EXPLORING THE PROS AND CONS OF A LOCAL ENGLISH COURSEBOOK IN USER PREFERENCES

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Abstract

Despite teachers' constant complaints, local course books continue to be the basic text of foreign language classes in Turkey, and apparently owe their wide circulation much to MoNE's official mandate in state schools. Although their deficiencies and user dissatisfaction have been well-documented, the problem of quality has still not been resolved. This may be related to the fact that the authorities are disregarding the opinions of teachers and students as real consumers. However, a post-use evaluation of local course books by its users can render useful data, on which course book writers can base their revisions for new editions. For this reason, the purpose of this study was to elicit the views of 85 English teachers and 396 seventh-graders on the performance of the newly published local textbook (Sunshine 7), to identify its strengths and weaknesses for the teachers as well as students' favorites, and also to determine the course book's role, teachers' preferred supplementary materials and learners' cultural needs. The qualitative data from the survey questions were examined with the content analysis method, and it was found that almost half of the teachers (47%) were discontent with their local course book in use, and its major weaknesses related to the limited number of activities (11%), vocabulary overload (7%), and incompatibility with the learners' level of proficiency (7%), whereas the strengths were about the choice of interesting topics (7%), reading texts at the appropriate level of difficulty (6%), and clear outline of the content (7%). While 61% of the teachers did not assign a central role to the course book in the foreign language class, they tended to prefer conventional paper-based materials to promote grammar learning (49%), and thus improve learners' performance in state examinations (TEOG). On the other hand, the students were found to be much attracted by the visuals (35%) and activities (12%), and demanded a richer presentation of global world cultures (59%).

Keywords: local course books, post-use evaluation, supplementary materials, user views

1. INTRODUCTION

Much of language teaching is supported by two main types of materials, namely printed and non-print materials (audio CDs, DVDs, computer software etc.), and learners' attitudes toward the lesson as well as their participative eagerness during communicative activities are heavily influenced by them (Tok, 2010). Among all these materials, it is the textbooks that appear to be the ESL/EFL teacher's essential companions besides the other many important components of the language course (Moghtadi, 2014). Even in our age of

technology, they continue to remain as the main instrument of teaching all over the world. Although course books tend to be conceived as "providers of input" or a collection of "texts, activities and explanations", they serve many other purposes like: giving teachers and learners a sense of direction through its clear framework, reflecting the syllabus, presenting the material in different forms and providing practice through a variety of activities, and supporting both less experienced teachers and independent learners (Cunningsworth, 1995; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994: 317; Ur, 1996). Yet, it has become a bone of contention in the field of foreign language education whether course books are really necessary. Some shun the use of course books on the grounds that they restrict the language content, expose learners to inauthentic uses of language and impose a specific world view. There are still others who regard them indispensable elements of any learning-teaching situation due to their many services like structuring the lesson, providing novice teachers with a road map, and guiding learners into individual study etc. The controversy around the essentiality of the textbook was also brought up by Crawford (2002), who pointed out the difficulty of meeting the individual needs of specific learner groups through pre-prepared materials. In addition, their advantages and disadvantages had been discussed in a good number of studies before: for instance, Harmer (2001) and Tomlinson (2008) focused on the facilitating and reassuring roles of the course book in providing an attractive, rich and systematic presentation of content for teachers and students so that both can enjoy a fuller, more meaningful and varied experience of language learning. On the other hand, Littlejohn (1992) and Richards (2001) were concerned about the deskilling effect of course book instructions on teachers, as their prescriptive nature forces them to manage the activities according to a given template. Harwood (2005) worried about the pedagogical unsoundness of predetermined syllabuses and incompatibility of commercial course books with the local context.

However, Sheldon (1988: 237) seemed to have resolved the textbook debate by calling them "necessary evils" for every language class, and it is about time that we got down to the heart of the matter; that is, we must focus on how best to choose appropriate materials among a wide range of course packs available in the market. Byrd (2001) identified three main patterns of textbook selection in use: teachers on their own can select them on the basis of individual criteria or the administration and a board of teachers may decide on the textbook together, and ministry of education as a higher authority not only develops the curriculum but also selects the textbook. In fact, Turkey seems to fit in with the last fashion, whereby a governmentally-approved, officially-mandated, and locally-produced English course book is adopted and distributed all over the country. McDonough et al. (2013) suggested a three-phase procedure for textbook evaluation: (1) *external evaluation*, which concerns the outer organization of the course book, i.e. the blurb, cover, table of contents, introduction; (2) *internal evaluation*, which involves a deeper study of the materials from the perspectives of skills-presentation, grading and sequencing, textual appropriacy and authenticity, appeal for different learning styles etc., and (3) *overall evaluation*, where the textbook's design on the whole is assessed with respect to the parameters of usability, generalisability, adaptability and flexibility. Furthermore, Ellis (1997) and McGrath (2002) underscored the importance of classroom trials in the evaluative procedures. McGrath (2002) advocated that besides *pre-use evaluation*, *in-use* and *post-use evaluations* can be undertaken to test both materials and selective criteria more systematically, as assessing materials before classroom use can only reveal preliminary results about the suitability of a given course book, no matter how thoroughly it is performed. In McGrath's (2002) circular model, pre-use evaluation requires teachers to estimate the potential suitability of the course book, whereas during in-use evaluation, they implement the candidate course book and monitor its performance in the real-time classroom, and finally, post-use evaluation involves users' (teachers' and learners') awareness of its strengths and weaknesses through reflective practice. In this circle, Roberts (1996) and McGrath (2002) recommended consulting teachers and students as real users/consumers about their experiences of the course book.

Consequently, if the purpose of teaching is to create an effective and enjoyable learning atmosphere in the classroom, we need to perform needs analysis before reaching a final decision (Işık, 2013). Exploring users' needs and wants is not just about choosing the ideal course book for our own context but also concerns developing local criteria before adoption. Roberts (1996: 386) stated that excluding learners from materials evaluation is not sound practice because learners as both "recipients of language teaching" and objects of materials use deserve the right to voice their reactions. While Breen and Candlin (1987) suggested asking learners what kind of topics interest them or what they would like to learn more about the new language, Roberts (1996) offered to use a student questionnaire to find out the motivating and demotivating aspects of materials at whatever stage of choosing a course book. In the Turkish context, local course books continue to be the basic text of foreign language classes despite teachers' constant complaints. It is common knowledge that at the beginning of each term, the ministry of education issues an official command to stick to local course books and reminds school administrations and teachers of the consequences of using supplementary materials in the class or forcing parents to buy these (i.e. UK-produced course books) (Milli

Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015). Obviously, consumer discontent is hereby suppressed and unwanted materials gain wide circulation much to MoNE's official mandate in state schools. Since a post-use evaluation of the new local course book, Sunshine 7, by its users can render useful data for later editions, this study aimed to elicit the views of 85 English teachers and 396 seventh-graders on the performance of the newly published local textbook, to identify its strengths and weaknesses for the teachers along with students' favorites and to determine the course book's role, teachers' preferred supplementary materials and learners' cultural needs.

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

The participants of this study were formed by 396 seventh-graders and 85 English teachers from eight middle schools located in the high-, middle- and low- income regions of Mersin. 23.5% of the teacher participants had 1-5 years, 24.7% 6-10 years, and 51.8% had over ten years of experience, and had been using the governmentally-approved local course book, "Sunshine 7", for nearly two terms, when the survey took place. The new A2-level English course book was launched in the 2014-2015 academic year, and focused on developing communicative skills by the end of the study of the ten units (Talim Terbiye Kurulu, 2013). During the survey, the participants were only requested to indicate their age, sex or years of experience, and ensured that their privacy would be ensured by numbering their responses as T1 (Teacher 1) and S1 (Student 1). In this way, the participants were provided with a secure environment while revealing information about their course book experiences, and their consent helped to increase the quality of their data (Berg, 2001; Creswell, 2012; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

2.2. Data Collection

The participants were administered a survey, consisting of seven questions in total: four questions on the teacher's form and three on the student's form in order to elicit their views on the performance of Sunshine 7. The questions were reviewed by two experts, and revised on their suggestions before the application. In the teacher's form, the participants first answered these two closed-ended questions: (1) Do you think your English course book is effective?, and (2) Mark the option that best describes the course book's role in your classroom: a) It is an irreplaceable material for any learning-teaching situation; b) It is just another material we use while teaching the language; c) Course books are inessential in the foreign language class. Secondly, the teachers detailed their answers by responding to the following open-ended questions: (3) What are the strengths and weaknesses of your English course book? And (4) What kind of supplementary materials do you use in your classes? In the student's form, the seventh-graders firstly expressed their attitudes towards their own course book by answering this open-ended question: (1) Do you like your English course book? Then, they told about their favorite features of the given course book as well as their cultural needs by responding to these two closed-ended questions: (2) What do you like most about your English course book?; and (3) What other places would you like to see in your English course book?

2.3. Data Analysis

The qualitative data from the survey were analyzed by using the content analysis method. First of all, the participants' responses were listed and classified according to the theme of each question. Then, the unclear responses were eliminated; for instance, some of the students wrote that there were many features that they liked about the course book but did not define what those features were. Similarly, there were a few teachers that did not specify the type of supplementary materials they used and simply wrote, "I use various materials" As a result, these responses were disregarded in the content analysis. Secondly, the responses were grouped according to their semantic similarity and assigned to the relevant category. As opposed to the 12 strong sides of the course book, 18 weak points were obtained after the content analysis, and teachers' supplementary materials were distributed into three major categories according to their focus as grammar-based, skills-based, and interactive. As for the students' favorites in the course book, 15 elements were derived from their responses relating to the visuals, reading texts, topics, vocabulary, fun factor, cover and dialogues. After the two researchers compared their coding of the data, the frequencies and percentages were calculated and tabulated.

3. FINDINGS

When the teachers were asked if they found their English course book effective, it can be seen from Table 1 that almost half of them were dissatisfied with the performance of their new local course book (47%).

Table 1. Teachers' views on the effectiveness of the course book

Responses	f	%
Effective	45	53
Ineffective	40	47
Total	**85**	**100**

As a follow-up to the first question, they were requested to explain the strong and weak sides of their own course book, and the distribution of their responses were presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Strengths and weaknesses of the course book according to teachers

Strengths	**f**	**%**
The topics are interesting.	10	7
The content is clear and easy to understand.	9	7
The reading texts are appropriate for their level.	8	6
There is a sufficient number of units.	7	5
It covers four skills.	3	2
There isn't a heavy vocabulary load.	3	2
There are activities for revising grammar rules.	2	1
The visuals are appealing.	2	1
It is suitable for the level of the students.	1	1
It gives priority to speaking.	1	1
It is compatible with the curriculum.	1	1
The topics are up-to-date.	1	1
Total strengths	**48**	**35**
Weaknesses	**f**	**%**
There aren't enough activities in the course book.	15	11
It is not compatible with their proficiency level.	10	7
There are too many unknown words.	9	7
There aren't enough activities for grammar.	8	6
The audio CDs aren't available.	8	6
There aren't enough activities for speaking.	8	6
It is based on teaching grammar.	7	5
There is no vocabulary list.	6	4
The reading texts are above their level.	5	4
The visuals are unattractive.	3	2
Its content doesn't prepare them for the eighth-grade.	2	1
Its content is similar to that of the sixth-graders.	1	1
There is no connection between its units.	1	1
There isn't a sufficient number of reading texts.	1	1
It is complicated and boring.	1	1
There is no clear presentation of grammar structures.	1	1
It needs supplementing.	1	1
Total weaknesses	**87**	**65**
TOTAL RESPONSES	**135**	**100**

Respondents gave multiple answers

It is clear from Table 2 that the respondents stated more weaknesses (65%) than strengths (35%) of the course book, even though the greater part of the participants (53%) had positively evaluated the performance of the course book. A closer study of these responses demonstrated that the participants were disagreeing about the appropriacy of the course book for the students' level, the difficulty of the reading texts, the vocabulary load, amount of speaking and the quality of the visuals. While 6% appreciated the language level of the reading texts, 4% were thinking the opposite. The situation was the same in the case of the course book's overall difficulty: 7% found it above the students' level, whereas 1% thought it was at the right level. As for the vocabulary load, 2% found nothing problematic about its weight, but 7% were really anxious about the quantity of the unknown words in the course book. Similarly, speaking received enough focus for only 1% of the participants, yet for another 6%, the density of the speaking activities had better be increased. The last point of contention was about the quality of the visuals: three found them unattractive, as

opposed to the two, liking them. It can also be observed from Table 2 that the most-cited strengths of the course book concerned the choice of interesting topics (7%) and comprehensibility of content (7%), while its compatibility with the level and curriculum, speaking focus and topical up-to-dateness were mentioned by only 1%. Those forty participants (having found the course book ineffective) reported that it was deficient in all respects, and also noted the following weaknesses of the course book: deficient number of activities (11%), incongruence with the proficiency level (7%), overloaded vocabulary (7%), absence of audio CDs (6%), lack of glossary (4%), unnecessary recycling of the sixth-grade content (1%), lack of preparation for the eighth-grade content (1%), unclear presentation of grammar (1%) and burden of supplementation (1%).

Secondly, the teachers were inquired about the kind of supplementary materials they used in their classes, and when their varied answers were grouped into three major categories of materials, the following results were obtained in Table 3.

Table 3. Teachers' preferred type of supplementary materials

	Materials	f	%
Grammar-Based	Worksheets	14	18
	Tests	13	16
	Reference Books	11	14
	Activities	1	1
	Total	**39**	**49**
Skills-Based	Flashcards	9	11
	Videos	6	8
	Visuals	4	5
	Authentic Materials	3	4
	Reading Texts	3	4
	Listening Texts	3	4
	Presentations	3	4
	Songs	2	3
	Posters	1	1
	Word Box	1	1
	Total	**35**	**45**
Interactive	Computers	2	3
	Websites	1	1
	Smart Board	1	1
	Games	1	1
	Total	**5**	**6**
TOTAL MATERIALS		**79**	**100**

Respondents gave multiple answers

It can be understood from Table 3 that grammar-based materials like worksheets (18%), tests (16%) and reference books (14%) were most popular with the teachers for two possible reasons (49%). They may have been feeling obliged to prepare their students for state examinations (TEOG), and in order for their students to get high scores on discrete-point tests, they needed to do more mechanical activities of grammar. They might also have preferred grammar-based materials due to the technological infrastructure of their schools. Skills-based materials ranked the second (45%), with flashcards (11%), videos (8%), visuals (5%) as teachers' favorites for teaching four major skills. Interactive materials were chosen by only 6% of the teachers, and computers (3%), websites (1%), smart board (1%) were found to be really rare choices despite our age of technology and MoNE's huge investments in Fatih Project. Whether it was because of the school's facilities or the teachers' avoidance and incapacities, use of technology was uncommon in these classes and much of the class work seemed to be still paper-based.

The teachers were finally asked to determine their understanding of the course book's role among the given three options on the survey, and the results were displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. The course book's role according to teachers

Roles	f	%
It is just another material we use while teaching the language.	52	61
It is an irreplaceable material for any learning-teaching situation.	17	20
Course books are inessential in the foreign language class.	16	19
Total	**85**	**100**

According to Table 4, the course book is viewed by the majority of the teachers (61%) as one type of source that they can make use of during language instruction. Therefore, it can be argued that the teacher participants in this study would rather not organize their lessons on the basis of the textbook. While 20% believed that they cannot do without the course book, 19% of these teachers rejected the idea of the course book as an indispensable tool and found it totally superfluous for teaching English. This last group indicated that language learning can still take place without using a course book in the classroom.

In line with the teachers' questions on the survey, students were first asked if they liked their course book, and those, who said yes, would also tell about their favorite course book features.

Table 5. Course book proponents and opponents

Responses	f	%
Likes	300	76
Dislikes	96	24
Total	**396**	**100**

In Table 5, 76% of the students indicated their liking for Sunshine 7, and they listed the following features of the new local course book as their favorites in Table 6.

Table 6. Students' favorite features of the course book

Features	f	%
The pictures are attractive.	105	35
The reading texts are fun.	35	12
The course book is enjoyable.	33	11
I like the activities.	24	8
The topics are interesting.	22	7
It is educational.	21	7
The course book is colorful.	13	4
The course book is explanatory.	12	4
I like the vocabulary sections.	8	3
I like the puzzles.	7	2
I like the listening texts.	6	2
I like the attention box in the units.	5	2
I like its cover.	4	1
I like the games.	3	1
The dialogues are entertaining.	2	1
Total	**300**	**100**

As can be seen from Table 6, what the students most liked about the course book was the pictures (35%), and secondly, there comes the fun factor in the reading texts (12%) with the activities (8%). 7% of the students were pleased with the choice of interesting topics and its instructiveness, whereas 4% mentioned the colorful design and course book explanations along with the vocabulary study (3%), use of puzzles, listening texts and attention box (2%) in the units. The least-cited features concerned the cover of the course book, games and dialogues (1%).

The students were ultimately questioned about the kind of places they would like to see in their English course book, and the findings from their responses were presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Students' cultural needs

Cultures		f	%	Exemplars
Local		187	41	Turkey (86), Mersin (56), İstanbul (19), Adana (6), İzmir (5), Ankara (4), Antalya (3), Siirt (2), Şanlıurfa (1), Tokat (1), Van (1), Şırnak (1), Bursa (1), Malatya (1)
Global	English	109	24	USA (30), New York (23), Los Angeles (4), England (28), London (10), Canada (5), Australia (3), Sydney (2), India (4)
	Non-English	157	35	France (36), Paris (23) Germany (33), Berlin (5), Spain (13), Barcelona (4), Italy (10), Rome (3), Japan (6), Tokyo (4), China (6), Korea (5), Holland (4), Egypt (2), Finland (2), Dubai (1)
Total		453	100	

Respondents gave multiple answers

Table 7 showed that 41% preferred to see more of their own cultural elements (e.g. their hometown), while 59% looked for global cultures, with English-speaking cultures amounting to 24% of all, and the cultures of non-English countries equaled to 35%. It can be concluded from the lower concentration of native-speaking cultures that the students were more curious about different world cultures, although western countries like France (f=59), Germany (f=38), Spain (f=17) and Italy (f=13) dominated. In the inner circle of English, centers like the USA (f=57) and UK (f=38) took the lead, yet a few students wanted to learn more about the cultures of Canada (f=5) and Australia (f=7), and India in the outer circle (f=4). For this reason, their local course book can be said to fail to meet their expectations in terms of cultural variety.

4. DISCUSSION

As a result of the content analysis, it was found that almost half of the teachers in this study (47%) found Sunshine 7 ineffective, even though there were more teachers approving the course book (53%). This finding was in line with the previous literature on the effectiveness of other MoNE-approved course books, where the majority of the teachers tended to evaluate them negatively in many respects (learners needs, cultural information, practice activities, skills-integration, physical make-up, authenticity and relevance), and were unwilling to continue using their local coursebook (Acar, 2006; Çelik, 2011; Ertürk, 2013; Kayaoğlu, 2011; Özeş, 2012; Taylan, 2013; Tekir & Arıkan, 2007; Yaşar, 2015). The dividedness of the teachers seemed to be replaced by their more frequent mentions of weaknesses (65%), when they were secondly asked to specify the pros and cons of their local English course book. Sunshine 7's weaknesses concentrated on the balance of activities, suitability for the level, amount of vocabulary and grammar practice, supplementary materials, skills-focus and unity of content. Ezici (2006), Tok (2010) and Kayaoğlu (2011) identified similar weaknesses: overloaded vocabulary, incompatibility with the level of proficiency, comprehension difficulties in reading passages, uninteresting topics, lack of authentic communication as well as a coherent syllabus. As for the strengths of Sunshine 7, they were on the whole concerned with topic choice, presentation of content, comprehensibility of reading texts, teaching of all four skills and visual appeal. Similarly, in Ezici's evaluation of *New Bridge to Success 3* (for ninth-graders), interesting, up-to-date topics from students' real life along with the artwork and colorful design were cited as the strengths of that local course book by the teachers. Tok's (2010) participants appreciated the integration of four major skills and realistic content of *Spot on* (for eighth-graders). A closer analysis of the teachers' responses revealed that the same participants were in conflict as to the effectiveness of certain course book features like the quality of reading texts and visual elements, speaking focus and vocabulary treatment, as they were listed under both strengths and weaknesses. All in all, it is clear from the shared outcomes of the relevant literature that the weaknesses of local English course books are outweighing their strengths as in the case of Sunshine 7. According to İnal (2006), the evaluation process itself should be held responsible because the teachers in Turkey – whether in state schools or private institutions – depend on their course books as the single source of an effective language teaching program, and yet do not apply any standardized criteria during their selection.

Among different types of supplementary materials, paper-based materials (i.e. worksheets, tests, and reference books) that focus on grammar work stood out as these teachers' most reliable resources (49%), and they were followed by skills-based materials (45%), with flashcards (11%), videos 88%), and visuals (5%) as the more popular sub-categories used for creating situations. Likewise, in Jazadi's (2003) study with 106 Indonesian teachers, realia (56%), magazines (41%), newspapers (35%), and self-developed materials (63%) composed teacher's main instruments for supplementing course books. Jazadi (2003) also detected teacher avoidance of technological devices like TV (54%), radio (56%) and the internet (95%). As in the

current study, Garton et al.'s (2011) 4700 teachers from 144 countries predominantly used listening CDs (73.5%), games (69.9%), songs (66.9), grammar exercises (56.4%) and gap-filling (64.8%), while they stayed away from using computers (45%) and TV/video viewing (39.4%) in their classes. This general tendency of language teachers to avoid using technology-based materials and to value grammar-based ones was illuminated by Tomlinson (2008: 3) as follows: "…that's what teachers are expected and required to do by administrators, by parents, by publishers, and by learners too". One reason why interactive materials (6%) were least liked by these teacher participants can be about the pressure of Turkish state examinations like TEOG, where grammatical and lexical knowledge ensures high performance on the test. Another reason might be related to the lack of technological literacy on the teacher's side or technical facilities at school.

The findings from the last question on the teacher's form indicated that they were more inclined to treat the textbook as a resource that they can draw on from time to time (61%). This result stood in direct contrast to the previous research by İnal (2006), Aytuğ (2007) and Oflaz (2009), who documented crucial importance attached to the textbook in Turkey. Rather than worshipping or rejecting it, the current participants followed the second of McGrath's (2006) patterns, where the textbook is selectively used by the teacher, and like his Brazilian teachers of English, they would like to be in control of the textbook instead of being under its control. The content analysis of the students' responses uncovered that unlike their teachers, 76% of the students liked their course book and the favorites of this larger group concerned features of physical outlook (layout, visuals, colors, cover), topic choice, and fun factor in the readings, and the activities in general. In similar evaluations of MoNE-approved course books (e.g. Time for English 4, Unique 6, Spot on 8), students were reported to be content with the layout and interesting topics in their local course books (Arıkan, 2008; Ertürk, 2013; Özeş, 2012). Their preoccupation with the physical appearance can be related to their age and lack of experience in course book evaluation, but such identification of students' favorite features can be enlightening for course book writers in future compositions or newer editions. According to Kim (2004), getting learners' opinions can also help teachers to make more informed selections and to plan course book adaptations accordingly, whereas it gives learners the chance to become more sensitive users of materials.

Finally, when the students' cultural needs were surveyed, although 41% would like to see the cultures of their own country or hometown, the majority of them were more interested in learning about a wide range of world cultures, with non-English cultures (35%) more than English-speaking cultures (24%). This might also give us some idea of their current course book's cultural landscape, now that the students' responses were suggesting a lack of cultural variety. In the same way, Iriskulova's (2012) evaluation of the reading texts in *Spot on 8* demonstrated that the local culture was preferred over the target culture. In addition, the cultural content analyses of five other local English course books (Spring 6, Spring 7, English Net 8, Spotlight on English 3, My English 8) documented a similar ignorance of the other foreign cultures different from the local and target cultures (Barışkan, 2010; Çakır, 2010). This deficiency in cultural representation was related to the fact that the authors of these course books were mostly Turkish, and could not present language naturally in authentic situations (İnal, 2006).

5. CONCLUSION

It is maintained by the results of this post-use evaluation that Turkish users are still struggling with certain chronic course book problems, as their views are apparently not much taken into consideration during the composition and revision of local materials. Although the titles of these local English course books change in time and their deficiencies remain more or less the same, authorities in Turkey tend not to lend an ear to textbook researchers and users, and teachers are even disallowed to compensate for the damage through rightfully adapting or supplementing the locally-produced materials. Therefore, it is about time that we adopted a more holistic and participative approach to materials evaluation by involving all parties concerned, and continuously shared our understanding and evaluative results for the coming editions of existing textbooks and new products. Furthermore, it is evident that Turkish teachers in this study chose a lenient course book policy by regarding them as useful resources, and preferred to supplement them through traditional, paper-based materials aiming at grammar and vocabulary development, which was not unexpected due to the constraints of the educational system and state examinations. Pelgrum (2001) and Li (2007) linked teacher avoidance of technology use to various factors like lack of computer facilities, technical assistance, teacher knowledge, skills and interest, as well as their fear of being replaced by computers. However, if we want to increase the quality of foreign language instruction in Turkey, we need to take immediate action to equip our classes with the internet, smart boards, and computers, and train English teachers in organizing technology-assisted language lessons.

It is promising that the teachers of the current study reported not to follow the textbook as if it was a holy book, as teaching by the book signals the presence of a boring teacher, and can also be harmful for students

when we only pay attention to the realisation of a fixed lesson plan and ignore how they are using the materials (Graves, 2000; Prodromou, 1999). Yet, this rational attitude should also be taken while making use of supplementary materials, as these teachers appear to limit learners' intake to grammar-based materials. According to Tomlinson (2008), the overemphasis of most ELT materials on the teaching of linguistic items should be held responsible for the failure of many learners in developing communicative competence. For this reason, Turkish teachers need to supplement their already grammar-based course books with more motivating, interactive materials, and reduce their use of the worksheets like Ecuadorian teachers in Dodd et al.'s (2015) study. Another important lesson from the students' responses is that their likes and dislikes in a given course book can be instrumental in making informed decisions of materials selection and design as well. It is well-established in the course book literature that even though it is almost impossible to find the best fit for learner needs among the materials available in the market, teachers must be sensitive to their students' interests, learning styles and imagination even when they are adapting the materials for more stimulating and engaging lessons (Cunningsworth, 1995). Nevertheless, not much progress seems to have been made since İnal (2006) noted that students' needs were disregarded in the process of course book selection and Turkish schools depended on what was offered by the publishers. The situation is the same when it comes to meeting learners' cultural needs, as they are craving for a more global blend of foreign cultures in their local English course book, Sunshine 7. In order for our students to become intercultural communicators, it is essential to provide a more diverse, multicultural representation of the world in their English course books.

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