

An Evaluation of a Commercial Coursebook for a University Foundation English Course: Selection, Implementation and Effects

Apiwan Nuangpolmak

Chulalongkorn University Language Institute

Abstract

This paper reports a comprehensive evaluation of a commercial coursebook involving multiple perspectives. Three research objectives were proposed and different data collection methods were employed accordingly. First, to understand the criteria used in selecting the coursebook, interviews were conducted with the materials selection committee. Second, to explore opinions of students and teachers on the implementation of the coursebook, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. To specify, 527 students representing 18 disciplines and 33 teachers who were teaching the course completed the questionnaire. In addition, 20 students and seven teachers later participated in interviews. Lastly, to examine the extent that the coursebook contributed to the enhancement of English proficiency, students' achievements were compared in terms of pre- and post-test scores. The findings from the study revealed that the selection of a coursebook was conducted informally in that each evaluator used her own experience and personal judgment instead of a checklist with pre-determined criteria. With regard to students' and teachers' opinions on the coursebook, it was found that although the majority provided positive responses to questionnaire items, some negative reviews of the coursebook emerged from the interview data. Finally, the comparison between pre- and post-test scores suggested that the coursebook had contributed to the students' development of English proficiency in that the mean post-test scores differed significantly from the mean pre-test scores.

Keywords: commercial coursebooks, textbook selection, ELT materials, materials evaluation

บทคัดย่อ

บทความวิจัยนี้รายงานภาพรวมของการประเมินหนังสือแบบเรียนภาษาอังกฤษจากมุมมองต่าง ๆ โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์ 3 ประการและใช้วิธีการเก็บข้อมูลที่แตกต่างกัน ดังนี้ (1) เพื่อศึกษาหลักเกณฑ์ที่ใช้ในการคัดเลือกหนังสือแบบเรียน โดยเก็บข้อมูลจากการสัมภาษณ์คณะกรรมการคัดเลือกหนังสือแบบเรียน (2) เพื่อสำรวจความคิดเห็นของผู้เรียนและผู้สอนเกี่ยวกับการใช้หนังสือแบบเรียนทั้งในเชิงปริมาณและเชิงคุณภาพ โดยใช้แบบสอบถามในการเก็บข้อมูลจากผู้เรียนจำนวน 527 คนจาก 18 สาขาวิชาและผู้สอนจำนวน 33 คน และใช้การสัมภาษณ์ในการเก็บข้อมูลจากผู้เรียนจำนวน 20 คนและผู้สอนจำนวน 7 คน และ (3) เพื่อศึกษาผลของการใช้หนังสือแบบเรียนที่มีต่อการพัฒนาความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษของผู้เรียน โดยเปรียบเทียบคะแนนสอบก่อนเรียนและหลังเรียน จากการศึกษาพบว่า การคัดเลือกหนังสือแบบเรียนทำอย่างไม่เป็นทางการ กล่าวคือ ผู้ประเมินใช้ประสบการณ์และพิจารณาญาณส่วนบุคคลในการคัดเลือก แทนการใช้แบบประเมินที่มีหลักเกณฑ์กำหนดไว้แล้ว ในส่วนของความคิดเห็นของผู้เรียนและผู้สอนนั้น ถึงแม้ว่าข้อมูลจากแบบสอบถามส่วนใหญ่จะแสดงความคิดเห็นในเชิงบวก แต่ข้อมูลบางส่วนจากการสัมภาษณ์นำเสนอความคิดเห็นในเชิงลบ เมื่อเปรียบเทียบคะแนนสอบก่อนเรียนและหลังเรียน พบว่าหนังสือแบบเรียนมีส่วนช่วยในการพัฒนาความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษของผู้เรียน โดยคะแนนเฉลี่ยจากการสอบหลังเรียนแตกต่างจากคะแนนเฉลี่ยจากการสอบก่อนเรียนอย่างมีนัยยะสำคัญทางสถิติ

คำสำคัญ: หนังสือแบบเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ การคัดเลือกตำราเรียน สื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ การประเมินแบบเรียน

Introduction

According to Graves (2003, p.226), commercial coursebooks are defined as “pre-packaged, published books used by the students and teacher as a primary basis for a language course”. In English classrooms all over the world today, commercial coursebooks play a more prominent role as the main teaching and learning resources than other types of materials. However, the scholars’ opinions on commercial coursebooks vary. For the advocates, coursebooks are praised for their systematic and structured presentation of content (Cunningsworth, 1995), credibility (Sheldon, 1988), accuracy of language input (Zacharias, 2005), professional layout and visual appeal (Kayapinar, 2009). Moreover, commercial coursebooks provide a sense of security for inexperienced teachers (Richards, 2014), minimize teaching

preparation time (Tomlinson, 2008), ensure accountability and standardization (McGrath, 2002), and most importantly, are cost-effective (Kayapinar, 2009) because a coursebook package often includes an audio CD, a DVD, internet materials and even test papers.

On the other hand, there are many criticisms against commercial coursebooks. First and foremost, since these coursebooks are developed for the global market, they often fail to address learners' individual differences (Allwright, 1981). With their highly structured format, coursebooks are accused of deskilling teachers by leaving only little room for taking initiative or making decision (Graves, 2003) as well as leading to students' boredom from experiencing a repetitive style of presentation and practice (Charalambous, 2011). Furthermore, commercial coursebooks are heavily criticized for biased representation of English varieties and world cultures (Gray, 2000). In terms of learning outcomes, concerns are also raised whether coursebooks can promote long-term communicative competence (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2013) as they tend to focus more on pre-specified language forms than on negotiation of meanings (Graves, 2003). Coursebooks rarely represent authentic language use as the materials are written specifically to incorporate teaching points (Richards, 2002) and many of them fail to create a scaffolding where one activity is built upon the previous one and serves as a preparation for the next (Tomlinson, 2010).

Owing to the vigorous debates regarding the value of commercial coursebooks, studies have been conducted to investigate this type of materials in three domains: production, content and use (Harwood, 2014). While the investigation into the coursebooks' design process and the analysis of coursebooks' linguistic, pragmatic and cultural content are overwhelming, research that explores how coursebooks are used is limited (ibid.). It is argued that the value of the materials should not be determined without the perspectives of materials users (Garton & Graves, 2014). Accordingly, studies on coursebooks consumption have examined views of teachers toward a specific coursebook (e.g. Riasati & Zare, 2010; Tok, 2010) or observed how teachers actually used coursebook materials in their classrooms (Arikan, 2009). What lacking in these studies, however, is the learners' voices which

represent another important part of materials users. Furthermore, in order to conduct a full assessment of the materials' value, there needs to be an investigation into the selection of such materials, classroom implementation and its outcome (Cunningworth, 1995; Tomlinson, 2003). Perspectives of individuals involved the process are seen as vital to this evaluation.

The present paper reports a materials evaluation study which was conducted at Chulalongkorn University. Like most universities in Thailand of which curricula mandate at least two compulsory English courses, the university offers two foundation courses to be enrolled by first-year students of 18 disciplines. With some 5,000 students enrolling in these English courses each year, the adoption of a commercial coursebook as the main teaching and learning materials has become a preferred practice in recent years in order to ensure feasibility and standardization. To evaluate a new coursebook for this foundation course, the study proposed to (1) investigate the criteria based on which the coursebook was selected; (2) explore teachers' and students' opinions on the materials; and (3) assess the effectiveness of the materials in promoting learning outcomes.

Literature Review

According to Tomlinson (2003, p.15), materials evaluation "involves making judgments about the effect of the materials on the people using them". Materials can be evaluated during three stages: pre-use, in-use and post-use (Cunningworth, 1995; Tomlinson, 2003). At the pre-use stage, materials are evaluated for their potential value to the future users whereas in-use evaluation is concerned with the observation of materials being used. Meanwhile, post-use evaluation investigates the outcomes of the materials.

Prior to adoption, commercial coursebooks are often evaluated, either formally or informally. Depending on the points of departure, these coursebooks can be assessed for potential usage or contextual suitability. The former focuses on the features of a specific coursebook with no predetermined class in mind whereas the latter involves finding a coursebook to match the pre-existing course (Cunningworth, 1995). Simply put, the pre-

use evaluation can be done so as to develop a course based on the book or to see whether there is any book that will be good for the existing syllabus.

Several scholars have posited criteria for pre-use materials evaluation. For instance, Cunningsworth (1995) proposed four main guidelines for coursebook selection namely (1) coursebooks should address learners' needs and parallel with the objectives of the study program; (2) coursebooks should reflect the language use of learners both at present and in the future; (3) coursebooks should accommodate individual differences in the learning process; and (4) coursebooks should facilitate learning. Meanwhile, McDonough and Shaw (2003) argue that assessment should be made on materials' usability, generalizability, adaptability and flexibility if they are to be integrated into the existing syllabus. In their evaluation of six global coursebooks developed by various British publishers, Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013) assessed the coursebooks' potential value against these following criteria:

- providing extensive exposure to English in use
- engaging learners affectively
- engaging learners cognitively
- setting an achievable challenge
- helping learners to personalize learning
- assisting learners in making discoveries about how English is used
- providing opportunities to use language for communication
- helping learners to develop cultural awareness
- helping learners to make use of the English environment outside the classroom
- catering for the needs of all learners
- providing the flexibility needed for effective localization
- helping learners to continue to learn English after the course
- helping learners to use English as Lingua Franca
- helping learners to become effective communicators in English
- achieving the stated learning objectives

Many of the criteria used by Tomlinson and Masuhara coincided with principles of materials development (e.g. Dörnyei, 2001; Hall, 1995; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Nunan, 1988; Tomlinson, 2011) which have been influenced by second language acquisition theories, second language teaching methodology and motivational strategies.

There are three approaches commonly employed for pre-use materials evaluation. The first approach is impressionistic method. This method yields a general impression of the material. Although the assessment may cover a wide spectrum of such material, it can only address each of the features superficially (Cunningworth, 1995) and the views of the evaluators are often criticized for subjectivity (McGrath, 2002). This is why the second approach, the checklist method, is preferred when objectivity is concerned. McGrath (2002) asserts four advantages of checklist as systematic, cost effective, convenient and explicit. He claims that not only does checklist offer a common framework, understood by everyone involved, which covers all important features to be evaluated, but this method also allows information to be recorded quickly and kept in easy-for-comparison format. Nevertheless, to ensure the strength of this method, the criteria included in the checklist may need to be updated from time to time to reflect the current context of use and/or the trends in materials design. Finally, there is also the in-depth method for pre-use materials evaluation. As this approach encourages the evaluators to closely examine the specific features of materials such as units of study or lesson extracts to determine their value, it yields richer information about the materials in question. However, this approach tends to be criticized for its partiality since it only focuses on some selected samples which may or may not accurately represent the whole materials. Another drawback of this approach is the amount of time and expertise required (McGrath, 2002). Regardless of the approach taken, the results of the pre-use evaluation are predictive in nature. It can only serve the purpose of coursebook selection, but in no way guarantees the success in practice. This is why materials evaluation during in-use and post-use stages is also encouraged.

There are two main objectives of in-use evaluation. First is to re-examine the selection criteria used during the pre-use stage whether they are realistically met in the classrooms, and second is to investigate how teachers actually use the coursebook (McGrath, 2002). To evaluate a coursebook while it is being used, Tomlinson and Masuhara (2007, p.5) suggest some observable aspects of the materials that can be measured:

- Clarity of instructions
- Clarity of layout
- Comprehensibility of texts
- Achievability of tasks
- Flexibility of the materials
- Appeal of the materials
- Motivating power of the materials

In-use materials evaluation is claimed to yield direct benefits to the quality of teaching and learning since this type of evaluation tends to focus on “moment-by-moment assessment” rather than looking at the materials as a whole (McGrath, 2002, p.180). While the in-use evaluation focuses on what is going on in the actual classrooms, post-use materials evaluation examines what happens after that. Post-use evaluation is claimed to be the most valuable type of evaluation as it can measure both short-term and long-term effects of materials on the learners. Short-term effects of materials are concerned with motivation and immediate learning whereas long-term effects involve durable learning and application. When conducting post-use materials evaluation, the following questions should be asked (Tomlinson, 2003, p.25):

- What do learners know which they did not know before starting to use materials?
- What do learners still not know despite using materials?
- What can learners do which they could not do before starting to use materials?
- What can learners still not do despite using materials?
- To what extent have materials prepared learners for examination?

- What effects have materials had on the confidence of learners?
- What effects have materials had on the motivation of learners?
- To what extent have materials helped learners become independent learners?

In other words, post-use evaluation assessed the ‘gains’ that learners have made from being engaged with the learning materials both in terms of academic and affective outcomes. The academic and psychological impact of materials is not easily observed and therefore is often indirectly measured. For instance, in order to determine what learners know/do not know and can do/cannot do, test scores may be collected as they imply the levels of learners’ understanding of the issues. Furthermore, documents such as test papers need to be examined to see how learners actually perform on the test. In this sense, the scores and the exam papers can suggest what has been taught successfully/unsuccessfully by the materials. Likewise, to measure the affective impact, self-reported information, gathered through questionnaires, interviews, and diaries, can shed light on how learners feel about the materials.

Studies on Coursebook Evaluation

A review of literature shows that there have been a number of studies concerned with coursebook evaluation. For example, Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013) reported their review of six intermediate-level coursebooks namely *The Big Picture*, *Global*, *English Unlimited*, *New Headway* (fourth edition), *Speakout*, and *Outcomes* against 15 criteria to determine the materials’ potential to facilitate long-term acquisition of the second language. It was found that only two coursebooks; *Global* and *English Unlimited* showed likelihood of promoting long-term acquisition while the others were deemed unlikely to be effective in facilitating acquisition. *English Unlimited*, specifically, was praised in terms of its potential to help learners personalize their learning in that “The units start with personal questions and most of the activities invite the learners to make connections to their own experience”

(p.239). However, the coursebook was heavily criticized for its limitation in catering to the needs of all learners. The reviewers commented that the materials writers had made an assumption that “learners are middle-class, well-educated, much travelled, urban computer users” and that “the expressions provided for conflict resolution are all based on British middle-class expectations” which may not be required in the contexts where learners will use the language (p.242). Furthermore, there was also a negative review on the coursebook’s shortcoming in encouraging the use of English outside class. Regarding this, the experts pointed out that “simulation with roles in conflict resolution may lead to actual use in real life, but the book does not actually suggest developing such skills outside the classroom” (p.242).

In addition to an evaluation conducted by experts, there are other studies that involved opinions of teachers. Dat (2008) interviewed experienced English teachers from various countries in Southeast Asia and found that the majority of EFL teachers preferred imported (global) coursebooks over local materials because they contained appealing pictures and illustrations, offered interesting topics, were organized systematically, ensured linguistic accuracy and provided assistance to teachers in terms of “how to conduct activities, what to emphasize and how to answer many questions” (p.265). In contrast, they pointed out weaknesses of the global coursebooks with regard to their inaccurate representation of cultural images, lack of meaningful language use, linguistic difficulty, irrelevance to local examination system, and high cost. Similar to the findings of Dat’s study, Zacharias’ (2005) research revealed that the majority of the teachers surveyed, predominantly non-native speakers, preferred internationally-published materials to locally-produced ones because of both credibility and availability.

These similar results were also seen in other smaller-scale studies that examined characteristics of particular coursebooks. For instance, Riasati and Zare (2010) set out to determine the value and suitability of *New Interchange*. They surveyed opinions of 35 Iranian teachers regarding the coursebook and found that accessibility, cost-effective, clear layout and

organization, integrated skills, and teacher manual were the positive attributes the teachers saw in the materials. On the other hand, the teachers stated that the coursebook's shortcomings were irrelevance to Iranian culture, incompatibility with learners' linguistic capacity, insufficient focus on writing skill, lack of supplementary materials, and too many testing exercises. Similarly, Tok (2010) reported strengths and weaknesses of *Spot On* as evaluated by 46 Turkish teachers. The survey revealed that teachers saw interesting topics, multi-skill development, and teacher manual as advantages of the coursebook while lack of meaningful practice, unrealistic context, and repetitive tasks were named as its disadvantages.

Although there is little research that deals with learners' evaluation of coursebooks (Harwood, 2014), those studies that do reported teachers' and learners' agreement on certain issues. To illustrate, Masuhara and Tomlinson (2008) surveyed opinions of 60 teachers and 119 students and found that both parties would welcome more challenging tasks and relevant, meaningful content from the coursebooks. Students also agreed with teachers in their preference of materials with flexibility; i.e. the ones that cater for different learning and teaching styles. In the same vein, Litz (2005) conducted a survey with eight instructors and 500 first-year students following an introduction of a new coursebook called *English Firsthand#2* at Sung Kyun Kwan University, South Korea. The study found that the strength of this coursebook, as agreed upon by both instructors and students, lay in its attention to sub-skills such as skimming and note-taking. Both groups of participants gave negative comments of the coursebook on the issues of inadequate revision and practice, lack of balanced activities, and inability to present language points in motivating contexts. Meanwhile, Ahmed (2016) reported an evaluation of a piloted local coursebook commissioned by the Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia. It was found that 214 students and three instructors who were surveyed provided generally positive feedback, with average scores of 3.9 and 4.1 out of a 5-point scale respectively. However, shortcomings of the book were seen in its lack of activities that promote students' productive language use and the unattractive design. These two negative aspects were also mentioned by Dat (2014) as the weaknesses of many domestic coursebooks.

In addition to research that examined the perspectives of materials users, there have been a few studies that focused on how the coursebooks were actually used in the classroom. For example, Arikan (2009) analyzed the observation notes taken by practicum students in Turkey on how the observed teachers used the assigned coursebook in their secondary EFL classes. The findings revealed that teachers occasionally skipped or omitted parts of the book. They tended to pay more attention to reading comprehension and vocabulary exercises and less to writing activities. Many also ignored listening practice and hardly played the accompanying CD. There were a small number of teachers who decided to forgo the coursebook and conducted their classes based entirely on their own materials. The discovery in Arikan's study coincides with comments of many scholars that classroom teachers do not religiously follow the coursebooks page by page (McGrath, 2002; Richards, 2002; Graves, 2003).

Methodology

The present study was designed as a mixed-method research in which both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were followed. As Dörnyei (2007) points out, a mixed-method design has an advantage in that the weaknesses of one method may be substituted with the strengths of the other method. In the concurrent mixed method design, not only the textual data which yield rich description were collected, but numeric data which allow for quantification were also gathered. These two forms of data are collected at the same time and treated as having equal roles in the study. Both forms of data are integrated to provide a comprehensive analysis in the interpretation of the findings (Creswell, 2009).

Research Setting

The coursebook under investigation is *English Unlimited (Upper-Intermediate)* (Tilbury, Hendra, Rea & Clementson, 2011). The coursebook was selected as the main instructional materials for *Experiential English 1 and 2*, compulsory foundation English courses for all faculties except Faculty of Arts, which are offered by Chulalongkorn University Language Institute (CULI).

Although there are 14 units in this coursebook, only eight units were selected; four units to be covered in *Experiential English 1* (offered in the first semester) and the other four units in *Experiential English 2* (offered in the second semester). This study was conducted during the first semester of academic year 2012 when the coursebook was first used; thus, the scope of this investigation only included the four units taught in the first semester namely *Unit 1: Talented*, *Unit 2: Misunderstandings*, *Unit 4: Local Knowledge*, and *Unit 6: Virtual World*.

Participants

There were three main groups of participants. Firstly, to examine the criteria used in selecting a coursebook (pre-use evaluation), three teachers who were part of the materials selection committee were interviewed. These three teachers were selected because each represented one of the three teaching divisions at CULI namely Sciences and Technology, Business, and Social Sciences and Humanities. Secondly, to assess the value of the coursebook in the real teaching context, questionnaires were sent out to all 86 instructors of *Experiential English 1* (39 full-time lecturers and 47 part-time teachers) and 33 were returned (38.37%). Of these, seven instructors, with teaching experience ranging from two to 30 years, agreed to participate in subsequent semi-structured interviews. The last group of participants was students who enrolled in the course. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table of sample size determination, at least 357 samples are required for a population around 5,000 with a confidence level of 95%. In this study, purposive sampling was employed because the data collected from student participants were for two purposes; to investigate their perspectives toward the use of the coursebook and to explore the effects of the coursebook in terms of learning outcomes (post-use evaluation). Due to feasibility issues in the administration of pre-test and post-test, student samples were selected by sections that they were registered in. These sections, however, were purposely selected to represent all the 18 disciplines to which the course was offered. All in all, 536 students (10.57% of the population) sat for pre-test and post-test. Of these, 527 students completed the questionnaire and

20 (seven males and 13 females) voluntarily gave in-depth interviews. These 20 students also represented three streams of disciplines: Sciences and Technology (Faculties of Medicine, Pharmaceutical Science, Architecture, Engineering, Science, and Allied Health Science), Business (Faculties of Commerce and Accountancy, and Economics), and Social Sciences and Humanities (Faculties of Law, Political Science, Communication Arts, and Education).

Instruments

As implied by mixed method approach, a variety of research instruments were used in this study for data collection.

1. Questionnaires

To survey users' opinions on the coursebook, questionnaires were administered to both teachers and students. The questionnaires administered to the students consist of four main parts. The first part surveys background information of the respondents, namely, gender, age, faculty, years of prior English study, and self-assessment of four English skills. This is followed by questions regarding students' needs and goals in learning English. Part three is the main content of the questionnaire which focuses on materials evaluation. In this part, there are 15 questionnaire items concerning three main aspects of materials: appeal, relevance and utility. These three factors are commonly considered when designing materials as they are believed to attract and maintain learners' engagement with the materials (Dörnyei, 2001; Brohy, 2004; Tomlinson, 2010). Last but not least, part four of the questionnaire is open-ended for further suggestions and/or comments. Similar to the student's version, there are three parts in the teacher's questionnaire; one being demographic questions such as gender, years of teaching, faculty taught, and number of sections taught, while the other two parts comprise materials evaluation questions and open-ended comments, respectively. The questions regarding materials evaluation in both versions of the questionnaire are identical, with exception of an additional question about teacher's manual in the teacher's version. The students were administered questionnaires in Thai

to minimize the language barriers. However, the English version was administered to the teachers as there were also some foreign staffs teaching this course. Experts were consulted to ensure the validity of questionnaire content and the consistency of translations. The questionnaire's reliability was confirmed by a Cronbach's Alpha value of .89.

2. Interviews

In order to compensate for the questionnaires' limitations in providing rich and descriptive data (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010), interviews were also conducted with some of the students and teachers to further explore their views on the coursebook. In addition, semi-structured interviews were administered to three CULI instructors who were part of the materials selection committee in order to gain insights of how this coursebook was reviewed and selected as the main materials for the course. The participants had options of giving interviews in English or in their mother tongue. Each interview lasted between 20 and 40 minutes.

3. Pre-test and Post-test

To assess the impact of the coursebook on the learners' development of English proficiency, the pre-and-post-test method was employed. This followed Tomlinson's notion (2003) that the impact of materials can only be measured indirectly by implying from what learners know/do not know or can/cannot do after using the materials. Computerized Assessment System for English Communication (CASEC) was used to test the English proficiency of the student samples from all 18 faculties. CASEC is an adaptive computer-based English test that focuses on general communicative skills and topics. The CASEC testing method was developed based on Item Response Theory (IRT) which not only aims for high accuracy measurement but can also be equated to other proficiency scores such as TOEIC (www.global.cassec.com). The justification for using CASEC as testing instrument in this study was because the test is of international standard, developed by an accredited organization (The Japan Institute for Educational Measurement, Inc. (JIEM)), and the test content covers topics of general

English which *English Unlimited* also focuses on. This coincides with suggestion of Ellis (as cited in McGrath, 2002, p.198) that to measure the learning effects, the learners should be tested in a parallel situation where the similar knowledge/skills are required.

Data Collection

1. During the third week of the first semester, student samples, representing the 18 faculties, were asked to take the CASEC test of their own volition. These students were informed of the purpose of the study and the benefits of their participation and that anyone who did not wish to do so would be excluded from the study without any adverse effects. Later in the fifteenth week of the semester, students were asked to sit for a post-test.
2. Three teachers who were part of materials selection committee were interviewed individually during the semester, using the same set of interview questions.
3. On the day that the students sat for the post-test, they were asked to fill out the questionnaire. In that same week, questionnaires were also sent out to Experiential English teachers.
4. After the final examination, 20 students who had left their contact details on the questionnaires, indicating their willingness to provide more perspectives, were asked to come in for interviews, as pairs or small groups, using the same list of interview questions.
5. Seven teachers were interviewed individually at the end of the semester, using the same guideline questions.

Data Analyses

The quantitative data, namely the questionnaire responses and students' CASEC test scores, were analyzed statistically. Meanwhile, the qualitative data yielded by the semi-structured interview records were transcribed and coded for emerging themes. Both students' and teachers' comments in the open-ended section of the questionnaire were also analyzed qualitatively. Triangulation of different sources of data was

conducted to ensure the trustworthiness of the analysis (Rallis & Rossman, 2009).

Results of the Study

In order to determine the value of *English Unlimited*, the results obtained from the various sources will be presented according to the purposes of the study.

1. Criteria used in selecting the coursebook

The findings from the interviews conducted with three members of the materials selection committee suggested that the procedures for coursebook selection were done strictly internally and informally among a small group of academic staff. The materials selection committee appeared to consist of selected instructors who either had been teaching *Experience English* for numerous years or were seen as experienced members of the teaching faculty. It was unclear how the initial process of coursebook selection was conducted but it was revealed that the selection committee were asked to evaluate the suitability of only two coursebooks.

Despite the lack of materials evaluation checklist, each member of the selection committee came up with similar personal criteria to compare the two coursebook finalists. The findings suggested that two standpoints were taken when assessing the coursebook. The first was from learner's standpoint. The committee were putting themselves in first-year students' shoes in order to find materials with appealing topics, relevant skills and appropriate level of difficulty.

Committee Member 1: "As for content, I was trying to think of the students – what they would be interested to read, relevant to their lives, or appropriate to the modern world."

Committee Member 1: "If you consider the skills offered in this coursebook, I think students can use them. For their future study, there's this language function that they can use like expressing opinions which they will need in EAP courses. The students will need to talk about similarities and differences. Or even job interview [skills] is something they will certainly need."

Committee Member 2: “As there were students from several disciplines, an intermediate level of a coursebook was to be selected.”

Committee Member 3: “We aimed at the middle. If the students are too advanced for the coursebook we chose, teachers need to give them extra work. But if the students’ level of proficiency is lower than the [level of] coursebook, teachers need to give them a little push to reach that level.”

However, taking another standpoint as teachers/evaluators, the committee members also assessed the materials in terms of potential usage. While reviewing the coursebook, the committee members tended to visualize the preparation and the implementation of the coursebook in the classroom setting.

Committee Member 1: “I like the content of this coursebook because I think it’s easy to lead in to the lesson.”

Committee Member 2: “I was trying to see whether the content can be expanded into tasks.”

Committee Member 1: “As a teacher, I assessed whether there were any [language] functions to teach – anything students should learn. It would be good if grammar is in there. If exercises are included, it’s even better. Then, there isn’t much else left to do.”

Committee Member 2: “This coursebook lends itself to interaction. It encourages the involvement of learners.”

In summary, the committee found that, compared to the other coursebook finalist, *English Unlimited* offered more practical, better-structured, integrated activities for four skills which were easier to implement, yet allowed possibilities for adaptation/expansion. In addition, there were contemporary themes as well as vocabulary and grammar in context. Hence, the book was chosen to be the main instructional materials for the foundation course. However, it is worth mentioning that the committee assessed the suitability of the coursebook as a whole. The selection of units to be taught was decided later by another group of academic staff who were involved in the administration of the course.

2. Teachers' and students' appraisals of the coursebook implementation

In this section, the findings from the analysis of students' and teachers' questionnaire data, including their written comments in the open-ended section, and verbal information collected during the subsequent semi-structured interviews will be reported. As Tomlinson (2003) emphasizes, the retrospective evaluation of materials mainly concerns the impact of such materials on learners' academic and affective development. Accordingly, this section first presents the findings that deal with the motivational aspect of the materials. That is whether the materials had engaged learners through various affective domains such as relevance, utility and appeal (Brohy, 2004; Dörnyei, 2001; Tomlinson, 2010).

In general, both students and teachers provided positive responses to questionnaire items with regard to relevance of *English Unlimited* to the students' needs and real-life usage. Table 1 shows the views of students and teachers on the coursebook's relevance and usefulness.

Table 1. Views of students (Ss) and teachers (Ts) on the relevance and utility of the coursebook

| Statement | Strongly disagree | | Disagree | | Agree | | Strongly agree | |
|---|-------------------|-------|----------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|--------|
| | Ss | Ts | Ss | Ts | Ss | Ts | Ss | Ts |
| The content of the coursebook was relevant to students' needs. | 2.8% | 3.03% | 23.1% | 15.15% | 67.7% | 63.64% | 6.3% | 18.18% |
| The content of the coursebook was useful and applicable to real life. | 2.47% | 0% | 13.09% | 9.09% | 74.95% | 72.73% | 9.49% | 18.18% |

As shown in Table 1, the majority of students and teachers surveyed agreed that the content of the coursebook addressed the students' English learning needs and future application. This view was also supported by the interview data.

Student 15: "The book helped me a lot with grammar because there was an explanation of grammar at the back of the book so it's useful for me."

Student 12: "I especially liked the writing part. I think I can really apply it in my real life such as responding to emails and recommending places to go."

Teacher 4: "The good thing about this coursebook is that it covers all four skills."

Despite a generally positive review, it should be highlighted that approximately a quarter of students did not think that the coursebook was relevant to their needs. Some comments from the interviews also reflected this dissatisfaction.

Student 13: "The content of the coursebook looks pretty much like what I'd studied in high school – I thought I'd get to learn something different at university level."

Student 14: "I feel like what I actually need to learn isn't in the textbook. I'll just do some exercises and look at nice illustrations in the book."

Meanwhile, there were teachers' concerns regarding the irrelevance of some tasks and the insufficient attention paid to some necessary skills.

Teacher 1: "The grammar explanation for each unit was too short. Although there's more in the appendix, I still think it's too little."

Teacher 4: "The disadvantage of this book is that there's so little information about writing. It just gives you the finished product. I don't think weak students can produce one right off the bat like that."

To investigate the appeal of the coursebook, a few essential motivational factors were focused, namely variety, interest and challenge. These factors are claimed to promote learners' engagement and positive

learning experiences (Dörnyei, 2001; Tomlinson, 2010). The survey results regarding students' and teachers' appraisals on the appeal of *English Unlimited* are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Views of students (Ss) and teachers (Ts) on the appeal of the coursebook

| Statement | Strongly disagree | | Disagree | | Agree | | Strongly agree | |
|--|-------------------|-------|----------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|--------|
| | Ss | Ts | Ss | Ts | Ss | Ts | Ss | Ts |
| There was a variety of content in the coursebook. | 0.76% | 0% | 11.57% | 9.09% | 74.2% | 69.7% | 13.47% | 21.21% |
| There was a variety of activities in the coursebook. | 1.33% | 0% | 20.3% | 24.24% | 70.4% | 54.55% | 7.97% | 21.21% |
| The content of Unit 1 (Talented) was interesting. | 0.76% | 3.03% | 13.66% | 9.09% | 76.28% | 60.61% | 9.3% | 27.27% |
| The content of Unit 2 (Misunderstanding) was interesting. | 0.76% | 0% | 11.57% | 33.33% | 76.66% | 54.55% | 11.01% | 12.12% |
| The content of Unit 4 (Local Knowledge) was interesting. | 0.76% | 0% | 9.68% | 21.21% | 77.8% | 57.58% | 11.76% | 21.21% |
| The content of Unit 6 (Virtual World) was interesting. | 0.76% | 0% | 11.4% | 12.12% | 74.38% | 54.55% | 13.47% | 33.33% |
| The level of difficulty of the coursebook was appropriate. | 2.09% | 9.09% | 15.49% | 15.15% | 70.78% | 57.58% | 11.20% | 18.18% |

As seen in Table 2, both students and teachers agreed that the coursebook achieved its variety, through the topics more than it did through

the activities. In general, both groups rated all of the four units studied in the first semester favorably. It was apparent that the students enjoyed Unit 4 the most (89.56%) and Unit 1 the least (85.53%) when combining the responses for both 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. Conversely, the teachers found Unit 1 the most interesting (87.88%) while Unit 2 appeared to be least favored by the teachers, with 11 out of 33 responses (33.33%) cited disagreement. The interview data were also in accordance with these results.

Student 17: "I like Unit 4 because I was able to learn about different places around the world. It opened up my horizons."

Student 13: "The content of Unit 1 wasn't much about us. I don't know – it wasn't interesting. Other units had current news or some interesting places. This unit didn't seem to have anything."

Student 9: "This topic about talent, how practice makes perfect, seems to be in all coursebooks. I've studied this same theme repeatedly so many times. It's just so popular as a topic that I found nothing new in it."

Teacher 1: "I think this topic [Unit 1] is good. Since these students have just got into the university, I think they should learn about these things. If they can apply them to their lives, they'll be successful in their studies."

Teacher 3: "The topic [Unit 1] is good because it makes students aware of themselves. It can be related to personal experience."

Teacher 5: "It looked like Unit 2 hadn't got much focus in terms of content. I wasn't really sure what it was about. I tended to teach more about grammar in this unit. We didn't discuss much about the theme of the unit."

Teacher 1: "It was difficult to teach Unit 2. The topic was rather abstract. It was difficult to try to relate it to students' lives. There wasn't anything to attract their attention; nothing like tourism [Unit 4] or computer games [Unit 6]."

In terms of challenge, the majority of students surveyed (81.98%) thought the coursebook level was appropriate for them. Likewise, more than half of teacher respondents (75.76%) agreed that the coursebook provided the appropriate level of difficulty. However, it should be noted that almost a

quarter of teacher respondents indicated their disagreement with the level of the coursebook (15.15% and 9.09% for ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’ respectively). The perception of ‘appropriateness’ may depend on the proficiency of students who use the book, as seen in Teacher 2’s comment below.

Teacher 2: “[The coursebook] isn’t appropriate for weak students. It’s just too difficult. For the strong students, it’s okay; they could do it and it was quite challenging for them. But for the weak ones, they would be quite discouraged whenever they were asked to perform any tasks.”

Besides the affective impact, the learning impact of the materials both in short-term (i.e. preparing for an exam) and long-term (i.e. developing proficiency) was also evaluated by the students and the teachers. Table 3 shows the analysis of the responses to the questionnaire items regarding the learning impact of the coursebook.

Table 3. Views of students (Ss) and teachers (Ts) on the learning impact of the coursebook

| Statement | Strongly disagree | | Disagree | | Agree | | Strongly agree | |
|---|-------------------|-------|----------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|-------|
| | Ss | Ts | Ss | Ts | Ss | Ts | Ss | Ts |
| The coursebook facilitated performance on the exam. | 5.12% | 6.06% | 26% | 36.36% | 59.96% | 54.55% | 8.92% | 3.03% |
| The coursebook assisted the overall development of English proficiency. | 2.84% | 0% | 16.51% | 21.21% | 71.16% | 75.76% | 9.49% | 3.03% |

Even though the questionnaire data shown in Table 3 revealed that the majority of students (68.88%) and teachers (57.58%) could recognize the

coursebook's short-term learning impact, the percentage of respondents who did not think that the coursebook had facilitated exam performance was noteworthy (31.12% of the students and 42.42% of the teachers). The main reason for this negative evaluation was perhaps because of the misalignment between the coursebook's content and the exam requirements. During the interviews, both students and teachers made extensive comments with regard to this issue.

Student 13: "What was in the exam and what we actually learned were two different things. What was in the exam wasn't there in the book."

Student 6: "I felt that the exams focused too much on grammar which the book didn't have anyway."

Teacher 2: "Although this coursebook offers integrated skills, I felt that we focused too much on reading and writing because that's how the exam was."

Teacher 4: "I don't think the coursebook helped students much with grammar. Most of them used the supplement worksheets to prepare for this part in the exam."

This negative review, however, should not be taken as an unfavorable evaluation of the coursebook. Due to constraints in administrative feasibility, the assessment format of the course focused on reading and writing skills, including the test on discrete vocabulary and grammar items, rather than four integrated skills as presented by the coursebook. The students had been familiarized with the test format mostly through supplement worksheets; therefore, they may not feel that the coursebook itself was much helpful in this regard.

For long-term learning impact, the majority of both students and teachers agreed with the potential of the coursebook in assisting the overall development of proficiency. Despite this, some teachers still voiced their concerns about the unequal distribution of skills focused in the coursebook which, in their opinions, could lead to the development of one or two specific skills, but not the overall proficiency.

Teacher 6: “The skill that students most likely gain from this coursebook is listening.”

Teacher 7: “It could develop some skills – not so much reading skill though. But it’s probably good for [developing] listening skill. They could also gain vocabulary and idioms.”

To sum up, a considerable number of students and teachers had somewhat negative appraisals toward the coursebook in terms of learning impact. These unfavorable views appeared to be influenced by a perceived mismatch between the content offered by the coursebook and the assessment format mandated by the course.

3. Effects of the coursebook on students’ learning

According to principles in retrospective materials evaluation, one way to assess the effectiveness of learning materials is to measure the learning gains (McGrath, 2002). In this study, Computerized Assessment System for English Communication (CASEC) was employed as a measurement of students’ English proficiency before and after the implementation of the coursebook. There were 606 students who took the pre-test and 557 who did the post-test. For the purpose of comparative analysis, data of only 536 students who completed both tests were included in the t-test analysis. Table 4 compares the scores of pre-test and post-test.

Table 4. Comparison between pre- and post-test scores (N=536)

| CASEC | Mean | SD | Cor. | Sig. | t | Sig.(2-tailed) |
|-----------------|--------|--------|------|------|--------|----------------|
| Part I (pre) | 151.27 | 41.19 | .807 | .000 | -3.300 | .001 |
| Part I (post) | 154.90 | 40.91 | | | | |
| Part II (pre) | 147.39 | 39.81 | .773 | .000 | -2.385 | .017 |
| Part II (post) | 150.16 | 39.81 | | | | |
| Part III (pre) | 157.46 | 41.56 | .777 | .000 | -2.325 | .020 |
| Part III (post) | 160.23 | 41.19 | | | | |
| Part IV (pre) | 133.13 | 42.10 | .761 | .000 | -3.135 | .002 |
| Part IV (post) | 137.07 | 42.21 | | | | |
| Total (pre) | 589.24 | 146.80 | .929 | .000 | -5.393 | .000 |
| Total (post) | 602.08 | 146.04 | | | | |

As shown in Table 4, the pre-test and post-test scores in all four parts of CASEC test differ significantly. In part 1, there is a significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores ($t = -3.300$, $\text{sig} = .001$) in that the mean score of the post-test is higher than that of the pre-test ($M_{\text{pre}} = 151.27$, $M_{\text{post}} = 154.90$). The scores of part 2 are also different significantly between the two tests ($t = -2.385$, $\text{sig} = .017$) in that there is an increase in the average post-test score ($M_{\text{pre}} = 147.39$, $M_{\text{post}} = 150.16$). Similarly, the mean pre-test score of part 3 differs significantly from that of the post-test ($t = -2.325$, $\text{sig} = .020$) with the former being lower than the latter ($M_{\text{pre}} = 157.46$, $M_{\text{post}} = 160.23$). Lastly, a significant difference can be seen between the pre- and post-test scores of part 4 ($t = -3.135$, $\text{sig} = .002$) in that the mean score of the post-test increases from that of the pre-test ($M_{\text{pre}} = 133.13$, $M_{\text{post}} = 137.07$). According to the statistical analysis, it can be concluded that the English proficiency of the students have improved during the period of the study.

Discussion

The findings from the study suggested the satisfactory evaluation of *English Unlimited* in that the coursebook had made an impact on both learners' academic and affective development. Although the process of pre-use evaluation of the coursebook was done informally and impressionistically due to the lack of checklist, the results of post-use evaluation showed that the selection was more or less reliable and valid throughout the implementation and the impact stages.

Even though the committee did not conduct an in-depth evaluation of the coursebook, three common aspects were found regarding the basis of their judgements: interesting and relevant content, appropriate level of difficulty and practicality for classroom teaching. The findings from this study are in keeping with those criteria submitted by teachers in previous studies by Kim (2002) and Sercu et al. (2004) in that motivational appeal and level of difficulty of the coursebook were viewed as significant selecting criteria. Despite not having any specified criteria to work with, the committee members' professional instincts seemed to accord with many established

checklists. Mukundan and Ahour's examination of keywords in materials review checklists (2010, p.347) revealed that the most cited terms, throughout the four decades from 1970s to 2000s, were students, teachers, content, skills and practice, followed by concepts such as variety of activities and exercises, interest, clarity, culture, layout and tests. It could be said that the way in which the committee evaluated the coursebook by concerning factors such as students' interests and needs, relevance of skills and content and practicality for teaching more or less served the same principles in materials review as those of generic checklists. The practice of materials evaluation without the proper checklist is not uncommon. McGrath (2013) asserts that due to either (or combination of) time constraint, insufficient training, or lack of confidence, teachers in most contexts could not achieve a systematic materials evaluation. Instead, they often rely upon their own instinct governed by teaching experience and sound understanding of their own students.

In terms of users' evaluation of the coursebook, despite a generally favorable assessment in the survey, minor criticisms were made, during the interview, against the relevance of the materials to the students' needs and the impact of the materials on both short-term or long-term language development. These unfavorable appraisals were consistent with Tomlinson and Masuhara's (2013) evaluation conducted on a coursebook in the same series, i.e. *English Unlimited: Intermediate*, which disapprovingly pointed out its irrelevance of content to EFL contexts and its limited potential in promoting the use of English outside class. The negative review regarding the limitations of the coursebook in preparing learners for examination also aligned with previous findings in Dat's study (2008) that many Southeast Asian teachers felt that commercial coursebook could not properly address the demands of local examinations.

However, it may not be fair to judge the coursebook's failure to equip students adequately for the examination as its limitations. As mentioned previously, there was a misalignment between the content of the coursebook and the examination format. This situation left some teachers no choice but to heavily supplement the skills that were the main focus of the test. By

doing this, the teachers often had to sacrifice part of the coursebook content which did not directly address the test requirement. The similar findings were noted in Farooqui's study (as cited in McGrath, 2013, p.173) where the coursebook activities that targeted the oral skills were omitted in classroom teaching because they would not be tested. Through the teachers' practice of reducing or omitting content, some students could not help feeling that the coursebook was not necessary. This could arguably be a factor underlying their negative evaluation of the coursebook.

Findings from the interviews also revealed different factors underlying students' and teachers' attraction to the materials. Students' comments suggested that they favored the novelty of topics and personally-relevant content. These support Dörnyei's (2001) notion that a novelty element in learning materials decreases boredom; hence, prolongs the learners' engagement with learning, and materials that are related to the learners' personal experiences are likely to intrinsically motivate them. On the other hand, the suitability for classroom teaching served as a main criterion in the appraisals of the coursebook content by teachers in this study. The focus on practicality has consistently been one of the main criteria in teachers' evaluation of coursebooks as seen in many previous studies (e.g. Kim 2002; Masuhara & Tomlinson, 2008; Tok, 2010). The appraisals of students and teachers emerged from this study highlight two different points of departure when it comes to motivational factor in learning materials. For the students, it seems that enjoyment was their main criterion for assessing the materials. In their view, good materials should generate interest and promote an enjoyable learning environment. On the other hand, the teachers seem to place more emphasis on the value of the materials, both in terms of teaching advantages (i.e. teachable content) and learning benefit (i.e. knowledge/skills enhancement). For them, the academic merit of the materials was as important as affective appeal.

Lastly, although the CASEC results suggested that the student samples in this study had shown improvement in their communicative skills after the implementation of the selected coursebook, it may be premature to conclude that *English Unlimited* had single-handedly enhanced students'

proficiency. While it may be true to some extent that students' measurable learning gains can indirectly inform the impact of learning materials (Tomlinson, 2003), it is argued that such gains may be promoted by outside factors (McGrath, 2002). The exposure to and the practice of the target language beyond the scope of the materials may have contributed to the increased general proficiency of this group of students. Nevertheless, the fact that the students scored the highest on the listening part of the test (CASEC Part 3) may be linked to the focus of *English Unlimited* which has been placed heavily on listening skills. Provided that the classroom teachers had covered the listening activities as offered in the coursebook, it could be surmised that the exposure and practice of such skills mandated by the coursebook had assisted the students' development of listening proficiency as witnessed in CASEC test results.

Limitations

While the research findings provide useful insights into the issues of materials evaluation, the limitations presented here should be taken into consideration. First of all, the samples of students in this study were not achieved randomly and the return rate of the teacher's questionnaire was relatively low. These may result in some groups of population being underrepresented. Secondly, as the interviews were based on a voluntary basis, student interviewees did not represent all the faculties. Likewise, the group of teacher interviewees did not include native-speaker instructors. Nevertheless, views of the latter were expressed in written form and also considered in the analysis. All in all, this limitation was not believed to severely affect the integrity of the findings as the interview data only permit an in-depth investigation of the issue but do not aim at generalisation. Another limitation of this study may have been a result of the questionnaire design which overlooked the information regarding students' previous use of coursebook and teachers' background in materials development as these two factors could have influenced their perceptions of the current coursebook.

Implications and Recommendations

The findings from the study highlight the value of conducting comprehensive materials evaluation involving multiple perspectives in that it provides a better understanding of how the coursebook is selected and how effective it is in a real setting. To ensure a systematic appraisal and comparison, it is recommended that pre-use evaluation involve a checklist (McGrath, 2002). Moreover, the checklist evaluation should be accessible by all teachers who will be using the materials (Garton & Graves, 2014) and applicable to all materials available in the market. In this sense, it may be more feasible to conduct rounds of evaluation where checklist is used to narrow down choices from generally acceptable materials to highly suitable ones (see Kim, 2002). The checklist itself can be adapted from those proposed by experts (see Mukundan & Ahour, 2010 or Huang, 2011 for a review of checklists) or created to embody features specific to a certain context. Likewise, all stakeholders namely administrators, teachers and students can be included in the process of developing the checklist to ensure the validity of the criteria. Regardless of checklist type, it is imperative that the evaluators be trained how to use it (McGrath, 2002).

While it may not be feasible to involve the voices of learners in the initial selection of a coursebook, the next step in the materials evaluation process which warrants the continuation of such materials can be designed to include learners' opinions. As teachers are implementing the materials in the classroom, it is suggested that they also conduct an in-use materials evaluation to see whether the selected materials really 'work' in the actual classrooms (Ellis, 1997; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2007). Learners are involved in this process in two levels. Firstly, their performance on the actual tasks/activities and their learning gains as a result of engaging in the activities is to be observed (Ellis, 2011). Secondly, the views of learners on the implementation of materials are to be collected. This can be done quickly by having them rate their gratification after each class (Ellis, 1997) or comprehensively through learner diaries (McGrath, 2002).

The involvement of learners can also be extended into post-use materials evaluation process, as seen in this study. In addition to opinions of

teachers who have implemented the materials in the classroom, views of learners, i.e. persons who are directly affected by such implementation, can confirm the valid selection in the pre-use step. Furthermore, the academic gains achieved by learners can support the value of the selected coursebook as learning materials. Nevertheless, there may be numerous factors that influence learners' academic achievement. Instead of focusing solely on test scores, it is recommended that other "soft" gains such as motivation, attitude and self-confidence be assessed as well (McGrath, 2002, p.199).

Concluding Remarks

As a result of the satisfactory evaluation, *English Unlimited* was continued as the main coursebook for *Experiential English* for four more years. The Department of Academic Affairs had taken on board comments from both teachers and students in terms of assessment format and future selection of coursebooks. Recently, a new coursebook has been adopted for this foundation course. The selection process involved a larger pool of materials and a checklist for evaluation. The findings from this research have raised awareness in the selection of commercial materials to be used in the existing syllabus and the alignment between the materials and the assessment.

References

- Ahmed, S. (2016). An evaluation of Effective Communication Skills coursebook. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 7(3), 57-70.
- Allwright, R. L. (1981). What do we want teaching materials for? *ELT Journal*, 36, 5-18.
- Arikan, A. (2009). Problems with coursebooks in EFL classrooms: Prospective teachers' opinions. *EKEV Academic Review*, 38, 309-317.
- Brophy, J. (2004). *Motivating Students to Learn*. Second Edition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Charalambous, A. C. (2011). *The Role and Use of Course Books in EFL*. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED524247.pdf>

- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Third Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing Your Coursebook*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. & Taguchi, T. (2010). *Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration, and Processing*. Second Edition. London: Taylor & Francis.
- Dat, B. (2008). ELT materials used in Southeast Asia. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *English Language Learning Materials: A Critical Review* (pp. 263-280). London: Continuum.
- Dat, B. (2014). English coursebooks in Southeast Asia: Issues and concerns. *Journal of Science Ho Chi Minh City Open University*, 1(9), 54-62.
- Ellis, R. (1997). The empirical evaluation of language teaching materials. *ELT Journal*, 51(1), 36-42
- Ellis, R. (2011). Macro- and micro-evaluation of task-based teaching. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *Materials Development in Language Teaching* (pp.212-235). Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Garton, S. & Graves, K. (2014). Materials in ELT: Current Issues. In S. Garton & K. Graves (Eds.), *International Perspectives on Materials in ELT* (pp. 1-15). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Graves, K. (2003). Coursebooks. In D. Nunan (Ed.), *Practical English Language Teaching* (pp.225-246). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gray, J. (2000). The ELT coursebook as cultural artefact. *ELT Journal*, 54(3), 274-83.
- Harwood, N. (2014). Content, consumption, and production: Three levels of textbook research. In N. Harwood (Ed.), *English Language Teaching Textbooks: Content, Consumption, Production*. (pp. 1-41). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Huang, S. (2011). *Ideal and Reality of Textbook Selection: An Interview- and Questionnaire- based Investigation in the Taiwanese Tertiary Context*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. University of Warwick.
- Kayapinar, U. (2009). Coursebook evaluation by English teachers. *Inonu University Journal of the Faculty of Education*, 10(1), 69-78.
- Krejcie, R. V. & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30(3), pp. 607-610.
- Kim, H. D. (2002). Procedures for the selection of a textbook: A university general English course. *English Teaching*, 57(1), 239-266.
- Litz, D. (2005). Textbook evaluation and ELT Management: A South Korea case study. *Asian EFL Journal*, 48, 1-53.
- Masuhara, H. & Tomlinson, B. (2008). Materials for general English. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *English Language Learning Materials: A Critical Review* (pp. 17-37). London: Continuum.
- McDonough, J., & Shaw, C. (2003). *Materials and Methods in ELT*. Second Edition. Oxford: Blackwell.
- McGrath, I. (2002). *Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- McGrath, I. (2013). *Teaching Materials and the Roles of EFL/ESL Teachers*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Mukundan, J., & Ahour, T. (2010). A review of textbook evaluation checklists across four decades (1970-2008). In B. Tomlinson & H. Masuhara (Eds.), *Research for Materials development in Language Learning* (pp.336-352). London: Continuum.
- Rallis, S. E. & Rossman, G. B. (2009). Ethics and trustworthiness. In J. Heigham & R. A. Croker (Eds.). *Qualitative Research in Applied Linguistics: A Practical Introduction* (pp.263-287). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Riasati, M. J. & Zare, P. (2010). Textbook evaluation: EFL teachers' perspectives on "New Interchange". *Studies in Literature and Language*, 1(8), 54-60.

- Richards, J. (2002). *The role of textbooks in a language program*. Retrieved from www.professorjackrichards.com/wp-content/uploads/role-of-textbooks.pdf
- Richards, J. (2014). The ELT textbook. In S. Garton & K. Graves (Eds.), *International Perspectives on Materials in ELT* (pp.19-36). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sercu, L., Mendez Garcia, M. & Castro Prieto, P. (2004). Culture teaching in foreign language education: EFL teachers in Spain as cultural mediators. *Porta Linguarum*, 1 (January), 85-102. Retrieved from http://digibug.ugr.es/bitstream/10481/28351/1/SercuyMendez_1.pdf
- Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT Textbooks and Materials. *ELT Journal*, 42(4), 237-46.
- Tok, H. (2010). TEFL textbook evaluation: From teachers' perspectives. *Educational Research and Review*, 5(9), 508-517.
- Tomlinson, B. (2003). Materials evaluation. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *Developing Materials for Language Teaching* (pp. 15-36). London: Continuum.
- Tomlinson, B. (2008). Language acquisition and language learning materials. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *English Language Learning Materials: A Critical Review* (pp. 3-13). London: Continuum.
- Tomlinson, B. (2010). Principles of effective materials development. In N. Harwood (Ed.), *English Language Teaching Materials: Theory and Practice* (pp.81-108). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tomlinson, B. & Masuhara, H. (2007). *Developing Language Course Materials*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.
- Tomlinson, B. & Masuhara, H. (2013). Adult coursebooks. *ELT Journal*, 67(2), 233-249.
- Zacharias, N. T. (2005). Teachers' beliefs about internationally-published materials: A survey of tertiary English teachers in Indonesia. *RELC Journal*, 36(1), 23-37.

Bio Data

Apiwan Nuangpolmak, Ph.D. is an English lecturer at Chulalongkorn University Language Institute where she has developed materials for and is teaching courses such as English for Academic Purposes for Psychology, English for Academic Purposes for Law, Skills in English for Graduates, and Academic Writing (Abstract and Thesis). Her research interests include materials development, learning strategies, and learner autonomy.