Textbook evaluation: A Conscientious look at American English File Series

Mohammad Karimi[1], Elham Kalani[1] and Nima Shakouri[2]
[1]Iranian English Language Center, Bandar –e Anzali, Iran
[2]Roudbar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran.

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The purpose of the given paper is to evaluate American English File (hereafter AEF) series (1st ed.). In so doing, to achieve the very purpose, Daoud and Celce-Murica's 1979 attitude questionnaire was administrated to 50 EFL learners and 20 teachers in a popular language center, located in Bandare –e Anzali, Iran. The questionnaire aimed to elicit the agreement or disagreement of both learners and teachers on a Likert-scale. Based on the findings, it could be concluded that teachers had higher rating in comparison to the students for all the items. In general, there were significant differences between teachers and students in their attitude towards the textbook. Through this investigation, it is hoped that curriculum developers, before selecting a new material, make sure that it is able to meet both the students and the teachers' need.

Introduction

Textbooks play a pivotal role in the curriculum. Without books, education will blindly be directed. As Heyneman (2006) asserts, textbooks are respected as "an appropriate vehicle for future education" (p. 35). Sheldon (1988), also, maintains that textbooks do not only represent the visible heart of any ELT program, but also offer considerable advantages for both teachers and students.

Along the same vein, in the selection of a new book, certain criteria have to be taken into consideration in order to evaluate a text book. As to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), evaluation is respected as a process of matching needs to available solutions. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) define evaluation as asking questions and acting upon the responses. They further argue that evaluation begins with determining what information to gather and ends with bringing about change in current activities or influencing future ones.

There are several reasons that indicate the significance of textbook evaluation. Accordingly, Sheldon (1988) maintains that two reasons can be counted for the evaluation of textbooks. First of all, the evaluation of textbooks will pave the way for teachers to decide on selecting the appropriate textbook. Moreover, the evaluation of advantages and disadvantages of a textbook will get teachers familiar with its probable weaknesses and strengths. Henceforth, the teachers, in this way, are able to make appropriate adaptations to the material in their future instruction. Nevertheless, the criteria employed in an evaluation of a textbook are context-bound since every context is unique in the sense that the students have different backgrounds and needs.

The present paper is an attempt to go beyond an impressionistic assessment of AEF series in order to acquire useful and accurate insights into the overall nature of the very books. In this regard, the paper discusses parallel data collected from both language learners and teachers. To achieve the above-given goal, the study seeks to answer the following questions:
Q1: What are Iranian EFL teachers' and students' attitudes towards the textbook?

Q2: Is there any significant difference between Iranian EFL teachers and students with respect to their attitudes towards the textbook?

Review of Related Literature

The importance of textbooks in formal setting has been widely recognized. However, to several scholars (e.g., Grant, 1987) "perfect book does not exist" (p. 8), yet there is an optimistic inclination toward finding the best possible one that will fit and be appropriate to a particular learner group (Tok, 2010).

Generally, there are two perspectives toward the role of textbooks suggested by Allwright (1981). The first – the deficiency view – sees the role of textbook as being to compensate for teachers' deficiencies. The deficiency view maintains that experienced teachers always know what materials to use with a given class and have access to or create them. The difference view, in contrast, sees materials as carriers of decisions best made by someone other than the teacher because of differences in expertise (Allwright, 1981). However, as Crawford (2002) claims, these views (i.e. deficiency and difference views) challenge teachers' professionalism and make teachers the implementers of others' ideas and reduce them to classroom managers, technicians, or implementers of others' ideas. Crawford, also, goes on to hold that these views turn out to be problematic since "teaching materials are not neutral and so will have a role to play in deciding what is learnt" (Apple, 1992, cited in Crawford, 2002, p. 82).

Seen from this stance, the variety of perspectives toward textbooks reveals a shift from what Giroux (1997) calls a culture of positivism to an anti-positivist paradigm. As to Giroux, culture of positivism considers textbooks as a "storehouse of artifacts constituted as canon" (p. 122). In fact, "knowledge appears beyond the reach of critical interrogation except at the level of immediate application" (Giroux, 1997, p. 122). Moreover, the teacher is considered as mere consumer of information stored in the textbook. Anti-positivists, in contrast, hold that teachers and students are considered as active

Tele:
E-mail addresses: shakouri.ni@gmail.com

producers of meanings constructed based on their experience. It lends support to claim hat in anti-positivism, learning will be enhanced if students' voice is heard. In much the same way, when students are let talk from their vantage points, power will be decentered. Giroux asserts that the decentering power in the class should help "students take their place in society from a position of empowerment rather than a position of ideological and economic subordinations" (p. 120). Thus, in a classroom where power is shared, "juxtaposing conflicting understandings [that] creates a space for learning – an opportunity to recognize how differing perspectives coexist and complicate the learning milieu" (Dehler, Welsh, & Lewis, 1999, p. 18).In fact, the evaluation of textbooks, from anti-positivist lens, can be respected as "incredulity towards metanarrativeness" (Lyotard, 1984, p. 24). In a sense, reality is not considered as a tangible truth that can be discovered.

Textbook Evaluation

Textbooks as vehicles for delivering content knowledge were always at the center of academic and pedagogical challenges. The reason of these challenges is a matter of the quality of criteria. However, there is no clearly defined set of quality criteria available for judging. To several scholars (e.g., Hammersley, 2007), the task of judging quality cannot be reduced to a finite set of explicit criteria that can substitute for judgment. To Hammersley, the criteria in the form of guideline can play an important role in the work of a researcher. Along the same vein, Cunningsworth (1995) outlines four criteria for evaluating textbooks: (1) they should correspond to learner's needs; (2) they should reflect the uses which learners will make of the language; (3) they should take account of students' needs as learners and should facilitate their learning processes; and (4) they should have a clear role as a support for learning. Similarly, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) divide the evaluation process into four stages: (1) defining criteria, (2) subjective analysis, (3) objective analysis, and (4) matching. Robinson (1991) also distinguishes between three types of material evaluation: (1) preliminary (before an ESP course begins), (2) summative (takes place at the end of the course), and (3) formative (conducted while the course is ongoing). She states that evaluation can be carried out by both outsiders and insiders. Similarly, in the evaluation of a book, reality cannot be obtained uni-dimensionally; that is, "if teachers are encouraged to investigate learners' attitudes and compare them with their own, the resulting awareness may be a spur to professional self-development" (McGrath, 2006, p. 171).

McDonough and Shaw (2003) suggest a model for textbook evaluation which involves three stages. First, external evaluation that examines the organization of materials stated by the author or the publisher including claims made on the cover page and information in the introduction and table of contents. This kind of evaluation gives information about the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context of use, presentation and organization of materials, authors' opinion about language and methodology, use of audio-visual materials, vocabulary list and index, cultural aspects, tests and exercises included in the book. Second, internal evaluation in which the following factors are examined: (1) the presentation of the skills, (2) the grading and sequence of the materials, (3) the authenticity or artificiality of the listening materials, (4) the authenticity or artificiality of the speaking materials, (5) the appropriateness of tests and materials, and (6) the appropriateness of the materials for different learning styles and claims made by the authors for self-study. The last stage is overall evaluation in which usability, generalizability, and flexibility factors are examined.

Generally, there are three methods for the evaluation of textbooks: impressionistic, checklist, and in-depth method (McGrath, 2001). As to McGrath, the first method (i.e., the impressionistic method) entails analyzing a textbook on the basis of a general impression; hereby the book would be evaluated by paying heed to the blurb, for instance. In effect, it is suggested that to skim the topics, visuals, and the layout in order to have a general information about the book. Unlike the impressionistic method which appears to be inadequate, the checklist method is systematic as it involves pursuing a variety of criteria on a list earlier prepared that are lined off in order. The third method, the in-depth method, involves a meticulous examination of representative features including the design of a particular element in the book. There is not much space in the present paper to deal with that the merits and demerits of the given methods. Henceforth, present writers, relying on the first two methods, make an endeavor to evaluate AEF series (1st ed.).

Books' Design

Each chapter called a File consists of four 2-page lessons, and each lesson includes reading, listening, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and speaking practice. Additional material in the back of the book specific for each lesson is also available for those who need additional practice of grammar or vocabulary. Most lessons also contain an information gap pair work exercise that is fully related to the lesson. Another advantage of the book is that each lesson theme develops through a variety of tasks, each of which usually a continuum of the previous one.

"Practical English", just the fourth page before the end of each chapter, is a serial story that begins in the first book in the series and continues throughout AEF3.It has three parts: a listening passage of a situation that happens to the people involved in the story, a conversation that students listen to and fill in the missing words, and the main story which includes some listening comprehension questions, followed by some common sayings from such situations for students to practice. The very section (i.e. Practical English) in AEF 4 becomes more documentary-like using various themes normally related to the chapter's theme. However, the exercises are all like the pervious series. Then there is writing practice; each page includes some kind of reading model; some tasks are presented first; then the students are asked to write.

Chapters end with a 2-page review. The first page is a quiz of the grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. The second page has a reading passage, a listening passage, and a bit of speaking practice.

Methodology

Participants

The participants of this study were in two groups: The first group included 20 Iranian EFL teachers both male and female from an English Language Center located in Bandar –e Anzali, Iran. They had a minimum of four years of teaching experience, and all of them held at least a bachelor degree. All the teachers attended the teacher training course of the language center which is a 3-day intensive course touching upon the major trends of language teaching methodology. The second group included 50 Iranian EFL learners from the same English Language Center who were randomly selected from among 300 students. The learners were 22 to 30 years of age of both genders.

Instrumentation

Data gathering in this research was mainly done through the questionnaire adapted from a template by Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979). The questionnaire aimed to elicit the agreement or disagreement of both the learners and teachers on a Likert-

Scale (i.e., Excellent, Good, Adequate, Weak, and Totally Lacking).

Procedure

Being qualitative, the procedure of the present study was limited to the preparation of a questionnaire and its administration to the students and teachers of a number of classes at different proficiency levels in an English Language Center located in Bandar –eAnzali, Iran.

Results and Discussion

Estimation of the Reliability Index for the Attitude Questionnaire

The main research instrument in this study was an attitude questionnaire that was administered to the selected sample including teachers and students. The questionnaire contained 25 items.

The reliability of the questionnaire was checked through the pilot study on 15 subjects including both teachers and students.

Table 1. Reliability statistics of the questionnaire (pilot study)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.78	25

Cronbach's Alpha statistic was computed for the 25 questionnaire items and a reliability of .78 was obtained which is considerably higher than the minimum required value of 0.70.

RQ1: What are Iranian EFL teachers' and students' attitudes towards the textbook?

Teachers and students' viewpoints towards the textbook were evaluated through an attitude questionnaire that included five sub-categories. The first category of the questionnaire inspected the teachers' and the students' attitudes with respect to the "*subject matter*" of the textbook.

The first section of the questionnaire contained four items that measured the two groups' attitudes towards the "*subject matter*." In general, teachers had higher rating in comparison to the students for all of the items of this section.

Teachers reported their highest positive attitude towards "*the accuracy and contemporaneity of the materials of the textbook*" (X= 3.00). However, teachers also reflected the largest degree of heterogeneity in their responses for this item (SD= .91). On the other hand, the lowest mean rank was reported for item (3) that scrutinized the teachers' attitudes towards "*grading the content of the textbook according to the needs of the students or the requirements of the existing syllabus*" (X= 2.80). Besides, the value of standard deviation showed that teachers were unified in their rating of this item (SD= .61).

Students reported their lowest rating for item (4) that hold the highest mean rank for the teachers(X= 2.42). This controversy among the teachers' and students' responses was also observed for item (3) that had the highest mean rank for the students (X= 2.70). Moreover, the highest degree of scatterdness of the responses given by the students was reported for item (3) of this category (SD= 1.05). Despite that, the students appeared unified in their ratings for item (1) that assessed the students' viewpoints towards "*the relevance of the materials to the interests of the learners*" (SD=.78).

The second section of the attitude questionnaire, measured teachers' and students' perspectives towards "*the vocabulary & structures of the textbook*." It contained nine items among which item (6) was found to hold the highest mean rank for the teachers(X=2.95). This item examined their attitudes with respect to the "*appropriateness of the structures to the reading ability of the learners.*" Despite that, item (3) that scrutinized their perspective towards "*the repetition of the new vocabulary items in subsequent lessons for reinforcement*" had the lowest

mean rank (X= 2.15). Concerning the dispersion of the ratings, teachers were highly varied in their responses to item (1) that evaluated their viewpoints towards "*equitability of the vocabulary load for the students of that level*"(SD=1.23). On the other hand, they were relatively consistent in their responses to item (6) that hold the highest mean rank for the teachers, too (SD=.75).

Regarding the responses given by the students, item (5) had the highest mean rank(X=3.16). This item investigated the students' orientation towards the" *appropriateness of the number and sequence of grammatical points*." Similar to the teachers, students disclosed their negative attitude towards item (3) that was related to the "*role of repetition of the new vocabularies for their reinforcement*" (X=1.98). When it comes to the extent of diversity in the responses, items (1 & 2) had the highest degree of standard deviation (SD= 1.21). Despite that, the students appeared more consistent in their responses to item (5)that was found to have the highest mean rank for this group, too(SD=.76).

The third component of the attitude questionnaire inspected the two groups' stances towards the "*exercises of the textbook*." Teachers reported their highest positive attitude towards item (4) that investigated their orientations with respect to the "*function of the exercise to provide a pattern of review within lessons and cumulatively test new material*" (X=2.95). In spite of that, teachers reflected their lowest rating for item (2) that examined their perceptions of the "*appropriateness of the exercises to build up the learner's repertoire for the vocabulary and structures*" (X=2.50). The findings showed that teachers were more compatible with regard to item (4) that had the highest mean rank of this category, too(SD= .60). Nevertheless, they were highly divergent in relation to item (2) that had the lowest mean rank of this category, too (SD= .94).

In relation to the responses given by the students, unlike to the responses of the teachers, item (2) had the highest mean rank(X=2.72). Students disclosed their negative attitude towards item (3) that was related to the "*role of the exercises to provide practice in different types of written work*" (X=1.96). In addition, this item had the highest degree of standard deviation (SD= 1.24). Despite that, the students appeared more consistent in their responses to item (1) that was related to the "function of the exercises to develop comprehension and test knowledge of main ideas, details, and sequence of ideas (SD=.90).

The fourth part of the attitude questionnaire, measured teachers' and students' perspectives towards the "*illustrations*" of the textbook. This part included three items among which item (3) was found to hold the highest mean rank for the teachers(X=3.100). This item examined their attitudes with regard to the "*position of the illustrations and their relevance to the content to the content to help the learner understand the printed text*." Despite that, item (2) that investigated their stances towards "*the clarity and simplicity of the illustrations to prevent learner confusion*" had the lowest mean rank (X= 2.65). With respect to the diversity of the ratings, teachers were highly varied in their responses to this item (SD=1.08). On the other hand, they were relatively consistent in their responses to item (3) that hold the highest mean rank for the teachers, too (SD=.85).

Regarding the ratings done by the students, item (2) had the highest mean rank(X=2.84). On the other hand, students disclosed their lowest rating towards item (1) that was related to the "*role of illustrations to create a favorable atmosphere for practice in reading and spelling by depicting realism and action*" (X=2.34). The degree of diversity in the responses for

items (2) was lower than that of other items (SD=.88). Despite that, the students appeared more heterogeneous in their responses to item (1)that was found to have the least mean rank for this group, too(SD=1.13).

The last section of the attitude questionnaire determined the two groups' outlook in relation to the "*physical make-up*" of the textbook. Teachers reported their highest positive attitude towards item (4) that rated their perspective with respect to the "*appropriateness of the type size for the intended learners*" (X=3.10). In spite of that, teachers reflected their lowest rating for item (2) that evaluated their perceptions of the "*attractiveness of the text*" (X=2.65). The results revealed that teachers were more compatible with respect to item (1) that rated their perceptions of "*durability of the cover to withstand wear*" (SD= .81). On the other hand, they were highly varied in relation to item (2) that had the lowest mean rank (SD= 1.03).

In relation to the responses given by the students, similar to the responses of the teachers, item (2) had the lowest mean rank(X=1.76). Despite that, Students disclosed their highest attitude towards item (4) that was related to the "*appropriateness of the size for the intended learners*" (X=2.96). Furthermore, item (1) had the highest degree of standard deviation (SD=1.44). In spite of that, the students appeared more consistent in their responses to item (3) that was related to the "convenience of the size of the book for the students to handle" (SD=1.08).

RQ2: **Is there any significant difference between Iranian EFL teachers and students with respect to their attitudes towards the textbook?**

Accordingly, the following null hypothesis was suggested:

H0: There is no significant difference between Iranian EFL teachers and students with respect to their attitudes towards the textbook.

The non-parametric Mann-Whitney U Test that is alternative to the t-test for the two independent samples was used to test for the possible differences between the two independent groups (teachers and students) on their attitudes towards the textbook. It was run to examine if teachers and students differed with respect to their perceptions of the textbook. The Mann-Whitney U Test actually compared medians of the groups. Teachers and students' viewpoints towards the textbook were converted to ranks across the two groups. Afterwards, it was evaluated to check if the ranks for the two groups differed significantly.

Sig. (2-tailed) was calculated for the total attitudes of the two groups as well as their perceptions of different subcomponents of the textbook evaluation questionnaire. As it is shown in table 8, the z value for the "*total*" attitude of the teachers and students is (–2.583) with a significance level of (p=.010). The probability value (p) was less than (.05), so the difference was statistically significant. There was statistically significant difference in the total attitudes of teachers and students. From the ranks table under the column mean rank it was clear that teachers' rank (45.43) was higher than that of students' (31.53).

Moreover, the z value for the attitudes towards" *subject matter*" of the teachers and students is (–2.504) with a significance level of (p=.012). The probability value (p) was less than (.05), so the difference was statistically significant. There was statistically significant difference in the attitudes of teachers and students towards the *subject matter* of the textbook. From the ranks table under the column mean rank it was clear that teachers' rank (45.05) was higher than that of students' (31.68).

Besides, the z value for the attitudes towards" Vocabulary & Structures" of the teachers and students is (–. 300) with a significance level of (p=.764). The probability value (p) was higher than (.05), so the difference was not statistically significant. There was not statistically significant difference in the attitudes of teachers and students towards the "Vocabulary &Structures" of the textbook. From the ranks table under the column mean rank it was clear that teachers' rank (36.65) was higher than that of students' (35.04).

Additionally, the z value for the attitudes towards" exercises" of the teachers and students is (–2. 539) with a significance level of (p=.011). The probability value (p) was less than (.05), so the difference was statistically significant. There was statistically significant difference in the attitudes of teachers and students towards the "exercises" of the textbook. From the ranks table under the column mean rank it was clear that teachers' rank (45.18) was higher than that of students' (31.63).

When it comes to the teachers' and students' attitudes towards "Illustrations" of the textbook, the z value was (-1.066) with a significance level of (p=.286). The probability value (p) was greater than (.05), so the difference was not statistically significant. There was not statistically significant difference in the attitudes of teachers and students towards the "illustrations" of the textbook. From the ranks table under the column mean rank it was clear that teachers' rank (39.55) was higher than that of students' (33.88).

Concerning the two groups' perceptions of "Physical make-up" of the textbook, the z value was (-3.261) with a significance level of (p=.001). The probability value (p) was lower than (.05), so the difference was statistically significant. There was statistically significant difference in the attitudes of teachers and students towards the "Physical make-up" of the textbook. From the ranks table under the column mean rank it was clear that teachers' rank (47.98) was higher than that of students' (30.51).

As it is depicted in the above table, the median of the teachers' rating was higher than that of the students in all of the categories of the attitude questionnaire.
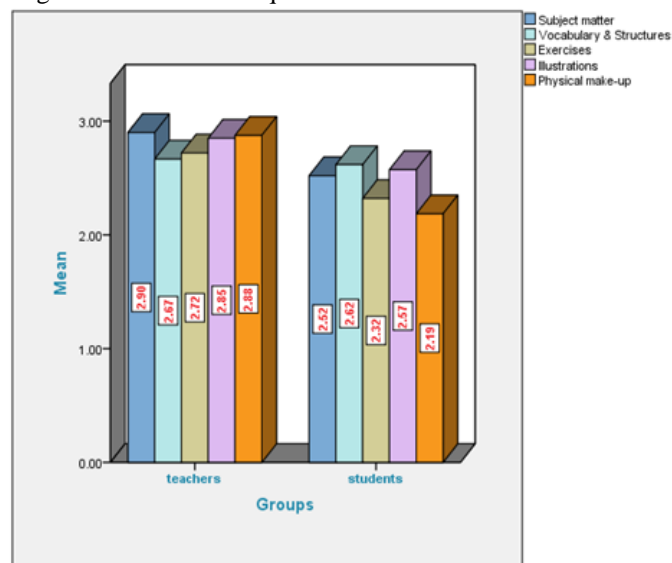

Figure 1. The Comparison between Teachers and Students in Their Attitudes towards Different Categories of the Attitude Questionnaire

Computing the Effect size

The value of z that was reported in the output was used to calculate an approximate value of r.

r = z / square root of N

Where N = total number of cases.

Table 2. Teachers and students' attitudes towards the subject matter

	Teachers			Students		
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1.Does the subject matter cover a variety of topics appropriate to the interests of the learners for whom the textbook is intended (urban or rural environment ;child or adult learners; male and/or female students)?	2.90	.71818	20	2.50	.78895	50
2.Is the ordering of materials done by topics or themes that are arranged in a logical fashion?	2.90	.71818	20	2.46	.99406	50
3.Is the content graded according to the needs of the students or the requirements of the existing syllabus (if there is one)?	2.80	.61559	20	2.70	1.05463	50
4.Is the material accurate and up-to-date?	3.00	.91766	20	2.42	.97080	50

Table 3. Teachers and students' attitudes towards the Vocabulary & Structures

	Teachers			Students		
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1.Does the vocabulary load (i.e., the number of new words introduced every lesson) seem to be reasonable for the students of that level?	2.55	1.23438	20	2.68	1.21957	50
2.Are the vocabulary items controlled to ensure systematic gradation from simple to complex items?	2.85	.87509	20	2.30	1.21638	50
3.Is the new vocabulary repeated in subsequent lessons for reinforcement?	2.15	1.18210	20	1.98	1.03982	50
4.Does the sentence length seem reasonable for the students of that level?	2.55	.94451	20	2.72	1.06981	50
5.Is the number of grammatical points as well as their sequence appropriate?	2.65	.93330	20	3.16	.76559	50
6.Do the structures gradually increase in complexity to suit the growing reading ability of the students?	2.95	.75915	20	2.56	.99304	50
7.Does the writer use current everyday language, and sentence structures that follow normal word order?	2.60	1.14248	20	2.38	1.15864	50
8.Do the sentences and paragraphs follow one another in a logical sequence?	2.90	.85224	20	2.84	.93372	50
9.Are linguistic items introduced in meaningful situations to facilitate understanding and ensure assimilation and consolidation?	2.80	.83351	20	2.94	.93481	50

Table 4. Teachers and students' attitudes towards the Exercises

	Teachers			Students		
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1.Do the exercises develop comprehension and test knowledge of main ideas, details, and sequence of ideas?	2.80	.69585	20	2.42	.9055	50
2.Do the exercises involve vocabulary and structures, which build up the learner's repertoire?	2.50	.94591	20	2.72	.9905	50
3.Do the exercises provide practice in different types of writt	2.55	.82558	20	1.96	1.2447	50
4.Does the book provide a pattern of review within lessons and cumulatively test new material?	2.95	.60481	20	2.22	.9749	50
5.Do the exercises promote meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations?	2.80	.89443	20	2.28	1.0309	50

Table 5. Teachers' and Students' attitudes towards the Illustrations

	Teachers			Students		
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1.Do illustrations create a favorable atmosphere for practice in reading and spelling by depicting realism and action?	2.8000	.95145	20	2.3400	1.13587	50
2.Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learner?	2.6500	1.08942	20	2.8400	.88893	50
3.Are the illustrations printed close enough to the text and directly related to the content to help the learner understand the printed text?	3.1000	.85224	20	2.5400	1.03431	50

Table 6. Teachers and students' attitudes towards the physical make-up

	Teachers			Students		
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1.Is the cover of the book durable enough to withstand wear?	2.85	.81273	20	2.06	1.44857	50
2.Is the text attractive (i.e., cover, page appearance, binding)?	2.65	1.03999	20	1.76	1.37855	50
3.Does the size of the book seem convenient for the students to handle?	2.90	.91191	20	1.96	1.08722	50
4.Is the type size appropriate for the intended learners?	3.10	.96791	20	2.96	1.12413	50

Table 7. Ranks of teachers and students on their attitudes towards the textbook

	Groups	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Subject matter	Teachers	20	45.05	901.00
	Students	50	31.68	1584.00
	Total	70		
Vocabulary & Structures	teachers	20	36.65	733.00
	students	50	35.04	1752.00
	Total	70		
Exercises	teachers	20	45.18	903.50
	students	50	31.63	1581.50
	Total	70		
Illustrations	teachers	20	39.55	791.00
	students	50	33.88	1694.00
	Total	70		
Physical make-up	teachers	20	47.98	959.50
	students	50	30.51	1525.50
	Total	70		
Total	teachers	20	45.43	908.50
	students	50	31.53	1576.50
	Total	70		

The median of each group was also computed for the results of the attitude questionnaire, which are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Median value of each group (listening comprehension strategy -use questionnaire)

Report						
Groups		Subject matter	Vocabulary & Structures	Illustrations	Physical make-up	total
Teachers	Mean	2.9000	2.6667	2.8500	2.8750	2.7700
	N	20	20	20	20	20
	Median	3.0000	2.6111	2.5000	3.0000	2.8400
Students	Mean	2.5200	2.6178	2.5733	2.1850	2.4680
	N	50	50	50	50	50
	Median	2.5000	2.5556	2.6667	2.2500	2.4800

Table 9. Mann-Whitney U Test for the attitudes of teachers and student towards the textbook

Test Statistics [a]						
	Subject matter	Vocabulary &Structures	Exercises	Illustrations	Physical make-up	total
Mann-Whitney U	309.000	477.000	306.500	419.000	250.500	301.500
Z	-2.504	-.300	-2.539	-1.066	-3.261	-2.583
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.012	.764	.011	.286	.001	.010
a. Grouping Variable: groups						

As it is shown in Table 4.6, for the total attitude of the teachers and students, $z = -2.583$) and N = (70); therefore the r-value was (.30). This would be considered a medium effect size using Cohen's (1988) criteria of $r < (.1)$ =small effect, (.1) to (.3) =medium effect, and higher than (.5) =large effect.
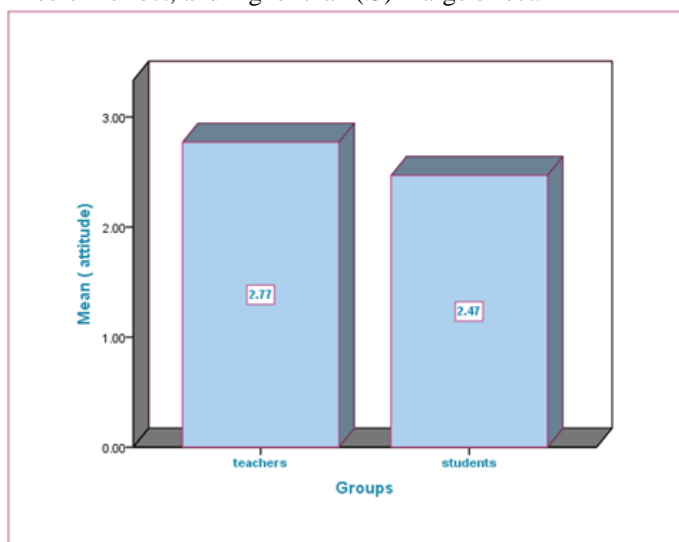
Figure 2. The Comparison between Teachers and Students in Their Attitudes towards the Textbook

The Mann-Whitney U Test revealed significant difference in the attitudes of teachers (*Md* = 2.84, *n* =20) and students (*Md* = 2.48, *n* = 50), *(Mann Whitney U* = 301.500, *z* = –2.583, *p* = .010, *r* = .30). This rejected the null hypothesis and suggested that there were significant differences between teachers and students in their attitudes towards the textbook.

Discussion

In recent years, there has been a lot of debate on the significant role of textbook as ELT material in teaching. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) suggest that the textbook is an almost universal element of language teaching. In classroom, using textbook can equip both the teachers and the learners with a more effective and organized teaching and learning process, but how much it can meet the students and the teachers' demand needs to be investigated. Textbook evaluation definitely plays an influential role in selecting the material, and the "selected material closely reflects [the needs of the learners and] the aims, methods, and values of the teaching program" (Cunningsworth, 1995, p.7). In the present paper, the researchers, based on the result of the study, went on to hold that the teachers with respect to the '*subject matter*' had higher rating in comparison to the students. In other words, there was statistically significant difference in the attitudes of teachers and students towards the *subject matter* of the textbook. Regarding the attitudes of teachers and students towards '*vocabulary and structures*', there

was not statistically significant difference in their attitudes. However, as demonstrated in Table 8, it was clear that teachers' rank was higher than that of students'. Considering the '*exercises*', the present investigators claimed that there was a significant difference in the attitudes of teachers and students towards the exercises of the textbook. In assessing the median value in each group, the present researchers also found out that teachers' rank was higher than that of students'. Regarding the fourth part of the questionnaire (i.e., '*illustrations*'), there was not statistically significant difference in the attitudes of teachers and students; as shown in the table, the teachers' rank was higher than that of students'. Finally, concerning the two groups' perceptions of '*physical make-up*' of the textbook, the difference was statistically significant. Thus, the researchers steadfastly claim that there was striking difference between the teachers' and the students' rank.

Conclusion

The result of the study illustrates that teachers' attitudes toward the AEF series were higher in comparison to language learners'. Although the teachers' attitudes are indeed significant and influential for syllabus designers, learners' needs are in priority. As regards, since 1970s, there has been a movement to make learners the center of learning process; learners' need should be taken into consideration. O'Neill (1982), accordingly, indicates that textbooks are generally sensitive to students' needs. Also, Brown (1995) points out that textbooks should be at the service of both teachers and learners.

A bell of caution is to be rung for the syllabus designers and the stockholders to consider the learners' needs and never stick them to the margin. Working in parallel with learners' needs would certainly provide an unforgettable chance for the teachers to taste the learners' success in the future. It is resided in our breath that through surfacing the attitudes of the teachers and learners quality is not scarified at the expense of quantity.

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