EFL Teachers' Attitudes toward Commercial Textbooks in EFL Programs

Munassir Alhamami
English Department, Faculty of Languages and Translation,
King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Javed Ahmad
English Department, Faculty of Languages and Translation,
King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Abstract
The perception of the English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is extremely crucial since their perceived views regarding the commercial English learning textbooks plays a major role in framing their attitudes towards such textbooks. These textbooks are published by different international publishers and used extensively in EFL programs around the globe. Moreover, attitudes do influence language learning. This paper aims to investigate teachers' attitudes toward the commercial textbooks used in (EFL) programs. In this quantitative research, forty-three EFL instructors were surveyed through a Likert scale questionnaire. The results reveal, in general, the negative attitudes of the teacher towards commercial English textbooks since for them such textbooks are found insufficient in meeting the courses' aims and objectives, students language proficiency level, their cultural sensitiveness, and their academic backgrounds. The study found teachers opinion vis-à-vis textbooks inappropriate content, a mismatch in learners' needs and not in agreement with teaching methodologies. The paper offers a few recommendations to the EFL instructors as well as to the instructional designers to adapt and customize commercial textbooks in line with learners' needs. It suggests teachers to use teaching material to suit the purpose, in addition to advising curriculum designers and content developers to take into account the specific needs of the students and the objectives of the course.

Introduction

The use of commercial textbooks that are introduced by international publishers is a common practice in most of the EFL programs due to the lack of language learning materials. Textbooks are considered the primary resource of input that students receive during their schooling years. Language teachers build their lessons, activities, and assignments based on the textbooks they use in their classrooms. Instructional materials can be divided broadly into two types: Printed content (textbooks, workbook, course book, and alternative material, etc.) and Non- Printed content (audios, videos, and computer-based materials). These are considered as the backbone of any EFL program. Of all these study materials, 'textbooks' are considered the most important component of any teaching/learning process.

Teachers' positive attitudes towards the textbooks are surety of effective attainment of actual teaching and learning objectives whereas; reservations can destroy the whole process. Attitudes are also significant to measure because they act as directives for curriculum designer and material developers for the creation and development of new teaching materials. Also, it calculates the textbooks' strengths and weaknesses in different aspects such as the culture of the target language, instructions given in the textbooks, input, and output.

Richards (2001) believes that EFL textbooks are a key component in most EFL language programs. They are especially beneficial for both teachers and learners. For teachers, they provide a kind of framework in achieving the aims and objectives of the course and guide them in conducting lessons. For learners, the textbook is the main exposure to the target language apart from the inputs they received from their language instructor. The use of commercial textbooks which are introduced by any international publishers is a common practice in most of the EFL programs. Since the textbooks play an essential role in any teaching-learning processes, and teachers are primary stakeholders of such books, so it is important to measure their attitudes towards such textbooks. The evaluation of the teachers' attitudes towards commercial textbooks is significant because it affects the whole teaching-learning practice.

The students, as well as instructors, both are benefitted from the evaluation process of the textbooks. It is critical and beneficial for teachers' development and professional growth. Ellis (1997) opines that it helps the teachers to gain purposeful, accurate, systematic and contextual insights into the overall nature of the textbook material. It mentions the students' needs and helps the teachers to gain high-quality materials. Students are the actual end users of these commercial textbooks. Thus any language program must measure the attitudes of the target group. Regarding textbooks, for which these are, designed (Baker, 1992). Learners' negative attitudes towards textbooks may decrease their motivation and may act as a major obstacle in their attainment of L2 proficiency.

According to Tomlinson (2003), "materials evaluation is a procedure that involves measuring the value of a set of learning materials. It involves making judgments about the effect of the materials on the people using them" (p. 15). Teachers are not passive recipients of any textbooks' contents. They accept the inputs once they have evaluated them and accept their effectiveness regarding compatibility with their classroom. For them textbooks' should be practical and feasible in terms of time, resources available, teachers' and students' needs,

methodology, aims and objectives of the course. Teachers' negative attitude towards textbooks might help them to explore every bit of the textbook and will urge them to incorporate it into most of their lesson plans. And ultimately, this helps the language school to harvest positive course outcomes.

Teachers' incompatible attitudes towards commercial textbooks will result in their reservations whereas their wholehearted cooperation and support will result in an intended outcome. Teachers' attitudes towards textbooks might be shaped by different factors like their educational background, their age, educational level, and their teaching experiences.

Thus, this present study is an attempt to explore the teachers' general attitudes towards commercial textbooks used in KSA in EFL undergraduate program. In doing so, the study will investigate whether the textbooks are suitable as per the official curriculum, needs, and interests of the students, the methodology of the teachers, aims and objectives of the course from the teachers perspective. Their notion will help the instructional designers in producing the appropriate materials, and these notions will help the teachers' themselves in adapting and customizing the existing textbooks as per their needs. Hence, measuring teachers' attitudes towards commercial textbooks in EFL programs would be very beneficial for educators, trainers, institutions, and above all for publishers. But, one undeniable fact should always be kept in mind that "no commercial textbook will ever be a perfect fit for language programs" (Richards 2001, p.2). This defines commercial textbooks as textbooks that are designed by international publishers to be taught in different EFL contexts albeit they are designed or adapted for a particular context. They can be used to teach students from different countries, university majors, and mother tongues.

Furthermore, the paper focuses on the users who will use the textbooks. Teachers are essential stakeholders to understand their attitudes about the textbooks. Teachers' negative attitude towards the textbooks might result in the less effective use of the textbooks in language classrooms. This might affect the course' outcomes negatively since most of the language schools choose those textbooks that match their curriculum outcomes. On the other hand, the positive attitude toward textbooks might help the teachers to use textbooks in most of their lesson plans. This helps the language schools to achieve the course outcomes. Different factors might shape the teachers' attitudes toward textbooks: it might be based on their educational background, their age, their educational level, and their teaching experiences.

Literature Review
Language textbooks are an essential part of the learning process in language classrooms (Garinger, 2001; Richards, 2001; Tomlinson, 1998, 2003). They are the base of the learning outcomes. Language teachers use the textbooks in the classroom for several reasons. One obvious reason is lacking the ability to develop new learning materials for classroom instruction (Sheldon, 1988). Language teachers find it challenging to create and develop their language teaching materials. They might do not have enough time in their classrooms to use new materials besides the textbooks. Newly created materials by the teachers might cause unexpected results in the classrooms due to their lack of experience in materials creations and adaptations. Therefore, the EFL teachers use the published commercial language textbooks because they are signed by the schools' administration to fill in the course outcomes.

Cunningsworth (1995) identifies several roles of language textbooks in the learning and teaching process. Textbooks can be the resources for the activities and practices in the classroom. They are the reference for the grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Teachers can create and develop ideas in the language classrooms based on the use of the textbooks. They help the new teachers or the less experienced teachers to run their classrooms. Also, students can learn by themselves using their textbooks inside or outside their classrooms. Moreover, schools might choose textbooks that reflect the goals and objectives of the course. The textbooks reflect the objectives of the course and methods of teaching in the classroom. They work as the mirror for the activities that take place in the classroom. By reading the textbooks, the reader can have a clear idea about the course outcomes and contents (Richard 1998).

The advantages of using language textbooks in the language classrooms vary based on the textbooks and the contexts where they are used. Richards (2001) and Graves (2000) argue that one of the advantages of the textbooks is providing enough visuals and different activities that save the teachers' time to search for language teaching materials. Textbooks which are visually appealing and contain different activities might attract the students' attention and engage them in the learning process. Experts in language learning fields write the textbooks, which give the textbooks outcomes that are more purposeful. Writing textbooks is a long process in which they are exposed to the students and tested several times before they are actually published to make sure that they yield the expected learning outcomes in favorable learning conditions. Moreover, they help the teachers to set clear goals and objectives for their courses. In short, textbooks are the resource of knowledge in the classrooms and outside the classrooms.

The disadvantages of using textbooks in language classroom might be caused by the textbooks themselves or by the contexts where they are being used. Crawford (2002), Graves (2000), and Richards (2001) opine that the textbooks might have negative effects on the learning process. For example, the textbooks might not match the students' language proficiency levels and cultural values. Students might depend on the textbooks as the only source of information. This will limit the students' ability to explore further in the target language. Besides, this will deskill the teachers and limit their creativities in the classroom. Another negative side of the textbooks is that some of these are designed for specific contexts which might cause conflicts in the classroom such as cultural, political and social conflicts.

Teachers' beliefs influence the instructional practices in the classroom (Burns, 1992; Lee & Bathmaker, 2007). Their attitudes are a key factor in the effectiveness of using the textbooks in the classroom. Their attitudes shape the way they interpret and teach the textbooks. In EFL programs, this is an important variable that does influence the effectiveness of using the textbooks in language learning. McGrath (2006) stresses that "since teachers' attitudes to textbooks are likely to have an impact on how they use them, and learners' attitudes, and learning, will be affected by how teachers use them, it seems vital to seek to understand what these attitudes are" (p.171). Understanding teachers' attitudes toward textbooks will explain the way the teachers' deal with them. Negative attitudes might result in less or ineffective use of the textbooks. Positive attitudes might exploit every part of the textbooks in the classrooms.

However, few studies focus on the EFL teachers' attitudes toward the EFL textbooks. Harwood (2010) states, "clearly, future studies also need to focus on students' reactions to and comprehension of the materials, as well as on teachers' interpretations of the materials" (p.19). There is the need to conduct further studies on the effect of teachers' attitudes on the use of textbooks (Harwood, 2010) since that the textbooks are the most convenient form of presenting materials in the classrooms (Littlejohn, 1992; Tomlinson, 2001).

The Research Question:
    a. Based on EFL teachers' experiences in the field, how they perceive EFL commercial textbooks in EFL program and what they think about the influence of EFL commercial textbooks on students, courses, contents, and cultures in EFL learning environment are the gist of this research. How do the teachers, in general, perceive EFL textbooks?
    b. What are the negative contents that could affect the learning outcome?
    c. How far, as per the teacher\s perceptions, the textbooks mismatch with the course objective?
    d. How does the content affect the learners in the lingual and cultural domain?

Methods
The current study is having a naturistic and exploratory approach as it considers the experience, perception and social realities of EFL teachers towards textbooks.

A questionnaire was administered to seek the opinion of teachers. It contains fourteen closed-ended responses that investigate the teachers' attitudes toward the use of textbooks in their classrooms. Brown (2001) writes, "Attitudes questions are typically used to obtain data about the participants' feelings, wishes, and attitudes toward the elements of a language curriculum" (p. 33). These attitudes' questions are evaluated on Likert-scale questions. Likert-scale questions are used in the survey because they are "effective for gathering respondents' views, opinions, and attitudes about various language-related issues" (Brown, 2001, P. 41). The survey items are adapted from language materials evaluation research (Littlejohn, 1998., Tomlinson, 1998; 2003). They are ordered rationally to control the ordering effect. They are formatted in terms of spacing, typing and highlighting to give the participants a clear idea about the survey. (see Appendix A for the Questionnaire items).

Participants
It is essential to describe the participants in the study and the reasons for their selection (Brown, 1988). In this study, the participants are the English language instructors at a Saudi university. They have different biographical factors. They have different cultural backgrounds as they are from different countries such as South Africa, Canada, India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Bangladesh, Sudan, Yemen, and Syria. They have different educational and curriculum backgrounds as they have finished their graduate and postgraduate studies in different countries such as America, Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, India, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sudan, Syria, and United Kingdom and that too at different educational institutions in those countries. They are also of varied age groups.

The participant teachers have vast, multifarious, and diverse experience of teaching EFL in various institutions and in many countries. There, they have worked at different positions, have taught various English learning (crash, short-term and full-term) courses to different levels of students. Moreover, the most important factor is that they have dealt with mixed and wide-ranging commercial textbooks in achieving the desired outcomes.

The students are mostly Saudi sharing the same culture and same first language (Arabic). They are roughly between 19-25 years of age. They are all male. The requirements to attend the college at the Saudi Universities are passing the high school and the Saudi National Exam (QEYAS). The university students are not required to do any English proficiency test that shows their English proficiency level such as TOEFL or ILETS.

Results and Discussions

The survey items are grouped into four categories: Students' Related Issues, Content Related Issues, Course Related Issues, and Culture Related Issues. The items are presented in the survey in different to examine the participants' attitudinal factors about each category. Future pedagogical implications and recommendations are then made on the basis of analysis of the result collected.

A. EFL Commercial Textbooks & EFL Students

The first category presents the teachers' perspectives on issues related to students in commercial textbooks. Table 1 summarizes and presents the participants' attitudes about the variables related to students in the commercial textbooks.

Table 1. *Teachers' Attitudes Toward EFL Commercial Textbooks Regarding EFL Students*

Attitudes	Q#1 Helping Students for Their future Study	Q#5 Considering Students' Academic Backgrounds	Q#6 Fitting Students' Proficiency Level	Q#11Providing Students with needed language level
Strongly Disagree	(2) 4.7	(2) 4.7	(5) 11.6	(0) 0.0
Disagree	(5) 11.6	(21) 48.8	(18) 41.9	23.3
Neither	(12) 27.9	(11) 25.6	(14) 32.6	39.5
Agree	(20) 46.5	(8) 18.6	(4) 9.3	30.2
Strongly Agree	(4) 9.3	(1) 2.3	(2) 4.7	7.0
Total	(43) 100%	(43) 100%	(43) 100%	(43) 100%

Arab World English Journal   74
www.awej.org
ISSN: 2229-9327

The first item in this category asked the instructors about their opinions if the textbooks help the students in their future study at the University. More than half of the surveyed instructors thought that the commercial textbooks help the students in their future academic studies at the university. The majority believe that commercial textbooks provide the students with the academic language that the students need in their colleges. The textbooks might contain enough academic words and structures of the academic language. The textbooks give synchronized structure and a standard syllabus for a course. Without textbooks, a course has no spine and students have no systemically planned and developed syllabus. However, there are quite a few instructors who think that the commercial textbooks are not necessarily helpful for the students' academic studies in their colleges. This might be due to commercial textbooks are not able to maintain the quality, students are not exposed to the materials, the content of the textbooks are not tried and tested, they may lack sound learning principle.

The second item in the category asked the instructors' about their views if the textbooks' contents consider the students' academic backgrounds. More than half of the surveyed instructors believe that the textbooks do not consider the students' academic backgrounds.

They may believe that commercial textbooks have distorted content, inauthentic language and may not reflect the students' need properly. Students take different courses in their elementary and in high schools. Thus, they have different academic backgrounds. For example, in Saudi Arabia, there are core courses such as the Holy Quran, Hadith, Tawheed, Fiqah, and Arabic language since the elementary education that are not available in other countries. Also, students might join different academic disciplines. This will create different academic needs. Barnard and Zemach illustrate, "a student taking a humanities seminar will need discussion skills; a student in the science may need specialized vocabulary" (2003, p. 312).

The third item in the category asked the instructors if they think that the commercial the textbooks fit the students' language proficiency level. The majority of the instructors think that the textbooks do not meet the students' English language proficiency. These textbooks might be higher or lower than the students' current language level. Instructors might be of this opinion that textbooks are mostly targeted towards marketing or profit-making so the publishers may compromise the language proficiency contents and major instructional principles. International publishers target schools that follow the western or English speaking countries educational systems. The educational systems are varied among the countries. For example, the English language is taught since the kindergarten in some countries. In Saudi Arabia, students begin their English classes from the sixth grade.

In addition, the English language textbooks in high schools also vary. Tomlinson states "materials should help the learners to develop confidence, "e.g., through pushing learners slightly beyond their existing proficiency by involving them in tasks which are challenging but achievable" (2003, p. 21). Also, textbooks' activities should build the learners' confidence so that learners can use language well. Rubdy (2003) stresses that the activities in materials should provide learners with confidence. So, the students can communicate well in their classrooms with their classmates and instructors.

The last item in this category asked the instructors if the commercial textbooks provide the students with the language proficiency needed to get success in their studies. The majority of the instructors believe that the textbooks provide the students with the language proficiency that they need to get success in their studies which is based on the authentic materials, target group and need for language learning, what is happening in the world, intrinsic educational thirst and the same piece of material can be used under different way and situation.

Textbooks might contain the necessary vocabulary and language structures that students need to understand before they start their studies in their colleges. Few instructors thought that the textbooks do not necessarily provide the needed language proficiency to achieve success in colleges. This might be due to the fact that the textbooks cannot cover all the vocabulary and language skills in different disciplines.

Howard and Brown, (1997) stress that in order to provide adequate preparation for college/ university-level work, English for academic purposes instructors must be able to teach the following language skills and strategies: (a) reading (e.g., scanning, skimming, and critical thinking). (b) Writing (e.g., academic discourse, genres, grammar). (c) Listening/speaking (e.g., lectures oral presentation). Also, Millard (2000) stresses that language programs should include some form of grammatical instructions to develop students' grammatical accuracy.

B. Commercial Textbooks and EFL Contents
The second category presents participants' perspectives regarding the contents of the commercial textbooks. Table 2 summarizes and presents the participants' attitudes regarding the contents that commercial textbooks include.

Table 2. *Teachers' Attitudes Toward EFL Commercial Textbooks Regarding The Contents of the Textbooks*

Attitudes	Q#8 Reorder the Contents	Q#9 Add the Contents	Q#10 Replace the Contents	Q#13 Updated the Contents
Strongly Disagree	(11) 15.6	(4) 9.3	(4) 9.3	(0) 0.0
Disagree	(10) 23.3	(13) 30.2	(11) 25.6	(9) 20.9
Neither	(10) 23.3	(16) 37.2	(15) 34.9	(12) 27.9
Agree	(11) 25.6	(9) 20.9	(11) 25.6	(17) 39.5
Strongly Agree	(1) 2.3	(1) 2.3	(2) 4.7	(5) 11.6
Total	(43) 100%	(43) 100%	(43) 100%	(43) 100%

The first item in the category asked the participants based on their experiences if they realize that the teachers do not need to reorder some of the textbooks' content. The instructors' opinions are spread between the agreement and disagreement. It seems that the majority of them think that they need to order the textbooks. There might be different reasons to do so such as course books deskill teachers, course books cause boredom, no textbook is perfect, every class is unique, and every student should be treated individually. Another obvious reason is to coordinate with other language skill classes that might use different textbooks. Materials should be adaptable to make the learning process effective. Dat Boa states, "good material should suggest ways for the teacher to make the process adaptable to a broad spectrum of learners" (2003, p.386).

Moreover, the textbooks should be flexible to sequence them the way teachers need. Millard (2000) stresses that "[grammar textbooks should] maintain a communicative focus that interests learners while allowing teachers to sequence their classes as they deem appropriate" (p. 49). In addition, the textbooks should be adaptable for teaching styles, students' needs, and institution's goals. Singapore and Duriya state that the materials should be adaptable to teaching styles and the methods of the teaching body (2003, p. 144).

The second item in the category asked the teachers if they think that the teachers do not need to add some content to the textbooks. Around 40% of the instructors think that they need to add some contents to the textbooks to cover the course aims and objectives. 37% percent give equal opportunity to the additional materials use in the classroom. They expect that they sometimes might need to bring materials from outside the textbooks to help the students to achieve the course's outcomes. Graves (2000) suggested that teacher should use the textbooks as a resource to minimize the difficulties and may use as a guide, be free to modify, change, eliminate, evaluate, add, develop and supplement the textbooks with lots of external readings. Another reason might be that the textbooks do not meet all the students' needs and learning styles. The textbook should contain different learning styles to give an equal opportunity to the students because there are usually different students who have different learning styles such as auditory learning (learning by hearing), visual learning (learning by seeing), and kinesthetic learning (learning by doing) in the class. Tomlinson (2003) states that the materials should cater for different preferred learning styles.

Moreover, Hismanoglu (2000) stresses that the most important role for foreign language teacher is the provision of a collection of tasks to match varied learning styles. In order to do this role, the teacher needs materials that consider learners' different learning styles. Around 23% of the instructors doubt that whether they need to add some contents to the textbooks since the textbooks cover all the course' objectives. After all, the teachers do not have enough time to cover the signed language materials by the administrations.

The third item asked the participants if they think that the teachers do not need to replace some of the textbooks' content. More than one-third of the instructors find that in some situations they need to replace the content of the textbooks. For example, if the textbooks contain inappropriate activities that might not match the students' interests such as sports' activities like ice hockey and ice skating, rugby, and cricket. These sports are uncommon in Saudi Arabia. Teachers might replace them with other common sports in Saudi Arabia such as soccer and volleyball. The instructors might replace some of the contents of the textbook with more authentic

activities that fit the students' needs. Graves (2000) gave a cycle in which a series of steps can be practiced. Planning, how to teach with text, teaching the text, re-planning how to teach, and re-teaching. Planning includes need analysis and textbook structure analysis; teaching takes care of implementing the modifications. Re-planning stresses on planning again using all the conclusions made during the completion of a course and reteaching is the implementation of the decisions and conclusions made during re-planning.

The textbook should contain authentic materials. Outside the classroom, students are going to listen and read the language that is not modified for non-native speakers. Saraceni (2003) states that language learning materials should be based on authentic texts that are texts which have been written for any purpose other than language teaching. So, language teachers should prepare their students by teaching those authentic materials and use authentic activities that students are going to do in the college. Lowe (2010) clarifies, "language teachers should dare to use authentic texts, and must use authentic activities such as summarizing, outlining and inferencing" (p.1). It is the teacher responsibility to use authentic materials, and they can do that by choosing a book that contains authentic texts.

The fourth item in the category asked the participants think that the contents of the commercial textbooks are updated. More than half of the instructors think that the textbooks are up-to-date. The textbooks contain current topics such as technology products names and current international events. The textbook should provide the students with the most important and current technological terms and abbreviation. Outdated textbooks might not increase the students' motivations and engagements especially of those who have joined the college of engineering and computer sciences. Richards (2015) standpoint is to monitor the use of materials by classroom observation, feedback sessions with teachers, written reviews by teacher or group of teachers, and students' comments on their experience of with the materials.

Motivation plays a vital role in the language learning process. So, students should be motivated to learn effectively. Cives-Enriques states, "if the students of any discipline enjoy what they are doing, they will at least make the effort to learn" (2003, p. 240). Therefore, materials' activities should motivate students to learn. Harmer (2007) states that students become bored and they find the subject more difficult than their expectations. Therefore, the teacher should sustain students' motivation by providing materials that contain current topics and issues.

C. EFL Commercial Textbooks and EFL Courses
The third category presented the participants' views of factors that are related to courses inside the commercial textbooks. Table 3 summarizes and presents the influence of EFL commercial textbooks in EFL courses.

Table 3. *Teachers' Attitudes Toward EFL Commercial Textbooks Regarding EFL Courses*

Attitudes	Q#3 Course's Aims and Objectives	Q#4 Course's Time Frame	Q#14 Teaching Methods
Strongly Disagree	(2) 4.7	(6) 14.0	(0) 0.0

Disagree	(10) 23.3	(8) 18.6	(7) 16.3
Neither	(17) 39.5	(20) 46.5	(7) 16.3
Agree	(12) 27.9	(7) 16.3	(14) 32.6
Strongly Agree	(2) 4.7	(2) 4.7	(15) 34.9
Total	(43) 100%	(43) 100%	(43) 100%

The first item in this category presents the participants' views if they think that the textbooks meet the course's aims and objectives. 28% of the instructors think that commercial textbooks fail to foster the course' aims and objectives. They think that the course' objectives are broad and cannot fit within a single commercial textbook. The majority of them give equal opportunities where the textbooks might meet some but not all. This might mean that the textbooks to some extent meet the course' overall objectives. 32% of the surveyed instructors agree that the textbooks that they use meet the course' aims and objectives.

Skopinskaja, (2003) states textbook content needs to be analyzed in reference to its specified aims and objectives, e.g., to what extent teaching areas like grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing and culture is present in a student's book, teachers' manual, and activity book. Also, it is important to determine whether, for example, cultural information is taught in a particular context (texts, exercises, dialogues) or as isolated facts.

The textbooks might achieve the aims by verifying the learners' roles that textbooks activities provide. For example, the role of the learners might be that of a participator in some activities, researcher, context explorer, speaker, a builder who constructs products such as diagrams or essays, a listener, a reader, a team member who works on projects, or of a writer who applies and analyzes information.

The second item in this category asked the participants if they think that the commercial textbooks organization fit the course's time frame.   From the mentioned results, we can see that instructors are not satisfied with the time that is required to cover the textbook chapters. 32% of the instructors have negative experiences about managing time to cover the required textbooks within the semester. This issue shows that the EFL program administration might underestimate or overestimate the required period to teach each textbook. EFL programs vary regarding the time required to finish the assigned textbooks. Some school might want to finish the textbooks within two months. Others might need to finish them in four months. This is a dilemma for the language textbooks publishers. They cannot meet the needs of all EFL programs with one textbook. Educationist advocates that there is an appropriate balance between depth and breadth in the treatment of subject matter, the level of difficulty of the material for timely completion of a course book.

In addition, it is clear that some of these commercial textbooks are designed to be self-study materials. However, teachers might facilitate difficulties, manage the activities, provide information, or add examples. Coulson clarifies that the effectiveness of self-study materials will increase "if the teacher actively augmented the instruction by rephrasing difficult program items, adding examples, working through the program problems with the student, and branching the student to different parts of the program" (1967, p. 1). So, the stockholders are varied with their time slots to study these commercial textbooks. As a result, this puts demands on the EFL programs to be careful about assigning the required time to cover the textbooks.

The third question in this category asked the instructors if they think that the commercial textbooks are suitable with regard to the teaching methods used in the classes. 67 percent of the instructors have found that the textbooks can fit with different teaching methods. It seems that the commercial textbooks are fixable with different language teaching methods. Materials should develop a student's ability to communicate in spoken and written form. Tomlinson (2003) confirms that "materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes" (p. 21).

Flipped classroom model can be useful as it encourages students to prepare the lesson before the lecture. At present, gamification method is in fashion. It enables students to learn the subject without even realizing. It is a technique which focuses on learning through the use of games. Social media can also be used as a tool for teaching. Today students are well connected to various social media websites and their applications so they need little motivation. For example, the Brazilian Academy of Languages "Red Ballon" asked students to review the tweets of their favorite artists and correct grammatical errors that they committed in an effort to improve their English language skills!

In recent years, publishers have tried to create materials that promote students' ability to use the language. Littlejohn (1992) states that there is "an increased role for materials in endeavoring to provide ways of promoting communicative language use" (p.108). Even some of them are designed for more updated teaching methods such as the communicative teaching methods. The teachers have the ability to use the same contents with different teaching methods such as the grammar-translation method and audio-lingual method.

D. EFL Commercial Textbooks and EFL Cultures

The fourth category in this study presents the teachers' attitudes toward cultural issues inside the commercial textbooks. Table 4 summarizes and presents the variables that are related to culture in EFL commercial textbooks.

Table 4: *Teachers Attitudes Toward EFL Commercial Textbooks Regarding EFL Culture*

Attitudes	Q#2 Conflicts, Values, & Beliefs	Q#7 Deleted Contents	Q#12 Academic Culture
Strongly Disagree	(3) 7.0	(6) 14.0	(0) 0.0
Disagree	(7) 16.3	(17) 39.5	(8) 18.6

Neither	(22) 51.2	(14) 32.6	(18) 41.9
Agree	(9) 20.9	(5) 11.6	(15) 34.9
Strongly Agree	(2) 4.7	(1) 2.3	(2) 4.7
Total	(43) 100%	(43) 100%	(43) 100%

The first question in this category asked the participants if they believe that the commercial textbooks do not conflict with the students' values, beliefs and culture. When the instructors were asked about the cultural conflicts in EFL classrooms due to the use of the commercial textbooks, more than half of them give the equal opportunity of agreement and disagreement. They are not quite sure about the cultural issues that commercial textbooks raise in the classroom. This might be due to the fact that the teachers come from different backgrounds and have different cultures than the students' culture. The instructors might not have a deep understanding of their students' culture and religious beliefs. It depends on the context and people. Some students might be more open-minded where they can accept discussions on cultural topics such as religious beliefs and religious holidays.

The question to ask ourselves bearing in mind socio-cultural factors in language teaching process is whether teachers should include socio-cultural factors in the teaching process. Wardhaugh(1992) wrote instructors might have a positive or negative response. In case of positive response, then we have to decide how much socio-cultural information should be given to learners and what methods of teaching and kind of techniques should be used while analyzing or teaching the textbooks. We may have different target culture; it does not primarily a native culture like English or British. Instructors must consider the learners' needs, characteristics and aims.

Zaid (1999) stresses that in some EFL textbooks there are violations to some native cultures. Although the authors may not have intended these insensitivities; all of these, from the perspective of a non-Western culture, promote confrontation. For example, social aspects of Western culture are stressed in exercises and activities: Boyfriend/girlfriend, dating, beach/bikini wear, the consumption of wine, dancing, and hugging. These might be prohibited social activities in certain non-Western societies such as Saudi Arabia.

According to Byram and Grundy (2003), language students can develop cultural sensitivity if they are allowed to internalize different cultural outlooks and perspectives as well as the fundamental aspects of cultures. There is a need that a culturally neutral form of English or target culture tailored English textbooks should be appropriate to nullify the cultural sensitiveness. Global language utilization for communication purposes would enable the non-native speakers to retain their cultural characteristics as much as possible.

The second item in this category asked the participants if they think that the teachers do not need to delete some of the commercial textbooks' content. More than half of the instructors need to delete some of these commercial textbooks contents. There might be different reasons for

doing so such as cultural conflicts. These textbooks might contain sensitive contents as we have discussed in the second question. Teachers can also delete repeated contents as they might have been covered in other textbooks. Teachers can also delete some contents because they are either complicated and unnecessary for the students, or too easy for them.

The teacher or instructor is not obliged to cover all the content of the textbook. Sometimes, some parts of the textbook are not appropriate for the teaching situation. The process of textbook adaptation is left for language teachers. Some objectives for material adaptation: to eliminate the unnecessary content, to consider individual differences, to provide the content based on learning strategies and cognitive styles of the learners, to justify the content based on the learners' culture and values, to establish challenges for the talent learners, to accomplish the learners' interests and goals, to maximize the learners' involvement in the teaching process,and to reduce stress and anxiety on the part of the learners (Tomlinson, 2003).

The third item in this category asked the instructors if they believe that the textbooks introduce the students to the academic culture of their future colleges. Around 40% of the surveyed teachers assume that the textbooks help the students to understand the academic culture in the colleges. For example, the textbooks might contain topics that explain common rules in colleges that did not necessarily exist in high school such as university rules and principles, college students' roles and duties, time management in the college life, and creating academic social networks. Materials should be relevant to the learners to be useful for them. Dörnyei (2003) states that language materials should be relevant for the learners because they do care about their learning.

The textbook might include several learning-teaching strategies such as pair discussion sharing, repetition, clarification or identification, guided reading, interview, guided writing, brainstorming, note taking, making a presentation, guessing, classifying, understanding point of view, evaluating, and revising. Hismanoglu (2000) stresses the importance of teaching-learning strategies such as clarification, guessing, practice, participation in the conversation, analyzing, evaluating, and revising the language learning process.

Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations
This analytical attempt is conducted to assess the teachers' attitudes towards commercial textbooks in EFL programs in Saudi Arabia. The results of the study highlighted that the commercial textbooks used in EFL programs are quite ineffective. They do not encounter the needs of the teachers or the students within the Saudi context. These textbooks are not considered a perfect fit within the Saudi educational system from the language instructors' perspectives. As the textbooks are the major source of contact, the students have with target language; and for teachers, they provide structure and syllabus for a program. Richards (2001), states that there should be a complete agreement with learners, teachers and with the administration. However, as Grant (1987) claims "the perfect book does not exist" yet one can come with the best solution available. Thus the study recommends language instructors to adapt the available commercial textbooks according to their context by applying the methods of simplification, reduction, modification, deletion and editing of contents of the textbooks. They can even bring some of the language materials that are culturally relevant and more authentic. They can even supplement their textbooks with alternative

materials available. They can use authentic materials in the classroom to make the teaching-learning process more realistic and neutral.

Teachers' negative attitudes towards commercial textbooks act as directives for material designers and developers. The study recommends the course designers to revise their textbooks in a way that they suit the learners' needs, provide them with ample opportunity to interact with textbook's contents, enhance their skills and motivate them towards learning. It also suggests them to create and develop specific textbooks to cater the specific needs of the specific discipline. Teachers also found the contents of the selection of the instructional materials will affect teachers, students, and overall classroom dynamics. The said time frame should be kept in mind and should be one of the most important criteria while selecting EFL textbooks. Teachers' and students' views should also be given due importance. The use of systematic procedure can result in the most potential selection and will ultimately enhance the learners', teachers' and administration's outcome.

Participants of the study revealed negative attitudes towards the course's time frame. Now, this brings responsibility on the EFL program administrators to evaluate and analyze textbooks before selecting them for their programs. They should amend and reconsider their EFL textbooks selection policies and decisions related to the textbooks which are culturally inappropriate for KSA. Thus, it is recommended to the course designers to bear in mind the cultural sensitivity of the region while designing textbooks. If the textbooks do not respect the cultural habit of the students, then they will be demotivated from the textbooks. As Karmani (2005) stresses that the material and contents of English textbooks are culturally inappropriate in the Arabian Gulf, the publishers of these textbooks are sensitive to the marketability of their textbooks in the Arabian Gulf region. The attempts to modify the textbooks' cultural elements such as pictures and habits make them acceptable; however, the learners fail to understand and appreciate the target culture.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

One point that might affect the results of this study is the definition of the word attitude. The teachers' attitudes involve the teachers' opinions, interests, and values. Dörnyei, (2003) states that the attitudinal questions are "abroad category that concerns attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests and values. These five interrelated terms are not always distinguished or defined very clearly in the literature" (p. 7). The word attitude is abroad category. However, this study looks for the teachers' attitudes in general. This might not affect the results of the study. Another limitation point in the design of the study is using questionnaires which might involve subjectivity. For example, the researchers in the study might not know if the participants exaggerate in their answers (Mackey & Gass, 2005; Wallace, 1998). However, the participants were informed that the study is for research purposes and their answers are very important to make conclusions about the textbooks.

The current research shows that there is a need for future studies that study the language teachers' attitudes and the use of textbooks in the classrooms (Harwood, 2010; McGrath, 2006). Understanding the biographical factors that shape the teachers' attitudes toward the textbooks will help the language teaching schools and the textbooks publishers to design and provide workshops

for the teachers to change or strengthen their attitudes. This will result in practical use of the EFL textbooks in the EFL classrooms.

Replicating the study to see similar or different findings will contribute to the research in teachers' attitudes toward textbooks. Language Teaching Review Panel (2008) writes, "Language teaching is now encouraging original papers which replicate previous significant experimental studies in the field of language learning and teaching" (p. 1). Replication will give the results of this high validity if it has the same results. Future studies might investigate how we can change the negative attitudes of teachers toward the textbooks. Language program can use methods such as workshops and seminars to help the teachers to change their attitudes toward the used textbooks.

Conclusion

The present study is conducted to underscore the commercial textbooks potentiality and suitability in EFL programs from teachers' perspective. Teachers' perspective towards instructional materials is accountable as it is a predictor for course outcome. The current research chose the quantitative method where data is collected through a close-ended questionnaire. The questions were themed to sort out the textbooks feasibility with students' academic backgrounds, their proficiency level, their cultural values, courses' aim and objectives, time frame, methodology and content relevancy. The results of each item in the survey were then comprehensively analyzed separately. The analysis revealed, in general, negative attitudes of teachers' toward commercial textbooks. They demonstrated their incompatibility with commercial textbooks. Majority of the instructors maintained that the commercial textbooks do not consider the students 'academic backgrounds. This may be the reason that students coming to undergraduate program are from varied academic background and one textbook cannot cater the background of each student as it needs to comply with its own set standards.

Most of the instructors' response maintained a mixed attitude with few of the textbooks attributes, like meeting course aims and objectives, with textbooks conflict with students' values, beliefs, and culture. Based on the results it can be safely concluded that there are many incompatibilities between language instructors and commercial textbooks. They possess mostly negative attitudes toward commercial textbooks in EFL programs. Only a few attributes they showed positive and to others, a mixed sort of attitudes. The obvious factor behind this may be that the teachers in the study share different educational, political, economic, social and cultural background backgrounds.

The negative attitudes of teachers raise the attention of EFL administrators to reconsider the selection policy of the commercial textbooks. They should evaluate and select teaching material on several criteria such as course aims and objectives, learners' needs, cultural issues and theory of learning. Moreover, these negative attitudes bring certain responsibilities on the teachers themselves. The study concluded that teachers should adapt the contents of the textbook and can supplement them with alternative and authentic materials. The results of the study are like the indicator for the material designer to keep in mind the raised concerns and issues while developing and designing textbooks for EFL programs in KSA. To sum up, commercial textbooks for EFL programs in KSA need more revision, adaptation, redesigning, redeveloping to make them more effective.

About the authors

Dr. Munassir Alhamami is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia. He received his MA degree from Trinity Western University, Canada. He received the PhD degree from University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, USA. ORCID: http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4229-9947

Mr. Javed Ahmad is a lecturer at English Language Center, Faculty of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia. He joined the University as a lecturer in 2008. He received his MA (English Language and Literature) degree from Aligarh Muslim University. He also did Master in Education from Aligarh Muslim University. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8147-0642

References

Baker, C. (1992). *Attitudes and language*. London: Multilingual Matters.

Barnard, R; & Zemach, D. (2003). Materials for specific purposes. In Tomlinson, Brian (Ed.), *Developing materials for language teaching* (pp. 306- 323). New York: Continuum

Brown, J. D. (1988). *Understanding research in second language learning: A teacher's guide to statistics and research design*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, J. D. (2001). *Using surveys in language programs*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Burns, A. (1992). Teacher beliefs and their influence on classroom practice. *Prospect, 7*(3), 56-66.

Byram, M., Grundy, P. (Eds.). (2003). *Context and culture in language teaching and learning*. Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Cives-Enriquez, R. (2003). Materials for adult: 'I am no good at languages!' – inspiring and motivating L2 adult learners of beginner's Spanish. In Tomlinson, Brian (Ed.), *Developing materials for language teaching* (pp. 239- 255). New York: Continuum

Coulson, J, E. (1967). *The teacher's role in classes using self-study materials*. Retrieved from ERIC database.

Crawford, J. (2002). The role of material in the language classroom: Finding the balance. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in English teaching, An anthology of current practice* (pp. 80-89).New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. Oxford: Heinemann.

Dat, B. (2003). Materials for developing speaking skills. In Tomlinson, Brian (Ed.), *Developing materials for language teaching* (pp. 375- 393). New York: Continuum

Dörnyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research construction, administration, and processing*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ellis, R. (1997). The empirical evaluation of language teaching materials. *ELT Journal, 52*(1), 36-42.

Garinger, D. (2001). Textbook evaluation. *TEFL Web Journal*. Available at http://www.teflweb-j.org/v1n1/garinger.html

Grant, N. (1987). *Making the most of your textbooks*. London: Longman.

Graves, K. (2000). *Designing language courses: A guide for teachers*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Harmer, J. (2007). *How to teach English*. London: Longman.

Harwood, N. (Ed.). (2010). *English language teaching materials: Theory and practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hismanoglu, M. (2000). Language learning strategies in foreign language learning and teaching.*The Internet TESL Journal*, *6*(8). Retrieved from http://iteslj.org/Articles/Hismanoglu-Strategies.html

Howard, R; & Brown, G. (1997).*Teacher education for languages for specific purposes*. Clevedon-Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters Limited.

Karmani, S. (2005). Petro-linguistics: The emerging nexus between oil, English, and Islam. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education, 4*(2), 87-102.

Language Teaching Review Panel. (2008). Replication studies in language learning and teaching: Questions and answers. *Language Teaching, 4*(l), 1-14.

Lee, R., & Bathmaker, A. (2007). The use of English textbooks for teaching English to 'Vocational' students in Singapore Secondary Schools: A survey of teachers' beliefs. *RELC Journal, 38*(3), 350-375.

Littlejohn, A. (1998). The analysis of Language teaching materials: Inside the Trojan horse. InB.Tomlinson (Ed.), *Materials development in language teaching* (pp: 190-216). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Littlejohn, A. P. (1992). *Why are English language teaching materials the way they are?* Unpublished Ph.D. thesis. Lancaster University, Lancaster, UK.

Lowe, I. (2010). *ESP teachers MUST teach specialist content*. Retrieved from http://www.scientificlanguage.com/esp/esp.html.

Mackey, A., & Gass, S. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc Inc.

McGrath, I. (2006). Teachers' and learners' images for coursebooks. *ELT Journal, 60*(2), 171-180.

Millard, D. (2000). Form-focused instruction in communicative language teaching: Implications for grammar textbooks. *TESL Canada Journal, 18*(1), 47-57

Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. (2015). The changing face of language learning: Learning beyond the classroom. *RELC Journal*, *46*(1), 5-22.

Rubdy, R. (2003). Selection of materials. In Tomlinson, Brain (Ed.), *Developing materials for language teaching* (pp. 37-57). New York: Continuum

Saraceni, C. (2003). Adapting courses: A critical view. In Tomlinson, Brian (Ed.), *Developing materials for language teaching* (pp. 72- 85). New York: Continuum

Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal, 42*(4), 237-246.

Singapore, W., Duriya, A. (2003). Publishing a coursebook: Completing the materials development circle. In Tomlinson, Brian (Ed.), *Developing materials for language teaching* (pp. 141- 161). New York: Continuum

Skopinskaja, (2003). The role of culture in foreign language teaching materials: An evaluation from an intercultural perspective. In I.Lázár(ed.), *Incorporating intercultural communicative competence in language teacher education* (pp. 39–68). European Centre for Modern Languages, Council of Europe Publishing.

Tomlinson, B. (2001). Materials development. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 66-72). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tomlinson, B. (Ed.). (1998). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tomlinson, B. (Ed.). (2003). *Developing materials for language teaching*. New York: Continuum.

Wallace, M. J. (1998). *Action research for language teachers*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wardhaugh, (1992). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. USA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Zaid, M. (1999). Cultural confrontation and cultural acquisition in the EFL classroom. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching. 37*(2), 111-126.

Appendix A
* To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statement in general:

No	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	In general, the textbooks help the students for their future study at ………….					
2	In general, the textbooks do not conflict with the students' values, beliefs, and culture.					
3	In general, the textbooks meet the course's aims and objectives.					
4	In general, the textbooks' organization fit the course's time frame.					
5	In general, the textbooks' contents consider the students' academic backgrounds.					
6	In general, the textbooks fit the students' language proficiency levels.					
7	In general, the teachers do not need to delete some of the textbooks' content.					
8	In general, the teachers do not need to reorder some of the textbooks' content.					
9	In general, the teachers do not need to add some content to the textbooks.					
10	In general, the teachers do not need to replace some of the textbooks' content.					
11	In general, the textbooks provide the students with the language proficiency needed to get success in their studies.					
12	In general, the textbooks introduce the students to the academic culture of their future colleges.					
13	In general, the textbooks' content is updated.					
14	In general, the textbooks are suitable with regard to the teaching methods used in the classes.					

Thank You