

Evaluation of the “Traveler” English Textbook Series in Saudi High Schools: English Teachers’ Perspectives

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Abstract: The current study is an evaluation of the “Traveler”, the English Language curriculum that is taught in the high schools in Saudi Arabia and adopted by the Saudi Ministry of Education (MOE). Through this study, the researcher focused on whether this curriculum fulfils students’ needs. In order to achieve this goal, an 18-statement, five-pointed Likert questionnaire, developed by Leitz (2005), was used. The questionnaire was based on three dimensions: subject matter and content, activity and tasks, and skills. The participants of this study were (104) female teachers who were randomly selected from different Saudi high schools. The results showed that (59.6%) of the teacher stated that the subject and content of the book are not relevant to the students’ level as English language educators, (46.2%) of teachers stated that the textbook does not give activities balance, and (49.2%) stated that the materials provide suitable balance of the four language skills. The study conducted some recommendations for the EFL teachers, textbooks evaluators, and the Saudi MOE to investigate the educational textbooks considering the results of evaluation..

Keywords: perceptions, EFL, Saudi teachers, textbooks, curriculums, Traveler textbook, material evaluation

Introduction

This study provides an evaluation of the *Traveler KSA-Edition* series, which was specified by Saudi Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2009. The Ministry of Education collaborated with MM, McGraw-Hill, and Macmillan to develop English textbooks to meet the local needs (Alsufyani, 2016). Therefore, the English Language Development Project (ELDP) supervises three series of English textbooks which are taught to secondary stage students: *Traveler*, *Mega Goal*, and *Flying High* (Alshammari, 2016).

The evaluation process in this study was carried out according to Saudi English teachers’ perceptions about “Traveler” textbook. Saudi English teachers have no choice in selecting the textbook series but they can give their views to the MOE to ‘keep up with developments in the field’. In addition, this process will encourage them to make the needed modifications, which are required for developing principled materials (McDonough et al., 2003). Moreover, the evaluation process will enhance their vocational exploitation by supporting them to foster speculative method to their educating pursuit.

Problem Statement

The researcher selected the study based on professional experience as an English teacher and taught four different English textbook series that had been introduced into Saudi high school: *Say It in English*, *Mega Goal*, *Flying High*, and *Traveler*. She intended to investigate the appropriateness of the *Traveler* series to achieve the educational purposes that were detected in the goals of the MOE for educating the foreign language (Elyas & Badawood, 2015).

Study Questions

This paper aims to answer these questions:

1. What is the scope suitability of *Traveler* for Saudi secondary school students in terms of the theme and meaning?
2. What is the scope suitability of *Traveler* for Saudi secondary school students in terms of the actions and functions?
3. What is the scope suitability of *Traveler* for Saudi secondary school students in terms of the proficiencies?
4. Are there any differences in the teachers' appraisal of *Traveler* that can be assigned to their trial?

Study Limitations:

The study will be limited to:

1. English language female teachers in the secondary stage in various cities in Saudi Arabia.
2. Evaluating the content of the *Traveler KSA-Edition* series of the secondary stage with respect to the subject and content, activities and tasks, and skills.

Definition of Terms:

The following terms were used in the entire study, and it will be a kind of help if these terms were clearly defined before entering to the body of the study:

Curriculum:

"Principles and procedures for the planning, implementation, evaluation and management of an educational program. Curriculum study embraces syllabus design (the selection and grading of content) and methodology (the selection of learning tasks and activities)" (Parakay et al., 2014).

EFL (English as a Foreign Language):

"The teaching of English to students whose first language is not English" (Turner, 2006).

Evaluation:

"The process of seeking to establish the value of something for some purpose" (Brown & Rogers, 2002).

Materials:

"Anything which is used to help to teach language learners. Materials can be in the form of a textbook, a workbook, a cassette, a CD-Rom, a video, a photocopied handout, a paragraph written on a whiteboard: anything which presents or inform about the language being learned" (Tomlinson, 1998).

Material evaluation:

"The systematic appraisal of the value of materials in relation to their objectives and to the objectives of the learners using them. Evaluation can be pre-use and therefore focused on predictions of potential value. It can be whilst-use and therefore focused on awareness and description of what the learners are actually doing whilst the materials are being used. And it can be post-use and therefore focused on analysis of what happened as a result of using the materials" (Tomlinson, 2003).

Syllabus:

"A specification of what is to be taught in a language programme and the order in which it is to be taught. A syllabus may contain all or any of the following: phonology, grammar, functions, notions, topics, themes, tasks" (Richards, 2001).

Literature Review

General objectives of teaching English:

The Saudi MOE identified the prevalent purposes of educating English depending on the new curriculum paper as follows (Al-Hajailan, 2003):

Students should be able:

1. To obtain the necessary language proficiencies to communicate with English Language speakers.
2. To promote their realization of English significance as a global connection method.
3. To promote the linguistic eligibility that qualifies them to be realizable of the cultural, economic, and public matters of their community.
4. To promote the linguistic significance that grants them the ability to introduce and demonstrate the Islamic concepts and matters and to participate in spreading Islam.
5. To acquire the linguistic basis that provides them with the ability to participate in relocating the scientific and technological improvements of other countries to their country.
6. To promote the linguistic basis that offers them the ability to present and demonstrate the Islamic concepts and matters and participate in their dissemination.

These goals aim to enhance the culture's understanding and to narrow the gaps between English speaking cultures and Saudi Arabia Islamic culture. Therefore, the textbooks, which are considered as representatives to syllabi, should be designed in order to achieve these prescribed objectives.

English Language Development Project (ELDP)

In 2008, King Abdullah established "King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Public Education Development Project". It endeavors to improve public schooling and targets the development of curricula and qualified teachers. One of its sub-projects is English Language Development Project. The aims of this project include the following:

- To improve the students' efficiency in English language and equip them with its necessary skills.
- To design high-quality curricula in order to teach English according to modern national criteria in addition to training teachers to study these curricula and be able to teach it properly.
- To develop English teaching skills and learning strategies (Al-Hugail, 2003).

Thus, the MOE, in collaboration with American and European companies, developed the English syllabi of all stages and trained the teachers. As a result, there are three different series of English textbooks for each stage: *Mega Goal*, *Traveler*, and *Flying High*. Each series is prepared to run across domestic requirements.

Criteria of perfect textbooks

Foreign language English Textbook Evaluation for Adult Education Programs (Bitterlin, 2003) classified Sample Measures for Instructional Materials as follows:

1. There is a continuous follow-up (e.g. published ten years ago).
2. They include relevant contentment.
3. They take the linguistic and cultural variation of the student population in consideration.
4. The order and the style (including line size) are suitable for the student population.
5. The photographs and graphics are clear, suitable for adults, and culturally acceptable.
6. The materials contain a lot of educating styles.
7. The materials are used with a lot of grouping strategies.
8. The materials include practices in which learners share the previous experience with previous information of the material. (p. 79)

Subsequently, it is important to choose the suitable book that has the previous criteria to meet the learners' needs. As a result, EFL evaluation is important.

Empirical Studies on Textbook Evaluation in Saudi Arabia

Abu Naba'h et al. (2016) explored the perceptions of 60 Saudi EFL teachers educating *in advance the series specified by the MOE for Saudi Arabia* in 2009. The instrument of this study was a Likert four-pointed questionnaire with (42) statements, distributed into seven axes, as well as an open-ended

question. The findings exposed that the entrants comprehend the series to be highly appropriate with a percentage of 78%.

In his article, Faruk (2015) tries to investigate the cultural theme in the Saudi English textbooks published in the last 33 years. He found that, in the books published between 1982 and 2012, a pattern based on national culture was maintained. However, there is a paradigm shift in terms of cultural elements: Allwright (1981) stated, "We need teaching materials to save learners from teachers' deficiencies or as carriers' of decisions best made by someone other than classroom teachers."

Al-Harbi (2015) points out that there was a positive view of the overall vocabulary, reading skills, and technical aspects among teachers. However, the textbook needs to be modified by adding speech, grammar, and writing skills to meet the students' needs and interests.

Al-Malki (2014) also evaluated *Flying High* series incorporating 42 EFL teachers' results regarding its quality and their preparation to teach it. The study revealed that the teachers had mixed feelings about the quality of the textbook. Although they believed that the curriculum reflected high quality in its layout and instructional design, the results indicated that they encountered some difficulties in implementing the new methodologies and strategies.

Al-Shammari (2005) evaluated *view it in English* books for the first and second intermediate degrees. The sample of his study consisted of (140) teachers who taught this textbook, and he used a questionnaire that contained (66) clauses of Likert type. The fields include the book's public aspects, content, structure, vocabulary, language proficiencies, scholastic assists, teachers' book, and the workbook.

The researcher recommended that the Saudi MOE has to initiate a board to re-evaluate this textbook concerning its suitability to the students' age and their learning abilities. In addition, the researcher pointed out that the time allocated to overlay the material is not sufficient. Therefore, neither the number of lessons should be reduced nor should the number of English classes be increased.

Methodology

The researcher presents the research design, the sources of collecting the data, and how the study was conducted. Also, she identifies the participants and specifies the tools used to collect the data. Moreover, she explains the procedure used in data collection and the methods of analysing these data. After that, the researcher discusses data analysis, specifying methods and techniques applied for analysing and interpreting the data. Finally, this chapter ends with reviewing the limitations of the research.

Research Design

The recent research aimed to evaluate the Traveler KSA-edition series for high schools. This evaluation was defined as being summative, descriptive, and quantitative. It was summative because the

data was collected after the textbook was put into use, and it was descriptive as it intended to describe the appropriateness of the textbook to Saudi high school students. In addition, the study employed the quantitative measurement by using the questionnaire.

Sample Selection:

The researcher selected the sample of the study randomly, it was composed of (104) female teachers who were teaching the "traveler" textbook for the Secondary level. Their teaching experience in high schools varied from one year to over ten years (Table 1). Also, the book series has six levels, and the participants were given the choice to evaluate any level. (Table 2) shows the number of entrants as well as the percentage of evaluators for each level.

Table 1: Information about evaluators

Years of experience	Evaluators number	Proportion
1-5 years	36	34.62%
6-10 years	24	23.08%
More than 10 years	44	42.31%
Total	104	100%

Table 2: Proportion of evaluators for each level

Level	Evaluators number	Proportion
Traveler 1&2	60	57.69%
Traveler 3&4	25	24.04%
Traveler 5&6		18.27%
Total	104	100%

Instrument

The book evaluation's instrument in this research is the questionnaire by Litz (2005). The evaluation questionnaire featured 18 clauses in the three sections offered to each entrant in a five-point Likert Scale, from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree), which will recognize their conception. Section (A) had seven items that were intended to examine the teachers' perception of the topic and meaning of the book. Section (B) included items, numbered from 8 to 14, which investigated the teachers' perception of the activities and tasks. Section (C) consisted of four items that focus on the teachers' perception of the skills introduced in the textbook.

McGrath (2013) argue that teachers can derive criteria to help them evaluate the textbook. First, they can pose some initial questions regarding the usefulness of the materials we either have or wish to adopt. Then, they can evaluate these issues and suggest some criteria for the choice and use of materials in

methods, which are sensitive to learning language in the classroom. The evaluation questionnaire also includes the demographic data (i.e. the level of the textbook which was determined by the respondents and the duration of experience) of each participant in order to determine whether teachers with less experience tend to have beliefs that differ significantly from the perceptions of more experienced teachers.

The reliability of the questionnaire was measured by Cronbach's alpha (α). Kothari (2004) stated that "if the quality of reliability is satisfied by an instrument, then, while using it; we can be confident that the transient and situational factors are not interfering" (p.74). Overall, the precision of the questionnaire was 0.94 for all the 18 individual statements, which can be believed a reasonable indication of the precision of the questionnaire.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

In this descriptive study, the quantitative data is gained through the questionnaire. An invitation letter for teachers to get involved in the survey study was spread at different Arabic educational forums on the internet. It was directed to the participants to fill out the questionnaire on The Survey Monkey.com website at <http://svy.mk/2itFMw9>. The Survey Monkey website automatically saved the participants' responses. To analyze the quantitative data collected for this study, the researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences *SPSS* version 20.0. The data was listed into an excel spreadsheet using variable labels and values. The Excel file was imported into *SPSS*, and a master data file was built. The descriptive statistics including average, standard deviation, frequency, and proportion were used in the data analysis. (Table 3) outlines the statistical executions that were used to address each research questions.

Table 3: Research Questions and the Statistical tool

Research Question	Statistical Procedure
<p>1 To what extent is the Traveler suitable for Saudi high school students in terms of the subject and content?</p> <p>2 To what extent is the Traveler suitable for Saudi high school students in terms of the activities and tasks?</p> <p>3 To what extent is the Traveler suitable for Saudi high school students in terms of the proficiencies?</p>	<p>Frequencies, Descriptive</p>
<p>4 Are there any differences in the teachers' evaluation of Traveler that can be assigned to their experience?</p>	<p>ANOVA</p>

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Results of the Data Analysis for Research Question 1

The first question was, 'To what extent is the *Traveler* suitable for Saudi high school students in terms of the subject and content?' The section of **Subject and Content** in the questionnaire had seven items for which the average, standard deviations, frequencies, and proportions were calculated (Figure 1 and Table 4).

Table 4: Description of the seven items of Subject and Content of Traveler series

Rank	Item	M	SD
1	5. The subject and content of the textbook are interesting, challenging and motivating.	3.11	1.165
2	1. The subject and content of the textbook match the general objectives of the level.	3.08	1.212
3	6. The subject and content consider the cultural sensitivities.	3.02	1.190
4	4. The subject and content of the textbook are generally authentic.	2.86	1.092
5	3. The subject and content of the textbook are relevant to my students' needs as English language learners.	2.85	1.213
6	2. The subject and content of the textbook are relevant to my students' level as English language learners.	2.37	1.191
7	7. The subject and content of the Traveler are compatible with the number of classes.	2.17	1.288
	Total	2.78	1.193

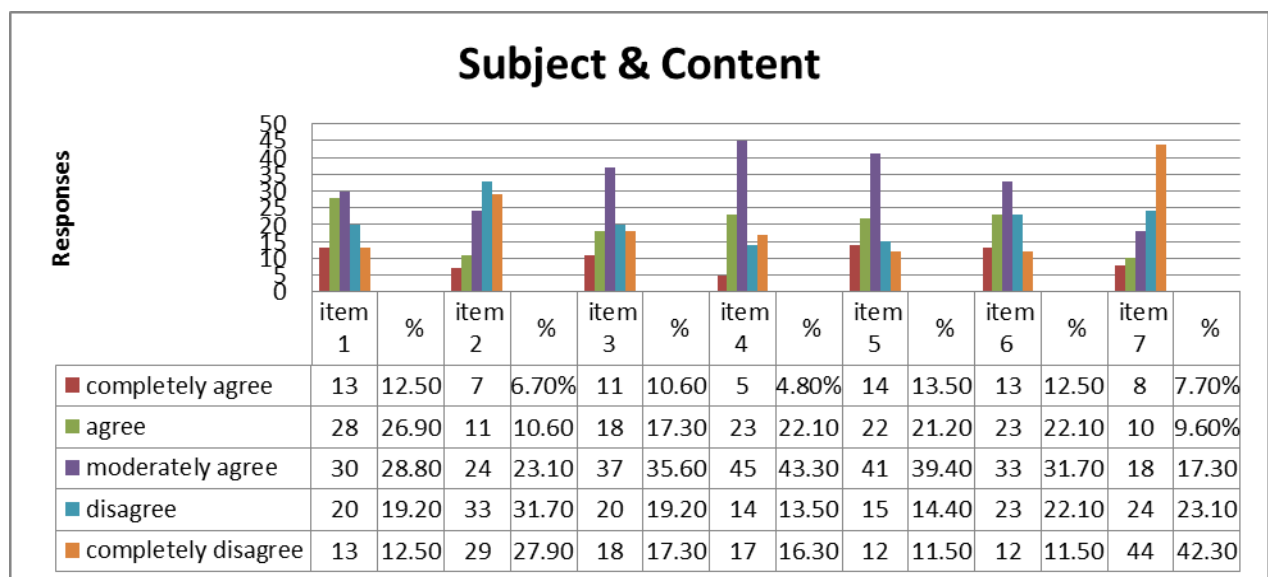


Figure 1: Frequency and percentage of the criteria of Subject and Content of Traveler series

As (Figure 1 and Table 4) show, 12.5% of the teachers stated that they "completely agree" with the first item, 28.8% of the teachers announced "moderate agreement", and about 19.2% disagreed ($M=3.08$, $SD=1.212$). The majority of the teachers (59.6%) selected "disagree & completely disagree" and stated that the subject and content of the book are not relevant to the students' level as English language educators (item 2), and the least number of teachers (17.3%) chose "agree & completely agree" for the same item ($M=2.37$, $SD=1.191$). In addition, 35.6% of the teachers stated their moderate agreement with (item 3), and about 10.6% stated that they "completely agree", and 17.3% stated their agreement ($M=2.85$, $SD=1.213$). Similarly, 13.5% stated that they disagree with the authenticity of the subject and content of the textbook (item 4), while 26.9% agreed with it ($M=2.86$, $SD=1.092$). A percentage of 39.4% agreed moderately with (item 5), while 25.9% disagreed with the item and 34.7% agreed, which indicates that the subject and content of the textbook are interesting, challenging, and motivating. In relation to the consideration of cultural sensitivities (item 6), 36 teachers (about 34.6%) agreed with it, while 35 teachers (about 33.6%) disagreed or disagreed completely. For the last item, 65.4% stated their disagreement, but 17.3% indicated that they agree with the item ($M=2.17$, $SD=1.288$).

Results of the Data Analysis for Research Question 2

The second research question was, 'To what extent is the *Traveler* suitable for Saudi high school students in terms of the activities and tasks?' The section of **Activities and Tasks** had seven items for which the average, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were calculated (Figure 2 and Table 5).

Table 5: Description of the seven items of Activities and Tasks of Traveler series

Rank	Item	M	SD
1	10. The activities incorporate individual, pair and group work.	3.13	1.270
2	14. The activities are adequate.	3.10	1.145
3	11. The activities are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts.	2.98	1.149
4	12. The activities promote students' critical thinking.	2.84	1.098
5	9. The activities encourage enough communicative and meaningful practice.	2.81	1.158
6	13. The activities can be modified or supplemented easily.	2.75	1.104
7	8. The textbook provides a balance of activities (Ex. They help students who are under/over-achievers).	2.50	1.174
	Total	2.87	1.157

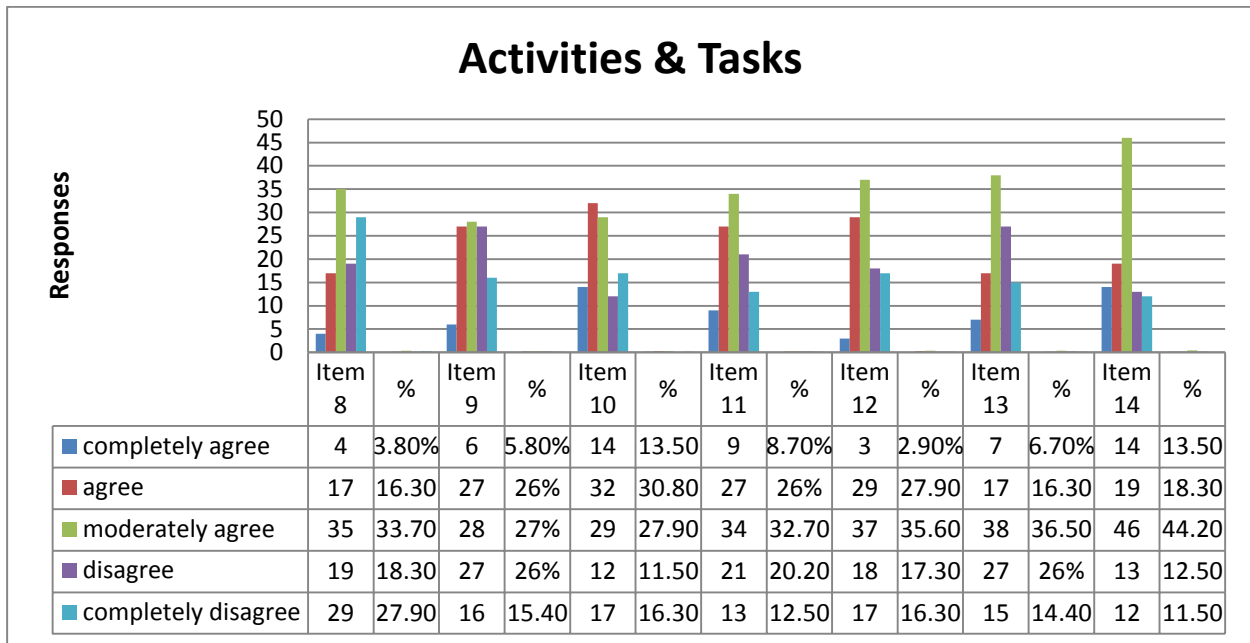


Figure 2: Frequency and percentage of the criteria of Activities and Tasks of Traveler series

As shown in (Figure 2 and Table 5), 48 teachers (46.2%) showed that the textbook does not give activities balance (item 8). Also, there is no equal distribution of free versus controlled exercises and tasks focusing on both fluent and accurate production ($M=2.5, SD = 1.174$). About 27% agreed moderately that the activities encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice for the students, only 5.8% agreed completely with (item 9) ($M = 2.81, SD = 1.158$). Only 13.5% completely agreed with (item 10), and 27.9% of the teachers agreed moderately, while 44.3% agreed that textbook activities incorporate individual, pair, and group work ($M = 3.13, SD = 1.270$). Only 34.7% agreed completely or agreed, and 32.7% agreed moderately with (item 11) "The activities are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts" ($M = 2.98, SD = 1.149$). The rest of the participants announced that they disagree with the item. Regarding (item 12), 30.8% stated that the textbook activities promote students' critical thinking, but 33.6% disagreed or disagreed completely with the item ($M = 2.84, SD = 1.098$). Only 23% agreed completely or agreed, 36.5% agreed moderately, and 40.4% disagreed or disagreed completely that activities can be modified (item 13) ($M = 2.75, SD = 1.104$). For the last item, which was related to the activities, 33 teachers believed that the activities are adequate with a percentage of 31.8%, while 25 teachers disagreed with a percentage of 24% ($M = 3.10, SD = 1.145$).

Results of the Data Analysis for Research Question 3

The third research question was, 'To what extent is the *Traveler* suitable for Saudi high school students in terms of the skills?' The section of **Skills** had four items for which the average, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were estimated (Figure 3 and Table 6).

Table 6: Description for the four items of Skills of Traveler series

Rank	Item	M	SD
1	16. The materials provide a suitable balance of the four language skills.	3.33	1.288
2	17. The textbook focus to sub-skills (e.g. Listening for gist, note taking, skimming for information, etc.)	3.26	1.191
3	15. The materials include and focus on the skills that students need to practice.	3.01	1.178
4	18. The practice of individual skills is integrated into the practice of other skills.	2.97	1.119
	Total	3.14	1.194

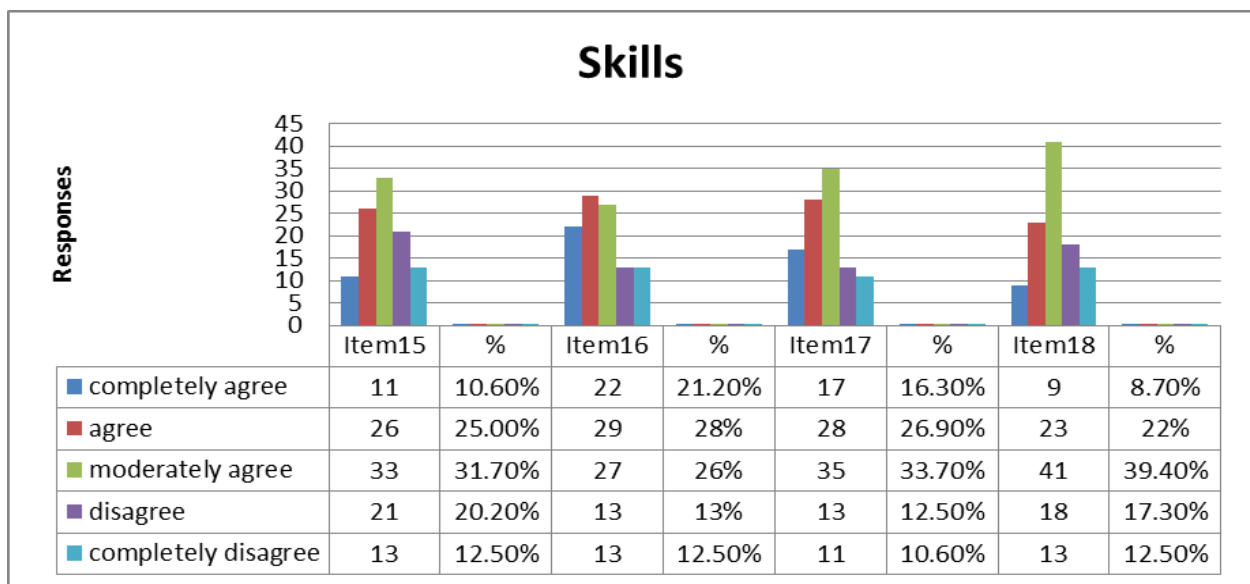


Figure 3: Frequency and percentage of the criteria of Skills of Traveler series.

As (Figure 3 and Table 6) indicate, 35.6% of the participants stated their agreement with the first item regarding the focus on the skills that the students need to practice, while 32.7% disagreed or disagreed completely with (item 15) ($M=3.01$, $SD=1.178$). Almost all of the entrants (49.2%) stated that the materials provide suitable balance of the four language skills, but 25.5% disagreed with (item 16) ($M=3.33$, $SD=1.288$). Concerning the sub-skills (item 17), 43.2% agreed completely and agreed, 33.7% moderately agreed with it, and 23.1% stated their disagreement ($M=3.26$, $SD=1.191$). Finally, 30.7% agreed completely and agreed, and 39.4% agreed moderately with (item 18) which is related to the practice of individual skills that is incorporated into the exercise of other skills, while 29.8% stated their disagreement ($M=2.97$, $SD=1.119$).

Results of the Data Analysis for Research Question 4

The fourth research question was, 'Are there any differences in the teachers' evaluation of *Traveler* that can be assigned to their experience?'

Null Hypothesis:

There were no statistically considerable differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the teachers' evaluation of *Traveller* that can be assigned to their experience.

To answer this research question, it was necessary to examine the average of each of the 18 items within each group. A One-Way Analysis of difference (ANOVA) was used. The results in (Table 7) show the teachers' evaluation of the *Traveler* textbook series with regard to their teaching experience. It is apparent that there were not significant differences at ($\alpha= 0.05$) in the teachers' evaluation of *Traveler* that can be assigned to their experience. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 7: One-way ANOVA results of teachers' evaluation of Traveler that is related to their experience

	1 – 5 years		6 – 10 years		More than 10 years		F	sig. of F
	Average	S.D	Average	S.D	Average	S.D		
Item1	2.69	1.06	3.25	1.19	3.25	1.28	2.452	0.091
Item2	2.31	1.30	2.54	1.10	2.31	1.17	0.337	0.714
Item3	2.66	1.36	3.08	1.10	2.85	1.17	0.850	0.431
Item4	2.69	1.30	3.04	0.86	2.88	1.04	0.731	0.484
Item5	3.09	1.30	3.25	1.11	3.04	1.11	0.254	0.776
Item6	3.00	1.39	2.88	0.95	3.10	1.17	0.298	0.743
Item7	2.38	1.51	2.04	0.859	2.10	1.30	0.582	0.561
Item8	2.47	1.24	2.75	1.29	2.40	1.07	0.740	0.479
Item9	2.56	1.19	3.08	1.02	2.83	1.19	1.420	0.246
Item10	3.06	1.29	3.25	1.23	3.13	1.29	0.150	0.861
Item11	2.84	1.32	3.33	1.01	2.90	1.08	1.503	0.227
Item12	2.66	1.29	3.08	0.88	2.83	1.06	1.038	0.358
Item13	2.63	1.29	2.83	0.92	2.79	1.07	0.304	0.739
Item14	3.06	1.32	3.17	1.05	3.08	1.09	0.061	0.941
Item15	3.00	1.16	3.08	1.18	2.98	1.21	0.063	0.939
Item16	3.19	1.31	3.63	1.09	3.27	1.36	0.873	0.421
Item17	2.94	1.32	3.58	1.06	3.31	1.13	2.153	0.121
Item18	2.66	1.13	3.21	1.06	3.06	1.12	2.005	0.140

Discussion

Subject and Content

The most poorly rated criterion was Subject and Content ($M=2.78$, $SD=1.193$). According to 65.4% of the teachers, the content was not compatible with the classes' number allotted to the subject. The textbook was organized in a way that offered one module for two weeks, which does not suit the four weekly classes allotted to EFL in Saudi schools. The same result was revealed by Al-Shammari (2005). He evaluated *view it in English* books for the first and second intermediate grades and found that the time needed to cover the material is not sufficient. Abu Naba'h et al. (2016), who evaluated advance for Saudi Arabia series, found the same gap. Therefore, there is a need to reduce the number of modules in order to be convenient with the number of periods.

Moreover, almost all of the teachers stated that the subject and content of the textbook are not suitable to the students' level and needs as English language educators. The results indicated that the subject and content of the *Traveler* textbook need some modifications based on the students' needs and level. This agrees with Al-Hamlan's (2013) paper, which revealed that 63.79% of the students believe that the material is hard to be understood for the students. For this reason, analysis of Saudi high school students' needs should be theorized in selecting the subject and content of the textbook.

Results have shown that only 34.6% of the teachers agreed that the book theorized the students' culture. Through content analysis of the textbook, it is obvious that visuals and graphics are appropriate for cultural sensitivity, but there are few topics related to Saudi Arabia. Similarly, Al-Harbi's study (2015) demonstrated the result that one of the deficiencies of the *Flying High* textbook contents was related to the educators' culture and environment. As a result, Faruk (2015) suggested that EFL textbooks should be written exclusively for Saudi Arabia and by competent writers in terms of Islamic, Saudi, Western, and other cultural elements.

Concerning the material authenticity, 43.3% of the teachers moderately agreed with it. Therefore, the textbook needs some changes in order to be more authentic. Richards (2001) noted that one of the negative effects of the textbook is that it contains fictitious language. Inauthentic texts, dialogs, and other sides of content tend to be written "To incorporate teaching points and are often not representative of real language use" (p.2).

From other point of view, the majority of the teachers (34.7%) found the subject and content of the textbook interesting, challenging, and motivating. This can be considered as a point of strength. Motivation is essential for success in teaching (Harmer, 2003). Regarding the general objectives, 17.3% of the teachers agreed that the textbook matches the objectives of the level. In general, the topics of the textbooks aim to enable students to gain the linguistic skill necessarily desired in different life fields and the linguistic abilities desired in different professions.

Activities and Tasks

The findings of the study indicate that the teachers' perceptions about the activities and tasks were not satisfactory in general ($M=2.87, SD=1.157$). The reason for this is the fact that the activities of the *Traveler* book do not provide balance of activities to help students who are under or over achievers. In addition, it can be difficult to modify the activities or supplement them. It is essential for the textbooks to satisfy the individual needs. Charalambous (2011) stated that one of the negative effects of the textbook is its failure to treat each student individually. He notes that a "certain activity or material that is particularly appropriate for one student may not be suitable for another" (p.6).

Regarding promoting the students' critical thinking, only 30.8% of the teachers agreed completely. This is contrary to the objective of the level, which is to cultivate the students' critical thinking. This is in agreement with Al-Malki (2014) who evaluated *Flying High* and found that 49% of the teachers disagree with the idea that textbook helps to develop students' thinking skills.

On the other hand, 31.8% of the teachers' perceptions revealed that the activities are adequate. Al-Hamlan (2013) demonstrated almost the same result, i.e. 62% of the students agreed about the suitability of the exercises of *Traveler 5* textbook. This might be due to the availability of the workbook, which is rich in exercise.

The highest average is that for the item that indicates that the textbook activities combine individual, pair, and group work ($M=3.13, SD=1.27$). This can be considered a point of strength. According to Harmer (2003), different kinds of managing students to perform tasks in pairs or groups should be used to suit different kinds of activities.

Skills

The quantitative findings have shown that the "language skills element" of the textbook ($M=3.14, SD=1.194$) were through the criteria that obtained the most upholding in this study. Most respondents concurrent that the materials provide an appropriate balance of the four-language skill and pay attention to the sub-skills. In terms of skills, the results of this study match the findings of Al-Hamlan (2013). She concluded that the *Traveler 5* textbook showed a balance of the four main language skills which can also be considered a point of strength.

Overall Impression

In short, the results of the questionnaire showed that *Traveler* textbook is satisfying to some extent and this satisfaction reached 49% (Table 5). The book gives suitable balance of the four language skills. Furthermore, the topics are interesting, motivating, and challenging. The layout and design may be considered one of its merits. However, it requires some modification to meet the needs of Saudi citizens in general and high school students in particular. First, needs analysis of Saudi educators should be the first step to layout the materials to meet the goals. Second, it should provide a balance of activities to help

different learning styles. In addition, there is an urgent need to reduce the number of modules that are not compatible with the number of classes.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

First and foremost, the aim of this research was to assess the quality of the *Traveler KSA-Edition* series for the high school using the EFL Saudi female teachers' perceptions (n=104) to answer the following questions:

- To what extent is the *Traveler* suitable for Saudi high school students in terms of the subject, content, tasks, activities and skills?

- Are there any differences in the teachers' evaluation of *Traveler* that can be assigned to their experience?

The study utilized the quantitative measurement by using a questionnaire to collect the teachers' perceptions of the *Traveler* textbook. The questionnaire was developed by Litz (2005) and adapted by the author to suit the context. It consists of 18 items divided into three criteria: **Subject and Content**, **Activities and Tasks**, and **Skills**. It was an electronic questionnaire by using Survey Monkey website. The 108 participants for this study were all female EFL teachers in various cities in Saudi Arabia.

The study employed two types of data analysis. A statistical descriptive analysis was used to analyze the closed-ended questions in the questionnaire. ANOVA also was used to define the relationship between the demographic information of teachers and their responses. The data was analyzed by SPSS v.20.

As the findings of this study revealed, almost all of the teachers (34.7%) found the subject and content of the textbook interesting, challenging, and motivating. This is considered a point of strength and advantageous for the *Traveler* textbook. According to the teachers' standpoint, the subject and content of the textbook is not pertinent to the students' interests and needs, and the time recommended for teaching the textbook is not sufficient. In addition, the textbook fails to promote the students' critical thinking which is another shortcoming of this textbook. Therefore, some modifications were suggested to be made. However, the textbook contains some strong points. It integrates the four language skills in a variety of ways. It also includes very interesting, challenging, and motivating topics. In addition, the teachers find the activities adequate.

Recommendations

Recommendation for EFL teachers:

Teachers are the link between students and policy makers. They need to investigate the educational context as a whole, especially the textbook. In addition, notify the MOE of the required changes to be made. Moreover, they need to be material developers inside their classes to meet the general objectives.

Recommendations for textbook evaluators:

Further research is required to investigate other features of the textbook based on the educators' and learning needs in the EFL situation of Saudi Arabia. Mixed method studies may also be very fruitful; for example, a quantitative study might reveal general attitudes, and then a qualitative study using interviews might be conducted to investigate those perceptions in more detail.

Recommendations for MOE:

One of the most important modulations of this study is the necessity of conducting a detailed needs analysis for studying English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia from the teachers and students' points of view and considering the results in designing, preparing, and even evaluating English as foreign language textbooks.

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الملخص:

تعتبر الدراسة الحالية تقييم لمنهج "المسافر"، وهو منهج اللغة الإنجليزية الذي يتم تدريسه في الصفوف الثانوية في المملكة العربية السعودية وتبنته وزارة التربية والتعليم. ومن خلال هذه الدراسة، ركز الباحث على إذا ما كان هذا المنهج يلبي احتياجات الطلاب. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، تم استخدام استبيان ليكرت ذو خمس نقاط، والذي وضعه لیتز (2005). واستند الاستبيان إلى ثلاثة أبعاد: الموضوع والمحتوى، والنشاط والمهام، والمهارات. بلغ عدد المشاركين في هذه الدراسة (104) معلمة تم اختيارهن عشوائياً من مختلف المدارس الثانوية السعودية. وأظهرت النتائج أن (59.6%) من المعلمين ذكروا أن موضوع الكتاب ومضمونه لا صلة لمستوى الطلاب كمعلمين في اللغة الإنجليزية، (46.2%) من المعلمين ذكروا أن الكتاب المدرسي لا يعطي توازن الأنشطة، (49.2%) أن المواد توفر التوازن المناسب للمهارات اللغوية الأربع. وقد قدمت الدراسة بعض التوصيات لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، والمقيمين في الكتب المدرسية، ووزارة التربية والتعليم السعودية لتقييم الكتب التعليمية مع مراعاة نتائج التقييم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التصورات، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، المعلمين السعوديين، والكتب المدرسية، والمناهج الدراسية، منهج "المسافر"، تقييم المحتوى.