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CRITERIA AND CHALLENGES IN SELECTING ENGLISH COURSE BOOKS FOR KAZAKHSTANI SCHOOLS

Annotation

Despite the growing integration of digital technologies and AI tools into education, course books remain a dominant instructional resource, raising concerns about their relevance, adaptability and pedagogical value. The purpose of the study is to identify key challenges teachers encounter in selecting appropriate EFL course books and to determine the most effective criteria for their evaluation in the Kazakhstani educational context. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collected through a structured online survey administered to 33 English language teachers from schools, colleges and universities. The analysis focuses on teachers' perceptions, preferences and practical experiences in course book selection. The findings reveal that while teachers value course books for their structured content, skill coverage and time-saving benefits, they express significant concern about the lack of cultural adaptation, limited engagement, and insufficient flexibility of materials to meet diverse educational needs. The study identified level and age appropriateness, relevance of content, authenticity and clarity of design as the most influential criteria in course book evaluation. Additionally, external constraints such as cost and availability were found to affect teachers' selection decisions. The results underscore the need for a more context-specific approach to course book evaluation and adaptation in Kazakhstan. The study demonstrates that the reliance on standardized materials alone may not adequately address the linguistic, cultural and pedagogical needs of learners. Based on the findings, a well-defined, context-specific evaluation criteria can support educators in making informed decisions, ultimately enhancing the quality of EFL teaching, particularly among novice educators who have not gained enough experience in selecting and adapting teaching materials.

Keywords: EFL course books, course book selection, Kazakhstani teachers, English language, textbook design, teaching materials, challenges in selecting course books.

Introduction. To use or not to use - that is the question language instructors face when deciding on the course books. Whether and how to use a course book (CB) in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) has been a topic of extensive debate among educators. However, CBs remain in great demand, even if there are innovative technologies such as AI tools integrated in education. They are often considered more effective resources for enhancing learning experiences. Before analysis, it is worth considering the question of what the differences are between course book and textbook.

While the terms “*textbook*” and “*course book*” are often used interchangeably in the research, there are some different connotations depending on the context.

According to Oxford Learners dictionary, textbook is a book that an educator uses to teach a particular subject and that is used especially in school and college [1]. Course books, on the contrary, are largely used in language instruction and learning. Both of them are intended to meet the needs of a defined learning program and include lessons and activities focused toward increasing certain abilities over an established period of time [2]. The theoretical foundations of course book development and evaluation are connected with prominent scholars in foreign language methodology. Yakusheva argued that the course book should focus on motivation, needs of learners, have cognitive learning strategies and also encourage learner autonomy [3].

The present study aims to investigate the most effective criteria to be considered when selecting the best EFL course books for secondary schools in Kazakhstan.

This suggests that the objectives of this research are:

a) to identify the common challenges faced by Kazakhstani English language teachers in selecting EFL course books;

b) to determine the most important criteria used by Kazakhstani English language teachers when evaluating and selecting EFL course books.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in its identification and empirical justification for selecting EFL course books in Kazakhstan. Whereas previous studies have examined textbook quality, cultural presents in various educational settings, limited research has investigated the practical challenges faced by Kazakhstani English language teachers while selecting course books across different levels. The present study empirically determines the most influential evaluation criteria from teacher's perspectives, developing the framework which integrates international standards with the linguistic, cultural and educational needs of learners.

The findings of this study will be considerably valuable for school and university instructors as well as learners, educational administrators and the material designers in Kazakhstan and in the countries where English is studied as a second language. Since this topic is vital, firstly, for raising awareness of the importance of selecting course book properly, and, secondly, for enlightening the principles of working with learners using EFL course books.

Previous studies provide further evidence to explain why teachers prefer to use CBs in teaching EFL. Primarily, educators are not able to construct their learning material. Secondly, CBs save teachers' time for lesson planning by providing prepared texts and tasks for students' use, thus, it gives teachers workload.

Any CB used for a large number of students suggests that the material is accessible to everyone equally, without taking into account the personal preferences of each student or teacher. Ultimately, this brings problems, since in any class, as Prodromou L. noted, students differ in levels, abilities, potential and other factors, and this contributes to the difficulties in assimilating the material, or knowledge gaps [4].

Another factor in rejecting CBs is that it may turn teachers into “technicians”. This happens when the teacher completely transfers the control of the lesson from himself / herself to the material. This reduces or perhaps completely deprives the teacher of his ability to flexibility and creativity. This mainly happens when the teacher depends on the teaching material, completely focusing and relying on the information given in the CB, page by page, following each topic and each exercise in strict order [4, p.45]. For this reason, recent research highlights that CB dependency is a measurable phenomenon in which teachers rely heavily on textbook structure, avoid deviation from prescribed content and equate teaching with “covering the book” [5].

Coursebook selection

Teachers are likely to face problems while choosing an appropriate CB in the teaching process. There is a professional need for educators to consider whether CB can meet students' needs and satisfy their characters and priorities.

It is a critical issue to select a suitable CB, since its assessment is essentially subjective, and there is no accurate formula that may serve as a crucial criterion. Furthermore, it is important to pay attention to a few factors that should be addressed, such as age, cultural sensitivity, procedure, and variety of exercises and their quantity, involvement of students and learning pace [6].

In Kazakhstan, CBs are widely used in all educational institutions as a guide for teachers and students. Recent studies emphasize the importance of cultural relevance, quality criteria, and visual aids in EFL textbooks. Z. Nurbekova et al. propose a multi-criteria expert model for assessing textbook quality, focusing on comprehensive standards to ensure that EFL materials meet educational needs effectively. Their research highlights factors such as content accuracy, engagement, and alignment with curricular goals, offering valuable insights for educators seeking to choose appropriate textbooks [6, p. 1417].

Further examining cultural relevance, S. Boribayev et al. explore the interplay between language and culture in EFL textbooks, suggesting that cultural representation plays a critical role in language acquisition. Their research work underscores the need for materials that resonate culturally with students to enhance understanding and retention [7]. Moreover, T. Shelestova et al. found that, in the Kazakhstani context, illustrations, visual aids and simulations positively influence primary school students' English language learning [8]. Together, these studies provide a comprehensive view of the

multifaceted elements crucial for effective EFL textbook design. However, despite the growing interest of research stating the importance of cultural relevance, visual support in EFL materials, limited attention has been paid to the practical issues, teachers face when selecting appropriate course books and teaching resources.

Therefore, the study attempts to identify the challenges educators face when selecting EFL CBs. Also, the purpose of the study is to establish criteria for choosing teaching materials that optimize learning outcomes. By exploring these issues, this research will provide valuable insights for language instructors, administrators and curriculum developer, ultimately boosting the quality of EFL education in Kazakhstan.

Materials and Methods. This research adopts a mixed approach of both quantitative and qualitative research methods using a survey as a major instrument. The quantitative part of the questionnaire is intended to examine and compare respondents' general perceptions; the qualitative part is intended to discover teachers' concrete views and recommendations.

The target participants were 33 English language teachers (ELT) of state and private schools, lyceums, colleges and teachers from online schools. Major lecturers are from the Department of Education and Humanities of two universities. Participants were selected based on their professional background, direct involvement in evaluating, selecting and using English language course books. As the study was exploratory in nature and combined quantitative and qualitative data, the sample was intended to provide diverse professional perspectives rather than statistical representatives of all English language teachers in Kazakhstan.

Concerning the survey participants, there were 28 respondents mainly from the number of females, their ages ranging from 25 to 40 years old and the minority was male with the number of 5 participants, aged from 28 to 50 years. Some university lecturers hold Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) levels, while the teachers from high school hold Master's degrees. Most of the participants' native language is the Kazakh, some of them are native to Turkish language and few of them are in Russian language.

The survey was created using Google Forms and distributes to participants via a web link. The questionnaire was developed based on the objectives of the study and a review of relevant literature on EFL course book evaluation and selection. The instrument consisted of four sections: demographic information, course book use and selection practices, evaluation criteria and challenges encountered during the selection process. A five-point Likert scale was employed in several sections of the questionnaire as it enables the systematic measurement of participants' perceptions, attitudes and evaluations while providing efficient variability for comparative analysis. The scale allowed respondents to express varying degrees of agreement and importance, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of their views on EFL course books.

In addition to closed-ended ones, the survey included several open-ended questions to get deeper insights into teacher's experiences and perspectives. The qualitative responses were analyzed using thematic content analysis. The answers were reviewed, coded and grouped into themes related to course book selection criteria, perceived advantages and disadvantages and challenges face by teachers.

Prior to administration, the instrument was reviewed by experienced EFL educators and researchers to assess the clarity, relevance and comprehensiveness of the items. Reliability was enhanced via the use of standardized questions, data collection procedure and a combination of quantitative and qualitative elements that allowed for data triangulation and cross-validation of results.

Results and discussion. The outcomes of the questionnaires are interpreted in this part of article in terms of the following research questions:

1) "What are the main challenges encountered by Kazakhstani English language teachers when selecting EFL course books?"

2) "What criteria do Kazakhstani English language teachers consider most important while evaluating and selecting EFL course books?"

The respondents were asked to identify the place where they are currently working. According to the responses, 36.4% of participants are teachers from state or private schools, 30.3% are lecturers from universities, 18.2% are working at lyceums; 9.1% are working at colleges, and the last 6% of participants are teachers from online courses and language centers.

Along with the respondents' answers about the years of their working experience, 39.4% of teachers have up to 2 years of experience, another 33.3 % of teachers have from 3 to 5 years, 27.3% of participants have more than five years of professional experience.

As shown in Figure 1, next question is connected to the participants' use of course books during their classes. As a result, 90.9% of them use CBs, 9.1% do not use. So maybe 3 from 33 participants are teachers from private online courses or language centers.

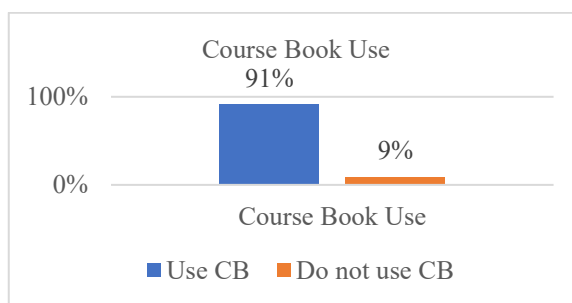


Figure 1. The Use of Course Books

Source: developed by the authors.

The next question examined whether the CBs were selected by teachers or prescribed by the institution. The majority (69.6%) still use the materials provided by the administration of the educational institution. The minority (24.2%) have the opportunity to choose CBs themselves. Also, respondents answered that they use the course books equally provided by the administration and personal preference course books (3.1%), another one responded that they usually consult with students and then choose the one that students prefer (3.1%).

As it is illustrated in Figure 2, the English File course book (31.5%) is more popular among teachers, followed by the book Solution (20.4%), then Smiles (7.4%); however, teachers also use Pioneer, Aspect, and Excel equally (5.6%). The remaining course books are used in the minority: Eyes Open, Global, Straightforward, and Action scored 3.7% each, while Headway, New Destinations, Skillful, and Face to Face course books scored 1.9% each.

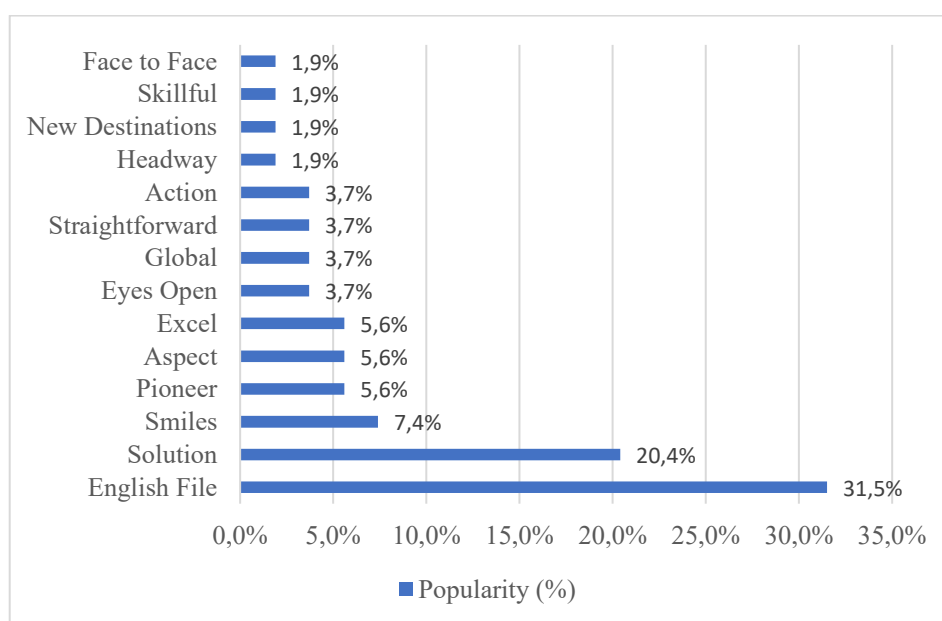


Figure 2. The Course Books used by Kazakhstani Teachers

Source: developed by the authors.

The first question of the second section offers a range of course book’s advantages and subsequently, participants have to show their viewpoints on course books’ main disadvantages which is illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages

Category	Item / Criterion	Percentage (%)
Perceived Advantages	Coverage of major language skills	63.3
	Interesting, up-to-date topics	60.3
	Colorful design	54.5
	Appropriate and relevant content	51.5
	Multiple tasks and activities	39.4
	Authentic language	27.3
	Promotion of learner independence	21.2
	Adaptation to local learners	18.2
	Communicative-centered approach	18.2
Perceived Disadvantages	Lack of adaptation to local culture	48.5
	Lack of multiple activities	24.2
	Artificial drills	21.2
	Boring topics	15.2
	Poor design	12.1
	Teacher-centered methodology	12.1
	Focus on traditional methods	9.1
	Inappropriate content	9.1
	Lack of major skills	6.1

Source: developed by the authors.

According to the results, teachers highly value skill development, topical relevance, and design, reflecting a focus on curriculum relevance and ease of use. However, the most frequently cited weakness is the lack of adaptation to local culture, reflecting dissatisfaction with the contextual primacy of textbook use. These results demonstrate a tension between the standardized nature of commercial textbooks and the respondents’ culturally sensitive expectations of the CBs.

The following open question of the research was connected with the criteria by which the participants use a CBs. As it appears, 19% claim their important criteria are level and age appropriacy, and 16.7% of teachers state it is the presence of interesting tasks. In descending order such criteria take place as the content (14.3%), authenticity (14.3%), and the relevance of topics (11.9%). The least number of teachers wrote the balance of four language skills (9.5%), reader-friendly design (7.1%), coherence (4.8%), and price (2.4%).

The survey focuses on five Likert scale questions highlighting criteria for appearance in course books. Participants prioritize attractive appearance (48.5%), legible font, and adequate letter size (54.5%). Matching book description with content (33.3%) and appropriate illustrations (27.3%) are less important for teachers. Legible font is the most essential for readers. The prominence of readability and supplementary resources highlights teachers’ concern with day-to-day instructional efficiency rather than purely visual appeal.

There are plenty of measurements that characterize the content of a language course book. The local availability, good quality of audio and video materials, and useful guide of teacher’s book happened to be very significant for participants (up to 75.8%). The presence of digital materials (45.5%) and effective workbooks (42.4%) took the latest places in terms of importance. Most participants ticked the neutral option in the effective workbook (21.2%) section.

The following category covers the general content criteria. According to the respondents, the most significant factors are level-appropriate content (81.8%), age-appropriate materials (75.8%), up-to-date content (69.7%), and authentic language (60.6%). The least important criteria are relevant and interesting topics (57.6%) and the adaptation to local culture (42.4%) as participants presume. These results suggest that cultural adaptation is perceived as a criterion of relatively limited importance while evaluating EFL CBs.

The next group of questions can be grouped as the concrete criteria.

By aggregating the “very important” and “important” options, it becomes evident that the criteria considered most significant by participants are the appropriateness of tasks to learners’ abilities, the provision of clear instructions and the promotion of functional language’s development which are endorsed by nearly up to 90% of respondents.

Participants also indicate that critical thinking and contribution to communicative competence are more neutral evaluations with 15.2%.

The remaining set of questions in section 2 is related to content structure as it is shown in Figure 3.

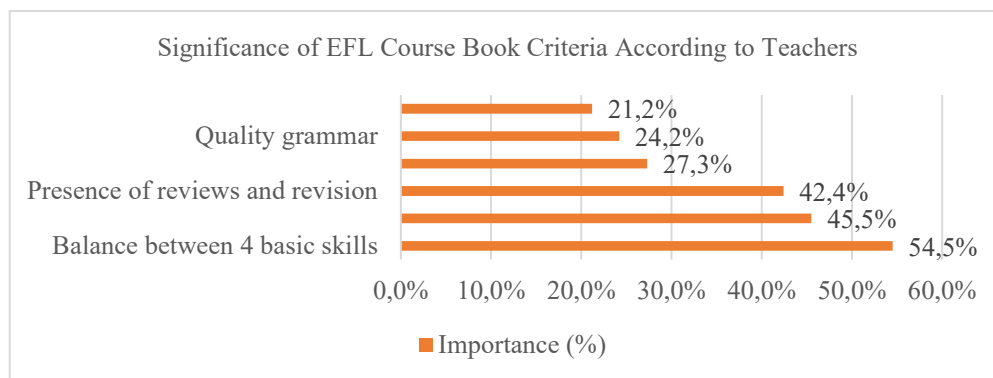


Figure 3. The significance of EFL Course Book Criteria

Source: developed by the authors.

The participants state the coherence of materials is of high significance, as well as the balance between 4 basic skills (54.5%), sufficient volume of vocabulary (45.5%), and the presence of reviews and revision (42.4%). As teachers claim, a balance between fluency and accuracy (21.2%), an equilibrium of free tasks and controlled tasks (27.3%), and quality grammar (24.2%) are all neutral criteria.

The first question of the final section was an open-ended question. Analysis of the responses show that the primary challenge is the high price of course books reported by participants (28.9%). Availability of materials ranked second problem (18.4%). Furthermore, some participants claim that poorly designed activities and inadequate structure cause obstacles to effective selection (10.5%). The smallest problem mentioned concern was the unavailability of supplementary materials, including Compact Discs (CDs) and teacher’s guides.

The following set of questions was of a multiple-choice format and several unified categories were created for the analysis. The first group considers problems in selecting course books. Most participants stayed neutral regarding the acceptance of course books that are provided by the administration (57.6%). 45.5% of participants stated that course books are affordable for students. Overall, the findings reveal that most of the respondents do not perceive high cost or the mandatory use of administratively assigned course books as major barriers that limit the effective use of textbooks in teaching practice.

Many assumptions were to be united by topic problems. 63.6% of participants claim that students are not interested in some topics. Most of them refuse that a unit’s length matches the planned time (39.4%). 42.4% of respondents are neutral towards the statements of boring presentation of materials. And participants rather deny that the course book does not consider local culture.

Teachers should ensure that the selected course book aligns with the objectives of the course. Once teachers get acquainted with the whole structure and content of a course book and have chosen which units to dismiss and which to apply and adapt, they can examine each unit separately. They may create a map dedicated solely to their course objectives, content and organization of the unit, and the activities they have chosen. After that, they need to think about how they may adapt every exercise to match it with the lesson objectives. There are some principles provided by McGath for adapting materials [9], such as:

- localization - matching the cultural background of the country CB is being taught and the content of materials.
- personalization - meeting the needs of the learners so that the materials would be easy to relate to and be involved in.
- individualization - concerning students' various learning styles and fitting into different tools of information comprehension.
- modernization - designing the course book according to new trends.
- simplification - creating the materials aesthetically simple so that the design would grab all the attention and providing tasks with easy instructions.

Many linguists admit that relying too heavily on a sole course book can lead to harmful effects as there is a constant need for adaptability and additional materials in English classrooms. The general belief among current experts emphasizes that CB selection should be guided by a learner-centered approach, where teachers prioritize students' needs, authenticity, and learning context, and evaluate coursebooks based on learners' needs, interests, motivation and suitability for the instructional context [10]. Although CB can help in a particular way, it is not able to define a general content language course. Among general challenges, teachers often need to pay attention to the affective and cognitive challenges in learning materials. The notion of "affect" means a form of emotions, feelings, and moods that create certain behaviors. In the educational process, feelings vary from positive to negative, and they can affect learning. To be specific, positive emotions include happiness and joy, pleasure, self-confidence, and empathy. On the other hand, negative emotions are stress, anxiety, fear, etc. Experts agree that the stimulation of negative factors is risky to the learning potential of students [9, p.162]. Along with foreign scholars, Kazakhstani ones also emphasize that the emotional intelligence should be taken into account by all teachers as the psychological climate in the educational environment rises the efficiency of teaching activities and contribute to effective interaction between teachers and students [11]. Thus, to avoid such risk teachers should take into account students' level of emotional sophistication.

Among the affective factors, motivation is one of the strongest indicators of learning success. Although teachers cannot completely control the motivation, as it is subjective and internal to the student, teachers can attempt to provide materials that are available to drive intrinsic interest. Focusing on cognitive factors and the challenges in the selection of course books, learning materials should increase the learning potential of students by stimulating their intellectual involvement [10, p. 145]. Tomlinson highlights that the published course books often lack the intellectual challenge they are supposed to provide [12]. Therefore, teachers should consider the intellectual challenges in course books which are created by applying cognitive domain. The cognitive domain is the way we develop mental skills in the learning process. In terms of applying mental skills, Bloom's taxonomy plays a vital role, since it illustrates subsequent degrees of cognitive engagement. It would be obvious that cognitive engagement may be implemented by selecting learning materials that deal with higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy and decreasing work at the lower levels.

Kazakhstan faces challenges in course book selection due to rapidly changing educational programs and policies. S. Kunanbayeva highlights students should become intermediators of intercultural communication, accepting material through secondary cognitive consciousness in learning foreign language [13]. Therefore, cognitive science plays a significant role in foreign language education as well as in creating the materials for course books.

The Ministry of Education in Kazakhstan selects textbooks and teaching materials once approved. However, schools have the option to choose alternative course books, which can affect teachers and parents. Parents complain about difficulty in finding Kazakhstani-produced course books, while teachers struggle to adapt to new ones and curriculum requirements.

In Kazakhstan course books are used in all educational institutions of the country. A right to publish course books in Kazakhstan has only entrepreneurs or publishing companies. However, firstly, the course book should receive its status, which is recommended by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan [14]. According to the updated English Language (EL) training

program of Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (ME RK), some of the course books from the first to eleventh grades are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Course Books Approved by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan

#	Name of the Course book	Authors	Publishing Company
Primary school (1-4 grades)			
1.	Family and Friends	Tamzin Thompson, Naomi Simmons, Kamila Beibitbayeva	Oxford University Press, 2024.
2.	English Language for Kazakhstan	Jenny Dooley, Bob Obee, Natalya Mukhamedjanova	EDU Stream и Express Publishing, 2024
3.	Top Stars for Kazakhstan	H.Q. Mitchell, Marileni Malkogianni, Konstantina Vasileiou, Anar Yessenbay	MM Publications, 2024
Middle School (5-9 grades)			
4.	Eyes Open for Kazakhstan	Vicki Anderson, Eoin Higgins	Cambridge University Press, 2018
5.	Excel for Kazakhstan	Virginia Evans, Jenny Dooley, Bob Obee. Translator: Natalya Mukhamedjanova	Express Publishing, 2018
6.	English Plus for Kazakhstan	Ben Wetz, Diana Pye	Oxford University Press, 2018
7.	Laser for Kazakhstan	Malcolm Mann, Steve Taylore-Knowles	Macmillan Publishers, 2018
8.	Full blast for Kazakhstan	H. Q. Mitchell - Marileni Malkogianni	MM Publications, 2018
High school (10-11 grades)			
9.	Action for Kazakhstan	Jenny Dooley, Bob Obee	Express Publishing, 2019
10.	Aspect for Kazakhstan	Jenny Dooley, Bob Obee	Express Publishing, 2019

Source: Compiled based on the data (Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2022).

Since 2015 any CB should be published in strict accordance with the requirements of Kazakhstan state standards in terms of content and methodology of material presentation. Now, the right to choose a CB on a specific subject has been given to schools, and no author’s education program is applied in schools.

The responsibility of creating new language course books is tremendously serious. Mainly, because it is caused by the need for classrooms all around the world to foster the learning process and to absorb some new ways of teaching language. One who is busy developing the field looks up to the material’s duty to be highly informative, very well structured, and aesthetically simple. The publisher is responsible for all the costs involved in developing the CB. Concerning the publishing process, firstly, a creative team of three specialists is involved in the preparation of the CB: a scientist, a practical teacher, and a methodologist. Soon editors, painters, layout designers, and proofreaders make their contribution to previous work. It takes about a year to prepare and publish a CB. The same amount of time is given for scientific, pedagogical, and public examinations. Firstly, it must face learners’ needs, “selling” the information to students. Moreover, as one of the problems of materials in Kazakhstani education, it has to be accessible to some extent. Yet the evaluation of these newly designed course books itself is complicated. The process involves reading through the course book, matching it with the criteria, and placing it according to the overall image. The evaluation of materials requires rich experience and devotion from the teachers.

The comparison of textbook evaluation standards presented in Table 3 provides a vital framework for interpreting the survey findings. Several criteria mentioned by teachers as highly important correspond closely to the standards emphasized across the Kazakhstani, Russian and European frameworks. Although all three frameworks have common criteria, mainly to what extent

material stimulates learners’ interest, how diverse the tasks are, and the presence of illustrations and their balance with text, they differ in the specific content and methodological requirements used to evaluate teaching materials. The analysis reveals that the checklist of the European Union (EU) is structured more thoroughly, as most it concerns about the aim of materials, quality of media and learning pace. In contrast, the Kazakhstani and Russian criteria are more common and more extensive. For instance, both countries are broader and pay greater focus on compliance with educational standards and cultural content.

Regarding the Kazakhstani framework, it has a main focus on materials’ topics and representation of national culture, inclusion of advanced scientific and technological achievements, the development of higher-order thinking skills (HOTs) and age-related factors. It also contains stricter requirements regarding linguistic, true-life and stylistic accuracy. The Russian checklist is the most specific and broad in methodology, which emphasizes learner needs and balanced development of all language skills, diverse teaching approaches and teacher-student interaction. The EU framework, meanwhile, focuses on personalization, learner autonomy, clear learning strategies and systematic practicing previously learned materials.

Table 3. CB Evaluation Standards

Country / Criteria of CB evaluation	Approved by MES in the Republic of Kazakhstan	Approved by MES in the Russian Federation	Approved by the European Framework of Reference for Languages
Content	Compliance with the curriculum Materials stimulate interest in an in-depth study of the subject Compliance of the CB structure with the requirements (table of contents, introduction, texts, illustrations, questions, and tasks, use of signs and symbols) Quantity balance of materials in every section Lexical and grammatical limits by the intellectual level of students Coherence and cohesion of a presented material The presence of advanced achievements. of modern science and technology in a content The presence of words which are frequently used in spoken and written language No elements of religious extremism and terrorism Clarity and brevity of language The absence of factual, grammar and stylistic mistakes The balance between text and visual material Understanding the cultural diversity of the whole world Reflection of the Kazakhstani culture	The content is focused on satisfying the capabilities and needs of students. The presence of illustrations, graphs, tables and maps Diversity of the texts. All linguistics aspects involved (vocabulary, grammar, phonetics) A clear system of exercises to consolidate and practice lexical and grammatical skills. Attention paid to all activities (reading, speaking, listening, writing). The presence of authentic materials. The dialogues are emotionally charged and supported by practice. The presence of literary works as representatives of the cultural heritage General and cultural knowledge is provided about the country of target knowledge.	Materials correspond to the aims of the unit. The main goals of units and courses are clear. Included topics are interesting and engaging. Media is beneficial and practical in the given context. The presence of an extensive amount of task types. Materials are presented in a visually pleasing way. Materials are authentic. The supposed learning pace is appropriate for students.

Methodology	<p>Materials promote higher order thinking skills (HOT)</p> <p>The way of perception of different age-related groups is considered</p> <p>Reflection of gender approach in texts and illustrations</p> <p>Conformity of educational material to psychological characteristics of students</p>	<p>Content relying on the previous knowledge of students and their intellectual abilities.</p> <p>Enable the learners' autonomy.</p> <p>The optimal combination of theoretical knowledge and commutative practice.</p> <p>The combination of various types of learning strategies: individual/ group/ discussions/ projects/ game training.</p> <p>Materials present cultural differences that raise cultural awareness in students.</p> <p>A clear construction of lessons that increases students' motivation.</p> <p>The content reflects spaced repetition learning.</p> <p>An approach that focuses on equality between teachers and students.</p> <p>An inductive approach to learning grammar.</p> <p>Simple to complex approach is applied.</p>	<p>A pattern of organization to the units is included.</p> <p>Topics are concerned with students' interests.</p> <p>Units are formed in consonance with clear learning strategies.</p> <p>Different approaches are involved in materials.</p> <p>Materials are enabled to create the effective language acquisition.</p> <p>The presence of adequate recycling of new information.</p>
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Source: developed by the authors.

The comparison of course book evaluation standards provide an important context for interpreting the survey findings. Several criteria known by teachers correspond closely to those across the Kazakhstani, Russian and European frameworks. For instance, respondents graded level appropriateness (81.8%), age appropriateness (75.8%), up-to-date content (69.7%) and authenticity of language (60.6%) among the most influential factors in course book evaluation. These priority indicators reflect the shared emphasis of all three frameworks on learner needs, authentic materials and developmental appropriateness.

Simultaneously, the survey results show certain variations between formal evaluation standards and teachers' classroom experiences. Although the Kazakhstani criteria pays attention to cultural representation and development of HOTs, many respondents identified insufficient adaptation to local culture as one of the major weaknesses of present course books. Moreover, participants gave greater importance to practical classroom considerations such as task suitability, clear instructions and availability of materials than to broader methodological principles highlighted in official frameworks. These findings indicate that effective course book evaluation should balance compliance with formal standards and awareness to the practical realities of classroom teaching.

Conclusion. The purpose of this study was to identify the main challenges faced by Kazakhstani English language teachers in selecting EFL course books and to investigate the most effective criteria to be considered when selecting them. The study was to give a concrete answer to these questions: What varieties of challenges stand in the way of Kazakhstani teachers when selecting the best ESL course book? What are the most important criteria to consider when selecting a course book for Kazakhstani students?

The findings provide clear answers to both research questions and confirm that the study objectives were achieved.

Regarding the first research question, the results show that teachers encounter a few challenges during the course book selection. The most frequently reported difficulties include the high cost and limited availability of course books as well as concerns about insufficient cultural adaptation and the limited flexibility of materials to meet diverse learner needs. The findings from the research indicate both practical and pedagogical factors which influence teachers' decisions while selecting instructional materials.

According to the second question, the study found that level and age appropriateness, relevance and authenticity of content, clarity of design and suitability of tasks are the most influential criteria

in course book evaluation. Teachers emphasized the importance of selecting materials that correspond to learners' language proficiency, developmental characteristics and needs.

Nevertheless, several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of the study. First, the sample size was relatively small ($n=33$), which limits the possibility of generalizing the results to entire population of English language educators in Kazakhstan. Second, although participants represented various educational institutions, the study did not aim to achieve proportional regional representation. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted as reflecting the experiences of the participating teachers rather than all Kazakhstani EFL teachers.

Despite the limitations, the study provides valuable exploratory insights into the challenges and criteria associated with EFL course book selection in the Kazakhstani context. On the whole, the findings suggest that effective course book selection in Kazakhstan requires a context-sensitive approach which considers both international quality standards and local educational realities. The paper highlights the need for culturally relevant, flexible and learner-centered materials that raise intercultural awareness and extend general knowledge beyond the classroom.

The proposed evaluation criteria may serve as a practical guide for novice and experienced teachers, curriculum developers and academic administrators while selecting and adapting EFL course books for different educational settings.

Future research could involve a larger number of teachers from various regions of Kazakhstan to further validate and refine the proposed evaluation framework.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАН МЕКТЕПТЕРІ ҮШІН АҒЫЛШЫН ТІЛІ ОҚУЛЫҚТАРЫН ТАҢДАУДАҒЫ ӨЛШЕМДЕР МЕН ҚИЫНДЫҚТАР

Аңдатпа

Цифрлық технологиялар мен жасанды интеллект құралдарының интеграциясының артуына қарамастан, оқулықтар оқытудың басым ресурсы болып қала береді және бұл оқулықтардың өзектілігі, бейімделуі мен педагогикалық құндылығы туралы алаңдаушылық тудырады. Зерттеудің мақсаты оқытушылардың тиісті ағылшын тілі оқулықтарын таңдауда кездесетін негізгі қиындықтарды анықтау және оларды бағалаудың ең тиімді критерийлерін қазақстандық білім беру контекстінде анықтау болып табылады. Зерттеуде мектептердің, колледждердің және университеттердің 33 ағылшын тілі оқытушылары арасында жүргізілген құрылымдық онлайн сауалнама арқылы жиналған сандық және сапалық деректерді біріктіретін аралас әдістер қолданылады. Таңдау оқытушылардың оқулықтарды таңдаудағы қабылдауларына, қалауларына және практикалық тәжірибелеріне бағытталған. Зерттеу нәтижелері оқытушылардың оқулықтарды құрылымдық мазмұны, дағдыларды қалыптастыруы және уақытты үнемдеу артықшылықтары тұрғысынан бағалағанымен, олар оқулықтардағы мәдени бейімделудің болмауына, өзара әрекеттесудің шектеулілігіне және әртүрлі білім беру қажеттіліктерін қанағаттандыру үшін материалдардың икемділігінің жеткіліксіздігіне айтарлықтай алаңдаушылықтарын білдіретінін көрсетеді. Зерттеу барысында оқулықтарды бағалауда деңгей мен жас ерекшеліктерінің сәйкестігі, мазмұнның өзектілігі, түпнұсқалық пен дизайнның анықтығы ең ықпалды критерийлер ретінде нақтыланды. Сонымен қатар, оқулықтың құны мен қолжетімділігі сияқты сыртқы шектеулер оқытушылардың таңдау шешімдеріне әсер ететіндігі анықталды. Нәтижелер Қазақстанда оқулықтарды бағалау мен бейімдеуде контекстке тән тәсілдің қажеттілігін көрсетеді. Зерттеу стандартталған материалдарға ғана сүйену оқытушылардың тілдік, мәдени және педагогикалық қажеттіліктерін жеткілікті түрде қанағаттандырмауы мүмкін екенін көрсетеді. Зерттеу нәтижелеріне сүйене отырып, нақты анықталған, контекстке тән бағалау критерийлері педагогтарға ақпараттандырылған шешімдер қабылдауға көмектесе алады. Сайып келгенде, әсіресе оқу материалдарын таңдау мен бейімдеуде жеткілікті тәжірибе жинамаған жас оқытушылар арасында ағылшын тілін оқыту сапасын жақсартады.

Түйінді сөздер: шетел тілі ретіндегі ағылшын тілі оқулықтары, оқулықтарды таңдау, қазақстандық оқытушылар, ағылшын тілі, оқулық әзірлеу, оқыту материалдары, оқулықтарды таңдаудағы қиындықтар.

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КРИТЕРИИ И ТРУДНОСТИ ВЫБОРА УЧЕБНИКОВ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА ДЛЯ КАЗАХСТАНСКИХ ШКОЛ

Аннотация

Несмотря на растущую интеграцию цифровых технологий и инструментов искусственного интеллекта, учебники остаются доминирующим учебным ресурсом, вызывая опасения по поводу их актуальности, адаптируемости и педагогической ценности. Целью исследования является выявить основные проблемы, с которыми сталкиваются преподаватели при выборе подходящих учебников английского языка и определить наиболее эффективные критерии их оценки в контексте казахстанской системы образования. В исследовании используется смешанный подход, сочетающий количественные и качественные данные, собранные посредством структурированного онлайн-опроса, проведенного среди 33 преподавателей английского языка из школ, колледжей и университетов. Анализ сосредоточен на восприятии, предпочтениях и практическом опыте преподавателей при выборе учебников. Результаты исследования показывают, что, хотя преподаватели оценивают учебники с точки зрения структурированного содержания, развития навыков и экономии времени, они также выражают значительные опасения по поводу отсутствия культурной адаптации в учебниках, ограниченной интерактивности и недостаточной гибкости материалов для удовлетворения разнообразных потребностей в обучении. В исследовании были определены следующие наиболее влиятельные критерии оценки учебников: соответствие уровню и возрасту, актуальность содержания, аутентичность и ясность дизайна. Кроме того, было установлено, что внешние ограничения, такие как стоимость и доступность учебников влияют на решения преподавателей при выборе учебных материалов. Результаты подчеркивают необходимость контекстно-ориентированного подхода к оценке и адаптации учебников в Казахстане. Исследование показывает, что опора исключительно на стандартизированные материалы может не в полной мере удовлетворять лингвистические, культурные и педагогические потребности учащихся. Определенные на основе результатов исследования контекстно-ориентированные критерии оценки могут помочь преподавателям принимать обоснованные решения. В конечном итоге это улучшит качество преподавания английского языка, особенно среди молодых учителей, которые могут не иметь достаточного опыта в выборе и адаптации учебных материалов.

Ключевые слова: учебники английского языка как иностранного, выбор учебников, казахстанские преподаватели, английский язык, разработка учебников, учебные материалы, трудности при выборе учебников.

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