

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

INVESTIGATING CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING ESL TEXTBOOKS

BY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores three research questions regarding what the research literature and practicing ESL teachers consider important when selecting a good ESL textbook. Based on an extensive literature review a Textbook Evaluation Tool (TET) was developed and then, with input from practising ESL teachers during three focus group interviews, revised to include 80 criteria in 13 categories: Content, Activities, Language, Culture, Communication, Evaluation, Organisation, Format, Reliability, Supplementary Components, Literacy, Marketability and Legal. Of particular importance to teachers are the following: use of standard English and quality of language in the textbook and good editing, an attractive design and layout, easy access to components and content for organising instruction, evidence of a developmental progression of content, topics that are of relevance and interest to student users, Canadian content (e.g. money and measurement), educational validity, an assessment of costs and durability, variety of activities, a sufficient number of practice activities that fit all parts of the learning process, many activities on a similar theme or topic, follow-up questions for all readings, up-to-dateness or reflection of contemporary life and times in the content, activities which promote communication, and activities that meet the needs of multi-level classes.

The thesis also reveals frustrations expressed by teachers over their limited knowledge about and access to ESL learning resources. They describe a lack of complete textbook series and all accompanying components in their schools, an overuse of photocopying, breaking copyright, the impact of this lack

on their daily planning and preparation, budgetary restrictions, and a need for tools such as TET and Bilash's Second Language Instructional Model (B-SLIM). After reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of textbook use in schools the important role of textbooks for new teachers to the profession or to ESL is noted. Clearly being able to assess textbooks or other learning resources according to sound criteria must be seen as a necessary and critical skill of all ESL teachers. Direction for further research is also suggested.

DEDICATION

To my son, Justin Xu Feng, and my daughter, Justina Xu Feng.

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Red Deer College Library helped me to locate and access a set of ESL textbooks unavailable locally. Ms. Hannah Noerenberg also made several valuable suggestions to my TET. Their favour is greatly appreciated.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In 1961, I was born into a family of medical doctors. My father is a cardiothoracic surgeon and my mother is a gerontologist and geriatric physician. Both of them worked at Harbin Medical University (HMU) Hospitals located in Harbin, the capital city of Heilongjiang Province, People's Republic China.

When I was three years old, I started to go to a week care and stayed there 24 hours a day, 6 days a week, from Monday to Saturday. The week care system was established for working couples. Every week the happiest day for me was Saturday afternoon, when youngsters had the best of food. Every Saturday I had a small blue plastic bag filled with some cookies or cakes, an apple or a pear, a couple of candies to bring home for my parents.

Schooling

At age six I went to school. It was one of the key primary schools, named Flower Garden School, in the centre of the city. Most of the teachers at that time used the so-called "chalk and talk" and "teacher-centred" method to teach us sixty-some kids, instead of the student-centred activities now so popular in the North American context. They taught us all they knew, and they knew a lot. We could not even move around our chairs since they were double-chair or desks. A boy and a girl might sit together but many of them usually drew a line in-between, carefully measured to mark his or her special territory. An invading elbow was usually pushed back immediately.

Textbooks were very important in China. We did not have many materials to choose from at that time. Reading-aloud was a major activity in our school life;

we read everyday of every month of every year. When we read aloud in unison it seemed like all of the sound came from one mouth, instead of sixty little mouths. In this practice we learned to pronounce correctly by both saying words and phrases ourselves and hearing others read them aloud. What we did most was reading and writing to the extent that after many times of reading and writing we could easily recite almost the whole textbook from cover to cover. The teacher explained each character very carefully, and checked on some of us randomly for our understanding. My teacher never smiled, to the best of my memory. She could not let any of us talk in class as it would waste our precious class time. The teacher seldom made any positive comments. It was our responsibility to do well. I believe this to this day. Our parents supported the idea. Every single day the teacher collected our Book A homework and marked them the same day. Not a single day's delay, no matter how late it was into the night. The next day we handed in our Book B homework, and got back our Book A homework to be handed in the day after when we would get back our Book B homework.

We studied the textbooks, copied from the textbooks, read the textbooks, and recited against the textbooks. We always had the textbooks to refer to, for the teachers, the youngsters, as well as the parents. The only thing we did at school was to study, not to have fun. Working hard was more important than anything else was. Because of that attitude and approach we accumulated a lot of intellectual knowledge solidly. We could hardly forget what we went through, even if we wanted to. I still believe that knowledge and skills learned well accumulate to form a solid foundation for future learning.

I did not know what a library was until senior primary years. I only knew where I could rent picture books (similar to comic books but usually on historical, ethical, or moral themes) in Grade 2 or 3. All drawings were in black on white with no colour at all. The drawings were very delicately done and the words were very educational morally and intellectually. By simply reading those picture books I learned a lot about history, science, language, morals, respect for other people and their labour.

Foreign Language Learning

I started to learn English, a foreign language, in Harbin 3rd Middle School, the best school in the province. My English teacher was a graduate from Shanghai, a city noted for its English proficiency. The term “broken English”, or “pidgin English”, was used to refer to a kind of English used by many compradors in Shanghai during the 20’s and 30’s, indicating how popular English was many years ago. She taught me English from junior high to graduation.

At the beginning I did not know why I should learn English. It was about 1973, and English was a core course in China. We had about two periods of English per week. Our English textbook was very thin, about 60 pages and 7×5.5 cm in size. Most of the English textbooks we used then were compiled by Liaoning People’s Publishing House, taught in a step by step fashion from the easiest to the most difficult, based mainly on sentence patterns and drills, grammar, and reading comprehension. After I started majoring in English many years later I learned that the grammatical structures could be computer analysed

(Alexander, Allen, Close, & O'Neill, 1975). Examples of some structures from my textbooks are:

This is a flag.

It is a red flag.

That is a car.

It is a Red Flag car.

“This” and “that” started my literacy development in English.

All the sentences in the textbooks were English, but might be better called “China English”, not Chinglish, which has been heavily influenced by Chinese grammar. China English means real English with heavy Chinese content (culture, politics, etc). The teacher read a sentence and the students read after her. We followed the textbooks, never skipping a single page, not even a single letter or word. I remembered the teacher even taught us in English the page number on each corner of the page.

In 1977 we all heard the greatest news that the Worker-Peasant-Soldier (WPS) students would not be selected and recommended by their social class status any more, and the university entrance examination would be restored soon. English broadcasting courses and correspondence courses, begun about five years earlier, started to boom. Relying on the limited English course at junior or senior high schools would not be adequate. When I was finishing a night school course, my mother asked a private tutor, Professor of English at Ship Building University, to help me to continue with my English studies.

It was the private tutoring that really started my interest in English. In a period of about two years, I had learned to write compositions and diaries. Professor Zhu would correct them once a week in my presence. Understanding

the value of learning from my own mistakes, I recalled how much I learned from his corrections. He had many books in Russian and English on shipbuilding, but not many stories. He managed to lend me some stories anyhow, such as *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Match Girl*, and other fairy tales. Those stories usually had no pictures in them, but long paragraphs of reading and detailed explanations of vocabulary, grammar, and Chinese translations. He passed on to me a lot of knowledge about British literature, not American literature, and nothing about Canadian literature.

When I prepared my National Matriculation Examination (NME), we had national curricular standards. They were very detailed. They showed clearly which formula we should know in mathematics or sciences, which rivers we should memorise and which English phrases we should know the use of. Those standards made both teaching and preparation extremely straightforward, clear and hence, easy.

National Matriculation Examination

It was on the 2nd of August in 1979, a day I would never forget, that I received the Letter of Admission from Harbin Teachers' University. Every member of my family rejoiced. After the Examination week, after one year of concentrated preparation, after the twelve years of "all work and no play", I could now relax and live a little. Looking back on it now, I feel that I really passed an ordeal.

The Admission meant I passed the NME, held usually in the second week of July, duly called "black July" by all the middle school graduates in China. It

was in this week that my future, and the future of all the middle school graduates, was determined. All the middle schools, junior and senior, are closed for the Examination. All graduates will have to sit for examinations on Language Arts, Mathematics, Politics, Foreign Language, Physics, Chemistry, History, Geography, and Biology. For a total of four days I had to compete with time and my memory, no calculators and no dictionaries allowed. For example, I had to answer questions on a history of five thousand years within the time limit of three hours.

The Admission meant I beat out 99 other students. Every year millions of graduates compete with one another. However, in 1977, 1978 and 1979 the competition was more fierce than in any of the following years because in those years it was opened up to everyone who had graduated during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). All the graduates in the ten years of the Cultural Revolution were trying to pass the Examination. One percent admission rate was even greater than that of the great Confucius. Seventy-two of his 3000 disciples, or 2.4 percent, were able to practise the Six Arts.

The Admission also meant I beat WPS students. During the Cultural Revolution, no NME's were ever conducted. But some people could still go to the universities and colleges, though no degrees were ever granted. Who could go? The WPS students, or Worker-Peasant-Soldier students. Why could they pursue post-secondary education but others could not? It was simply because they were "red-rooted" and "straight-stemmed". They were born into a worker's family, or a peasant's family, or a soldier's family. All the Chinese people were divided into

nine social classes, arranged from the most politically reliable to the least: we have soldiers, workers, peasants, rightists, bad elements, counterrevolutionaries, rich peasants, landlords, and intellectuals. Because I was born into a family of medical doctors, we were the ninth in the order, meaning that I could not even have dreamed of a post-secondary education. However, after the Cultural Revolution I was given the chance to compete with the WPS students and I beat them.

More than twenty years passed and the Chinese students are still working on the same rules: examinations for education, examinations for promotions, examinations for going abroad, examinations for almost everything. As the Chinese proverb goes: All occupations are base; only book learning is exalted.

English Learning at University

I began to study English at Harbin Teachers' University formally and systematically in my hometown. We had a lot of practice reading and writing, but limited opportunities to listen and speak. We had no English native speakers to speak to or to help us in the first three and half years. Nor did we have enough resources like textbooks, cassettes, dictionaries, encyclopædias, or videos. We were using the huge old tape recorders, not the compact cassette recorders, which came into China a few years later. Soon thereafter, televisions came into many homes and then occasionally some of the classics were shown. Several books were available as well. I believe those books were banned for some time and were dug out of somewhere after censorship. *Pride and Prejudice* (Austen, 1963), *Hamlet* (Shakespeare & Guthrie, 1962), *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare

& Guthrie, 1962), *Julius Caesar* (Shakespeare & Guthrie, 1962), *Jane Eire* (Bronte, 1969), *Rebecca*, *My Fair Lady*, *Oliver Twist*, etc., were also shown on TV. The Russians performed many of them, though. We had about one English film per month in our department and the room was usually very crowded with students majoring in English, Russian, Japanese, and other languages. Related novels were dug out and read side by side with Chinese translations, which were translated before the Cultural Revolution. Group discussions were usually conducted after each reading among friends. Comments and summaries were occasionally done in class as well. Writing was done frequently, chiefly based on topics in textbooks, mainly on exercises after each lesson. A lot of translation was done each day. I remember translating *Loving and Hating New York* (Griffith, 1978) and *Love Is a Fallacy* (M. Shulman, 1951). Also each day we would share what we did the previous day in class. It could be on any topic: weather, events, current or old, anecdotes, etc.

After 1982, our school hired a couple of native English speakers, who were only allowed to teach us oral English. The experiences I had with them tend to be negative since they were not so good at grammar, and even worse at answering questions about literature, history, and geography. The greatest help during university years came from most of my seniors or classmates living in the same dormitory. We were eight students living in one small room with four double-decker beds for about four years and all studied in the same Department. One can learn a lot from others if one really wants to learn. When one of us got a good book, all the other seven of us would read it in turn.

EFL Textbooks and EFL

During the four years I studied at university, a lot of well-written ESL textbooks were brought into China, mostly reprinted versions. *Essential English* (Eckersley, 1942, 1956), *English 900* (English Language Services, 1964a, 1964b, 1965, 1966a, 1966b), *New Concept English* (Alexander, 1967), *New English 900* (*New English 900: book*, 1977; *New English 900: teacher's book*, 1977; *New English 900: workbook*, 1977), *Linguaphone English Course* (*Linguaphone*), *English for Today* (National Council of Teachers of English., 1974; National Council of Teachers of English. & Slager, 1962, 1972, 1976), etc. were used by millions of English learners in China.

The last two years at the university were the time to decide on a direction of research or employment. For a teaching position I systematically read *A University Grammar of English* (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973b), *Dictionary of word roots and combining forms compiled from the Greek, Latin, and other languages, with special reference to biological terms and scientific names* (Borrer, 1960), *Language Testing* (Heaton, 1982), *A Handbook of Translation* (Zhong, 1980), *Everyday Sentences in Spoken English* (Palmer, 1935), and a lot of others by Henry Sweet on the history of pronunciation (Sweet, 1965), Daniel Jones and A.C. Gimson on *Received Pronunciation and English pronunciation* (Gimson, 1975; D. Jones, 1956; D. Jones & Gimson, 1969, 1977), J.D. O'Connor on pronunciation practice (O'Connor, 1971, 1973), Randolph Quirk and others on grammar (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973a, 1973b; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1972, 1985), Otto Jespersen on historical grammar (Jespersen, 1928,

1949, 1969), R.A. Close on grammar (Close, 1977), and a few books written in English by Russian linguists, etc. Many of the books are still sitting on the bookshelves in my home in China.

In the Chinese environment of the time interpretation and translation were more important than anything else, since many English learners usually do not have chances to speak with or listen to live native speakers. They read to translate and wrote as a result of translation.

At that time employment in China was planned and regulated by the government. All graduates of my *alma mater* were assigned to teach in schools, from secondary education to tertiary education. These prospective teachers had no choice over the school in which they would like to teach, except for the “more equal” people (Orwell, 1946); the government decided where we would work and if we would change jobs.

I was considered lucky to have found a teaching job with the Medical University, where all the teachers were requested to wear long white gowns. All the teachers were requested to take some courses relating to medical science. I took five courses including anatomy and biochemistry. My first assignment was to teach medical English and common core English. In the lecture theatre I had to face about 400 students for each session. It was a huge lecture theatre. I stood at the front of the class. There was no student interaction—how could there be with 400 students in a class! With these students being among china’s best, from that day I knew that the responsibility for the success of these students was heaviest on my shoulders, no less than that of the head of a state. If I made any

single mistake, even a tiny one, it would eventually affect the lives of perhaps 400 of my students, which in turn might eventually affect millions of people.

At that time teacher-centred curriculum, memorisation and repetition to accumulate knowledge played a very important role in learning. The teacher imparted knowledge and the students received that knowledge. In this paradigm students memorised what the teacher or textbook said and used it in their practice. And the students tried to learn everything in the textbooks since they were developed by the state and perfectly “fit” the curriculum. That was basically what we considered learning. What was in the textbook was considered the most important since students were to be tested on it.

I remembered that before we started a new lesson, we teachers would sit together to prepare what we were going to teach. Which part was important and why? The examples we chose would go through the same scrutiny. The teaching plan and unit plans of each and every teacher teaching the same subject or topic were almost identical. We also speculated about the questions the student might ask and how we should explain the answers to them. As of the writing of this dissertation, I found out that the Japanese teachers were doing something very similar, called “lesson study” (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Both authors hoped that North American teachers could learn something from it.

I was working at my university so outstandingly that by 1987 I was selected to represent our province at a conference in Beijing on the new Band 4 English examination. I was then a Member of the National Committee for the Compilation of English Textbooks. We evaluated the new textbooks to be used

for Common Core English, meaning English for non-English majors, and also the test curricula of Band 4 English tests. Nowadays a bachelor must pass Band 4 English test while a master must pass Band 6 English test to be granted the respective degree. Before I came to Canada in 1989 I was in charge of the departmental library, where I started selecting and evaluating learning resources, including textbooks.

In China schools had no say in choosing the textbooks they used. The government compiled the textbooks and recommended which textbooks each school should use. The textbooks were always marked as draft, never a final version, and every couple of years the publisher, the People's Education Press (Renmin Jiaoyu Chubanshe) (British Council, 2003) under the Ministry of Education, made changes and called the new printing another "draft".

Studying and Teaching in Canada

On 16th of April 1989 I came to Canada, joining my husband who had earned a Chinese Government scholarship to study Education. At that time I was expecting to see a systematic education system with a standardised approach to English language teaching and testing. For example, I thought that Canada would and should have well organised and compiled textbooks or dictionaries similar to the ones available to me at the time in China. I was expecting to see many of the textbooks, dictionaries, and other resources mentioned at the beginning of this dissertation. I was expecting that everything in Canada would be a better version of what we had in China.

To my great surprise I did not find even a small portion of the titles with which I was very familiar. Many of the bookstores had available only incomplete titles (not even the complete set) of a few familiar books. Later on I learned that one has to pay a lot of money to special order them. That would have been all right with me as long as they were available.

After obtaining my M.Ed. degree from the University of Alberta, I started teaching ESL at a local high school. The biggest problem I had then was with the textbooks, though I was also frustrated adjusting to teaching ESL in and under certain Canadian conditions. I found very few good textbooks to guide my practice (and I will define what a good textbook is later): many of the textbook writers did not provide a readability index for each of the texts or paragraphs chosen for the textbooks, so that as I had to do the calculations myself and was very surprised with the results I found. For instance, I was once looking in a textbook for a vocabulary exercise for beginning ESL students. The first page of Unit 1 was rated at grade level 2, while the middle pages (only about 3 pages later) were rated at grade level 5, as measured according to a readability test (Fry, 2000; Johnson & Johnson). If I was to apply Krashen's $i + 1$ comprehensible input hypothesis (1982), this "1" would be a BIG ONE, jumping up 3 grade levels in 3 pages! In another set of textbooks (Kessler, Bernard-Johnston et al., 1994; Kessler, Lee, McCloskey, Quinn, & Stack, 1994) I found simple sentence structures like "This is ..." and "That is ..." introduced on page 1, alongside names like "Satoshi", "Claudia", "Nadine", "Fernando", and "Marta". For ESL students, personal names are new words as well, and often reveal many

irregularities in spelling rules. On the average the textbook was supposed to be covered in one semester, which meant covering about 2 pages per day (i.e. in one 50-minute session). On page 4 of the book, time, and cardinal numbers (one, two, etc.) are introduced. On page 7 we learned about periods in a school day, and ordinal numbers (first, second, etc.). On page 9 most of the names of the school subjects are presented. On page 12 object complement is covered (e.g., I saw somebody writing on the blackboard in the classroom.), the SVOO_cA (Subject, Verb, Object, Object Complement, Adverbial) sentence structure. It is very difficult for students to learn these patterns, and even more difficult for teachers to teach them, when they have not yet understood what simple verb patterns are (Hornby, Cowie, & Lewis, 1974; Quirk et al., 1972, 1985).

Most of the textbooks at my disposal were written by American authors, some by British authors and published in the USA and UK, respectively and they do not fit the Canadian context (currency, measures, temperatures, and Canadian history, for example).

When my colleagues and I talked about ESL textbooks, they accepted that with the current budget restrictions we were faced with limitations about the textbooks we could use. So, we had to use whatever was available on the bookshelves, or in boxes in the storage room. All of us use different textbooks, materials and resources, even though we are teaching in the same school and teaching the same level of students, because our schools do not have budgets to purchase complete sets of textbooks for a whole class.

I was also frustrated because I heard colleagues giving incorrect information or erroneous knowledge (EK) to students. Although the teachers were native speakers of English and teaching ESL, they usually did not have much training in languages (and had no command of another language, even at a beginning level). One day, one of them was asked by a student, a Chinese boy, about the origins of some English surnames or words, the knowledge of which in my mind is definitely part of English culture and language. Here are answers that she provided:

Teacher: Mr. Coffin, as a surname, originated about 1000 years ago. Most probably, his ancestors were making and selling coffins. Of course you know what a coffin is.

Student: What about Mr. Ghostkeeper?

Teacher: Ghostkeeper? Housekeeper, Goalkeeper. Of course it originated about 1000 years ago again. Their ancestors were simply taking care of ghosts, you know, keeping them away from haunting people, that kind of stuff.

Student: What about Mr. Sexsmith?

Teacher: Locksmith, Goldsmith, Silversmith, and Sexsmith. Their ancestors repaired or made something, you know.

Student: What about cops when referring to policemen?

Teacher: Cop means a police officer. You know copper (Cu)? Cop is short for copper, referring to the copper buttons on a police officer's uniform.

Here is another example of EK. With the terms Direct Object (O_d) and Indirect Object (O_i) marked on the board, this teacher presented the following sentence to the class to analyse: "I ran to the shop with my friend". But there were no direct or indirect objects in this sentence! I was almost going to ask, "Where are those objects?" but remembered that it would be unprofessional of me to challenge the knowledge and teaching strategies of my colleagues. Some native speaking ESL teachers did not learn grammar systematically when they were at school; their English may be native, but it is not always accurate or even literally correct.

It seems that Canadian teachers, including ESL teachers, choose whatever textbooks they want, or they feel like. There also seem to be no standards, personal or objective, in choosing materials. Most of the teachers choose materials based on their experiences or personal feelings.

So far I have not seen any guidelines from the province or school board in helping one as a teacher to select a textbook. Alberta Learning, school boards, schools, colleges and universities lack a unified and systematic standard for textbook selection and they do not seem to talk to one another. Although Alberta Learning has some ESL Language Curricula, they are very general and vague viewed in light of Alexander's structures (1975), and they don't meet the needs of low language ability level ESL students. Upon inquiry I learned that Alberta Learning simply groups "experienced" ESL teachers recommended by their school jurisdictions (most of whom do not speak or write another language) to develop curricula; consultation with other professionals (like university

professors, multilingual ESL teachers at colleges or private learning centres) seems minimal. The school boards offer minimal help, if at all, regarding textbook selection. In fact, I was told that because schools must pay a consultation fee when an ESL teacher asks questions of central office, the school discourages teachers from asking for 'expert' advice. I have been looking for something akin to the standards designed for tests by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), but there seem to be no objective standards for textbook selection.

There is so much I need to know in order to understand my professional teaching in Canada. Teaching ESL at a High School in Canada has been frustrating for me. I crave the use of a textbook to help me structure and pace my lessons and give me a clear starting point for students who come from other classes, schools, or cultures. I yearn for an understanding of what content my students need to learn and some direction on how I can get them there. Surely it is not unreasonable to find a class set of approved textbooks and know according to what criteria they were approved. I believe it is time for me to start the groundwork.

The value of a textbook

According to Mikk (2000, pp. 15-24) textbooks are 'the future of a nation'. Richards (2001) said that textbooks are a key component in most language programs. Without textbooks, programmes may have no central core (2001). Viewed from a wider angle, textbooks in many subject areas promote commonalities from coast to coast, thus providing a quasi-national curriculum at the same time. Textbooks are one of the major determinants for the curriculum of

American elementary and secondary schools, and that situation does not appear likely to change in the near future (Ryan & Cooper, 1984).

Pupils work with textbooks for about 60 per cent of the lesson time in some advanced countries (Johnsen, 1993), and most of their homework consists of studying texts (Mikk, 2000). The publishing of textbooks is a billion-dollar enterprise. By the time most students complete high school, they will have been exposed to over 32,000 pages in textbooks. Almost all of their time in reading instruction and at least three-fourths of their time in content classes will be spent with a textbook (Chall, Conard, & Harris-Sharples, 1991).

Furthermore, teachers rely on textbooks when structuring about 90 per cent of lesson time (Honig, 1991). Many teachers derive their content ideas from textbooks, as well as using workbooks, teacher's guides, and accompanying dittoes and tests prepared for the teacher to use (Ryan & Cooper, 1984). Teachers are said to need high-quality professional development that is targeted specifically to the classroom use of their textbook (American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), 2000; Wang, 2002).

Research shows that a majority of teachers use textbooks as their principal curriculum guide and source of lessons (St. John, 2001). New and inexperienced teachers, or those who lack adequate time for lesson planning, may actually teach from the first page of the textbook to the last, skipping little or nothing (Tyson, 1997). Some American researchers (Chambliss & Calfee, 1998) estimate that textbooks determine 75-90 per cent of instructional content and activities in schools throughout the nation. They also point out that many

teachers lack either the subject matter expertise or time to construct their own curriculum, particularly in the elementary grades. Therefore they may be forced to rely heavily on textbooks to enskill themselves, to compensate for their lack of subject matter expertise, or to supply teaching strategies and tactics (Lebrun et al., 2002). The truth is that some textbooks are closely tied to curriculum frameworks while others lack consistency between instructional frameworks and textbooks (Cobb & College Entrance Examination Board., 1994). Furthermore, for very long and repetitive textbooks in subjects such as mathematics:

American teachers often omit some topics, different topics are omitted by different teachers, thereby making it impossible for the children's later teachers to know what has been covered at earlier grades—they cannot be sure what their students know and what they do not (Stevenson & Stigler, 1992, p. 140).

Some authors recommend that learners and teachers use the materials in a textbook from cover to cover without omitting even a single symbol (Horning, 1997). I am not alone in my search for and need for a good textbook to guide my instruction of students! In fact, many authors (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Britton, Gulgoz, & Glynn, 1993; Hargis, 1998; Mikk, 2000; Richards, 2001; Woodward, 1993) provide good reasons for using textbooks. The most commonly mentioned advantages for using a textbook are that it acts as a syllabus; provides novice or neophyte teachers with security, guidance, and support; serves the purpose of promoting ideas of democracy; provides learning tasks; regulates, times, programmes and standardises instruction; 'trains' experienced teachers in new ideas and methods of instruction; and is visually appealing. See Table 1.

Table 1 Advantages of Textbooks

<i>Advantages: Good textbooks are</i>	Anary and Bahat (2002)	Britton, Guilger, & Glynn (1995)	Gretchen Hargis (1998)	Jaan Mikk (2000)	Jack Richards (2001)	Arthur Woodward (1993)
accurate: containing correct, truthful, factual and accurate information.			√			
a way to unite a nation : sharing national experience.				√		
inexpensive: providing learning materials in an inexpensive way.	√					
clear: presenting information in such a way that users understand it the first time.			√			
complete: including all necessary information and only that information, being an ever-present part of classroom life.			√			√
concrete: including appropriate examples, scenarios, similes, analogies, specific language, and graphics.			√			
modelling language and providing input.					√	
efficient.					√	
field-tested in some schools.				√		
tools for learners.	√					
a resource or a general outline for teachers.						√
long-term investments.				√		
a source for novice teachers: meaning security, guidance, and support.	√					√
organised: so that information is presented that makes sense to users.			√			
ways to teach ideas of democracy and human rights : giving a sense of purpose.	√			√		
a medium for high quality serious education : maintaining quality.	√			√	√	
a source of useful learning and teaching tasks: helping users do tasks related to their work.	√		√			
a framework which regulates and times the programs: pacing, sequencing, and standardising instruction.	√				√	
a source that helps users retrieve information quickly and easily.			√			
models of style: using correct and appropriate writing conventions and word choices.			√			
a syllabus: providing structures for a programme or dominating the classroom.	√			√	√	√
a means of training teachers.				√	√	
providing a variety of learning activities.					√	
visually appealing: using visual elements to enhance meaning and attractiveness.			√		√	

Of course, these same authors also point out disadvantages of textbook use. The most commonly mentioned disadvantages of using a textbook include its outdatedness, its inability to make content relevant at local levels, its inability to present content in forms that are meaningful for all students in a class room, especially those at different ability levels, its restrictedness to topics, its lack of authentic materials or content, and its deskilling of teachers. See Table 2.

Table 2 Disadvantage of Textbooks

Disadvantages: Bad textbooks are	Ansary and Babait (2002)	Britton, Galgor, & Glynn (1993)	Gretchen Hargis (1998)	Jaan Mikk (2000)	Jack Richards (2001)	Arthur Woodward (1993)
a disaster for a nation.				√		
confining: inhibiting teachers' creativity, being too difficult for children.	√			√		
not a response to all differing students' needs.	√			√	√	
expensive.					√	
deskilling teachers: making teachers slave to others' judgements about what is good and what is not.	√				√	
unclear, incoherent: missing important elements or links.		√				
inauthentic: being prearranged sequence and structure that may not be realistic and situation-friendly.	√				√	
irrelevant or uninteresting: being unclear, incoherent, missing important elements or links or distorting content.	√	√		√	√	
not catering for a variety of levels: satisfying every type of learning styles, and every category of learning strategies that often exist in the class.	√					
paralinguistic: not substituting for good language in the text.		√				
written poorly.		√				
not giving the desired results.				√		

English as a major world language

English has official or special status in at least seventy-five countries with a total population of over two billion people. However, the importance of English is not just in how many people speak it (over 750 million) but also for what people use it. Over two-thirds of the scientists in the world read in English. English is the

major language of news and information in the world. It is the language of business and government even in some countries where it is a minority language. It is the language of maritime communication and international air traffic control, and it is even used for internal air traffic control in countries where it is not a native language. Three quarters of the world's mail is written in English. American popular culture—primarily movies and music—carries the English language throughout the world (British Council, 2000; Kitao, 1996). No language is more widely studied or used as a foreign language than English, and, according to Quirk and others (Quirk et al., 1985), English is a top requirement of those seeking good jobs, and is often the language in which much of the business of good jobs is conducted. Indeed, immigrant children to Canada deserve an opportunity to learn English well in order to open doors in their futures! As one of their teachers I know that I need a good textbook to provide me with all of the advantages of textbooks listed above, knowing that I, too, must supplement the content with materials that will meet the needs of all of my learners.

Ansary and Babaii (2002) contend that no textbook is perfect and I agree. But, based on the widespread use of textbooks around the world and the rise in importance of English as an international *lingua franca*, there must be criteria to assess and select a good ESL textbook for Canadian teachers. Thus, my doctoral research will be aimed at getting to the heart of what makes a good ESL textbook.

Formation of the Research Questions

In my experience new ESL teachers usually find themselves in one or more of the following situations, a) no textbooks are available; b) the teachers are given (the right to choose) a textbook to be used as the basis for their teaching; c) the teachers are given access to a numbers of books and told that they may use them if and as they wish. This is what I call a none-some-many (NSM) situation. Sources of criteria for assessing and selecting textbooks are few and their findings seem not to be synthesised. Thus, the purpose of this research study is twofold. First, it intends to develop a list of criteria for selecting ESL textbooks for high school students. By undertaking a comprehensive literature review I hope to generate factors which will help ESL teachers like myself, to select ESL textbooks for their classes. These criteria will also be reviewed by local practising teachers and altered accordingly. Second, it will identify issues that local ESL teachers face in textbook use. Thus, the questions this research aims at answering are:

1. What constitutes a “good” ESL textbook, according to research literature?
2. What do ESL teachers think about what the research literature says about what constitutes a “good” ESL textbook?
3. What other factors or criteria do ESL teachers consider when assessing or looking for an ESL textbook or resource?

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

With the frustrations mentioned in Chapter One in mind, and determined to find out answers to the proposed research questions, I have designed a study grounded on qualitative methodology. In this chapter, I begin with a list of the steps taken to answer the 3 proposed research questions. Then I expand on the design of the questionnaire and the summary of the pilot study, which is used to modify the final version of the questionnaire. Towards the end of the Chapter, issues of ethics, reliability, verification and triangulation, delimitation and limitations are addressed.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research, as a research approach, typically entails in-depth analysis of relatively few subjects for which a rich set of data is collected and organised. When a large number of subjects are available, quantitative research is more typical, and is arguably much more statistically powerful (Rudner, 1999). Both qualitative and quantitative research designs seek reliable and valid results. Data that are consistent or stable as indicated by the researcher's ability to replicate the findings are of major concern in the quantitative arena while validity of the qualitative findings are paramount so that data is representative of a true and full picture of constructs under investigation (Barrow, 1993).

The real value of qualitative data lies in its divergent nature, variety, and list of surprise requests and results. Since this study is touching largely uncharted waters, surprises are bound to surface. These surprises rarely surface

in a strict close-ended questionnaire and may be valuable for future studies of the needs of ESL students and teachers (Bender, Chang, Morris, & Sugnet, 1997) or textbook designers.

Qualitative research begins by accepting that there is a range of different ways of making sense of the world and is concerned with discovering the meanings seen by those who are being researched and with understanding their view of the world rather than that of the researchers (R. Jones, 1995).

A chiefly qualitative research design was used in this study, which included written questionnaires and recorded interviews. ESL teachers were used as informants or respondents in order to answer the last three following research questions:

1. What constitutes a “good” ESL textbook, according to research literature?
2. What do ESL teachers think about what the research literature says about what constitutes a “good” ESL textbook?
3. What other factors or criteria do ESL teachers consider when assessing or looking for an ESL textbook or resource?

These questions had to be addressed using a variety of research tools. The complete process used in conducting this research project consisted of sixteen steps, to be found in Appendix A. An abbreviated description follows:

1. What constitutes a “good” ESL textbook, according to research literature?

Step 1

A thorough literature review of criteria for textbook assessments was conducted. This focussed on assessing textbooks in general, including those

used in other subjects, such as mathematics and sciences. Most of the ESL textbooks have been used for transitional links for ESL students—between the time they arrive in Canada and the time that they are placed into regular classrooms after ESL training. Reviewing research about textbooks in other subjects has revealed a broader perspective.

Step 2

A thorough literature review on criteria suggested for ESL textbook assessments was conducted. This focussed mainly on ESL textbooks used in Canada or North America, chiefly because these textbooks were more accessible than textbooks produced in other areas.

Meanwhile several research courses, such as those on textbook analysis, had been taken to supplement the review of literature.

Step 3

Alberta Learning's criteria for RD&PR (Recognising Diversity and Promoting Respect) (Alberta Learning, 2003) were reviewed by reporting on participation in a training workshop. This training stressed the selection and evaluation of instructional materials from the viewpoint of human rights. However, since these ideas were not found elsewhere in the research literature, they were not used for the textbook evaluation tools (TET). Further analysis will be provided later in Chapters Three and Five.

2. What do ESL teachers think about what the research literature says about what constitutes a “good” ESL textbook?

Step 4

Based on the initial steps taken in answering question one above, the criteria were formulated into a draft of a textbook evaluation tool/instrument (TET). See Appendix B for the draft prior to categorisation.

Step 5

The criteria were used to formulate a questionnaire to be completed in a field test with three teachers before being circulated to study participants. At the same time statistics software, Microsoft Excel, was researched as to its potential use in analysing the data collected in the questionnaire. Based on the same initial steps a battery of interview questions was formulated as well to be used in the field test. After results from the field test the TET criteria was also revised. The open-ended questions are described in Appendix C.

Merriam (1998) recommends field testing questions through pilot interviews. Some initial work was done prior to the actual interviews. The purpose of the field test was mainly to gather enough information to modify the questionnaire, so that the wording of the questions, the background information for each of the concepts, and perhaps the order of questions could reflect the practical thinking of the informants. In other words, the pilot study stood to verify the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. A field test was conducted amongst a group of ESL teachers who had a similar background to that of the

targeted group of ESL teachers, so much so that the results would be comparable.

Step 6

Three teachers for a field test and another three teachers for the formal study were contacted and agreed to participate in this study on their own time outside of the school as soon as ethics approval had been received. An ethics review including a letter to participants (See Appendix D), and letter of consent for teachers (See Appendix E) were completed during this step. The following table shows characteristics of participants in the pilot study and the focus group.

Table 3 Composition of Informants

Names	Occupation	Educational Background	Mother Tongue (L1)	Teaching Experience (Years)	TESOL Experience	L2 Experience
Sonia	Sessional Teacher	PhD Candidacy	Chinese Mandarin	10	10	English (Advance) German Japanese
Ora	Sessional Teacher	PhD Student	English	5	7	Japanese French (beginner)
Ian	ESL Teacher	MEd	English	7	7	Chinese Japanese (Beginner)
Roy	ESL Teacher	Completing MEd	English	21	10	ASL (Advance)
Nina	ESL Teacher	MEd	English	31	20	French Spanish
Eden	ESL Teacher	BA	English	2	2	French

Sonia is a PhD candidate in the area of second language education and international education. Her L1 is Mandarin Chinese. She started to learn English when she was in Grade 4 in China. She also learned German and Japanese at the university. She taught English as a foreign language (EFL) at the university level in China for 10 years. She also taught TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign

Language) and Mandarin as well as instructional methods courses to ESL minors at the University level for three terms. She loves teaching ESL. She loves to see the smiles on her students' faces when they feel they have learned something useful from her!

Ora is a full-time PhD student. She works during the year as an ESL teacher, and an educator for in-service and pre-service language teachers. She has taught ESL for 7 years and she has been involved with teacher education for 5 years. She can also sympathise with the challenges of language learning since she has had a variety of successful and unsuccessful language learning experiences in Japanese and French, which she took because she thought it was important for people involved in public education to realize the challenges that students face in successfully integrating into the academic life of public schools. She thinks that teachers of subjects outside of language are very aware of the cultural differences, but are not fully aware of the linguistic challenges ESL students face and how to help them. Everyday is a new learning experience for her as she is sure she learns as much from the students as they do from her.

Ian is an ESL Academic Coordinator for a university English Language Program. He has a Bachelor of Physical Education, Bachelor of Education; presently completing a Masters of Education in Second Language Education. His L1 is English. He taught EFL for 3 years at a private high school in Taiwan. He has also taught online ESL for four summers in a university summer seminar program. He enjoys teaching ESL because of the contact it gives him with different cultures, ideas and perspectives on the world. When ESL students are

able to communicate these differences through English, it is very rewarding for him as a teacher. When students have a high level of academic motivation, teachers are able to focus more on the teaching process. This is why he enjoys teaching ESL.

While in Taiwan Ian learnt enough Chinese to do basic, everyday things – shopping, ordering at a restaurant, paying bills etc. He also studied Japanese for one year. This was a wonderful experience because of the glimpse it gave him into the language learning process.

Roy taught ESL at a high school and simultaneously worked on completing his M.Ed. degree. Although he has 21 years of teaching experience; he has only been teaching ESL for 10 years. He also teaches ESL to deaf adults. He has been aware of ESL and literacy issues through his studies and experience and said that he absolutely loves teaching ESL and enjoys learning about cultures and languages and comparing and contrasting similarities and differences between them and Canada. He thinks that the ESL program at his school, like mother tongue programs, needs to improve and thinks that computer software programs need to be designed for ESL students to familiarize them with their function and use. Independent learners could also use computers and their progress tracked on the computer.

Nina is a full time teacher of ESL and Department Head of Languages in a high school. She has both a B.Ed. degree and an M.Ed. degree in Education. Her L1 is English. She has taught since 1972 and taught ESL since 1979. She has written curricula for Alberta Learning and participated in different projects at

the provincial level. She has written curricula and learning resources for local public and Catholic schools. She said that everyday is a new learning experience for her as she is sure that she learns as much from the students as they do from her. Now her classroom is bursting with students from every continent except Australia. Many are struggling with numeracy and literacy issues but they love being in Canada and they have not yet learned to dislike snow.

Eden is a new ESL teacher. In his two years of experience, he has taught ESL English, ESL Math, ESL Science and Learning Strategies.

Step 7

A meeting was planned to sign the consent forms, complete the questionnaires and initiate discussion about the criteria that could be used to identify good ESL textbooks by referring to the TET. The main source of data for answering the second research question was drawn from teacher responses to the written questionnaire that was administered at this first meeting with the group of three ESL teachers.

Step 8

Data from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and focus group interviews (Leedy, 1989), were used to answer the third research question. Completion of the questionnaires and the first recorded discussion took about four hours. Recordings were summarised and then circulated to participants for their approval or revisions (also known as a 'member check').

Step 9

The following were analysed and interpreted: responses to questionnaires, transcribed and validated discussions about criteria of a good ESL textbook. This data were then compared and contrasted with the findings of the literature review.

Step 10

Based on data gleaned in Step 8 a revised draft of TET was made.

Step 11

A follow up meeting was arranged for validation (another 'member check') of the written summary of the first meeting, presentation of the revised TET and to further probe as to criteria used for selecting ESL textbooks and the reasons why. This meeting was also audio-recorded.

Step 12

The audio transcript of the second meeting was summarised in writing for validation/member check and discussion and a revised TET was again responded to by the informants. This meeting was also audio-recorded. Questions asked during the focus group interviews described in steps 7, 9, 11 and 12 can be found in Appendix F.

Step 13

A written summary of the second meeting (focussing on criteria and reasons for selecting them) was sent for validation or member check through e-mail. The final revisions to TET were circulated for feedback through e-mail.

3. What other factors or criteria do ESL teachers consider when assessing or looking for an ESL textbook or resource?

Step 14

A final follow up meeting was arranged, with a gift certificate for each participant, to present the final TET, results of a textbook analysis for their validation and to further clarify the teacher thinking involved in textbook selection. Clarifications were integrated accordingly. A presentation and interpretation of the findings of all steps of the research to date were presented to participating teacher informants. This meeting was audio-recorded.

Step 15

A written summary of discussions of the final meeting were sent to participating teachers by e-mail for a final member check or validation. The themes that emerged from these discussions are presented in Chapters Four and Five. The final part of the thesis includes recommendations for future research.

Research Design

The whole process of collecting data involves the selection or design of the instruments and the conditions under which the instruments will be administered (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). This research design employs a number of research tools: literature review and synthesis; questionnaires; field test; focus group interviews; validation; computer analysis; thematic coding and personal reflection. Each is described in what follows. See Appendix G for an overview of this research project.

Literature Review and Synthesis

Teachers, students, and administrators are all consumers of textbooks. All these groups, of course, may have conflicting views about what a good or standard textbook is. The detailed literature review in the next chapter led to the creation of a questionnaire (see Appendix H) which formed the starting point for this research study about the criteria for assessing a good ESL textbook. The questionnaire was revised several times. After its initial formulation it was field tested. The feedback from the field test participants resulted in a few modifications. At the end of the study, based on detailed feedback from the ESL teachers about what factors they consider when looking for an ESL textbook it was again revised. All drafts are included in appendices and described in more detail throughout the thesis.

Questionnaires

The main source of data for answering the second research question was drawn from teacher responses to a written questionnaire that was administered at the first meeting of a group of three ESL teachers. Because data sometimes lies buried deep within the minds or within the attitudes, feelings, or reactions of the informants, a questionnaire is a useful instrument for observing data beyond the physical reach of the observer. Closely allied to the questionnaire will of course be an interview (Leedy, 1989), in this case focus group interviews. Data from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and focus group interviews were used to answer the third research question.

The revised written questionnaire consisted of a total of thirteen categories with eighty questions or criteria about the selection of ESL textbooks, as detailed in Chapter Three, as well as some open-ended questions. All of the TET questions were designed to ask informants to rate the degree to which they think the criterion is an important factor in the selection and evaluation of ESL textbooks using a Likert summated scale of importance from 0 to 4. A zero means that the informant rates the criterion as the least important factor while a 4 means that the informant rates the criterion as the most important factor. In the scoring process, weights are assigned such that the direction of importance—least important to most important—is consistent over items and neutral statements are avoided. Each statement is unequivocally asking for importance. The informant reacts to each statement on the scale (Thorndike & Hagen, 1961).

One unique feature of the TET questionnaire is that a column entitled Background Information has been added in front of the question column. Whenever the informant is unsure of a concept or the source of information, the background column can be referenced. This is an improvement over the many questionnaires that have been reviewed in the literature (National Center for Education Statistics, 1999; National Education Association, 2002; Quintero & Troncoso, 2001; Vassilakis, 1997).

The terms informants, respondents, and interviewees, are often used interchangeably in the research literature. In this research context I have chosen to use the term informants. Informants have been selected based on their education and experience. Approaching contacts in the field, I was interested in

including both native speakers and non-native speakers of the English language as well as individuals who had taught or at least lived abroad, and had studied another language and possibly reached at least an intermediate level of oral and written proficiency in it. With these factors in mind, I hope that my informants represent a very broad spectrum of background characteristics

For the purposes of my study I am focussing on ESL textbooks as opposed to EFL texts. The former are used by learners who are immersed in the target language in and out of the classroom while the latter were created for a context in which students primarily encounter the target language as a subject within the classroom, the situation in which I found myself teaching English in China. Since we know that the rate of language learning is directly proportionate to the time of exposure to the language, students in ESL contexts are likely to learn English at a much more rapid rate!

Although I do not have enough participants to conduct a quantitative study I am interested in knowing the range of agreement among teachers as far as selection of criteria for an ESL textbook is concerned. Thus, written questionnaires were given in the form of a Likert scales format, since the questions basically asked whether informants view certain criteria as less important or more important. Instead of using precise mathematical averages for each degree of favourability, Likert recommended that all items be given the same mathematical weight (Sommer & Sommer, 1991). Thus in the scoring process of my thesis, weights are assigned such that the direction of attitude favourable to unfavourable is consistent over items.

Field Test–Revision of Questionnaire

Based on the field test, the chief revision made to the TET was to check the wording of the background knowledge, and that of the questions. All the sources referred to have also been verified. The thirteen categories and the original ordering of the criteria remained the same. Questions 69, 70, 71, and 75 were revised based on the feedback of pilot study participants.

Focus group Interviews

Focus Group Interviews can range from being highly structured with standardised predetermined questions to being unstructured and informal (Leedy, 1989). In the current project, I would like to provide opportunities for open ended conversation and reflection that will hopefully provide a window to a deep understanding of ESL textbook selection and evaluation, the reliability and validity of the criteria that have been summarised in the literature review, as well as a from the opinions of practising ESL teachers (informants).

The quality of the data collected is very much a reflection of the skill of the researcher. Merriam (1998) highlights the importance of asking “good” questions and sensitively “probing” in this process. It will be easier for me to develop these skills and glean rich data since I already know all of the informants.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994; 2000) suggest that an interview is not a neutral tool, at least for the people who create the reality of the interview situation. Fontana and Frey (2000) highlight the complexity of the interviewing process and urge those undertaking this form of data collection to be sensitive to the social dynamics at play in any conversation. They note that “[i]nterviewers are

increasingly seen as active participants in interaction with respondents, and interviews are seen as negotiated accomplishments of both interviewers and respondents that are shaped by the contexts and situations in which they take place” (2000, p. 663). Since I have a strong professional relationship with the participants I am confident that they will give me honest responses and not ‘what they think I want to hear’.

Validation

Mishler (1990) defines validation as the social construction of knowledge (1990, p. 417) by which we evaluate the trustworthiness of reported observation, interpretations, and generalisations (1990, p. 419). Through on-going member checks informants are given opportunities to change or add to a written summary of the discussions. This reformulating of validation as the social discourse through which trustworthiness is established eludes such familiar shibboleths as reliability, falsifiability, and objectivity (1990, p. 420). Wolcott (1990) suggests nine points which need to be realised in order to guarantee validity (pp. 127-128), which can be summarised as an attempt to act sensitively in the field and above all as the transferral of the problem of validity in the research to the domain of writing about research (Flick, 1998, 2002). Triangulation, which included member checks, is also a part of the validation process.

Computer Analysis

The questionnaire data was analysed using Microsoft Excel. To tabulate the results, I entered the Likert scale, from 0 to 4, into Microsoft Excel, and calculated the average (arithmetic mean) score of each of the criteria. Then I

chose the criteria with higher averages to be included in the formal study, classified under the same categories. This data was then triangulated with the interview data.

Thematic Coding

After transcribing the interview data, it was used in two ways. First, in order to integrate the voices, ideas and concerns of practicing ESL teachers into criteria used for textbook assessment and analysis, data from the interviews was used to revise the TET. Second, the transcripts were read and re-read for emergent themes. Thematic coding has been developed from the background of Strauss (1987) for comparative studies, in which the groups that are studied are derived from the research question and thus defined *a priori* (Flick, 1998, 2002). The underlying assumption is that in different social worlds or groups, differing views can be found. Thematic coding is not used in this research to generate a theory; however, it is used to generate new criteria.

Personal Reflections

I have kept a journal of reflections following each focus group interview and during the analysis of the textbooks in order to remain conscious of how my own values and attitudes inform this study and in an effort to make my personal biases explicit in the research study. For instance, I am aware that I believe that ESL should be considered a specialized field, and as such, should be taught by teachers who have not only native-like fluency, but also have experience learning a second language, and developed a certain level of proficiency or competency in that second (or third) language. This opinion is also supported by Maum

(2002) and Phillipson (1996). I am also aware that my experience learning and teaching in China has been textbook based.

Ethics

The basic question to ask in this regard is, "Will any physical or psychological harm come to anyone as a result of the research?" By behaving ethically, one is doing what is right. And what it means to be "right" as far as research is concerned is based on current law and regulations, for instance, the FOIPP (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) (Alberta. Alberta Education, 1999a, 1999b), Ethical Principles (Committee on Scientific and Professional Ethics and Conduct, 1981), Guidelines (Coalition of Adult Education Organizations, 1993), or some manuals (MacDonald, 1987, 1994). Specifically this study has been reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Board of the Faculties of Education and Extension at the University of Alberta (See Appendix E).

Reliability of Evidence

To increase credibility (Burt & Saccomano, 1995) and help ensure reliability of qualitative measures, evaluators collect multiple types of evidence (such as interviews and observations) from various stakeholders around a single outcome (Alamprese, 1994; Lynch, 1990; Patton, 1987). Data from an extensive literature review, focus group discussions and member checks, applications of tools created and personal reflections have all been integrated into results presented in this research project.

Data collected from the literature review was synthesized into matrices (Fitz-Gibbon & Morris, 1987; Lynch, 1990; Sperazi & Jurmo, 1994) so that the advantages and disadvantages of textbook use could be clearly seen.

Verification and Triangulation

Creswell (1998) addresses issues of quality through a discussion of verification and standards. He sees verification as “a process that occurs throughout the data collection, analysis, and report writing of a study and standards as criteria imposed by the researcher and others after a study is completed” (p. 194).

Merriam (1998) indicates that an underlying assumption of qualitative research is that “reality is holistic, multidimensional, and ever changing” (p. 203). She suggests that the question of internal validity then addresses how well the research captures the perspectives of those involved, and interprets the complexity of behaviour in its contextual framework. Lincoln and Guba (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) refer to the question of the “trustworthiness and authenticity” of the research findings, i.e., to what extent they are an accurate portrayal of reality.

“Triangulation” is an important verification procedure in the conduct of qualitative research (Creswell, 1998; Flick, 1998; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). Another important verification procedure is “member checks” (Flick, 1998, 2002). Triangulation is the “cross-checking of data using multiple data sources or multiple data collection procedures” (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996, p. 590). Creswell (1998) contends that the process involves corroborating evidence from different

sources to shed light on a theme or perspective. In the current study, use of multiple sources of data based on observation, interview and document review has served as the primary method of triangulation.

“Member checks”, in the sense of communicative validation of data and interpretation with members of the fields under study (Flick, 1998, p. 232), confirms feedback from the participants, especially regarding interpretation of data and conclusions (Sookraj, 1999). The questionnaire has been pre-tested on a small scale in a pilot study. Rigorous attention to my own biases through some form of self-critique has also been required.

Delimitations

This study focuses on what constitutes a “good” ESL textbook. It has not distinguished between “good” and “bad” textbooks, though there could also be many “bad” textbooks according to selected criteria summarised (Bennett, Finn, & Cribb, 1999; Gross, 1999; Hirsch, 1992a, 1992b, 1993a, 1993b, 1997, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2002; Hirsch & Holdren, 1996a, 1996b; Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil, 1987; Stout, 1999, 2000; Wang, 2002).

ESL teachers’ opinions about what constitutes a “good” ESL textbook have been studied, however, the teachers’ attitude toward certain criteria or why certain teachers hold certain attitudes will not be explored.

A comparative and contrastive study of the criteria identified by research studies and those given by practising teachers has been made but the underlying *raison d’être* has not been explored.

CHAPTER THREE: WHAT CONSTITUTES A “GOOD” ESL TEXTBOOK ACCORDING TO RESEARCH LITERATURE?

Introduction

Using textbooks in teaching has both advantages and disadvantages, depending on how they are used and the contexts for their use. Of the three questions raised in the present study, the first one, “What constitutes a “good” ESL textbook, according to research literature (Hadley, 1986; Hargis, 1998; Mikk, 2000; Tyson, 1997)?”, marks the vital start of this research study. With that question in focus this chapter sets out to review and synthesise how research describes textbooks and their importance, criteria for a “good” ESL textbook as well as the models and theories underlying their creation and assessment. This review was used to develop a questionnaire to present to participating teachers as a way to explore the next research question. See Appendix H.

Out of 110 criteria taken from 35 sources in my literature review about what criteria is used to describe a good SL textbook, some factors appear more frequently than others. They have been grouped into thirteen categories and reduced to 80 criteria: content, language, culture, communication, curriculum, evaluation, organisation format, research, supplementary, task, marketability, and other. What follows is a brief description of the component parts of each category. The number before the subheading indicates a new category. The numbers within the category refer to separate criteria.

1. Content

The contents of a textbook are considered important by many authors (Hoge, 1986; Horsley, 1992; Moulton, 1997; Tsai, 2000). Contents refer to the subject matter of a written work, such as a book or magazine (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992). It is often used in contrast with form, which is the outline, shape or overall structure of an object or figure (Reber, 1995). Contents only exist in certain forms, and forms are used to serve certain contents.

The content of the ESL textbook is of utmost importance. The criteria that define content include: authenticity (1), integratedness (2), relevance or relatedness (3), sufficiency (4), activities (5), clarity of instructions (6), connections (7), critical thinking skills (8), life content (9), meaningfulness and tasks (10), readability or reading level (11), and analogies (12).

1. **Authenticity** (Atkins, 2001; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Dumitrescu, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002) refers to the “realness” of the content, or how appropriate the content would be for a native speaker.

2. **Integratedness** (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; Tucker, 1975) refers to the inclusion of non print content, i.e., maps, pictures, graphs, etc., to make text series into a whole by bringing all parts together.

3. **Relevance** or relatedness (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988) means that the content, word selection, sentence

structure, visuals and proposed activities are appropriate to the age and cognitive level of the user.

4. **Sufficiency** (Atkins, 2001) refers to the level of the comprehensiveness of the content in the textbook and support materials and the adequacy of coverage in meeting the official goals and expectations.

5. **Activities** in the textbook should address the needs of many types of students or learners regarding their learning styles (Bilash, 2000; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).

6. The textbook and supporting guidebook, workbook, etc., must offer **clear instructions** to both the teacher and the students (Bilash, 2000; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998).

7. **Connections** mean that the textbook helps the learner see that learning another language provides connections to additional bodies of knowledge that may be unavailable to the monolingual English speaker (Copland, 2002; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).

8. Questions asked of students and activities designed for students to complete should require **critical thinking skills** (Mikk, 2000; V. Rogers, 1988; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002) and should be assessed for the variety of thinking skills required.

9. **Life content** (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) refers to the inclusion of

activities that relate to real life and/or draw upon a student's real life experiences and should be integrated throughout a textbook series.

10. **Meaningful** activities or tasks (Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; House, 1987; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988) refer to activities or tasks designed to be meaningful for students, and have a clear and relevant function, or purpose.

11. The **reading level** of a text should advance slowly but steadily from unit to unit so that the student can access the content in a written text. The reading level can be determined by Flesch Reading Ease score, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score, Fog index, or Fry Readability (Carolyn, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Mikk, 2000; V. Rogers, 1988).

12. When different types of **analogies** (Thiele & Treagust, 1992) are used in the presentation of the texts they can reach a greater variety of students and thus should be seen in good ESL textbooks.

2. Language

The second major category identified in the research literature about a good SL textbook is that of language. Under the category of language are such criteria as: grammar (13), language skills (14), balance of skills (15), practice (16), pronunciation (17), being interesting (18), motivation (19), positiveness (20), and thorough coverage (21).

13. **Grammar** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; P. Collins, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; Thiele & Treagust, 1992; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002) is considered a necessary component of learning a second language. A good textbook should include a detailed explanation of grammatical points in clear and accessible language with related activities or exercises.

14. **Language skills** (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Short, 1995) refer to the inclusion of activities designed to develop the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. A good ESL textbook should help students develop all four skills.

15. A textbook should strive to develop a variety of aspects of language in a **balanced** way. This should include activities that develop a student's vocabulary, grammar, oral and written language, learning strategies (Atkins, 2001; Copland, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). Textbook assessors must insure that one skill is not stressed more than others.

16. **Practice** of language (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984) refers to an adequate number of practice activities for the development of skills of language. Bilash (2001) separates practice activities into 'getting it' and 'using it' activities to distinguish the difference between those designed to help students learn a concept and those designed to help students use it in a communicative way.

17. **Pronunciation** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002) activities are considered important in helping learners become comfortable speakers of another language.

Pronunciation refers to the sounds of the spoken word, especially the sounds that are accepted or generally understood and their related practice activities.

18. Content and activities in a textbook should be varied and **interesting** (Mikk, 2000), meaning that they should reflect inclusion of a variety of methodologies that keep learners motivated and interested in the text.

19. **Motivation** (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Tsai, 2000) means the textbooks are providing practice activities that motivate student learning.

20. **Positiveness** (Richard-Amato, 1988) means that visual and print content and activities in the textbooks foster positive self-image.

21. Textbooks should cover the topic or subject accurately, **thoroughly**, and in a motivating and logical manner (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richard-Amato, 1988).

3. Culture

The more recent research literature on textbooks repeatedly mentions cultural content as a criteria of a good SL textbook (Cárdenas, 2000; Chipouline, 2001; Kuo & University of Alberta. Dept. of Secondary Education, 1990; Reid, 1998). Culture is a system of information that codes the manner in which the people in an organised group, society or nation interact with their social and physical environment. In this sense the term is really used so that the frame of reference is the sets of rules, regulations, mores and methods of interaction within a group. A key connotation is that culture pertains only to non-genetically

given transmission; each member must learn the systems and the structures (Reber, 1995) of his/her world independently.

Cunningsworth and Tomlinson (1984) described both the advantages and limitations of culture-specific coursework. Bilash (2000) suggested that textbooks compiled in Canada for learners in Canada should be preferably Canadian culture-specific. Under the category of culture are criteria such as: culture (22) and values (23).

22. **Culture** belongs to one of the 5 C's in the framework for SL teaching established by the American Counsel of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). Through the study of other languages, students gain a knowledge and understanding of the cultures that use that language and, in fact, cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language is used.

23. Content and activities should help the L2 learner learn about the **values** of L2 culture explicitly (Copland, 2002; Sorace, Gass, & Selinker, 1994)

4. Communication

The fourth category describing criteria of a good SL textbook, as found in the research literature, can be described as communication. Communication means the transmission of something from one location to another. The "thing" that is transmitted may be a message or a signal. In order to have communication both the transmitter and receiver must share a common code (Reber, 1995). Cunningsworth and Tomlinson (1984) noticed that being able to

communicate effectively in English means being proficient in the various language skills involved in the communication process; in other words, it means more than being able to perform in each of the four skills separately. It also means being able to use the skills effectively in various combinations depending on the nature of the interaction (p. 49). In a short evaluation table based on the American Counsel of Teachers of Foreign Languages ACTFL standards, communication is listed at the top of the table (Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). As authenticity cannot always be realised in a classroom situation, the artificially contrived learning situation can at best be modelled on real language use (p. 49) in communicative activities. Cunningsworth and Tomlinson (1984) stressed age-appropriateness of communicative activities which means "activities designed to get learners to use the language for communication rather than for language practice. The main aims of these activities are to help learners to gain confidence, to become more fluent and to acquire language through exposure and use ("Canadian tests of basic skills: Levels 5-8, Teacher's Handbook. (Kindergarten to Grade 2) Form K," p. 83). Richard-Amato (1988) assumes a similar point of view, that the main goal in the examination of textbooks is to assess what it does to help students learn and communicate in the target language. She further distinguishes between using the target language as means of communication and learning the language as content (p. 209). Bilash (2000) also points out the importance of communicative activities - the degree to which the resource or proposed activities within the resource lend themselves to a

communicative interactive approach which has meaning to the age group of the intended audience.

Omaggio (1986) mentions that good textbooks should include suggestions for group work and active communicative interaction among students. In other words, do the activities suggest context and situations which people, particularly of that age, find themselves in? Garinger (2001) similarly mentions that exercises in the textbooks that promote communication should be criteria used for textbook selection. Due to the nature of the communication method, inductive pedagogy is strongly loaded (P. Collins, 1998). For inductive pedagogy to be effectively applied, there may have to be a heavy input of comprehensible language samples as the basis for induction. Short (1995) suggests that the second language in classrooms should focus on academic language, such as that of social studies. Only by developing skills in using the second language in a subject area can students be bridged to mainstream English speaking classrooms.

Thus, under the category of communication are such criteria as: comparison (24), communication (25), and communities (26).

24. Comparisons are the fourth C in the ACTFL standards. Through comparisons and contrasts with the language being studied, students develop insight into the nature of language and the concept of culture and realise that there are multiple ways of viewing the world (Tang, 1994; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). Textbooks should provide such information to their users.

25. **Communication** is at the heart of second language study, whether the communication takes place face-to-face, in writing, or across centuries through the reading of literature. It is one of the 5 C's in ACTFL standards and has been elaborated by many researchers (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Britton, Woodward, & Binkley, 1993; P. Collins, 1998; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Woodward & Elliott, 1992). A textbook and accompanying materials that emphasise communication should include content and activities that help students interact with one another and with native speakers.

26. **Communities** are the fifth C in the ACTFL standards. It includes content that enables the student of languages to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world in a variety of contexts and in culturally appropriate ways (Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).

5. Curriculum

Not surprisingly, the fifth category of criteria that identifies a good SL textbook relates to curriculum. To exemplify the importance of curriculum, in his series of "What your nth grader needs to know", E. D. Hirsch, Jr (1992a; 1992b; 1993a; 1993b; 1997; 1998; 1996b) writes:

A parent of identical twins sent me a letter in which she expressed concern that her children, who are in the same grade in the same school, are being taught completely different things. How can this be? Because they are in different classrooms; because the teachers in these classrooms have only the vaguest guidelines to follow; in short, because the school, like many in the United States, lacks a definite, specific curriculum (XVII).

Curriculum means either all the courses of study offered by an educational institution, or a group of related courses, often in a special field of study

(Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992). Not only does the curriculum implemented in classrooms often combine with teachers' own thinking and planning, but it also means that a discrepancy between curriculum materials and what is implemented in classrooms can also be found (Li & Fuson, 2000). On the other hand, a textbook can serve different purposes for teachers: as a core resource, as a source of supplemental material, as an inspiration for classroom activities, even as the curriculum itself, taking over the curriculum in many schools (Woodward, Elliott, & Nagel, 1986). Therefore, with textbooks being used for so many different purposes researchers have advocated using variety of approaches to textbook selection (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2002; Sheldon, 1988; Skierso, 1991; Ur, 1996).

In the upper elementary years, the content of curriculum becomes broader. The major focus shifts from helping children to learn to read books to helping them to use books to acquire and organise new information. The curriculum is helpful for all students in a classroom to have a large number of books available that supplement and enlarge on the information in textbooks, but for ESL learners this is particularly important (Spangenberg-Urbschat, Pritchard, & International Reading Association, 1994).

However, the resources must, preferably, meet most of the syllabi of the curriculum or at least meet certain syllabi well. This means that the syllabus content must also correspond to the proficiency level of the user (Bilash, 2000). Garinger (2002) also contends that prior to selecting a textbook, educators should thoroughly examine the programme curriculum. If the goals and

curriculum of the programme are clear and well defined, the parallels with certain textbooks may become obvious. In other words, the resources have educational validity.

Under the category of curriculum are such criteria as: curriculum fit or syllabus (27), detailed outcomes (in curriculum or syllabus) (28), and educational validity (29).

27. **Curriculum fit** (Bilash, 2000; Nevada Department of Education, 2001; V. Rogers, 1988) means that the resource includes content and activities that will help students reach the expectations of a prescribed syllabus or curriculum.

28. Textbooks should define **detailed outcomes** that learners should be able to display after learning/completing activities included in them (Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001).

29. **Educational validity** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001) means that the user can trust that the activities in the textbook will help the learners reach the specified outcomes.

6. Evaluation

The sixth category that much of the research I reviewed falls under is the evaluation of textbooks, which means the assessment of correspondence between the characteristics of a textbook and the ideal set of characteristics (Mikk, 2000). In his proposed form of textbook review Mikk (2000) draws on systematically collected feedback from three groups: respondent opinions, textbook analysis and experimental investigation (Mikk, 2000). All textbooks must be evaluated by a subject-area evaluation and selection committee or the like

under a school board (Montgomery County Public Schools, 1999). According to Cunningsworth and Tomlinson (1984), it is necessary to examine teaching materials from a number of different perspectives and establish explicit criteria for evaluation, professional judgement and decision making in this crucial area. According to Grant (1987), when choosing and evaluating any material/textbook, three questions must be asked: Does it fit? If it fits, how well does it fit, and how does it compare with others that also fit? Does it still fit? These questions are particularly relevant after the textbook has been used for a period of time. Evaluation also includes an examination of how evaluation is proposed in the textbook: levels of analysis required in activities, understanding of text, types of feedback offered, places for general criticisms, degree of scientific correctness and types of tests included (standardised test, cloze, or Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ's)).

Under the category of evaluation are such criteria as: analysis of evaluation (30), extensions (31), scientific accuracy (32), standardised tests (33), and research or instructional models used (34).

30. Analysis and evaluation (Copland, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) of the textbook and other support materials should be conducted as a part of the development and approval or selection process. Authors or publishers should clearly state the context in which the pilot study was conducted and the changes made as a result.

31. Activities that help students **extend** their understanding of the text (New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) include problem solving, decision making, or creation of original work.

32. Content in a textbook should be scientifically correct, **accurate** and scientifically proven (Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Robb, 1996).

33. It is important to include measurement tools such as **standardised tests** on content, cloze procedures or multiple choice questions as part of the package (along with relevant statistics) (House, 1987; Robb, 1996).

34. Textbooks may follow a research model, or **instructional model** (Chipouline, 2001; Copland, 2002) and should clearly state the premises upon which development has been based.

7. Organisation

Organization, or appropriateness of sequencing, is the seventh category that the research literature describes as a criteria for a good SL textbook (Ansary & Babaii, 2002). Cunningsworth and Tomlinson (1984) use the word grading to mean the speed with which the student progresses, how much new material is introduced in a given number of hours, how close together or how far apart new grammatical structures are in relation to each other, how much new vocabulary is introduced in each unit and so on. Garinger (2001) imitates Cunningsworth and Tomlinson (1984) completely. Mikk (2000) also researched graded materials, while Richard-Amato (1988) mentions appropriateness of needs, age and interests of students. It is reasonable to assume that appropriateness is used to

refer to age and grade levels based on native speakers, not on second language learners.

Under the category of organisation are such criteria as: appropriateness (35), good outlines (36), introduction and summaries (37), references or bibliography (38), functional load (39), gender (40), glossary (41), index (42), learning styles (43), linkage (44), organization (45), quality of writing (46), sequencing (47), study guidelines (48), table of contents (49), recycling (50), pre-reading plan (51), balance in exercises (52), PCK (53), procedures (54), self-evaluation activities (55), and self-teaching (56).

35. **Appropriateness**, grading selection, and age-appropriateness (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; House, 1987; Mikk, 2000; Richard-Amato, 1988) refer to the correlation between age level and grade level of the materials, visual and written content and activities found in the textbook and related components.

36. **Good outlines** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992) or statements summarising the important points of a text (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992) should be easily accessible by the textbook user.

37. Clear and comprehensive **summaries** (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) of the substance of a body of material in a condensed form, a list of or main points, or an abstract, help students gain key ideas in a chapter (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).

38. The textbook should contain **references** and a bibliography, listing other helpful and related resources for further reading or viewing (Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).

39. **Functional load** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Tucker, 1975) refers to the distribution of words that have singular and multiple meanings. The functional load is high when more words, or more complicated words, are included.

40. **Gender representation** means that visuals, stories and cultural information represent males and females in non-stereotypic ways (Sosniak, 1990).

41. **Glossary** is usually a list of difficult or specialised words with their definitions, often placed at the back of a book (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998). It provides easy access to necessary information by its users.

42. An **index** (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) serves to guide, point out, or otherwise facilitate reference, especially an alphabetised list of names, places, and subjects treated in a printed work, giving the page or pages on which each item is mentioned (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).

43. **Learning styles** (Bilash, 2000; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002) should be reflected in the collective of activities included in a textbook since we know that learners learn in different ways [McCarthy's 4-

MAT (McCarthy, 1980, 1981) or Gardner's multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983, 1993)].

44. **Linkage** (Atkins, 2001) means that themes or concepts are interconnected between sections of a chapter and chapters in the book. Linkage promotes the spiral curriculum.

45. **Organisation** (Britton, Woodward et al., 1993; Denedy & McNaught, 1997; V. Rogers, 1988) means that the textbook has been sequenced or ordered in a logical and meaningful way (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).

46. **Quality of writing** (Tucker, 1975; Wang, 2002) means that content is presented clearly, concisely and accurately.

47. **Sequencing** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998) refers to the order of presentation, and progression of content from the simple to the more complex. For example, simple sentence patterns should come first, introduction of new structures must rest on already-mastered simpler patterns, etc.

48. **Study guidelines** give students direction in selecting the most important content presented in the textbook (Mikk, 2000).

49. A **table of contents** helps users easily locate content in a textbook and is a vital organizational (Copland, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; V. Rogers, 1988; Tang, 1994; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).

50. Recycled or **recycling** (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richard-Amato, 1988) means that words, sentences, themes, topics, etc. are repeated throughout the textbook or series.

51. A **pre-reading plan** (Molner, 1989) is a before-reading strategy that helps teachers assess student's prior knowledge. It is a useful component of a textbook.

52. **Exercises** are arranged in several levels and **balanced** among and between levels (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).

53. **PCK** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Thiele & Treagust, 1992), pedagogical content knowledge, means that the teacher resource offers tips and explanations to the teacher about how to teach difficult concepts in the textbook (L. S. Shulman, 1987).

54. **Procedures** for teaching content should be clear and include student activities for step by step learning of key concepts (Copland, 2002).

55. **Self evaluation activities** allow students to see clearly the progress they are making in learning the content in the textbook and act as a motivator for the student.

56. **Self-teaching** (Hough, 1984) means the textbooks can be used without teachers or tutors.

8. Format

Many authors referred to aspects of format as being important when developing or assessing a SL textbook. Format included such criteria as:

diagrams, graphics and illustrations (57), layout (58), physical characteristics (59), presentation (60), editing and publishing (61), size and typefaces (62), and text structure (63).

57. Illustration, diagrams, and graphics (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Tang, 1994) are required to clarify a concept for students or add visual appeal.

58. Layout characteristics (Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Robb, 1996) make a page easier or more difficult to read and more or less appealing to the reader. They refer to overall design of a page, spread, or book, including elements such as page and type size, typeface, and the arrangement of titles and page numbers.

59. Physical characteristics (Atkins, 2001; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) of a textbook contribute to its reader-friendliness. They include the quality of paper, size of the textbook, or weight of the textbook.

60. Presentation (Copland, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Robb, 1996) or sequencing of the content of the textbook from the easy to the more difficult, or mixed, will make the book more or less accessible to different types of learners.

61. **Quality of editing and publishing** (Garinger, 2002; Tucker, 1975; Wang, 2002) refers to the accuracy and thoroughness of the language and form of the published textbook.

62. **Size and format of print** should be appropriate (Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) for the target age group and visually appealing.

63. **Text structure** (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Short, 1995; Wang, 2002) refers to the extent of coverage of the components in the textbook and their organisation.

9. Research

The research base used to develop a textbook needs to be made explicit for the potential user. Are the textbooks tested with students? Can the textbooks be used for research as well? This category includes analysis (64) and research (65).

64. **Second language learning data analysis** (Tang, 1994) means that the textbook has been tested with students.

65. Some textbooks are based on research and can be used for further **research** as well (Chipouline, 2001).

Analysing textbooks means collecting data about textbook characteristics using explicitly stated rules (Mikk, 2000). Mikk (2000) also said an analysis of a textbook gives objective data about its characteristics. High validity of a textbook analysis method indicates that the method is reliable (Mikk, 2000). Textbook

analysis can build in research on topics such as comparisons between L1 and L2, controversial issues, and SL learning.

10. Supplementary Components

There is general agreement in the research literature that a textbook alone cannot provide materials and activities to develop all of the SL skills (Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). Thus, extra components such as audio or videotapes or CD ROM's, are also important. Supplementary materials or books or other non-print materials used within the context of the instructional program are not usually included in the definitions of textbooks or instructional materials (Appleton Area School District, 1993). The use of supplementary materials in the educational program is based on the needs of the curriculum and the professional judgement of the instructional staff. Different school boards may give different directions in the use of supplementary materials, as shown by the following suggestion:

Whenever a teacher plans to utilise supplementary materials beyond the normal parameters of the curriculum, the matter should be discussed with the building principal or appropriate supervisor or program leader. Whenever a teacher plans to utilise supplementary materials of a sensitive nature, the matter must be discussed with the principal and appropriate curriculum supervisor (Montgomery County Public Schools, 1999).

Under this category are criteria such as: added components (66), assessment, homework, and workbook (67), teaching aids (68), parent letters (69), transparencies (70), charts, maps, and videos (71) and software (72).

66. Added technological components or technology (Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002)

refer to videotapes, cassette tapes, computer diskettes, CD-ROM's or DVD-ROM's (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998).

67. **Assessment, homework, and workbook** are components of the textbook series which are recommended ways of helping learners reach the outcomes stated by the textbook designers (Copland, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).

68. A textbook is considered a desirable **teaching aid** when it meets most of the needs of materials for the teacher and students (New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; V. Rogers, 1988).

69. Sample **parent letters** are included in the series to help teachers maintain contact with the caregivers of students (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).

70. **Transparencies** (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) are components of a textbook series that act as tools needed by students to understand key concepts or complete learning activities and to save the teachers preparation time and effort.

71. **Videos, maps and charts** (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) are also components of a textbook series that act as tools to help learners and save the teachers preparation time and efforts.

72. Inclusion of **Software** components (CD-ROMs, DVDs, Laserdisks, etc.) (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998) means the technological aspect is considered and included.

11. Literacy Levels and Meaning Making

73. The eleventh category has only one criteria, students' **literacy** levels (C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Thiele & Treagust, 1992), which can be assessed using material in the series.

12. Marketability

Of course, textbooks have a commercial dimension. The marketability of the textbook and its accompanying materials also contribute to its overall use and success (Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richards, 2001; Robb, 1996; Shannon, 1987; Wang, 2002). Criteria under this category include: commercial materials (74), cost (75), popularity (76), durability (77), and guidance for non-native speaking teachers (78).

74. **Commercially produced for profit materials** (Richards, 2001; Shannon, 1987) must be noted in textbook selection because they are often too expensive for students in many parts of the world.

75. **Cost** is measured in terms of value for cost (Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Robb, 1996; Wang, 2002). This is an important factor for many schools when choosing books in today's economic climate (Atkins, 2001). If the textbooks are too expensive, it is not advisable for the school to provide each student with a copy. Mikk (2000) reached a similar conclusion one year earlier, claiming that textbooks are often neglected when considering financing of education.

Garinger (2002) contends that budget restrictions belong to a category which is unrelated to pedagogy. In considering cost, factors such as accessibility and popularity must be included.

76. **Popularity** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002) means that a book sells well.

77. **Durability** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Tucker, 1975) describes how long the resource will last, or how strong the textbooks is. Because hard cover textbooks are expensive and are handled by young people on a daily basis they need to be well made.

78. **Guidance for non-native speaking teachers** (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Tucker, 1975) means that the textbook is written with an international market in mind. As such, instructions to the teacher may be given in several languages.

13. Other

This category includes legal compliance (79) (Nevada Department of Education, 2001) and efficiency (80).

79. **Legal compliance** (Nevada Department of Education) refers to the fact that the contents of a textbook are or should be in compliance with the law (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992). Because a complete set of textbooks can cost as much as over \$1000.00 USD, sometimes the school can only afford one complete set. Other times the school can only afford an incomplete set of a textbook. This scenario leads teachers to photocopy materials for students which in turn raises the problem of copyright, a legal matter.

80. The term **efficiency** is sometimes used to describe the relationship between inputs and outputs. Mingat and Tan (1988) pointed out that in education, this relationship can be analysed in at least two ways, depending on how output is defined. According to one definition, output refers to broad societal goals, such as the production of resources among levels and types of education. According to the second definition, output refers to the goals internal to each level of education, such as students' achievement of the curriculum objectives. Since the intrasectoral or interdepartmental allocation of resources is fixed, the analysis involves evaluating alternative allocations of resources in schools to achieve these goals. In their book the authors use the second definition of output and focus on the question of how the resources available for a given level of education can be used to attain its goals (p. 58). The frequent repeating of a teaching point, even if focusing on different aspects each time (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984), is considered less efficient than infrequent repeating.

Textbook Evaluation Tools (TET)

Based on an extensive literature review about factors considered important in a textbook, a questionnaire called a Textbook Evaluation Tool or TET was developed and revised at the end of Chapter six (See Appendices G). The questionnaire has a special column listing each of the criteria synthesised from the literature review and the related background information, including a brief definition of the criterion and the sources from which the criterion has been drawn. This unique feature, different from any of the comparable TET's reviewed (Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education,

1998; Zealand Public Schools, 2002), helps users to understand each of the concepts as described in the research literature. The 80 criteria of the TET will be used to initiate a discussion about the next research question: What do ESL teachers think about what the research literature says about what constitutes a “good” ESL textbook?

CHAPTER FOUR: WHAT CONSTITUTES A “GOOD” ESL TEXTBOOK ACCORDING TO ESL TEACHERS?

Introduction

This chapter presents the views of six ESL teachers about what constitutes a good ESL textbook. More precisely, what do ESL teachers think about what the research literature says about what constitutes a “good” ESL textbook and what other factors or criteria do ESL teachers consider when assessing or looking for an ESL textbook or resource?

The data was gathered from three sources: the Likert scale responses from the written questionnaire or TET described in the previous chapter, offered answers to the second research question: What do ESL teachers think about what the research literature says about what constitutes a “good” ESL textbook? Answers to the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and three recorded focus group interview sessions (See Appendix F for the questions) provided insight into the third and final research question: what other factors or criteria do ESL teachers consider when assessing or looking for an ESL textbook or resource correspondingly, this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section summarises the results of the Likert scale statements. The second part discusses the themes revealed in the open-ended questions. The final section summarises findings from two of the three focus group meetings. Results of the last focus group will be summarised in Chapter Five.

Likert Scale Statements

The participating ESL teachers in this study shared many common views about what constitutes a good ESL textbook and generally agreed that all of the criteria mentioned in the TET were important factors to consider when analysing and selecting a textbook. Details of their responses are in Appendix I.

Themes from the Open—Ended Questions

In general teacher informants agreed with most of the categories and criteria summarized in the TET. The following themes were identified from the comments made by teachers: level of language and content for the student user; organisation, format and user-friendliness; relevance or relatedness and Canadian content; educational validity; costs and durability; interesting topics; variety of activities; up-to-dateness; textbook use; and using one textbook in ESL class. Below is a summary table describing the characteristics of the teacher-informants (refer to Chapter Two for more detailed biographical information).

Table 4 Teacher-Informants and Backgrounds

Name	brief description
Ian	an ESL teacher with over 10 years of teaching experience
Eden	a new teacher with 2 years of ESL teaching experience
Nina	a veteran ESL teacher with over 30 years of experience
Ora	a teacher with 10 years of ESL teaching experience
Roy	an ASL teacher with many years of ESL teaching experience
Sonia	an ESL teacher with over 10 years of teaching experience

1. Level of Language and Content

All teacher-informants agreed that teachers rely heavily on textbooks. For most teacher-informants the “appropriate level” of language and content for the

student user is the most important factor that they consider when assessing or selecting an ESL textbook. Ian commented:

The materials must be at a level so that my students will have a certain amount of success, but also challenge them to improve their English. The topics should also be relevant to the students' age and gender.

Ora wanted textbooks to suit "students' needs and background knowledge". More specifically, Eden thought that level-appropriate grammar was necessary. He also noted the importance of "how grammar should be taught" in textbooks, how culture should be taught in textbooks, how authenticity should be handled in textbooks, and whether textbooks deskilled teachers. "And the information should be contextualised as well," said Roy. Nina wanted a text to "mesh with the curriculum". She stated that she wanted the students to have a text that they can rely on.

2. Organisation, Format and User-Friendliness

The organisation of the content and activities of the textbook was the second most significant factor that these ESL teachers identified as being important when selecting an ESL textbook. The teacher-informants referred to visual appeal, user friendliness, the presence and quality of supplemental components, sequencing and thoroughness of content within this theme.

The materials should be "visually appealing . . . because it is important for the visual learners and provides another way for other students to learn" (Ian). Roy agreed and added that the "visuals (should include) graphics, and diagrams". The textbook should also be "well organised" (Nina and Sonia), whether "theme-based, grammar-based, or project-based". Ora favours the idea

that teaching should not mean using a textbook “cover to cover”, and that “flexibility” should allow teachers and students “additional materials” for “extra practice”.

Eden believes that user-friendliness, such as ease of use, size of fonts, inclusion of a glossary are important factors in a good ESL textbook.

A good ESL textbook series should “provide supplemental materials” (Ian), including “audio or CD aural and oral material, workbooks, tests and teaching strategies” (Nina). Ora thinks that such components are important to have the “students refer to and reference on their own . . . after the class is finished”. Thus, textbooks are not only used by teachers and students in class work, but also used after class for homework. “Examples” of teaching strategies and procedures and “articles” that teachers can read for professional development should also be suggested (Roy).

“Materials must be presented in a logical and pedagogically sound manner so that students can build on what they have already learnt” (Ian). “Teaching exercises must be developmental and reinforce prior concepts” (Roy). This is what Atkins (2001) calls linkage. Knowledge builds on knowledge so the sequencing or progression of the content is very important (Hirsch et al., 1987). The content and activities in textbooks must be sequenced from the easiest components to the more difficult ones, be they in vocabulary, grammar, phonetics, or other (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Unfortunately, many textbooks jump from level to level in consecutive lessons, indicating a huge ONE in Krashen’s *i + 1* comprehensible input hypothesis (Krashen, 1982). Such is certainly the case in

Making Connections (Kessler & Bernard-Johnston, 1996a, 1996b; Kessler, Bernard-Johnston et al., 1994; Kessler & Lee, 1996; Kessler, Lee et al., 1994), a locally approved resource for middle and high school ESL students. These teachers' written comments support the call for textbooks to cover a topic or subject accurately, thoroughly, and in a motivating and logical manner (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richard-Amato, 1988) and for what Copland (2002), Cunningsworth & Tomlinson (1984) and Robb (1996) call presentation or sequencing of the content of the textbook from the easy to the more difficult, in order to make it more accessible to different types of learners.

3. Relevance or Relatedness and Canadian Content

As has already been mentioned, a lot of the available resources have been produced by publishers in the US or the UK, meaning that little attention has been paid to Canadian content. Eden thinks that too much American/US content "confuses ESL students". Nina agrees with Eden that Canadian images, literature and culture should be "taught in the class", "reflecting Canadian experiences". All teachers mentioned that one of the first things they look for when scanning a new textbook is its Canadian content. Certainly the teacher-informants knew that an important part of a publisher's job is to make each book appeal to as wide a market as possible in order to maximize sales potential (T. G. Collins, 1999).

4. Educational Validity

When Roy stated that he favoured using materials that have had "proven results", making many of his decisions "based on discussions with other ESL

teachers and tutors”, he was describing educational validity (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001). He wants to be able to trust that the activities in the textbook will help learners reach the outcomes specified. Sonia wrote that the evaluation of the text’s success in reaching “student outcomes” is very important. She also stated that a good textbook or series should contain materials that teachers can use for evaluation because teachers can see “the new needs” of students after a test. Sadly the rigorous evaluation of textbooks has not usually been considered an important factor in the educational establishment (Gross, 1999), due in large part to what Hofstadter (1963; Howley, Howley, & Pendarvis, 1995) considers the anti-intellectualism lingering on in North America for the past 40 years.

5. Costs and Durability

Ora wants each student “to be able to have a copy of the textbook instead of copying from it, therefore the textbooks must be cost—effective. Sonia said that the ESL textbooks in Canada are very expensive. I have only seen one school, in a fly—in First Nations reserve, that has a complete set of textbooks from Grades 1 to Grade 6 for ESL students. Perhaps the extra funding from both federal and provincial governments enables them to provide one copy of the textbook for each of the students?

Noting that due to the tight budgets in these difficult economic times and the fact that school based budgeting seems to have shifted the priority placed on purchasing textbooks, Nina reminds us that a textbook should “last for a number of years”. The textbook that I used, *Making Connections*, would cost the school approximately \$2000.00 for one copy of all components covering Grades 10 to

Grade 12, according to the pricing index provided by the Alberta government's Learning Resources Centre. In order for each student to have a copy of the textbook and workbook only, the cost would be approximately \$5353.50 without tax $25 \times \{(48.95 + 22.10) + (48.92 + 22.10) + (48.92 + 23.15)\} = \5353.50 (based on 25 students per class, 1 class in each grade).

6. Interesting Topics

"If students are interested in the topics, they will be more motivated to learn" said Ian, telling us that textbooks must be interesting. Mikk (2000) explained students are interested in:

. . . their own lives. They wish to know how to be successful in human communication, how to win friends, how to be healthy, how to get a good salary, etc. If the textbooks also help to answer such questions, they might become more interesting for students (p. 245).

Whether the presentation "is clear" (Sonia) matters as well. A lot of times, presentation sparks the interest of the students. Therefore, it has to be progressive and clear (Sonia). Roy stated that finding one book of interest to all of his students was very difficult - some of his students were preparing to go to university and wanted to learn about topics such as science and math while others were seeking employment in the service sector. Eden thought that most ESL textbooks did not provide students with "interesting, useful or high levels of content".

7. Variety of Activities

Sonia thinks that the textbook or resource should contain "a lot of useful activities" because teachers did not have time to look for more activities in a single busy day with an average preparation time of only 30 to 40 minutes per

day. At some of the schools, teachers only have preparation time in either the first semester, or the second semester, but not both. Textbooks with activities or activity masters are of vital importance.

Only one teacher, Ian, mentioned that a good textbook should meet a variety of learning styles and be teacher-friendly. Meeting learner's preferred learning styles has two benefits, as indicated by Kelly (1997). It helps teachers understand their areas of weakness, giving them the opportunity to work on becoming more proficient in the other modes and it helps students realize their strengths, which might be useful in certain social situations, such as deciding on a career. He said that some high level students need to deal with real life issues and their own lives in activities.

8. Up-to-Dateness

"Language in the textbook (must be) up-to-date," wrote Sonia. "ESL teachers should stay up-to-date on ESL teaching" and "ESL textbooks should be up-to-date on ESL research" (Roy). Sonia, who as an experienced high school ESL teacher and department head often works with student teachers, talked about how different the "needs" of experienced teachers and new teachers were. She thought that the "contents in a good ESL textbook should be up-to-date" and that the information should be contemporary so that the new teachers know what to teach.

9. Textbook Use and Using One Textbook in ESL Class

In *The teaching gap: best ideas from the world's teachers for improving education in the classroom*, James and Stigler (1999) wrote: "If the method is

limited, students' learning will be limited no matter how talented the teacher. Teachers are only as good as the methods of teaching they use" (p. 175). If best methods can be incorporated into textbooks, both students and teachers, talented or not, will benefit from, preferably, a single source.

Since Canada is a multicultural country, materials "should be varied and give a well rounded view of the language and not be restricted to use by certain learners only or to explanations in dialogues" (Ora). The textbook should have a somewhat universal usability, as supported by the following:

Tailoring instruction to specific students is seen as unfairly limiting and as prejudging what students are capable of learning; all student should have the opportunity to learn the same material (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999).

About half of the teacher-informants would like to use a single set of textbooks as their basic resource while still maintaining the flexibility to choose other materials. For instance, Sonia preferred "to stick to one set of textbooks so that (her) students will learn everything that has been covered in that set," meanwhile, "(she) also look(s) for additional materials to supplement (her) teaching because no single set of textbooks can cover everything that the students need to learn in the target language."

Ian also liked to use "one textbook for (his) ESL classes", but he wanted to be able to "photocopy pages from other textbooks and produce materials to supplement the main textbook materials." Ora usually chose "a basic textbook with grammar explanations and examples at the back and supplemented it with authentic texts and reading, writing, listening and pronunciation activities from

other sources.” She also said that no ESL textbook should force teachers to do everything and teachers should be able to choose from the textbooks.

Other teacher-informants preferred to use multiple sources. Eden explained that there is “no one great source”. Nina and Roy preferred to use several textbooks because in Nina’s class she had “her students all day.” She used one set of books for English class (grammar-themes) and another for ESL Social Studies, ESL Science and ESL Math and yet another for cultural themes. Roy said he tried to use as many resources as possible:

ESL students have a variety of literacy learning preferences (phonetic, sight words). I try to demonstrate as many possible ways to learn reading and writing, meeting students’ needs and IPP (Individualized Program Plans) objectives.

Some teachers expressed that they thought that it would be difficult to produce one set of textbooks to meet the needs of all teachers as well as those of all of their students. Ora thought that “it would not be cost effective and that you could only tailor a textbook to meet the needs of your students at a particular time. Although there are basics covered each time you teach, it is catering to the little details we learn about each student that makes teaching worthwhile.” Ian said:

This may be difficult because I think providing a variety of materials in different forms is beneficial for language learning. For example, in my ESL classes I use computer lessons, self-developed activities and authentic materials to supplement the textbook. I may also use the textbook to supplement other lessons, which means that the textbook becomes a secondary resource material as opposed to a primary resource material. It is possible to develop a very valuable textbook, but I think it would be very difficult to teach with only one resource.

Roy’s teaching experience to date “has led (him) to use a variety of textbooks that reflect a wide genre of language learning and literature available.

ESL students are not a homogeneous group; therefore ESL textbooks and resources need to honour this fact.”

Nina said: “If we were speaking about only conversational English or English literacy and grammar, perhaps one textbook could be created or found. But at the high school level where a student needs English acquisition for academic courses, it might not be possible.”

Sonia agreed:

In Canada, it is more difficult to find only one textbook to meet the needs of all students. We have multi-level classrooms. Students speak different first languages and have varying language learning needs. It’s a much more complex situation than EFL. But if you never try to find or create one, you’ll never know. . . Maybe we can start writing an ESL textbook for the Province of Alberta to see how it goes? Maybe we can turn this impossibility into a possibility!

Eden wrote “absolutely” in regards to the need for producing an ESL textbook that would meet most of the students’ needs as well as the teachers’ needs. However, he is “not sure if the publishers feel that there is enough of a market” for such a book. Sonia supported this position: “In countries where students speak the same mother tongue, and/or if there is a national curriculum guideline to follow, I think it is possible to produce an ESL textbook that would meet most of my needs as a teacher and most of the needs of my students.”

The teacher-informants’ answers to the open-ended questions revealed support for many of the criteria listed in TET. They also added some new criteria, such as Canadian content, up-to-dateness or usability, some of which are different from, but covered in, others terms in the TET.

Focus Group Interview Results

This section of the chapter summarizes the themes that arose from the focus group interviews which focussed on the following (See details in Appendix F):

1. Use of ESL textbooks
2. Criteria used for ESL textbook analysis and selection
3. Types of use and sources of SL resources or materials used in the class
4. Accessibility of learning resources for teaching ESL

From these discussions the themes which emerged reflected both some of the themes identified in the previous section and some new ones. They are: criteria of a good ESL textbook, comments about ESL textbooks currently being used, difficulties obtaining ESL textbooks, using computers in ESL class, and how the teacher-informants felt about participating in this research project.

10. Criteria of a Good ESL textbooks

Focus group informants supplied a number of criteria to identify a good ESL textbook: relevance, design and layout, inclusion of support components, structure for all parts of the learning process, activities which promote communication, easy access for organizing instruction, Canadian content, and developmental progression, quality of language. Most of the criteria focused on how the ESL textbook helps teachers teach and how it contributes to student learning.

Nina said that the relevance of the textbook was important—how current it was and how the students could relate to it.” She also said that a good textbook had to have a design and layout that supported its proposed pedagogy so that students were “able to focus on the textbooks”. She stated that the textbooks needed to have a number of different “components” and qualities:

A good ESL textbook has a number of different components. It has to have some placement activities so it has to have a good assessment package with it. It has to have a variety of levels and a variety of activities. It has to have good illustrations so that even if they were in black and white they would still be good illustrations. The text has to be accurate, good modelling of English, Canadian, or Standard English of any type. I do not want to see a lot of idioms because this is something that is extremely regional. I do not want to see regional accents in the tapes that are used. I want Standard English. And I like to see a variety of support materials. For instance if there are illustrations or pictures that I can put up on the board, or if there is a CD-ROM that’s available or if it has student workbooks or if it has computer elements to it, that are part of this. I like to see all of it when I am choosing a textbook, when I am choosing a set for my class. As it so happens, the bold typeface in the citation highlights many of the repetitive criteria in this study.

Roy echoed that “just one easy textbook” is preferred to several different textbooks in a class:

Maybe a series of with one book focussing on reading, another focussing on writing, and still another focussing on grammar. There’s hardly any out there. Very minimum. I would like to see textbooks that are developmental. To address not only ESL, but also other needs of the variety of ESL students. . . because I think there is ESL plus disabilities. Publishers need to address that. Some (students) arrive without an education, some have post stress disorders, textbooks need to address that.

Roy believes that students need a textbook even if different students are using different textbooks. He also mentioned that a good textbook should allow for interesting communication. Furthermore, Eden voiced agreement with the other teacher-informants, saying that “a good textbook should be easy to teach”

and “well planned”, so it’s always readily apparent what the teacher should do. He also stated that a good textbook should meet the “students’ needs” and be “easy for students to learn from”. He is more concerned with both of the agents in the realisation of learning - the instructors and the learners.

Eden also noted that most of the textbooks lacked information about the province of Alberta, thus giving less than a complete picture of the whole of Canada:

Most of Canadian stuff is Toronto-based: CN tower, bla-bla, Montreal, a little of Newfoundland, Toronto. Jumps the prairies and goes straight to Vancouver. I did the curriculum review (of many textbooks) and that’s all there has been.

A good ESL textbook should be accurate and well organised (Nina and Sonia) and developmentally sequenced so that it is easy to learn from. Teacher—informants said that the textbook should be “organized in a way that it is developmental” (Nina). In this way “students can more easily learn from it and recognize the next steps” (Roy). It should also have Canadian content, because the students are studying in Canada. Ian agreed and would like a good ESL textbook to be communicative, interesting, and relevant. For Roy, “the key criteria of a good ESL textbook is that it should be developmental, easy to learn from and with”. He also mentioned that in an age of technology a good ESL textbook should “follow the country’s needs, should have CD-ROM’s and computer elements”. Eden, who is a new teacher, thought “a good set of lesson plans” in a textbook would help teachers, especially new teachers, to prepare and teach. He said:

A good textbook has a mix of exercise types, good illustrations. . . (because) we were new in the school, we had many

things to learn. If the textbooks are helpful, had many activities, assessment, support materials, workbooks and a good model it will positively influence many teachers.

Nina thought, like Eden and Roy, that a key criterion of a good ESL textbook was to “meet students’ needs”, though there are different kinds of needs. They also thought a good textbook should provide the students with the linguistic tools to “promote communication”, using “Standard English”.

Most of the teacher-informants felt that some, but not many, textbooks met their criteria but also felt that it was not surprising that there were so few and that books had actually improved a lot over the years. Nina said that “there just is no comparison.” She also said that the quality of illustrations had improved a lot since electronic graphic designs had become available to some ESL publishers. Roy stated that the number of nice coloured books for ESL learners had increased. “I think that what we really want to see is the final result, which is helping people learn,” said Eden.

11. Difficulties obtaining good ESL textbooks

As much as teachers expressed clearly the qualities they looked for or desired in a good ESL textbook, they were also vocal about the constraints surrounding their ability to actually obtain textbooks for use in their schools. In fact, the focus group interview meetings revealed frustrations shared by all of the teacher-informants in this regard. Challenges included institutional constraints such as teacher’s time budget restrictions, copyright restrictions, limitations on photocopies made, and incomplete sets of textbook series. When describing the textbooks that they used or had access to, teacher—informants mentioned

concerns over lack of Canadian content and the minimal attention paid to multi-ability level classes and class size.

a. Institutional and time constraints

Nowadays teachers are placed under tremendous institutional constraints. They work more but are paid less, they encourage students to have self-esteem but they have less social and personal esteem themselves, and have less autonomy. They have to teach larger classes, (for example, Roy's CALM class has 40 students enrolled in it), often have very heavy extracurricular duties, and have extra organizational responsibilities in the school. They also "have no spares" (Eden). Most teachers are preparing for and teaching several subjects. For example, Nina is teaching English literacy, science, social studies, and math. Roy is teaching English literacy, arts, learning strategies, math, science, social studies and special ed. Eden is teaching English, social studies, science, computers, learning strategies and CALM. They are even teaching several levels within the same subject. Sonia said: "Oh, yes, in several subjects I teach multiple levels – in math, sciences, social studies, all of the core curriculum. As well, we teach whatever the students need."

Teachers recognize that under their professional responsibilities they have very little time to select textbooks and often lack sufficient detailed knowledge in a subject area to enable them to make informed decisions.

b. Budget restrictions

When discussing the challenges of choosing ESL textbooks, most teachers said that, because of budget restrictions, they "are limited when

choosing textbooks.” They just used “whatever is available”, “on the bookshelves”, or in “some boxes in the storage room”.

Here in Canada the textbooks are too expensive. We have no rights to decide which books we are going to buy or use in Canada. Good or bad, it is all up to the school’s budgets. However, I believe if the students want to learn, any of the textbooks are helpful. (Eden)

Roy agreed with Eden and added:

For the whole year, each teacher has \$500.00 to spend. With this money you could buy books, whatever you want. However, with \$500, how many references can you buy? Less than 7! I am teaching at least 7 subjects, that means I just could purchase one book per subject? Of course, this idea of purchasing only one copy of a textbook it has copyright problems. . . BUT the school has no money to buy the textbooks.

Sonia voiced the same concerns as the other teacher-informants although, because she has been teaching ESL for over 30 years in her school, she has accumulated many more “references” than her junior colleagues have.

c. Copyright restrictions and copy limitations

As we have seen, tightly related to budget constraints are restrictions provided by copyright. Teachers often find themselves in one of three situations: no textbooks are available, they are given (or choose) a textbook to be used as the basis for their teaching, or they are given access to individual copies of a number of books (i.e. without class sets) and told that they may use them if and as they wish, of course within the restrictions of Canada’s Copyright Act. A very general guideline of what can be copied and what cannot is provided as a poster (Access Copyright), usually hanging on the wall above where the photocopier is located.

“We are very busy using all of the ancillary products companies publish” (Eden). Regarding copyright and lack of enough materials, Eden also stated that “it was a lot of extra strain to have to argue with the photocopy lady that the materials being photocopied were indeed within guidelines, especially after having to photocopy materials in the first place because the school could not afford to purchase a class set”. Roy agreed:

Yes, I think that I would say that I am often “breaking copyright laws.” However, even if we want to copy whatever we want, we have “copy limitations”. Each teacher has around a 1000-page paper limit at school during the school year. . . Lots of obstacles in textbook use, and I needed to learn to go around those obstacles, otherwise I wouldn’t survive.

d. Class size, minimal numbers of textbooks and Canadian content

All of the teacher-informants and their colleagues used different textbooks, materials and resources, even if they were in the same school. With such large classes to teach and so many subjects to teach, none of them had any extra time to look for good textbooks.

Although teacher informants said that there were many ESL textbooks in schools, what they described was mostly isolated copies – “most of them were usually incomplete packages or sets”(Nina). “We don’t often have enough copies of anything to make a complete set for each and every student. Teachers’ manuals are usually missing” (Roy). Many Canadian schools are forced to use “American ESL textbooks, using the non-UN standards of the Imperial System of measure” (Eden, Roy and Nina).

12. ESL texts currently being used

Fifteen different sets of textbooks were mentioned by teacher-informants. Listed below in alphabetical order, the years of publication range from 1977 to 2001, a 24 year time span.

English Easy Way (Elliot, Schachter, & Clark, 1983a, 1983b).

English Skills Program (Plattor, Elliott, McIntyre, Doyle, & Rourke, 1977a, 1977b, 1977c, 1977d).

English, Yes! Introductory (Goodman, 1998).

Lado English Series (Lado, Huizenga, & Ford, 1990).

Language for Writing (Forest, 1991).

Making Connections (Kessler & Bernard-Johnston, 1996a, 1996b; Kessler, Bernard-Johnston et al., 1994; Kessler & Lee, 1996; Kessler, Lee et al., 1994).

Oxford Basics (Hadfield & Hadfield, 1999a, 1999b, 2000a, 2000b, 2001).

Oxford Practice Grammar (Eastwood, 1992).

Real life reading and writing on the job (Handel & Angeles, 1979).

ResourceLines text (Dawe, Duncan, & Mathieu, 1999; *Prentice Hall language resourceLines 7/8*, 1999).

Sightlines (Barlow-Kedves, 1999a, 1999b; Fullerton, Crane, & Joseph, 2000; Hume & Ledgerwood, 1999).

Stories We Brought With Us, Beginning Readings (Kasser & Silverman, 1994).

The Chicken Smells Good (Pickett, 1984).

Vocabulary in Use, Intermediate (Redman & Shaw, 1999).

Steps into Writing (Bonner, 1994).

Teachers had valuable comments to make about each textbook, revealing the many factors that they consider when choosing to use pages or units from each. Sonia used several different textbooks in her instruction and said:

As I said before there are not that many Canadian textbooks available because our ESL population is small, and our country is

small. This is the same problem we have (when) looking for a textbook in any subject in Canada. For example, in current literature textbooks, the ones called *Making Connections*, and *Sightlines*, especially the *Sightlines* textbooks, which go from grades seven to grade (twelve) there are resources that an ESL student at an advanced level or an intermediate level would be able to use. But most importantly there are, in the teacher guides, ways to make every lesson an ESL lesson. So if you are looking at the teacher guide for *Sightlines 7* or *8*, you will find that for each literature selection there is an ESL application. The Reflection, which is part of the *Resource Lines* text series, favours all sorts of grammar activities. And it's a very valuable resource for an ESL student. . . and together with the world of CD's that come along with this, it is a really valuable Canadian resource for an intermediate ESL student at the 7 - 8 level or the 9 level or the 10 level with an advanced class or transition class which would be level 5.

Other teachers used newer series, like *Oxford Basics*, used by Roy:

They are covering listening, reading, speaking, writing, and presenting in the English language. And *Stories We Brought With Us*, *Beginning Readings*, which has two versions of the same story, one simpler than the other.

Perhaps one series, *Making Connections*, is a little above the average. It is the only textbook for ESL young kids. It is conceived as a resources book that does not compel the teacher to follow any set procedures. It is, however, topically confined to things American, or seen from an American angle, and thus not overtly international. I appreciate this series though, as it does not neglect the "mechanical" things of English, that is grammar. But this book is really Standard American English. (Roy)

Oxford Basics covers the four Big Skills, and is nicely presented. *Stories We Brought With Us*, *Beginning Readings* is a good book, since it is composed of stories collected from immigrant students, which appealed to many of the ESL students. *Making Connections* does not have enough copies for each student, but roughly about 10 sets in total. No supplementary materials were purchased. (Sonia)

Sonia continues to mention the use of a specific set of textbooks:

I am now using one series from cover to cover for a higher level. The one I am using is *English Skills Program* and something else. It is really hard. Some students like it and some students don't, as always. I don't like to choose learning resources everyday and make some photocopies in the morning. I think it is not necessary, much worse than from cover to cover. (Sonia)

I have reviewed Books 3 to 5 of *English Skills Program*, and still think it is a very good series, with lots of knowledge and skills included. One feature of the books is that side by side with the main text, a detailed analysis of how the composition is written is provided, thus helping would-be writers to understand how an article is composed. Though the book is somewhat older, neither was the book designed for ESL learners, I would use it from cover to cover as well.

I am using *Lado English Series*, understandings about listening, writing, reading, and practising (I do not think the order is correct, though it is what is written in the preface). This is a classic and is one of the best and most widely used resources for middle school ESL students. In my school there are 5 ESL levels. From my observation, only I am using the series. Unfortunately all cassettes are missing. The teachers' manual is somewhere else, and I am still looking for it.

It is really a good textbook, the best that I have ever seen. It has the usage of word and grammar. Listening comprehension is not available since cassettes are missing. Reading passages are very good, as well as the sentence patterns, for my low-level students. I do spend useless time looking for other resources as well. The Series also includes pronunciation, syntax, and sociolinguistic areas. You don't have to be a linguist to teach EFL or ESL, most of what you need to know can be learned from reading the students' textbooks. Often the rules and explanations about structures in the students' texts are much more accessible and realistic than in texts used in TESL syntax courses. It works for me. Maybe a few years later I will choose others to use. I found these books almost like from the garbage cans, nobody else uses them, anyway. Also I am using some other books introduced by an experienced teacher. They are really good books for the beginners. (Eden)

Most of the above mentioned books are relatively older, published at least 12 years ago. *Lado English Series* can almost meet the condition that each student has a book since its component parts have been accumulating for many years. However, in this school the teachers' manual is missing.

Eden, a new teacher, said: "I do not know what kind of textbook to use in my writing classes, as there are hardly any writing class textbooks done by expert teachers. What a pity! . . . Anyway it is real Canadian life. It helps me enliven otherwise potentially awkward moments in front of a gaggle of wide-eyed English learners" (Eden).

Sonia, a veteran teacher, mentioned: "On the other hand, one book has proved to be very instrumental in my job, *Real life reading and writing on the job*. This book was published in 1979 - our life has changed a lot, but it is still worthwhile".

13. Selecting textbooks for different levels

Roy is teaching low-level ESL learners and he uses two other textbooks in his literacy class:

Language for Writing, and *English, Yes! Introductory*, are other two books I use also. And I get the students to copy the exercises they cannot write in the book. Purposes are just grammar and practice, and also comprehension and topics of the grammar and structure for the English. And for reading I find that reading has difficulties too, because I need readers that have high interest and vocabulary that matches their abilities. My students really dislike their current English texts, particularly *English, Yes! Introductory*. They are low to intermediate level ESL students. And also not enough of the readers have visual context to draw inferences from. That's a difficulty that I find. Especially the high school, the libraries aren't equipped with, or don't have sufficient ESL material for the high school students. They really love comics. I have heard that there are some good texts out there that are in comic book format. I couldn't find one. I've also used *The Chicken Smells Good*, which is a true story book to good effect.

Teaching ESL is a challenge. Teaching ESL literacy is more challenging. No textbooks or any suggestions for low-level middle school kids. "I would love a text that would inspire students to speak" (Nina).

Eden said that he really does not know which one is “good for these low-level students”. He couldn’t understand why there was “such a lack of quality textbooks”. Roy agreed:

Most textbooks follow the same tired, boring pattern and include the same major functions, grammar and vocabulary. The main reason for this is not scientific at all—it is the publisher's unwillingness to take a risk by publishing something new. Also, by trying to please all teachers, many publishers force authors to water down their materials to the extent of being unnatural at times. It is the teacher's responsibility to add any extra necessary vocabulary, functions, grammar, or topics that you feel the students may want or need. It doesn't fit with our needs for the next few years. It's too FUN. These kids do not need FUN. They need serious stuff. They need to go in a regular classroom.

Roy also said that personally he doesn't think one can do better than a lively combination of *English Easy Way* and *the Oxford Practice Grammar*.

But, of course, everything depends upon ages, class sizes, the make-up of your groups in terms of jobs and interests, etc. The problem with all textbooks is that there are good bits and bad bits in all of them; some, alas, have more bad sections than good ones. If you're teaching teenagers, avoid the ones specially written for teenagers like the plague. At best they are patronising; at worst, absolutely awful. I noticed this thread and had to say that I don't find myself too pleased with these textbooks in general, mostly due to the group of students I work with. I've used the *Vocabulary in Use, Intermediate* (Redman & Shaw, 1999) and *Steps into Writing* (Bonner, 1994) in my Level 2 and 3 classes, both of which bore them to near tears. I'm currently heading a project to either find better books or design our own writing course book, and would love to know what there is out there. I've done a lot with augmenting News-site articles, but run into copyright questions in doing so. Photocopying will run into the same problem, as well. (Roy)

“We really need time to do the textbook selecting and the money to buy the textbooks” (Eden). “In my experience even the most ‘boring’ textbook (content) can be great if presented with enough imagination and gusto” (Nina). However, “it is not a question of selection and evaluation that you're ever wanting. It is more like a question of how the textbooks are to be used” (Roy).

Most of the teachers do not use textbooks from cover to cover, believing themselves to be “way better than textbook compilers” (Roy). They only select those components that they like, or think they like, instead of teaching the whole textbook. “If we had one set textbook and it was good and all inclusive, and all students could have their own copies of the book and workbook, that would be nice” (Roy and Eden).

Eden said:

We don't really have a textbook so that's what makes lots of planning, takes so much time of your day and week. I find most of my time dedicated to that one period of English class because of stories from different places. A lot of the time they, the textbooks, don't have questions accompanying the readings so you are reading the stories, creating questions for the kids to answer, on top of planning stuff and figuring out how and when to use the grammar book . . . You're all over the place, borrowing from other teachers. . . because there is no one 'bible' to use. There is nothing. . . I have nothing to rely on.

Though there are a variety of series of textbooks available and teachers do have some choices, I can still see clearly all of the teachers still trying to follow at least one set of textbooks. This one set of textbooks can be, like *Oxford Basics*, having 4 or 5 books, each stressing one of the Four Big Skills. However, they still make up a complete set. Another conclusion is that one set fitting all is a possibility, which definitely saves a lot of copying time and preparation time.

14: Comments about criteria used to select ESL texts

When I asked the teacher-informants whether ESL textbooks are important, all of the teacher-informants answered in the affirmative. Eden said that the ESL textbooks are “super important”. Sonia said: “Yes, ESL textbooks are important, very important”.

First of all students have something that they can physically hold on to. And it gives them something to then look up, to take home, to share, and to reflect on. Because even at the beginning literacy level it's very important to students to have a book. They see other students having books and when they get their books, oh, yes. It means, you know, I have a right. With that parents and teachers have a way of gauging them, how far they have to go and how far they have come. As you are going through a textbook, it also helps me to keep track of where I should be going, how far I should be going, what's necessary and what's not necessary. And I, tend to go off on tangents. . . OK, BUT if I had a textbook that I know that I have to get through, it'd keep me more focussed. . . (Nina).

When asked whether teacher-informants have seen any criteria for selecting textbooks, many believed that there are some (Sonia and Eden), but not much (Roy). Research should be done on them (Roy), and school boards need the help of the teacher to do the research (Eden). From their answers to open-ended questions and the focus group interview meetings, the teacher-informants reiterated the criteria described in the literature review.

15. Using computers in ESL

Information and resources discussing the use of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) as an instrument of language learning and teaching abound. Discussions about computer use focussed on the value of the internet and how to properly use a computer in a classroom environment.

The informants claimed that the internet is very useful for teaching English. Teachers use it for gathering information for themselves and for their classes, including teaching plans and materials for classroom use. They can subscribe to mailing lists related to TEFL/TESL, and exchange information with other teachers. They can also subscribe to electronic journals or newsletters either by e-mail or using the World Wide Web and keep up with new trends in

English teaching, or consult with publishers on teaching materials (Kitao & Kitao, 1997).

When asked about use of the computer to teach ESL lessons, teacher informants responded as follows:

I put my class in an internet course three times per week for two weeks and all 25 were finished. I was sending them to the library because I wanted them to be using the public library in the community. . . they don't know how to use the internet in the public library. They can't keep up and you know what was most intriguing was they're sitting and learning how to type. They actually got onto websites that talked about their own country and they were fascinated that you can do that in Canada and so that was alright. (Nina)

I guess sometimes I use the net to find plans, like an entire unit plan, just like in science. I find it easy because I actually borrow what teachers have done before... They have great science stuff for Science 26, 16. They are actually laid out and I only have to modify it to make up my own questions. When it's laid out already it increases your sanity level. Science resources for ESL students have been a real problem. (Eden)

Eden uses computers for supplementary resources, to "borrow what teachers have done".

Many teacher informants discussed the technical advantages of using computers. Roy "would like to use the computer more to help with ESL planning. If I do use it, it's usually to change the font or the size so you can read without straining".

Eden also "hooks up the computer to the overhead projector", which "is very helpful". Nina does the same, and commented:

You have to have a special type of television. It has an adaptor that goes into it. You can hook up your laptop into your television and what you show is just like what you see on your monitor. So if you want to go onto the internet and take some of the pictures from the website and put that onto your television and then use them.

Other than simply using the computer as a variation of a TV set, or a big screen, Nina also used some programmes on the computer:

There's something called *Pronunciation Power* and this is a disk that you can use in computer labs and in a language lab and it's locally made and locally developed for helping students with pronunciation so it has all of the vowel sounds, all of the consonants and it's really great to get the kids to be more fluent and faster.

Nina also mentioned other uses of computers, such as to keep marks, to do rubrics, to test students, or:

Right now the students are working on their resumes because a lot of them want to find jobs. So the first thing we did was to write a resume by hand and we looked at it and we looked at the criteria in the book. There's a book that we have for the CTR1010 (Career Transition 1010) so we took a look at that specific item and said ok now this is the same type of information that you're being asked to fill out on a job form.

As for the advantages and disadvantages of using computers in an ESL classroom, Nina says:

The students have to be on task. They can't be fooling around, they have to understand what the task is about and if they don't have enough English, that's very difficult, so then they're just mimicking, going through and not learning but if they understand that this is a tool you can use wisely then they will take it and use it as they should be. You know the more this gives the opportunity for students to help each other too.

At least we've found that when you are learning a new task you'll learn it in the second language. You'll use it and you won't even think about it in the first language. So where you've got help and the help is in the first language then you've got somebody speaking in English and listening in English and 2 people remember in English and that's really the target.

For disadvantages, computers break down. Computers are only machines. They break down and the students will attack the computer if they don't understand.

Both Eden and Roy added that if they had more preparation time they would use computers more often. As mentioned earlier, with an average

preparation time of only about 30 to 40 minutes, not many teachers have the time to prepare for use of the computer either for themselves or for their students.

Closing Comments of Teacher Informants

For both the teacher-informants and me, the overall process of conducting the meetings proved to be a very engaging experience. Many of the teacher-informants commented that they found the focus group meetings very enlightening, because the meetings gave them “food for thought”, looking at certain aspects of the ESL field that they had never considered previously.

Ian and Roy both agreed that some of the questions raised in the questionnaire and meetings were interesting but difficult to answer, because nobody had ever asked them to think about these issues before (such as how to select a good textbook and what is a good textbook). Nina added: “I think this is fascinating. I hope we’re going to get a copy of the results.” The teacher-informants all showed their eagerness to participate in the research for they too, would like to see the results and some even expressed the willingness to see the results published on the Web for wider access. All the teacher-informants were very interactive. As one of the teacher-informants indicated, one set of textbooks, well designed and planned, supported by theoretically approved models may be the solution to most of their frustrations. “It may work since nobody has ever even tried it” (Sonia).

From the data presented in this chapter we see that the teacher informants are very clear about what they are looking for in an ESL textbook for their high school students - all criteria mentioned in TET, use of standard English

and quality of language in the textbook and good editing, an attractive design and layout, easy access to components and content for organizing instruction, evidence of a developmental progression of content, topics that are of relevance and interest to student users in a Canadian context, educational validity, an assessment of costs and durability, a variety of activities, up-to-dateness or reflection of contemporary life and times in the content, activities which promote communication, and activities that meet the needs of multi-level classes. Furthermore, many teachers would prefer one complete set of textbooks (with a textbook and workbook for each student) over the daily photocopying from multiple textbook sources. This would be a particular asset to new teachers to the profession or to ESL who would not have had the advantage of having accumulated a set of reference resources. The obstacles that prevent this from happening are primarily financial in nature, whether they be due to budgetary constraints, lack of Canadian textbooks or lack of teacher preparation time.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINAL FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW RESULTS

Introduction

The last meeting of the focus group interviews began with a presentation to the teacher-informants of the revised TET, an analysis of an Alberta Learning approved ESL resource using TET and a brief explanation about B-SLIM (Bilash's Second Language Instructional Model), a model I used to analyse the same resource. Alberta Learning's *Recognising Diversity and Promoting Respect* (RD&PR) analysis guidelines were also explained to the teacher-informants so that the current trend in textbook selection and evaluation could be envisioned.

In the first part of this chapter I will provide an overview of B-SLIM and later of RD&PR. Throughout the chapter are integrated comments given by teachers during this last interview session.

B-SLIM

B-SLIM (Bilash's Second Language Instructional Model) was developed to respond to three needs (Bilash, 2001): 1) to provide pre-service teachers with a framework for lesson and unit plans; 2) to help pre-service and practicing teachers to develop a common language so that they could better discuss aspects of their practice; and 3) to give teachers criteria that could be used to assess textbooks. B-SLIM has five parts: Planning and Preparation, Comprehensible input, Intake (getting it and using it), Output and Assessment and Evaluation. Together they remind teachers of the need to plan and prepare activities that will help all learners succeed in the learning process (Kawana,

2001; Kwangsawad, 2000; Okuzono, 2001; Yabe, 2001). See Figure of B-SLIM in Appendix J.

Planning and Preparation

While veteran teachers plan in their own minds, drawing upon hours of practiced lessons, sometimes write down only a few significant words, beginner teachers must write detailed plans to clarify the procedure that will guide their instruction. Preparation for beginning (and veteran teachers who want to try new activities) takes time—time to research, select materials, develop activities, adapt, prepare questions for a reading, etc.

Comprehensible Input

Second language teachers are responsible for presenting “new” ideas, strategies, concepts or knowledge to learners by building on what students already know. Successful second language learners develop such knowledge and ability in the following areas: language awareness, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, situation/fluency, ‘C’ulture and ‘c’ulture, learning strategies, listening comprehension, speaking, how to read, how to write, forms, content knowledge and skills, development of positive attitude (Bilash, 2001). Comprehensible input means that all students in the class understand the concept being introduced, usually through a variety of visual, auditory, kinaesthetic means or through mnemonics, acronyms, analogies, anecdotes or humour (Bilash, 2001).

Intake (Getting it & Using it)

There are two types of activities in this phase: 1) Short clarifying activities using examples are called “getting it” activities and 2) a range of activities that increase in difficulty and duration over a longer period of time are called “using it” activities (Bilash, 2001). “Getting it” activities may include traditional skill and drill type activities as well as activities structured for social interaction and learning while “using it” activities are more communicative in nature. The goal of “getting it” activities is to understand and remember the new content while the goal of “using it” activities is to clarify nuances of the content through using it in real life situations. While both require a high degree of structure the former breaks learning steps into small incremental ‘chunks’ as required by the learner. Bilash (2001) suggests that three to five activities that collectively appeal to all learning intelligences be used during each part of the intake.

Output

The output phase allows learners to work independently to more fully integrate and apply all categories of input, especially language and content knowledge. It is through such output that students discover what they know, what they have learned, and their opinions about a topic. Output activities take a longer time to produce and often require research and preparation time on the part of the student. They typically take the form of oral or written “projects” such as preparing a recipe, menu, schedule, map radio weather report, writing journals, essays and stories. They should call upon students’ creativity and appeal to their personal interests and choices. As such, output activities should

be integrative, creative, personal, and where possible, spontaneous (Bilash, 2001).

Evaluation and Assessment

While evaluation appears more at the end of this recursive model, assessment is conducted throughout. Teachers are constantly observing and gaining information about each learner in the class. During evaluation and assessment activities, teachers gather data in order to make decisions about what students need to learn next and how. They also reflect upon and monitor their own teaching and its effectiveness. Teachers use assessment or formative evaluation both formally and informally throughout every teaching day and summative evaluation to record final grades and comments about growth and performance of students over a long period of time such as a school term or a school year (Bilash, 2001).

B-SLIM contains many important elements for language learning (Yabe, 2001). The model or framework has helped teachers to come to understand the interrelatedness of theory and practice. From her work as a textbook developer and consultant for SL resource development, Bilash noted that teachers needed to understand why activities had to be developed for all phases of the model (Kwangsawad, 2000).

Teachers' Comments on B-SLIM

After presenting B-SLIM to the teachers I invited their feedback. Nina said that B-SLIM was a very good model for teachers' planning, especially for new

teachers. It not only shows the teachers how to prepare lessons but it tells the teachers, especially ESL teachers, how to analyse and evaluate.

Roy continued:

It was new for me, but it was interesting. It could help me to prepare my other subjects in different classes as well. I have a big class. I should take a course to learn B-SLIM.

Eden thought we should have a PD day to learn more about B-SLIM, so we could also learn more about how to prepare and how to evaluate. "It was very interesting. It would be nice, if some ESL textbooks were published according to B-SLIM." During his teacher training he had not taken many ESL courses.

Ian agreed:

I guess, (B-SLIM) moves (the students) on, and gives them enough practice with the language. If we follow the B-SLIM model, I think it would provide enough activities, enough for students to better learn English (ESL).

Many of the teacher-informants were not formally grounded in ideas related to ESL education, though some of them are teaching ESL. Again we see the erroneous assumption that certified teachers who are native speakers of English, but not specialists, have sufficient background to teach ESL.

By using B-SLIM teachers were immediately able to see how their lessons could be improved and how textbooks were short of activities and/or content in many areas. Since they are always battling for more time to prepare, they also expressed a wish that publishers incorporate B-SLIM in their resource development.

The TET

The TET (Textbook Evaluation Tool) was seen to be a good complement to B-SLIM. Both help to examine details of the resource with B-SLIM particularly focussing on the instructional components.

The TET is “very useful and helpful” (Eden, Roy, and Nina). However, they generally believed that “TET should be finalized, approved and followed by paid assessors in Alberta Learning, school boards, or universities” because the teachers have other daytime commitments and cannot be held responsible for completing this task after hours. Roy and Eden also thought that the schools or school boards should send an ESL coordinator and ESL teachers to study the B-SLIM model and TET for ESL textbook analysis and selection. Nina also thought that teachers needed more time:

I think people need, especially teachers, need time to reflect on what they've seen in the resources. Like, you have to look at it three or four times before you decide. And do not select strictly from a picture and brief description in catalogues. Actually, you have to physically handle the books and see if they're going be useful for you.

Since the current practice of selecting ESL teachers is at best happenstance, few teachers may have a chance to get to know the resources in the subject well enough to actually handle them several times. This makes it all the more important that resources be modelled after TET and B-SLIM so that teachers only have to personalize additional resources. If TET is not implemented in the publishing process, then the selection and evaluation of the resources will fall on the teachers – the constraints on their time, the budget they can spend, the experience they have gained, or their personal preferences.

Realistically even if I like some ESL textbooks, I have no right to buy these books for my students. Nina is the department head, she could use TET to select the ESL textbooks and make better use of their budget. (Eden)

Teachers' Impression of Textbook Selection

Although both Eden and Nina had completed special training in ESL textbook selection in a workshop sponsored by Alberta Learning, they had never seen a detailed or comprehensive list of criteria for selecting and evaluating textbooks like TET or B-SLIM. When they attended the workshop on textbook selection and evaluation with Alberta Learning, they did several practice reviews. During a preliminary review they were asked to draw upon their own experiences; there were not criteria for them to follow. In a second review, they were assigned to work with a different group of teachers, which meant, "nobody saw the same textbook twice". Then they decided whether to give an OK to the resource, or to eliminate it altogether. Of course, they also had to give the reasons for why the resource was considered acceptable or unacceptable, because the publishers who sent the material wanted to know what was wrong with it. They also had to give descriptions about what the book or resource was about. According to both Eden and Nina, Alberta Learning has done "some good stuff". The resources they were asked to assess were given to them from publishers, and many of them were outdated. It seems to Eden and Nina that the publishers were hoping to get rid of those materials from the warehouse. Unfortunately, few of the resources had a good 'fit' with their needs. The best resources were usually American which meant that there were too many content and cultural (institutional, historical and lexical) differences.

Nina commented that some textbooks were nice to look at, with some current pictures, but not necessarily user friendly in other ways. She felt that the process she learned through Alberta Learning was rushed.

Teachers should use the textbooks that they are asked to evaluate . . . or need more time for ESL textbook selection, because the teachers are the users of the textbooks. Teachers know what they should use and what they should teach. It is the right of the teacher (to select textbooks). (Nina)

Eden added: "In this process you've got to qualify your answers and it takes time to do that."

Nina thought that "when one knows more one reflects on it more, and then begins to explore what one is doing with one's own curriculum. . . .

Moreover, how you want something to fit in becomes clearer. So you began to see that you use parts of the book only and may not understand how the other parts interrelated. I never found the textbook useful to go through from cover to cover—BUT sometimes you really do have to use all of the parts. Therefore, I think people need time definitely to get to know a textbook and do a good analysis.

Roy agreed, and added that it is quite common to use one textbook in Social Studies, especially at the higher levels.

Teachers never seem to have enough to select and evaluate ESL textbooks, and feel more frustrated because it is their right and responsibility to do so. Teachers also feel that many materials that they have access to are outdated and in need of changes. Teachers also need a great deal of time to fit the textbooks with their curricula or program.

Should Teachers Know How to Analyse a Textbook in Order to Select it?

At first Roy said that teachers did not need to have specific knowledge about textbook analysis in order to engage in the activity. On the other hand,

both Eden and Nina thought that teachers should and gave some reasons. Nina thought that textbook analysis was learned either at university or through experience—something you gain over the years. “And you have to have a lot of experience. The needs of ESL students change every year. Therefore, you are going to choose those texts or resources that are the best (for the needs of each group of students).” (Nina)

However, as many people look at the textbooks, they forget the most important part. It is the teacher in front of the classroom, not the textbook, that is most important. The textbook is a good aid. But the real thing that makes it work is the teacher. (Nina)

Eden noted that textbook analysis was linked to purchasing and should be done with some planning.

The question of whether teachers need to learn how to analyse a textbook is never brought up in public circles. It’s never emphasised by anyone in the school really, not the department head, coordinators, nobody. There is not much thought put into it because. . . maybe, there is no money, so why bring up the issue anyways? Basically they give some money to the teachers every year and the teachers go find some stuff at conventions. . . or at Toys R Us (a toy store with some resources). This for a dollar and that for five dollars. And that was more or less how the problems of resources are solved. “Don’t talk to us about textbooks. There are none. We are not buying any. Here is five hundred dollars. You find something you like, keep it. Return the receipts at the end of the year.” It doesn’t really work.

By this point in the discussion Roy agreed that teachers should know how to analyse a textbook, especially when one is in a position to be buying textbooks.

What Do Teachers Consider When They Pick a Textbook?

When we talked about what the first thing is when teachers pick a textbook, the teacher-informants gave many varied ideas. Eden likes to look at the quality of the cover, how “flashy” it is, first. Then he checks for the amount

colour in the book—black and white, or colour. Then he checks the quality of the type of paper inside, “whether they put shiny paper in the whole book?”

Roy agreed with Eden and added that he also quickly flips through the pages and find out about the colour. Next, he checks the index for what topics are included and the year of publication. Then he sorts through the pages to see what size the font is in, especially if it is smaller than size 12. He also considers whether it would work in all parts of Alberta, rural and urban, whether teachers might like the textbooks and whether there is sufficient Canadian content in it.

Eden commented that obviously there had to be preference for Canadian content. Pictures in particular are examined for Canadian content and currency. However, the type of Canadian content and the language level are also important considerations. “Too many pictures of Canadian Prime Ministers might not be good for somebody who has never been educated in Canada so some Level One books (with those types of pictures) are less helpful. They might be better for Levels Three, Four, or Five.... So I guess we need two kinds of textbooks.” (Eden).

Roy agreed with Eden:

I also find out, especially now, how much money I have to spend. Therefore, these days (with the low budgets) I don't even bother looking at hard covers. I want to have as many things available to me as possible so I tend to buy two different types of books. . . you know, workbooks, I would rather buy them than one hard cover textbook. Yes, one more thing, I like tests and answer keys. They are very important for me.

“That would be nice,” Eden agreed. In addition, Eden claims that there are not enough commercially developed exercises to accompany stories. “When one gets a story to read, about a page and a half in length, then five questions at the

end are not enough.” Eden uses stories a lot and noted that he often has to stay late, reading the stories and coming up with his own questions. Maybe there are some stories out there with more questions? However, he has “been to all the educational stores in town, and I still haven’t found any really good resources anyway. He found “lots of great resources on grammar, all kinds of grammar, but they are awfully dry.”

“A shiny cover doesn’t mean everything,” Roy added. “What might be added is a nice book analysis, like the TET.”

When teachers need textbooks they may go to see Alberta Learning’s website, or to the public schools’ website and look at information there, like criteria for teachers, like teaching models such as (B-)SLIM, like finding textbooks or some different ideas. It might be helpful to have these sites interconnected - get downloads or look at what other teachers have looked at and their opinions. Also when we are going to select ESL textbooks . . . we should think about the teachers’ references. (Roy)

Eden agreed: “The references for teachers should be broad, because we cannot copy all the time. We need to know what we can buy.” Then he stated why:

Teachers should not be copying stories. Nobody has enough time to copy. Some stories are cool, but the trouble I had is that there are no exercises or tests to accompany them. Some have some low level questions or ridiculous and hypothetical questions that insult kids, because they can do those questions. . . . So teachers run out of time in their life - just making questions.

Eventually, by the end of the year, Eden was so tired of making reading questions, even though he recognized that they definitely helped him. He became disillusioned when he noted that because he would not be teaching any of the same courses next year he felt like his effort had been unfocussed. “They

(the publishers) should be able to (make good questions and tests). The Americans probably have them,” Eden added.

To summarize, teachers usually look at covers first, then the content, the size of the fonts, colour and pictures, when they pick the textbook. They would also like to have everything, including tests, exercises, teachers’ references etc. ready for use for each student, so that they did not need to copy anything. Not being able to teach the same courses again also lead to disillusionment about time invested in preparation for teaching the course the first time.

What Do Teachers Say Is Important in an ESL Textbook?

Most teachers felt that ESL textbooks had improved a lot over the years. However, they still identified many problems. They felt that the publishers and authors did not seem to know the importance of textbooks in a classroom, or what teachers really need in a textbook. Many new ESL textbooks were “not sufficient to meet our needs” (Nina and Roy). Of course Nina, Roy and Eden understood that “no book could completely meet the needs of a teacher” (Roy), and “no book is perfect” (Nina). Sometimes informants wondered whether the authors whom the publishers hired had ever been “in the ESL classrooms recently” and whether they had ever “lived in immigrant countries”.

Roy said that he did not think that these books fit his ESL learners’ particular needs.

When there is a textbook, the publishers or authors jam in too much information . . . anything—grammar, comprehension and writing . . . they put everything in one book. It is difficult and it serves no purpose in the end, because they try to capture everything. (Roy)

Roy also thinks that the publishers and authors need to be more content specific. At the Teachers' Depository, to which Roy went a few days before the final focus group interview, the ESL section was what he considered "very weak, really bad".

Eden added:

Everybody loves having a textbook to rely on. In science, for example, everything is in a textbook, and for math, everything is in a textbook. It is really simple to prepare for those subjects. But for everything else, especially ESL, lots of people have to spend their own time finding resources. . . . Actually I find out there are no ESL textbooks (at the Teachers' Depository). People definitely want to buy. . . but there is not much out there . . . "Just tell the teachers you are on your own and find your own material."

Roy commented on the need for materials at various language levels in the ESL programme.

I think they (Alberta Learning or school boards) should have dedicated resources for each ESL level . . . because it is different teaching teenagers at level one than teaching children at "grade one" level. . . . It is really tough. There is a comfort zone in which these kids can learn. They need to have, you know, programmes and computers, because it is the computer age and they should learn how to get information. . . But their language and computer skill levels are very low, I cannot believe it. Who can help the schools and teachers to decide and to solve these real problems - teachers or somebody else?

Again the devalued role that teachers play in textbook development or selection surfaced. "No matter what resources are available, if the people who have access to the resources cannot use them, the resources are useless." (Roy) Alberta Learning's library contains many computer CDs and games, such as spelling games, complete sentence games. After Eden reviewed them in 2002 he concluded that.

Alberta Learning has got to convince the schools to buy them. But we also need the teachers' computers to work. Many of

the teachers' computers do not work. Some schools have computers that were impeccable, just amazing. You could definitely use these resources in a modern lab.

Roy added that teachers could also download from one central server.

What is important in the eyes of the teacher-informants are the needs of the students, the needs of the teachers, the use of technology, and how the publishers and authors understand ESL teaching.

Alberta Learning's Analysis on Diversity and Respect

According to the Alberta government's *Recognizing Diversity and Promoting Respect* (RD&PR) program, which provides the basis on which to carry out an analysis of departmental curricula, curricular documents, suggested teaching/learning strategies and approved learning resources (p. 3), textbooks are ranked as either meeting standards, or below standards. The main goal of this instrument is to insure that all social groups (ages, genders, races, disabilities, occupations) are favourably represented and that there is no bias of omission.

After an explanation of what RD&PR is and what it tries to do, Roy thought that the authentic representation of Canada and Canadians was a big issue for textbooks.

The authenticity of textbooks is even more important, because the students came from different countries, different life backgrounds...they are immigrants. They are going to learn the real pronunciation, real language, and real life... and that has to be modelled in the textbook.

Eden agreed with Roy. He stated that lifelikeness is important for ESL students. The textbooks should present lifelike authenticity:

According to RD&PR, policeman and policewoman should be changed to police officer. It also requires that no woman should

be seen cleaning, changing the diapers; instead, the man was the one (like in commercial TV shows) changing the diapers, cooking and watching TV at home while the woman is working outside. That means that approved textbooks were not sexist and did not portray racial or ethnic stereotypes. But Canada is an immigrant country; if the textbooks were published or chosen following the RD&PR, it would mislead the immigrants. The pictures of textbooks show that immigrants come to Canada to live and work. Thus, let the immigrant deal with racism and sexism or ethnicity.

Nina thought differently. She suggested that the authentic representation of Canada in a textbook was less important for the lower level newly arrived students, when the pronunciation and cognitive complexity of authentic resources might literally overwhelm ESL students; but that an accurate representation was important for students that are more proficient.

The teachers all agreed that their understanding of RD&PR had improved. "Before I wondered why the ESL textbooks were poor, but I now see that it is not only ESL, other subjects are the same". (Nina) Roy commented that so many "restrictions were imposed" by the government in response to the political activists. Eden added: "If we have to put these political messages inside the textbooks, according to their (the government's) ideal, no book could be used."

The process of compiling resources by Alberta Learning is not well known, or may be only known to very few teachers. Nina commented on how she thinks an analysis of resources is usually organized.

The first place Alberta Learning phones is not us, instead they phone the ATA (Alberta Teachers' Association). They go to the professional library at the ATA. Most of the time the specialist councils are putting ideas into the library at the ATA. But people in the city never get to see them because they always go to the rural areas. Very interesting. How then do we ESL teachers get to choose any materials when we can't see them? If Alberta Learning does not come up with resource reviews, then where do we get

good information? How do you make those choices? Is it always by guessing, you know.

These are very practical and thought provoking questions.

According to Eden's perception, teachers, researchers or government officers tend to share their research results or knowledge as a special power. They do not seem to see how textbook analyses or curricula influence learning and that that falls in the hands of the teacher.

These people often provide their results as a commodity, transferred and delivered, to be consumed. . . . They should understand that it is learning that needs to happen.

"And that hopefully is a lifelong learning", Roy added. "Alberta Learning gets the better out of it. The analysis needs to start somewhere, at the university level, maybe? I would hate to think that getting teachers who are unpaid by Alberta Learning (to do the analysis) is acceptable." (Roy)

For some teachers who have many years of experiences, like Nina, "the textbooks have always just been there. A teacher simply goes in there and starts to teach." (Nina) In Nina's career taking courses at the university she has never been asked to do a textbook review. "The textbooks just always seem to be there".

"When you finish university, you get a job, and don't care if you know how to analyze a textbook or not. You never worry about analysing textbooks, you worry about getting a job".

Nina thought learning how to analyze a textbook is definitely something that should be learned – "because it is definitely a tool. Now the question is when are you going to learn to do this? Perhaps at beginning teachers' conferences?

The ATA gives such conferences, so maybe that's one of the topics that they could be looking at." (Nina)

Roy thought that there should be courses about textbook analysis at the university. However he is not sure even at university level who would offer that.

Nina agreed:

People always used to say, 'well, ask, do you understand the curriculum?' The curriculum is so difficult to read now that (practicum) students are having a tough time, even analysing what's in the curriculum for ESL or any other course. Because it is all the outcome based, the curriculum does not give direction on teaching.

In summary, ESL textbooks should be realistic and representative, which means that the data and stories in them should be from real life. It is a very important principle to achieve bias-free and objective textbooks (Mikk, 2000) which present the society as it was, as it is, and as it should be in the future (Powell R. R., 1985). For example, there are as many women in the society as men but men are prevailing in the history textbooks. Textbooks should give a realistic picture of life and aim at guiding students to a better future (Mikk, 2000).

These teacher—informants believe that analysis of textbooks should involve practising teachers, should be made available to teachers for free, should be a part of pre-service teacher preparation (at the university or through the ATA) and that access to resources should be better organized and widely publicized

Accessibility to Resources

Resources are most accessible at annual conferences where publishers try hard to promote their products. From catalogues teachers can also contact publishers directly, but as has been stated previously, it is more difficult for them

to select from seeing only a picture of a book in a catalogue! No matter where the resources are found, the teachers noted that the responsibility for finding them falls totally in their hands. "Unless you strike the bargain or are willing to phone and find out what's available, you can really be behind", Nina commented.

The Americans got a long way in this. The British got a long way in producing excellent material. So why are we always so concerned about what the Americans have and what the Brits have? As opposed to the Canadians. Well, our population is small, get over it and get on the phone. (Nina)

Roy agreed with Nina and added, "Sometimes even free Canadian Oxford Dictionaries are sent out to the schools". However, this happenstance approach to resource accumulation still leaves teachers dismayed.

Conclusion

The views of teacher informants expressed in this chapter align well with those in the research literature. Finding the best text for a class is an extremely difficult task, and too often, the decision is made too quickly and based on the wrong criteria. Young (1990) comes out forcefully on this issue:

Research on textbook selection has revealed that the most widely used criteria for selecting textbooks are copyright date and author's credentials.... This is probably the worst way to select textbooks (p. 84).

After finding the textbooks, the use of the selected textbook also poses problems. Do we use one set or many? It is a balance that most teachers are seeking:

The role of the textbook in the language classroom is a difficult one to define perfectly and exactly. Using only textbooks, from cover to cover, without any supplemental material is not the most satisfactory method for meeting students' needs. However, both teachers and students need a framework on which to build and textbooks definitely provide this. It is important that instructors

strike a balance between being a slave to their texts and providing organized, objective-based instruction (Garinger, 2001).

As summarised in Project 2061 (Roseman, Kulm, & Shuttlesworth, 2001), research shows that essentially all students—even the best and the brightest—have predictable difficulties grasping many ideas that are covered in the textbooks. Yet most books fail to take these obstacles into account in the activities and questions they contain. There are not many good textbooks available and it is not only a dilemma for teachers, but for students as well. Authors and publishers could benefit greatly from attention to teachers' concerns as a way of improving their products.

In the US, teachers are reported to spend too much time on aligning textbooks with local curricula or standards (Lewis, 2000), compared with teachers in Japan. If a well designed set of criteria for textbook authors and analysts could be established, it could give teachers more time in classrooms.

Teachers also noted that they need tools such as TET and B-SLIM to help them select learning resources and to plan and prepare lessons and units. To the criteria mentioned in Chapter Four, teacher informants added the following as criteria they consider when selecting a textbook or learning resource: inclusion of: support components, practice activities to be structured and included for all parts of the learning process, Canadian content, more activities on a similar theme or topic, and follow-up questions for all readings.

CHAPTER SIX: CLOSING COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In Chapter One I indicated my frustration finding sufficient resources in teaching ESL in Canada. After my experience teaching EFL in China where I was accustomed to using a textbook I was eager to find an all inclusive textbook for my Canadian ESL students. In that eagerness (to meet my own needs) I discovered that many of my colleagues shared similar frustrations about a lack of ESL resources in their schools. Convinced that the paucity of resources was related to poor textbook design I set out to identify criteria that could be used to describe a 'good' textbook, hoping that this set of criteria would be of use not only to teachers and school jurisdictions, but also to authors and publishing companies. Thus I designed my doctoral study around three related research questions:

1. What constitutes a "good" ESL textbook, according to research literature?
2. What do ESL teachers think about what the research literature says about what constitutes a "good" ESL textbook?
3. What other factors or criteria do ESL teachers consider when assessing or looking for an ESL textbook or resource?

In Chapter Two I described the qualitative methodology – a literature review, questionnaires, focus group interviews—that I used to explore these research questions. By undertaking a comprehensive literature review about what constitutes a 'good' ESL textbook I hoped to generate factors which would help ESL teachers like myself, to select ESL textbooks for their classes. In fact, the literature review yielded a Textbook Evaluation Tool (TET) with 80 criteria. In

comparison with textbook evaluation forms issued by educational authorities (which typically consisted of a generic list of ten to fifteen questions), TET is detailed, offers an extra column to explain the criterion and requires teacher-evaluators to have subject specific background knowledge in order to be used. The fact that many ESL teachers are not subject area specialists is all the more reason that those assessing and selecting textbooks for use in ESL contexts should insure that they are accurate and all encompassing in content, well structured in design and sequenced with activities for different types of learners.

Chapter Three described the initial 80 criteria that were reviewed by local practicing ESL teachers – the response to research question one. Chapters Four and Five presented the teachers' views of the TET as well as the issues they face in textbook acquisition, selection and use. From focus group interviews some of the ideas brought forward and particularly emphasized by the teacher informants had already been included in the TET. They included the need for: an attractive design and layout (TET # 58); topics that are of relevance and interest to student users (TET # 3); educational validity (TET # 29); an assessment of costs (TET # 75) and durability (TET # 77); a variety of activities (TET # 18); up-to-dateness or reflection of contemporary life and times in the content (TET # 9); inclusion of support components (TET # 66, 67, 70, 71, 72); practice activities to be structured and included for all parts of the learning process (TET # 16); activities which promote communication (TET # 25); use of standard English and quality of language (TET # 46) in the textbook and good editing (TET #61); easy access to components and content for organizing instruction (TET #49); and

evidence of a developmental progression of content (TET #60). Teachers' needs for the textbook to offer them direction in professional reading is strengthened in TET # 38 in the category of Organization.

The teacher informants also emphasized points which had not been included in the draft TET. Thus, the following criteria have been added or strengthened in the revised TET .To reflect the teacher's desire for Canadian Content TET # 81 was placed in the category of Content. The need for a textbook to provide activities that follow the progression identified in B-SLIM is found in TET # 82, 83 and 84 in category of Activities. These points should also satisfy the teachers' craving for more activities on a similar theme or topic. The desire for textbooks to provide activities and materials about similar topics for multi-ability classrooms was strengthened in the wording of TET criterion # 52 and placed in the category of Activities. The observation that readings are too often without follow-up questions is reflected in TET criterion # 85 in the category of Literacy.

To acknowledge that many of the criteria in TET came from research in FL contexts and that the end purpose of language learning is different in FL vs. SL contexts criterion #86 has been added to the category of content. While many FL students do go on to develop advanced proficiency in the language they are studying, SL students must develop that proficiency in order to pursue future educational or career opportunities. Thus, whereas learning about one another in a FL classroom is a good way to foster communication (TET # 25), learning about and through content must be integrated into the SL syllabus. That content

for learning language and content for learning through language should be appropriate to the ability level of the intended target audience or student user is reflected in TET # 86.

Some of the points that the teachers considered less valuable or suggested were redundant were also changed in the final TET. Thus, Organisation (Criterion 45) was removed from the draft TET since it duplicated the category itself. The statement about sequencing was already included in TET # 47. Analogies (Criterion 12) were removed from the final TET since it was encompassed in TET Criterion #18. Software (Criterion 72) was removed from the final TET since it was included in components (Criterion 66). Popularity or TET #76 and TET #68 (a textbook is a desirable teaching aid) were also removed.

Some of the names of the 13 categories have also been changed. Curriculum (Category 5) was removed and the pertinent criteria were combined into Content (Category 1). Research (Category 9) was changed to Reliability. Supplementary (Category 10) was changed to Supplementary Components. Task (Category 11) was changed to Literacy. Other (Category 13) was renamed Legal. The final TET has the following categories: Content (1), Activities (2), Language (3), Culture (4), Communication (5), Evaluation (6), Organisation (7), Format (8), Reliability (9), Supplementary Components (10), Literacy (11), Marketability (12), and Legal (13).

The final version of TET, found at the end of this chapter, consisted of 13 categories with 80 criteria and is submitted in this thesis as an original

contribution to knowledge. What remains to be resolved is the way in which a final 'score' in TET might be calculated, whether all of the criteria should be considered of equal value and how scores might be utilized. Furthermore, TET needs to be tested with groups of teacher evaluators on actual textbooks for reliability. In fact, the TET requires detailed assessment of a textbook as opposed to just 'browsing'. Once completed, teacher participants suggested that TET be published on the web to provide more accessibility since they have not seen such a comprehensive list of criteria anywhere.

In comparing what teachers want in a textbook and what researchers/publishers propose constitutes a good ESL textbook a contradiction or discourse gap (T. G. Collins, 1999) has emerged. This contradiction is between what Cunningsworth and Tomlinson (1984) call "efficiency" (TET # 80) and what teacher-informants describe as an insufficient number of activities designed to practice the same topic so that students actually have enough support to learn it. Defined as the relationship between input and output, the frequent repeating of a teaching point (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984) (or a learning point), is considered less efficient than infrequent repeating. However, the positive attribute of efficiency seems to directly contradict what many teachers are looking for. This then forces teachers to search for other forms of reinforcement in other resources for their students. So textbook publishers must revisit the notion of efficiency in ESL materials and provide what Bilash (2001) calls at least three to five "getting it" activities for each new input (e.g. grammar, vocabulary, expressions to be used in a situation) so that students of all learning

styles can understand and remember concepts and then use or apply them in three to five different “using it” activities. (Note that what is being called for is not the same as recycling or the deliberate repetition of words, sentences, themes, topics throughout the textbook or series.) In light of this contradiction TET #80 has also been removed from the revised version of TET.

A current dream of some teachers is that one textbook with Canadian content could be developed for multi-ability classes following B-SLIM (Bilash, 2001) and that it and all of the support resources it would include could be made available to teachers, with every student receiving his/her own copy of a textbook, student workbook, etc. From my research I believe that it is worth trying to produce such a textbook. By bringing together a team of teachers, methodologists, developer-authors and guided by the points raised in TET, B-SLIM and RD&PR such a textbook series is worth creating. Of course, it is the volume of varied activities and the ability to serve a class of different ability levels and different mother tongues that will make it most useful to the classroom teacher.

In Chapters Four and Five the themes coded from the individual and focus group interviews (with native and non-native speakers of English) were identified. While the written questionnaire served primarily to confirm that teachers agreed with all of the points identified in the first version of TET (answer to research question two), the interviews revealed other factors that teachers look for in learning resources and why (answer to research question three). As is often the case in qualitative studies, the coding of this data yielded some ‘surprising’

findings, in particular, the issues that local ESL teachers face in textbook selection, acquisition and use.

ESL teachers in this study reported that in addition to having limited knowledge about textbook selection criteria or even how textbooks are developed, they have minimal access to textbooks in their schools. There were no complete ESL textbook series in any of the classrooms of the participating teacher-informants and a limited number of components of series in their schools, with teacher guides not often being among them. Participating teacher informants reported that any exposure to systematic textbook selection opportunities seems to be happenstance and rushed. Those who had been involved in the textbook review process sponsored by the provincial government noted that the process was hurried and not very systematic, the books reviewed were dated and that no criteria for review were provided. From such comments one might conclude that practicing teachers are in need of professional development in the area of SL instructional design and textbook analysis. Perhaps workshops about B-SLIM and TET could be provided through local school boards or specialist councils.

Overriding the many points learned about textbook selection criteria in the interviews was the frustration teacher informants felt in not being able to acquire resources for use in their classrooms. They reported that the system of acquiring learning resources entails each teacher being allocated a limited amount of money for resource purchases every year. That amount must be directed to all of the subjects the teacher teaches and would only cover about ten percent of the

costs of purchasing a complete textbook series with enough copies for each student in the class.

A further concern of teacher-informants was not being able to preview textbooks before they were purchased. Those who were not department heads had no idea how to obtain copies of textbooks for preview. Those who were, described dissatisfaction with choosing books from a catalogue (i.e. purchasing them sight unseen!) and the significance of the publishers' displays at annual conferences, but also noted that few teachers from each school can attend such conferences, especially when they are not held locally. How can teachers assess textbooks that they cannot access or purchase? How can they practice textbook assessment strategies if they do not have access to textbooks? How can they learn about research on textbooks if they are rarely invited to participate in textbook evaluation activities? Teachers are busy people and, like other professionals, will only develop skills they NEED. What must change to make resource assessment seen as a necessary and critical skill of all ESL teachers?

With funds being restricted, teachers' time limited and a process of selection or set of criteria being absent, ESL teachers are indeed under-supported in the area of learning resource selection and acquisition! In these difficult economic times and with increasing decentralization of decision making the question of who is responsibility for textbook selection and acquisition and professional development in these areas must be clarified. Should textbook evaluators be trained? By whom? How? How can school jurisdictions (teachers, administrators) be held accountable for their selections of learning resources or

their decision not to purchase complete sets of textbooks and their accompanying components? Who should be financially responsible for textbook analyses? Should teacher education institutes insure that textbook analysis is a part of pre-service teacher preparation programs? How can a system be developed so that veteran teachers can both share their practical knowledge and be informed by research so that they can become 'qualified' to analyze textbooks in their subject areas? How can information and assessments about new resources be disseminated? Is a website needed and who would pay for the webmaster?

Many questions raised in this study are of a political nature and policy needs to be reviewed and critically assessed. Have teachers been deskilled by textbooks? Or have administrations benefited financially from this 'position'? Does a practicing teacher have the skills needed to be a resource developer? Do teachers who gather pages of activities from a variety of resources actually 'develop' their own materials? Or are they simply re-sequencing materials that have in fact been professionally developed and already exist? And in that process is copyright being infringed upon? And if so, why? Are teachers forced to stretch this infringement because they lack suitable learning resources in their school? If so, what factors have brought about this scenario and how can it be rectified? What role can publishers play in this process?

From this study four things seem certain. First, there is a need for a detailed textbook evaluation tool (TET) and ways to inform and train teachers to use it. Second, the study itself brought an increased awareness about ESL

textbook selection, acquisition and use to a group of high school ESL teachers. Their lack of knowledge about many factors identified in TET suggests that professional development in these areas is needed. Until such professional development occurs little action on textbook improvement can take place. However, the act of having increased awareness itself offers more possibilities for 'spreading the word' in schools, on committees, and at conferences. Third, a gap between what teachers look for in a learning resource and what the research suggests is important is one that needs to be filled. It is not that either teachers or publishers are wrong or right; rather, it is that teachers are not sufficiently informed to incorporate some of the research into their thinking and textbook publishers are not 'hearing' teacher requests or responding to them. Finally, many more questions need to be asked and answered before matters surrounding textbook use can be understood. This study on the characteristics of a "good" ESL textbook examined only the perspectives of teachers. Future research is needed to solicit views of publishers, author-developers, school administrators, curriculum specialists, educational consultants, parents, former ESL graduates and students.

Although there are many voices opposing textbook use, as revealed in Chapter One, there are also a variety of reasons to support the development of a good textbook, as are also stated in Chapter One. As a new teacher to Canada I experienced firsthand the frustration of not having a textbook to help me structure, sequence and pace my teaching (in any of the subjects I taught). With only two years of teaching experience and without formal ESL preparation, one

of the teacher informants in this study expressed the same need. ESL teachers could learn much from national organizations in science and mathematics who are calling for a strong textbook for instruction in their subject areas. In many subject areas rookie teachers and those new to teaching a subject rely upon a textbook to help them develop pedagogic content knowledge—to guide them in teaching specific content, the best sequence for instructing that content and a suggested rate of that instruction. With so many ESL teachers lacking any form of specialized subject area or SL methodological knowledge, good ESL textbooks are surely useful.

TET

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
1. Content	1. Authenticity (Atkins, 2001; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Dumitrescu, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002) refers to the “realness” of the content, or how appropriate the content would be for a native speaker.	0	1	2	3	4
	2. Integratedness (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; Tucker, 1975) refers to the inclusion of non print content, i.e., maps, pictures, graphs, etc., to make text into a whole by bringing all parts together.	0	1	2	3	4
	3. Relevance or relatedness (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988) refers to the content, word selection, sentence structure, analogies, visuals and proposed activities are appropriate to the age and cognitive level of the user.	0	1	2	3	4
	4. Sufficiency (Atkins, 2001) refers to the level of the comprehensiveness of the content in the textbook and support materials and the adequacy of coverage in meeting the official goals and expectations.	0	1	2	3	4
	6. The textbook and supporting guidebook, workbook, etc., must offer clear instructions to both the teacher and the students (Bilash, 2000; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998).	0	1	2	3	4
	7. Connections are the third C in ACTFL standards. Learning languages provides connections to additional bodies of knowledge that may be unavailable to the monolingual English speaker (Copland, 2002; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	0	1	2	3	4
		Inclusion of authentic materials is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.				

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
9. Life content (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) refers to the inclusion of activities that relate to contemporary real life and/or draw upon a student's real life experiences.	Inclusion of contemporary life content is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
10. Meaningful activities or tasks (Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; House, 1987; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988) refer to activities or tasks designed to be meaningful for students, and have a clear and relevant function, or purpose.	Inclusion of meaningful activities or tasks is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
11. The reading level of a text can be determined by (Carolyn, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Mikk, 2000; V. Rogers, 1988) Flesch Reading Ease score, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score, Fog index, or Fry Readability, etc.	A statement about the reading level of a text is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
16. Practice of language (Ansary & Babai, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984) refers to an adequate number of practice activities for the development of skills of language.	Inclusion of opportunities for practice of language is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
27. Curriculum fit (Bilash, 2000; Nevada Department of Education, 2001; V. Rogers, 1988) means that the resource must include content and activities that will help students reach the expectations of the syllabi or curricula.	Curriculum fit is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
28. Textbooks should define detailed outcomes that learners should be able to display after learning/completing activities included in them (Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001).	Inclusion of definitions is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
29. Educational validity (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001) means that the user can trust that the activities in the textbook will help the learners reach the specified content outcomes.	Educational validity is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
81. A good ESL textbook will reflect the local, regional and national environment in which it is used (e.g. Canadian content).	It is important that ESL textbooks reflect local, regional and national environment.	0	1	2	3	4
86. Content for learning language and content for learning through language should be appropriate to the ability level of the intended target audience or student user is reflected in TET.	It is important that content for language learning and for learning through language be included in an ESL textbook.	0	1	2	3	4
52. Exercises are arranged in several levels and balanced among and between levels to facilitate use in multi-ability level classes (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	That student activities or exercises are arranged according to level of ability (and for multi-level classes) is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Activities address the needs of many types of students or learners regarding their learning styles (Bilash, 2000; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	An ESL textbook should address the needs of different types of students	0	1	2	3	4
8. Questions asked of students and activities designed for students to complete require critical thinking skills (Mikk, 2000; V. Rogers, 1988; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	Level of critical thinking required for activities is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
43. Learning styles (Bilash, 2000; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002) refers to different ways of learning – for example, McCarthy’s 4-MAT (McCarthy, 1980, 1981), Gardner’s multiple learning intelligences (Gardner, 1983, 1993), etc.	Inclusion of activities for all learning styles is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

2. Activities

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
82. After every new content is presented, at least five 'getting it' activities should follow and the activities should appeal to a range of learning intelligences as described in B-SLIM (Bilash, 2001).	It is important that enough 'getting it' activities be included.	0	1	2	3	4
83. Three to five 'Using it' activities should be included throughout every three to five hour period of instruction (Bilash, 2001).	It is important that enough 'using it' activities be included.	0	1	2	3	4
84. Output activities should also be clearly described with proposed assessment criteria (Bilash, 2001).	It is important that output activities be described clearly.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Language	13. Grammar (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; P. Collins, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; Thiele & Treagust, 1992; Zealand Public Schools, 2002) refers to inclusion of detailed explanation of grammatical points and related activities or exercises.	0	1	2	3	4
	14. Language skills (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Short, 1995) refer to the inclusion of activities designed to develop the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.	0	1	2	3	4
	15. The textbook strives to develop a variety of aspects of language in a balanced way of activities that develop a student's vocabulary, grammar, oral and written language (Atkins, 2001; Copland, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Zealand Public Schools, 2002). Sometimes one skill is stressed more than others are.	0	1	2	3	4
	17. Pronunciation (Ansary & Babaii, 2002) refers to the sounds of spoken word, especially the sounds that are accepted or generally understood and related practice activities.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
18. Content and activities in a textbook should be interesting (Mikk, 2000), meaning that it includes use of a variety of methodologies that keep learners motivated and interested in the text (including analogies).	My perception of how interesting the content and activities would be for student-users is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
19. Motivation (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Tsai, 2000) means the textbooks are providing practice activities that motivate student learning.	Inclusion of motivating activities is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
20. Positiveness (Richard-Amato, 1988) means that visual and print content and activities in the textbooks foster positive self-image and do not discriminate against any age, gender or social group.	Positiveness is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
21. Textbooks cover the topic or subject accurately, thoroughly, and in a motivating and logical manner (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richard-Amato, 1988).	That textbooks cover the topic or subject thoroughly and in a motivating and logical manner is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Culture	22. Culture belongs to one of the 5 C's in ACTFL (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). Through the study of other languages, students gain a knowledge and understanding of the cultures that use that language and, in fact, cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language is used.	0	1	2	3	4
	23. Content and activities should help the L2 learner learn about the values of L2 culture explicitly (Copland, 2002; Sorace et al., 1994).	Focus on the values of the L2 culture that are different or not a part of L1 culture is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree	
	Background Information	Questions					
5. Communication	24. Comparisons are the fourth C in the ACTFL standards. Through comparisons and contrasts with the language being studied, students develop insight into the nature of language and the concept of culture and realise that there are multiple ways of viewing the world (Tang, 1994; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	Inclusion of comparisons is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
	25. Communication is at the heart of second language study, whether the communication takes place face-to-face, in writing, or across centuries through the reading of literature. It is one of the 5 C's in ACTFL standards and has been elaborated by many researchers (Ansary & Babai, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Britton, Woodward et al., 1993; P. Collins, 1998; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Woodward & Elliott, 1992). A textbook and accompanying materials that emphasise communication will have content and activities that help students interact with one another and with native speakers.	Attention to communication is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
	26. Communities are the fifth C in the ACTFL standards. It includes content that enables the student of languages to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world in a variety of contexts and in culturally appropriate ways (Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	Inclusion of activities which provide potential involvement in communities is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
6. Evaluation	30. Analysis and evaluation (Copland, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) of the textbook and other support materials has been conducted as a part of the development and approval or selection process.	Knowledge that the design and developmental process included testing/piloting the textbook and supporting materials and activities in real classrooms is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
31. Activities that help students extend their understanding of the text (New Jersey Department of Education, 1998), include problem solving, decision making, or creation of original work.	Inclusion of activities in the textbook that help students extend their understanding of a text is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
32. Content in a textbook should be scientifically correct, accurate and scientifically proven (Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Robb, 1996).	Scientific correctness and accuracy of content are important factors in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
33. It is important to include measurement tools such as standardised tests on content, cloze procedure or multiple choice questions as part of the package (along with relevant statistics) (House, 1987; Robb, 1996).	Inclusion of standardised tests on content, cloze or multiple choice questions or other evaluation instruments is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
34. Textbooks should state the research or instructional model upon which they have been developed (Chipouline, 2001; Copland, 2002).	An explicit statement about the model or research base of the method/organisation of the textbook is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
40. Gender representation means that visuals, stories and cultural information represent males and females in non-stereotypic ways (Sosniak, 1990).	Gender representation is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
7. Organisation	35. Appropriateness, grading selection, and age-appropriateness (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; House, 1987; Mikk, 2000; Richard-Amato, 1988) refer to the correlation between age level and grade level.	0	1	2	3	4
	36. Good outlines (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992) mean statements summarising the important points of a text (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
37. Clear and comprehensive summaries (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) of the substance of a body of material in a condensed form, a list of or main points, or an abstract, help students gain key ideas in a chapter (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).	Inclusion of clear and comprehensive summaries is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
38. The textbook contains references and a bibliography, listing other helpful and resources for further reading or viewing (Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) by students and teachers (for professional development).	Inclusion of references, bibliography and resource lists is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
39. Functional load (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Cunningworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Tucker, 1975) refers to the distribution of words that have singular and multiple meanings. The functional load is high when more words, or more complicated words, are included.	A statement of the functional load is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
41. A glossary is usually a list of difficult or specialised words with their definitions, often placed at the back of a book (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Inclusion of a glossary is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
42. An index (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) serves to guide, point out, or otherwise facilitate reference, especially an alphabetised list of names, places, and subjects treated in a printed work, giving the page or pages on which each item is mentioned (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).	Inclusion of an index is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree	
Background Information	Questions						
44. Linkage (Atkins, 2001) means that themes, or concepts are interconnected between sections of a chapter and chapters in the book.	Linkage is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4	
46. Good writing (Britton, Gulgoz et al., 1993) means that ideas and concepts are presented clearly and concisely.	Quality of writing is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4	
47. Sequencing (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Britton, Woodward et al., 1993; Dennedy & McNaught, 1997; Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; V. Rogers, 1988) refers to the order of presentation, that is to say, simple sentence patterns should come first, introduction of new structures must rest on already-mastered simpler patterns, etc.	How content and materials are sequenced is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4	
48. Study guidelines provide students (Mikk, 2000) direction in selecting the most important content presented in the textbook.	Inclusion of study guidelines for students is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4	
49. Table of contents help users easily locate content in a textbook (Copland, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; V. Rogers, 1988; Tang, 1994; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	Inclusion of a table of contents is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4	
50. Recycled or recycling (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richard-Amato, 1988) means that words, sentences, themes, topics, etc. are repeated throughout the textbook or series.	Recycling is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4	
51. A pre-reading plan (Molner, 1989) is a before-reading strategy that helps teachers assess student's prior knowledge.	Inclusion of a pre-reading plan is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4	

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree	
Background Information		Questions					
8. Format	53. PCK (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Thiele & Treagust, 1992), pedagogical content knowledge, means that the teacher resource offers tips and explanations to the teacher about how to teach difficult concepts in the textbook (L. S. Shulman, 1987).	Attention to PCK by the authors is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
	54. Procedures for teaching content are clear and include student activities for step by step learning of key concepts (Copland, 2002).	Procedures proposed for teaching content are an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
	55. Activities allow students to see clearly the progress they are making in learning the content in the textbook.	Inclusion of activities that help students see the progress they are making in learning is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
	56. Self-teaching (Hough, 1984) means the textbooks can be used without teachers or tutors.	Potential for self-teaching is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
	57. Illustration, diagrams, and graphics (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Tang, 1994) all refer to visual matter used to clarify a text or add visual appeal.	Inclusion of illustrations, diagrams, and graphics is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
	58. Layout characteristics (Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Robb, 1996) refer to overall design of a page, spread, or book, including elements such as page and type size, typeface, and the arrangement of titles and page numbers.	Layout characteristics are important factors in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
	59. Physical characteristics (Atkins, 2001; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) refer to the quality of paper, size of the textbook, or weight of the textbook.	Physical characteristics are important factors in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
	Background Information	Questions				
	60. Presentation (Copland, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Robb, 1996) refers to the sequencing of the content of the textbook from the easy to the more difficult, or mixed.	0	1	2	3	4
	61. Quality of editing and publishing (Garinger, 2002; Tucker, 1975; Wang, 2002) refers to the accuracy and thoroughness of the language and form of the published textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
	62. Size and format of print is appropriate (Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) for the target age group and visually appealing.	0	1	2	3	4
	63. Text structure (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Short, 1995; Wang, 2002) refers to the extensiveness of the components in the textbook and their organisation.	0	1	2	3	4
	69. Sample parent letters are included in the series (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	0	1	2	3	4
	70. Transparencies (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) are tools to save the teachers preparation time and efforts.	0	1	2	3	4
	71. Videos, maps and charts (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) are also tools to save the teachers preparation time and efforts.	0	1	2	3	4
Reliability	64. The textbook has been tested with students. Second language learning data analysis (Tang, 1994) refers to statistical analysis of teaching materials.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
	Background Information	Questions				
	65. Textbooks for study and research (Chipouline, 2001) means textbooks are based on research and can be used for further research as well.	0	1	2	3	4
10. Supplementary	66. Added components or technology (Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Short, 1995; Zealand Public Schools, 2002) refer to videotapes, cassette tapes, computer diskettes, CD-ROM's or DVD-ROM's, etc..	0	1	2	3	4
	67. Assessment, homework, and workbook are components of the textbook series (Copland, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	0	1	2	3	4
11. Literacy	73. Students' literacy levels can be assessed using material in the series (C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Thiele & Treagust, 1992).	0	1	2	3	4
	85. All readings in a textbook should include a series of oral and written questions for students.	0	1	2	3	4
12. Marketability	74. Commercial materials (Richards, 2001; Shannon, 1987) refer to textbooks that were developed with profit as a chief aim. Costs may then become prohibitive, for students in many parts of the world.	0	1	2	3	4
	75. Cost is measured in terms of value for cost (Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Robb, 1996; Wang, 2002).	0	1	2	3	4
	77. Durability (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Tucker, 1975) means how long the resource will last, or how strong the textbooks are.	0	1	2	3	4
	78. Guidance for non-native speaking teachers (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Tucker, 1975) means the textbooks are written with an international market in perspective.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
	Background Information	Questions				
13. Legal	79. Legal compliance (Nevada Department of Education) means that the contents are in compliance with the law (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).	Legal compliance is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.				
		0	1	2	3	4

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APPENDIX A: TIMELINE

Research Study Timeline (01 September 2002-30 June 2003)

	Steps
Question 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a thorough literature review of criteria for textbook assessments. 2. Prepare a thorough literature review of criteria for ESL textbook assessments. 3. Review Alberta Learning criteria for Recognising Diversity and Promoting Respect (RD&PR).
Question 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Configure these criteria into a textbook evaluation tool (TET). 5. Based on the two initial steps the criteria will also be used to formulate a questionnaire to be complete by teachers in the next step. 6. Find 4-6 possible local ESL teachers to determine their interest and availability in participating in this project. Prepare an ethics review including a letter of consent for teachers. Conduct a field test. 7. Organise the first meeting with teacher participants on Saturday, 27 April 2003, to sign consent forms, complete the questionnaire and initiate discussions about criteria of a good ESL textbook by referring to TET. 8. Analyze data from open-ended questions of questionnaire and the first focus group meeting. 9. Analyse questionnaires to help formulate probing questions for next meeting. Summarise audio transcript of meeting for validation and discussion. 10. Revise TET according to feedback from teachers. 11. Organise the second meeting to present summary of first meeting for validation, address issues raised from questionnaire analysis, present revised TET and continues the conversation about criteria that can be used to identify a good ESL textbook. This will be recorded on audiocassette. 12. Summarise audio transcript of meeting, and revise TET. 13. Send summary and revised TET to participants by e-mail for discussion and validation (acceptance, rejection, and clarification).
Question 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Organise the final focus group interview meeting in May, 2003 to show teachers results of the synthesised frame for ESL textbook analysis, and propose recommendations. Audio record teachers' responses. 15. Summarise discussions of the final meeting and send them to teachers by e-mail for validation. 16. Write up the thesis.

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE (DRAFT)

Please circle the corresponding number.		Strongly Disagree	◇			Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
Communication is at the heart of second language study, whether the communication takes place face-to-face, in writing, or across centuries through the reading of literature. It is one of the 5 C's in ACTFL standards and has been elaborated by many researchers (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Britton, Woodward et al., 1993; P. Collins, 1998; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Woodward & Elliott, 1992).	Communication is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Through the study of other languages, students gain a knowledge and understanding of the cultures that use that language and, in fact, cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language occurs. It also belongs to one of the 5 C's in ACTFL (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). Some cultures are more superior than others (Henry, 1995).	Culture is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Learning languages provides connections to additional bodies of knowledge that may be unavailable to the monolingual English speaker (Copland, 2002; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). It is the third C in ACTFL standards.	Connections are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Through comparisons and contrasts with the language being studied, students develop insight into the nature of language and the concept of culture and realize that there are multiple ways of viewing the world (Tang, 1994; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). This is the fourth C in the ACTFL standards.	Comparisons are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Together, these elements enable the student of languages to participate in multilingual communities at home and	Communities are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the corresponding number.		Strongly Disagree	◇	Strongly Agree		
Background Information	Questions					
around the world in a variety of contexts and in culturally appropriate ways (Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).						
Accuracy refers to the correctness of the content knowledge (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Accuracy is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Added components or technology (Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002) refer to videotapes, cassette tapes, computer diskettes, CD-ROM's or DVD-ROM's, etc.	Added components and technology are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Address the needs of student or learner needs (Bilash, 2000; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Addressing the needs of students is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Appropriate readability (Carolyn, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Mikk, 2000; V. Rogers, 1988).	Appropriate readability is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Appropriateness, grading selection, and age-appropriateness have been mentioned in several sources (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; House, 1987; Mikk, 2000; Richard-Amato, 1988).	Appropriateness, grading selection, and age-appropriateness are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Arranged logically (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) means from the easy to the more difficult.	Logical arrangement and order are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Assessment, homework, and workbook are components of textbooks (Copland, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Assessment, homework, and workbook are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Authenticity (Atkins, 2001; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Dumitrescu, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002) refers to the "realness" of the content.	Authentic materials are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the corresponding number.		Strongly Disagree \diamond Strongly Agree				
Background Information	Questions	0	1	2	3	4
Clarity of instruction considering both the teacher and the students (Bilash, 2000; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998).	Clarity of instruction is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Clear and comprehensive summaries (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Clear and comprehensive summaries are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Commercial materials (Richards, 2001; Shannon, 1987) refer to the expensiveness of textbooks.	Commercial materials are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Containing references, bibliography and resources (Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	References, bibliography and resource lists are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Cost or overall value for money spent on textbooks (Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Robb, 1996; Wang, 2002).	Cost or overall value for money is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Critical thinking (V. Rogers, 1988; Short, 1995; Zealand Public Schools, 2002) is sometimes contrasted with creative thinking.	Critical thinking is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Curriculum fit (Bilash, 2000; Nevada Department of Education, 2001; V. Rogers, 1988).	Curriculum fit is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Definition (Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001) refers to detailed outcome the learners should be able to display after learning.	Definitions are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Desirable teaching aid (New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; V. Rogers, 1988).	ESL textbooks are desirable teaching aids.	0	1	2	3	4
Different types of analogies (Thiele & Treagust, 1992).	Different types of analogies are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Durability (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Tucker, 1975).	Durability is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Educational validity (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001).	Educational validity is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Evaluation and analysis (Copland, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Evaluation and analysis are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Exercise balance (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Exercise balance is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Extending understanding of text (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998).	Extending understanding of text is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the corresponding number.		Strongly Disagree	◇	Strongly Agree		
Background Information	Questions	0	1	2	3	4
Feedback (Robb, 1996).	Feedback is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Flexibility (Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002).	Flexibility is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Focus on the values ignorant in their own culture (Copland, 2002; Sorace et al., 1994).	Focus on the values ignorant in their own culture is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Fostering thinking (Mikk, 2000).	Fostering thinking is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Functional load (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Tucker, 1975).	Functional load is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Gender (Sosniak, 1990).	Gender consideration is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Glossary and index (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Glossary and index are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Good outlines and summaries (Ansary & Babaii, 2002).	Good outlines and summaries are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Grammar (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; P. Collins, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; Thiele & Treagust, 1992; Zealand Public Schools, 2002).	Grammar is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Guidance for non-native teacher (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Tucker, 1975).	Guidance for non-native teacher is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Illustration, diagrams, and graphics (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Tang, 1994).	Illustration, diagrams, and graphics are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Implications and literacy tasks (C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Thiele & Treagust, 1992).	Implications and literacy tasks are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Integratedness (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; Tucker, 1975) means the integration of non-text content.	Integratedness is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Interesting (Mikk, 2000).	Being interesting is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Language skills (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Short, 1995).	Language skills are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Language systems balance, which means the balance between vocabulary, grammar,	Language systems balance is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the corresponding number.		Strongly Disagree	◇	Strongly Agree		
Background Information	Questions					
oral and written language (Atkins, 2001; Copland, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). Usually one skill is stressed more than others.						
Layout characteristics (Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Robb, 1996).	Layout characteristics are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Learning styles (Bilash, 2000; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	Learning styles are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Legal compliance (Nevada Department of Education).	Legal compliance styles are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Life content (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) refers to real life applications or the inclusion of real life experiences.	Life content is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Linkage (Atkins, 2001) means connected themes.	Linkage is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Meaningful activities or taskfulness (Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; House, 1987; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988).	Meaningful activities or taskfulness are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Model for research or method (Chipouline, 2001; Copland, 2002) means that the textbooks may follow a model.	Model for research or method is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Motivation (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Tsai, 2000).	Motivation is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Organisation (Britton, Woodward et al., 1993; Dennedy & McNaught, 1997; V. Rogers, 1988).	Organisation is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Parent letters and prepared kits (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Parent letters and prepared kits are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
PCK (Ansary & Babaii, 2002;	PCK is important in selecting ESL	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the corresponding number.		Strongly Disagree	◇	Strongly Agree		
Background Information	Questions					
Thiele & Treagust, 1992) is, of course, Pedagogical content knowledge.	textbooks.					
Physical characteristics (Atkins, 2001; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Physical characteristics are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Poor writing (Britton, Gulgoz et al., 1993).	Poor writing, instead of good writing, is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Popularity (Ansary & Babaii, 2002) means that a book sells well.	Popularity is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Positiveness (Richard-Amato, 1988).	Positiveness is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Practice of language (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984) means adequate practice of skills of language.	Practice of language is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Pre-reading plan (Molner, 1989).	Pre-reading plan is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Presentation (Copland, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Robb, 1996) means that the texts are well laid out and easy to read.	Presentation is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Procedures and progress (Copland, 2002) refers to the clear indication of steps and improvement.	Procedures and progress are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Pronunciation (Ansary & Babaii, 2002).	Pronunciation is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Quality of editing and publishing (Garinger, 2002; Tucker, 1975; Wang, 2002).	Quality of editing and publishing are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Recycled or recycling (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richard-Amato, 1988).	Recycling is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Relevance or relatedness (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988).	Relevance or relatedness is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Scientific correctness (Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Robb, 1996).	Scientific correctness is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Self-teaching (Hough, 1984).	Self-teaching is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Sequencing (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998).	Sequencing of materials is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the corresponding number.		Strongly Disagree	◇	Strongly Agree		
Background Information	Questions	0	1	2	3	4
Size and format of print is appropriate (Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Appropriate size and format of print is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Second language learning data analysis (Tang, 1994) refers to statistical analysis of teaching materials.	Second language learning data analysis is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Software (CD-ROMs, DVDs, Laserdisks, etc.) (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998).	Software is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Standardised tests or content, cloze or MCQ's (House, 1987; Robb, 1996).	Standardised tests or content, cloze or MCQ's are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Study guidelines for students (Mikk, 2000).	Study guidelines for students are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Sufficiency (Atkins, 2001) refers to self-sufficiency of sets of textbooks.	Sufficiency is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Table of content, other subject areas or structure (Copland, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; V. Rogers, 1988; Tang, 1994; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	Table of content, other subject areas or structure are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Text structure (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Short, 1995; Wang, 2002).	Text structure is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Textbook for study and research (Chipouline, 2001).	That textbooks can be used for both study and research is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Thorough, motived and logical (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richard-Amato, 1988).	That textbooks should be through, motived and logical is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Transparencies (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998)	Transparencies are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
Videos, maps and charts (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	That videos, maps and charts should accompany textbooks is important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX C: 3 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. What are the five most important factors/criteria you would use to select an ESL textbook? And Why?
2. Do you use one textbook for your ESL class? Why or why not?
3. Do you think that it is possible to produce an ESL textbook that would meet most of your needs as a teacher and most of the needs of your students? Please explain.

APPENDIX D: LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

12 April 2003

Dear Teachers,

As an ESL teacher in Canada and an EFL teacher in China, I have noticed that textbooks are used very differently in these two countries. Thus, I have designed my doctoral research to identify and understand factors that influence EFL/ESL textbook selection. The study has three phases. In phase one a list of criteria used to select ESL textbooks will be identified from research, Alberta Learning and practising ESL teachers. Phase two will seek to understand how and why ESL teachers' views differ or are the same as the views of researchers and the local authorities. In Part three a tool will be generated (synthesised from findings in phases one and two) and used for the assessment of one Alberta Learning approved ESL textbook. The results will also be presented to ESL teachers for discussion and interpretation.

I wish to conduct part of this research project with ESL teachers from April to May, 2003. Participating in this research group will require attending several meetings, discussing criteria that constitutes a good ESL text book, giving information about the state of textbook access, and dialoguing with the (2-4) other members of the teacher group and the researcher, Iris Xu over three sessions (for about 5-7 hours). I will write field notes during the sessions and will write summary reflections after each of these sessions. I will give you a copy of the notes before each session, which you can then respond to during that or any future session in person or by e-mail.

I need willing participants for this project. You will have an opportunity to respond on an ongoing basis to the work we create and discuss and you may withdraw at any time without consequence. A draft of the research thesis will also be given to you and you will have an opportunity to request that any of the information be removed. I will respect the confidentiality of this research group and your anonymity, at all times. The only persons who will have access to the data are yourselves, myself and the supervising professor, Dr. Olenka Bilash.

Thank you for considering the request to participate in this research project. I will make myself available at your convenience to answer any questions that you might have.

Sincerely,

Iris Xu

iris.xu@ualberta.ca

Phone: 486-9447

In case of concerns, please contact:

Dr. Olenka Bilash

Olenka.bilash@ualberta.ca Office: 492-5101

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Board of the Faculties of Education and Extension at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at 492-3751.

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM

University of Alberta Research Consent Form

I, _____, consent to be a participant in the “ESL TEXTBOOKS IN CANADA: MODELLING FRAME OF REFERENCE,” teacher group led by Iris Xu, a doctoral student at the University of Alberta. Participating in this research group will require attending several meetings, discussing criteria that constitutes a good ESL text book, giving information about the state of textbook access, dialoguing with the (2-4) other members of the teacher group and the researcher, Iris Xu over three sessions and validating the interpretations made by the researchers at meetings and by e-mails.

I understand that:

- The purpose of the research is to identify and understand factors that influence EFL/ESL textbook selection. The study has three phases. In phase one a list of criteria used to select ESL textbooks will be identified from research, Alberta Learning and practising ESL teachers. Phase two will seek to understand how and why ESL teachers' views differ or are the same as the views of researchers and the local authorities. In Part three a tool will be generated (synthesised from findings in phases one and two) and used for the assessment of one Alberta Learning approved ESL textbook. The results will also be presented to ESL teachers for discussion and interpretation.
- We will meet approximately three times in April and May and that our conversations will be summarised by the researcher and that I shall have an opportunity to respond to or clarify points in the summaries.
- I may withdraw at any time without penalty, or that the project may be terminated
- Release of information will be subject to my approval, involve only participants in this research, my supervisor Dr. Olenka Bilash and me, Iris Xu.
- All information gathered will be treated confidentially and I will not be identified
- Data will be validated by participants and kept on file in a locked and secure place for a period of five years and then destroyed
- Any interpretations that I do not want included will be removed at my request
- Anonymity will be respected

I further understand that the results of this research project will only be used for the following:

- Doctoral thesis
- Presentations and written articles for other educators

In case of concerns, complaints or consequences, the following person may be contacted

Research Supervisor: Dr. Olenka Bilash

Olenka.bilash@ualberta.ca or Office phone: 492-5101

Signature of Participant

Date signed

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Board of the Faculties of Education and Extension at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at (780) 492-3751.

APPENDIX F: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Meeting 1: ESL teacher focus group interview questions

1. Do you use ESL textbooks? Why? /Why not?
2. Which ones do you use? With which level of language ability?
3. How did you go about selecting the textbook(s) you use?
4. How do you use the ESL textbooks?
5. Do you think ESL textbooks are important? Why? /Why not?
6. Can you name and rank ESL textbooks and describe why you think some are GOOD and/or better or worse than others are.
7. Have you found sufficient Canadian content in ESL textbooks? If so, which ones. If not, what do you do about it?
8. In your mind, what makes a good ESL textbook?
9. Any issues you would like to talk about associated with usage of ESL textbooks?
10. Have you seen any criteria for selecting a textbook? From your school? School board? designed by Alberta Learning? Elsewhere? (where?) What do you think of these criteria? Why? Would you change them to make them better? If so, how?
11. Do you think that teachers/schools need a list of criteria for selecting a good ESL textbook? Why? /Why not?

Meeting 2: ESL teacher focus group interview questions

1. How do you think a second language is learned?
2. Which materials do you use that best reflect that understanding of how a second language is learned?
3. How do you think people learn to read and write in a second language?
4. Which materials do you use that best reflect that understanding of how people learn to read and write in a second language?
5. What do you understand by a communicative approach or CLT?
6. What activities do you do in your classroom that are communicative?
7. What materials do you use for these communicative activities?
8. Where do you get these materials?
9. Do you use the computer to plan ESL lessons? Please explain how.
10. Do you use the computer to teach ESL lessons? Please explain how.
11. What advantages have you found using the computer in the ESL class? Please explain how and why.
12. What disadvantages have you found using the computer in the ESL class? Please explain how and why.

Meeting 3: ESL teacher focus group interview final questions

1. With the new information whether you have any more comments?
2. Does the chapter on the teachers' ideas about what is valuable match what the research says?
3. What do teachers say is important?
4. What do teachers consider when they pick a textbook?
5. Do teachers need more time for textbook selection?
6. Or whether teachers know how to analyse a textbook in order to select it?
7. The Alberta analysis is based on diversity, organisation. Whether it gives enough information about details? Or gives enough activities for students?
8. How about the accessibility to resources?

APPENDIX G: OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

Research questions	Question 1 What constitutes a “good” ESL textbook, according to the research literature?	Question 2 What do ESL teachers think about what the research literature says about what constitutes a “good” ESL textbook?	Question 3 What other factors or criteria do ESL teachers consider when assessing or looking for an ESL textbook or resource?
Methodology	Literature review	Questionnaires 5 points (0-4) Likert Scale	+ 3 open-ended questions 3 Focus Group Interviews
Analysis and interpretation	35 resources consulted 110 key criteria sorted into 80 criteria: 13 categories	Microsoft Excel Analysis	Thematic Coding
Results	Chapter 3 80 criteria in 13 categories: (Appendix B) 1. Content 2. Language 3. Culture 4. Communication 5. Curriculum 6. Evaluation 7. Organisation 8. Format 9. Research 10. Supplementary 11. Task 12. Marketability 13. Other	(Appendix H) Teachers agreed with all of the points.	Chapter 4 1. Level of language and content 2. Organisation, format and user-friendliness 3. Relevance and Canadian content 4. Educational validity 5. Costs and durability 6. Interesting topics 7. Variety of activities 8. Up-to-dateness 9. Textbook use and using one textbook in ESL class
Chapter 5 10. Criteria of a good ESL textbook 11. Difficulties obtaining good ESL textbook a. Institutional and time constraints b. Budget restrictions c. Copyright restrictions and copy limitations d. Class size, minimal numbers of textbook and Canadian content 12. ESL texts currently being used 13. Selecting textbooks for different levels 14. Comments about criteria used to select ESL texts 15. Using computers in ESL			
Chapter 6 Recommendations: Revised TET; Questions about accessibility of textbooks and responsibility for textbook acquisition; issues of copywriting; 1. teachers’ need for a TET; 2. teachers’ benefits from exploring issues relating to textbooks; 3. gap between what teachers look for in a learning resource and what the research suggests is important; 4. more research needed.			

APPENDIX H: TEXTBOOK EVALUATION TOOL (TET) QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	↕		
Background Information	Questions					
1. Content	1. Authenticity (Atkins, 2001; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Dumitrescu, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002) refers to the “realness” of the content, or how appropriate the content would be for a native speaker.	0	1	2	3	4
	2. Integratedness (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; Tucker, 1975) refers to the inclusion of non print content, i.e., maps, pictures, graphs, etc., to make text into a whole by bringing all parts together.	0	1	2	3	4
	3. Relevance or relatedness (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988) refers to the content, word selection, sentence structure, visuals and proposed activities are appropriate to the age and cognitive level of the user.	0	1	2	3	4
	4. Sufficiency (Atkins, 2001) refers to the level of the comprehensiveness of the content in the textbook and support materials and the adequacy of coverage in meeting the official goals and expectations.	0	1	2	3	4
	5. Activities address the needs of many types of students or learners regarding their learning styles (Bilash, 2000; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	0	1	2	3	4
	6. The textbook and supporting guidebook, workbook, etc., must offer clear instructions to both the teacher and the students (Bilash, 2000; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998).	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	↕		
Background Information	Questions					
7. Connections are the third C in ACTFL standards. Learning languages provides connections to additional bodies of knowledge that may be unavailable to the monolingual English speaker (Copland, 2002; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	Inclusion of activities and notes to students that help them make connections is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
8. Questions asked of students and activities designed for students to complete require critical thinking skills (Mikk, 2000; V. Rogers, 1988; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	Level of critical thinking required for activities is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
9. Life content (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) refers to the inclusion of activities that relate to contemporary real life and/or draw upon a student's real life experiences.	Inclusion of life content is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
10. Meaningful activities or tasks (Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; House, 1987; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988) refer to activities or tasks designed to be meaningful for students, and have a clear and relevant function, or purpose.	Inclusion of meaningful activities or tasks is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
11. The reading level of a text can be determined by (Carolyn, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Mikk, 2000; V. Rogers, 1988) Flesch Reading Ease score, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score, Fog index, or Fry Readability, etc.	A statement about the reading level of a text is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
12. Different types of analogies (Thiele & Treagust, 1992) are used in the presentation of the texts.	Inclusion of different types of analogies in an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	↕		
Background Information	Questions	0	1	2	3	4
2. Language	13. Grammar (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; P. Collins, 1998; Richard-Amato, 1988; Thiele & Treagust, 1992; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002) refers to inclusion of detailed explanation of grammatical points and related activities or exercises.	0	1	2	3	4
	14. Language skills (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Short, 1995) refer to the inclusion of activities designed to develop the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.	0	1	2	3	4
	15. The textbook strives to develop a variety of aspects of language in a balanced way of activities that develop a student's vocabulary, grammar, oral and written language (Atkins, 2001; Copland, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). Sometimes one skill is stressed more than others are.	0	1	2	3	4
	16. Practice of language (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984) refers to an adequate number of practice activities for the development of skills of language.	0	1	2	3	4
	17. Pronunciation (Ansary & Babaii, 2002) refers to the sounds of spoken word, especially the sounds that are accepted or generally understood and related practice activities.	0	1	2	3	4
	18. Content and activities in a textbook should be interesting (Mikk, 2000), meaning that it includes use of a variety of methodologies that keep learners motivated and interested in the text.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
	Background Information	Questions				
	19. Motivation (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Tsai, 2000) means the textbooks are providing practice activities that motivate student learning.	0	1	2	3	4
	20. Positiveness (Richard-Amato, 1988) means that visual and print content and activities in the textbooks foster positive self-image.	0	1	2	3	4
	21. Textbooks cover the topic or subject accurately, thoroughly, and in a motivating and logical manner (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richard-Amato, 1988).	0	1	2	3	4
3. Culture	22. Culture belongs to one of the 5 C's in ACTFL (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Short, 1995; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002). Through the study of other languages, students gain a knowledge and understanding of the cultures that use that language and, in fact, cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language occurs.	0	1	2	3	4
	23. Content and activities should help the L2 learner learn about the values of L2 culture explicitly (Copland, 2002; Sorace et al., 1994)	0	1	2	3	4
4. Communication	24. Comparisons are the fourth C in the ACTFL standards. Through comparisons and contrasts with the language being studied, students develop insight into the nature of language and the concept of culture and realise that there are multiple ways of viewing the world (Tang, 1994; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↔		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
	25. Communication is at the heart of second language study, whether the communication takes place face-to-face, in writing, or across centuries through the reading of literature. It is one of the 5 C's in ACTFL standards and has been elaborated by many researchers (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Britton, Woodward et al., 1993; P. Collins, 1998; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Woodward & Elliott, 1992). A textbook and accompanying materials that emphasise communication will have content and activities that help students interact with one another and with native speakers.	0	1	2	3	4
	26. Communities are the fifth C in the ACTFL standards. It includes content that enables the student of languages to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world in a variety of contexts and in culturally appropriate ways (Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	0	1	2	3	4
5. Curriculum	27. Curriculum fit (Bilash, 2000; Nevada Department of Education, 2001; V. Rogers, 1988) means that the resource must include content and activities that will help students reach the expectations of the syllabi or curricula.	0	1	2	3	4
	28. Textbooks should define detailed outcomes that learners should be able to display after learning/completing activities included in them (Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001).	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	↕		
Background Information	Questions					
	29. Educational validity (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001) means that the user can trust that the activities in the textbook will help the learners reach the specified outcomes.	0	1	2	3	4
6. Evaluation	30. Analysis and evaluation (Copland, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) of the textbook and other support materials has been conducted a part of the development and approval or selection process.	0	1	2	3	4
	31. Activities that help students extend their understanding of the text (New Jersey Department of Education, 1998), include problem solving, decision making, or creation of original work.	0	1	2	3	4
	32. Content in a textbook should be scientifically correct, accurate and scientifically proven (Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; Robb, 1996).	0	1	2	3	4
	33. It is important to include measurement tools such as standardised tests on content, cloze procedure or multiple choice questions as part of the package (along with relevant statistics) (House, 1987; Robb, 1996).	0	1	2	3	4
	34. Textbooks may follow a research model, or instructional model (Chipouline, 2001; Copland, 2002).	0	1	2	3	4
	35. Appropriateness, grading selection, and age-appropriateness (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; House, 1987; Mikk, 2000; Richard-Amato, 1988) refer to the correlation between age level and grade level.	0	1	2	3	4
7. Organisation	35. Appropriateness, grading selection, and age-appropriateness are important factors in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
36. Good outlines (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992) mean statements summarising the important points of a text (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).	Good outlines are important in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
37. Clear and comprehensive summaries (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) of the substance of a body of material in a condensed form, a list of or main points, or an abstract, help students gain key ideas in a chapter (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).	Inclusion of clear and comprehensive summaries is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
38. The textbook contains references and a bibliography, listing other helpful and resources for further reading or viewing (Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Inclusion of references, bibliography and resource lists is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
39. Functional load (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Tucker, 1975) refers to the distribution of words that have singular and multiple meanings. The functional load is high when more words, or more complicated words, are included.	A statement of the functional load is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
40. Gender representation means that visuals, stories and cultural information represent males and females in non-stereotypic ways (Sosniak, 1990).	Gender representation is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
41. A glossary is usually a list of difficult or specialised words with their definitions, often placed at the back of a book (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	Inclusion of a glossary is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
42. An index (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) serves to guide, point out, or otherwise facilitate reference, especially an alphabetised list of names, places, and subjects treated in a printed work, giving the page or pages on which each item is mentioned (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).	Inclusion of an index is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
43. Learning styles (Bilash, 2000; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Zealand Public Schools, 2002) refers to different ways of learning – for example, McCarthy’s 4-MAT (McCarthy, 1980, 1981), Gardner’s multiple learning intelligences (Gardner, 1983, 1993), etc.	Inclusion of activities for all learning styles is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
44. Linkage (Atkins, 2001) means that themes, or concepts are interconnected between sections of a chapter and chapters in the book.	Linkage is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
45. Organisation (Britton, Woodward et al., 1993; Dennedy & McNaught, 1997; V. Rogers, 1988) means that the textbook has been sequenced or ordered in a logical and meaningful way (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).	Organisation is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
46. Good writing (Britton, Gulgoz et al., 1993) means that ideas and concepts are presented clearly and concisely.	Quality of writing is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
47. Sequencing (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998) refers to the order of presentation, that is to say, simple sentence patterns should come first, introduction of new structures must rest on already-mastered simpler patterns, etc.	How content and materials are sequenced is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions					
48. Study guidelines provide students (Mikk, 2000) direction in selecting the most important content presented in the textbook.	Inclusion of study guidelines for students is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
49. Table of contents help users easily locate content in a textbook (Copland, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; V. Rogers, 1988; Tang, 1994; Zeeland Public Schools, 2002).	Inclusion of a table of contents is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
50. Recycled or recycling (Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Richard-Amato, 1988) means that words, sentences, themes, topics, etc. are repeated throughout the textbook or series.	Recycling is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
51. A pre-reading plan (Molner, 1989) is a before-reading strategy that helps teachers assess student's prior knowledge.	Inclusion of a pre-reading plan is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
52. Exercises are arranged in several levels and balanced among and between levels (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998). Balance (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) means exercises are arranged in several levels and balanced among and between levels.	That student activities or exercises are arranged according to level of ability balance is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
53. PCK (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Thiele & Treagust, 1992), pedagogical content knowledge, means that the teacher resource offers tips and explanations to the teacher about how to teach difficult concepts in the textbook (L. S. Shulman, 1987).	Attention to PCK by the authors is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
54. Procedures for teaching content are clear and include student activities for step by step learning of key concepts (Copland, 2002).	Procedures proposed for teaching content are an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Disagree	Strongly Disagree	↕	Strongly Agree	Agree
Background Information	Questions					
55. Activities allow students to see clearly the progress they are making in learning the content in the textbook.	Inclusion of activities that help students see the progress they are making in learning is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
56. Self-teaching (Hough, 1984) means the textbooks can be used without teachers or tutors.	Potential for self-teaching is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
8. Format	57. Illustration, diagrams, and graphics (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Mikk, 2000; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Tang, 1994) all refer to visual matter used to clarify a text or add visual appeal.	0	1	2	3	4
	58. Layout characteristics (Atkins, 2001; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Robb, 1996) refer to overall design of a page, spread, or book, including elements such as page and type size, typeface, and the arrangement of titles and page numbers.	0	1	2	3	4
	59. Physical characteristics (Atkins, 2001; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) refer to the quality of paper, size of the textbook, or weight of the textbook.	0	1	2	3	4
	60. Presentation (Copland, 2002; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Robb, 1996) refers to the sequencing of the content of the textbook from the easy to the more difficult, or mixed.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	↕		Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree
Background Information	Questions						
	61. Quality of editing and publishing (Garinger, 2002; Tucker, 1975; Wang, 2002) refers to the accuracy and thoroughness of the language and form of the published textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4	
	62. Size and format of print is appropriate (Nevada Department of Education, 2001; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) for the target age group and visually appealing.	0	1	2	3	4	
	63. Text structure (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; Short, 1995; Wang, 2002) refers to the extensiveness of the components in the textbook and their organisation.	0	1	2	3	4	
9. Research	64. The textbook has been tested with students. Second language learning data analysis (Tang, 1994) refers to statistical analysis of teaching materials.	0	1	2	3	4	
	65. Textbooks for study and research (Chipouline, 2001) means textbooks are based on research and can be used for further research as well.	0	1	2	3	4	
10. Supplementary	66. Added components or technology (Bilash, 2000; Cunningsworth & Tomlinson, 1984; Short, 1995; Zealand Public Schools, 2002) refer to videotapes, cassette tapes, computer diskettes, CD-ROM's or DVD-ROM's, etc..	0	1	2	3	4	
	67. Assessment, homework, and workbook are components of the textbook series. (Copland, 2002; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	0	1	2	3	4	
	68. A textbook is a desirable teaching aid when it meets most of the needs for materials of the teacher and students (New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; V. Rogers, 1988).	0	1	2	3	4	

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree		↕		Strongly Agree
	Background Information	Questions				
	69. Sample parent letters are included in the series (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998).	0	1	2	3	4
	70. Transparencies (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) are tools to save the teachers preparation time and efforts.	0	1	2	3	4
	71. Videos, maps and charts (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998; New Jersey Department of Education, 1998) are also tools to save the teachers preparation time and efforts.	0	1	2	3	4
	72. Software (CD-ROMs, DVDs, Laserdisks, etc.) (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998) means the technological aspect is considered and included.	0	1	2	3	4
11. Task	73. Students' literacy levels can be assessed using material in the series (C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Thiele & Treagust, 1992).	0	1	2	3	4
12. Marketability	74. Commercial materials (Richards, 2001; Shannon, 1987) refer to textbooks that were developed with profit as a chief aim. Costs may then become prohibitive, for students in many parts of the world.	0	1	2	3	4
	75. Cost is measured in terms of value for cost (Atkins, 2001; Bilash, 2000; Garinger, 2001, 2002; Robb, 1996; Wang, 2002).	0	1	2	3	4
	76. Popularity (Ansary & Babaii, 2002) means that a book sells well.	0	1	2	3	4

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your degree of agreement with each statement. Please refer to the background information to help you understand terminology if required.		Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	↕		
Background Information	Questions					
77. Durability (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Bilash, 2000; Tucker, 1975) means how long the resource will last, or how strong the textbooks are.	Durability is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
78. Guidance for non-native speaking teachers (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Atkins, 2001; Tucker, 1975) means the textbooks are written with an international market in perspective.	Guidance for non-native English speaking teachers is an important factor in selecting ESL textbooks.	0	1	2	3	4
13. Other	79. Legal compliance (Nevada Department of Education) means that the contents are in compliance with the law (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).	0	1	2	3	4
	80. Efficiency means that the relationship of inputs to outputs is such that there is a minimal amount of repetition.					

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The teacher—informants were asked to identify the degree to which they agreed or disagreed that factors identified in TET were important in assessing and selecting an ESL learning resource/textbook. TET contained a total of eighty items divided into thirteen categories: content, language, culture, communication, curriculum, evaluation, organisation format, research, supplementary, task, marketability, and other (Appendix H).

1. Content

The content category had twelve criteria. The teacher-informants considered three of them to be of the highest importance. A textbook should: contain authentic content (Criterion 1), since teachers would agree that textbooks must contain some “realness” in the content; incorporate integratedness (Criterion 2) of the material, since teachers agree that all parts of the textbook need to be brought together; and show clarity (Criterion 6). Textbooks must provide a clear picture of what is to be taught and what is to be learned (Bilash, 2000; Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1998).

Criterion 12 was ranked lowest amongst the group. The use of different analogies was not considered very important by many teacher-informants. Perhaps because many teacher-informants lack training in formal logic, they see this as the concern or responsibility of textbook writers or publishers?

2. Language

The language category had nine criteria. The teacher-informants considered four of them to be of the highest importance. A textbook should

contain a balance of activities (Criterion 15) covering both spoken and written language; give adequate practice in the target language (Criterion 16); contain interesting content (Criterion 18); and foster positive self-image (Criterion 20). All these criteria are consistent with many of the values in the current educational environment (New Jersey Department of Education, 1998; C. V. Rogers & Medley, 1988; Zealand Public Schools, 2002).

Criterion 17 - pronunciation and related practice activities - had the lowest rating amongst the teacher-informants although two of the teacher-informants in the pilot study whose first language is not English rated Criterion 17 very high. Perhaps native speakers of English do not understand that pronunciation can be a problem for second language learners? However, two of the informants in pilot study whose first language is not English rated Criterion 17 very high.

3. Culture

The culture category had two criteria. Criterion 23 happened to be ranked the lower of the two. The values of the culture of second language or focussing on the values of L2 explicitly are not considered important by some teacher-informants. Hopefully, they are not exhibiting the Americo-centrism that Ishihara (1991) described in his best seller in Japan:

This is the kind of information I give to Americans who exhibit ignorance of our culture. Unfortunately, most Americans don't like to see these facts, and they tend to change the subject. In short, their historical prejudice and cultural narrowness has reached a point where they cannot see another's point or see the value of another culture. All this has made Americans, in the post war period, very irritable on the issue.

4. Communication

The communication category had three criteria. The teacher—informants considered one of them to be of the highest importance. A textbook should contain activities which promote communication (Criterion 25), one of the key concepts in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

Criterion 26 was rated the lowest by the teacher—informants. Perhaps the work entailed in involving local communities in teaching ESL is seen as extra work for teachers who are already over—worked (Hoge, 1986).

5. Curriculum

The curriculum category had three criteria. The teacher-informants considered criteria 27 and 29 to be of the same high importance. Criterion 28 had a relatively lower rate amongst the group. Why statements about detailed outcomes (Criterion 28) were not considered very important by many teacher-informants needs to be further explored.

6. Evaluation

The evaluation category had five criteria. All criteria were considered important by the teacher—informants.

It is vital to notice that criterion 33, that measurement tools should be included, had been rated the highest, relatively, amongst the group. In an era when standardised tests are not usually viewed favourably, it is noteworthy to see that some teacher-informants still value the importance of measurement. The teacher-informants do not want detailed outcomes in the curriculum (Criterion 28), but want to include measurement tools in textbooks (Criterion 33).

7. Organisation

The organisation category had twenty-two criteria. The teacher—informants considered three of them to be of the highest importance (Criteria 35, 36 and 45). A textbook should contain appropriateness, grading selection, and age—appropriateness (Criterion 35); contain good outlines (Criterion 36); and be organised logically and in a way that is meaningful (Criterion 45) for learners.

The teacher—informants considered six of the 22 criteria to be of relatively low importance (Criteria 38, 41, 42, 44, 48 and 56). Since textbooks are rarely covered completely there is probably no need to include references, a glossary, an index, study guides, or self-teaching materials. Similarly, linkages between sections of the book are probably not even noticed!

Teacher—informants considered the most important criteria in the organisation category to be the textbook itself, its match to age level (Criterion 35), its inclusion of good outlines (Criterion 36), and its arrangement (in a meaningful manner) (Criterion 45).

8. Format

The format category had seven criteria. The teacher—informants considered three of them to be of relatively higher importance while one of them to be of the lowest importance. It seemed the physical characteristics of textbooks (Criterion 59), such as the quality of paper, size or weight of the textbook, were not considered to be important; however, the printing must be visually appealing (Criteria 57, 60, and 62), and include illustrations, a sequential presentation, and appropriate size of print.

9. Research

The research category had two criteria. None of which was considered as important as other criteria in most of the other categories. Perhaps because most of them are not researchers themselves or have graduate degrees, they have not fully recognised the correlation between research and practice?

10. Supplementary

Teacher—informants considered all seven criteria in this category to be important. Inclusion of assessment strategies and tools, suggestions for homework and workbook activities (Criterion 67) were ranked highest along with criterion 68, that a textbook should be a desirable teaching aid.

Teacher—informants considered sample letters for parents (Criterion 69), and transparencies (Criterion 70) to be relatively less important than other criteria in this category. Perhaps because high school teachers are accustomed to less contact with parents, criterion 69 was ranked low? However, some textbooks for primary school, for example *Cornerstones* (Farr & Martchenko, 2000; Martchenko & Farr, 2000; McClymont, 1998, 1999), have been assessed very highly because they provide translations of sample parent letters in many languages.

11. Literacy

The teacher—informants agreed that a good textbook should consider the literacy level of students (Criterion 73) in its development and design.

12. Marketability

The marketability category has five criteria. With two of them considered less important. Teacher—informants considered textbooks used as commercial material (Criterion 74), and popularity of textbooks (Criterion 76), to be less important than other criteria in the category. This result corresponds with the results in the pilot study. Textbooks are a necessity for education and should not be viewed as for profit only. Nor should a textbook be thought of as a 'best seller' as commonly understood by the status.

Teacher—informants considered durability of the textbooks (Criterion 77) to be of relatively higher importance. This revealed the reality that textbooks are usually lent to students for a complete semester. They have to be durable so that students in the next semester can borrow them again, for at least five to ten years.

13. Other

Teacher-informants considered Criterion 79 to be important since textbooks should definitely meet legal compliance. Accordingly textbooks should be revised on a regular basis to meet changes in society including legal mandates.

APPENDIX J: B-SLIM

Bilash's Second Language Instructional Model (B-SLIM)

