my transcription of Phase Two interviews, and then I explained the purpose of the Phase Three interviews to them. The questions asked and the rationale for them are explained as follows.

1. Are there criteria for selecting a textbook that you want to modify, add to or delete from the criteria you mentioned in the first interview, and why?

This question attempted to check and clarify the data I transcribed and translated. I also felt it might reveal changes or some criteria which might have not been investigated in

the previous interviews. I asked the teachers to go through and validate all the comments that they had made in the Phase Two interviews, and followed on to explain the reasons in more detail. This included dealing with some of the practical constraints found in the Phase Two interviews, for example, teachers might have been restricted by time or distracted by other colleagues or students.

2. What do you think of the contents of the textbook you are currently using? Do they determine your teaching, and to what extent?

This question attempted to explore, to what extent, teachers were aware of the impact of using a textbook in their teaching. Are teachers skilful and flexible when they use a textbook or is their teaching determined by a textbook? This question might also help teachers examine their criteria according to the textbook they are using.

3. How do you evaluate materials (after they have been used) in your school (if at all)? Do you think this would be useful (if it is not currently done) and why?

Before I conducted the Phase Three interviews, I received two versions of questionnaires relating to materials evaluation in post-use phase from two universities where I did my Phase Two interviews. It seemed that some universities had started to place importance on evaluating materials at post-use phase rather than including evaluating materials as part of the annual course evaluation. Therefore, I wanted to establish if other teachers conducted post-use evaluation and how.

4. Have you taken any training course on evaluating materials? If yes, how practical was it? If not, do you think it is necessary to have a training course? What do you need from the training course?

Finally, I would like to know if there is sufficient training to help teachers select an appropriate textbook for their students and how this would help teachers. This might be a useful tool to reflect teachers' needs and provide information for revisiting teacher education.

Results

As mentioned in the reflections for Interview Phase Two, some teachers were made redundant, or changed status from being full-time to being part-time teachers. Therefore, I had fewer participants in Phase Three. At the beginning of the Phase Three interviews, I reminded the teachers about my research topic to help them get involved with the interviews quickly. Most of the interviews went smoothly, as the good rapport and trust that had been established continued with the teachers. The teachers were very cooperative; they went through their own Phase Two interview data carefully and answered the interview questions patiently. Some broader criteria did emerge from the follow-up interviews. For example, the ideas that 'a textbook should match the amount of teaching materials appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught', 'a textbook should be appropriate for a mixed level class', and 'provide a teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers'. The teachers also gave deeper reasons for some criteria (see Appendix 10). All the data I had transcribed and translated were agreed by the teachers, only two teachers corrected a few words because of mistranslation.

However, there were some distractions in the course of the interviews, especially to those who shared an office with others. For example, one colleague interrupted the conversation by commenting on what the teacher being interviewed had just said, another colleague came in and participated in the interview at the very end, and one colleague interrupted the interview to briefly to ask something else. The noises from people who came in and out of the office also affected the flow of the interviews. Again,

I had no control over these distractions because I had to respect the interviewees'
choices.

5.4.2 Analysis of the qualitative data

After completing my preliminary interviews with the teachers, I started the process of
analysing the qualitative data to find out about the current situation of materials
evaluation and identify teachers' criteria with associated reasons. Data from the
preliminary studies were included for analysis because, when responding to the same
questions, some of the participants offered information that the teachers interviewed in
the main study had not mentioned. For example, TB gave a full explanation of why
pictures are important when selecting a textbook and what kind of pictures are
necessary. Therefore, the interview data analysed was derived from 25 teachers in total
(see Appendix 5).

In order to gain an overview of the current situation of materials evaluation, I started by
analysing the data relating to RQ1: What is the role of textbooks in English teaching in
Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan, and RQ2: What kind of materials
evaluation occurs in this context? Who conducts it? When is it conducted? How is it
conducted? I describe the procedures for this analysis below:

Step 1: I transcribed the audiotapes in Chinese according to the interview questions in
interview guides (see Questions 1- 2 in Appendix 6.1 & Questions 2- 4 in Appendix
6.2).

Step 2: I collated the 25 teachers' individual answers to the same questions together, for
example, Q1: what is the role of textbook in your teaching context? I then conducted a

content analysis by placing keywords in margins, next to teachers' comments in relation to the role of textbook for Q1. Finally, I summarised the 25 teachers' viewpoints. The other questions were analysed in relation to RQ2, with answers being separated into 'who, when and how', and content analysis being carried out in the same manner.

After that, I analysed the data related to RQ3: what aspects of materials do teachers focus on when they evaluate them, and RQ4: what reasons underline teacher's evaluation criteria to identify teachers' criteria with associated reasons (see Question 3-5 in Appendix 6.1 & Question 1 in Appendix 6.2). The procedures were as follows:

Step 1: I prepared and organised the data. I transcribed the audiotapes into transcripts in Chinese. Then I conducted a content analysis by focusing on the criteria for selecting a good textbook as this would help data reduction and selection. I read the transcripts line by line and developed a table by using Microsoft Office Excel to organize the data into meaningful and analytical units (see Appendix 8: Contents for an example). Each segmented dataset was assigned a teacher's pseudonym so that they could be easily sorted at a later stage. For example, T1 stands for Teacher 1. I then started to explore and code the database. I went through all segmented data and preliminarily labelled them with the key words or key concepts that emerged directly and exclusively from those data (see also Appendix 8: Coding from key words).

Step 2: As I continued coding, I continued to see the key word or the key concept which appeared again from other teachers' responses. I grouped the segmented data which shared the same label together, for example, content (grading) (see Appendix 9 as an example). I then went through these segmented units with the same label and highlighted the statement which was the most representative for each unit. I also attempted to be as objective as possible; accordingly, I selected words as close as

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possible to what the teachers had said to develop the criteria. I also discussed my characterizations of themes repeatedly with my supervisor, to gain a second perspective, and made several changes as a result. A preliminary criterion was identified for each segmented unit. For example, 'be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. grammar)', and 'be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. reading texts)'. This process continued until I finished analysing all the data. As Richards (2003) suggests, we have to bear three rules in mind when analysing the data: relate analysis to the process of data collection; relate interviews to other data sources; relate categories to representations. Some of the criteria were combined and/or refined later when I was developing a questionnaire (see section 5.5.1). For example, I summarized criteria with the same label e.g. Content (grading) into a wider criterion which covered all the aspects in this label. An example given for this is 'a good textbook should be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar or reading texts)'. The number of teachers for each criterion helped me to know which criterion was identified by a relatively high number of teachers and which criteria were unique as I felt this might be worth exploring further in the Phase Three interviews. I read the data several times. Each time I read my database, I developed a deeper understanding about the information supplied by my participants.

Step 3: I went through all the criteria, and categorized each criterion under a wider characterization, such as 'Overall Construction' (see Appendix 10). I started by categorizing the criteria which seemed relatively straightforward to categorize, for example, Authenticity and Cultural Issues. Then I placed the rest of the criteria under Overall Construction so that there would not be too many overall characterizations when I constructed a questionnaire and it would not be too complicated for analysis and presentation. As a result, there were eight overall categories which emerged: Overall

Construction, Students' Needs, Teachers' Needs, Authenticity, Self-instruction, Cultural Issues, and Visual Design. After categorizing all the teachers' criteria, a preliminary set of Taiwanese teachers' criteria with associated reasons was finally established. It should be noted that even criteria which were mentioned by only one teacher in the interviews were still included in the checklist. There would then be a need to conduct a survey to understand if there were more teachers who agreed with such criteria, whereas, criteria which were mentioned by many teachers in the interviews might gain less attention in the survey results. In addition, when I was collecting data, I was also analysing other information previously collected, looking for major ideas as the phases of analysing and collecting qualitative data are simultaneous activities. Richards (2003:272) explains that the process of analysis is to collect, think, categorise, reflect, organise, connect and collect again in order to help the researcher in the search for clearer perception and better understanding. I acknowledge there are other possible ways of categorizing criteria, for example, a criterion such as 'contain practice which simulates real-life situations (e.g. make a list for travelling)' could be categorised under the category of 'Students' Needs'. However, as some important attributes emerged, for example, 'Authenticity' and 'Self-instruction', criteria with these attributes were then highlighted.

Step 4: The Phase Three interview data which related to teachers' criteria with associated reasons were transcribed and added into the Phase Two interview data (see Appendix 10). All the criteria then, first, were used to formulate a questionnaire, second, were compared with the checklists which I have systematically reviewed from the literature advising on the subject of materials evaluation. In addition, other questions asked in the Phase Two and Phase Three interviews (see Appendix 6.1 and 6.2) were analysed separately to provide background information for the main interview results (see Chapter 6). As stated above, issues arising during the process of analysing the

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interview data were also discussed with my supervisor to ensure objectivity in coding and classifying criteria from the teacher data.

To sum up, I was aware that no matter how well the computer functions, it is better the researcher examines the data again to check if there are any mistakes. It is also worth noting that Li (1998:685) in summarising Powney and Watts (1987) warns that 'data analysis is not only a simple description of the data collected, but a process by which the researcher can bring interpretation to the data'. I was aware of my own subjective views which may affect the interpretation of the collected data. The research findings could still be subjective due to the fact that the researcher is the main interpreter of this research. Dörnyei (2007:141) points out that 'interviewing is not merely the neutral exchange of asking questions and getting answers but rather a co-constructed social exchange in which taking a stance becomes unavoidable'. What I see, hear and participate in is central to data collection and analysis. The questions I ask will determine the responses I receive. My point of view could also become part of the research findings, recognising the subjective nature of reality and the issue that the findings in the interviews could be the statements that I agree with. It is always possible for researchers to make prejudiced judgments in any stage of research. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the research framework may serve as a model for future research projects focusing on materials evaluation in different contexts.

5.5 Collecting and analysing the quantitative data

The quantitative data was collected in Phase Four. The questionnaire was developed from the interview data rather than being devised prescriptively by me (as the researcher) or adopted from other suggested checklists so that I could stay true to the purposes of

my study. I attempted to see whether the qualitative findings of the first three phases of the study on Taiwanese teachers' criteria for evaluating materials were either widely shared across universities or somehow different, based on different universities. The questionnaire was also used to investigate what criteria are important or unimportant for the teachers when they select a textbook to be used for a General English course. A closed-ended and structured online questionnaire was developed. This was administered to Taiwanese teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology by e-mail invitation. Statistical descriptive analysis was used to analyse the quantitative data.

5.5.1 Collecting quantitative data: Phase Four

The process for collecting quantitative data comprised five steps: selecting participants, obtaining permissions, selecting types of data, developing and piloting the questionnaire, and administering the questionnaire. I will describe the process in detail next.

Step 1 Selecting participants

The participants involved in collecting the quantitative data were, as in the interviews, intended to be those who have past or present experience of selecting or helping to select a textbook for a General English course to non-English major students in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. I attempted to collect Taiwanese EFL teachers' e-mails, including full-time and part-time teachers, from the websites of Departments of Applied Foreign Languages, Language Teaching Centres or Centres for General Education, in all 78 Taiwanese Universities and Institutes of Technology (see Step 5 below for further information). Part-time teachers were invited to participate in this research in order to increase the number of responses. Those who participated in the interviews were also invited to fill in the questionnaire. The reason for this was that I had not asked them to prioritize their criteria when I interviewed them.

Step 2 Obtaining permissions

An invitation letter was included as part of the online questionnaire to obtain participants' permission. The information included in the invitation letter included the purpose of the study, the time required for completing the questionnaire, how I would be using the data or results, the benefits of the study and the provisions I had made to protect the anonymity of participants.

Step 3 Selecting types of data

Brace (2004:4) points out that the role of the questionnaire in large-scale surveys is to provide a standardized interview across all respondents, that is, the same set of questions is asked 'in a predetermined order' (Gary, 2004:187) to different respondents. Therefore, the researcher can handle and interpret large levels of data with a standardized question format. Although inadequate design or data collection could be a challenge for achieving 'sufficient (and well-documented) psychometric reliability and validity' (Dörnyei, 2003:3) to answer the objectives of the research, Gillham (2000:1-2) still stresses that questionnaires 'have their place as one method, of most value when used in tandem with other methods'. The results of multiple methods converge; the findings will be more reliable and valid to the research. Borg (2006: 169) adds further that

> questionnaires elicit beliefs, knowledge and attitudes through instruments, typically consisting of a series of questions or tasks, which require a written response. These written responses are then used as evidence of the respondents' cognitions.

Dörnyei (2003:8) then illustrates that a questionnaire can provide three types of data about the respondents: factual questions, behavioural questions, and attitudinal questions. Factual questions help to find out the background information of the respondents that may be relevant to interpreting the findings of the research. This could include, for example, demographic characteristics, level of education and the number of years teaching. Behavioural questions then help to find out what the respondents are doing or have done in the past, focusing on actions, life-styles, habits, and personal history. Finally, attitudinal questions help to find out what people think, covering attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests and values. Therefore, we can, for example, ask teachers to prioritise the criteria for selecting a textbook. As a result, factual questions and attitudinal questions were used for this structured questionnaire.

Step 4 Developing and piloting the questionnaire

The questionnaire aimed to investigate what criteria are important or unimportant for the Taiwanese teachers when they select a textbook for a General English course. In the quantitative phase of the study, a closed-ended and structured questionnaire was developed based on the three-phase interview data. I will illustrate how I developed and piloted the questionnaires.

■ *Developing the questionnaire*

The questionnaire items adopted all the preliminary set of Taiwanese teachers' criteria established in the qualitative data analysis. The questionnaire was written in Chinese as the interviews were conducted in Chinese. I combined and/or refined some of the criteria in this preliminary set of teachers' criteria with a view to presenting the questions more clearly to the respondents. T3 and T6 commented that a textbook should 'introduce new vocabulary in preparation for reading texts', and T7 commented that a textbook should 'introduce new vocabulary in preparation for conversations'. I

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summarized these statements as a textbook should 'introduce new vocabulary in preparation for other activities, e.g. reading texts or conversations'. Second, a definition for numbers or length is given by one of the teachers' statements to help respondents answer the question. For example, 'a textbook should not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words)'. Third, some examples from the teachers were given to the same criterion to clarify the questions for respondents. For example, 'a textbook should have rich resources and supplementary information (e.g. cultural background, new vocabulary or a variety of optional activities) in the teacher's manual'. Finally, to make the oral statements clearer and more coherent, I added some linking words or rearranged the order of the words where it was necessary.

I was aware that it is a dilemma to design the questionnaire items precisely according to the interview data because some statements from individuals might be vague and subjective; or the examples might not have been given by the teachers; for example the definition of the number of large classes, the length of reading texts, or the number of new items of vocabulary introduced in a reading text; or the fact that the information was given by only one teacher. Indeed, I attempted to find out which criteria are more important, rather than prejudge the teachers' views; therefore I decided to stick with the teachers' perceptions, instead of putting my words into the questionnaire as I wanted to retain the non-judgemental nature of my research.

■ *Pilot Study*

A pilot study was conducted to refine the questionnaire.

Aims

The aims of piloting this questionnaire were to clarify the instructions, to check any ambiguous and unclear questions and to measure the completion time. As Cohen,

Manion and Morrison (2003) suggest, a pilot study could enhance the reliability, validity, and practicability of the research instrument.

Setting

The questionnaire was uploaded on a survey Website (my3q.com) for participants to complete. The revised version of the questionnaire was also placed on the same Website (see Appendix 7).

Procedure

There were six teachers involved in developing the questionnaire prior to the main large scale study. The pilot study for the questionnaire was conducted with three teachers who work in similar Universities to those for whom the questionnaire was designed and three teachers who are professionals in designing questionnaires in the University of Warwick. They went through the online questionnaire I sent to them and gave me valuable feedback.

Changes to the questionnaire

I revised the questionnaire according to the comments from the pilot study as follows. First, the instructions needed to be clearer. I added 'non-English major department' to the title. Second, the questions in the 'Differentiation' section were combined with the 'Students' Needs' section. Also the ideas that 'a textbook should meet students' needs, e.g. to pass the GEPT exam', 'a textbook should match the difficulty level of the target exam, e.g. the GEPT exam', and 'a textbook should match the task types and question patterns of the target exam, e.g. the GEPT exam' were combined into one question as 'a textbook should meet students' need to pass the GEPT exam, e.g. match its difficulty level, task types and question patterns'. Third, the ideas that 'a textbook should give activities for fluency practice' and 'a textbook use sufficiently large font size' were deleted as they could be identified in other questions. Fourth, the ambiguous and

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unclear questions were revised, for example, the idea that 'a textbook should give short dialogue exercises' was revised as 'a textbook should give short dialogue practice activities'. The idea that 'a textbook should provide exercises to match students' learning styles, e.g. provide exercises with close-ended questions, sentence drills or making full sentences' was revised as 'provide controlled exercises to match students' learning style, e.g. provide exercises with close-ended questions, sentence drills, matching or True/False'. The idea that 'a textbook should provide learning opportunities for teachers' was revised as 'provide learning opportunities for teachers, e.g. new knowledge or information' and the idea that 'a textbook should be chosen according to students' feedback' was revised as 'a textbook should have been positively evaluated by students in previous years'. Finally, the participants reported that the questionnaire could be completed in 15-20 minutes.

The final version of the questionnaire was developed and refined back and forth in the process of qualitative analysis, questionnaire development, and questionnaire piloting. As a result, the questionnaire consists of 88 items. First, it asks teachers to prioritize the criteria. The items are grouped into eight categories by following the format in the interview results in order to analyse the results later: Overall Construction (17 items), Students' Needs (13 items), Teachers' Needs (16 items), Authenticity (6 items), Self-instruction (6 items), Cultural Issues (3 items), Visual Design (5 items) and Practical Concerns (13 items). Second, it asks for teachers' background information (7 items). I was aware that some criteria might not be identified from the teachers in the six selected universities. Therefore, two open-ended questions are also provided at the end of the questionnaire to invite teachers to list any other criteria which have not been mentioned with associated reasons for their choosing those criteria. This also provides an opportunity and freedom for teachers to give any further comments on textbook

selection or on this questionnaire. The final point is that the rating scales in this questionnaire contain four points to avoid respondents selecting the non-committal central point, according to my experience of conducting surveys.

Step 5 Administering questionnaires: Phase Four

I decided to send the questionnaire to teachers by e-mail invitation. The drawback of an online questionnaire is that a population list cannot always be fully provided, and contact details are not always updated, correct or provided. It is also difficult to identify which contacts are most qualified to participate in this type of research, as the e-mail addresses do not provide details on whether the contact is responsible for teaching English to non-English major students. The situation varies from university to university because of University self-government as I have explained in section 1.1. It is, however, known that all contacted people are EFL teachers in a Department of Applied Foreign Languages, Language Teaching Centre, or Centre for General Education. Accordingly, I can only claim that all the (138) teachers who filled in the questionnaire were qualified to participate in this research, not that all the (893) teachers I contacted were in fact qualified according to the criterion I had set up (see Step 1).

I managed to collect teachers' e-mails from 73 out of 78 Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. The remaining five universities did not provide any online information on individual teachers, although I did try to contact the departments or the centres. This could be attributed to the fact that some Institutes of Technology were in the process of being upgraded to Universities of Technology at that time so they were updating the information on their websites, for example. The news about the upgrading were widely reported in the media later. In total, 138 out of 893 EFL teachers completed and returned the online questionnaire. Now I shall describe the procedures used to analyse the quantitative data.

5.5.2 Analysis of the quantitative data

The online questionnaire sent to 893 Taiwanese teachers attempted to understand how Taiwanese teachers valued these criteria, that is, the importance of each criterion. To analyse the quantitative data, first, I adopted a descriptive statistics analysis by using SPSS 16.0 to summarise sets of numerical data in order to reach consensus among the teachers. For the information with regard to frequency, percentage, range, mean and standard deviation of each criterion see Appendix 12. After that, I calculated the scores to the questions on each scale. I integrated the scores in the category of 'not at all important' and 'unimportant' as 'unimportant', and 'important' and 'very important' as 'important' in order to simplify the presentation of the data. Data are reported in a bar chart and by means of percentages for presentation. From the bar charts, I compared the items in each category. The process continued until all the categories had been analysed. I will present the data in Chapter 7.

In this chapter, I have illustrated how I conducted a mixed-methods approach to address a set of related questions regarding materials evaluation (which I have discussed in Chapter 3). In the next chapters, I will present the findings of the three-phase interviews in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, and the findings of the survey in Chapter 8.

Chapter 6 Findings (1): The current situation of materials evaluation

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings relating to RQ1: 'What is the role of textbooks in English teaching in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan?' and RQ2: 'What kind of materials evaluation occurs in this context? Who conducts it? When is it conducted? How is it conducted?'

It introduces the current situation for evaluating materials in Taiwan and aims to provide the background information for the interviews and the survey results in the next two chapters. It starts with the uses and roles of the textbooks (section 6.1, data from Phase One, Preliminary interview; Phase Two, Interview 1). After that, the issues regarding who the evaluators are, and how Taiwanese teachers evaluate materials will be investigated and described in terms of pre-use, in-use, and post-use phase (section 6.2, data from Phase One, Preliminary interview; Phase Two, Interview 1; Phase Three, Interview 2). Finally, the need for evaluation training will be discussed (section 6.3, Phase Three, Interview 2).

6.1 Materials: uses and roles

In this context the textbook might determine language teaching to a certain extent. The majority of teachers, except T3, T6, and T8, agreed that their teaching is considerably influenced by the use of a textbook. Evidence included the following:

A textbook determines the design of course and the sequence of my teaching. (T10, Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

We have to follow the same teaching progression which is agreed by other teachers, so all the exercises in the textbook have to be practised, for example. The reading texts presented in the textbook also determine how to teach. If the text is the type of text I am familiar with, I would know how to present it better. (T5, Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

All the textbooks provide teacher manuals, so we are bound to the method that the textbook offers. It also seems to be a convention that we have to buy textbooks from publishers. (T12, Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

We have no choice in selecting a textbook we like. The department decides which textbook we are going to use, so we have to follow the same textbook. (T21, Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

In contrast, T3 and T6 use the textbook more flexibly. Examples are:

For 70% of the lesson I follow the textbook. 30% of the lesson will depend on, first, students' feedback; second, current issues, for example, bird flu, and finally the insufficiency of the textbook. (T6, Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

Basically what I teach is based on the textbook. However, I follow the pace of my own rather than that of the textbook. I select what I want to teach from the textbook. (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

Only T8 claimed the teacher is the master of the lesson. She reported,

I have the authority to choose what to use. I decide how to present my lesson. I use the same teaching method, no matter which textbook I use, for example, the use of TPR. Only when students can't accept what I teach, then I modify my teaching. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

In addition, the roles of textbook are identified by Taiwanese teachers as follows.

■ A textbook is a teaching-learning guideline (T1, T2, T4, T6, T9, T10, T11, T20, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

■ It provides the basic structure of language teaching (T4, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and a guideline for students to prepare for examinations (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Teachers and students would know what has been done and what is going to be taught next (T1, T2, T3, T6, T7, T10, T12, T16, T20, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). This can be used to evaluate students' learning progress (T16, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

■ A textbook is a main (TA, TB, Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 1&2; T5, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T14, T17, T18, T19, T20, T22, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and convenient teaching tool which saves teachers' time and energy (T16, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

■ A textbook is a resource book (T3, T12, T13, T16, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). It should offer teachers the choice of which lesson to teach (T8, T12, T15, T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and help the teacher to develop their own teaching (T12, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

■ A textbook is a treasury of knowledge (T5, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). It needs to be presented and integrated logically and systematically by 'following the theory of language teaching' (T16, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Students can use the textbook for self-instruction to preview and review (T7, T15, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

- A textbook provides a standardised evaluation for students in different classes in the same year (T21, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

- A textbook helps students to concentrate on study in class (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

- A textbook is the medium between the teacher and the students (T5, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

- A textbook functions as a tool of entertainment for students. Students not only learn the knowledge of language itself but also real-life experiences, for example, introducing dating websites, or fashion designs etc. It helps students feel relaxed when learning English. The premise is the textbook should be well-organized, lively, and presented attractively (T5, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

To sum up, a textbook is still a core teaching material and widely used by the teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. After understanding the uses and roles of materials, I will continue to explain how evaluation is conducted in this teaching context.

6.2 How is evaluation conducted?

According to the data from the three-phase interviews, the textbook is selected by the institution (12%), the committee (4%), individual teacher (80%) or others (4%) (see Appendix 5). I structure the findings according to pre-use, in-use and post-use phases, considering who evaluates and how evaluation is conducted in each phase.

6.2.1 Pre-use phase

Different Universities and Institutes conduct the process of evaluation and selection in different ways, which I will illustrate in terms of both individual evaluation and group evaluation. Often individual evaluation is conducted before group evaluation. The detailed criteria which the teachers employ with associated reasons will be presented in Chapter 6.

Individual evaluation

Often publishers provide samples of textbooks to teachers at the end of the academic year. Teachers then select the textbook they are going to use before the new academic year. They start by evaluating textbooks individually. According to the Phase Two interviews, apart from T17, T18, and T19 in Institute 4 where the Head of Department decided on the textbook they were going to use for the new academic year, and T21 who was a part-time teacher and had no choice in the matter of selecting a textbook, the majority of teachers adopted an 'impressionistic' approach to make their overall evaluation. They randomly browsed the content of textbooks (T5, T20, T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T1 described how he examined textbooks as follows.

> First, I skim the table of contents in a textbook so that I know what is included in the textbook. Then I read the introduction of the textbook because it presents the author's underlying principles of language teaching, the approach s/he adopts, and the aims for designing this textbook. I will examine whether the underlying principles of language teaching in the textbook meet mine or not. I also consider how the author(s) designed the textbook and how I am going to plan my lessons based on this design. Finally, I skim the whole textbook. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

T9 then explained that 'I skim the content of a textbook randomly and check the practicability of grammar in the table of contents' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T2 and T10 selected a textbook in a similar way to T9, but with different focus. T2 focused on how reading texts are presented in a textbook (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T10, on the other hand, focused on dialogues and layout (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Furthermore, T8 selected a textbook based on the layout only. As she said, 'I skim the textbook to see whether the layout, the pictures, and the colours of the textbook are attractive and interesting or not' (T8, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). TB further emphasised that 'I skim the textbook to see if pictures presented in the textbook are meaningful and clear or not' (Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 2). T7 explained how she selected a textbook.

> I examine the layout of a textbook. The sequence of the presentation in a textbook has to meet the sequence that I would like to teach. For example, if a textbook is better presenting the pictures first, and then follows the thematic vocabulary and model dialogues. The reading texts also have to include exercises. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

T6, on the other hand, examined textbooks differently. She said,

> First, I skim the table of contents in a textbook to see what kinds of topics are included. Then I scan one unit from the beginning to the end to see the format of the textbook. Finally, I examine the exercises in this unit. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

T3 mentioned that 'I select a textbook which covers with four skills and provides a variety of supplementary materials, such as a CD-ROM and a test question databank'

(Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T11 and T22 adopted a similar way to that of T3 (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Finally, TA, T12, T13, T14, T15, and T16 reported that they made their individual evaluation based on the demonstration by the publishers (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Group evaluation

After evaluating textbooks individually, teachers conduct group evaluation in meetings. I shall explain the process according to the similarities and differences among universities and institutes.

■   Institute of Technology 1, Institute of Technology 2, Institute of Technology 3

After providing samples of textbooks to teachers in advance, publishers come to individual universities/institutes to demonstrate their materials and show teachers how these materials are able to help them teach, as well as support students' self-instruction. After demonstrations, all teachers discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each textbook and then vote in the meeting (T1, Institute 1, Oct. 2008, Interview 1; TB, Institute 3, Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 2).

The differences found are: Institute 1 allowed teachers to suggest some teaching materials from the market to be voted for along with the ones that the publisher suggested. Also an individual teacher was free to select one out of five textbooks which had been voted for in the meeting (T1, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Whereas, T5, T8, T10, and T11 in Institute 2 pointed out that the publisher who agreed to provide Industry-University Cooperative Projects had the priority in terms of being selected. Then teachers chose a series of textbooks from this selected publisher for the different levels of students (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T7 in Institute 2 also expressed the fact that she allowed students to select the volume in the series of textbook they would like to

use (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Finally, TA in Institute 3 added that he followed the *Standard Curriculum for English Language Teaching* to select a textbook (Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 1).

- ■ Institute of Technology 4

T18 and T19 in Institute 4 indicated that the textbook was assigned by the Head of Department (e.g. T17) for that particular year. The Head clarified that she had decided to use a series of textbooks recommended by the publisher which provided Industry-University Cooperative Projects or the Promoting Foreign Language Project (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). However, T18 and T19 still reported their own criteria for selecting a textbook even though they were not given freedom to select a textbook for the academic year when I interviewed them (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

- ■ University of Technology 1

Publishers provided samples of textbooks to teachers in advance. Then a teacher who was responsible for textbook selection reported to all the other teachers in the meeting, then all teachers voted. Therefore, as T20 in University of Technology 1 reported, 'often we are informed of the final poll results without being provided with any information about how this textbook was selected. We have no idea about other teachers' viewpoints' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

- ■ University of Technology 2

According to T12 in University of Technology 2, teachers recommend some textbooks first, and then the entire group of teachers discuss and vote according to the recommendations in the meeting (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

After presenting how teachers evaluate and select a textbook in different Universities and Institutes at the beginning of academic year, I will continue by explaining how teachers conduct in-use evaluation.

6.2.2 In-use phase

According to the Phase Three interview 2 results, although all teachers do not conduct in-use evaluation systematically or formally, for example, as a group in periodic meetings accompanied with observations, they believe that the process of evaluating materials is a continuous process which teachers carry out on a lesson-by-lesson, and class-by-class basis. They focus on what seemed to work from what is provided in the textbook. T2 gave a reason for the need of in-use evaluation,

> it is very possible to make mistakes when selecting a textbook; even though we tried to be as careful and thorough as possible. After a few lessons, I always found that there are some problems using the textbook we selected, for example, the transcript shouldn't be attached to the textbook otherwise students will read it before listening to it. The types of exercises are also limited, so students might feel bored. We are only able to know the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook we selected after using it. So we learn how to select a textbook from our own experiences. (June 2009, Interview 2)

However, T6, T8, and T13 considered that a formal evaluation was not necessary, for example filling in a questionnaire for in-use evaluation. A currently used textbook could not be replaced over a period of time as they explained. Alternatively, the teachers responded to the effectiveness of the textbook immediately while they are teaching and/or when they have just finished teaching a lesson. Teachers' evaluation of the

textbook in use is essentially based on students' reaction in class and this has been widely recognized by the teachers (T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T13, T15, T16, T21, T23, June 2009, Interview 2). As T3 describes,

> Whenever there is a need I evaluate the textbook according to students' reaction in class. The reaction from students shows that the students listen to the teacher attentively or not and this further shows students' interest. The exercises in the textbook I am using now focus on speaking. After using it I realized it was too difficult to use in a large class so I have to select some units or exercises which I think might work for them. (June 2009, Interview 2)

This immediate modification also led to improvements being made in the use of the textbook during and after the lessons. This was a method used by all of the teachers. Understanding how the teachers conduct an in-use evaluation and the considerations they give to this, I shall continue to explore whether they conduct a post-use evaluation and see which aspects they depend on at the end of the course.

6.2.3 Post-use phase

After using the textbook, the teachers still do not conduct a post-use evaluation systematically or formally. The effectiveness of a textbook is assessed individually in different ways. As T1 explained,

> I judge the effectiveness of the textbook according to my own reflection on the lesson, the results of Teaching Assessment Questionnaires from students at the end of the course, and the results of students' examinations or tests. For example, the

topics, the exercises, and the dialogues in the textbook I've just used were not appropriate to my students' age. It should be more challenging rather than standardised for all students. (June 2009, Interview 2)

This comment has been echoed by T4, T13, and T21 (June 2009, Interview 2). T4 also asked students' opinions about the textbook and about his teaching. However, T13 reminded us that 'the form for Teaching Assessment Questionnaires at the end of each semester only includes a few questions regarding textbook evaluation. It cannot cover all the aspects concerned' (June 2009, Interview 2). T16 also looked at the extent to which students had improved, and to what extent the textbook was able to reduce the teaching load.

In addition, a questionnaire which accompanies the Industry-University Cooperative Projects for post-use evaluation has recently been used in some universities, for example, in the Institute of Technology 2 and University of Technology 1. This shows that the checklist approach was adopted for post–use evaluation in some universities. However, the teachers I interviewed in these two universities reported that the questionnaire was not appropriate to what they needed after they had compared it with their own criteria, for instance, it was too general and too superficial (T6, T11, and T20, June 2009, Interview 2). Cultural issues (T7, June 2009, Interview 2) and the use of activities (T10, June 2009, Interview 2) were not mentioned in this questionnaire. As a result, T7, T8 and T11 indicated that there was no or little value in conducting the evaluation in this manner (June 2009, Interview 2).

Even the methods of post-use evaluation varied; the majority of teachers still recognised the value of conducting a post-use evaluation (T1, T2, T3, T6, T9, T12, T16, T20, T21, and T23, June 2009, Interview 2). T16 suggested that a questionnaire which fitted the

individual teaching context for post-use evaluation would help teachers select an appropriate textbook for the next academic year (June 2009, Interview 2). T12 also indicated that a questionnaire could reveal teachers' and students' views after using the textbook (June 2009, Interview 2). T1 further recommended that 'the differences of the questionnaire results should be analysed and discussed with all the teachers, as this might help teachers to look at what they have ignored' (June 2009, Interview 2). T2, T8 and T23 shared the same view as T1 (June 2009, Interview 2).

Finally, T23 suggested that a complete process of evaluation which included pre-use, in-use, and post-use evaluation should be conducted so that we could compare how the selected textbook affects language teaching and learning for the whole academic year (June 2009, Interview 2). It is worth noting here that T9 and T23 also pointed out that they conducted a post-evaluation when they were going to select a textbook for the subsequent academic year (i.e. pre-evaluation). Thus, post-evaluation sometimes overlaps with pre-evaluation (June 2009, Interview 2).

6.3 The need for training

All the teachers, except T3, in the Phase Three interviews reported that they had not taken any training course in textbook evaluation, even though they were now expected to make decisions themselves. Twelve out of nineteen teachers (including T3) agreed that there was a need to take a training course and learn how to select an appropriate textbook for their students. As T21 indicated, evaluation can improve teaching, for example, in understanding what interests students (June 2009, Interview 2). T3 shared her experience in taking a training course on evaluating materials in America. She pointed out that the training course she took was not practical for use in her own

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teaching context. The principles of evaluation are, in general, similar such as considering the price, the skills, and the layout. The detailed criteria, however, are specific to individual contexts. For example, in America they consider the textbook had to meet the district regulations, whereas in Taiwan this is not necessary. However, in Taiwan, a textbook selected must meet the requirements of the GEPT exam in some universities (June 2009, Interview 2).

The teachers also identified what they would need from a training course. T2 and T7 required that the course suggest which aspects teachers should look at when they evaluate textbooks, taking students' needs into consideration (June 2009, Interview 2). T4 and T10 stated that they would like to understand how and why the textbook is organized in the way they are so that they might be able to adjust their teaching (June 2009, Interview 2). T11 and T15 further suggested that this training course could help teachers to develop their own teaching materials and improve their lessons by learning more teaching methods and techniques (June 2009, Interview 2). Finally, T12 suggests that teachers will benefit from the training course if it introduces some instruments to help teachers to evaluate materials effectively (June 2009, Interview 2). T13 added that the evaluation instruments must be suitable to their teaching contexts (June 2009, Interview 2). A checklist method is widely reckoned to be an effective method by the teachers in the interviews (T1, T3, T6, T9, T10, T12, T16, T20, T21, and T23, June 2009, Interview 2).

However, seven out of nineteen teachers considered that it was not necessary to take the training course. As T5 explained, 'teachers are the masters of the course; they should have the confidence that they are able to select an appropriate textbook for their students according to their teaching and learning experiences' (June, 2009, Interview 2). T9, T20

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and T23 also emphasised the importance of experience in evaluating materials (June 2009, Interview 2). T23 noted that 'the demonstration on how to use the textbook from publishers helps teachers make a better choice when selecting a textbook' (June 2009, Interview 2). T6 thought that teachers could self-study without taking the training course (June 2009, Interview 2). Finally, T8 pointed out that 'there is a gap between principles and practice, so there is no need to take this training course. How teachers use the textbook is more important than how good the textbook is' (June 2009, Interview 2).

This chapter presented findings relating to RQ1: 'What is the role of textbooks in English teaching in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan?' and RQ2: 'What kind of materials evaluation occurs in this context? Who conducts it? When is it conducted? How is it conducted?' It attempted to explore the current situation of materials evaluation in Taiwan to provide a general picture for the interview and the survey results in Chapter 7 and 8. Next, I shall present Taiwanese teachers' evaluation criteria with associated reasons in detail.

Chapter 7 Findings (2): Teachers' evaluation criteria with associated reasons

7.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings relating to RQ3: 'What aspects of materials do teachers focus on when they evaluate them?', and RQ4: 'What reasons underpin teachers' evaluation criteria?'

Students in different teaching contexts have their own needs and interests; it is unlikely that all the textbooks in the market are able to meet all students' needs. This indicates a requirement for a list of criteria that would help teachers to select an appropriate textbook effectively for their own students. The reasons for their inclusion are often not made explicit and, indeed, often appear to have been subjectively chosen. This study, therefore, attempted to explore the criteria which teachers employ in practice rather than that which is suggested in the literature, and to examine their reasons for valuing the criteria. It should be noted here that the criteria presented in this chapter respond to the unique nature of Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan, and thus a descriptive list of criteria is provided to respond to the particular needs and issues arising directly from this context.

7.1 Teachers' evaluation criteria with associated reasons

The findings presented in this chapter are data from Phase One (preliminary interview), Phase Two (Interview 1), and Phase Three (Interview 2) interviews (see discussion in

Chapter 4). Also the criteria presented here have been refined during the development of an online questionnaire (as described in section 5.5.1). Eight categories were then derived inductively from the interview data in a process described in more detail in section 5.4.2. The eight emerging categories were: (1) Overall Construction (17 items), (2) Students' Needs (15 items), (3) Teachers' Needs (12 items), (4) Authenticity (6 items), (5) Self-instruction (8 items), (6) Cultural Issues (3 items), (7) Visual Design (5 items), and (8) Practical Concerns (13 items).

Below I present teachers' evaluation criteria under each of these categories, together with associated reasons for valuing these criteria. Individual criteria within each category are structured broadly from the most to the least popular for presentation. I have also indicated who mentioned a particular criterion (see Appendix 12 for a more detailed presentation of the findings). The aim at this stage was not to assess relative importance but to derive a list of criteria *actually* used by (some) Taiwanese teachers for later comparison with published lists of criteria as well as to inform the design of a questionnaire which would assess relative importance. The reasons given for teachers' criteria are also derived inductively by themes and summarized for presentation.

7.1.1 Overall Construction

Table 7.1 presents seventeen criteria which are grouped as 'Overall Construction' and consist of grading, providing the right amount of content to fit with time available, deductive/inductive approach of teaching, recycling and revision, clear instructions for the activities, length, amount, and different genres of reading texts, amount of new vocabulary, model dialogues and dialogue exercises, interactive activities, linguistic exercises with skills practice, instruction related to learning strategies, practice in

teaching one point at a time, and an appropriate amount of teaching materials compared to the complexity of what is being taught. The reasons are summarized in terms of (1) Grading, (2) Texts, (3) Deductive/inductive approach, (4) Load/review, (5) Integration, and (6) Practice activities.

Item#	A textbook should	Numbers of teachers commented	Sub-heading below
1	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar or reading texts).	10	Grading
2	provide the right amount of content to fit with time available.	10	Load/Review
3	provide short reading texts (e.g. no longer than half a page).	8	Texts
4	not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words).	8	Texts
5	introduce new vocabulary in preparation for other activities, e.g. reading texts or conversations.	6	Deductive/ Inductive approach
6	include recycling and revision.	5	Load/Review
7	not provide too many reading texts.	4	Texts
8	integrate vocabulary, grammar and/ or pronunciation exercises with skills practice (e.g. learning vocabulary through dialogues).	4	Integration
9	give practice in only one teaching point at a time.	4	Load/Review
10	present a reading text first and then teach new vocabulary through the reading text.	3	Deductive/ Inductive approach
11	give clear instructions for the activities.	3	Practice Activities

12	give short dialogue practice activities.	3	Practice Activities
13	provide interactive activities for students to be used in class (e.g. pair work, group work).	3	Practice Activities
14	integrate instruction in related learning strategies (e.g. learning vocabulary from context).	3	Integration
15	give model dialogues in which students can substitute some words.	2	Practice Activities
16	offer reading texts of different genres.	1	Texts
17	match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught.	1	Load/Review

Table 7.1 Interview results: Overall Construction

The reasons given for the criteria mentioned by teachers above are under the following themes:

Grading

Giving the presentation of grammar as an example, T3 observed that 'most of my students don't fully understand English grammar and can't use it accurately' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Therefore, T10 suggested that

> new items of language should be introduced by following the right order with the right priorities of students' language learning progression, for example, the acquisition of negative sentences. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

T8 further pointed out that 'sequencing the content of learning on the basis of complexity will allow students to know what they have learnt and to see the progress of

their learning' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1), and this can 'increase students' confidence in learning English' (T4, June 2009, Interview 2).

Texts

The length of reading texts should be short. This is because 'students' levels are too low' (T5, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and 'students are used to the way the information in the Internet is written' (T13, June 2009, Interview 2). Therefore, T8 indicated that students might feel pressured which comes from visual impact when they see long reading texts (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Also, T9 pointed out that 'teaching time is limited, if reading texts are too long, I can't finish teaching the whole content in the allotted teaching time' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). It should be noted that the length of a reading text varies according to different teachers' opinions. The length of a reading text should be, for example, around 1500 words according to T2 (Oct. 2008, Interview 1); about two paragraphs in one page according to T8 (Oct. 2008, Interview 1); and no longer than half a page according to T15 (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Also, the number of reading texts and new words introduced per reading text should not be too many. Both are affected by students' low levels of language proficiency (T5, June 2009, Interview 2). T14 indicated that 'if there are too many reading texts, students get pressured' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Also if there are too many new words introduced in a reading text, students might 'feel frustrated' (T5, T9, and T17, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and 'become impatient' (T1 and T11, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T2 suggested that 'a reasonable amount of vocabulary will help students to have enough vocabulary to make sentences' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and further to 'enhance their four skills' (T17, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T5 also hoped that a reasonable number of new words would be able to stimulate students' motivation to learn (T5, June 2009,

Interview 2). However, the quantity of new words per reading text is perceived by the teachers as variable: no more than 10 new words according to T3 (Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and no more than five new words according to T9 and T17 (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Finally, a textbook should offer reading texts of different genres. As T6 illustrated,

> the various reading texts will broaden students' views of the world; for example, students in the Engineering Department can develop their awareness of humanities through studying the literary style of reading texts. (Interview1, Oct. 2008)

Deductive/inductive approach

Six out of twenty-five teachers asserted that a textbook should introduce new vocabulary in preparation for other activities. As T7 pointed out, 'vocabulary can provide background knowledge for the following teaching activities, such as conversations, or reading' (June 2009, Interview 2). T6 explained further that in this way 'low level students will assimilate the knowledge more easily and feel more comfortable' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T10 emphasised that

> Taiwanese teachers and students like to teach/learn English starting with vocabulary. The young adults would like to know the meaning of words first; otherwise they may give up learning. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

In contrast, three out of twenty-five teachers argued that a textbook should present a reading text first and then teach new vocabulary through the reading text. T20 explained that 'learning vocabulary from the reading text will be more meaningful and can aid

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memorization' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). He added that 'it helps students to connect the concepts in their minds which further helps them to retain the knowledge' (June 2009, Interview 2).

Load/Review

A textbook should provide the right amount of content to fit with the time available. T9 explained that teaching hours are limited, e.g. three hours per week. In addition, students' levels of proficiency (Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and motivation to learn are often low (June 2009, Interview 2) and this should be a consideration. Large class size also affects the progress of language teaching as T8 (June, 2009, Interview 2) added. So it is difficult to cover and finish everything provided in the textbook in a limited time as agreed by ten teachers (T1, T2, T8, T9, T11, T12, T14, T18, T21 and T22, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T11 concluded that teachers and students might gain a sense of achievement if the textbook could be finished by the end of an academic year (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Also students would not then complain that buying a textbook is a waste of their money (June 2009, Interview 2). Furthermore, a textbook should match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught. T1 reported that each unit in a textbook is often allotted the standardized teaching hours and shares the same number of pages. However, the more complex grammar rules, for example, should be allotted more teaching time and more practice time for students, so they should have more space on a printed page (June 2009, Interview 2). Finally, a textbook should give practice in only one teaching point at a time. T1 explained 'if the teaching point is listening, just focus on practising listening strategies or skills; do not explain any grammar rules' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). 'Students can easily be distracted' (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and 'students can't master too many things at the same time' (T21, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). In this way, as T11 suggested, students can listen to

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the keywords to find out the answers more easily, this will motivate them to learn (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

In addition, a textbook should include recycling and revision. T13 suggested that

> if each topic connects with those of the subsequent lessons, students will benefit from periodic reviewing of what they have learnt and build up their knowledge on previous knowledge accordingly. For example, Lesson 2 introduces the names of jobs, Lesson 12 asks students to talk about their future careers. (Oct, 2008, Interview 1)

These exercises will, as T21 indicated, 'reinforce students' memory about new vocabulary items and benefit low level students so they won't feel too frustrated' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T18 further suggested that recycling and revision 'help students to prepare for exams. Students will know what they are going to be tested on' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Integration

A textbook should integrate vocabulary, grammar and/or pronunciation exercises with skills practice. As T10 indicated, 'students like learning from doing. This might be the characteristic of students in Institutes of Technology' (June 2009, Interview 2). Therefore, T2 suggested that grammar exercises could be integrated with speaking skills. Students would then find it easier to learn (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T11 then suggested that grammar could be practised in songs as listening exercises because people like listening to music (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T10 further suggested that grammar items integrated into the reading texts will be more interesting for students (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Finally, T21 suggested that 'vocabulary can be practised in conversations

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provided in CD-ROMs as this might interest students through visual aids' (June 2009, Interview 2). Furthermore, a textbook should integrate instruction in related learning strategies. T20 explained that 'learning everything from the content is more meaningful. Examples of this are such activities as learning vocabulary from context' (T20, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and 'integrating instruction in reading strategies in reading texts' (T10, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Practice Activities

In terms of practice activities, as T16 suggested,

> if teachers give students clear instructions for the activities provided in a textbook, it will help the process of carrying out the activities flow smoothly; therefore teachers can save time for preparation. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

Furthermore, giving model dialogues in which students can substitute some words will help students to understand 'how the dialogues are formed' (TB, Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 2). These also serve as a model of sentence patterns, so students will know 'how to use the sentences' (T7, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Also short dialogue exercises will 'reduce students' feeling of frustration' (T1, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and 'encourage students to participate in doing the exercises' (T14, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Students who are a higher level can memorize and use the short dialogues immediately (T10, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

In conclusion, T1 commented that a textbook should provide interactive activities such as pair work or group work for students to be used in class. This might motivate students to learn (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). He also suggested that 'teachers have to manipulate

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these activities; therefore they will know how to help students to get involved in learning' (June 2009, Interview 2).

7.1.2 Students' needs

Table 7.2 presents fifteen criteria in this category concerning how the textbook should meet students' needs in terms of matching proficiency level, being appropriate for a mixed level class, considering the interests and needs of students from different departments, containing the usefulness of topics for students' future careers, meeting students' needs to pass the GEPT exam, catering for the four skills, providing many exercises to practise the four skills, familiarizing students with vocabulary and grammar rules, providing controlled exercises to match students' learning styles, providing a variety of exercises, providing exercises to help students develop their creativity, providing student workbooks, providing a CD recording of conversations which are not too fast, and finally being age-appropriate. The reasons are summarized in terms of (1) Skills, (2) Student level, (3) Student type, (4) Career, (5) Exercises, (6) Workbook, and (7) Exam.

Item#	A textbook should	Numbers of teachers commented	Sub-heading below
18	cater for the four skills.	19	Skills
19	match the majority of students' real vocabulary/grammar level not just the level they are 'supposed' to have reached previously.	16	Student Level
20	provide many exercises to practise the four skills.	9	Exercises
21	contain useful topics for students' future careers.	7	Career

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22	provide controlled exercises to match students' learning style. (e.g. provide exercises with close-ended questions, sentence drills, matching or True/ False).	7	Exercises
23	provide student workbooks.	7	Workbooks
24	meet students' need to pass the GEPT exam. (e.g. match its difficulty level, task types and question patterns)	6	Exam
25	consider the interests or needs of students from different departments.	4	Student Type
26	provide a variety of exercises rather than just mechanical or routine exercises.	4	Exercises
27	provide many exercises to familiarize students with grammar rules.	3	Exercises
28	provide CD recordings of conversations which are not too fast.	3	Student Level
29	be appropriate for a mixed level class.	2	Student Type
30	provide many exercises to familiarize students with vocabulary	2	Exercises
31	provide exercises to help students develop their creativity.	2	Exercises
32	be age-appropriate.	1	Student Type

Table 7.2 Interview results: students' needs

Skills

A textbook should cater for the four skills. This is because the textbook selected aims for a General English course for students in non-English major departments. The four skills are linked with each other, so students can practise one skill after another (T4, June 2009, Interview 2). For example, writing after reading (T7, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Also the GEPT exam evaluates the performance of students' four skills (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). However, as T21 pointed out, teaching time is limited so it is impossible

to pay attention to all the skills. Also students' levels of ability and motivation are often low, therefore, only one or two skills can be emphasised (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

T1 and T22 believed that the sequence of learning a language should be listening, speaking, reading and writing (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). However, the focus seems to vary and this focus be given different justifications by different teachers. Listening and speaking are considered to have priority by more teachers (T13, T14, T15, T16, and T22, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T16 explained that 'listening and speaking need to be taught and extensively practised in class, so teachers can correct their mistakes whenever needed' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T20 then emphasised reading and listening which choice was influenced by the aim of helping students to pass the GEPT exam. Reading and listening are tested in the first test of the GEPT exam, after passing the first test, speaking and writing are then tested. Students in T20's university are required to at least pass the first test (reading and listening) before they graduate (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Furthermore, T17 emphasised reading and writing. She explained that students have limited vocabulary and limited knowledge of grammar; therefore they have difficulties in reading. Also, according to her experience of studying abroad, there was a student who could communicate well but who had difficulty with writing reports. The student did not get her degree at the end; therefore this affected that particular teacher's focus on writing (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Finally, T5 placed emphasis on reading and speaking. As he explains,

> reading is easier for students; students can guess the meaning of a sentence from key words. However, many Taiwanese students cannot even say a full English sentence after learning English for years (June 2009, Interview 2).

It is worth noting that all teachers agreed that writing is too difficult for their students, also 'teachers have not time to give feedback' (T16, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Student level

A textbook should match the majority of students' real vocabulary/grammar level not just the level they are supposed to have reached previously. The majority of students' English language proficiency levels in Universities and Institutes of Technology are low, as is widely recognized by most of the teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T9, T10, T11, T21, and T22, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). For example, T1 observed that the level of student ability in his university is likely to be the same level as students in junior high school (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T10 confirmed that 'none of our students this year passed the GEPT exam, elementary level, which means their level is lower than the level in junior high school' (June 2009, Interview 2). In particular, T4 mentioned that 'some students still cannot distinguish the differences between is, am and are' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T6 also reported that 'my students' level is that of a beginner and they are not motivated to learn' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T9 added further that

> whenever I ask my students questions, they all tell me they don't know. They have had poor academic performance in English since they were in high schools. They can't pronounce or recognize the words. Neither are they interested in memorizing the words. (June 2009, Interview 2)

T2 indicated that 'this might be caused by students' personal reasons, such as low motivation, low intelligence, or learning environments in family or at school' (June 2009, Interview 2). Therefore, T4 suggested that it is better to choose a basic textbook which is most appropriate to students' real vocabulary and grammar level rather than

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the best one (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Also CD recordings of conversation cannot afford to be too fast. (T2, T11, and T14, Interview1, Oct. 2008). Students will be able to assimilate what the teacher teaches (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and increase their confidence in learning English (T4, June 2009, Interview 2). However, it is worth noting that T7 gives new students an opportunity to choose which level of a series of textbooks they would like to use as students themselves know their levels of English better (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Student type

A textbook should be appropriate for students' age and/or a mixed level class. It also should consider the interests or needs of students from different departments. As T11 reported, 'the content should be age- appropriate to my students' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1) because 'different ages of students have different cognitive development' (June 2009, Interview 2).

In addition, T11 explained that

> I don't agree that students' levels are low. I think the main problem is that different levels of students are put in the same class in my university, so it becomes difficult to choose a textbook to meet individual student's need. (June 2009, Interview 2)

T5, therefore, suggested selecting a basic textbook for students (June 2009, Interview 2).

Finally, as T5 observed, the topics that interest students depend on their majors, for example, students in the Products Design Department seem to be more creative, they

tend to like topics relating to art (June 2009, Interview 2). Therefore, T21 pointed out that it is difficult to select a textbook if a class is made up of students from different departments. The needs of students in the Business Department will be different from those of students in the Engineering Department, for example. Balancing the majority of students' needs will as a consequence be a challenging task (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Career

According to T3, a textbook should contain useful topics for students' future careers as 'this will motivate students to learn the language, and ensure that students can use the language' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T13 gave an example that students are required to write resumes in English when they apply for some jobs (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Exercises

A textbook should provide many exercises to practise the four skills, to familiarize students with vocabulary and/or grammar rules. T1 explained that students need to have opportunities to use the language in order to acquire the language (Oct. 2008, Interview 1), that is, 'learning by doing' (T9, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T1 also indicated that

> practice in each skill area enhances mastery of the others. For example, students who practise regularly might find generalizing the grammar rules easier, and this further helps students improve fluency (June 2009, Interview 2).

Many exercises would seem, then, to allow students to have opportunities to practise what they have learnt and further help them build up confidence to speak (T7, June 2009, Interview 2). Students might feel more interested in learning (T7 and T9, June 2009, Interview 2) and 'be aware of which aspects they do not really understand' (T9,

Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T2 and T7 concluded that 'practice makes perfect' (June 2009, Interview 2). The lesson will then not be teacher-centred as students do not enjoy just listening to the teacher (T20, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

The exercises to familiarize students with vocabulary can be 'various but fixed model exercises' which means each lesson includes the same types of exercises (T6, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Also T5 pointed out that 'it is better to practise a grammar rule after explaining the rule. Students might find the grammar rule is easier to learn if they can use what they have just learnt' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). A number of exercises further reinforce students' understanding of the rules (T5, June 2009, Interview 2).

As for the types of exercises, teachers seem to have different views. Seven teachers asserted that a textbook should provide controlled exercises to match students' learning style. T8, T12, T18 and T20 agreed that open-ended questions or discussions are not suitable for Taiwanese students (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Taiwanese students seem to be reluctant to talk about their own ideas, views or opinions (T8 and T20, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). As T8 observed, 'most of my students have poor communication skills, so they don't really know how to express themselves. They are quiet in class' (June 2009, Interview 2) and they 'might be too shy to speak English' (T20, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). This might be attributable to Taiwanese students' learning style, pressure from their peers and teachers' authority as identified by T8 (June 2009, Interview 2). First, T20 indicated that Taiwanese students seem prefer a teacher-centred and a top-down approach to learning. They are passive learners and they are used to learning with a view to taking written exams (June 2009, Interview 2). Second, students might worry that their opinions might be different from others; therefore, if the teacher does not ask them questions, they will not actively answer the questions (T8, June 2009, Interview 2).

Finally, the majority of students in this context have had low academic achievement previously; therefore a teacher's perceived authority might discourage them from expressing themselves. Students feel secure when they have standard answers from teachers (T8, June 2009, Interview 2). As a result, exercises such as multiple choice, True/False questions, and matching (T18, Oct. 2008, Interview 1), sentence drills exercises (T7, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and controlled dialogues or reading aloud of texts (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) are suggested as being more appropriate to students in this context. However, T19 made the point that there are no 'multiple-choice' or 'fill in the blanks' types of questions in real life conversations; we need to communicate with people in full sentences (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

On the other hand, four teachers suggested that a variety of exercises, such as conversations, writing, or interactive exercises (T7, Oct. 2008, Interview 1), might 'motivate students as they can practise what they have learnt' (T12, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and this 'helps students deepen their impression' (T7, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Therefore, a textbook should provide a variety of exercises rather than just mechanical or routine exercises.

Finally, a textbook should provide exercises to help students develop their creativity. As T5 said,

> imagination helps students develop their logical thinking and know how to organize their ideas. For example, doing an exercise of making a list for travelling, students can develop new words built upon the vocabulary they have already known. This might motivate students to learn more unknown words. (June 2009, Interview 2)

Imagination also helps 'students draw inferences about other cases from one instance' (T12, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Workbook

T3 pointed out that 'time for class is limited and the size of class is too large, therefore workbooks offer extra exercises for students to practise' (June 2009, Interview 2). Extra exercises help students 'develop their language ability as practice makes perfect' (T6, June 2009, Interview 2) as well as 'evaluate their learning progress' (T1, June 2009, Interview 2). The content of the workbook can also be used as a test question databank (T11, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and can save teachers' preparation time (T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Exam

According to the policy of the Ministry of Education, students are encouraged to pass the GEPT exam, elementary level, before they graduate from university. The pass rate will be annually evaluated by the Ministry of Education (T3, T10, T17, T21 and T22, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). This determines the institutional policy (T3, T10, and T21, June 2009, Interview 2). Therefore, the level of difficulty of the textbook has to match the requirements in the GEPT exam, elementary level, which students are going to take (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview1). The task types and question patterns of the textbook also have to match those of the GEPT exam to help students prepare for the exam (T10, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

7.1.3 Teachers' needs

Table 7.3 presents twelve items identified as required to meet teachers' needs, support their development and reduce the pressures of teaching. These include the belief that a

textbook should provide learning opportunities for teachers, contain topics which can stimulate teachers to share their knowledge or experiences, provide various topics to select from which meet students' interests, be suitable for setting writing tests, provide an approach which suits a teacher's teaching philosophy, have rich resource and supplementary information, provide a teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers, have an easy-to navigate teacher's manual, contain answer keys, a test question databank, exam papers, transcripts of audio-recordings. The reasons are summarized in terms of (1) Learning opportunities, (2) Teacher's manual, (3) Approach, (4) Topics, and (5) Test.

Item#	A textbook should	Numbers of teachers commented	Sub-heading below
33	have rich resources and supplementary information (e.g. cultural background, new vocabulary or a variety of optional activities) in the teacher's manual.	12	Teacher's Manual
34	contain a test question databank.	6	Test
35	contain topics which can stimulate teachers to share their knowledge or experiences with the students.	4	Topics
36	provide an approach which suits my teaching philosophy (e.g. cooperative learning approach, CLT etc.).	4	Approach
37	contain answer keys.	4	Teacher's Manual
38	provide a teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers.	2	Teacher's Manual
39	have an easy-to-navigate teacher's manual. (e.g. with the content displayed on one side, and the instructions on the other side).	2	Teacher's Manual

40	provide teachers with exam papers.	2	Test
41	contain transcripts of audio-recordings.	2	Teacher's Manual
42	provide learning opportunities for teachers (e.g: new knowledge or information).	1	Learning Opportunities
43	provide various topics from which teachers can select to meet students' interests.	1	Topics
44	be suitable for setting written tests.	1	Test

Table 7.3 Interview results: Teachers needs

Learning opportunities

According to T12,

> I hope the textbook will increase my knowledge or information and how to use activities, because I'm also an advanced learner when I prepare for the lessons. If I learn something interesting or useful from the textbook, I'm very enthusiastic to teach and to share this with my students. So I choose the textbook which I can learn something from. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

Teacher's manual

A teacher's manual serves as 'a reference book' for teachers (T10, June 2009, Interview 2). It first helps teachers to be familiar with what is provided in the textbook; therefore, teachers will understand 'how to use the textbook effectively' (T14, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and 'how to use the activities and exercises' (T11, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Therefore, it is convenient if the layout of the teacher's manual is designed with the content displayed on one side, and the instructions on the other side (T15, June 2009, Interview 2, and T23, Oct. 2008, Interview1). A teacher's manual should also stimulate

teaching ideas or offer suggestions to teachers (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). These especially benefit less-experienced teachers in terms of gaining confidence (T10, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Teachers can 'accumulate knowledge and experience from using different teacher's manuals and further might create new teaching methods or activities' (T11, June 2009, Interview 2). Particularly in the case where most of the activities provided in a textbook are designed for small class, teachers 'have to modify the activities to fit large class needs' as T10 reported (June 2009, Interview 2). Resources or information included in a teacher's manual are cultural background (T9, Oct. 2008, Interview 1), new vocabulary (T3, T9, and T14, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and a variety of optional activities (T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). A variety of activities will motivate students to learn (TA, Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 1) and save teachers' preparation time (T11, June 2009, Interview 2). As T13 explained, 'students lack confidence in communicating, they need various activities to practise their speaking and listening. They will reckon language is a useful tool' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

In addition, answer keys and/or transcripts of audio-recordings are better contained in a teacher's manual. Access to answer keys can 'make sure that teachers give the standardized answers' (T11, Oct. 2008, Interview 2), and that 'the marking criteria are likely to be objective' (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T13 further suggested a textbook should contain transcripts of audio-recordings in the teacher's manual as this 'helps students to learn' (T13, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). However, T3 suggested that the transcripts of audio-recordings can be attached in student books and used for reading practice (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Finally, often the teacher's manuals written by native speakers focus on a student-centred approach to learning which might not be suitable for our students as

identified by T20 (June 2009, Interview 2). Therefore, T21 suggested, 'the information provided in the teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers will fit better to our teaching context' (June 2009, Interview 2).

Approach

A textbook should provide an approach which suits individual teachers' teaching philosophy. For example, T1 adapts the communicative language teaching approach (Oct. 2008, Interview1). He prefers students to practise what he has taught immediately and independently after teaching it (T1, June 2009, Interview 2). T13 also prefers a more cooperative learning approach. She suggested that

> students might know what to respond in English but be too shy to express themselves in public. Working in a small group and getting support from other students will help them to learn effectively. (June 2009, Interview 2)

Topics

As T3 observed 'students' motivation to learn is low, the more topics that a textbook provides, the more choices that teachers can select from to meet students' interests' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). The topics contained are better if they are able to stimulate teachers to share their knowledge or experiences with the students. As T4 explained, 'if the topics are what I am familiar with, for example, famous writers, I will explain more about the writers' works or life' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T5 added that he expanded the content by introducing related knowledge in humanistic concerns, history, geography, and architecture. He stated that 'this extra information I share will enrich students'

knowledge and enhance their attention' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Furthermore, T6 expressed the view that

> I like the topics to relate to my life and travel experience. These experiences will inspire me to supplement any inefficiency within the textbook, for example, some new vocabulary for local use might be not included in the textbook. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

She suggested that the textbook is merely a guideline and a direction; teachers need to know how to develop the topics (T6, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Test

T15 reported that most mid-term and final exams are paper-and-pencil exams. Too many pictures, speaking and listening in the content of textbook will make it difficult for teachers to write exam papers, so it is better if the textbook is suitable for setting written tests (Oct, 2008, Interview 1).

Also a textbook should provide teachers with exam papers and contain a test question databank. Both are very handy and can save teachers some time for preparation (T11, T12, T16, T20, T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). For example, a textbook should include diagnostic tests as well as progress tests (T11, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). However, it is very likely that teachers need to modify or edit the ready-to-use tests according to their students' level of proficiency and learning progress (T11, June 2009, Interview 2). The test question databank also can be used for midterm and final exams (T20, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

7.1.4 Authenticity

Table 7.4 presents six criteria in relation to the notion of 'authenticity' in terms of recordings, vocabulary use, topics, reading texts, simulating real-life situations and the use of photography. The reasons are summarized in terms of (1) Topics, (2) Vocabulary, (3) Genre, (4) Practice, and (5) Materials.

Item#	A textbook should	Numbers of teachers commented	Sub-heading below
45	introduce real-life topics (e.g. opening a bank account, buying a ticket).	17	Topics
46	contain vocabulary which is related to 'real-life' use.	7	Vocabulary
47	contain reading texts which are related to 'real-life' (e.g. true stories, non-literary texts).	7	Genre
48	use photographs.	3	Materials
49	contain practice which simulates real-life situations (e.g. make a list for travelling).	2	Practice
50	contain authentic recordings (including situational sounds) on the CDs.	1	Materials

Table 7.4 Interview results: authenticity

Topics

T1 pointed out that 'a language is used for communication' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Students will be motivated to learn if what they learn can be used immediately in daily life (T1, T3, T4, T6, T14, T16, T17, and T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). The topics which can be associated with students' own personal life or experiences also reinforce their memory (T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Real-life topics suggested by the teachers are

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those such as buying a ticket, opening a bank account (T2, Oct. 2008, Interview 1);
music, movie stars, and fashions (T4, Oct. 2008, Interview 1); dating, love stories and
shopping (T5, June 2009, Interview 2); sports, and pets (T 21, June 2009, Interview 2),
and popular tourist attractions (T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Vocabulary

As T9 indicated, students are more interested in learning vocabulary for practical usage,
for example, making a mobile phone call (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T1 also suggested
that it will 'help students to memorise the vocabulary if the vocabulary presented in the
textbook is the vocabulary frequently used in real life' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Genre

T6 pointed out that 'the textbook we selected is to use for a General English course. So
it's better if it contains reading texts which are related to real-life' (Oct. 2008, Interview
1). T2 further explained that 'I prefer reading texts related to real life rather than limited
to literary style, because my students have limited vocabulary and limited patience'
(June 2009, Interview 2). T19 mentioned that the reading texts are better if they are true
stories as this will motivate students to learn (Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and 'deepen their
impression' (T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Practice

A textbook should contain practice which simulates real-life situations. T5 stressed that
'this will motivate students, for example, making a list for travelling' (Oct. 2008,
Interview 1).

Materials

Photographs should be used. T20 points out that 'students are visual learners' (Oct.
2008, Interview 1). Photographs help students to better understand the reading passages

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and motivate them to learn (T20, June 2009, Interview 2). Also, authentic recordings (including situational sounds) on the CDs should be present in the textbook. This will 'provide background knowledge and enhance student understanding of the conversations. If students can memorize these dialogues, they can survive in English speaking countries' (T10, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). However, T10 warns,

> often textbooks aim for the global markets. Yet, to the low level students in my teaching context, it is better not to provide a wide variety of English accents. Students will have difficulties understanding authentic language although they like listening to the conversations spoken by native speakers. (June 2009, Interview 2)

7.1.5 Self-instruction

Table 7.5 shows that students should be able to use the material for self-instruction, so supplementary materials such as CD, CD-ROM and online materials, pictures which are rich in potential for use by the teacher, reference sections such as glossary, grammar, and advice on learning strategies should be accessible. Six items are classified in this category. The reasons are summarized in terms of (1) Supplements, and (2) Strategies.

Item#	A textbook should	Numbers of teachers commented	Sub-heading below
51	contain a CD-ROM for students to use for homework/self-instruction.	13	Supplements
52	contain a CD for students to use for self-instruction.	7	Supplements
53	contains pictures which are rich in potential for use by the teacher.	7	Supplements

54	have an accompanying CD- ROM for students to use in class.	7	Supplements
55	be accompanied by online learning materials for self-instruction.	5	Supplements
56	contain a glossary for self-instruction.	3	Supplements
57	contain advice on learning strategies for self-instruction (e.g. learning strategies for vocabulary or reading).	2	Strategies
58	contain a grammar reference section for self-instruction.	1	Supplements

Table 7.5 Interview results: Self-instruction

Supplements

A textbook should have an accompanying CD-ROM, CD and/or online learning materials for self-instruction. The reasons for using a CD-ROM by teachers are identified as follows. First, students are visual and audio learners. The exercises in the CD-ROM are more interesting and interactive; students are therefore likely to be motivated (T2, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Second, teachers might not be able to cover individual student's needs and every aspect in the textbook (T2 and T3, June 2009, Interview 2). A CD-ROM is good for supplementing the content and providing a variety of exercises for students. The more resources provided in the CD-ROM, the more choices that teachers/students can make (T23, Oct. 2008, Interview1). Using a CD-ROM also allows students to control their learning progress and learning load. Students can choose whatever they want to learn from the CD-ROM and can practise the exercises repeatedly (T7, June 2009, Interview 2). For example, the conversations provided in a CD-ROM can be divided into individual sentences and words, so students can follow the instructions and practise the sentences and words repeatedly (T1, June 2009, Interview 2). Third, time for practising a language in classroom is limited (T2,

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June 2009, Interview 2). As T12 indicated 'English teaching hours in the university are fewer than in senior high school, e.g. only two hours per week' (T12, June 2009, Interview 2). It is better that students can review and preview the lessons by themselves (T2, June 2009, Interview 2). Also asking students to do some homework can increase their involvement in learning English (T12, June 2009, Interview 2). Therefore, T13 suggested that 'doing exercises in a CD-ROM can be seen as a different way of doing homework, for example, games as exercises' (T13, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Fourth, using a CD-ROM will benefit students who do not feel comfortable interacting with other students in class (T23, June 2009, Interview 2). Finally, using a CD-ROM is convenient and saves teachers' preparation time. Teachers can play it immediately and repeatedly without spending time writing on the blackboard. Teachers can just follow the schedule of the textbook provided in the CD-ROM (T1, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). However, T1 and T4 warned that 'a CD-ROM cannot replace the teacher's role in class' (June 2009, Interview 2).

The use of a CD, as T1 explained, can 'provide appropriate pronunciation input if teachers are non-native speakers. Students can imitate dialogues on the CDs and practise repeatedly' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Furthermore, online learning materials offer some benefits for students. First, online learning materials increase students' motivation to learn (T18, Oct. 2008, Interview 1), because they provide students with the opportunities to learn whenever they want (T16, June 2009, Interview 2). As T1 explained, time for practising a language in classroom is limited, e.g. three hours per week and student numbers in one class is high so there is therefore not enough time per class for each student to practise (June 2009, Interview 2). Second, online learning materials present the contents of a textbook in different forms, so students can practise in different ways (T13, June 2009, Interview 2). They also can 'include the GEPT exam

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practice. The progress of learning can be recorded' (T16, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Finally, online learning materials benefit students who cannot spontaneously communicate in English (T16, June 2009, Interview 2). Moreover, a textbook should contain a glossary, a grammar reference section and pictures which are rich in potential for use by the teacher. The glossary can help students to 'practise dialogues or reading' (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview1) as well as 'preview or review' (T13, Oct. 2008, Interview1). A grammar reference section also can help students to preview or review the lesson (T13, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). TB further elaborated the use of pictures. He said that

> I use pictures as a resource for teaching vocabulary, grammar, and the four skills. Pictures provide background knowledge for topics; this helps students to understand the content more easily. So pictures in the textbook need to be able to convey all the information that I need to convey to students. (Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 2)

He then added that

> students with different levels of ability will benefit from using pictures. For example, I only speak English in class and I realize that low level ability students become frustrated because they can't understand spoken English. Using visual pictures and realia whilst explaining the meanings in English helps students understand. On the other hand, the high level students may be good at reading but not speaking English. Visual resources, such as pictures, encourage them to ask and answer questions by using the words they have already acquired, so they will feel a sense of achievement. (Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 2)

Finally, he explained his view of using pictures for grammar teaching.

> I dislike teaching grammar in a single sentence and prefer using a picture to present all the rules of a tense needed. I will ask students to describe the picture by using the concepts of grammar as presented in each lesson. Then they might be able to use correct grammar in real life. (Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 2)

Other teachers also have their own views regarding the use of pictures. For example, T11 reported that pictures can 'help students to find out the answers for a listening practice' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). TB indicated that 'using pictures helps students reinforce their memory' (T13, Interview 2, 2009). T23 finally observed that

> pictures related to the topics will attract students' attention. This generation of students has grown up with television and computers. They cannot concentrate when they see too many words on a page. (June 2009, Interview 2)

Strategies

A textbook should contain advice on learning strategies for self-instruction. T10 suggested that a textbook should include learning strategies for reading (Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and T18 suggested learning strategies for vocabulary (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

7.1.6 Cultural issues

Table 7.6 shows that Taiwanese teachers believe it is important to incorporate the teaching of culture into the foreign language classroom as this can contribute to learning. Examples of this are, presenting cultural issues in the content of texts or conversations and introducing foreign cultures and comparing them to the Taiwanese culture. The reasons are summarized in terms of cultural issues.

Item#	A textbook should	Numbers of teachers commented	Sub-heading below
59	introduce foreign cultures.	10	Cultural Issues
60	introduce Taiwanese culture.	9	Cultural Issues
61	present cultural issues on the basis of content of texts or conversations.	3	Cultural Issues

Table 7.6 Interview results: Cultural issues

Cultural issues

A textbook should present cultural issues on the basis of the content of texts or conversations. T11 identified that

> it is not possible to learn a language without learning culture. Culture can be introduced through reading texts or conversations. I think when students are in advanced level, they should learn how to introduce their own culture in English. (June 2009, Interview 2)

Foreign and/or Taiwanese cultures should be introduced. As T12 pointed out, 'introducing different cultures will help students to learn languages' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1) as 'this allows students to understand and accept different cultures' (T2, June 2009, Interview 2). For example, students need to be aware of politeness in different cultures (T14, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). This further helps students to broaden their views of the world (T23, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). As T23 observed, 'nowadays we have more opportunities to make contact with people from different countries' (June 2009, Interview 2). In particular, T10 stressed that 'I like the textbooks which introduce American culture, because we have closer relationship with the US. If students travel to America one day, they can use the language' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). The comparison between different cultures also interests students (T21, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). On the other hand, T6 observed that

> most of the textbooks are imported from English speaking countries. They mainly introduce the foreign cultures which are new and interesting, but often they neglect the local culture in Taiwan. If the textbook can present appropriate Taiwanese culture, students might be able to pick up the language easier because they will be familiar with it. (Oct. 2008, Interview1)

Therefore, students might be able to 'explain what happens in their daily life in English' (T20, June 2009, Interview 2) and further 'introduce Taiwanese culture in English to foreign visitors' (T6, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T8 provided an example of an activity. Students come from different places in Taiwan; they can work in groups to introduce their own local culture to other students in class (June 2009, Interview 2). T10 also

suggested that the Taiwanese culture can be presented in reading texts or pictures in the textbook (June 2009, Interview 2).

7.1.7 Visual design

Table 7.7 shows that in respect of the visual design of a textbook, the Taiwanese teachers interviewed consider whether the textbook has a clear page layout, is laid out attractively, uses a sufficiently large font size, provides plenty of space for note-taking, and whether it uses colourful pictures or not. Five items are identified. The reasons are summarized in terms of (1) Clarity, (2) Attractiveness, and (3) Note-taking.

Item#	A textbook should	Numbers of teachers commented	Sub-heading below
62	have clear page layout.	14	Clarity
63	use colourful pictures.	8	Attractiveness
64	use sufficiently large font size.	7	Clarity
65	be laid out attractively.	5	Attractiveness
66	provide plenty of space for note-taking.	1	Note-taking

Table 7.7 Interview results: Visual design

Clarity

As T16 pointed out, clear page layout has visual impact (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). It helps students know what to learn clearly (T4, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Also students 'can't keep concentrating on learning English for three hours at a time. The less dense the layout is the less visual pressure on the students ' (T3, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T10, therefore, illustrated that

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> the presentation of vocabulary and pictures are better balanced for low level students. Students prefer more pictures than words in a page. Students feel frustrated and might give up learning if they see too many words. They are visual learners. (June 2009, Interview 2)

T11 added that 'pictures can't be too crowded, so the layout will look clear and comfortable' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). This will 'attract students to continue reading and motivate them to learn' (June 2009, Interview 2). Also, a larger font size is 'clearer for students to read' (T9, June 2009, Interview 2), therefore 'it is easier to get students' attention' (T10, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and 'keep them motivated' (T11, June 2009, Interview 2).

Attractiveness

T21 explained that an attractively designed textbook will motivate students. Also that it would mean that teachers could have more time to focus on their teaching content (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). It is interesting to notice that T7 often chooses an imported textbook because they seem to have more attractive print than some of the locally produced textbooks (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Furthermore, this teacher thought that colourful pictures as visual stimulus interest students more (T2 and T17, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and can attract students' attention (T4, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T5 gave the view that

> my students' English level of proficiency is low and they are not interested in learning English. But I heard my students discuss some interesting pictures in the textbook, so I think colourful pictures will motivate them. (June 2009, Interview 2)

T8 also stressed that 'I might have to make the decision shortly in the textbook selection meeting, so the visual impression, such as colourful pictures will have a strong impact on my choice' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Note-taking

A textbook should provide plenty of space for note-taking. 'Students will not then be afraid of seeing too many English words in a page' (T13, Oct. 2008, Interview 1) claimed one teacher.

7.1.8 Practical concerns

Table 7.8 presents thirteen items in relation to practical concerns. These items are linked by the flexibility of the textbook, the notion of availability, the use of mother tongue, the recommendations by colleagues or a publisher, the demonstration by a publisher, the teacher training courses provided by a publisher, the connection with the Projects and the GEPT exam, the feedback from students, the latest versions of the textbook and cost. The reasons are summarized in terms of (1) Price, (2) Series, (3) Chinese instructions, (4) Project-connection, (5) Recency, (6) Recommendation, (7) Supplementary services, and (8) Large classes.

Item#	A textbook should	Numbers of teachers commented	Sub-heading below
67	be of a reasonable price.	9	Price
68	be part of a complete series of textbooks for different levels in the same year or for different years.	7	Series
69	provide Chinese instructions and	6	Chinese

	explanations.		Instructions
70	be accompanied by opportunities for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher.	6	Project-connection
71	match the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project.	5	Project-connection
72	be newly published, covering recent issues.	4	Recency
73	have been recommended by colleagues.	3	Recommend
74	have been demonstrated by a publisher.	3	Recommend
75	be accompanied by teacher training courses provided by a publisher.	3	Supplementary Services
76	be easy to use in large classes	2	Large Classes
77	have been recommended by a publisher.	2	Recommend-Other
78	provide mock papers for the GEPT exam and a marking service for the mock papers for the GEPT exam from a publisher.	2	Supplementary Services
79	have been positively evaluated by students in previous years.	2	Recommend-Other

Table 7.8 Interview results: Practical concerns

Price

T5 pointed out, many of our students might have financial considerations such as student loans; particularly the tuition fees in private universities are more expensive, so teachers must take the price into consideration (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Series

Five schools out of six where I conducted my interviews carry out English placement tests with students. T13 explained that students are placed into three levels according to the results of their placement test, so it is important that a textbook is part of a complete series of textbooks for different levels in the same year (Oct. 2008, Interview 1) and

'can be more challenging and interesting for students when they are upgraded to the next level' (T12, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Furthermore, according to T23, a series of textbooks are graded into different levels so that they can be used flexibly for the different levels of student ability in different years (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). However, T3 made the point that while Book 1 in a series of textbooks available might seem to be easy, Book 2 in the same series might seem to become too difficult. This is possibly due to the fact that most of the textbooks imported from English speaking countries are aimed at university students who have received more English language input in senior high schools and are therefore not appropriate for Universities and Institutes of Technology students (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Chinese instructions

T4 observed that low level students will be reluctant to learn English if a textbook is completely written in English (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T23 suggested that appropriate Chinese instructions or explanations help students to learn more easily which might further helps students' self-instruction (June 2009, Interview 2).

Project-connection

T10 explained that 'the Ministry of Education demands that the Institutes be involved in the Industry-University Cooperative Projects' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1), therefore 'teachers are required by the Institutes to offer the Industry-University Cooperative Projects in order to get research credits for their annual evaluation' (T7, June 2009, Interview 2) as 'this will have an impact on their careers' (T8 and T11, June 2009, Interview 2). However, T7 pointed out that it is not easy for English language teachers in Taiwan to implement the projects. Therefore, if the publisher provides the

Industry-University Cooperative Projects, teachers will select a textbook from those being promoted in this way (June 2009, Interview 2).

T12 also indicated that the textbook selection corresponds closely with the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). The projects not only help students to improve their level of English ability but help schools to get financial support from the Ministry of Education (June 2009, Interview 2).

Recency

T5 explained that 'new materials influence my teaching methods and further enrich my teaching experience. I also gain knowledge from new teaching materials, for example, natural science' (June 2009, Interview 2). Therefore, a textbook should be newly published, covering recent issues. T13 also observed that 'the examples illustrated in the textbook should be up-dated' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T 3 and T5 both agreed that they like using a newly published textbook. They feel bored if they use the same textbook repeatedly (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Recommendation

According to T2, A textbook should have been recommended by colleagues as this helps teachers 'to know the advantages and disadvantages of the textbook from other teachers' experience, so the risk of making mistakes will be reduced' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1), particularly 'for the novice teachers' (T20, June 2009, Interview 2). Second, T3 pointed out that

> publishers often promote certain textbooks, so the choices might be limited. Knowing what textbooks that other teachers use will benefit me from their experience and save time in finding an appropriate textbook. I always search online

information for the textbook used by other universities or other teachers. I will pick out the five most popular textbooks among them, and then I will go through these five textbooks in detail. (June 2009, Interview 2)

Recommendation by publishers or feedback from students could also be factors. T9 stated that 'I chose this newly published textbook recommended by the publisher. The publisher told me that there are many teachers using the same book' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T17 also confirmed that 'I chose *Active Skills* because the publisher recommended this textbook, and because it suits my teaching philosophy' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T1 then explained that 'I choose a textbook according to the feedback from students in previous years. They have used the textbook, so they know which exercise or activity they like or dislike, for example' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T7 further expressed the view that

I choose a series of textbooks first. I don't know the new arrived students' level yet, so I allow them to select which level of the textbook they prefer according to their level. I will introduce the content of textbooks first, and then allow students to browse the textbooks, and finally I ask them to vote. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

T3 considered that 'if more students use the same textbook, the publisher will develop and offer more supplementary materials. The price of a textbook also can be reduced' (June 2009, Interview 2). Publishers' demonstrations will also be an important index as teachers will know how to use this textbook (T12, T13, and T15, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

Supplementary Services

T17 commented that it is be a further bonus if the textbook is accompanied by teacher training courses provided by a publisher on how to use the textbook for teachers (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T16 explained that

> the training courses benefit me by giving many teaching ideas or resources, for example, how to teach writing or how to use activities. My major is English literature, so I need to learn the techniques or strategies of language teaching. (June 2009, Interview 2)

T16 also suggested that 'teachers can give feedback to the writers in order to fit the needs of the local context' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T21 concluded that

> taking training courses benefits teachers' lifelong learning. Different generations of students have different needs. Teaching methodology needs to be updated, so teachers can catch up with students' current ideas and interests. (June 2009, Interview 2)

In addition, T11 took into consideration that the Ministry of Education encourages students to pass the GEPT exam, so teachers have to help students prepare for the exam. However, teachers have a heavy workload, and it is not easy to produce the mock papers. A publisher is better able to provide mock papers for the GEPT exam and a marking service for the mock papers for the GEPT exam (June 2009, Interview 2).

Large Classes

T2 pointed out that the selection of a suitable textbook will depend on the number of students in a class. The average number of students in one class ranges from 40 to 60 in her university (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). As T10 observed, textbooks and the teachers' manuals accompanying them often emphasise interactive teaching which is suitable for no more than 15 students in one class. She added that 'often the activities designed in the textbook don't work very well for large classes; I have to design the activities I'm going to use' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

This chapter presents findings relating to RQ3: 'What aspects of materials do teachers focus on when they evaluate them?', and RQ4: 'What reasons underpin teachers' evaluation criteria?' I will now move on to discuss the results of the survey in order to understand how widely what was discovered in the interviews exists in wider populations.

Chapter 8 Findings (3): Questionnaire Results

8.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings relating to RQ5: 'What degree of importance do teachers attach to different evaluation criteria?'. Questionnaire responses were gathered to assess the validity of the interview results and to determine how teachers prioritized overall among the criteria, increasing understanding of which criteria are more important than others from a larger sample of the whole population. Indeed, certain criteria are likely to be more important than others in different situations. However, the criteria for selecting a textbook are often treated equally in existing published checklists. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of a list of Taiwanese teachers' criteria for selecting a textbook derived from the three-phase interviews (as presented in Chapter 7). The second section elicited background information relating to the respondents (see Appendix 7 for the complete questionnaire). A point to be stressed here is that different universities or teachers might have different considerations as evaluation is 'learner- and context-related' (McGrath, 2002:18). The set of criteria presented in Chapter 7 was derived from only twenty-five Taiwanese EFL teachers in six selected universities and is therefore unlikely to be a fully comprehensive list for this context. Also the list of statements seemed to invite positive responses from teachers; however, I discovered that teachers' views in relation to some criteria were contradicted. For example, some teachers prefer a more deductive approach (Item 5); others prefer an inductive approach (Item 10). Also some teachers prefer 'controlled exercises to match students' learning style' (Item 22); others prefer 'a variety of exercises rather than just mechanical or routine exercises' (item 26). Finally, some teachers agreed that a teacher's manual is

useful (Item 33, 37, 38, 39, and 41); others never or seldom use it (TA, Oct. 2008, Preliminary interview 1; T1, Oct. 2008, Interview 1). Therefore, by administering a questionnaire to a larger sample of teachers in a wider range of universities and by asking respondents to rate the criteria given in terms of importance to them, I *was* able to gain insights into the general validity or otherwise of the criteria included in the questionnaire in this context. There was also space in the questionnaire for respondents to indicate additional criteria not included in the list of items.

138 out of 893 online questionnaires were completed and returned. The return rate was 15.5 per cent. Data are reported as percentages below (see Appendix 13 for full results). The participants were 41 males (30%) and 97 females (70%). They also included teachers who had majored in the fields of Education (16%), ELT/TEFL/TESOL (53%), Linguistics (13%), Literature and related subjects (13%) and others (5%). The years of teaching varied from 0-4 years (14%), 5-9 (20%), 10-14 (22%), 15-19 (24%), 20-24 (12%), and 24 years above (7%). A textbook is selected by the institution (12%), the committee (37%), the individual teacher (42%) and others (9%). Others, as teachers reported in the questionnaires, include selecting a textbook from a list of textbooks recommended by the Language Centre or a Committee, selecting a textbook both by the institution and individuals, or teachers making materials by themselves. The participants also included 103 teachers in Universities of Technology (75%) and 35 teachers in Institutes of Technology (25%). They consisted of 105 full-time teachers (76%) and 33 part-time teachers (24%) (see Appendix 5). The main findings are presented in the following sections.

8.1 Questionnaire results

The analysis of the questionnaire starts from the general and moves from that into the detail. The criteria are broken down into eight categories to compare with the interview findings in sequence: (1) Overall Construction, (2) Students' Needs, (3) Teachers' Needs, (4) Authenticity, (5) Self-instruction, (6) Cultural Issues, (7) Visual Design, and (8) Practical Concerns. Data are reported as a percentage by means of %. I integrated the scores in the category of 'not at all important' and 'unimportant' as 'unimportant', and 'important' and 'very important' as 'important' in order to simplify the presentation of the data. Fig 8.1 shows that how important the criteria are in each category.
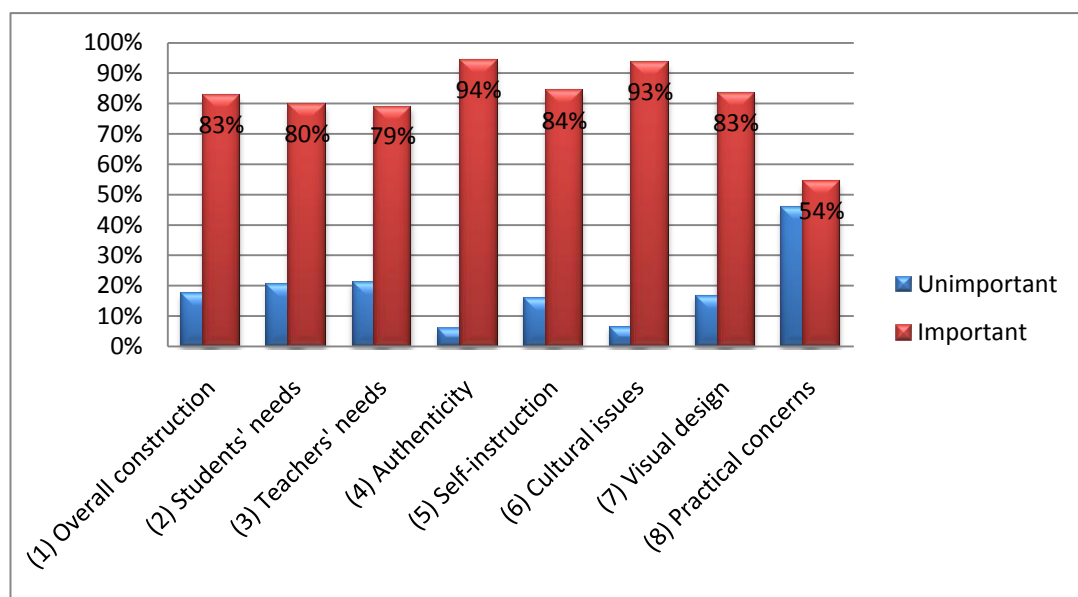
Figure 8.1 Questionnaire results: Important and unimportant criteria

In general, as we can see in Fig 8.1, the results of the questionnaire show that all criteria under the eight categories are agreed to be *important*; particularly the categories of Authenticity (94%), Cultural issues (93%), and Self-instruction (84%) are resoundingly

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agreed to be important by the majority of the teachers. It is worth noting that 54% of the teachers agreed that the category of Practical Concerns is important, this obviously needs further investigation in a later section.

The importance of the criteria in each category will be discussed in detail as follows. The item numbers given attempt to help the researcher compare these criteria easily rather than represent the priority of importance. The criteria are presented in short forms in figures. Full statements and detailed information in relation to their frequencies, percentages, ranges, means and standard deviations can be seen in Appendix 13.

8.1.1 Overall construction

A good textbook should...

- ■ Important ■ Unimportant

1. be carefully graded — 93%
2. provide the right amount of content to fit with time available — 93%
3. provide short reading texts (no longer than half a page) — 80%
4. not introduce too many new words per reading text — 69%
5. introduce vocabulary in preparation for other activities — 49%
6. include recycling and revision — 90%
7. not provide too many reading texts — 64%
8. integrate linguistic items exercises with skills practice — 93%
9. give practice in only one teaching point at a time — 60%
10. present a reading text first, followed by teaching new words — 72%
11. give clear instructions for the activities — 91%
12. give short dialogue exercises — 89%
13. provide interactive activities (e.g. pairwork, group work) — 91%
14. integrate instruction in related learning strategies — 93%
15. give model dialogues — 94%
16. offer reading texts of different genres — 90%
17. match amount of material to complexity of content — 95%

Criteria

Percentage 100%, N=138

Figure 8.2 Questionnaire results: overall construction

The bar chart for Overall Construction (Fig. 8.2) shows that teachers agreed the majority of criteria in this category are important. The idea that 'a textbook should match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught' (Item 17) is agreed as the most important by 95%. However, the idea that 'a textbook should introduce new vocabulary in preparation for other activities, e.g. reading texts or conversation' (Item 5) is agreed as important by the smallest percentage of teachers (49%) with the overall mean for this item being 2.67. In contrast, 72% agreed with the idea that 'a textbook should present a reading text first and then teach new vocabulary through the reading text' (Item 10) is important (mean= 2.92).

In addition, 91% agreed that the idea that 'a textbook should provide interactive activities for students to be used in class (e.g. pair work, group work)' (Item 13) is important (mean=3.26), whereas 94% agreed that the idea that 'a textbook should give model dialogues in which students can substitute some words' (Item 15) is also important (mean=3.26)

Finally, Taiwanese teachers seem to have different views of the quantity of reading texts, vocabulary, and teaching points in practice as presented in the textbook. First, 69% agreed that the idea that 'a textbook should not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words)' (Item 4) is important (mean= 2.87). Second, 64% found the idea that 'a textbook should not provide too many reading texts' (Item 7) is important (mean= 2.77). Finally, 60% found the idea that 'a textbook should give practice in only one teaching point at a time' (Item 9) is important (mean= 2.79).

8.1.2 Students' needs
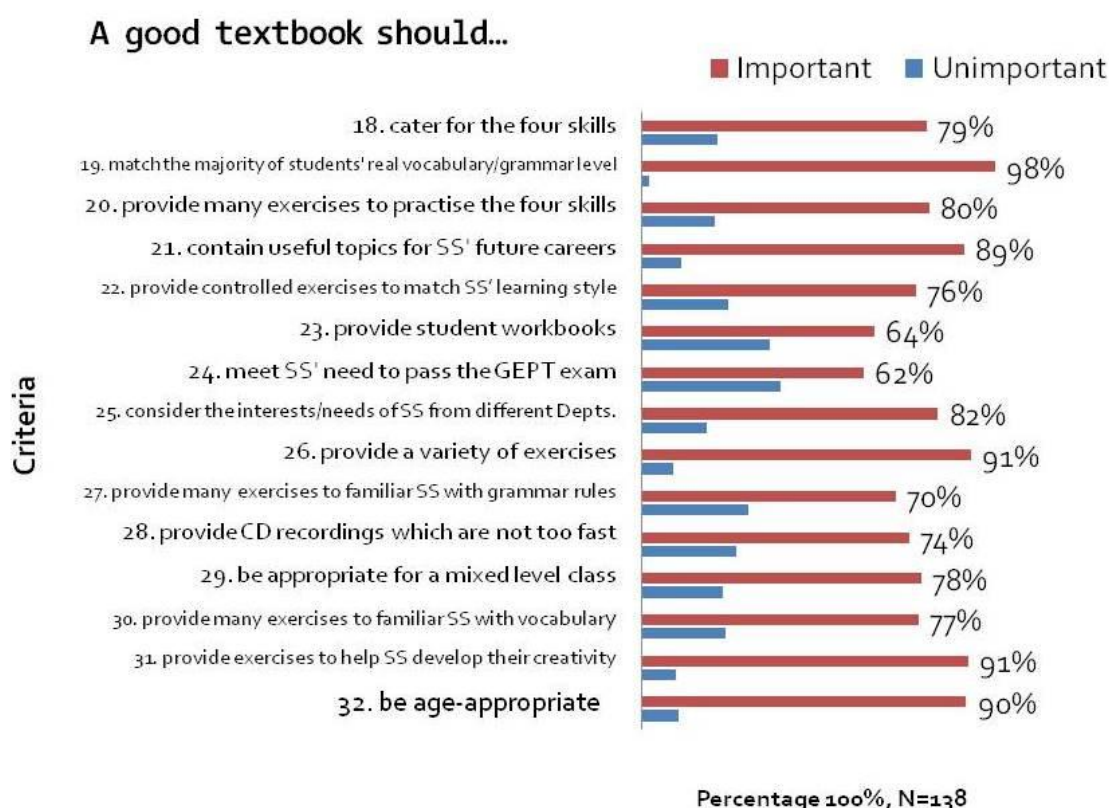
Figure 8.3 Questionnaire results: students' needs

The bar chart of Students' Needs (Fig. 8.3) shows that all the teachers agreed that all criteria in this category are important. The idea that 'a textbook should match the majority of students' real vocabulary/grammar level not just the level they're 'supposed' to have reached previously' (Item 19, mean= 3.38) is agreed to be important by the majority of teachers (98%). On the other hand, the idea that 'a textbook should meet students' need to pass the GEPT exam (e.g. match its difficulty level, task types and question patterns)' (Item 24, mean= 2.77) is agreed to be least important by 62%.

In addition, 91% agreed that ''a textbook should provide a variety of exercises rather than just mechanical or routine exercises' (Item 26) is important (mean=3.21). However,

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76% agreed that 'a textbook should provide controlled exercises to match students'

learning style. (e.g. provide exercises with close-ended questions, sentence drills,

matching or True/False)' (Item 22) is important (mean=2.91).

8.1.3 Teachers' needs
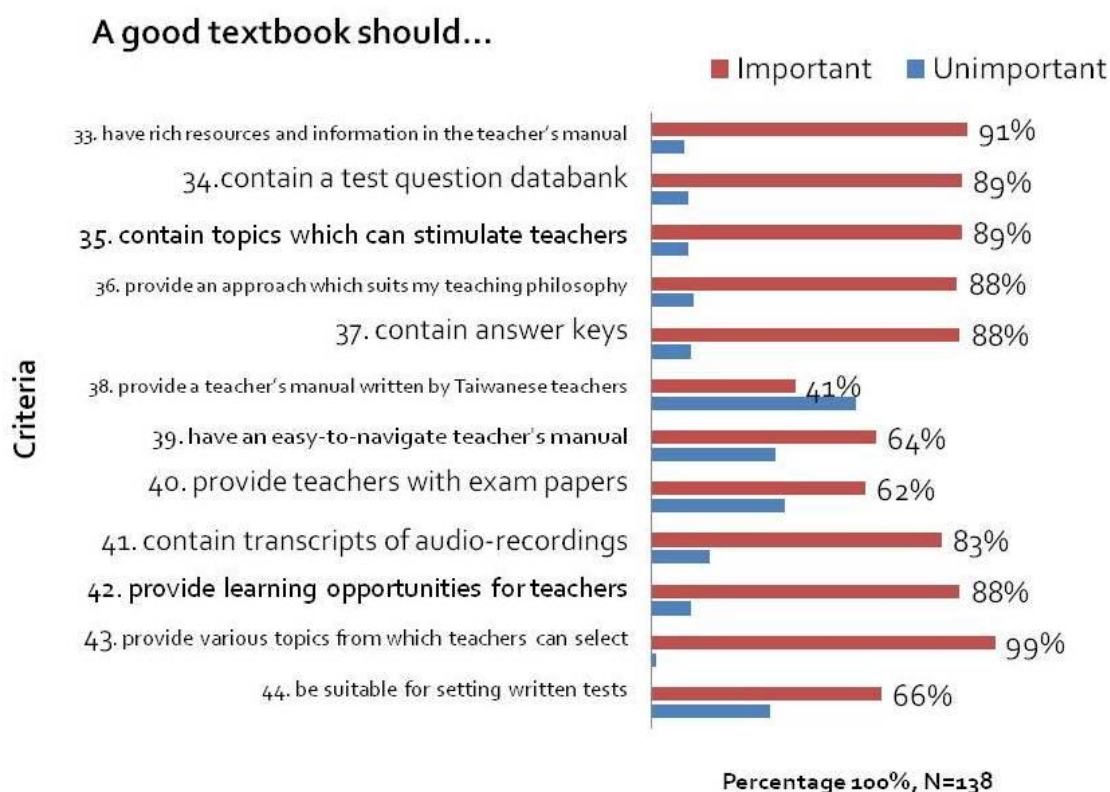
Figure 8.4 Questionnaire results: teacher's needs

The bar chart of Teachers' Needs (Fig. 8.4) shows that the teachers agreed that the

majority of criteria, with the notable exception of Item 38, in this category are important.

99% agreed with the idea that 'a textbook should provide various topics from which

teachers can select to meet students' interests' (Item 43) as important (mean= 3.42).

Conversely, it is noticeable that merely 41% found the idea that 'a textbook should

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provide the teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers' (Item 38) important (mean= 2.44).

Also, 91% agreed that 'a textbook should have rich resources and supplementary information (e.g. cultural background, new vocabulary, or a variety of optional activities) in the teacher's manual' (Item 33) is important (mean=3.38). However, only 64% agreed with the idea that 'a textbook should have an easy-to-navigate teacher's manual. (e.g. with the content displayed on one side, and the instructions on the other side)' (Item 39) is important (mean= 2.8).

8.1.4 Authenticity
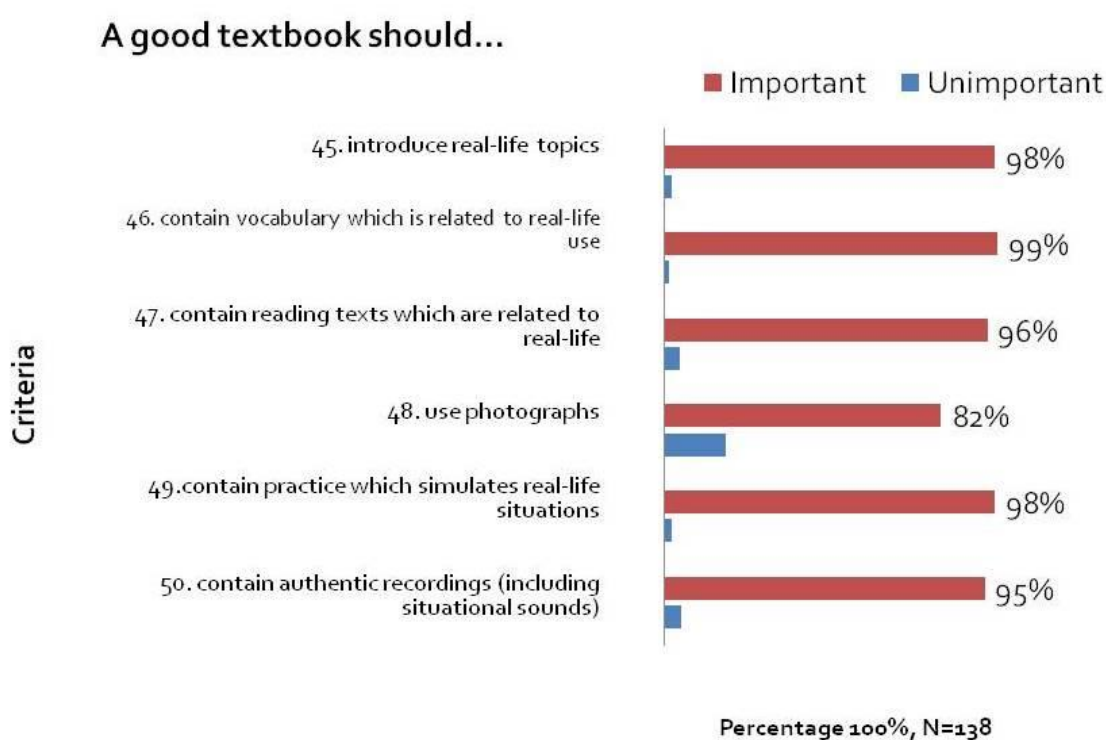
Figure 8.5 Questionnaire results: authenticity

The bar chart of Authenticity (Fig. 8.5) shows that all criteria are agreed as high priority. The idea that 'a textbook should contain vocabulary which is related to real-life use' (Item 46) is agreed as highly important by 99% (mean= 3.49). Meanwhile, the idea that 'a textbook should use photographs' (Item 48) is agreed as least important by 82% (mean= 3.15), even so, it still gains a high rating.

8.1.5 Self-instruction

A good textbook should...

■ Important ■ Unimportant

Criteria	
51. contain a CD-ROM for homework	85%
52. contain a CD for students to use	88%
53. contain pictures which are rich in potential for use by the teacher	85%
54. have an accompanying CD-ROM for SS to use in class	80%
55. be accompanied by online learning materials	87%
56. contain a glossary	80%
57. contain advice on learning strategies	86%
58. contain a grammar reference section	83%

Percentage 100%, N=138

Figure 8.6 Questionnaire results: self-instruction

The bar chart of Self-instruction (Fig 8.6) shows that all criteria are identified as important. Above all, a CD-ROM for homework (Item 51) and for classroom use (Item 54) are both important (mean= 3.22, 3.07 respectively).

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8.1.6 Cultural issues
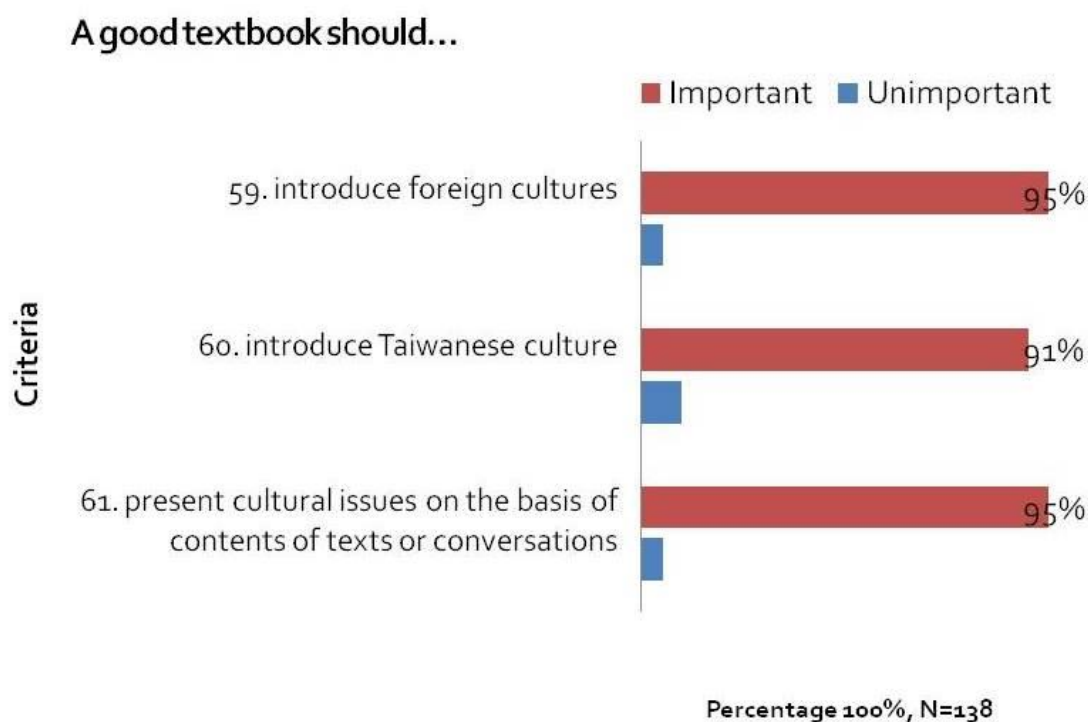
Figure 8.7 Questionnaire results: Cultural issues

The bar chart of Cultural Issues (Fig. 8.7) shows that all criteria are agreed as having great importance, by 95%, 91%, and 95% (means of 3.39, 3.28, and 3.38, respectively). This shows that a textbook should introduce both foreign cultures and Taiwanese culture.

8.1.7 Visual design
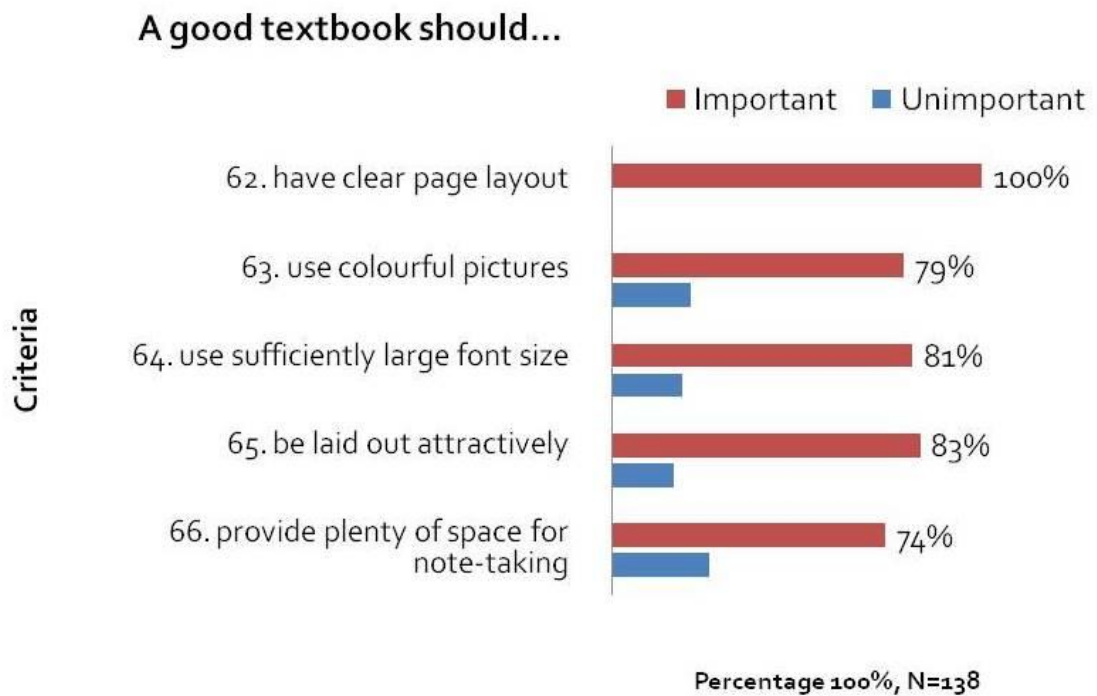
Figure 8.8 Questionnaire results: visual design

The bar chart of Visual Design (Fig 8.8) shows that all criteria are agreed as important. The idea that 'a textbook should have clear page layout' (Item 62) is agreed as having the greatest importance by nearly 100% (mean= 3.58). Meanwhile, the idea that 'a textbook should provide plenty of space for note-taking' (Item 66) is agreed as having the lowest importance by 74% (mean=3.00).

8.1.8 Practical concerns

A good textbook should …
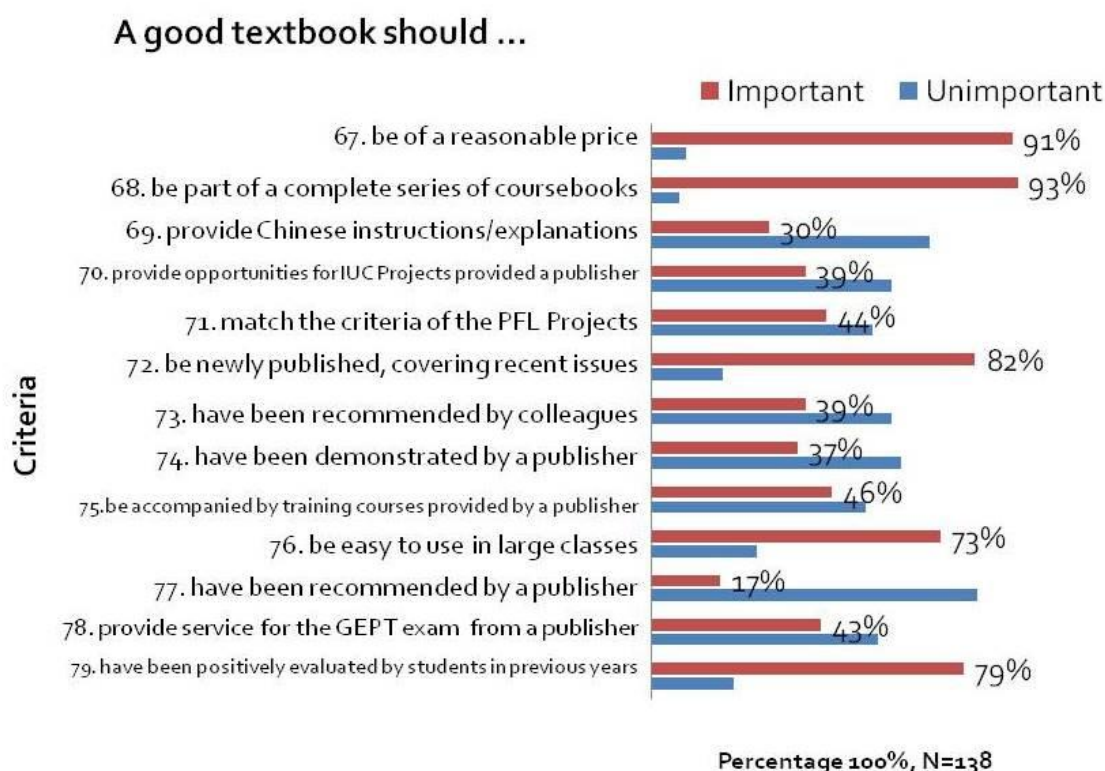
Figure 8.9 Questionnaire results: practical concerns

The bar chart of Practical Concerns (Fig 8.9) shows a big difference among the criteria. Only five out of thirteen criteria are agreed as important. The idea that 'a textbook should be part of a complete series of textbooks for different levels in the same year or for different years' (Item 68) is identified as important (mean= 3.25) by the majority of teachers (93%). The idea that 'a textbook should have been recommended by a publisher' (Item 77) is agreed as of the lowest importance (mean= 2.01), by only 17%.

Additionally, the following criteria are agreed as 'unimportant' by the teachers: 'a textbook should provide Chinese instructions and explanations' (Item 69) agreed as important (mean= 2.20) by 30%, 'a textbook should be accompanied by opportunities

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for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher' (Item 70), by 39% (mean=2.33); 'a textbook should match the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project' (Item 71) by 44% (mean= 2.38). The idea that 'a textbook should have been recommended by colleagues' (Item 73) is agreed as important (mean= 2.29) by 39%. The idea that 'a textbook should have been demonstrated by a publisher' (Item 74) is agreed as important (mean= 2.30) by 37%. The idea that 'a textbook should be accompanied by teacher training courses provided by a publisher' (Item 75) is agreed as important (mean=2.43) by 46%. The idea that 'a textbook should provide mock papers for the GEPT exam and a marking service for the mock papers for the GEPT exam from a publisher' (Item 78) are agreed as important (mean= 2.35) by 43%.

In this chapter, I have presented and discussed the findings of the survey regarding Taiwanese teachers' criteria in order to answer RQ5: what degree of importance do teachers attach to different evaluation criteria? I have also presented Taiwanese teachers' evaluation criteria in terms of eight categories. Next, I will discuss the similarities and differences between what is suggested in the literature and what teachers *actually* do in reality in evaluating materials according to the interview and survey results.

Chapter 9 Overall discussion

9.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I will synthesise and discuss the findings I gathered from the interviews and the questionnaire survey with regard to the research questions. The findings will also be compared with the existing literature. I begin this overall discussion with general issues in relation to materials evaluation in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan (section 9.1). I then discuss the criteria Taiwanese teachers employ (section 9.2) and explore the reasons for these criteria (section 9.3). After that, I discuss the degree of priority teachers give to different evaluation criteria (section 9.4). Finally, I will discuss the gaps between Taiwanese teacher's criteria and existing published lists of criteria, in section 9.5.

9.1 General issues related to materials evaluation

This section will discuss the use and role of the textbook (section 9.1.1), the degree of freedom in terms of selecting a textbook (section 9.1.2), the phases of evaluation (section 9.1.3), and the need for training (section 9.1.4) in relation to RQ1: 'What is the role of textbooks in English teaching in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan?' and RQ2: 'What kind of materials evaluation occurs in this context?' with its sub-questions 'Who conducts it? When is it conducted? How is it conducted?'

9.1.1 The use and role of the textbook

Based on the interview results, the use and role of the textbook as described by teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan (see section 6.1) match quite well with what has been previously identified in the literature (see section 3.1). From the interview results, we can see that although the majority of teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan seem to be bound to using a textbook, they are able to adapt the selected textbook according to students' feedback, current issues, the insufficiency of the textbook or their preferred teaching methods, for example (see section 6.1). They are also encouraged to use other teaching materials to supplement the textbook, for example, using English magazines, online materials and multimedia materials. Some teachers even make their own teaching materials to fit students' level of proficiency (see section 2.3). As Ur (1996) and Crawford (2002) suggest, over-dependence on textbooks could constrain teachers' initiative and creativity (see section 3.1). Thus, teachers need not only to be skilful in selecting an appropriate textbook but also willing to develop their independence and autonomy in using teaching materials of any kind.

9.1.2 The freedom to select a textbook

According to declarations from the Ministry of Education in Taiwan, universities are self-governed. Teachers are given freedom to select their preferred materials, as has been discussed in section 2.2. Kao and Huang (2005:77) confirm that 'English teachers in technological colleges can choose whatever materials they want to use in their English classes, [so] the contents and levels of textbooks used in technological colleges vary'.

However, as described in section 6.2, the interview results I generated show that the teachers' involvement in evaluating materials varies, as the procedure for this varies from university to university and from individual to individual. Some schools select course materials within a meeting context but with limited time available and teachers vote for a set of textbooks which would be for all students in the same year to use. Some teachers have to select a textbook from a list of textbooks recommended by a committee. Some teachers have no choice in selecting a textbook, as it is assigned by the Head of Department. On the other hand, some teachers participate actively in selecting materials for their school because they are responsible for having Industry-University Cooperative Projects with the publishers, which helps them gain credits for their own annual evaluation. Alternatively, some teachers are sometimes uninterested or unavailable for textbook-selecting meetings because of personal reasons. The survey results from the 138 teachers also confirm that a textbook is selected by the institution (12%), a committee (37%), individual teachers (42%), and others (9%) (see Appendix 5). Despite there being different approaches, within the study all the participants had their own sets of criteria for selecting a textbook, regardless of the level of their involvement in the process at their particular University or Institute.

Drawing conclusions from the interview and survey results, we can see that the degree of freedom as regards selecting a textbook varies from university to university, although teachers are in theory granted freedom from the Ministry of Education to select whatever teaching materials they like. The freedom given to teachers still depends on individual teaching contexts and is affected by institutional policy.

9.1.3 The phases of evaluation

As discussed in section 4.2, many writers recommend a pre-use evaluation for potential suitability. In more recent years, some writers propose in-use and post-use evaluation to establish whether materials are suitable. However, except for Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979), who propose a post-use evaluation using the same checklist as for pre-use evaluation, others do not provide concrete suggestions for in-use and post-use evaluation. In addition, some writers suggest using group evaluation, and inviting students' participation (see section 3.4). In reality, according to the interview results (section 6.2), teachers conduct pre-use evaluation individually or as a group, depending on individual universities, but even though teachers are aware of the importance of conducting in-use and post-use evaluation, and also provide some practical suggestions according to their experience (see sections 6.2.2 and 6.2.3), they do not conduct these evaluations systematically and/or in a formal way in these two phases; instead, they tend to 'rely on impressionistic holistic judgments rather than evidence' (McGrath, 2002:180). This might be because a currently used textbook cannot be replaced during the academic year, and selecting a new textbook might be limited to what publishers are promoting in many universities. I shall now briefly summarise how teachers conduct evaluations in terms of pre-, in-, and post-use phases.

■ **Pre-use phase**

The method that teachers use to evaluate materials in pre-use evaluation varies from university to university and individual to individual. Some teachers use an impressionistic method. Others adopt an in-depth approach. None use the checklist method discussed in section 6.2.1. This might be attributed to many teachers not being aware of the existence of published lists of criteria. All but T3 in the interviews reported that they had not taken any training course in textbook evaluation. However, many

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teachers seemed to agree that a checklist could be a very useful instrument for teachers to use (see section 5.3). According to survey results, this is also possibly affected by the qualifications of teachers. Only 53% of teachers have degrees in the field of English language teaching, and even those who do have not necessarily taken a course in evaluating materials (see Appendix 5). In addition, students are seldom invited to participate in the process of selection (see section 6.2.1). However, they are one of the main users and eliciting their views could contribute to meeting their needs more precisely. This is neglected as a source of knowledge in selecting materials, both in the literature and in the focal teachers' practice.

■ **In-use phase**

Regarding in-use evaluation, as discussed in section 6.2.2, teachers do seem to believe that the process of evaluating materials is a continuous one that teachers carry out on a lesson-by-lesson, and class-by-class basis. Their evaluation of the textbook in use is essentially based on students' reaction in class.

■ **Post-use phase**

Interview findings for post-use evaluation, as presented in section 6.2.3, also reveal that teachers do evaluate the effectiveness of the textbook after using the textbook. This is informed by teachers' reflections on lessons, the results of Teaching Assessment Questionnaires from students at the end of the course, the results of students' examinations or tests, and students' feedback. In addition, in many universities, post-use evaluation is conducted at the same time as pre-use evaluation for the next academic year. In-use and post-use evaluation also can overlap (section 5.4.1). Therefore, the phases for evaluating materials do not necessarily need to be clearly distinguished in terms of pre-, in-, and post-phases as suggested in the literature.

To sum up, teachers do conduct individual evaluation in pre-use, in-use, and post-use phases (section 6.2) as recommended in the literature. However, in the literature, although a few writers recommend group evaluation and give clear instructions for conducting it (e.g. Chambers, 1997, McGrath, 2002, and Tucker, 1975), they do not mention when to conduct this. I would suggest that it might be more constructive for teachers to conduct evaluations as a group in regular meetings not only in the pre-use phase but also during in-use and post-use phases. This would help them share their classroom experience and brainstorm ways of adapting and supplementing the textbook. This might also promote teachers' autonomy and further help them to produce their own materials. Furthermore, only a few teachers invited students to become involved in selecting a textbook (see section 3.4). Students should be encouraged to contribute their views to evaluations, because they would know which aspects work best for them and help them learn most effectively. They might then be more motivated in learning what they have selected. This could be done by eliciting students' feedback via questionnaire or focus group interviews in pre-, in-, and post-use evaluation phases.

9.1.4 The need for training

As we can see from the findings presented in section 6.3, the majority of teachers had not taken any training course on evaluating materials. Therefore, teachers might be unaware that published checklists specifically designed to help them to select a textbook exist. Kao and Huang (2005) also found that more than half of the teachers they interviewed admitted that they do not have clear teaching goals in their minds and have not been trained in the textbook selection process. Therefore, As Richards (1993:13) suggests,

to avoid the possibility of textbooks resulting in the deskilling of teachers, it is essential to give teachers the knowledge and skills needed to evaluate and adapt textbooks and to prepare them to use textbooks as sources for creative adaptation. In this way, the potential negative impact of using textbooks can be minimized and they can find their rightful place in the educational system, namely as resources to support and facilitate teaching rather than dominate it.

Such training would help teachers to evaluate materials more systematically and consistently; it would empower teachers with a greater awareness of the prerequisites for effective materials, and it would help teachers to reflect and further develop their theories of language teaching.

In brief, there is no one way to evaluate materials. In my findings, each context was different and unique as regards how evaluation was carried out. This implies that recommendations need to relate to a diversity of individual contexts, that is, evaluation methodology has to be appropriate to local contexts.

9.2 Teachers' criteria

I presented 79 teachers' criteria emerging from the three-phase interviews in Chapter 7. I also presented how teachers prioritized among the 79 criteria overall, according to survey findings in Chapter 8. Here, I would like to discuss the differences between qualitative and quantitative results in relation to RQ3, emphasizing the value of a mixed methods design: what aspects of materials do teachers focus on when they evaluate them? Some differences in relation to the criteria according to survey results will be discussed in the light of the reasons given in the interviews; however, the reasons

provided here might not be able to articulate the full story since it was outside the scope of the study to conduct follow-up interviews to clarify the quantitative results. Results of both methods converged in that the criteria in the categories of Authenticity, Self-instruction, and Cultural Issues were identified and agreed as important. Meanwhile, the criteria in the category of Practical Concerns revealed the divergence in results between interviews and questionnaires.

In addition, the mixed methods design used in this study, first, helped me to understand teachers' viewpoints from a larger population. For example, some criteria such as the idea that 'a textbook should provide Chinese instructions and explanations' (Item 69), and 'a textbook should be accompanied by opportunities for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher' (Item 70) were identified as popular in the interviews (both were identified by 6 teachers), but, not in survey results (only 30%, and 39% of teachers, respectively, agreed them to be important). On the other hand, some criteria such as the idea that 'a textbook should match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught' (Item 17) and 'a textbook should provide various topics from which teachers can select to meet students' interests' (Item 43) were identified by only one teacher in the interviews, but were agreed as important by 95% and 99% of teachers in the survey results.

Second, a mixed methods design helped me to throw light on different views expressed in interviews. Examples are given as follows.

■   Inductive/deductive approach

The idea that 'a textbook should introduce new vocabulary in preparation for other activities, e.g. reading texts or conversation' (Item 5) was agreed as important by the smallest percentage of teachers (49%). In contrast, 72% agreed with the idea that 'a

textbook should present a reading text first and then teach new vocabulary through the reading text' (Item 10) is important. The evidence revealed seems to indicate that more Taiwanese teachers prefer an inductive approach than a deductive approach to language teaching.

■   Communicative/traditional approach

91% agreed that the idea that 'a textbook should provide interactive activities for students to be used in class (e.g. pair work, group work)' (Item 13) is important, while 94% also agreed that 'a textbook should give model dialogues in which students can substitute some words' (Item 15). In addition, 91% agreed that ''a textbook should provide a variety of exercises rather than just mechanical or routine exercises' (Item 26) However, 76% also agreed that 'a textbook should provide controlled exercises to match students' learning style. (e.g. provide exercises with close-ended questions, sentence drills, matching or True/False)' (Item 22). This might show that teachers wish to use communicative exercises, however, due to students' language proficiency level being low as described in section 1.1, they might have to use different practice material to meet students' level and needs.

Finally, a mixed methods design provides supplementary information. Examples are given as follows.

■   Teacher's manual

91% agreed that 'a textbook should have rich resources and supplementary information (e.g. cultural background, new vocabulary, or a variety of optional activities) in the teacher's manual' (Item 33). However, only 64% agreed with the idea that 'a textbook should have an easy-to-navigate teacher's manual. (e.g. with the content displayed on

one side, and the instructions on the other side)' (Item 39). The reason for this might be as T1 explained,

> I don't think a teacher's manual is important when I select a textbook. I have been teaching for years. Teaching approaches provided in teacher's manuals are more or less about the same. Teacher's manuals are often too idealistic in their presumption of students' attitudes or levels toward language learning. It is assumed that students will follow the teacher's instructions; however, this is not the case in reality. A teacher's manual might be used for references or for suggestions. Teachers should be flexible and make judgments whenever necessary, for example, some activities are not suitable for classroom use or not suitable for every class. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

TB further pointed out,

> Some students in my class enjoy their own teaching; they enjoy doing what they like to do. I think it's more interesting and creative than what the teacher's manual suggests. (Oct. 2008, Preliminary Interview)

■ Quantity and length of reading texts

64% of teachers agreed that 'a textbook should not provide too many reading texts' (Item 7), and 80% of teachers agreed that 'a textbook should provide short reading texts' (Item 3). However, Taiwanese teachers seem to have different views of the quantity and length of reading texts as presented in the textbook. For example, the reasons for disagreement might be, as T15 reported, 'the amount of reading texts should be increased as this will increase the amount of students' vocabulary and phrases, and

further interest students in learning' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). T20 also shared the same view that 'if we read more, we will be more familiar with the language which further helps students' writing' (June 2009, Interview 2). T10 finally put forward the view that 'the length of reading texts should be longer' (Oct. 2008, Interview 1). The definition of the length of a reading text varies according to different teachers' estimations, for example, around 1500 words (T2, Oct. 2008, Interview 1); about two paragraphs in one page (T8, Oct. 2008, Interview 1); and no longer than half a page (T15, Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

- Exam

The idea that 'a textbook should meet students' need to pass the GEPT exam (e.g. match its difficulty level, task types and question patterns)' (Item 24, mean= 2.77) is agreed as the least important criterion, by 62%, in the category of Students' Needs. This could be attributed to teachers' attitude towards examinations. As T8 points out,

> the most important thing in language learning is to help students develop their basic language ability rather than focus on how to pass the exams. The basic language ability means students can make sentences in present continuous tense, or students can distinguish past tense and future tense, for example. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

However, T4 emphasises that

> nowadays getting certificates is important to students as this might help them to gain confidence in learning and further benefit their future. I try to help my students to pass some of the English exams, although I disagree that passing the

exams to get the certificates is the main aim for language learning. In particular, for the low achievement levels of students in my school, they have to learn fundamental parts of English as this will help them more. (June, 2009, Interview 2)

■ Workbooks

Also, 64% agreed with the idea that 'A textbook should provide student workbooks' (Item 23) is important. According to T3,

> it is difficult to use students' workbook in class as teaching time is limited and the size of class is too large. It is also difficult to ask students to complete homework in the workbook, because some of them have part-time jobs, for example. (June 2009, Interview 2)

Therefore, T3 decided not to ask students to buy workbooks. As an alternative, she used the content of the workbook as the questions given in exams (Oct. 2008, Interview 1).

■ Cultural Issues

As my review of previous studies shows (section 2.8) and as Pennycook (2009) points out, conventional approaches to materials evaluation have tended to avoid cultural issues. Data from my investigation showed that Taiwanese teachers welcome the input from both foreign and local cultures (section 6.1.6) rather than avoiding cultural issues. Therefore, this shows that the use and role of the textbook depends on individual contexts.

■ Practical Concerns

The idea that 'a textbook should be part of a complete series of textbooks for different levels in the same year or for different years' (Item 68) is identified as important by the majority of teachers (93%). This is possibly because a placement system is carried out in many schools according to my interview outcomes.

Conversely, the idea that 'a textbook should provide Chinese instructions and explanations' (Item 69) is agreed as important by only 30% of teachers. The possible reasons provided in the interviews for this item might be that , as T12 explains,

> students are likely to depend on Chinese instructions and explanations in their learning. Yet, it is better to learn English through English. Teachers also have the opportunities to be self-developed. (Oct. 2008, Interview 1)

Finally, the idea that 'a textbook should match the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project' (Item 71) is agreed as important by only 44% of teachers. This might be because not all schools are able to get financial support from the project. Situations vary from university to university and year to year. Therefore, the teachers' views are unlikely to achieve consensus for this criterion.

9.3 Reasons for criteria

This section attempts to discuss the findings regarding RQ 4: What reasons underpin teachers' evaluation criteria? Apart from knowing teachers' *actual* criteria for selecting a textbook (to be compared with those recommended in the literature below), a major

intention of my study was to look at teachers' reasons for these criteria and thereby understand the actual processes of textbook evaluation further. Previous studies have highlighted the potential benefit of understanding not only teachers' actual criteria for evaluating materials but also the reasons for different views (e.g. Tomlinson, 2003); however, to my knowledge, no studies have either systematically investigated teachers' *actual* criteria or the reasons for their criteria and their priorities. As I argued in Chapter 3, criteria recommended in the existing literature are therefore subjective, and fail to take the needs of individual contexts into consideration. Also, as I have suggested earlier (section 4.7), understanding the reasons that underpin teachers' criteria for textbook selection can benefit the clarification or discovery of their ways of thinking about their students and language teaching-learning.

Reasons why teachers adopt individual criteria were presented in Chapter 7 under the themes which were derived inductively from the interviews. While it was beyond the scope of this study to make generalizations about these reasons, it is interesting to note that the factors affecting teachers' evaluation criteria as revealed in the interviews (Chapter 7) generally matched the factors discussed in the literature review (section 3.7), as I shall exemplify here. First, teachers have various beliefs about teaching-learning. For example, some teachers aim to assist students to pass the GEPT exam while others aim to help students use English to communicate with people in their daily life. Second, teachers have different teaching experience. They teach different groups of students such as students in Business Departments or Engineering Departments where different learning styles and levels of proficiency are evident. Third, teachers favour different teaching methodologies or approaches. Some focus on language form and language practice; others focus on use; some prefer inductive methods; others may prefer deductive methods.

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A further point worth noting here is that, in terms of macro aspects, most teachers in the interviews (Chapter 7) indicated that the students' levels of proficiency and motivation to learn English in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan are low (this despite the fact that students are aware of the importance of English in their careers), and that this tends to considerably affect their criteria in selecting a textbook. For example, teachers gave very detailed explanations for the criterion that 'a textbook should provide controlled exercises to match students' learning style'. The issue arose from having a placement system and the need for helping students to pass the GEPT exam also seems to have a strong impact on the decision. In terms of micro aspects, in interviews, many reasons given (factors) seemed to relate not only to student needs but also to teacher's own needs (something not highlighted in the literature). For example, some teachers have a highly developed awareness of the need to build on their teaching knowledge and skills. This explained their criteria that 'a textbook should provide learning opportunities for teachers (e.g. new knowledge or information)' and 'a textbook should contain topics which can stimulate teachers to share their knowledge or experiences with the students.'

If brief, I have conducted a relatively small-scale interview study (though a total of 25 interview participants is not negligible) in order to explore teachers' *actual* criteria for textbook selection and their associated reasons. The main contribution of my study (with regard to investigating reasons for criteria) is that this is the first study of teachers' *actual* reasons. However, exploring teachers' reasons was not included in the questionnaire, as this would have made it unmanageable. The findings in this area of 'reasons' are therefore not generalizable and require further investigation, although they are of some interest in shedding light on an unexplored area.

9.4 Teachers' priorities in textbook selection

This section attempts to answer RQ5: 'What degree of importance do teachers attach to different evaluation criteria?' and further to discuss the similarities and differences between interview and survey results.

Criteria which are globally true are not necessary locally true. Some criteria might be considered more important than others in different contexts. It is beneficial to know the priorities teachers attach to different criteria for the best possible results to be produced. For example, if budgets are limited, we need to find out what criteria are identified as the most important in an individual type of context (in this case, Taiwanese Universities and Institutes of Technology) to seek out the most appropriate textbook.

I generated eight categories inductively from the interview data (section 5.4). The eight categories were: (1) Overall Construction, (2) Students' Needs, (3) Teachers' Needs, (4) Authenticity, (5) Self-instruction, (6) Cultural Issues, (7) Visual Design, and (8) Practical Concerns. The questions in the questionnaire were then based on the interview data. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: firstly, criteria for selecting a textbook, and second, background information.

The following comparison between the interview results and survey results is necessary, because results differed as indicated in Chapter 8. This could be attributed to the differences between the characteristics of participants (see appendix 5). For example, the majority of participants in the interviews had majored in Literature (52%); in contrast, the majority of participants in the survey had majored in EFL/TEFL/TESOL (53%). Furthermore, the majority of participants in the interviews had been teaching between 10 and 14 years (56%). Years of teaching of participants in the survey were similar, except the category of '24 years above' had fewer members than other categories (7%). Thirdly, the participants in the interviews were mainly from Institutes

of Technology (88%); however, the participants in the survey were mainly from Universities of Technology (75%). In addition, they also shared some things in common; for example, most participants in the interviews and the survey were full-time teachers. Textbook selectors mainly consisted of individual teachers- 80% in the interviews, 42% in the survey. However, a committee also played an important role (37%) which showed in the survey results.

The majority of criteria (87%) in the eight categories were identified as *important* in the questionnaire survey, particularly in the categories of Authenticity, Self-instruction, and Cultural Issues. Conversely, 13% of the criteria were identified as unimportant. Secondly, existing published checklists do not prioritize the criteria in their lists. However, in reality, some criteria are considered more important than others. The top ten most popular teachers' evaluation criteria (see detailed information about the full list in Appendix 13) are:

A good textbook should		Mean	Category
1	have clear page layout (Item 62).	3.58	Visual Design
2=	introduce real-life topics (e.g. opening a bank account, buying a ticket) (Item 45).	3.49	Authenticity
2=	contain vocabulary which is related to 'real-life' use (Item 46).	3.49	Authenticity
4	integrate instruction in related learning strategies (e.g. learning vocabulary from context) (Item 14).	3.45	Overall construction
5	contain reading texts which are related to 'real-life' (e.g. true stories, non-literary texts.) (Item 47).	3.43	Authenticity
6=	be carefully graded-sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar	3.42	Overall construction

	or reading texts) (Item 1).		
6=	provide various topics from which teachers can select to meet students' interests (Item 43).	3.42	Teachers' needs
8=	integrate vocabulary, grammar and/or pronunciation exercises with skills practice (e.g. learning vocabulary through dialogues) (Item 8).	3.39	Overall construction
8=	contain practice which simulates real-life situations (e.g. make a list for travelling.) (Item 49).	3.39	Authenticity
8=	introduce foreign cultures (Item 59).	3.39	Cultural issues

Table 9.1 The top ten priorities of teachers' evaluation criteria

From the information above, in terms of category, we can confirm that the criteria in the category of Authenticity are high on Taiwanese teachers' list of priorities in evaluation criteria (4 out of 10 criteria). This reveals that Taiwanese teachers strongly agree that language learning should relate to real-life use (see section 7.1.4). It is worth noting that the criteria in the category of Overall Construction also have high priority (3 out of 10 criteria). From these three criteria, we can see 'integration' is the key word for constructing a textbook. Integrating vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation exercises with skills practice will motivate students. Integrating instruction in related learning strategies also makes learning more meaningful. Gradation is also important. Thereby, students are able to see their own learning progress (see section 7.1.1). Furthermore, among individual criteria, the idea that 'a textbook should have clear page layout' is the most important criterion on the checklist. This might be related to the fact that students in Universities and Institutes of Technology context are visual learners (see section 7.1.7).

Conversely, criteria which emerged from interviews but which were not seen as important in the survey were as follows (mean < 2.5).

A good textbook should		Mean	Category
71	provide a teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers (Item 38).	2.44	Teacher's needs
72	be accompanied by teacher training courses provided by a publisher (Item 75).	2.43	Practical concerns
73	match the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project (Item 71).	2.38	Practical concerns
74	provide mock papers for the GEPT exam and a marking service for the mock papers for the GEPT exam from a publisher (Item 78).	2.35	Practical concerns
75	be accompanied by opportunities for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher (Item 70).	2.33	Practical concerns
76	have been demonstrated by a publisher (Item 74).	2.30	Practical concerns
77	have been recommended by colleagues (Item 73).	2.29	Practical concerns
78	provide Chinese instructions and explanations (Item 69)	2.20	Practical concerns
79	have been recommended by a publisher (Item 77).	2.01	Practical concerns

Table 9.2 Criteria which were identified as 'unimportant' in the survey

On the other hand, the criteria in the category of Practical Concerns are low on Taiwanese teachers' evaluation criteria list of priorities. This shows that the criteria in the category of Practical Concerns do vary from university to university, and individual to individual. For example, the consideration of the GEPT exam, the Promoting Foreign

Language Project, and Industry-University Cooperative Projects all depends on individual contexts. Therefore, the 70 criteria (after prioritising) provided here attempted to offer some principles or guidelines for Taiwanese teachers to select a textbook and to reflect their own teaching rather than give any prescriptive suggestions. The set of evaluation criteria must come from teachers who work in the same institution, as they know what fits their context best.

9.5 Gaps between Taiwanese teachers' criteria and existing published criteria

It is possible to identify gaps by comparing Taiwanese teacher's criteria (Chapter 7) with the eighteen published checklists (Chapter 4) individually, item by item. The set of Taiwanese teachers' criteria presented below for comparing with the criteria suggested from the literature is the full set of criteria derived from interview data. The main gaps will be presented below in terms of the categories of Taiwanese teachers' criteria mentioned from interview results, except 'authenticity' and 'visual design' as there were no gaps in these two categories. I will also attempt to explain the popularity of these criteria in the local context. Whether the most recent published checklists contain items that the Taiwanese teachers did not mention is beyond the scope of my study. This is because if the Taiwanese teachers did not mention a criterion, this does not mean that they do not consider it. When the teaching situation changes, for example, students' level of proficiency improves, teachers might have different considerations. Or when Ministry of Education policy changes, teachers might focus on different aspects.

9.5.1 Overall construction

In relation to overall construction, the following criteria not appearing in the literature were clearly pointed out by Taiwanese teachers. A good textbook should:

- provide short reading texts (e.g. no longer than half a page).

- not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words).

- give short dialogue exercises.

- match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught.

The literature has little to say about the quantity and length of content and practice. This might be because the majority of students' English proficiency level is low and English language teaching hours are limited in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan, as mentioned by many interview participants (also see the discussion in section 2.3). Therefore, writers only can provide general suggestions rather than explicitly indicating appropriate quantity and length of content and practice in individual contexts (see section 7.1.1).

9.5.2 Students' needs

With respect to students' needs, Taiwanese teachers identified the following criteria absent from the literature. A good textbook should:

- consider the interests and needs of students from different departments.

- contain useful topics for students' future careers.

- meet students' need to pass the GEPT exam (e.g. match its difficulty level, task types and question patterns).

The literature is not specific about these areas. Universities and Institutes of Technology aim to offer students quality training on a work-based rather than academic educational route (see section 2.1). Therefore, it is important that what the textbook offers is able to allow students to use the language for the jobs they participate in. For example, students in Engineering Department would like to understand the English instructions of the operation manual for the machines they are going to use according to my experience (see section 7.1.2). However, the published lists of criteria are often designed for selecting a textbook in general and so cannot cater for specific students' needs in Universities and Institutes of Technology.

9.5.3 Teachers' needs

Regarding teachers' needs, Taiwanese teachers say a good textbook should:

- provide learning opportunities for teachers. (e.g. new knowledge or information).
- contain topics which can stimulate teachers to share their knowledge or experiences with the students.
- be suitable for setting written tests.
- provide a teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers.
- provide CD recordings of conversation which are not too fast.
- have an accompanying CD- ROM for students to use in class.

The literature says little about teacher development needs. As discussed in section 2.3, teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology are strongly encouraged to

participate in the Industry-University Cooperative Projects for their universities' development as well as their personal development or career prospects. Many teachers in this context (see Appendix 5: Teachers background information from survey result) might have taken few or no teaching training courses, for example, those who majored in Literature (as reported by the teachers in the interviews). There may also be inequalities in teaching resources, for example depending on the availability of funding (see section 2.3). Teachers need to improve their knowledge and skills for self-development, particularly to meet the requirements of the Industry-University Cooperative Projects to understand the business and industry expectations and communication needs, but in-service teaching training courses might not be sufficient or teachers might not be interested in them, so that learning opportunities vary.

In addition, most teaching materials are imported from the BANA-contexts (see section 2.3) and the teacher's manuals or activities designed in the textbooks may not be appropriate for the local context, for example, to be used in a large class (see section 7.1.8). Therefore, some teachers suggested providing a teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers because the local teachers will know what suits their students' needs most. It might be good to integrate the information in the textbooks, teachers' manuals, and training course.

Finally, the use of CDs/CD-ROMs can help language teaching-learning, but the contents and design of these supplementary materials also need to be appropriate to students' needs, levels and interests. If local teachers could be consulted by textbook writers or publishers this would be beneficial for all users.

9.5.4 Self-instruction

Concerning self-instruction, Taiwanese teachers agree a good textbook should:

■   contain a CD and/or a CD-ROM for students to use for self-instruction.

■   be accompanied by online learning materials for self-instruction.

Therefore, the literature needs to be updated due to technological developments. In addition, the importance of self-instruction via technology in language learning is now widely recognised but not represented in existing published checklists. We can see that, although students' level of English and motivation to learn are low in Universities and Institutes of Technology (see section 2.3), many Taiwanese teachers still strongly encourage students to take responsibilities for their own learning (see section 7.1.5).

9.5.5 Cultural issues

With regard to cultural issues, Taiwanese teachers believe a good textbook should:

■   present cultural issues on the basis of contents of texts or conversations.

■   introduce Taiwanese culture.

However, the literature is less specific about the importance of cultural issues in relation to these aspects (see discussion section 3.8). This shows that Taiwanese teachers have a keen awareness of the importance of introducing both foreign and local cultures in language teaching (see section 7.1.6). In my view, the textbook should present cultural issues carefully without making any judgements rather than avoiding them (see section 3.8). The misunderstandings among different cultures might be reduced through learning and positive discussions. Learning a language is more meaningful if students have a purpose, for example communicating with people from different cultures.

9.5.6 Practical concerns

Relating to practical concerns, Taiwanese teachers consider a good textbook should:

- provide Chinese instructions and explanations.
- have been recommended by colleagues or a publisher.
- have been demonstrated by a publisher.
- be accompanied by teacher training courses provided by a publisher.
- match the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project.
- be accompanied by opportunities for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher.
- provide mock papers for the GEPT exam and a marking service for the mock papers for the GEPT exam from a publisher.
- have been positively evaluated by students in previous years

The literature does not include consideration of these issues in relation to the needs of local context. Of course, in many of these cases this is not surprising since the concerns expressed are very local and, indeed, specific in some cases to particular universities. These criteria prove that, first, the GEPT exam, the PFL Projects and the IUC Projects are highly influential on language learning in Universities and Institutes of Technology in this context, as discussed in section 2.3. They also indicate that some Taiwanese EFL teachers do need training courses for their personal career development (see section 6.3 and section 7.1.3). Finally, teachers could consider inviting students to participate in selecting their textbook more formally and systematically as suggested in the literature (see section 3.4)

I will summarize locally appropriate evaluation criteria not included in the published checklists as follows:

A textbook should	Category
■ provide short reading texts (e.g. no longer than half a page).	Overall

■ not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words). ■ give short dialogue exercises. ■ match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught.	construction
■ consider the interests and needs of students from different department. ■ contain useful topics for students' future careers. ■ meet students' need to pass the GEPT exam (e.g. match its difficulty level, task types and question patterns).	Students' needs
■ provide learning opportunities for teachers. (e.g. new knowledge or information). ■ contain topics which can stimulate teachers to share their knowledge or experiences with the students. ■ be suitable for setting written tests. ■ provide a teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers. ■ provide CD recordings of conversation which are not too fast. ■ have an accompanying CD- ROM for students to use in class.	Teacher's needs
■ contain a CD and/or a CD-ROM for students to use for self-instruction. ■ be accompanied by online learning materials for self-instruction.	Self-instruction
■ present cultural issues on the basis of contents of texts or conversations. ■ introduce Taiwanese culture.	Cultural issues
■ provide Chinese instructions and explanations. ■ have been recommended by colleagues or a publisher. ■ have been demonstrated by a publisher. ■ be accompanied by teacher training courses provided by a publisher. ■ match the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project. ■ be accompanied by opportunities for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher. ■ provide mock papers for the GEPT exam and a marking service for the mock papers for the GEPT exam from a publisher.	Practical concerns

■ have been positively evaluated by students in previous years	

Table 9.3 Gaps between Taiwanese teachers' criteria and existing published criteria

From the discussion above, we can understand that the criteria recommended in the literature are generally appropriate for helping teachers select a textbook for their own learners in terms of linguistic aspects (cf. the top ten criteria), however, as Chan (2009) points out, teachers' reasons for choosing evaluation criteria might be affected by practical considerations or other general pedagogical concerns, but not necessarily by the linguistic aspects of the materials. The procedures and criteria for selecting a textbook greatly depend on individual local context and situation, and even vary from individual to individual. Kumaravadivelu (2006:20) expresses this view as follows:

> textbook preparation and production remain a centrally controlled, globally targeted activity with very little role for local ELT professionals. To be relevant, textbooks should reflect the experiences teachers and students bring to the classroom, experiences that are shaped by the social, economic and political environment in which they operate. Instead of using the process of globalization merely to re-centre the textbook industry, as is happening now, what needs to be done is to de-centre it so that the periphery ELT community which is knowledgeable about local needs, wants and situations can legitimately enjoy a meaningful sense of authorial ownership and professional contribution.

Most of the issues highlighted in this study, for example the role of the textbook, the degree of freedom in terms of selecting a textbook, the phases of evaluation, and the needs of training, the criteria teachers employ, the reasons teacher have, and the priorities teachers have are all unique in each context and cannot be generalized.

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Accordingly, as Tomlinson (2003) suggests, it is more useful to suggest a procedure for developing criteria to match the specific circumstances of a particular evaluation rather than provide models of criteria to teachers. This would then assist teachers to reflect on their teaching and develop their professional ability.

Chapter 10 Conclusion

10.0 Introduction

The combination of interviews and a questionnaire survey gave a comprehensive overview of the role and use of the textbook in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan, the process of materials evaluation which occurs in this context, teachers' criteria with associated reasons, and teachers' priorities as regards the criteria. I gained rich data from the three-phase interviews with 25 teachers. Based on the interview data, a questionnaire was developed and sent to Taiwanese teachers. 138 out of 893 teachers completed and returned the online questionnaire. In this concluding chapter, first, I will summarise the main findings of the study associated with the research questions proposed (section 10.1). Second, I will discuss the significance of the study with respect to materials evaluation and its research methods (section 10.2). Third, the limitations of the study will be summarised (section 10.3). Finally, the concluding chapter will make recommendations for future research (section 10.4).

10.1 Summary of the findings

The findings in relation to the research questions are summarized as follows.

With regard to RQ1, the use and role of textbook described by teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan match what has been identified in the literature.

In respect to RQ2, the interview results show that the degree of teachers' involvement in evaluating and selecting material textbook varies. The degree of freedom and process vary from university to university and from individual to individual. In addition,

teachers recognise the value of conducting pre-use, in-use, and post-use evaluation in evaluating materials, and they do conduct these three phases of evaluation as suggested in the literature. However, they do not conduct in-use and post-use evaluation systematically and/or in a formal way. In some universities, post-use and pre-use evaluation as well as in-use and post-use evaluation even overlap. Finally, many teachers in this context have little or no training in respect of evaluating materials. However, each context is unique; it seems to be preferable to suggest a procedure of exploring criteria which teachers can use in their context rather than providing a set of prescriptive criteria for them. There is an urgent need for a teacher training course, as teachers have stated.

Concerning RQ3, RQ4, and RQ5, I have systematically investigated teachers' actual criteria in this context and provided in-depth reasons for their criteria. 70 criteria were identified as important after being prioritised by teachers in the survey. The criteria in the categories of Authenticity, Self-instruction, and Cultural Issues gain considerable attention from teachers when they evaluate materials. The most important criteria, coming in the top three, are the ideas that 'a textbook should have clear page layout', 'a textbook should introduce real-life topics (e.g. opening a bank account, buying a ticket)', and 'a textbook should contain vocabulary which is related to 'real-life' use'.

Last but not least, the gaps between Taiwanese teachers' criteria and the published lists of criteria were identified. The gaps were identified in the categories of Overall Construction, Students' Needs, Teacher's Needs, Self-instruction, Cultural Issues, and Practical Concerns. There are no gaps in the categories of Authenticity and Visual Design. The main gaps are in the category of Practical Concerns. This surely proves that evaluating materials needs to take the needs of individual context into consideration.

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10.2 Significance of the study

There has been little research which examines the recommendations given within teacher training and in teacher training manuals to teachers for textbook selection. This study has attempted to provide in-depth insights into materials evaluation and research methods. The significance of the study lies in the following aspects.

First, to my knowledge, no studies have either systematically investigated teachers' *actual* criteria or reasons for their criteria and priorities. This is the first study to explore the criteria that teachers employ so that the criteria are suitable for their own needs. The existing checklists provided by writers are either developed on the basis of their own criteria (e.g. Breen and Candlin, 1987; Cunningsworth, 1995; Ellis, 1997; McDonough and Shaw, 1993; McGrath, 2002; Tomlinson, 2003; Ur, 1996) or adopted and adapted from other writers' criteria (e.g. Skierso, 1991; Peacock, 1997; Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Rubdy, 2003). However, these recommendations are essentially based on the writers' knowledge, experiences, and training. This 'armchair' basis for evaluation might be said to be subjective, prescriptive, and not context-related, although some checklists do leave room for evaluators to add or modify their own criteria (e.g. Grant, 1987; Sheldon, 1988; Ur, 1996). This is also the first study to explore the reasons associated with the criteria. Finally, it is the first study to investigate priorities overall among criteria through a survey. The criteria suggested in the literature seem to be treated equally, but there is no way of knowing whether they are in fact of equal relevance to teachers.

Furthermore, by reviewing the literature, I have provided a comparative analysis and, on this basis, an original synthesis of published materials evaluation criteria. This comparison reflects how a textbook should be selected in terms of writers from BANA-contexts viewpoints. It also functions as a basis for comparison of published lists of criteria with teachers' *actual* criteria so that I am able to find out the gaps

between them. The gaps can be used to update currently existing published lists of criteria and/or as a basis for suggestions for teacher training and teacher training manuals in relation to textbook selection.

Finally, the sequential exploratory mixed-methods design employed for this study provides a more comprehensive view than would any one method alone. It not only improves the quality of final results, but is also of benefit to future researchers in their exploration of issues of materials evaluation in their unique teaching contexts. The benefits of conducting a mixed-methods design will be explained as follows. First, the results in both methods converged in that criteria in the categories of Authenticity, Self-instruction, and Cultural issues are all perceived as important. For example, the idea that 'a textbook should introduce foreign cultures' (Item 59) which was identified by 10 teachers in the interviews, and agreed to be important by 95% teachers. Also the idea that 'a textbook should introduce Taiwanese cultures' (Item 60) which was identified by 9 teachers, and agreed to be important by 91% teachers. Second, employing both methods revealed the divergence between the two methods, for example, the criteria such as the ideas that 'a textbook should provide Chinese instructions and explanations' (Item 69) and 'a textbook should be accompanied by opportunities for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher' (Item 70) in the category of Practical Concerns revealed marked differences in both results. They were identified as popular criteria in the interviews, however, they were agreed to be unimportant in the survey. Third, the interview findings help me to develop the questionnaire; therefore, I was able to ask teachers to prioritize the criteria from the interview data. Fourth, the findings of the questionnaire reinforce those of the interview data. For example, the idea that 'a textbook should offer reading texts of different genres' (Item 16), that 'a textbook should match the amount of teaching material

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appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught' (Item 17), that 'a textbook should be age-appropriate' (Item 32) and that 'a textbook should provide learning opportunities for teachers (e.g. new knowledge or information)' (Item 42), that 'a textbook should provide various topics from which teachers can select to meet students' interests' (Item 43), that 'a textbook should contain authentic recordings (including situational sounds) on the CDs' (Item 50), and that 'a textbook should contain a grammar reference section for self-instruction)' (Item 58) were reported by only one participant in the interviews. However, Item 16, Item 17, Item 32, Item 42, Item 43, Item 50, and Item 58 are agreed to be important (94%, 95%, 90%, 88%, 99%, 95%, 83%, respectively) in the questionnaire results. On the other hand, the interview found that teachers were deeply concerned about the idea that 'a textbook should cater for the four skills' (Item 18) which was identified by 19 teachers in the interviews, whereas, it is only agreed as being important by 79% of teachers in the questionnaire results. Finally, the findings of the interview data further reinforce those of the questionnaire. For example, the use of teacher's manual which has been discussed in section 8.2.

In terms of practical implications, this study attempted to provide a set of locally appropriate principles for teachers to consider when evaluating a textbook rather than aiming to develop a fixed, prescriptive set of criteria for Taiwanese teachers to use. It is my hope that the results will help teachers to reflect on their own criteria and their own perceptions in relation to language teaching–learning.

10.3 Limitations of the study

There could be said to be some potential limitations in this research. Firstly, the small sample in the interviews (25 teachers) is not necessarily comprehensive overall (though

I used a questionnaire to partially overcome this. Some examples are revealed from answers to one of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire (Question 87). For example, Respondent 52 considered that whether publishers' representatives provide good service or not would affect his/her decisions. Respondent 101 also pointed out that 'None of the textbooks in the market fits my teaching context well. It's better to produce my own teaching materials'. However, as Bryman (2008) comments, the expectation is that conclusions summarised from the two strands of quantitative and qualitative research are integrated to provide a fuller understanding of the phenomenon under study. This can be done by comparing, contrasting, building on, or embedding one type of conclusion with the other.

Secondly, there is the limitation of relying on teachers' self-report of what they do. Teachers may not do what they say they do. Observations may be a better way of seeing what teachers actually do as opposed to what they say they do. However, this was not feasible in my study (although it was my original intention): indeed, my experience shows that it may be very difficult for a researcher (except for a participant-researcher) to be present at and able to observe the selection process in action. I was able to probe teachers' reasons as well as stated criteria and believe that this enabled me to see, to some extent, whether they were 'telling the truth' as well as obtain in-depth data which observation alone cannot provide.

Thirdly, I am aware that although I have some evidence of teachers' criteria and their views of the criteria, the evidence would be stronger if I could provide students' views, as they are one of the main users. However, due to the fact that teachers in this context are the main selectors and that the time is limited, this research only focused on teachers' views.

Fourthly, the environmental factors, the time factors, the participants' personal factors all have an impact on the collected data. For example, Bryman (2008: 443) suggests that the researcher make sure as far as possible that the interview takes place in a setting that is quiet (so there is little or no outside noise that might affect the quality of the recording) and private (so the interviewee does not have to worry about being overheard). This may not always be possible in reality.

Fifthly, use of a questionnaire does not reveal how individual teachers prioritize among criteria, but only provides an overall view of their relative importance for teachers. Future researchers could look into the issues under investigation further.

Finally, use of electronic questionnaires has highlighted an issue of the lack of a real population list and the questionable representativeness of the sample data (Mertler, 2001 in Creswell 2008). Although I attempted to send the online questionnaire to all EFL teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan according to the e-mail addresses I collected from their websites, I was unable to know whether those who did not reply failed to respond because they were unwilling to fill in the questionnaire, were not qualified in filling in the questionnaire or did not receive the e-mail invitation. In addition, I could not contact teachers in five universities because they did not provide any online information on individual teachers, although I did try to contact the departments or the centres. Therefore, the low response rate of questionnaires is unlikely to represent the views of all Taiwanese teachers in Universities and Institutes of Technology. Thus, I only can claim that those who did reply were those who were willing to participate and were qualified to participate in my research.

10.4 Recommendations for future research

This study provides a method by adopting interviews and a questionnaire to explore teachers' *actual* criteria accompanied with associated reasons and their priorities. It is worth future researchers, who might be interested in evaluating materials, using this method to explore their own set of criteria with reasons in-depth in their teaching contexts. The results of this could then also be used to compare with what is suggested in the literature.

Furthermore, as discussed in the methodology chapter, the study was unable to conduct observations in textbook-selecting meetings due to practical considerations. Therefore, I would like to suggest future researchers conducting observations in textbook-selecting meetings. What teachers think, know and believe may not accurately reflect what they do in their classroom practice. For example, teachers might be aware of the importance of conducting authentic tasks in language teaching-learning; however, they might find it difficult to use these authentic tasks. As Cyril and Roberts (1994) suggest, interviews and questionnaire data are reliable if supported by other data because of 'post-event reconstruction' by the informant, and the tendency for interviewers or question wording to affect responses. In addition, more in-depth, qualitative investigation of how teachers prioritize among different criteria could also be carried out.

This final suggestion is that in-use and post-use evaluation are given too little attention in the literature and in reality. This study shows that teachers do conduct in-use and post-use evaluation, but they do not conduct the evaluations systematically. It is worth exploring the retrospective aspect of evaluation. In this case, different instruments may be employed. Also, students are one of the main textbook users. Their viewpoints might show what they need and want. Therefore, they could be invited to participate in developing criteria for evaluating and selecting materials.

In conclusion, this study was the first study to systematically investigate teacher's *actual* criteria and the reasons for their criteria and priorities. I have introduced the context and motivation for the investigation in Universities and Institutes of Technology in Taiwan. I have also reviewed the related literature in evaluating materials and discussed how I collected the qualitative and quantitative data in research methodology chapter. Finally, I have presented findings in terms of the current situation of materials evaluation, teachers' evaluation criteria and the reasons for these, and questionnaire results. This study, therefore, reveals that selecting a textbook varies from context to context, and individual to individual. It is also a continuing and reflective process for teachers rather than limited to pre-, in- and/or post-use phases. Therefore, the set of Taiwanese teachers' criteria (after prioritizing) I presented in this study attempted to provide a set of locally appropriate principles for evaluating a textbook rather than aiming to develop a fixed set of criteria for Taiwanese teachers to use. The results will help teachers to reflect on their own criteria and their perceptions of language teaching-learning. Ultimately, a set of criteria teachers employ for selecting a textbook must come from within the teaching context itself.

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List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Taiwan Educational system

Appendix 2: The published lists of criteria

Categories / Writers	Tucker 1975	Davison 1976	Haycraft 1978	Daoud & Celce-Murcia 1979	Mariani 1983	Williams 1983	Mattews 1985	Grant 1987	Dougill 1987	Sheldon 1988	Harmer 1991	McDonough & Shaw 1993	Richards 1993	Cunningsworth 1995	Ur 1996	Savignon 1997	Harmer 1998	Byrd & Celce-Murcia 2001	Sum
Teaching contexts and situations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Role of the textbook													*						1
Aims and objectives		*							*	*	*		*	*	*			*	8
Syllabus				*		*	*	*							*		*		6
Time available		*	*				*	*	*			*							6
Appropriateness to learners		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		15
Suitability for teachers																*	*		2
Class size		*					*												2
Suitability to mixed ability classes														*					1
Authenticity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Authenticity of materials	*		*	*				*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*			11
Authenticity of tasks				*					*										2
Sensitivity to socio-cultural issues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Socio-cultural issues			*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	13
Politics		*	*																2
Religion		*								*									2
Sexism							*		*	*		*		*			*		6
Racism									*	*	*						*		4
Equality											*	*		*			*		4

Organization of the materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Clarity of organization				*		*	*		*		*		*						6
Clarity of instructions and explanations		*				*									*	*		*	5
Clarity of presentation				*		*			*										3
Ease of adaption												*	*						2
Ease of navigation		*				*	*	*	*			*	*				*		8
Grading		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*		13
Recycling and revision		*		*	*		*	*	*	*				*	*				9
Balance							*	*		*							*		4
Variety and regularity of each unit			*						*										2
A series of textbooks				*			*			*									3
Evaluation for learners' progress				*	*					*		*				*			5
Methodology		*	*		*	*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*	*	*	13

Textbook content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Content	*		*	*						*	*	*		*			*		8
Topics			*											*	*		*		4
Vocabulary			*	*		*								*	*				5
Grammar	*			*		*	*			*				*	*			*	8
Pronunciation	*					*								*	*				4

Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Coverage of 4 skills	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*			*		*		*	*		12
Integration of skills	*		*			*			*					*					5

Exercises and activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Rationale for exercise types and their objectives													*			*			2
Appropriateness of practice						*								*				*	3
Clarity of instructions						*							*						2
Sufficiency in linguistic items and skills	*	*					*	*	*		*								6
Variety of exercises		*		*	*		*		*						*				6

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Sufficient communicative activities			*					*	*	*	*				*	*			7
Interesting practice											*						*		2
Level of difficulty													*						1
Self-instruction			*					*				*		*	*	*			6
Supplementary materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
Availability of supplementary materials	*		*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		13
Availability of a teacher's manual	*	*		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	14
Visual design	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Page layout and design			*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		12
Illustrations				*	*		*		*	*						*			6
Font size			*						*	*									3
Note –taking space							*			*									2
Practical concerns	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Availability of textbooks							*							*	*		*		4
Price	*		*			*	*				*			*	*		*		8
Competence of the author	*																		1
Consensus of colleagues							*												1
Equipment													*	*					2
Piloting				*		*					*								3
Recommendation of authorities							*												1
From the publisher											*								1
Quality of the textbook	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Sum
Quality of editing and publishing	*			*		*				*									4
Quality of production	*			*		*		*		*				*					6
Size and weight of textbook				*						*									2

Appendix 3: Example of coding process of published lists of criteria: Step 1

Sample: Cunningsworth, 1995 (Checklist 14)

Contents: criteria	Coding from key words
Do *the aims* of the coursebook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching programme and with the needs of the learners? (14)	Aims (clarity of)
Is *the coursebook* suited to the learning/teaching situation? (14)	Content (suitability to context and situations)
How comprehensive is *the coursebook*? Does it cover most or all of what is needed? Is it a good resource for students and teachers? (14)	Content (coverage of)
Is *the coursebook* flexible? Does it allow different teaching and learning styles? (14)	Content (flexibility of)
What *components* make up the total course package (e.g. students' books, teachers' books, workbooks, cassettes, etc)? (14)	Supplementary materials (availability of)
How is *the content organized* (e.g. according to structures, functions, topics, skills, etc)? Is the organization right for learners and teachers? (14)	Content (organization of)
How is *the content sequenced* (e.g. on the basis of complexity, 'learnability', usefulness, etc)? (14)	Grading (appropriacy of)
Is *the grading and progression* suitable for the learners? (14)	Grading (appropriacy of)
Does [*the grading and progression*] allow them to complete the work needed to meet any external syllabus requirements? (14)	Grading (appropriacy of)
Is there adequate *recycling and revision*? (14)	Revision and recycling (availability of)
Are there reference sections for grammar, etc? Is some of the material suitable for *individual study*? (14)	Self-instruction (suitability of)

Is it easy to *find your way* around the coursebook? (14)	Ease of navigation
Is *the layout* clear? (14)	Visual design (clarity of)
Does the coursebook cover the main *grammar* items appropriate to each level, taking learners' needs into account? (14)	Grammar (coverage of)
Is material for *vocabulary* teaching adequate in terms of quantity and range of vocabulary, emphasis placed on vocabulary development, strategies for individual learning? (14)	Vocabulary (coverage of)
Does the coursebook include material for *pronunciation work*? If so what is covered: individual sounds, word stress, sentence stress, intonation? (14)	Pronunciation (coverage of)
Does *the coursebook* deal with the structuring and conventions of language use above sentence level, e.g. how to take part in conversations, how to structure a piece of extended writing, how to identify the main points in a reading passage? (More relevant at intermediate and advanced levels.) (14)	Content (appropriacy of language)
Are *style and appropriacy* dealt with? If so, is language style matched to social situation? (14)	Reading style (compatibility of)
Are all *four skills* adequately covered, bearing in mind your course aims and syllabus requirements? (14)	Skills (coverage of)
Is there material for *integrated skills* work? (14)	Integration (availability of)
Are *reading* passages and associated activities suitable for your students' levels, interests, etc? (14)	Reading (suitability to learners)
Is there sufficient *reading* material? (14)	Reading (sufficiency of)
Is listening material well recorded, as *authentic* as possible, accompanied by background information, questions and activities which help comprehension? (14)	Materials (authenticity of)
Is material for spoken English (dialogues, role-plays, etc) well designed to equip learners for *real-life* interactions? (14)	Materials (authenticity of)
Are *writing activities* suitable in terms of amount of	Practice

guidance/control, degree of accuracy, organization of longer pieces of writing (e.g. paragraphing) and use of appropriate styles? (14)	(appropriate to)
Is there sufficient material of genuine *interest to learners*? (14)	Learners (appropriate to)
Is there enough variety and range of *topic*? (14)	Topics (coverage of)
Will *the topics* help expand students' awareness and enrich their experience? (14)	Topics (awareness-raising potential of)
Are *the topics* sophisticated enough in content, yet within the learners' language level? (14)	Topics (coverage of)
Will your students be able to relate to **the social and culture contexts** presented in the coursebook? (14)	Social/cultural issues (sensitivity to)
Are *women* portrayed and represented *equally with men*? (14)	Sexism (sensitivity to)
Are *other groups* represented, with reference to ethnic origin, occupation, disability, etc? (14)	Equity (sensitivity to)
What *approach/ approaches* to language learning are taken by the coursebook? Is this appropriate to the learning/ teaching situation? (14)	Method (appropriacy of)
What *level of active learner involvement* can be expected? Does this match your students' learning styles and expectations? (14)	Learners (appropriate to)
What *techniques are used for presenting/ practicing new language items*? Are they suitable for your learners? (14)	Methods (suitability of)
How are the different *skills* taught? (14)	Skills (presentation of)
How are *communicative abilities* developed? (14)	Communicate abilities (development of)
Does the material include any *advice/ help to students* on study skills and learning strategies? (14)	Guidance (availability of)
Are *students* expected to *take a degree of responsibility for their own learning* (e.g. by setting their own individual	Self-instruction

learning targets)? (14)	
Is there adequate ***guidance for the teachers*** who will be using the coursebook and its supporting materials? (14)	Teacher's manual (availability of)
Are ***the teachers' books*** comprehensive and supportive? (14)	Clear guidance for teachers
Do [***the teachers' books***] adequately cover teaching techniques, language items such as grammar rules and culture-specific information? (14)	Teaching techniques and language items (coverage of)
Do the writers set out and justify ***the basic premises and principles*** underlying the material? (14)	Principles (justification of)
Are ***keys to exercises*** given? (14)	Answer keys (availability of)
What does the whole package ***cost***? Does this represent good value for money? (14)	Acceptable price
Are the books ***strong and long-lasting***? (14)	Quality of production
Are [the books] ***attractive in appearance***? (14)	Visual design (attractiveness of)
Are [the books] ***easy to obtain***? Can further supplies be obtained at short notice? (14)	Textbook (availability of)
Do any parts of the package require particular ***equipment***, such as a language laboratory, listening centre or video player? If so, do you have the ***equipment available*** for use and is it reliable? (14)	Equipment (availability of)

Appendix 4: Example of coding process of published lists of criteria: Step 2

10= Checklist 10, 16= Checklist 16, 17= Checklist17 and so on.

Contents: criteria	Label	Overall Category
Authenticity of language (1)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Is the language used in the materials **realistic**- i.e. like **real-life** English? (11)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Is 'new' language introduced in motivating and **realistic** contexts? (11)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Is the subject and content of the materials **realistic** at least some of the time? (11)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Plenty of **authentic** language (15)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
How **realistic** are the language samples? Is the context sufficient to convey meaning? (16)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Are the dialogues **realistic** and relevant and lively? (3)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Are there enough **authentic** materials, so that the students can that the book is relevant to real life? (8)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Do speaking materials incorporate what we know about the nature of **real** interaction or are artificial dialogues offered instead? (12)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Is the content obviously **realistic**, being taken from L1 material not initially intended for ELT purposes? (10)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Is material for spoken English (dialogues, role-plays, etc) well designed to equip learners for **real-life** interactions? (14)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
How natural [is the cassette]? To what extent is [the cassette] **authentic**? (9)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Where listening skills are involved, are recordings '**authentic**' or artificial? (12)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity

Is listening material well recorded, as **authentic** as possible, accompanied by background information, questions and activities which help comprehension? (14)	Materials (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Do the **exercises** promote meaningful communication by referring to **realistic** activities and situations? (4)	Tasks (authenticity of)	Authenticity
Do the **tasks** exploit language in a communicative or '**real-world**' way? (10)	Tasks (authenticity of)	Authenticity

Appendix 5: Teachers Background Information

1. From interviews N=25

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	10	40%
	Female	15	60%
	Total	25	100%
Qualification	Education	3	12%
	EFL/TEFL/ TESOL	3	12%
	Linguistics	4	16%
	Literature	12	48%
	Others	3	12%
	Total	25	100%
Years teaching	0-4	4	16%
	5-9	3	12%
	10-14	14	56%
	15-19	2	8%
	20-24	1	4%
	24 above	1	4%
	Total	25	100%
Institution type	University of Technology	3	12%
	Institutes of Technology	22	88%
	Total	25	100%

2. From survey N=138

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	41	30%
	Female	97	70%
	Total	138	100%
Qualification	Education	22	16%
	EFL/TEFL/ TESOL	73	53%
	Linguistics	18	13%
	Literature	18	13%
	Others	7	5%
	Total	138	100%
Years teaching	0-4	20	14%
	5-9	28	20%
	10-14	31	22%
	15-19	33	24%
	20-24	17	12%
	24 above	9	7%
	Total	138	100%
Institution type	University of Technology	103	75%
	Institutes of Technology	35	25%
	Total	138	100%

Teaching Status	Full-time	24	96%
	Part-time	1	4%
	Total	25	100%
Textbook selectors	The institution	3	12%
	A committee	1	4%
	Individual teachers	20	80%
	Others	1	4%
	Total	25	100%

Teaching Status	Full-time	105	76%
	Part-time	33	24%
	Total	138	100%
Textbook selectors	The institution	16	12%
	A committee	51	37%
	Individual teachers	58	42%
	Others	13	9%
	Total	138	100%
Age	25-29	5	4%
	30-34	17	12%
	35-39	24	17%
	40-44	33	24%
	45-49	29	21%
	50 above	30	22%
	Total	138	100%

Appendix 6.1: Interview guide- Phase One & Two

<div style="border:1px solid black">

<u>Interview guide- Phase one & two</u>

Interviewee: Date: Place:

Time of interview:

Education background:

No of years teaching:

[Describe here the project, telling the interviewee about the (a) purpose of the study,(b) individuals and sources of data being collected, (c) what will be done with the data to protect the anonymity of the interviewee, and (d) how long the interview will take.]

[Turn on the tape recorder and test it]

Questions:

1.   What's the role of textbooks in your teaching context?

2.   Could you describe how you select a textbook usually?

3.   What kind of criteria do you apply when you select a textbook? Please think

       about times when you actually select one. And why do you think these criteria

       were important?

4.   Do you use any other teaching materials, except the textbook? In what way(s) do you use these?

5.   Have you ever used any teaching materials which you liked/disliked? What

       aspects of this teaching material did you like/dislike and why?

*Thank the individuals for their cooperation and participation in this interview. Assure them of the confidentiality of the responses and the potential for future interviews.

</div>

Appendix 6.2: Interview guide- Phase Three

<u>Interview guide- Phase three</u>

Interviewee: Date: Place:

Time of interview:

Education background:

No of years teaching:

[Describe here the project, telling the interviewee about the (a) purpose of the second interview, (b) individuals and sources of data being collected, (c) what will be done with the data to protect the anonymity of the interviewee, and (d) how long the interview will take.]

[Turn on the tape recorder and test it]

Questions:

1. Are there criteria for choosing materials that you want to modify, add or delete to the criteria you mentioned in the first interview, and why?

2. What do you think of the contents of the textbook you are currently using? Do they determine your teaching, and to what extent?

3. How do you evaluate materials (after they've been used) in your school (if at all)? Do you think it would be useful (if it is not currently done) and why?

4. Have you taken any training course on evaluating materials? If yes, how practical it was? If not, do you think it is necessary to have a training course? What do you need from the training course?

*Thank the individuals for their cooperation and participation in this interview. Assure them of the confidentiality of the responses and the potential for future interviews.

Appendix 7: An online questionnaire

Part 1: Invitation letter

老師您好：

我是英國華威大學英語教學博士研究生，我的研究主要探討當您選用非應外系共同英文教材時，哪些選書標準對您而言是重要的或是不重要的。

如果您有選用或協助選用非應外系共同英文教材之經驗者 (含專兼任教師)，竭誠邀請您參與本問卷填寫。本問卷預計 15-20 分鐘內可以完成填寫。所得結果純粹為學術研究之用，絕不另做他用，敬請放心作答。

問卷網址為 http://www.my3q.com/home2/281/huangshuer/9451.phtml

如果您對此問卷或我的研究有任何問題或建議，歡迎以信末提供之資訊與我們聯繫。

非常感謝您撥冗填寫此問卷。

祝 教安

黃淑娥　敬上

Part 2: The questionnaire

Topic: Taiwanese EFL teachers' criteria for selecting a textbook for the General English course

台灣技職校院教師選用非應外系共同英文教材標準之研究

This questionnaire aims to investigate what criteria are important or unimportant for you when you select a textbook for the General English course in order to provide suggestions for teachers in selecting a textbook. The criteria given below all come from interviews with teachers - are they important or unimportant for you?

I would like to invite those who have past or present experience of selecting or helping to select a textbook for the General English course in *Universities of Technology* in Taiwan to participate in this study. Please click how you feel about each criterion according to its importance to you. The questionnaire consists of 86 questions. It should take you 15-20 minute to complete the questionnaire.

This form is anonymous. No data which personally identifies you is collected on the form, and the data you provide is used solely to help me with my research.

您好，

這份問卷主要探討當您選用非應外系共同英文教材時，哪些選書標準對您而言是重要的或是不重要的。研究成果將提供技職校院教師選用非應外系共同英文教材之參考。問卷所提供之選書標準全部來自教師的訪談結果。

如果您有選用或協助選用非應外系共同英文教材之經驗者 (含專兼任教師)，竭誠邀請您參與本問卷填寫。本份問卷分爲兩大部分：第一部份爲與研究主題相關之問題，第二部分爲背景資料。問卷共計 86 題，大約 15-20 分鐘可以完成填寫。請根據您覺得各項選書標準的重要性程度點選答案。

本問卷採用無記名方式，所得結果純爲學術研究之用，敬請放心填寫。

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I. How important are the following criteria when you select a textbook?

Overall construction 整體架構

A textbook should 教科書應該
1. be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar or reading texts). 由簡而難、循序漸進。如:字彙、文法及文章
2. provide the right amount of content to fit with time available. 提供適合授課時數的內容份量。
3. provide short reading texts (e.g. no longer than half a page). 提供短篇閱讀文章。如：不超過半頁
4. not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words). 不要在每篇文章中介紹太多的新單字。如：不超過十個新單字
5. introduce new vocabulary in preparation for other activities, e.g. reading texts or conversations. 先介紹新單字後再介紹文章或對話。
6. include recycling and revision. 包含可以複習之前所學習過的內容。
7. not provide too many reading texts. 不要提供太多篇的文章。
8. integrate vocabulary, grammar and/ or pronunciation exercises with skills practice (e.g. learning vocabulary through dialogues). 透過聽說讀寫的活動來練習單字、文法、或發音。如：透過對話學習字彙或文法
9. give practice in only one teaching point at a time. 一次只練習一個教學重點。如：教 be. 動詞就只練習 be.動詞
10. present a reading text first and then teach new vocabulary through the reading text. 先呈現文章，再由文章中介紹新單字。
11. give clear instructions for the activities. 對於活動步驟說明清楚。
12. give short dialogue practice activities. 提供短篇對話練習活動。

13.	provide interactive activities for students to be used in class (e.g. pair work, group work). 提供課堂上學生可以互動的活動。如：兩人或三人以上的分組活動
14.	integrate instruction in related learning strategies (e.g. learning vocabulary from context). 於內容中融入相關的學習策略訓練。如：從上下文推測出字意
15.	give model dialogues in which students can substitute some words. 提供對話範例，讓學生可以自行替換單字做練習。
16.	offer reading texts of different genres. 提供不同體裁的文章。
17.	match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught. 篇幅長短應隨著課程內容的難易度做調整。

Students' needs 學生需求

A textbook should 教科書應該	
18.	cater for the four skills. 涵蓋聽、說、讀、寫四個層面。
19.	match the majority of students' real vocabulary/grammar level not just the level they're 'supposed' to have reached previously. 適合大部分學生的程度。
20.	provide many exercises to practise the four skills. 提供大量聽、說、讀、寫的練習。
21.	contain useful topics for students' future careers. 包含對學生將來就業有幫助的主題。
22.	provide controlled exercises to match students' learning style. (e.g. provide exercises with close-ended questions, sentence drills, matching or True/ False). 提供適合學生學習方式的制式練習。如：提供非問答題練習，句型替換練習，配對練習或由是非題所構成的練習。
23.	provide student workbooks. 提供習作本。
24.	meet students' need to pass the GEP Test. (e.g. match its difficulty level, task types and question patterns) 配合學生通過全民英檢的需求。如：配合全民英檢的難易度或考試題型
25.	consider the interests or needs of students from different departments. 考慮不同科系學生的喜好或需求。

26.	provide a variety of exercises rather than just mechanical or routine exercises. 提供多樣化而非機械式或例行性的練習。
27.	provide many exercises to familiarize students with grammar rules. 提供讓學生熟悉文法規則的大量練習。
28.	provide CD recordings of conversations which are not too fast. 提供速度不會太快的 CD 對話內容。
29.	be appropriate for a mixed level class. 適合學生程度不一的班級。
30.	provide many exercises to familiarize students with vocabulary. 提供讓學生熟悉單字的大量練習。
31.	provide exercises to help students develop their creativity. 提供可以讓學生發揮創意的練習。
32.	be age-appropriate. 適合學生的年紀。

Teachers' needs 教師需求

A textbook should 教科書應該
33. have rich resources and supplementary information (e.g. cultural background, new vocabulary or a variety of optional activities) in the teacher's manual. 提供內容豐富的教師手冊。如：補充文化背景、新單字或多樣化活動範例
34. contain a test question databank. 提供題庫。
35. contain topics which can stimulate teachers to share their knowledge or experiences with the students. 包含老師可以發揮的主題，讓教師可以跟學生分享個人的經驗或知識。
36. provide an approach which suits my teaching philosophy (e.g. cooperative learning approach, CLT etc.). 提供符合教師教學理念的教材教法。如：合作學習法或溝通式教學法
37. contain answer keys. 提供解答。
38. provide a teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers. 提供由台灣教師編寫的教師手冊。
39. have an easy-to-navigate teacher's manual. (e.g. with the content displayed on one side, and the instructions on the other side). 提供方便使用的教師手冊。如：一頁為課文，另一頁為教師手冊內容。

40.	provide teachers with exam papers.
	提供教師現成的試卷。
41.	contain transcripts of audio-recordings.
	提供(錄音的)文字記錄。
42.	provide learning opportunities for teachers. (e.g: new knowledge or information)
	提供教師學習的機會。如：新知識或新資訊
43.	provide various topics from which teachers can select to meet students' interests.
	提供多樣化的主題，讓教師可以從中選擇學生最感興趣的主題。
44.	be suitable for setting written tests.
	適合筆試的出題方式。

Authenticity 真實性

A textbook should 教科書應該
45. introduce real-life topics (e.g. opening a bank account, buying a ticket).
介紹生活化的主題。如：銀行開戶、買車票等
46. contain vocabulary which is related to 'real-life' use.
包含生活化的單字。
47. contain reading texts which are related to 'real-life' (e.g. true stories, non-literary texts).
包含生活化的文章。如：真實的故事, 非文學性的文章
48. use photographs.
使用照片。
49. contain practice which simulates real-life situations (e.g. make a list for travelling).
提供日常生活活動的練習。如：列出旅行用清單
50. contain authentic recordings (including situational sounds) on the CDs.
包含有實境對話的 CD。

Self-instruction 自學

A textbook should 教科書應該
51. contain a CD-ROM for students to use for homework/self-instruction.
搭配 CD-ROM 讓學生作為回家功課或自學用。
52. contain a CD for students to use for self-instruction.
搭配 CD 讓學生自學用。
53. contains pictures which are rich in potential for use by the teacher.
包含豐富的圖片以輔助教學。

54.	have an accompanying CD- ROM for students to use in class. 搭配 CD-ROM 供學生上課使用。
55.	be accompanied by online learning materials for self-instruction. 搭配線上學習教材自學用。
56.	contain a glossary for self-instruction. 附單字表自學用。
57.	contain advice on learning strategies for self-instruction (e.g. learning strategies for vocabulary or reading). 附學習策略自學用。如：字彙或閱讀學習技巧
58.	contain a grammar reference section for self-instruction. 附文法參考資料自學用。

Cultural Awareness 文化意識

A textbook should 教科書應該
59. introduce foreign cultures. 介紹外國文化。
60. introduce Taiwanese culture. 介紹台灣文化。
61. present cultural issues on the basis of contents of texts or conversations. 透過文章或對話介紹文化。

Visual Design 視覺設計

A textbook should 教科書應該
62. have clear page layout. 編排清楚。
63. use colourful pictures. 使用彩色圖片。
64. use sufficiently large font size. 使用較大的字體。
65. be laid out attractively 設計精美。
66. provide plenty of space for note-taking. 提供足夠的空白處讓學生做筆記。

Practical Concerns 現實考量

A textbook should 教科書應該
67. be of a reasonable price. 選用價格合理的。
68. be part of a complete series of textbooks for different levels in the same year or for different years. 包括一系列的教材，適合分級制度使用。
69. provide Chinese instructions and explanations. 提供中文解說。
70. be accompanied by opportunities for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher. 選用書商有提供產學合作案的。
71. match the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project. 選用有配合教育部提升外語能力計畫案的。
72. be newly published, covering recent issues. 選用涵蓋時事的新書。
73. have been recommended by colleagues. 選用同事所建議的。
74. have been demonstrated by a publisher. 選用書商有提供示範教學的。
75. be accompanied by teacher training courses provided by a publisher. 選用書商有提供教師教學訓練課程的。
76. be easy to use in large classes 適合大班教學使用。
77. have been recommended by a publisher. 選用書商所建議的。
78. provide mock papers for the GEP Test and a marking service for the mock papers for the GEP Test from a publisher. 選用書商有提供全民英檢模擬試卷及批改模擬試卷服務的。
79. have been positively evaluated by students in previous years. 選用前幾屆學生曾給予正面評價的。

II. Background Information about yourself 背景資料

80. Age 年齡:
    O 25-29 O 30-34 O 35-39 O 40-44 O 45-49 O over 50

81. Gender 性別:
    O Male 男 O Female 女

82. Qualifications 教育背景(最高學歷):
    O Education 教育 O ELT/TEFL/ TESOL 英語教學
    O Linguistics 語言學 O Literature and related subjects 文學相關學系
    O other, please specify 其他, 請說明 _____

83. Years of teaching 教學年資 O 0-4 O 5-9 O 10-14 O 15-19 O 20-24
                              O over 25

84. Institution type 學校類型 O University of Science and Technology 科技大學
                              O Institute of Technology 技術學院

85. Teaching status 教學狀態 O Full-time 專任 O Part-time 兼任

86. Who selects textbooks in your institution? 教科書選用者
    O The institution 校方 O A committee 課程相關委員會
    O Individual teachers 個別教師 O others 其他

Comments 建議事項
1. If you have any other criteria for selecting the General English textbook are not mentioned above, please list these below and give reasons. 如有本問卷未提到之選書標準，歡迎列出並說明原因。
2. If you have any more comments on textbook selection or on this questionnaire, feel free to make comments. 又，若您有任何關於教材評估或此問卷之意見或想法，敬請不吝指教。

Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Appendix 8: Example of coding process of Taiwanese teachers' criteria: Step 1

Sample Interviewee: Teacher 1

(Translated from Chinese into English for the purpose of illustration)

Contents	Coding from key words
The difficulty level of the content should be increased step-by-step. For example, the presentation of grammar items and vocabulary should be phased to become more difficult. (T1)	Content (Grading)
Students might become impatient if there are too many new words introduced in each lesson. (T1)	Reasonable vocabulary load
The design of the activities in the textbook can be more interactive to motivate students. (T1)	Support of interactive learning
A good textbook gives practice in only one teaching point at a time, for example, if the teaching point is listening, then just focus on practicing listening strategies or skills, don't explain the grammar rules because they are sentences. (T1)	Load of teaching points in the exercise
The majority of students' English language proficiency levels in Institutes of Technology are low. The level of student ability in my school is likely to be the same level of students in junior high school. So if the content is too difficult, students might have difficulty in assimilating the knowledge. (T1)	Appropriate to students' proficiency level
The textbook should include the four skills. However, as my students' level of ability is that of 'sentences' this limits the teaching level of writing to suit student needs. (T1)	Four skills (converge of)
Language learning should start from lots of conversation practice rather than just learning grammar rules. I used to focus on explaining 'knowledge' provided in the textbook, for example, grammar transmission. But I realized students have to be able to 'use' or 'perform' the language they are learning to be able to acquire the language. So I give students enough time to practice what I teach rather than just teaching them the subject. The process of learning a language should start from listening and speaking, then reading and writing. Practice in each skill area enhances mastery of the others. (T1)	Many exercises (availability of)
Workbooks offer extra exercises for students to be able to practise. (T1)	Student workbook (availability of)

English lessons are limited to three hours per week. I can't finish teaching the whole book. (T1)	Feasibility in terms of time
I would like to know if the teaching approach suggested by the textbook matches my own teaching philosophy, for example communicate language teaching. (T1)	Teaching approach (suitability of)
I use the exercises provided in the CD-ROM for classroom practice. Using a CD-ROM is convenient and saves teachers' preparation time. Teachers can play it immediately and repeatedly without spending time writing data on the blackboard. Teachers can also just follow the schedule of the textbook provided in the CD-ROM. Besides, the conversations provided in the CD-ROM can be divided into individual sentences and words, so students can follow the instructions and practice the sentences and words repeatedly. However, it can't replace the teacher's role in class. (T1)	CD-ROM (availability of)
It will help students to memorise the vocabulary if the vocabulary presented in the textbook is the vocabulary frequently used in real life. (T1)	Vocabulary (authenticity of)
Relating topics to real-life is a better approach to language learning, using topics such as shopping, movies, etc., because a language is used for communication. (T1)	Topics (authenticity of)
The use of CD can provide appropriate pronunciation input if teachers are non-native speakers. Students can imitate from the CDs and practice repeatedly. (T1)	CD (for self-instruction)
A CD-ROM can be used for students' self- instruction. (T1)	CD-ROM (for self-instruction)
Students can make use of rich online materials for self-instruction. (T1)	Online learning materials (for self-instruction)
I choose a textbook according to students' feedback from previous years. (T1)	Positively feedback from students in previous years

Appendix 9: Example of coding process of Taiwanese teachers' criteria: Step 2

Sample Criterion: A good textbook should be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar or reading texts).

	Contents	Coding from key words	Criteria
T1	The difficulty level of the content should be increased step-by-step. For example, the presentation of grammar items and vocabulary should be phased to become more difficult. (T1)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar).
T3	Most of my students don't fully understand English grammar and can't use it accurately, so it is important to introduce the basic grammar items systematically. (T3)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. grammar.
T4	Grammar should be presented in a systemically way, that is, from easy to difficult. (T4)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. grammar.
T7	I will examine the textbook to consider how difficult the step-by-step levels of vocabulary and grammar are progressed. (T7)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar).

T8	Sequencing the content of learning on the basis of complexity will allow students to know what they have learnt and to see the progress of their learning. (T8)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar or reading texts).
T9	The levels of content should be increased step-by-step based upon difficulty. Grammar items should be presented step-by-step. (T9)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. grammar.
T10	The design of textbook needs to be graded to follow students' language learning progression, for example, the acquisition of 'negative sentences'. (T10)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. grammar.
T14	Grammar is better presented systemically. (T14)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. grammar.
T15	A textbook should be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult, for example, in reading texts. (T15)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. reading texts).
T16	The complexity of the content should be increased step-by-step. For example, grammar. (T16)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. grammar.

Appendix 10: Example of coding process of Taiwanese teachers' criteria: Step 3

Sample Interviewee: Teacher 1

(Translated from Chinese into English for the purpose of illustration)

Criteria	Category
A textbook should	
be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar or reading texts).	Overall Construction
not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words).	Overall Construction
provide interactive activities for students to be used in class (e.g. pair work, group work).	Overall Construction
give practice in only one teaching point at a time.	Overall Construction
match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught.	Overall Construction
match the majority of students' real vocabulary/grammar level not just the level they're 'supposed' to have reached previously.	Students' Needs
cater for the four skills.	Students' Needs
provide many exercises to practise the four skills.	Students' Needs
provide student workbooks.	Students' Needs
provide the right amount of content to fit with time available.	Teachers' Needs
provide an approach which suits my teaching philosophy (e.g. cooperative learning approach, CLT etc.).	Teachers' Needs
have an accompanying CD- ROM for students to use in class.	Teachers' Needs

contain vocabulary which is related to 'real-life' use.	Authenticity
introduce real-life topics (e.g. opening a bank account, buying a ticket).	Authenticity
contain a CD for students to use for self-instruction.	Self-instruction
contain a CD-ROM for students to use for homework/self-instruction.	Self-instruction
be accompanied by online learning materials for self-instruction.	Self-instruction
have been positively evaluated by students in previous years.	Practical Concerns

Appendix 11: Example of coding process of Taiwanese teachers' criteria: Step 4

Sample Interviewee: Teacher 1

(Translated from Chinese into English for the purpose of illustration)

Contents (Interview 1)	Coding from key words	Criteria (The criteria reported here have combined with other teachers' criteria and refined while developing an questionnaire)	Category	Contents (Interview 2)
The difficulty level of the content should be increased step-by-step. For example, the presentation of grammar items and vocabulary should be phased to become more difficult. (T1)	Content (Grading)	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar or reading texts).	Overall construction	
Students might become impatient if there are too many new words introduced in each lesson. (T1)	Reasonable vocabulary load	not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words).	Overall construction	

The design of the activities in the textbook can be more interactive to motivate students. (T1)	Support of interactive learning	provide interactive activities for students to be used in class (e.g. pair work, group work).	Overall construction	It is important that textbooks provide interactive activities. However, if teachers can't manipulate these activities, it will not benefit any teaching. So I think how teachers interact with students in a teaching context is more important and additional what the textbook provides. The interaction between the teacher and students will encourage students to get involved in learning. (T1)
A good textbook gives practice in only one teaching point at a time, for example, if the teaching point is listening, then just focus on practicing listening strategies or skills, don't explain the grammar rules because they are sentences. (T1)	Load of teaching points in the exercise	give practice in only one teaching point at a time.	Overall construction	
The majority of students' English language proficiency levels in Institutes of Technology are low. The level of student ability in my school is likely to be the same level of students in junior high school. So if the content is too difficult, students might have difficulty in assimilating the knowledge. (T1)	Appropriate to students' proficiency level	match the majority of students' real vocabulary/grammar level not just the level they're 'supposed' to have reached previously.	Students' needs	

The textbook should include the four skills. However, as my students' level of ability is that of 'sentences' this limits the teaching level of writing to suit student needs. (T1)	Four skills (converge of)	cater for the four skills.	Students' needs	
Language learning should start from lots of conversation practice rather than just learning grammar rules. I used to focus on explaining 'knowledge' provided in the textbook, for example, grammar transmission. But I realized students have to be able to 'use' or 'perform' the language they are learning to be able to acquire the language. So I give students enough time to practice what I teach rather than just teaching them the subject. The process of learning a language should start from listening and speaking, then reading and writing. Practice in each skill area enhances mastery of the others. (T1)	Many exercises (availability of)	provide many exercises to practise the four skills.	Students' needs	
Workbooks offer extra exercises for students to be able to practise. (T1)	Student workbook (availability of)	provide student workbooks.	Students' needs	The extra exercises help to develop students' language ability and evaluate students' learning progress. (T1)
English lessons are limited to three hours per week. I can't finish teaching the whole book. (T1)	Feasibility in terms of time	provide the right amount of content to fit with time available.	Overall construction	

I would like to know if the teaching approach suggested by the textbook matches my own teaching philosophy, for example communicate language teaching. (T1)	Teaching approach (suitability of)	provide an approach which suits my teaching philosophy (e.g. cooperative learning approach, CLT etc.).	Teacher's needs	I adapt the communicative language teaching approach. I prefer students to practise what I have taught immediately after teaching it. (T1)
I use the exercises provided in the CD-ROM for classroom practice. Using a CD-ROM is convenient and saves teachers' preparation time. Teachers can play it immediately and repeatedly without spending time writing data on the blackboard. Teachers can also just follow the schedule of the textbook provided in the CD-ROM. Besides, the conversations provided in the CD-ROM can be divided into individual sentences and words, so students can follow the instructions and practice the sentences and words repeatedly. However, it can't replace the teacher's role in class. (T1)	CD-ROM (availability of)	have an accompanying CD- ROM for students to use in class.	Self-instruction	The CD-ROM is a good language teaching/learning material. Students can use the CD-ROM for self-learning. However, if students don' practise by themselves, it is just an ordinary teaching/learning material. (T1)
It will help students to memorise the vocabulary if the vocabulary presented in the textbook is the vocabulary frequently used in real life. (T1)	Vocabulary (authenticity of)	contain vocabulary which is related to 'real-life' use.	Authenticity	

Relating topics to real-life is a better approach to language learning, using topics such as shopping, movies, etc., because a language is used for communication. (T1)	Topics (authenticity of)	introduce real-life topics (e.g. opening a bank account, buying a ticket).	Authenticity	Students will be motivated if what they learn can be used immediately in daily life. (T1)
The use of CD can provide appropriate pronunciation input if teachers are non-native speakers. Students can imitate from the CDs and practice repeatedly. (T1)	CD (for self-instruction)	contain a CD for students to use for self-instruction.	Self-instruction	
A CD-ROM can be used for students' self- instruction. (T1)	CD-ROM (for self-instruction)	contain a CD-ROM for students to use for homework/self-instruction.	Self-instruction	
Students can make use of rich online materials for self-instruction. (T1)	Online learning materials (for self-instruction)	be accompanied by online learning materials for self-instruction.	Self-instruction	Self-learning is important because time for practising a language in classroom is limited. For example, only three hours are provided for English lessons per week. Also, as there are a high number of students per class there is not enough time per class for each student to practice. (T1)
I choose a textbook according to students' feedback from previous years. (T1)	Positively feedback from students in previous years	have been positively evaluated by students in previous years.	Practical concerns	
	Appropriacy of allotted pages	match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the	Overall construction	Each unit in a textbook is often allotted the standardized teaching hours and

		complexity of what is being taught.		shares the same amount of pages. However, the more complex grammar rules, for example, should allotted more teaching time and more practising time for students. (T1)

Appendix 12: Taiwanese Teachers' Criteria

N=25; T1= Teacher1; TA= Teacher A in the preliminary study

Item #	● Overall construction	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
1	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar or reading texts).	*		*	*			*	*	*	*				*	*	*										10
2	provide the right amount of content to fit with time available.	*	*					*	*			*	*		*				*			*	*				10
3	provide short reading texts (e.g. no longer than half a page).		*	*		*		*	*					*		*										*	8
4	not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words).	*	*	*		*			*			*						*				*					8
5	introduce new vocabulary in preparation for other activities, e.g. reading texts or conversations.			*			*	*				*	*												*		6
6	include recycling and revision.		*											*					*	*		*					5
7	not provide too many reading texts.		*			*									*											*	4

No.	Statement	Count
8	integrate vocabulary, grammar and/ or pronunciation exercises with skills practice (e.g. learning vocabulary through dialogues).	4
9	give practice in only one teaching point at a time.	4
10	present a reading text first and then teach new vocabulary through the reading text.	3
11	give clear instructions for the activities.	3
12	give short dialogue practice activities.	3
13	provide interactive activities for students to be used in class (e.g. pair work, group work).	3
14	integrate instruction in related learning strategies (e.g. learning vocabulary from context).	3
15	give model dialogues in which students can substitute some words.	2

	Students' needs	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
16	offer reading texts of different genres.						*																				1
17	match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught.	*																									1
18	cater for the four skills.	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*				19
19	match the majority of students' real vocabulary/grammar level not just the level they're 'supposed' to have reached previously.	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*					*	*	*				16
20	provide many exercises to practise the four skills.	*	*				*	*		*						*					*	*			*		9
21	contain useful topics for students' future careers.			*			*					*		*							*	*			*		7
22	provide controlled exercises to match students' learning style. (e.g. provide exercises with close-ended questions, sentence drills, matching or True/False).			*				*	*				*						*	*	*						7
23	provide student workbooks.	*		*			*					*									*		*				6

No.	Statement																											Count
24	meet students' need to pass the GEPT exam. (e.g. match its difficulty level, task types and question patterns).			*							*								*	*			*	*					6
25	consider the interests or needs of students from different departments.					*	*					*												*					4
26	provide a variety of exercises rather than just mechanical or routine exercises.							*		*			*									*							4
27	provide many exercises to familiarize students with grammar rules.		*			*	*																						3
28	provide CD recordings of conversation which are not too fast.		*									*			*														3
29	be appropriate for a mixed level class.					*						*																	2
30	provide many exercises to familiarize students with vocabulary.		*				*																						2
31	provide exercises to help students develop their creativity.					*						*																	2

		T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
32	be age-appropriate.										*																1
	● **Teachers' needs**	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
33	have rich resources and supplementary information (e.g. cultural background, new vocabulary or a variety of optional activities) in the teacher's manual.			*						*	*	*		*	*	*					*	*	*	*	*		12
34	contain a test question databank.			*									*				*		*		*	*					6
35	contain topics which can stimulate teachers to share their knowledge or experiences with the students.				*	*	*						*														4
36	provide an approach which suits my teaching philosophy (e.g. cooperative learning approach, CLT etc.).	*											*		*			*									4
37	contain answer keys.			*						*			*								*						4
38	provide the teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers.																				*	*					2
39	have an easy-to-navigate teacher's manual. (e.g. with the content displayed on one side, and the instructions on the other side).															*								*			2

No.	Item	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
40	provide teachers with exam papers.											*													*		2
41	contain transcripts of audio-recordings.			*									*														2
42	provide learning opportunities for teachers. (e.g. new knowledge or information).												*														1
43	provide various topics from which teachers can select to meet students' interests.			*																							1
44	be suitable for setting written tests.															*											1
● **Authenticity**		T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
45	introduce real-life topics (e.g. opening a bank account, buying a ticket).	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*						*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*		*	17
46	contain vocabulary which is related to 'real-life' use.	*					*			*			*									*	*	*			7
47	contain reading texts which are related to 'real-life' (e.g. true stories, non-literary texts).		*				*			*						*	*		*					*			7
48	use photographs.															*					*				*		3

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		T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
49	contain practice which simulates real-life situations (e.g. make a list for travelling).					*							*														2
50	contain authentic recordings (including situational sounds) on the CDs.										*																1
	● **Self-instruction**	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
51	contain a CD-ROM for students to use for homework/self-instruction.	*	*	*	*		*	*			*	*	*	*				*						*		*	13
52	contain a CD for students to use for self-instruction.	*	*										*					*	*				*	*			7
53	contain pictures which are rich in potential for use by the teacher.					*		*				*		*		*								*		*	7
54	have an accompanying CD- ROM for students to use in class.	*	*	*																		*		*	*	*	7
55	be accompanied by online learning materials for self-instruction.	*												*			*	*	*								5
56	contain a glossary for self-instruction.			*										*					*								3

#		T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
57	contain advice on learning strategies for self-instruction (e.g. learning strategies for vocabulary or reading).										*							*									2
58	contain a grammar reference section for self-instruction.													*													1
	● **Cultural awareness**	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
59	introduce foreign cultures.		*				*	*			*	*	*		*						*	*		*			10
60	introduce Taiwanese culture.		*				*	*	*		*	*									*	*		*			9
61	present cultural issues on the basis of contents of texts or conversations.								*		*	*															3
	● **Visual design**	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum
62	have clear page layout.		*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*		*			*	*	*			*	*				14
63	use colourful pictures.		*			*		*						*	*			*	*						*		8
64	use sufficiently large font size.							*		*	*	*		*				*	*								7
65	be laid out attractively.						*	*		*					*							*					5
66	provide plenty of space for note-taking.													*													1
	● **Practical concerns**	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17	T18	T19	T20	T21	T22	T23	TA	TB	Sum

No	Criterion																				Total
67	be of a reasonable price.				*	*		*	*	*			*		*		*			*	9
68	be part of a complete series of textbooks for different levels in the same year or for different years.		*	*							*	*	*	*					*		7
69	provide Chinese instructions and explanations.			*		*	*								*	*			*		6
70	be accompanied by opportunities for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher.				*		*	*	*	*						*					6
71	match the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project.										*		*	*	*	*					5
72	be newly published, covering recent issues.		*		*							*	*								4
73	have been recommended by colleagues.	*	*															*			3
74	have been demonstrated by a publisher.										*	*		*							3
75	be accompanied by teacher training courses provided by a publisher.														*	*			*		3
76	be easy to use in large classes.	*							*												2

#	Criteria																											Total
77	have been recommended by a publisher.									*								*										2
78	provide mock papers for the GEPT exam and a marking service for the mock papers for the GEPT exam from a publisher.							*				*																2
79	have been positively evaluated by students in previous years.	*						*																				2
	Sum of criteria: individual teacher	19	22	23	10	14	21	22	13	15	20	28	16	20	15	15	13	17	15	3	15	23	10	14	9	6		

Appendix 13: Taiwanese Teachers' Criteria (from questionnaire results)

Overall construction

| Item | Criteria | Not at all important=1 | | Unimportant=2 | | Important=3 | | Very important=4 | | Range | | Mean | Standard Deviation |
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min.	Max.		
1	be carefully graded - sequenced from easier to more difficult (e.g. vocabulary, grammar or reading texts).	0	0%	9	7%	62	45%	67	49%	2	4	3.42	0.61
2	provide the right amount of content to fit with time available.	1	1%	8	6%	73	53%	56	41%	1	4	3.33	0.62
3	provide short reading texts (e.g. no longer than half a page).	3	2%	25	18%	85	62%	25	18%	1	4	2.96	0.67
4	not introduce too many new words per reading text (e.g. no more than 10 new words).	1	1%	42	30%	69	50%	26	19%	1	4	2.87	0.71
5	introduce new vocabulary in preparation for other	3	2%	68	49%	39	28%	28	20%	1	4	2.67	0.82

	activities, e.g. reading texts or conversations.												
6	include recycling and revision.	0	0%	14	10%	79	57%	45	33%	2	4	3.22	0.62
7	not provide too many reading texts.	5	4%	44	32%	67	49%	22	16%	1	4	2.77	0.76
8	integrate vocabulary, grammar and/ or pronunciation exercises with skills practice (e.g. learning vocabulary through dialogues).	0	0%	10	7%	64	46%	64	46%	2	4	3.39	0.62
9	give practice in only one teaching point at a time.	5	4%	50	36%	52	38%	31	22%	1	4	2.79	0.83
10	present a reading text first and then teach new vocabulary through the reading text.	0	0%	39	28%	71	51%	28	20%	2	4	2.92	0.70
11	give clear instructions for the activities.	1	1%	12	9%	86	62%	39	28%	1	4	3.18	0.61
12	give short dialogue practice activities.	1	1%	14	10%	81	59%	42	30%	1	4	3.19	0.63

13	provide interactive activities for students to be used in class (e.g. pair work, group work).	0	0%	13	9%	76	55%	49	36%	2	4	3.26	0.62
14	integrate instruction in related learning strategies (e.g. learning vocabulary from context).	1	1%	8	6%	57	41%	72	52%	1	4	3.45	0.64
15	give model dialogues in which students can substitute some words.	0	0%	8	6%	86	62%	44	32%	2	4	3.26	0.56
16	offer reading texts of different genres.	0	0%	14	10%	80	58%	44	32%	2	4	3.22	0.61
17	match the amount of teaching material appropriately to the complexity of what is being taught.	0	0%	7	5%	87	63%	44	32%	2	4	3.27	0.55

Students' needs

Item	Criteria	Not at all important=1		Unimportant=2		Important=3		Very important=4		Range		Mean	Standard Deviation
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min.	Max.		
18	cater for the four skills.	0	0%	29	21%	61	44%	48	35%	2	4	3.14	0.74
19	match the majority of students' real vocabulary/ grammar level not just the level they're 'supposed' to have reached previously.	0	0%	3	2%	80	58%	55	40%	2	4	3.38	0.53
20	provide many exercises to practise the four skills.	0	0%	28	20%	71	51%	39	28%	2	4	3.07	0.70
21	contain useful topics for students' future careers.	1	1%	14	10%	60	43%	63	46%	1	4	3.34	0.69
22	provide controlled exercises to match students' learning style. (e.g. provide exercises with close-ended questions, sentence drills, matching or True/False).	2	1%	31	22%	82	59%	23	17%	1	4	2.91	0.67
23	provide student workbooks.	5	4%	44	32%	60	43%	29	21%	1	4	2.82	0.80

24	meet students' need to pass the GEPT exam. (e.g. match its difficulty level, task types and question patterns).	4	3%	49	36%	60	43%	25	18%	1	4	2.77	0.78
25	consider the interests or needs of students from different departments.	1	1%	24	17%	74	54%	39	28%	1	4	3.09	0.69
26	provide a variety of exercises rather than just mechanical or routine exercises.	0	0%	12	9%	85	62%	41	30%	2	4	3.21	0.59
27	provide many exercises to familiarize students with grammar rules.	3	2%	38	28%	71	51%	26	19%	1	4	2.87	0.73
28	provide CD recordings of conversation which are not too fast.	2	1%	34	25%	67	49%	35	25%	1	4	2.98	0.75
29	be appropriate for a mixed level class.	4	3%	27	20%	77	56%	30	22%	1	4	2.97	0.72
30	provide many exercises to familiarize students with vocabulary.	1	1%	31	22%	73	53%	33	24%	1	4	3.00	0.71
31	provide exercises to help students develop their	0	0%	13	9%	71	51%	54	39%	2	4	3.30	0.63

	creativity.											
32	be age-appropriate.		1	1%	13	9%	76	55%	48	35%	1	4	3.24	0.65

Teachers' needs

Item	Criteria	Not at all important=1		Unimportant=2		Important=3		Very important=4		Range		Mean	Standard Deviation
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min.	Max.		
33	have rich resources and supplementary information (e.g. cultural background, new vocabulary or a variety of optional activities) in the teacher's manual.	0	0%	13	9%	59	43%	66	48%	2	4	3.38	0.65
34	contain a test question databank.	0	0%	15	11%	75	54%	48	35%	2	4	3.24	0.63
35	contain topics which can stimulate teachers to share their knowledge or experiences with the students.	1	1%	14	10%	77	56%	46	33%	1	4	3.22	0.65
36	provide an approach which suits my teaching philosophy (e.g. cooperative learning approach, CLT etc.).	1	1%	16	12%	77	56%	44	32%	1	4	3.19	0.66
37	contain answer keys.	1	1%	15	11%	76	55%	46	33%	1	4	3.21	0.66

38	provide the teacher's manual written by Taiwanese teachers.	13	9%	68	49%	40	29%	17	12%	1	4	2.44	0.83
39	have an easy-to-navigate teacher's manual. (e.g. with the content displayed on one side, and the instructions on the other side).	5	4%	44	32%	63	46%	26	19%	1	4	2.80	0.79
40	provide teachers with exam papers.	3	2%	50	36%	55	40%	30	22%	1	4	2.81	0.80
41	contain transcripts of audio-recordings.	0	0%	23	17%	60	43%	55	40%	2	4	3.23	0.72
42	provide learning opportunities for teachers. (e.g. new knowledge or information).	0	0%	16	12%	73	53%	49	36%	2	4	3.24	0.65
43	provide various topics from which teachers can select to meet students' interests.	0	0%	2	1%	76	55%	60	43%	2	4	3.42	0.52
44	be suitable for setting written tests.	5	4%	42	30%	64	46%	27	20%	1	4	2.82	0.79

Authenticity

Item	Criteria	Not at all important=1		Unimportant=2		Important=3		Very important=4		Range		Mean	Standard Deviation
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min.	Max.		
45	introduce real-life topics (e.g. opening a bank account, buying a ticket).	0	0%	3	2%	64	46%	71	51%	2	4	3.49	0.54
46	contain vocabulary which is related to 'real-life' use.	0	0%	2	1%	67	49%	69	50%	2	4	3.49	0.53
47	contain reading texts which are related to 'real-life' (e.g. true stories, non-literary texts).	0	0%	6	4%	66	48%	66	48%	2	4	3.43	0.58
48	use photographs.	1	1%	24	17%	66	48%	47	34%	1	4	3.15	0.72
49	contain practice which simulates real-life situations (e.g. make a list for travelling).	0	0%	3	2%	78	57%	57	41%	2	4	3.39	0.53
50	contain authentic recordings (including situational sounds) on the CDs.	0	0%	7	5%	78	57%	53	38%	2	4	3.33	0.57

Self-instruction

Item	Criteria	Not at all important=1		Unimportant=2		Important=3		Very important=4		Range		Mean	Standard Deviation
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min.	Max.		
51	contain a CD-ROM for students to use for homework/self-instruction.	1	1%	20	14%	65	47%	52	38%	1	4	3.22	0.71
52	contain a CD for students to use for self-instruction.	1	1%	16	12%	77	56%	44	32%	1	4	3.19	0.66
53	contain pictures which are rich in potential for use by the teacher.	0	0%	21	15%	70	51%	47	34%	2	4	3.19	0.68
54	have an accompanying CD-ROM for students to use in class.	0	0%	28	20%	72	52%	38	28%	2	4	3.07	0.69
55	be accompanied by online learning materials for self-instruction.	0	0%	18	13%	74	54%	46	33%	2	4	3.20	0.65
56	contain a glossary for self-instruction.	2	1%	25	18%	74	54%	37	27%	1	4	3.06	0.71
57	contain advice on learning strategies for self-instruction	0	0%	19	14%	76	55%	43	31%	2	4	3.17	0.65

	(e.g. learning strategies for vocabulary or reading).											
58	contain a grammar reference section for self-instruction.	1	1%	22	16%	78	57%	37	27%	1	4	3.09	0.68

Cultural issues

Item	Criteria	Not at all important=1		Unimportant=2		Important=3		Very important=4		Range		Mean	Standard Deviation
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min.	Max.		
59	introduce foreign cultures.	0	0%	7	5%	70	51%	61	44%	2	4	3.39	0.59
60	introduce Taiwanese culture.	1	1%	12	9%	72	52%	53	38%	1	4	3.28	0.65
61	present cultural issues on the basis of contents of texts or conversations.	0	0%	7	5%	71	51%	60	43%	2	4	3.38	0.58

Visual design

Item	Criteria	Not at all important=1		Unimportant=2		Important=3		Very important=4		Range		Mean	Standard Deviation
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min.	Max.		
62	have clear page layout.	0	0%	0	0%	58	42%	80	58%	3	4	3.58	0.50
63	use colourful pictures.	1	1%	28	20%	71	51%	38	28%	1	4	3.06	0.71
64	use sufficiently large font size.	1	1%	25	18%	67	49%	45	33%	1	4	3.13	0.72
65	be laid out attractively.	1	1%	22	16%	68	49%	47	34%	2	4	3.17	0.69
66	provide plenty of space for note-taking.	4	3%	32	23%	62	45%	40	29%	1	4	3.00	0.80

Practical concerns

Item	Criteria	Not at all important=1		Unimportant=2		Important=3		Very important=4		Range		Mean	Standard Deviation
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Min.	Max.		
67	be of a reasonable price.	2	1%	10	7%	75	54%	51	37%	1	4	3.27	0.66
68	be part of a complete series of textbooks for different levels in the same year or for different years.	3	2%	7	5%	81	59%	47	34%	1	4	3.25	0.65
69	provide Chinese instructions and explanations.	19	14%	78	57%	35	25%	6	4%	1	4	2.20	0.73
70	be accompanied by opportunities for Industry-University Cooperative Projects provided by a publisher.	17	12%	67	49%	46	33%	8	6%	1	4	2.33	0.77
71	match the criteria of the Promoting Foreign Language Project.	16	12%	61	44%	54	39%	7	5%	1	4	2.38	0.76
72	be newly published, covering recent issues.	2	1%	23	17%	83	60%	30	22%	1	4	3.02	0.67
73	have been recommended by	17	12%	67	49%	51	37%	3	2%	1	4	2.29	0.71

	colleagues.											
74	have been demonstrated by a publisher.	16	12%	71	51%	45	33%	6	4%	1	4	2.30	0.73
75	be accompanied by teacher training courses provided by a publisher.	13	9%	62	45%	54	39%	9	7%	1	4	2.43	0.75
76	be easy to use in large classes.	5	4%	32	23%	68	49%	33	24%	1	4	2.93	0.79
77	have been recommended by a publisher.	22	16%	92	67%	22	16%	1	1%	1	4	2.01	0.59
78	provide mock papers for the GEPT exam and a marking service for the mock papers for the GEPT exam from a publisher.	18	13%	61	44%	52	38%	7	5%	1	4	2.35	0.77
79	have been positively evaluated by students in previous years.	2	1%	27	20%	93	67%	16	12%	1	4	2.89	0.60