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## Education Policy And Practices Of English As A Foreign Language (Efl) In Iraq

Ihab Razzaq Altufaili

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**EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICES OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN  
LANGUAGE (EFL) IN IRAQ**

A Masters Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate College of  
Missouri State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts, English

By

Ihab Razzaq Jasim Altufaili

May 2016

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# EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICES OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) IN IRAQ

English

Missouri State University, May 2016

Master of Arts

Ihab Razzaq Jasim Altufaili

## ABSTRACT

English is the language of trade, finance, science, education, and politics, and several countries have an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) policy to improve their ability to compete. Accordingly, many countries have placed emphasis on EFL and have established an effective teaching methodology as part of that policy. Currently, the Ministry of Education in Iraq has changed their educational policy to start EFL in the first grade and has adopted new textbooks using the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach. The purpose of this research is to study the Iraqi EFL education policy and practices after 2014 by assessing instructor perception of the new policy, quality of teacher training, and the effectiveness of the new textbook series, *English for Iraq*. The research questions for this study aim to: (1) find the positive and the negative aspects of the new education policy; (2) explore the quality of teacher training to develop teaching skills for *English for Iraq*; and (3) assess the effectiveness of *English for Iraq*. The study includes mixed research approaches where both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected by three different methods: survey, interview, and textbook evaluation. The participants in this study were 52 *English for Iraq* teachers. Findings indicate that facilities were substandard and could not support the new education policy, the textbooks were effective but lack supplementary materials, and more teacher training is required for effective CLT teaching. Recommendations include the establishment of a CLT training center in Iraq and language labs in schools to assist teachers to teach using CLT.

**KEYWORDS:** language policy, *English for Iraq*, teacher training, CLT, EFL, young learners, language policy and planning in Iraq

This abstract is approved as to form and content

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Yili Shi, PhD  
Chairperson, Advisory Committee

Missouri State University  
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May 2016

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

English has been an important language in Iraq after it was first taught after World War I during the British occupation of the country (Kareem). English was taught in the first grade at a basic level as a second language during the British occupation. After a while, that policy was changed and it was decided that English would be taught from the fifth grade as a foreign language (Al- Chalabi 41). At the time, the syllabus was based on the grammar – translation method, which was adopted in Europe in the nineteenth century. That method rapidly spread to other countries in the later part of the century (Rivers 14).

From 2008 to 2013 the English language began to be taught in the third grade, then late in 2013 there was a significant change in the English curriculum teaching and English then started to be taught from the first grade. English is now a compulsory subject that students have to pass in order to enroll in an upper grade level. There are also significant changes in terms of teaching materials as well as methods. Indeed, the communicative approach has now replaced the grammar- translation approach. This new approach to teaching English based on Chomsky's transformational generative grammar (TGG) and cognitive psychology was used from 2008 until 2013. These changes with regard to textbooks and teaching materials require special programs that help teachers update their teaching methods and strengthen their knowledge and experience of modern pedagogy. Teacher training also requires infrastructure repairs, specializing the equipment, materials, laboratories, libraries, etc. In 2014, the Iraqi Ministry of Education adopted a new language education policy that English should be taught from first grade using the textbooks that were specially written for the Iraqi elementary schools. The name of this series is

*English for Iraq*. The textbook is written with the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach as the methodology to be used by instructors. While this policy change is positive, it requires the proper training of instructors, so the Ministry of Education provided two training programs in Erbil and Beirut to improve the qualifications of teachers. These teachers were to return to Iraq and offer training sessions to their peers in order to prepare the instructors to teach *English for Iraq*. The goal of the training program was to also encourage the use of CLT since the previous method of instruction was the grammar-translation method.

Moreover, while teachers are willing to incorporate these newly learned skills into the classroom, there are other factors that hinder this transition. First, most Iraqi English teachers are non-native speakers with bachelor's degrees in either English literature or English education. Not only are there issues with the language proficiency, but there are also issues with awareness of teaching methodology. These gaps in skills can be improved; however, there is a need for intensive training in teaching methodology for a large number of instructors. With the country still recovering from conflict, much infrastructure is still lacking, which contributes to a difficult transition to both CLT and a new curriculum. This study will contribute to the overall body of knowledge of language teaching in Iraq since there are limited studies focused on analyzing the education policy or evaluating the new textbooks of that policy. Because of the new policy and new curriculum, there is an urgent need for an evaluation to assess the positive and negative aspects of the education policy in order to provide possible recommendations to improve the quality of education.

This study explores the new English as a Foreign Language (EFL) policy, evaluate the new textbook series *English for Iraq*, and assess the teacher training program. The aim of this study is to study EFL education policy and practices after 2014, to explore the change of the new

policy in terms of school equipment and materials, new textbooks, new methodology, and teacher training. The research questions that the study will investigate are:

1. What are the positive and the negative aspects of the new education policy for elementary EFL in Iraq, especially in terms of school equipment and materials, age grading, and new methodology?
2. Is the teachers' training that is sponsored by the Iraqi Ministry of Education as part of the new educational policy effective in developing teachers' skills in using the new textbook?
3. How effective is *English for Iraq* as an EFL textbook regarding its format and contents, students' goals and needs, and teachers' ability to use it?

The study involved 52 English teachers who teach *English for Iraq*. The study focused on three information collecting techniques: survey, interview, and researcher evaluation. The survey consisted of 24 questions where 23 questions required a response by using a five-point Likert-type scale, and the final question was open-ended as the researcher felt there was a need to gain deeper insight from respondents. The interview analysis, a questionnaire composed of 19 questions, was designed to investigate two teachers' opinions about the training program that was sponsored by the Ministry of Education. The researcher evaluation followed a ten category Robinett checklist for textbook evaluation where grade one to grade three of the *English for Iraq* series were evaluated.

This thesis includes six chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 reviews the extant literature and research that are related to the researcher questions that are addressed in this thesis. It also gives background information about the history of EFL education systems in Iraq, about the language policy before and after 2003, and about the training programs. Moreover, it provides information about the language policy and planning and the language planning levels. Chapter 3 represents the methodology approach that has been adopted in this study. In order to answer the research questions, different instruments were used. The major research instruments-

survey, interviews, and textbook evaluations- are identified and the procedures followed in collecting data are stated. Chapter 4 depicts the key findings from an analysis of the research data. These include results based on use of both qualitative and quantitative data. Chapter 5 includes a detailed account and interpretation of the findings of the study. It also answers the research questions while referring to relevant previous studies. Finally, Chapter 6 summarizes aims and findings of the study. Moreover, it also provides recommendations to assist in the full implementation of the new policy and suggestions for further study. The study limitations are also indicated in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Language Policy and Planning**

To really understand the importance of the literature review, there are two terms that need to be defined. Countries have different language policies and language planning procedures. These two terms help in understanding the structuring and evaluation of the Iraqi education policy. Therefore, this section provides a brief overview about language policy and planning (LPP). The two terms language policy and language planning are difficult to separate. Language policy is occasionally used as an equivalent to language planning. Donakey claims that “it is not always clear where policy ends and planning begins” (10). However, early scholars referred to the field by using the term language planning, while others, referred to the field by using the term language policy, and some researchers use the term language policy and planning interchangeably (LPP) (García 353). However, some scholars think that language policy is more concerned with linguistic, political and social goals that can be considered as the core of the language planning process. Language policy refers to “government authorized long-term, sustained, and conscious effort to alter a language’s function in a society for the purpose of solving communication problems” (Cooper 45). Language policy covers details in language teaching. For example, if English and French are the required languages at school then the policy will cover how many hours to be dedicated to each per week, and what type of teaching methodology to be used. These details go under language education policy. Language policy and planning also reflect learning goals and teaching methodology that result in merging policies “into planning along a continuum of language policy and planning (LPP)” (Donakey 10). Sue

states that both language policy and planning are necessary – one alludes to language changes by the state or legitimate associations, while the other conveys practices and convictions or attitudes toward language that shape the way that language is overseen and utilized as a part of society. This paper uses both terms - language policy and planning- interchangeably (García 353).

The term language planning was introduced for the first time in a seminar at Columbia University by Uriel Weinreich in 1957 (Cooper 29). However, Einar Haugen was the one who was accredited for using it in 1956. He defined language planning as "the activity of preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a non-homogeneous speech community" (8). In other words, it is the planners' responsibility to develop the language and seek to get the desired results. Although academic research in this field did not appear until the 1960s ("The Language Planning Situation in" 358). Cooper changed the view about language planning, he states that language planning is not only controlled by the government through official decisions, but it can also be done through individuals, groups, or local organization.

Language planning determines language status in a specific community ("The Language Planning Situation in" 15). Generally speaking, language planning encompasses government procedures (required languages and proficiency levels), and the influence of local organizations and individuals on language development. Language planning is usually categorized into four types: status planning, corpus planning, acquisition planning, and prestige planning. First, status planning refers to activities that change the function of a language and the rights of its speakers as well as their attitude toward the language. For example, status planning is responsible for deciding which language to be used at school, officially recognizing a variety of languages, providing bilingual ballots, court interpreters, and street signage. (Van Herk 170). Second,



corpus planning refers to the process of changing the language itself—typically to standardize it. It specifically develops the function of language such as orthography development, vocabulary development, spelling reform, dictionaries, grammars, and language “purism.” (Van Herk 170). Status and corpus planning frequently occur together; therefore, corpus planning affects language status. The third type, acquisition planning or Language-in-Education Planning, was first introduced by Coober who defined it as “language policy-making [that] involves decisions concerning the teaching and use of language, and their careful formulation by those empowered to do so, for the guidance of others” (31). Kaplan, Baldauf, and other scholars believed in the importance of education in the acquisition planning; therefore, they refer to it as language-in-education planning (LiEP), or language education planning (García 345). In other words, language-in-education planning is about language learning whose main focus is not spreading the language as status planning does, but to increase the number of its speakers through education by utilizing two methods: (1) teaching foreign/second languages, (2) using the first language to teach a second or a foreign language to help students maintain or learn the language (García 354). Moreover, to achieve its goals, this planning has two approaches: policy and cultivation planning. First, policy planning focuses on form, whose goal is to develop policy through “access policy, personal policy, curriculum policy, methods and materials policy, resourcing policy, community policy, and evolution policy.” Second, cultivation planning focuses on functions that lead to building up acquisition planning through “reacquisition, maintenance, foreign/second language, and shift” (Baldauf 150).

Lastly, prestige planning (also referred to as usage or opportunity language planning) is concerned with the image of languages. This type was introduced by Haarmann who argued that prestige planning is important for language planning because its activities are separated from

status and corpus planning activities. He claimed that status and corpus planning activities are considered "productive," while prestige planning activities are "representative." (120) In other words, the status and corpus planning activities are acts, while the prestige planning activities are people's responses to these acts. This paper will focus on "language-in-education planning," because it deals with the study of second/foreign languages in the Iraqi education system.

### **Language Planning Levels**

A recent study by Kaplan and Balduf suggests that language policy and planning can occur at several levels: macro, meso, and micro (*Language Planning from Practice to Theory* 52). Macro level refers to "top-down" government decisions in regard to the main bullets of language learning in a specific country (Donakey 21). In other words, macro level is the planning that government is responsible for. For instance, it is the government that decides on what should be used, when and how (i.e., selection of the second language, duration of classes, grade age, textbooks, curriculum, and teaching methodology). Micro level, on the other hand, is considered as a small-scale in comparison to macro level, but it is "controlled in implementing changes in language use" (Donakey 11). It involves "bottom up" activities that can be implemented by agencies, such as supplementary schools, local organizations, and individuals.

Language planning requires more than top-down decisions. In fact, it is shaped by different factors like politics, society, and religion. It can also be shaped by individuals who don't even know that they contribute to language planning:

Language teachers, materials developers, curriculum specialists, information scientists, advertising writers, personnel officers, and other human resource development planners at all levels of the public and private sectors have been asked to engage in micro language planning activities, although they would often not be aware that this is what they were doing. (*Language Planning from Practice to Theory* xii)

Lastly, meso level involves local government projects in language learning, for example, public schools, teachers, public libraries, and educational organization (Donakey 21).

Many language policy and planning scholars, in their research, emphasize on the macro-level language planning. For example, scholars such as Phillipson (1992), Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), Pennycook (1994) and Tollefson (1991, 1995) focus on macro language planning in terms of education function in teaching second/foreign language (Donakey 20). However, early researchers did not focus a lot on studying micro level. Kaplan and Baldauf state that "micro levels are not well documented in the literature, perhaps because they are not seen to be as prestigious" (*Language Planning from Practice to Theory* 52). However, in the last decade, many studies focus on the micro and the meso-language planning and their role in second/foreign language education. Many scholars argued that "the impact of language planning and policy depends heavily on meso and micro level involvement and support" (*Language and Language-in-Education Planning in the Pacific Basin* 201). Therefore, there are plenty of studies that emphasize the role of the micro level in implantation of the macro level. Many Asian countries are depending on the macro level planning when it comes to second/foreign language teaching. Iraq is one of these countries that are depending on the top down policy. In other words, the Iraqi Ministry of Education is responsible for making decisions, and teachers are required to implement them. In the last decade, the Iraqi Ministry of Education provided new textbooks, methods, syllabus, and curriculum to improve the overall education system in regard to learning English. Furthermore, the government provided training programs for teachers in order to be able to use the new methods in teaching English. As micro level has a minor role in the Education system of Iraq, it can be said that macro-level dominates the system. Therefore, the current research project focuses on the macro-level planning in introducing second/foreign language,

specifically grade age (the age that children are introduced to a foreign/second language), teacher training, teaching methods, and materials.

### **Language Teaching in Iraq from 1873-2002**

English was first taught in Iraq at a few schools in 1873, but after the First World War—when Iraq was occupied by Britain—the primary education was expanded to all Iraqi cities (Kareem). At that time, English was taught as a second language in the first grade, but later, it was taught as a foreign language in the fifth grade (Al-Chalabi 41). During that period, textbooks were based on the grammar translation method which was founded by a group of scholars in Europe in the nineteenth century, and it spread later that century to other countries (Rivers 14). The main skills that these textbooks tried to develop were reading and writing while little attention was given to speaking and listening, and almost no attention to pronunciation skill.

Three series of English Language Teaching (ELT) courses, which had been composed in Britain, were being used in Iraq. The first series was *The Oxford English Course* by Oliphant. The second series was *The Oxford English Course for the Middle East* by Faucett. These first two series had been used until the middle of the 1950s. The last series, *The Oxford English Course for Iraq* that had been used until the early 1970s, was written by Hornby, Miller and Selim Hakim, an Iraqi expert (Al-Bettar 2). It was noticed that almost all three of the series that are mentioned above presented the same material (Al-Bettar 2). The first two series were not specific for Iraqi students, since they were written with all ESL students around the world in mind. However, the third one was designed for Iraqi students, but it was not very useful because the material was taken from books and magazines that were not practical in any social context. Teachers, at this period, rarely used supportive tools to help them in their teaching such as

records and tapes, and these tools were exclusive for certain schools in specific urban areas ("The New English Course for Iraq" 6). Teachers also did not have any "Teacher's Guides" (Al-Hamash, and Hammo 7). In addition, these series did not take into account the sociological, religious and political factors for Iraqi society and as a result did not satisfy the Iraqi students' needs at that period (Richmond 6).

In the early 1970s, the Iraqi Ministry of Education decided to provide textbooks that were written by Iraqi authors . They came up with the New English Course for Iraq (NECI). This series consisted of eight books, and was designed based on the grammar translation method and the Audiolingual Method. It adopted the standard British English. Compared to the old textbooks the NECI proved to be a success with the students (Ramadhan 14). The NECI series included more activities than the old series which was reader-centered. In addition, the NECI activities focused on oral practice, dialogues, pronunciation, reading, spelling, and writing ("Features of the New English Textbooks of Iraq" 2). Moreover, the NECI series had a teacher's guide designed for each textbook in the series (Al-Hamash and Hammo 7). This was a big accomplishment for the Iraqi Ministry of Education because teachers at that time needed guidance and instructions to teach the new textbooks.

The NECI was used for almost thirty years without any change. Several attempts were made in vain to edit or change the textbooks. In 2001, the Ministry of Education set an Iraqi committee of eight ELT curriculum specialists to come up with new textbooks. The Committee came up with a new syllabus called *Rafidain English Course for Iraq*. This series was designed to follow the communicative approach. Each book from this series contained fifteen units. Each unit included many activities, such as short conversations, games, songs, and rhymes. Arabic culture and Iraqi habits were illustrated in this series. For example, many passages talked about

famous war leaders from Islamic history such as Khalid Ibn Al-Waleed and Salahuddin Al-Ayubbi. This series also used British English (Kareem).

After the war between the United States and Iraq, Iraqis explored both American culture and American English through movies and TV shows. Therefore, all the new series that the Ministry of Education adopted from 2008 until 2014 used American English instead of British English. In the last few years, the Iraqi Ministry of Education adopted two series. The first series was entitled *Iraq Opportunities*. Iraqi schools used this series from 2012 to 2014. This series embraced the communicative language teaching approach, which focuses on developing communicative competence by providing the students with opportunities to interact and communicate with others in the target language. The second series that the Ministry of Education adopted in 2014 was *English for Iraq*. This series published by Garnet Publishing Ltd., *English for Iraq*, is the new curriculum that is currently used in Iraqi schools. It is basically designed to follow the communicative method in teaching ESL learners.

### **Language Policy in Iraq since 2003**

Before going into the details of the new language policy, it is important to go over the Iraqi system of education after Saddam Hussein's regime to have a closer look at the needs of the Iraqi Education system. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) did a report entitled "Iraq, Education in Transition Needs and Challenges" (2004). This report went over all the problems that the Iraqi system of education had at that time, and the recommended procedures deemed necessary to improve the quality of the education system so that it is comparable to international standards. UNESCO found that the Iraqi education institutions foreign/second languages have a great need for: new textbooks and curriculum, basic

teaching-learning equipment and materials, in-service training for teachers, maintenance for the schools, and subsistence wages for teachers. During Saddam's regime, all textbooks and curriculum, especially art, history, social science, and technology, used to be restricted and limited by political constraints. Therefore, they needed to be changed. For example, most education institutions lack equipment and materials such as furniture, computer labs, language labs, and libraries. Also, internet access was very limited and most websites were censored or banned by the government. Schools, textbooks, and curriculum have to be updated to respect human rights, and democracy. The UNESCO survey showed that schools in Iraq need to have at least "7,000 science laboratories, 3,000 computer laboratories, 3,000 language laboratories, 2,500 library rooms, and 3,000 gymnasia for physical education" ("Iraq, Education in Transition Needs and Challenges" 5). This survey demonstrated that each school should have visual aids, at least "one overhead and slide projector, TV/VCR, and two heavy duty photocopiers in each location" ("Iraq, Education in Transition Needs and Challenges" 5). The reports also found that in-service teachers need to be trained to use new methodologies and new techniques. According to the UNESCO reports, although 98% of the in-service teachers have bachelor degrees, they do not have any access to new studies in their field. Additionally, professional training for teachers in recent years is very limited ("Iraq, Education in Transition Needs and Challenges" 5). Moreover, many schools need to be renovated and maintained. According to the UNESCO reports, "few of the buildings were in good condition, with 47% partially damaged, 23% in very poor condition and 10% totally unsafe. More than half of schools were without access to running water and few had well-functioning sanitation" ("Iraq, Education in Transition Needs and Challenges" 4). In Saddam's regime, teachers' salaries were very low, which led many teachers to leave their jobs to find better paying job opportunities either outside or inside of Iraq (irfad). However, after

Saddam's regime, the Iraqi government decided to increase teachers' salaries ("Iraq, Education in Transition Needs and Challenges VI). This decision had a great effect on improving in-service teachers' motivation, and encouraging many teachers to return to their teaching careers.

After 2003, UNESCO and the Ministry of Education tried to develop the Iraqi system of education through many effective procedures. However, the security problems that occurred after 2003 resulted in serious damages to the educational system. The Ministry of Education reported that 31,589 violent attacks happened between March 2003 and October 2008 against educational institutions (qtd. in Brendan 202). Moreover, teachers were subjected to threats and attacks of armed and terrorist groups. Many reports showed that about 300 teachers were killed and 1158 were injured in 2006. Higher education reported that "259 academics assassinated, another 72 abducted and 174 in detention between 2003 and 2008" (qtd. in Brendan 202). All these terrorist acts against teachers and college professors led them to leave their jobs and immigrate to other countries. The General Director of Planning and Study at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research states that "the numbers of the college professors who are leaving the country keep increasing; he also adds that we are losing most of our qualified and expert teachers and this act is causing a big problem in the Iraqi education system" (irfad). There is no definite evidence for the number of college professors who have left the country, but according to the reports of United Nations for college professors, about 1000 professors left the country including doctors (irfad). In 2007, in their reports, the Ministry of Displacement and Migration stated that "at least 30 percent of professors, doctors, pharmacists and engineers had fled the country since 2003" (qtd. in Brendan 202).

To solve this crisis and to replace the faculty, the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education established several scholarship and fellowship programs for elite students. The Higher



Committee for Education Development (HCED) played a big role in developing Education in Iraq by sending students to study in academic research areas in the world's best accredited universities. The committee's big goal is to develop the education system and to create new academic staff and civil servants. According to the HCED report, since 2009, more than 4,000 young Iraqi students were sent abroad to pursue their master and doctorate degrees at universities in the US, UK, and Australia ("Iraq Policy of Sending Students Abroad Begins to Bear Fruit at Home"). All these students will make a change in the quality of teaching at Iraqi universities. Zuhair Humadi, the former Secretary General of Iraq's Council of Ministers, said to the Global development organization, "Already, the students (who have returned) are boosting the ministries. They need quality people, and we are giving them quality people," ("Iraq Policy of Sending Students Abroad Begins to Bear Fruit at Home").

The Department of State and other organizations have also contributed to the development of the educational system in Iraq. They fund and support many exchange programs, scholarships and other chances for Iraqi scholars, students, and professionals. Part of these programs deal with teaching English. For example, the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program (FLTA) helps English teachers to develop their teaching skills, improve their English language proficiency, and increase their awareness about American culture and customs ("Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program"). The Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program is another program for junior Iraqi scholars. It is designed to introduce "new teaching and research methods, observe classes, attend seminars, and develop linkages with American faculty through weekly mentoring sessions" ("Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program"). This program is also designed to engage scholars in communities through volunteering activities. All these programs that are sponsored by Iraqi government, US government departments, or

other organizations contribute to developing the education system generally and the English language teaching specifically.

Speaking of the education policy, it is a good idea to go over English as material at schools and universities. In Iraq, English teaching begins in first grade and continues until high school. In the first and second grades, students learn English orally. For example, they learn the alphabet, lumps of vocabulary, and form simplified forms of interrogative sentences. However, in middle and high school, students learn more complex grammatical structures and read more difficult texts, such as short stories and novels. However, once students reach college age, whether they continue learning English depends on their major. For example, for science majors (i.e. medicine, pharmacy, and engineering) all textbooks are in English, while humanities and arts majors (i.e., law, education, literature, political science, history) have textbooks in Arabic, except for those who are majoring in English, and thus English is part of their course readings.

The Iraqi Ministry of Education who is responsible for hiring English teachers requires a minimum of a bachelor's degree in English Literature or English Education. However, these teachers are not prepared for teaching English at schools because they do not get enough training in learning English methodologies and approaches. For example, in Basic Education College, there is only one class for teaching methodology and approaches, which is not sufficient to prepare teachers to deal with students from different age groups. Since this project focuses on English language teaching, this paper will go over the new language education policy in the post-Saddam era.

The Iraqi language education policy basically depends on the government decisions when it comes to learning a foreign language, which represents a domination of macro-level planning discussed earlier in the paper. Currently, the micro-level planning is playing a more significant

role despite the continuous dominance of macro-level planning. Many companies and graduate studies require a high level of proficiency in English which motivates Iraqis to learn it. This new English language status will lead the government to create a new language policy. The new policy involves changes in terms of starting age grade, textbooks, and teaching methods. For instance, teaching English used to start at the fifth grade, but, with the new policy, English is being taught from the first grade. Also, textbooks for teaching English have changed. The Ministry of Education has adopted a new series of textbooks called *English for Iraq*. This textbook uses the communicative language teaching approach instead of the old grammar translation method.

### **Academic Training for School Teachers of English**

Training is one important aspect of language policy. It includes training teachers on how to use new techniques, technologies, textbooks, and methods. With a new textbook, teachers should be informed on the theoretical background of the textbook and be trained on how to use textbook activities. The Ministry of Education signed an agreement with Garnet Publishing Ltd. and a backup of Tahseen Khayat Group (TKG) to develop and introduce a new English curriculum entitled *English for Iraq* for the Iraqi schools (McIlhone). Karim Khayat, TKG Group CEP, states that "this contract benefits generations of ambitious and inspired Iraqi children looking to build a future for themselves and their country. We are proud to play such an important role in the development of Iraq" (McIlhone). He also added that "the English language has become the international norm and is key to entering into the global economy. Garnet's new curriculum has the ability to connect Iraqis with the rest of the world" (McIlhone). The new series *English for Iraq* consists of course books, workbooks, teacher books, teacher resources

and audio resources. The Ministry of Education in cooperation with Garnet Publishing Ltd. have been giving a series of trainings to teachers to help other teachers to implement the language pedagogy successfully in their teaching.

Garnet conducted two training programs that were sponsored by the Ministry of Education. The first one took place in Erbil city in December, 2013. The Training Program Director at the Ministry of Education, Sabah Alkunani, states that “more than 3000 English language teachers and supervisors participated in the Erbil training program. The full program lasted for two months, and the trainees were divided into five groups. Each group consisted of 600 trainees” (Abd). He also added that “Garnet chose expert British trainers to teach the Iraqi trainees and that he is very happy to see how Iraqi teachers were very excited and ambitious to learn the new language pedagogy” (Abd). Dr. Malik Muhammad Judah, the head of English language curriculum, states that “it is a big accomplishment for us to introduce the new textbooks, but our goal will not be complete until we train our teachers on how to use the new language pedagogy” (Abd). He also added that, “at the end of the program, they designed surveys to know if this training was efficient to the teachers, and the result was that 90% of the trainees responded positively and requested more training programs” (Abd). According to interviews that Media Network in Denmark conducted with a couple of trainees, the program was useful for the teachers and they learned a lot from it. The trainee, Seba Abbas, states that although the period of the program was short, the trainers did their best to introduce and explain new textbooks and new language methodology professionally. She also added that, “I suggest that the Ministry of Education should provide our schools with language labs and technology to make teaching process easier for both students and teachers” (Abd). However, because of the security problems that occurred in Iraq lately, other training programs took place in Beirut,

Lebanon. Ibrahim Hassan Abdel Wali, the Deputy Minister for Technical Affairs, said "we had 1350 teachers and Educational advisors in the Beirut training program. The training program lasted for five days and included teachers from cities all over Iraq. The Local representative of the Ministry of Education in each city nominated a number of teachers depending on the population density of each city." Sabah Alkunani, the Supervisor of English Language Development Projects, added that "after the positive results that we got from the Erbil training program, we were encouraged to do more. In Beirut, we had 16 British experts to teach our trainees and we were excited about it." Ghazi Mutlaq, the General Director of School Curriculum, states that "we are working on preparing the trainees not just to have better teaching skills but also to train them how to train other teachers in their schools, and how to apply the new techniques in the teacher's book for a better teaching experience." Hussein Aljaf, the General Director in the Ministry of Education, states that, communicative language teaching approach has been used for more than 15 years all around the world, and so far it has shown good result. Therefore, it will be very useful to start applying it in the Iraqi language Education curriculum. The communicative approach basically states that "language is primarily speech, fluency in account of accuracy." English for Iraq focuses on speech and group work instead of focusing on the traditional long boring grammar rules ("Training Program for Iraqi English Teachers in Lebanon").

### **Textbooks Analysis**

The Ministry of Education is responsible for providing schools with textbooks and materials. Therefore, English teachers do not have any control over the materials or the textbooks that are being used in class. Since the teachers' syllabus and lesson plans are already set up in the

teacher's guides by the Ministry of Education, teachers do not have the chance to use any additional resources in their classes (Kareem). Teachers basically follow textbooks and teachers' guide instructions in their teaching. Therefore, the textbooks that the Ministry of Education selects play an important role for teachers, what they teach and what children learn. As a result, English textbook evaluation is required in Iraq for the significant effect that textbooks play on the process of English learning. Since *English for Iraq* was issued and adopted recently, urgent evaluation is needed. Teachers should have the ability to examine the textbooks that they heavily rely on in their classes and determine how useful they are for their students' ages and levels. Since textbooks are used by English teachers in their classroom, they have the experience to evaluate these textbooks and to detect the strong and the weak points in their own teaching circumstance (Tok 508). Since English is a global language, EFL textbooks and materials for learning and teaching English have increased. Therefore, EFL textbooks play a prominent role in the English teaching and learning process. Sheldon states that the ESL/EFL textbooks that are being used in any ELT program are considered to be the "visible heart" for both students and teachers (237). O'Neill mentioned four reasons arguing for the use of textbooks in a language course in Germany and in other places. First, in spite of the fact that textbooks are not designed for specific groups, most of the textbook materials were appropriate for learners' needs. Second, textbooks help learners to have an idea of what they studied before and what they will study in the next class. Third, textbooks present good materials in an inexpensive form. Finally, well designed textbooks will allow teachers to improvise and adjust in their teaching, and it also allows students to interact unprompted in their class (105). According to Haycroft, textbook using is psychologically necessary for students because it helps them to see their progress and their achievements clearly (223). Other scholars such as Cunningsworth (1995) and Richards

(2001) agree that textbooks have a great impact on the learning process. It is the source for introducing materials. In other words, textbooks are the resource for supplementary material such as, workbooks, CDs and cassettes, and videos. These materials will help to create interesting and enjoyable classes for learners.

As mentioned above, many researchers believe that textbooks have an important role in ESL/EFL teaching. However, some other researchers do not agree with this view. Swales 1980, Nunan 1991, Medgyes 1994, Allwright 1981, Stern 1992, and Cunningsworth 1995 agree that heavily depending on textbooks is not useful for both teachers and students (Andrew 3).

Allwright states that textbooks are reflections of their authors' teaching methods, and linguistic preferences (6). In other words, textbooks are inflexible for teacher use; they mainly represent the authors' theories and implications. If teachers follow textbooks as day-by-day guides, and follow the textbooks' activities in order, their responsibility will be just teaching materials prepared by others (Richards "Beyond Training" 126). Teachers will lose the ability of lesson planning, and they will continue with the textbooks. Brumfit claims that textbooks will take creativity and inspiration from teachers (qtd. in McGrath 30). Cunningsworth as well as Brumfit emphasize that "Heavy dependence on course books is far from ideal as it reduces the importance of the individual contributions that good teachers make at all levels in the learning process" (10).

Other scholars also talk about textbook limitations. Richard suggests a couple of restrictions for textbooks using. He states that textbooks "may contain inauthentic language, may distort content, may not reflect students' need, can deskill teachers, are expensive" ("The Role of Text Books in a Language Program" 2). On the other hand, some scholars point out that textbooks may be boring because teachers are repeating the same activities and drills in each

unit. In 2002, McGrath states that unexpected materials in EFL classrooms make it more interesting and enjoyable for students.

Many other scholars agree that there are no EFL textbooks on the market that work for all language group learners, as Grant states “(the) perfect book does not exist” (8). Richard states that textbooks have their own positive and negative effects (“The Role of Text Books in a Language Program” 2). Teachers must take into consideration all these effects when they evaluate EFL textbooks that they want to use in their classes. In other words, teacher evaluations of EFL textbooks are very necessary because these evaluations will help them to choose the right textbooks that work specifically for their learners needs. Moreover, textbook evaluation is useful for teachers because it develops and expands their horizons about textbook materials. Rea-Dickens and Germaine and Germaine state that “evaluation is an intrinsic part of teaching and learning” (qtd. in Tok 509). Cunningsworth recommends that teachers should make sure that “careful selection is made, and that the materials selected closely reflect (the needs of the learners and) the aims, methods and values of the teaching program” (7).

Mukundan and Ahour (2010) reviewed 48 textbook evaluation checklists within four decades (1970-2000). Their study revealed that there is “no specific preference or pattern for the arrangement of the criteria and their underlying items in all the four decades” (347). Most of these checklists are either too short or too long. However, researchers found that Skierso’s checklist (1991) “is the most comprehensive one,” but it was very long. Therefore, researchers claim that it is not practical because it will take a long time for teachers to evaluate a textbook (Mukundan and Ahour 374). Cunningsworth recommends that “it is important to limit the number of criteria used, and the number of questions asked to manageable proportions; otherwise, we risk being swamped in a sea of details” (5). Teachers have many options when it



comes to checklist choice. It should be useful, on a high level of quality, and suitable for the people and situation where it is used (Tok 509).

Generally speaking, textbook evaluation checklists are tools that assist teachers to select the type of books that best fit their learner's proficiency levels. Williams states that "a textbook is a tool, and the teachers must know not only how to use it, but how useful it can be." (254). Based on a review of the ELT evaluation of material checklist, all of the textbook checklists contain a worldwide set of features. Skierso's (1991) checklist considers criteria related to "bibliographical date," "aims and goals," "subject matters," "vocabulary and structure," "exercise and activities," and "layout and physical makeup" (Mukundan and Ahour 340). These fields are consistent with the ones of Cunningsworth's (1995) checklist that include "aims and approaches," "design and organization," "language content," "skills," "topic," "methodology," and "practical considerations." Even though the heading of criteria in both Skiero and Cunningsworth seem divergent, an analysis of their checklists shows that they are most likely the same (Mukundan, Nimehchisalem, and Hajimohammadi 100-101), but according to the Mukundan and Ahour 2010 evaluation, there are problems in regard to their checklist's validity, reliability and particularity. Therefore, this paper will use Robinett checklist to evaluate the selected textbooks since it accounts for consistency in considering critical features that need to be taken into consideration when it comes to evaluating textbooks. Robinett presents an extensive checklist that consists of twelve main categories: goals of the course, background of the students, approach, language skills, general content, quality of practice material, sequencing, vocabulary, general sociolinguistic factors, format, accompanying materials and teacher's guide (Brown 192). The materials chosen for language teaching can determine the quality of learning-teaching procedure. Textbooks, as a part of language teaching materials in classroom, can play

an essential role in students' progress or proficiency level. According to Tok, "Cunningsworth identifies textbooks as a resource in presenting the material, a source for learners to practice and do the activities. They also provide the learners with a reference source on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation" (509). As a result, one should pay particular attention to evaluate such materials based on a valid and reliable checklist. According to Brown, the Robinett checklist "stands as an excellent set of evaluative factors" (191) because his checklist examines the textbooks from a number of angles. For instance, the way textbooks are structured and designed will help in providing framework for courses. It is important that the content is in line with the need of the students and the objective of the course.

Speaking to the authenticity of the materials, several supporters of using authentic classroom language argue that the main issue of choosing a textbook for language teaching is not related to cultural or social bias, but to the lack of authenticity, i.e. the authenticity is absent in their presentation of the target language (Tok 509). For instance, many scripts that are used for practicing speaking skills are artificial and unsuitable for communicative language teaching because they fail to prepare learners for different types of pronunciation. Cathcart (1989) and Lee (1995) believe that if learners have access to authentic materials, there is a greater possibility for learners to relate to the materials and increase their motivation to improve their language skills.

A good textbook should also provide clear guidance for the teachers such as in the answer keys or supplementary exercises. Moreover, there are practical concerns that play a critical part in textbook evaluation. The evaluation presented in Robinett's checklist takes into account the importance of language skills, whether a textbook integrated all of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and whether there is a balance between the skills. For

instance, there are much more dialogue passages than reading comprehension passages.

McDonough and Shaw “advocate an integrated multi-skills syllabus because it considers and incorporates several categories of both meaning and form.”(qtd. in Tok 513)

In summary, textbooks should combine the requirement of acceptable quality, effectiveness, and appropriate language to fit the context and the learners with whom they are used. Moreover, teachers should have the authority to use the best textbooks that can work best to meet their learners' needs. However, in Iraq it is the Ministry of Education's responsibility to choose textbooks. Therefore, this paper intends to evaluate *English for Iraq* elementary textbooks based on their content due to the vital role that textbooks play in the process of learning English.

### **Communicative Language Teaching Approach**

Methodology involved in learning a new language is very crucial for the learners to develop the desired skill and competency in the target language. Language learning has gone through several changes over the last century and different theories have been developed in recent years for language teaching. In modern times, there are several methods used for teaching a language such as the grammar translation method, the Audiolingual Method, the Direct Teaching Method and the communicative approach. The traditional approach to learning a language was based on grammatical competence. In a typical traditional grammar translation method, students were taught to build skill in grammar through repetitive practice and drilling and then apply the grammar on their own in translating and forming sentences. However, the traditional approach to learning a foreign language through grammatical competence was first questioned in the 1970s. While grammatical competence was effective in teaching students the

skill of forming grammatically accurate sentences, it was not sufficient to help the students use the language in a variety of contexts based on situations, the participants, their roles and intentions (Richards, "Communicative Language Teaching Today" 9). Therefore, the need for developing a communicative technique to learning surfaced. The communicative approach created a buzz when it first came into practice in the 1970s and 1980s. Instead of putting stress on grammatical accuracy and vocabulary strength, the communicative approach took into consideration the practical usage of the language. The communicative approach is a significant method of language teaching and it is playing an important role in teaching foreign languages to students. The communicative approach takes into consideration the day to day communicative usage of the target language. Communicative approach to learning a language involves laying the primary focus on helping the students use the second language or the foreign language in a variety of contexts because it has been seen that though students are able to construct grammatically accurate sentences, they fail to apply the target language in various situations. The communicative approach provides a better opportunity for learning a language than grammar translation method because it puts stress on the real communication needs during language learning. It provides the learners with opportunities to experiment with their knowledge and develop accuracy and fluency in the language. It does not emphasize grammatical structure and allows students to discover grammar rules on their own and does stress the development of different skills such as speaking, reading and listening. The communicative approach gives value to developing the communicative competence of a learner by taking into account the following aspects:

- A range of possible purposes for the learner to learn the target language (for academia or for business purposes.)

- The setting in which the learner would like to use the target language (whether in office, store or in a hotel).

- The communicative events in which the learner is likely to participate (For example, professional contexts, academic contexts, etc.).

- The functions of language required in those events, whether to give an introduction or make a speech.

- The grammatical and lexical content required to facilitate the communication of the learner (Richards "Communicative Language Teaching Today" 12).

CLT is not a method. In other words, there is no obvious model, syllabus or set of teaching techniques that are accepted universally by scholars for CLT (Richards and Rodgers 153). However, Wesche and Skehan state some qualities that are required to justify CLT label, they describe it as:

- Activities that require frequent interaction among learners or with other interlocutors to exchange information and solve problems.

- Use of authentic (non-pedagogic) texts and communication activities linked to “real-world” contexts, often emphasizing links across written and spoken modes and channels.

- Approaches that are learner centered in that they take into account learners’ backgrounds, language needs, and goals and generally allow learners some creativity and role in instructional decisions (208).

The communicative approach to learning has a few advantages. This approach makes the learner ready for using the language in real life by giving the students opportunities to communicate in the target language in the classroom with teachers and among peers. The communicative approach encourages students to take part in group discussion so that students can develop the skill of expressing their opinions on any given topic. Unlike students learning through grammar translation methods, the communicative approach makes students feel comfortable in speaking the target language fluently in any situation.

The communicative approach teaches language to students on the basis of needs so that they develop the rightful skills and forms of language required to function in their respective

profession. For example, an air-hostess working on the airlines would be taught the communicative competence in order to communicate with the passengers politely and a management student aspiring to go into sales and marketing would be taught how to communicate impressively with the clients to sell and promote products and services. This helps students develop the required skill of communication based on the needs of the profession they have chosen.

The communicative approach also has a few disadvantages. Since this approach lays least emphasis on grammatical accuracy, learners though learning to speak the target language fluently and confidently often lack accuracy in their sentence constructions (Belchamber). Further, the communicative approach emphasizes teaching the language on the basis of needs and settings, but it often makes students incapable of using the language in different contexts beyond their professional field. For instance, the air-hostess who has developed proficiency in talking to passengers on a flight may find herself incapable of giving a business presentation or holding a sales talk.

In the communicative approach, teachers play the role of a facilitator and monitor who facilitates the learning process of the students and monitors their progress. Since communication plays a big role in the classroom, teachers need to be proficient in the language so that they can help and encourage students communicate in target languages. Some non-native speaking teachers, who are not very proficient in the second language, find the CLT difficult to apply, since CLT involves many speaking drills (Brown 47). Teachers also need to help students form grammatically accurate sentences. The role of students in the communicative approach goes beyond only learning grammar and vocabulary. Students need to practice communicating in the target language with their teachers and their peers. They need to take active participation in

group discussions so that they acquire fluency in the language. There are some approaches that are related to the CLT approach such as task-based language teaching, cooperative learning, and content-based teaching. The following sections will summarize these approaches.

### **Task-Based Language Teaching**

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) for some scholars is the best nominee to replace the CLT approach. Some scholars (Kuaravadivelu, 2006) feel that the TBLT is a different approach from the CLT, while other scholars argue that TBLT is the core of the CLT approach (Brown 50). TBLT is an approach to language teaching which is based on the belief that learning will be more successful, more effective, and more focused when learners' minds focus on meaningful tasks instead of structure. Moreover, the task needs to be based on communicative tasks. In other words, the task should be based on meaningful real life experience.

What exactly is a 'task'? How is a 'task' different from an 'activity,' an 'exercise,' or a 'drill?' It is necessary to point out that there is no complete agreement on what constitutes a task which results in making the definition of 'task' problematic. According to R. Ellis, both researchers and pedagogic literature define 'task' differently, for these definitions provide several dimensions: (a) the definition of a task, (b) how a task is viewed from different perspectives (c) what is an authentic task (d) the role of language skills in relation to performance of a task (e) the outcome of a task (2).

**Definition of Tasks.** Generally speaking, 'tasks' can be categorized as 'tasks that require language, for example, making an airline reservation, and tasks that can be performed without language, for example, painting a fence' (Long 2). However, a more specific definition of a task

has been defined by Nunan that a ‘task’ is an activity that requires learners to be “comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form.” Scholars defined tasks from different perspectives. Bygate, Skehan and Swain have defined the task as “an activity requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective” (11). Furthermore, when it comes to the scope of a ‘task,’ there is another important difference, that the ‘task’ is essential to both teaching and researching. The question is how one can restrict the role of a ‘task.’ Should one limit a ‘task’ to only activities for which the attention of learners is mainly on conveying the message or should it contain activities that are designed to help learners to use the language correctly?

Some researchers such as Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985), Nunan (1989), and Shehan (1996a) hoped to limit the scope of task to activities where the focus is only on meaning while researchers such as Breen (1989) prefer the broader definition of ‘task’ i.e., a task that contains any type of language activities that includes ‘exercises’ (R. Ellis 3). According to Ellis, Breen’s definition is identical to the term ‘activities’ rather than ‘tasks’. R. Ellis also added that for the importance that is linked to focused-on-meaning communication both “in L2 acquisition and language pedagogy” it is important for each device to be labeled with a unique term that “elicit [s] this type of language use” (R. Ellis 3). It can be said that tasks mainly focus on meaning while exercises focus on form. Moreover, in the task-based teaching, teachers need to distinguish between two tasks: the target tasks, which students need to accomplish outside the class, and the pedagogical tasks, which refer to the tasks that teachers and students need to work on in the classroom to help students acquire the language. Long defined the target/ real world tasks as “the hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between.



“Tasks” are the things people will tell you they do if you ask them and they are not applied linguists” (89).

**Perspectives on ‘Task-Based’ Language Teaching.** Perspective can be simply defined as how a ‘task’ is viewed from the eye of the task designer or the participants. In this sense, it is related to the difference between meaning-focused and form-focused. A task might be designed to promote activities that focus on meaning, but the focus might shift when it is used by a particular group of learners. Hosenfeld said that the learners are skillful to degree that they can change the purpose of the activities to fit their own needs. Therefore, there is a probability as to whether or not the “task-as-work-plan” matches the “task-as-process” (Breen 1989) (qtd. in R. Ellis 5). The question is, should we consider a ‘task’ an activity that examines the intention of the task designer, i.e. one should take the “task-as-work-plan” into consideration, or the performance of the learners on the task. Since a ‘task’ is more focused on the meaning than on the form, according to R. Ellis a task is a ‘workplan’ whose purpose is to engage learners in meaning-focused communication rather than showing one’s knowledge of language. Moreover, the guidelines, which Bachman and Palmer (1996) call a ‘rubric’ (50), are central to task workplans because these guidelines identify the goal of the task, i.e. how this task affects the performance of the learners in a significant way, and what the learners are required to do to reach that goal (R. Ellis 5-6).

**Authentic Tasks.** Generally speaking, authentic materials are those types of materials that are specifically designed for native speakers with no consideration given to non-native accessibility, i.e. none of the topics, structures, syntax or language is designed to target non-native audience. For example, booking a flight or going grocery shopping are activities that take place in our daily routine. Tasks, such as filling in job application forms, are commonly used in

ESL classes and considered another type of real-world tasks. However, tasks such as re-telling/recalling of knowledge (i.e. testes and quizzes) used by teachers are not considered as authentic or real-world activities.

**Language Skills.** According to Long, a ‘task’ can be either an oral or written activity, for instance booking a flight/hotel or filling in compliance forms (89). Richards, Platt, and Weber pointed out that language production will possibly not be the outcome of activities such as listening tasks, ‘drawing a map while listening to a tape’ (289). Conversely, some other researchers hypothesized that “tasks directed at oral skills,” especially speaking skills (R. Ellis 7). Although the materials designed for certain tasks may contain some writing or reading skills, the assumption is that the main task itself is performed orally.

**Outcomes.** One of the core features of tasks is what Crookes calls “a specified objective” (1986); that is, the tasks are not designed for the learners to simply use the language, but also to see if learners are able to express themselves when they discuss topics successfully, i.e. to see if the learners have conveyed the message without any flaws or reposting wrong information (qtd. in R. Ellis 8).

Since the ‘outcomes’ of a task differ from the ‘aim’ of a task, it is important to distinguish between both of them. The term ‘outcomes’ refers to what the learners have learned after accomplishing a task, for instance, the main idea of a conversation, while ‘aim’ refers to instructional purposes of the task, in other words to promote meaning-focused language use whether ‘receptive and/or productive’. There is a possibility for the learners to meet the outcome of a task without achieving its aim. For instance, while working as a pair in an activity, the learners might be able to spot differences between two pictures by showing the pictures to each other, but they haven’t used language as a means of communication to accomplish the task.

Mostly, the learners are convinced that the outcome of a task is what matters the most, but the real purpose of a task should not only focus on the outcomes but also promote language learning. The outcomes may not be as effective if, for instance, the learners could identify the differences between two pictures, but there was no real use of the language. It can be said that the assessment of a task should rely on whether learners could use the language successfully or not.

In summary, a task is a kind of activity that promotes language use focusing on meaning to the objectives of the task. A task contains a workplan for learners' activity. The materials that are used for a task should be authentic from real-world experiences, and the task should include the kind of activities that encourage learners to use their four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

### **Content-Based Language Teaching (CBLT)**

It is important to first focus on the history of methods in second/foreign language teaching when it comes to defining CBLT. Historically speaking, content can be interpreted in a number of different ways. In the grammar translation method, it is defined as “grammatical structures of the target language” (Snow 303). However, in the audiological method, aspects such as sound patterns, vocabulary, or grammatical forms were included in content-based language teaching which are presented in dialogue form. Lately, content is defined as a means of communication purposes. For instance, in an EFL class, the content of the unit might be “Career,” and the lesson might cover the notion of “interview,” for which the students learn how to form Wh-questions or Tag questions, and how to prepare themselves for an interview. More recent studies showed that in content-based teaching, the selected topics or themes have been

chosen based on the learners interest and needs. In this sense, it can be said that this CBLT is similar to teaching English for specific purposes. Students who major in business will only learn topics related to their field. For instance, they will be familiar with how to write an email, how to be prepared for an interview or how to market a product. According to the content-based approach the most effective way to learn a language is to integrate the target language with meaningful content in the class; in this sense the target language will be both the objective of study and a channel for learning a particular topic. Therefore, the teachers tended to focus on a deductive method rather than an inductive one as a framework for instruction. Leaver and Stryker define CBLT as “an instructional approach in which language proficiency is achieved by shifting the focus of the course from the learning of language per se to the learning of subject matter.” (75). However, CBT is not a fixed method; it can be conceived as a flexible practical framework for language instruction. Stryker and Leaver agreed that CBLT contains four basic features: (a) the core of subject- the curriculum should revolve around the subject matter and organized in a way that addresses only a particular topic; (b) authenticity- the materials such as (video tapes, articles, audio recordings) should be chosen from those that target native speakers; (c) new information- the students should be able to use target language to express themselves; (d) relevancy- the topics should be relevant to the age level and cognitive ability of the learners, i.e. the selected subject matter should align with their proficiency level. (Dueñas 75). Generally speaking, what meets the qualification of being content is that the subject matters should be relevant to the learners’ academic syllabus of their education levels (elementary, high school, or college). For example, in Iraq, the students study scientific terms, and solve mathematical problems for Math, Physics, and Chemistry in English during their school years. However, when students enter college with different specializations, they will study most of the materials in

English according to their specialization. For instance, the students in the Medical school will learn most of their classes in English. Therefore, most Iraqi students learn English using a task-based approach in elementary, middle, and high school in English materials class, but when they enter college they will learn the topics that are related to their major only.

There are some similarities between both CLT and CBLT. First, both of them increase the students' language skills and help students to be more proficient in English. Second, both CLT and CBLT encourage the meaningful communication between students and teachers.

However, the differences between these two approaches are concentration, activity type and the outcome resulting from the approach. While task-based approaches focus on developing abilities to think and communicate, content-based approaches aim at developing academic skills that translate into manipulation of information from the subject matter that is used individually and collectively in groups. Secondly, activities in content-based approaches are specific to the subject matter being taught where students develop not only study skills, but also learn a variety of language skills which prepare them for future courses in their academic career and prepare them to work on project work. Finally, task-based approaches grant students chance for meaningful real-world language utilization, and they also have more communicative context than contextualized learning. On the other hand, in content-based approaches increase skill in academic language and learning skills, but may reduce skill in conversation, but allow more acquisition of high-level critical thinking skills.

Krashen's theories on second language acquisition (SLA) show that the learning process is more productive when the learners are not obliged to memorize vocabulary or learn grammatical rules inductively. When learners are provided with comprehensible input, they are more likely to be successful in achieving an anticipated level of proficiency, since the learners

become familiarized with the new linguistic codes when they understand the content. (qtd. in Dueñas 77).

### **Collaborative Work**

In the last two decades, collaborative work has been widely promoted in classroom settings. However, it first needs to be pointed out that sometimes collaborative learning is believed to be a synonym of cooperative learning, but that is not the case. Collaborative learning focuses on student/teacher working together to accomplish a task or achieve a goal. Based on a recent view, collaborative pair/group work should be the center of classroom language. Both pedagogical and theoretical considerations are in support of this view. Speaking of theoretical viewpoints, in L2 classrooms, using pair and group work is supported by “the social constructivist perspective of learning” (Ali 286) which is based on the work of Vygotsky 1978, who says that “human development is inherently a socially situated activity” (qtd. in Ali 286). In other words, a child’s cognitive and linguistic skills develop in social settings when he/she interacts with his/her caregivers who provide the child with the age suitable level of assistance to acquire their L1. Such assistance is called ‘scaffolding.’ ‘Scaffolding’ helps children to span their cognitive and linguistic ability that leads them beyond their current level. Some researchers believe that such ‘scaffolding’ can also be true in L2 contexts among learners who work in pairs or groups, with continuing assistance from the teacher, i.e. students are dependent on their teacher to accomplish a task.

In activities such as *dictogloss tasks* (students work in groups/pairs to paraphrase a text that has been read by the teacher) with the help of the teacher, students were able to solve linguistic problems that were beyond their level of proficiency. On the pedagogical side, a number of

researchers claim that working in pairs or groups will provide more opportunities to learners to utilize the target language. Collaborative work promotes “autonomy and self-directed learning” (McDonough 208). Additionally, learners feel more comfortable and less worried when it comes to expressing themselves during pair/group activities than they would participating in whole-class discussions.

In summary, based on both theoretical and pedagogical perspectives, collaborative learning should be encouraged in classrooms, particularly for children, since it helps learners to be more active and productive when it comes to class participation and utilizing the target language.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine EFL education policy and practices after 2014 to explore the change of the new policy, in terms of schools' equipment and materials, new textbooks, new methodology, and teachers' training. The study includes mixed research approaches; both qualitative and quantitative data are presented. To answer the research questions, the data has been collected by three different methods: survey, interview, and textbooks analysis.

#### Research Design

The research design was created solely by the researcher herself as the researcher has made use of qualitative and quantitative approach.

For research purposes, the primary data was collected in three different ways. Firstly, the researcher collected data from teachers using a questionnaire. These teachers teach English in public elementary schools in Iraq and they use *English for Iraq* as the primary textbook for grades 1-3 as mandated by the Iraqi Ministry of Education. The questionnaire was developed and collected using an online tool called survey monkey. The researcher also conducted interviews from two English teachers who participated in a Beirut training program that was put together by the Ministry of Education and Garnet Publishing Ltd. The training was given by expert trainers in the field of teaching English as a Foreign Language who were employed by Garnet. This training was to assist Iraqi teachers in teaching methodology and familiarize them with the new textbooks. Questionnaires were made by the researcher and used during the interview. Lastly, the



researcher did her own analysis to evaluate the new textbooks *English for Iraq* by using the Robinett checklist. As Cunningsworth states “Evaluation of this kind can be useful in helping to decide whether to use the same course book on future occasions” (14). *English for Iraq* was obtained and analyzed by the researcher. After combining the survey responses, interviews, and analysis results, conclusions were drawn to answer the research questions.

## **Participants**

The primary data was collected from two different sources: surveys and interviews. The participants for the survey section were composed of 20 male and 30 female English teachers who teach *English for Iraq* in elementary public schools. The participants ranged in age from 22 to 45 with a mean age of 30.28 (SD = 5.99). Participants were chosen randomly from a Facebook group called “English teacher in Iraq.” The researcher posted the online survey link to the Facebook group and asked the participants to carefully and honestly fill in a survey questionnaire prepared by the researcher and issue their opinions about *English for Iraq*. Individuals who responded affirmatively to the invitation to participate in this study received a consent form that was returned to the researcher. The respondents were asked to put only a tick mark in the column of their choice on the survey.

For the interview data, the participants were two teachers, one male (teacher A) and the other female (teacher B). Teacher A is teaching English for first, second, third, fifth, and sixth grades at an elementary school in Baghdad, while teacher B is teaching English for first, second, and third grades at a public elementary school in Diyala. The teachers were chosen specifically to answer one of the research questions.

## **Methodology of Analysis (Materials)**

This paper is divided into three parts: survey analysis, interview analysis, and researcher analysis. The survey analysis was designed to investigate the opinions of the teachers about the new language education policy that was recently adopted by the Ministry of Education in Iraq. The survey questions were developed by the researcher to answer the research questions and were not adopted from an existing questionnaire (see Appendix A1, A2). Although the participants are English teachers, the survey questions and instructions are written in Arabic to avoid any misunderstanding that may occur regarding the language, thus avoiding any suspicions regarding the validity of responses. The survey demographic section asked for participants' age, gender, grade(s) assigned to teach, and number of years of EFL teaching experience. In the survey, 24 questions were formed. 23 questions required a response by using a five-point Likert-type scale, from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). The final question was open-ended as the researcher felt there was a need to gain deeper insight from respondents. The question was optional; therefore, only 16 teachers responded to that question. Excel is used for data analysis and to calculate the percentage of the results.

For the interview analysis, a questionnaire composed of 19 questions was designed to investigate the teachers' opinions about the training program that was sponsored by the Ministry of Education. The researcher developed the survey questions by using Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model to answer the research questions. The questions were formed in such a manner that they were concise, were easy to fill in, and were understandable. The questions were "open-ended" questions, because the researcher wanted to get a more in-depth perception from the teachers. Since the researcher and the interviewed teachers are Arabic speakers and English is their foreign language, the researcher used Arabic as the communication language

during the interview to avoid any mother tongue interference and then translated the interviews into English.

A Robinett checklist consisting of twelve main categories was used for the researcher analysis to evaluate the textbooks. However, neither all the categories, nor all the items were examined. Instead, only the most important categories have been chosen (see Table 7).

For the data analysis, the model of scoring used to evaluate each item in the checklist was excellent (5), good (4), fair (3), bad (2) or very bad (1) (see Table 4). The researcher will do a quantitative evaluation for each item in the categories and will get the summation of the evaluated items. By getting the summation, the researcher can draw a conclusion about the textbooks. In addition, the researcher will do a qualitative analysis to explain more about the categories.

## **Procedures**

The researcher first completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) including the Humanities Responsible Conduct of Research and the Social Behavioral Research certificates. Then, prior approval for this project was obtained from the Missouri State University IRB (February 25, 2015; approval #15-0334).

As pointed out before, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in this study. The qualitative data was collected by the researcher through analysis of three textbooks. The quantitative data, survey and interviews were collected from Iraqi elementary school teachers who are currently using *English for Iraq* in their teaching. Participants were reached through a Facebook group for English teachers. They were asked to participate in a study about the new English education policy. The study's nature and purpose were explained to participants through

Facebook post on the group wall. Since not all school stages are using *English for Iraq*, the researcher requested that only teachers who teach the first, second, and third grade would apply to participate in this study. Participates were asked nicely if they would agree to participate in the study. If the teacher refused, they were thanked and not bothered again. Those who accepted were sent a consent form to complete. In the survey, if the participants agreed to be a part of the study, then they were asked to click on the online link and complete the survey. The participants were asked to complete the demographic information and were asked to choose from a scale of 1 to 5 to answer the first 23 questions and to answer the last open-ended question. Moreover, participants who received teacher training specifically for the *English for Iraq* textbooks were asked to contact the researcher in order to be interviewed. Those interviewed were contacted by phone and spoke with the researcher for about 40 minutes. The interview questions were 19 open-ended questions.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS

This chapter represents the results and the findings of this study in three sections: survey, interview, and researcher's textbook evaluations. The survey analysis shows the reaction of the teachers towards the new education language policy and the interview analysis evaluates the efficiency of the training programs. Lastly, the researcher's analysis focuses on evaluating specific elements in *English for Iraq* textbooks. This study will attempt to answer the research questions as follows:

1. What are the positive and negative aspects of the new education policy for elementary EFL in Iraq, especially in terms of school equipment and materials, age grading (age of introduction to a foreign language), and new methodology.
2. How effective are *English for Iraq* as EFL textbooks regarding its format and contents, students' goals and needs, and teachers' ability to use it?
3. Is the teachers' training that is sponsored by the Iraqi Ministry of Education as part of the new educational policy effective in developing teachers' skills in using the new textbook?

Before going in detail with the findings, demographic information about the researcher, the surveyed teachers, and the interviewed teachers are presented in the following section.

#### **Demographic Characteristics of the Participants**

The researcher is a female Iraqi teacher with one year experience in teaching EFL in an elementary school in Iraq. She has a scholarship from the Higher Committee of Developing Education in Iraq to finish her Master's degree in the United States. Currently, she is studying to get her Master's degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) at Missouri State University.

The survey participants are elementary EFL teachers. All the participants are teaching singular and/or multiple sections of first, second, and/or third grade. The total number of participants who agreed to fill the survey is fifty, 20 male and 30 female. Their ages ranged from 23 to 45 years old and their years of experience ranged from 1 to 23 years (see Table 1 & Table 2).

Table 1: Sample Distribution according to Gender. (Data are divided by gender).

Gender	Number of Teacher	Percent
Male	20	40%
Female	30	60%

Table 2: Sample Distribution of Participating Teachers According to Experience.

Teaching Experience	Number of Teachers	Percent
1-5 years	25	50%
6-11 years	20	40%
12-16 years	2	4%
17-20 years	2	4%
21 and over	1	2%

The interview participants are also EFL teachers who work in public schools. Two teachers agreed to be part of this study and were interviewed. Teacher A was 40 years old with 10 years

of experience in EFL teaching. He teaches English for first, second, third, fifth, and sixth grade. On the other hand, teacher B was 31 years old with 7 years of experience in EFL teaching. She is currently teaching English for first, second, and third grade.

## **Section 1: Survey**

The questionnaires are designed to answer the first research question: What are the positive and negative aspects of the new education policy for elementary EFL in Iraq, especially in terms of school equipment and materials, age grading, and new methodology. The data results are collected from fifty primary English teachers. These teachers are teaching first, second and/or third grade. The Likert scale ranged from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” and was used to evaluate teachers’ responses. Findings are represented using both simple graphs and analysis.

As can be noticed in Table 3, questions 1, 16, 6, 11, 13, 23, and 12 are focusing on the new textbooks, *English for Iraq*. The first question of the survey aims to see whether or not *English for Iraq* is an effective textbook to introduce English as a second language. The responses showed that high percentages of the teachers supported the statement. 7 teachers (14.00%) chose “Strongly Agree,” and 26 teachers (52.00%) selected “Agree.” On the other hand, 8 teachers (16.00%) disagree with the statement, while one teacher chose “Strongly Disagree.” It shows that the majority of teachers believe that *English for Iraq* is an effective textbook.

Table 3: Teachers' Responses to the Survey of the New Language Education Policy in Term of Textbooks.

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The new <i>English for Iraq</i> is an effective textbook to introduce English as a Second Language.	14.00% 7	52.00% 26	16.00% 8	16.00% 8	2.00% 1
16. I think the instructions in the teacher's guide are useful and I try to follow them as much as I can.	16.00% 3	62.00% 31	12.00% 6	2.00% 1	8.00% 4
6. The vocabulary chosen in the textbook are relevant to students' ages and grade levels.	12.00% 6	44.00% 22	22.00% 11	8.00% 4	14.00% 7
11. Iraqi culture is well represented in the content of <i>English for Iraq</i> .	8.00% 4	34.00% 17	34.00% 17	12.00% 6	12.00% 6
13. Based on my teaching experience using several books for teaching English, I think that this latest version is the best one.	14.00% 7	38% 19	24.00% 12	12.00% 6	12.00% 6
23. <i>English for Iraq</i> motivates students to learn English and use it outside the classroom.	22.00% 11	32.00% 16	24.00% 12	14.00% 7	8.00% 4
12. Overall, the new textbooks are a useful guide for non-native teachers of English.	14.00% 7	56.00% 28	16.00% 8	6.00% 3	8.00% 4

About 78% of the teachers think that the instructions in the teacher's book are useful and they try to follow them as much as possible. 34 teachers selected either "Strongly Agree" (16.00%) or "Agree" (62.00%), while one person selected (2.00%) "Disagree" and 4 selected (8.00%) "Strongly Disagree." Thus, it can be said that most teachers think that the teacher guide is clear and they implement it most of the time.

When the teachers were asked if they think vocabularies chosen in the textbook are relevant to students ages and levels, 6 teachers (12.00%) opted for "Strongly Agree," and 22



teachers (44.00%) selected “Agree.” In contrast, 4 teachers (8%) chose “Disagree,” and 7 teachers (14%) opted for “Strongly Disagree.” This shows that most teachers believe that the vocabulary chosen in *English for Iraq* is relevant to students at this age and level.

The study also indicates that most teachers think that Iraqi culture is well represented in the content of *English for Iraq*. 21 teachers (42%) opted either “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” while 12 teachers (24%) chose “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree.” However, Table 4 shows clearly that high percentage of participants 17 teachers (34%) were “Neutral.”

The fifth statement asked if the experienced teachers think that *English for Iraq* is the best series for teaching English. 7 teachers (14.00%) indicate that they “Strongly Agree” with the statement, and 19 teachers (38%) chose “Agree.” However, other teachers selected (12% “Strongly Disagree” and 12% “Disagree”) and 12 teachers (24%) preferred not to answer and chose neutral. This means that almost 52% of the teachers think that *English for Iraq* is the best book they have used so far.

Regarding the sixth statement, if *English for Iraq* motivates students to learn English and use it outside the classroom. 54% of the teachers “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” with the statement while 22% either “Strongly Disagree” or “Disagree.” It can be said that a high percentage of teachers think that *English for Iraq* encourages students to learn English and practice it outside the classroom.

Table 3 also shows that teachers believe that the new textbooks, *English for Iraq*, have useful guidelines for non-native English speakers. 70% of teachers “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” with this notion.

Table 4: Teachers Responses to the Survey of Language Education Policy in Terms of Schools' Equipment and Materials.

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. The visuals are useful in introducing and revising the meaning of vocabulary words.	32.00% 16	48.00% 24	12.00% 6	2.00% 1	6.00% 3
8. The audio-visual activities in the textbooks are effective in facilitating both instructors teaching and students learning.	28.00% 14	38.00% 19	20.00% 10	6.00% 3	8.00% 4
9. My school has the resources to utilize the activities of the textbook, such as tape recorders for listening drills and projection screens for displaying content.	0.00% 0	6.00% 3	0.00% 0	44.00% 22	50.00% 25
10. I use the textbooks audio-visual activities inside classrooms for better learning experience, especially with speaking and listening exercises.	14.00% 7	28.00% 14	12.00% 6	38.00% 19	8.00% 4
5. The materials used in teaching English should be improved and incorporated alongside other activities.	52.00% 26	28.00% 14	12.00% 6	6.00% 3	2.00% 1
17. I use my own supplementary teaching materials.	28.00% 14	52.00% 26	6.00% 3	10.00% 5	4.00% 2
18. The Ministry of Education allocates some of the school budget for teachers to buy supplementary teaching materials.	20.00% 10	10.00% 5	6.00% 3	36.00% 18	28.00% 14
19. Teachers have permission to use outside material, such as supplies that have not been approved officially by the Ministry of Education.	20.00% 10	44.00% 22	12.00% 6	14.00% 7	10.00% 5
20. I use the CD that is provided with the book to tell stories in class	6.00% 3	14.00% 7	8.00% 4	58.00% 29	14.00% 7
22. Students responded well to the materials in the textbooks.	10.00% 5	48.00% 24	24.00% 12	8.00% 4	10.00% 5

It can be seen that questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 5, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 22 in Table 4 are asking about school equipment and materials. Question 7 in Table 4 shows that high percentages of teachers find the visuals are useful in introducing and revising the meaning of vocabulary words. 16 teachers (32%) “Strongly Agree,” and 24 (48%) “Agree” with the statement while 4 teachers (8%) “Strongly Disagree” or “Disagree” with this statement.

Table 4 also shows clearly that teachers responded positively for question 8. It shows that 66% of teachers “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” that the audio-visual activities in the textbooks are effective in facilitating both instructor teaching and student learning while only 7 teachers (14%) “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree.”

For question 9, the results indicated that most schools do not have the resources and the technology to utilize the activities of the textbooks. 47 teachers (94%) chose “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement. However, only 3 teachers (6%) agree that their schools have the resources to help them to apply the activities in the textbook to the classroom.

Concerning question 10, which asks if teachers use the textbooks' audio-visual activities inside the classroom, the results show that 7 teachers (14%) chose “Strongly Agree,” and 14 teachers (28%) chose “Agree.” On the other hand, 19 teachers (38%) indicate that they “Disagree,” and 4 teachers (8%) said they “Strongly Disagree.” The reason behind this conflict might be due to the fact that some teachers have audio equipment like tape recorders, but they do not have projectors to use for visual activities. As shown in the results for question 9, most schools do not have the needed equipment. Thus, some teachers have to buy tape recorders with their own money to utilize the textbooks activities.

About question 5, 70% of the teachers think that the textbook's material used in teaching English needs to be improved and incorporated with other activities while 8% think that materials are good. Thus, a majority of the teachers chose "Strongly disagree" and "Disagree."

For question 18, most teachers "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" (64%) that the Ministry of Education has allocated money for teachers to buy supplementary teaching materials while 15 teachers (30%) "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" on that statement. This means that teachers are not aware of the Iraqi language policy.

Regarding question 19, 32 teachers (60%) "Strongly Agree" or Agree" that they have permission to use outside material. On the other hand, 12 teachers (24%) do not "Agree" or "Strongly Disagree" on that statement. This also means that teachers do not have any idea about the Iraqi language policy.

On Table 4, question 17 also shows that 14 teachers (28%) "Strongly Agree," and 26 teachers (52%) "Agree" with the statement whereas 7 teachers (14%) "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree." Thus, the result indicates that most teachers do use their own supplementary teaching materials.

When teachers have been asked about whether teachers use the CD that is provided with the book to tell stories in class or not, the response showed that 10 teachers (20%) use the CD. In contrast, 33 teachers (66%) do not use the CD that is provided with the book. The reason for this result might be because of the lack in equipment as the result of question 9 shows.

Regarding question 22, which asks if students responded well to the textbook's materials, Table 4 shows that high percentage of teachers (58%) "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" with the statement. However, 18% others "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" with it. This means that students generally react positively towards the textbook's materials.

Table 5: Teachers Responses to the Survey of Language Education Policy in Terms of Age and Teaching Methods.

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2. The hours set by the Ministry of Education to teach English in schools is sufficient.	8.00% 4	34.00% 27	24.00% 12	24.00% 12	10.00% 5
3. Starting teaching English from first grade can confuse students and affect their mother language literacy skills.	14.00% 7	16.00% 8	22.00% 11	36.00% 18	12.00% 6
4. It is better to teach children to read and write in their first language before teaching them how to read and write in another language.	16.00% 8	14.00% 7	28.00% 14	30.00% 15	12.00% 6
21. I found using the communicative language teaching approach useful in teaching English.	34.00% 17	48.00% 24	10.00% 5	0.00% 0	8.00% 4

It can be seen that Table 5, questions 2, 3, 4, and 21, are asking about the age grading and teaching methods. The teacher's answers for question 2 show that most teachers believe that the hours that are decided by the Ministry of Education to teach English in schools are sufficient. 4 teachers (8%) chose "Strongly Agree," and 27 other teachers (34%) chose "Agree." On the other hand, 12 teachers (24%) selected "Disagree," 5 teachers (10%) opted "Strongly Disagree," and 12 teachers (24%) chose "Neutral."

Table 5 also shows that when teachers were asked if starting teaching English from first grade can confuse students and affect their mother language literacy skills, most teachers chose

disagree (36%) and selected “Strongly Disagree” (12%). On the other hand, 15 teachers (30%) chose either “Strongly Agree” or “Agree.” Thus, the result shows that the majority of teachers think that teaching English from first grade does not confuse students nor affect their mother language literacy skills.

As for question 4, which asked if it is better to teach children to read and write in their first language before teaching them how to read and write in another language, most teachers chose “Disagree” (30%), and “Strongly Disagree” (12%). However, other teachers selected “Agree” (16%), “Strongly Agree” (14%), and a high percentage of teachers chose “Neutral” (28%). This means that most teachers do not think that it is better for students to learn Arabic before teaching them English.

Table 5 also shows that a high percentage of teachers found that using the communicative language teaching approach was useful in teaching English. 41 teachers (84%) chose “Strongly Agree” and “Agree,” and 5 teachers (10%) opted “Neutral.” However, 4 teachers chose “Strongly Disagree” and no one chose “Disagree.” Thus, it can be seen that teachers liked using the communicative language teaching approach.

Table 6: Teachers Responses to the Survey of Language Education Policy in Term of Training Program.

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14. I received training to teach the new textbooks.	6.00% 3	36.00% 19	12.00% 6	32.00% 16	14.00% 7
15. The training was helpful in directing teachers on how to use the textbook and how to perform the required activities.	8.00% 4	24.00% 12	28.00% 14	28.00% 14	12.00% 6

In Table 6, question 14 and 15 are asking about the training program that is provided by the Ministry of Education. When teachers asked about if they received training to teach the new textbooks 3 teachers (6%) chose “Strongly Agree,” and 19 teachers (36%) opted “Agree.” However, 16 teachers (32%) selected “Disagree,” and 7 teachers (14%) chose “Strongly Agree.” That means that 21 teachers (42%) received training, while 23 teachers (46%) did not get any training.

Moreover, the teachers were asked if the training was helpful in directing teachers on how to use the textbook and how to perform the required activities. 4 teachers (8%) chose “Strongly Agree” and 12 teachers (24%) selected “Agree.” 14 teachers (28%) opted “Disagree,” and 6 other teachers (12%) chose “Strongly Agree.” However, there are another 14 teachers (28%) that opted “Neutral.”

Finally, the last question is an “open-ended” question, and it was optional. Thus, only 16 teachers responded to it, while the other teachers preferred to skip it (Figure 1). Additionally, responses were translated from Arabic into English.

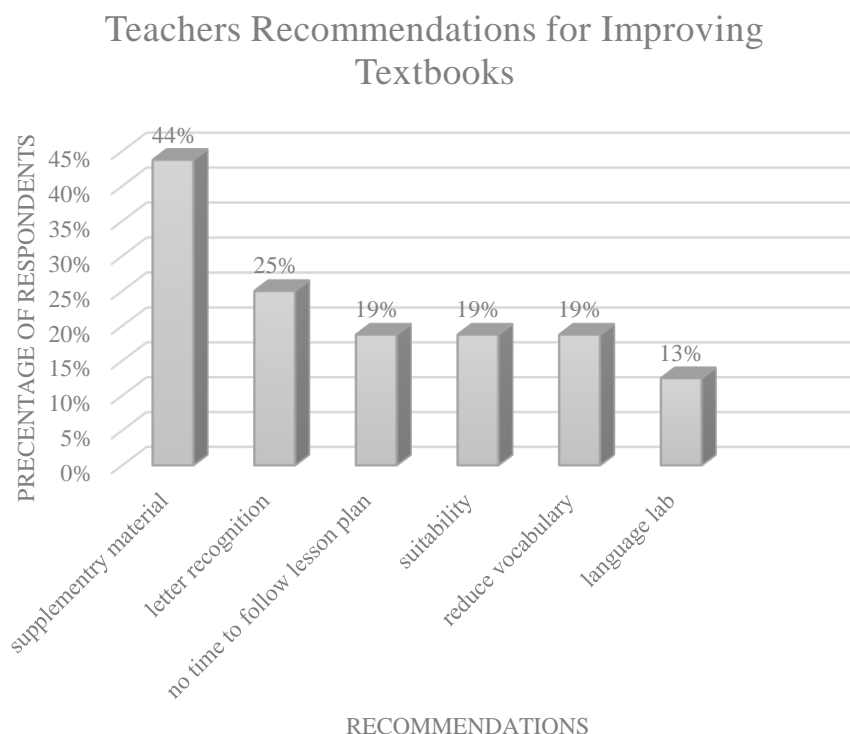


Figure 1. Teachers Recommendations to Improve the Textbooks *English for Iraq*. Data are divided by types of recommendations and shown by the percentage of respondents.

Regarding the last question, “What are your recommendation to improve the textbooks *English for Iraq*?” almost half of the respondents (44%) stated that schools have a need for supplementary material such as flash cards, posters, tape recorders, and projectors. The following comments are an example of the teachers’ translated responses that clarify this point:

1. “Teachers don’t have the supplementary material that they need in the learning process.”  
“The textbooks are good, but we need all the supported materials, especially projectors that help us to apply the materials.”
2. “If the Ministry of Education does not supply teachers with the needed supplementary materials, the textbooks will be useless and we will not be able to teach it properly.” One also added, “Because I do not have the MP3 or the CD player, it is difficult for me to teach them not being able to use these additional materials”
3. “We lack the supplementary material, and I use my own money to print the flash cards and posters, but I cannot afford to buy an MP3 player, or projectors for displaying the videos.”



4. “We lack the supplementary materials, and I cannot afford to print the visual aids. Thus, I hope that the Ministry of Education will allocate some money for teachers to buy supplementary teaching materials.”

Letter recognition was another common theme raised by teachers. About 25% of respondents showed that they prefer their students to learn the alphabet before learning vocabulary. The following comments were seen regarding this recommendation:

5. *1<sup>ST</sup> primary* textbooks should focus on teaching letters first, before teaching vocabulary words.”
6. “It is better for the students to learn letters first, then conversation or vocabulary words because students get surprised when they are introduced to a word that they do not even know its letters.”

Another theme that was recognized from the teachers’ responses is that teachers need more time to teach English. As figure 1 shows, 19% of teachers do not think that the hours or the class period that are set by the Ministry of Education to teach English in schools are sufficient. Some of the comments are as follows:

7. “I’m enjoying teaching the new textbooks, but it is impossible to follow the lesson plan. The time that is specified to teach each lesson is not enough. Therefore, I think the Ministry of Education should extend the class period.”
  8. “The new textbooks are intensive and long. Therefore, the school-year is not long enough to finish the textbook materials.”
- As it can be seen in Figure 1, 19% of the teacher respondents suggested that the

textbooks should be more suitable for the students’ ages and levels. Following are some of the teachers’ comments:

9. “The textbooks’ materials are difficult for the students. Therefore, it is better to make it easier and more suitable for the students’ age and levels.”
10. “There is a big difference in the students’ environments. Some of them live in the countryside and some are in the city. Therefore, it would be nice if the authors would take into account the individual differences between students.”

It also can be seen that 19% of teachers' responses suggested reducing vocabulary words in the textbooks. A teacher commented as follows:

11. "There are many vocabulary words in the textbooks. Learning many vocabulary words confuses students. Therefore, I recommend reducing the number of the vocabulary words in the textbooks."

A few other respondents (13%) showed that there is a need for language lab. One teacher stated that:

12. "English teachers in each school need at least one language lab that contains all the required supplementary materials. Moreover, with these additional materials teachers can hang all the required visual aids and posters."

Overall, the teachers find the textbooks effective. However, they have issues due to the lack of supplementary materials and technology that hampers their teaching. Therefore, many suggestions were about providing supplementary materials and improving the school facilities with language labs. The next comment focused on the letter recognition and the need to limit vocabulary until students were able to recognize the alphabet. The next two suggestions were both at 19% and were about lack of time for lesson planning and suitability of the textbooks for the students' age and level.

## **Section 2: Interview with Teachers**

To understand if the training program that occurred in Beirut was effective and teachers could make use of it, Teacher A and B were interviewed. The interview consisted of answering 19 questions in total and was conducted in Arabic (See Appendix B). Responses were then translated into English by the researcher.

## **Interview with Teacher A and B**

Both teachers who were interviewed graduated from the English department at the Basic Education College and they are teaching in primary public schools in Baghdad. Teacher A is currently teaching first, second, third, fifth, and sixth grades in the primary school while teacher B is currently teaching second, third, and fourth grades. The first few questions of the interview ask about the training, and the other questions are about the teaching practice after the training. When the teachers were asked to state their feelings about the training program, the teachers stated that they thought that the training was successful and worth their time and then they were asked what made the program successful. They stated that:

“The things that made the training program successful were the experienced teachers who did the training. They know their job very well and they tried their best to teach us how to use the textbooks. Moreover, they had all the supplementary materials and the technology that were needed and I was impressed with how useful the projectors are in the teaching process.” (A)

“It can be seen from the venue and the classes how the Ministry of Education and Grant Company put effort into the training program. The trainers were well prepared and they used many techniques to deliver the material for us such as detailed explanation for the techniques and the methods of how to apply the activity and how to deal with the young children” (B).

Both teachers stated some points for the strengths and the weaknesses of the training program. According to teacher A and B, the biggest weaknesses of the training program were that the program was very short and the material was intensive. Teacher B also added:

“The length of the program was very short and not enough time to cover all the materials.

It was very difficult for us to understand everything because the methods and the techniques are new and it is too much information to insert into five days” (B).

According to teacher A, the biggest strengths of the training program were that the presented materials were good and enjoyable. He also stated:

“The training program refreshed my memory about methods and techniques that I used to study in college. In college, we studied many teaching methods such as the grammar translation method, the audio language method, the CLT. However, there was no emphasis on CLT learning. In other words, we did not study the implications and the activities of the CLT since there was not official policy to use it in teaching and the previous textbooks used the grammar translation method. Thus, this training refreshed and added to my knowledge about the CLT” (A).

Teacher B also expressed the biggest strengths in the training program which were that the trainers were experts and they knew their job very well. She added that they introduced many new methods and techniques to teach English. She added:

“The trainer taught us how to tell stories, how to do games and songs, and how to introduce listening, speaking, reading and writing skills to the young learners using the textbooks and the Teacher’s Guide. The trainers also introduced good visual aids” (B).

Teacher B further stated that:

“There are advantages and disadvantages that the trainers were native speakers. The advantage is that teachers will get the chance to hear the pronunciation from native speakers which will give them the chance to improve their listening and speaking. Moreover, teachers will use English to communicate with the trainers which will enable them to learn new concepts and words, and also help them feel confident with their students. While the disadvantage is that the level of proficiency for some teachers is low and some trainers speak fast. Thus, some teachers do not understand everything that the trainers said and they may feel lost in class” (B).

The teachers further revealed that the venue and the presentation style was new to them, but they liked it. Both teachers felt that the training session did not correspond with their personal learning styles, but they still liked it. As teacher B stated:

“Trainers not only presented the new methods and materials orally, but they applied it practically. We had to pretend to be the students and they were applying the method or the activity as we were the students. I found this method of introducing material to be useful since it gave me an idea how to apply these activities practically in a real classroom setting” (B).

The interviewed teachers were chosen to train groups of English teachers when they finished the training program and returned to Iraq. The training took place in one of the public

school districts. Moreover, both teachers stated that the training programs that they provided were not as effective as the one that they had attended in Beirut due to the lack of supplementary materials and the technology inside the classroom. The teachers stated:

“I trained a group of English teachers. However, I think the training that I provided was not efficient enough because I did not have the visual aids and the technology that could help to explain the material in a good way to other teachers. For instance, I had to play several tutorial videos that were supposed to be presented during the training, but I was unable to perform this tasks due to a lack of tools such as a projector, computer, or even a TV in the training class” (B).

“In my opinion, the training that I provided was not that effective for many reasons. First, the classroom lacked the supplementary materials and the technology that was needed to present the materials to other teachers. I brought my own MP3 player, posters, and flash cards. I had a power point presentation and I could not show it to the teachers because the class was not provided with a computer or projectors. Second, the training time was so short compared with the Beirut training. I had to present everything that I learned from the Beirut training in two days. Actually, the training program lasted for three days, but the last day was for two teachers to present in a real classroom with real students and teach the class by using the concepts that they learned from the training. Moreover, the Iraq training was for three hours each day while the Beirut program was for five hours for five days. Third, not all English teachers kept coming to the training program. Some of them were there the first day, but did not show up the next days. Finally, when I asked the teachers to pretend to be students, some of them refused only because they are old or women. For example, when I asked the teachers to act the story of Layla and the wolf, I asked for one female teacher to come and play the role of Layla, but none of the female teachers would accept. Therefore, in my class when it comes to role playing, most teachers refused to do it while in Beirut everybody was willing to act and do the activities despite their age or gender” (A).

Despite the fact the teachers found the Iraq training not that effective according to the reasons that are stated above, the teachers have acquired some methods and techniques as teacher A stated “My trainees learned how to do group work, how to divide students into groups, and how to teach games and stories” (A). The teachers revealed that they learned many new techniques and methods to teach English to young learners. Both teachers stated that the training made them more skilled in teaching the new textbooks and they have clearer ideas about the textbooks’ activities. The teachers stated:

“Before the training program I did not know how to tell a story to my students, but this training program helped me a lot. I learned that for every story telling there are four basic skills that will help me to deliver meaning and make the story clearer for my students which are: use time words, use the past tense to refer to the things that take place in the past, use the present tense to talk about things in the story that do not change, use “said” to refer to the speech of other people. In the training I also learned how to use visual aids and how to make wall words. Moreover, in the training I now understand the characteristics of eight-year-olds and implications for the classroom” (B).

“I learned how to be skilled at using flash cards to enhance vocabulary learning. I learned that there are many ideas for using flash cards such as: slowly-slowly, flash, what’s missing, magic eyes and more. I also learned how to do group work and how to divide students and engage them in group work” (A). Moreover, the teachers indicated that after the training there were many changes in their attitude and behavior. In addition, they also noticed some improvement in their students’ levels and grades. The teachers stated:

“I noticed a big change in the way that I teach my students. For example, before, I did not involve students a lot in the class. However, after the training program I learned that it is important to involve students in class through participation because if I do not my students will feel bored. Consequently, I noticed a big change in my students’ level and grade. Now students communicate more in English and they enjoy and love the language” (A).

“After the training program, I noticed many changes in my behavior. For example, before I thought that it was better to use Arabic to communicate with my students. Now, I have started using English to communicate with my students inside the class. Another change in my behavior is that I used to use a stick to threaten students to obey me inside the classroom. However, now I do not use it. After all these changes in my behavior and using an all-new methodology, I noticed that my students’ level and grades became higher. My students liked group work and if I did not do it for a while, they would ask me to do it for them. I feel that my students are more engaged in the class. I think the new methods make English enjoyable and fun for students. Now students love the language and the teacher” (B).

The lack of supplementary material, technology and class size were the main factors that prevented them from applying the new methods and techniques that they learned in the Beirut training program. The following comments were seen regarding these aspects.

“I used about 50% to 60% of what I learned in the training program with my students. It is impossible to apply everything I learned in the classroom because some classes have 90-100 students which makes it very difficult to do group work or pay attention to all students’ pronunciation. Moreover, there are many factors that are preventing me from applying the new methods and technique such as: the high numbers of students in each class, the lack of the supplementary teaching materials, and the lack of technology (such as tape record and projectors). I think that each school has to have at least one language lab that has all the equipment that teachers may need to teach and use the new textbook *English for Iraq*”(A).

“I feel that there are some reasons for not applying all the new methods and techniques that I learned in the training program. First, the numbers of students are high in each class so it is very difficult to manage a class with 60 students. The classroom is tight and sometimes there are not enough chairs for all students to sit on. Second, I do not have the visual aids and the equipment that may help me in my teaching” (B).

Teachers have made comments that they are trying to make the class more active and

enjoyable for their students. Teacher A comments as follow:

“I learned from the training that the children are learning by doing, by being active. Therefore, now I’m trying to apply many enjoyable activities that motivate them to do Total Physical Response (TPR) such as Salman says. Moreover, whenever my students seem bored I will do fun activities or make them sing a song or play a game” (A).

Furthermore, the teachers thought the training program was not sufficient to train teachers in CLT. The teachers commented as follows

“The training refreshed my memory about the CLT approach but I think it was not enough since the training time was short. Therefore, the trainers tried to compress it all together and go quickly. In my opinion, I think we need more CLT training” (A).

Moreover, teachers had been asked about how they have taught and applied CLT activities in their classes. Their comments follow:

“Basically I try to follow the Teacher’s Guide in my teaching. First, I will introduce the new vocabulary and show some flash cards to enhance the learning. Then, I will follow the lesson plan when it comes to the activities and the homework. When I have grammar in the lesson, I will write the grammar rules on the blackboard and try to explain it to the students” (A). (This shows that the teacher still lacks skills)

“First I will greet the students, then I activate their schemata by asking them about the previous lesson, then I will follow the teachers’ guide in giving the lesson and I will follow it step by step. I will make them do some repetition drills. Then, I will make them do the book activities and do some group work” (B).

Both teachers stated that they are trying to use English as much as they can. However, sometimes students do not understand the teachers. Therefore, they communicate in Arabic. As teacher B commented:

“I communicate with them in Arabic most of the time for two reasons: First, their proficiency level is low. Second, sometimes I use Arabic for clarification because I do not have the visual aids to show them the words” (B).

Both teachers think that the skills teachers need most for teaching *English for Iraq* is speaking and listening. The following comments are explanatory.

“Teachers need to be more skilled in listening and speaking since the new textbooks are focusing on CLT. In my opinion to be successful teachers in applying CLT you need to have a high level of English proficiency. What I noticed during the training program was that most of the teachers were not fluent enough to carry a lesson for the young children. I remember the first day of the training program the trainer asked the teachers to tell a story. A few teachers in the class could do it while the others had difficulties doing it due to their low level of proficiency” (B).

Moreover, the teachers considered their levels to be between beginner and intermediate. And when they were asked about how a low-level of English proficiency hinders CLT in a classroom, their comments were as follows:

“I think the language that is used in the primary textbooks is easy and any teacher even if he was not proficient can handle it” (A).

“I’m good with writing and reading but when it comes to the speaking and listening I consider myself a beginner. Therefore, I depend a lot on the recorder tape in my classes because I know that my pronunciation is not that good” (B).



### Section 3: How Effective is *English for Iraq* as an EFL Textbook?

As is stated above, the researcher will do her own analysis of the textbooks using the Robinett checklist (see Table 7). The researcher will use a model for the evaluation in addition to her own analysis. All the primary schools textbooks (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>) have been examined below.

Table 7: Textbook Evaluation Criteria (qtd. in Brown 192).

1. GOALS OF THE COURSE (Will this textbook help to accomplish your course goal?)
2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDENTS (Does the book fit the students' background?)
  - a. age
  - b. native language and culture
  - c. educational background
  - d. motivation or purpose for learning English
3. LANGUAGE SKILLS (Does the book integrate the "four skills"? Is there a balanced approach toward the skills? Does the textbook emphasize skills which the curriculum also emphasizes?)
  - a. listening
  - b. reading
  - c. speaking
  - d. writing
4. GENERAL CONTENT (Does the book reflect what is now known about language and language learning?)
  - a. validity—does the textbook accomplish what it purports to?
  - b. authenticity of language
  - c. appropriateness and currency of topics, situation and contexts?
  - d. proficiency level—is it pitched for the right level?
5. QUALITY OF PRACTICE MATERIALS
  - a. exercises—is there a variety from controlled to free?
  - b. clarity of directions—are they clear to both students and teacher?
  - c. grammatical and other linguistic explanation—inductive or deductive?
6. SEQUENCING (How is the book sequenced?)
  - a. by grammatical structure
  - b. by skills
  - c. by situation
  - d. by some combination of the above
7. VOCABULARY (Does the book pay sufficient attention to word and word study?)
  - a. relevance
  - b. frequency
8. FORMAT (Is the book attractive, usable, and durable?)
  - a. clarity of typesetting

- b. quality and clarity of illustrations
- c. general lay out—is it comfortable and not too “busy”?
- d. size of the book and binding
- e. quality of editing
- f. index, table of contents, chapter headings

9. ACCOMPANYING MATERIALS (Are there useful supplementary materials?)

- a. Workbook
- b. Tapes—audio and/or video
- c. posters, flash cards, etc.
- d. a set of tests

10. TEACHER’S GUIDE (Is this useful?)

- a. methodological guidance
- b. alternative and supplementary exercises
- c. suitability for nonnative-speaking teacher

Table 8: Scoring the Criteria of the Textbooks.

Total Score	Criteria of the Textbooks
41-50	Excellent
31-40	Good
21-30	Fair
11-20	Bad
1-10	Very Bad

***English for Iraq: 1st Primary.*** When reviewing this text book, several factors need to be considered.

**Goals of the Course.** This course has been developed for teaching English to children in the first year of their primary school. In the Teacher’s Book, the authors stated the course goals which are : (1) Engage the students in learning the language so that they enjoy it and want to continue learning it; (2) Give students the confidence to participate; (3) Provide them with opportunities to communicate in English; (4) Introduce them to the sound of English through recorded materials, and take advantage of their ability to imitate spoken language; (5) Enable

them to identify and name people and objects in English; (6) Expose them to simple sentences and utterances, allowing them to acquire these at their own pace; (7) Introduce basic reading skills using phonics and whole word recognition; (8) Develop the first steps in handwriting with the introduction of the letters individually and in the context of words and simple sentences (teacher guide 6). The course goals have successfully been accomplished through the textbook activities which are designed to make students enjoy learning the language through games, songs, and stories, and are also designed to accomplish specific language-learning aims such as: imitating the rhythm and sounds of the language; carrying out spoken instructions and comments within the syllabus; naming people and objects and using a limited number of structures within the syllabus; recognizing the lower and upper-case letters of the alphabet and their sounds and names; recognizing a limited number of words, phrases, and sentences; understanding that English is written from left to right; taking the first steps in writing in the English script. It is clear after reviewing the course goals and the textbooks activities that the course goals have been clearly accomplished.

Provide several aims for each Unit and activities to accomplish Unit goals. For example, one of the first Unit's aims is to practice hand and pencil control in preparation for writing and as it can be noticed from only looking to Unit 1 activities that the aim is accomplished by making students draw lines, and make circles and shapes. Therefore, the authors have stated the aims for the whole book and for each Unit and they intend to accomplish them later through the book's materials and activities.

Background of the Students. *English for Iraq 1st Primary* is a colorful, engaging course that introduces children to English. The book pays some attention to the students' age, educational background, and culture. It can be seen that the book includes games, puzzles and stories that fit

the students' age and make the lesson more enjoyable. The vocabulary is easy and suitable for their age. For example, in Lesson 1, for the speaking exercise students only learn the word "Hello." Further, the authors stated some characteristics of a six-year-old child which affect teaching and learning and they took that into account when they designed the course. These are: emotional characteristics, physical characteristics, educational characteristics, and linguistic characteristics (Teacher's Book). For example, in the education characteristics, the authors stated that children need to learn by doing. Therefore, there are many exercises involving Total Physical Response (TPR) - which means that students have to listen and act to show their understanding since children appear to do a lot of listening before they have the ability to speak. Thus, students have to listen and act (moving, grabbing, looking, point, etc.) - activities such as in Unit 6 Lesson 8, where teachers play the Salman Says game to review the names of parts of the body. In Salman Says, students are commanded to touch their hair/arm/leg/ears/mouth/toy by the instructor. Another example of "to learn by doing" is where the teacher asks her/his students to act out a song or story (Unit 7, Lesson 10 and Unit 5, Lesson 6). Moreover, both Iraqi culture and English culture are represented in the textbooks. However, Iraqi culture was more obvious in *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* than the English culture. Iraqi culture is seen through the names of the characters and the pictures in the textbooks. For example, in Unit 1 Lesson 7 and 8, the main characters are named Ahmed, Nada, Hani, and Iman. Another example is found in Unit 2 Lessons 1 and 2, where the pictures show students wearing Iraqi school uniforms. While Iraqi culture is represented in *English for Iraq: 1<sup>st</sup> Primary*, there are also images from English culture. For example, English culture can be seen through the pictures of the houses in the textbooks which are designed with an English design. Children at this age are not aware of the importance of learning a foreign language and how that will be useful for their future career or field of study.

Therefore, it is the teacher's responsibility to motivate them to learn the language. The first course goal for the *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* was to engage the students in learning the language so that they enjoy it and want to continue learning it. The Teacher's Guide has many ideas for activities that are fun and effective for the students at this age such as singing, playing games, or doing TPR activities. It can be concluded that the book activities motivate students to learn the language. However, it is the teacher's responsibility to apply suggested teaching methods in order to engage students to promote learning.

Language Skills. The book follows an integrated approach that includes the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and pre-writing. Listening exercises in *English for Iraq 1<sup>st</sup> Primary* range from very simple task-based listening activities, which encourage learners to listen and complete a series of tasks such as ticking on pictures or words that are heard in the listening exercise. These tasks have a high percentage of authenticity in that they incorporate the language learned and require correct use of that language. For example, in *1<sup>st</sup> Primary*, students are instructed to "Listen and look," "Listen and say," "Listen, look and say," "Listen and match," "Listen and sing," and "Listen, say and find." These are all examples of task-based learning exercises for listening, where students listen and complete a task. Most of the listening tasks that are included in the *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* book are one-way (non-participatory) listening tasks which means that the learners have to listen to different kinds of spoken texts that are recorded or read aloud by the teachers and then they have to use this information through listening outcomes or products such as: listen and match, look, listen and repeat (texts), listen and color, listen and tick the right picture, listen and sing and listen and point. The listening skill that is used here is listening for global understanding. For example, students listen to stories to get the overall meaning with the help of the visual aids.

Moreover, the course provides integrated speaking activities that give opportunities to repeat language, practice pronunciation and develop fluency in a meaningful context in order to make students comfortable with the language. The activities include class chains, team games, role play and guessing games. The recorded materials also provide a model for speaking activities and reference for pronunciation both for children and teachers. Activities are in a very controlled manner since students are very limited in their ability to use English. For example, students are introduced to greetings and instructed on how to respond to the inquiry, "How are you?" They are taught the response "I'm fine, thank you."

In addition, the reading activities presented range from recognition of the letters of the alphabet and their sounds in the first four units to recognition of a limited number of words in Units 5-8; a few highly structured activities are also included in order to help students to practice reading words within sentences such as: what's your name, how old are you, etc. This means that the authors have used bottom-up processing which means that students first have to recognize a range of linguistic signals such as: letters, sounds, words, phrases. Then, from all the data they receive, students will select the signals that will make sense to them.

Finally, the pre-writing activities introduce the letters following the same sequence as the alphabet. There is also a focus on left-to-right orientation. Also, numbers from 1 to 10 are introduced in Unit 3. First, letter formation is introduced in the Students' Book. Then, in the activity sections, students have to do tracing activities. For example, in Unit 1, for pre-writing activities, students develop awareness of drawing from left to right, learn how to hold a pencil correctly, develop hand/eye coordination and learn the shape and direction of letters "a-f." However, the book does not have a balanced approach towards skills. Only by looking at the Icon Key can it be said that the book is focusing and building up basic listening skills (see

Appendix C). As a result of the text being the first book in the series of *English for Iraq*, there is the absolute necessity to teach literacy skills and therefore the text focuses on writing and eventually recognition of letters and basic words. Without these two fundamental skills, students will not be able to continue learning English in a meaningful manner. In the same manner, the listening skills are paramount to understanding English and eventually learning to speak. The curricular goals are met through the emphasis of teaching students the basics of writing and the basic skills of listening. In fact, the goals do not mention speaking, but do mention basic reading skills.

General Content. The book reflects part of what is known about language and language learning. For example, the book is closely related to the principle of Meaningful Learning which means that whenever students are introduced to a new topic, it has to be connected to their existing knowledge and background in order to be related to something they already know. For example, all the unit topics are appropriate for this age group, and are related to the students' life, such as the unit themes My House, My School, My Toys, At the Zoo, My Body, and My Family. Moreover, the language has to be authentic since children relate language to what is important and relevant to their knowledge and the environment around them. Thus, the topics create a context for learning and take advantage of the fact that children of this age are interested in the immediate world around them. The book also introduces authentic language that does not include authentic words for Iraqis but the language represents authentic words for English culture. For example, "jelly" is an authentic word in English although not common in Iraqi society. The book introduces authentic vocabulary words and culture associated with it, which is a good thing about the book. Therefore, the book is pitched for the appropriate level since language is introduced in meaningful and authentic contexts.

Quality of Practice Materials. The quality of practice materials is good. The activity book makes up the second half of the book and it includes many exercises. On the one hand, there is no variation in the exercises' techniques. Most of the book's exercises are controlled activities such as: warm up exercises which include songs, play, and dance; diction exercises which include copying letters and words; and identifying exercises which include matching activities such as: match words with pictures, match initial letters with pictures, and match words with settings. On the other hand, there was a variation in the types of drills that have been adopted in the textbook which are mechanical drills, substitution drills and communicative drills. First, mechanical drills have one correct response from the students and do not have any relationship with reality. In these exercises, the students are required to repeat words or sentences whether the students understand its meaning or not. For example, in unit 5 lesson 7,

Teacher: Where is the blue tiger?

Students: In the bag.

Teacher: Where is red tiger?

Students: In the net.

Second, substitution drills, where teachers give a sentence to their students and ask them to repeat after them, then they will ask them to change one word or structure in the sentence and repeat it. For example, in unit 6 lesson 7:

Teacher: I am a monster.

Students: I am a monster.

Teacher: I have a blue body.

Students: I have a blue body.

Teacher: 2 green heads.

Students: I have 2 green heads.

Teachers: 3 red arms.

Students: I have 3 red arms.

Teacher: A yellow leg.

Students: I have a yellow leg.

Finally, there were communicative drills such as: asking students "what is your name," and "how are you." These drills are useful because it gives the students the chance to be engaged in meaningful communication even though they are at a beginner level. The instructions for the exercises are clear for both teachers and students. Simple structures are being introduced



inductively in the book. In other words, teachers will not explain grammar using terms like “pronouns” or “simple past tense.” Instead, the grammar is introduced through communicative meaningful context. Therefore, due to intellectual development limitations, teaching should focus on the here and now for young learners and avoid abstract presentations and explanations of grammar (Brown, 102). For example, in unit 3 lesson 6, teachers will not tell students that they will learn how to ask and answer WH-questions; instead teachers will ask their students to listen to the track and look at the pictures. Afterward, they will ask their students to select five cards from their mini word/picture: kite, robot, queen, balloon, and bike. In pairs, students practice asking “what is it?” and then answering. *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* book introduces grammar such as pronouns (my, I'm, you, it's), auxiliary verbs (is, are), and WH-questions (where's the blue tiger?). In some cases, the answers include only (Yes /No), which is a format that the students at this age can use correctly. For this reason, it would be better if the answers would be taught in full format. For example, the answers take the form of (subject/verb/object). For example, in Unit 2 Lesson 7, (What's this? Is it a pen? No) (Is it a pencil? Yes) it would be better for the students to provide full answers such as (Is it a pen? Yes, it is). The grammar is introduced in a way that the rule is not explained directly, but is instead explained through meaningful contexts. Moreover, Units 4 and 8 focus on revision and each unit has extra exercises to enhance the learning materials in the previous units.

Sequencing. The book is sequenced by alphabet. Students will learn to recognize the lower and uppercase letters of the alphabet and their sounds and names. They will also learn limited words, phrases, and sentences that relate to the alphabet or the unit theme. For example, in unit one, students will learn to recognize the letter “a” and its sound. Then, they will be learning a couple of words that start with the letter “a” which are “apple” and “ant.” Students will learn how to get

ready to write and practice writing the letter “a.” In summary, the book is sequenced according to the alphabet. However, the book did not connect the alphabet vocabulary words with the vocabulary or the setting of the unit. Therefore, the sequencing of the book was fair.

Vocabulary. The vocabulary is recycled in activities throughout the course, as well as through games and using picture/word cards. Most of the vocabulary words that have been taught in *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* are related to the alphabet learning. Therefore, teachers introduce the letters through vocabulary. For example, teachers will elicit or say the sound “b.” Then, they will show a picture card for the related vocabulary and they will explain that the names of the three objects (ball, bus and bird) begin with the sound “b.” Then they will make students listen and look at the picture. After that they listen and say the words after the recording or the teacher. Then, the words will be practiced through many activities as in “What is missing?” games (for example, while putting the picture cards, apple, ant, ball, bus, bird, on the board teachers have to elicit the names. Then tell the students to close their eyes. Remove one of the picture cards. Tell the students to open their eyes and ask them which one is missing), and doing mimes for words (for example teacher say the word “bus” and students do the mime which is driving a bus and repeat the word). Another strategy that has been used in the *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* is learning vocabulary in context. Introducing vocabulary in sentences helps students to associate the new words with a meaningful context to which they can relate. Since the book is sequenced according to alphabet, most of the alphabet vocabulary words are not related to the unit theme.

However, some of the vocabulary in the textbooks is relevant to the unit topic. For example, in Unit 6 “At the Zoo,” all pictures and vocabulary are related to the zoo such as: cat, ant, bus, dog, penguin, monkey, tiger, elephant, camel, horse, goat, egg, and fish. On the other hand, in some units the vocabulary is not related to the unit topic. For example, in Unit 1 My

House, many words are not related to the contexts such as: apple, ant, bus, bird, car, cat, duck, etc. It can be noticed that the authors try to reinforce vocabulary that is unrelated to the unit and even Iraqi culture. For instance, in Unit 2, “My School,” when they teach a new letter such as “H,” they use “horse” as a new word to introduce the letter “H” even though 'horse' isn't a word that a student will encounter in school. Furthermore, the focus of the unit shifts when it comes to teaching new letters of the alphabet. For example, in Unit 1 “My House,” to teach letter “E,” elephant is used as an example for teaching that letter, but that word is not something that one can have inside a house. Therefore, they tried to reinforce it by putting a picture of an elephant outside the house in the garden (see Appendix D). It would be easier for the students to learn by introducing vocabulary that is related to the Unit topics.

Format. The format of *English for Iraq 1<sup>st</sup> Primary* is good. It is obvious that the typesetting of the textbook is very clear. The book has two sections. The first section represents the book’s core activities and language through its large, colorful pictures, songs, rhymes, listening/reading stories and speaking activities, while the second section includes exercises. The book language is clear; however, there are no clear instructions for the core activities of the first section since the key is a visual key using pictures instead of words. It would be better for written instructions to be included in the first section as it is included in the second section of the book, even though students do not know how to read at this point because it helps familiarize students with written instructions. Furthermore, it helps parents to follow the materials with their children. On the other hand, the instructions in the activity section which makes up the second half of the book are clear and simple. The book's general layout is comfortable and not too busy. However, there are a few lessons that are over packed with content. For example, in Unit 1 Lesson 9, there are five different activities on one page. In addition, the size of the book and binding is good. There

was a committee from the Ministry of Education English Curriculum who did the editing and it can be seen that they did a good job with that. The book is well organized and at the beginning of the book there is a color book map which provides a summary of the alphabet words, vocabulary and language covered in each unit. This map is very useful because it provides parents with a clear guide to what their children are learning. It is also seen that pages 4 and 5 of the book duplicate poster 1 which has the entire alphabet. These alphabet pages provide a quick reference guide for students when they are doing homework or other activities and want to check something quickly by themselves.

Accompanying Materials. Overall, the supplementary materials are very useful. The course provides visual aids and audio. The visual aids include flashcards and posters, while the audio aids include tapes and videos. Flash cards (color, picture, and word cards) are an integral part of the course and are used in most lessons. Moreover, the course also contains mini pictures and word cards at the end of the book. This is a very useful resource for teachers and students, especially in a big class. The course also presents 4 posters: lower case alphabet, colors and numbers, lower and upper case alphabet, and diagrams of a house, furniture and family. It would be useful if the teacher added one more poster with the Icon Key. Thus, students could see it whenever the teacher asked them to do an action. At the same time, the audio provides a rich variety of recorded materials such as songs, dialogues, stories, rhymes, instructions, and descriptions. These are good for the children's learning because the audio encourages children to show their understanding non-verbally by matching, circling, ticking, pointing and performing actions. The recorded materials give children the opportunity to listen to the natural stress and rhythm of English. They provide an accurate model for speaking activities and give both children and teachers a reference for pronunciation.

Teacher's Guide. The Teacher's Book is very useful and organized. It includes an introduction and detailed lesson notes, listening scripts, additional activities (extension and support), homework ideas and language games. However, the lesson plans that are provided in the guide are long and the lesson time is short. Thus, teachers do not have enough time to go over all the steps that the plan recommends. Moreover, the introduction to the Teacher's Guide mentions much useful information for teachers such as: the book's aims, how to use it, how to manage the classroom (classroom organization, classroom discipline, classroom language), and how to evaluate lessons and students' progress. A book map follows the introduction part; it provides a summary of the aims of each unit, key alphabet words, other vocabulary, and activities (see Appendix E). In addition, the guide is written in both languages, Arabic and English. Thus, the Teacher's Book is suitable for non-native English speaking teachers.

As it can be seen in Table 9, some criteria — such as goals of the course, background of the students, language skills, format, accompanying materials, and Teacher's Guide — scored four (good), while other criteria — such as general content, quality of practice materials, sequencing, and vocabulary — scored three (fair). The total scoring for the textbook's criteria is 36. Therefore, it can be said that the book is good.

Table 9: Evaluation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Primary Textbook

Categories	Excellent (Score 5)	Good (Score 4)	Fair (Score 3)	Bad (Score 2)	Very Bad (Score 1)
Goals of the course		4			
Background of the students		4			
Language skills		4			
General content			3		
Quality of practice materials			3		
Sequencing			3		
Vocabulary			3		
Format		4			
Accompanying materials		4			
Teacher's Guide		4			
Total score	36				

**English for Iraq: 2nd Primary.** When reviewing this text book, several factors need to be considered.

Goals of the course. This course has been developed for teaching English to children in the second year of their primary school. The aims of the course fall into two categories. The first three aims are designed to create a learning-conducive atmosphere while the other aims are more specific language-learning objectives. The aims are: engage students in learning the language so that they enjoy it and want to continue learning it; give them the confidence to participate; provide them with opportunities to communicate in English; introduce students to the English sounds through recorded material, and take advantage of their ability to imitate spoken languages; enable students to identify and name people and objects in English, expose students

to simple sentences and utterances, allowing them to acquire these at their own pace; introduce basic reading skills using phonics and whole-word recognition; and develop student's handwriting. The course goals have been reiterated throughout the book in the unit previews, unit lesson plans, and individual activities. Unit aims are broken into the four primary skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The listing of goals is used to give focus to instructors on the application of CLT to teach students the language of the lesson with a goal in mind. A novice teacher could plan their lesson just based on the Teacher's book and know how they should teach various activities in order to make students enthusiastic to learn the language through games, songs, stories, and puzzles. Moreover, the authors have incorporated much vocabulary from *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* in order to do revision with students and reinforce skills that were learned in the previous grade. This usage of previous language adds to the comfort level and confidence of these young learners. Moreover, each unit has its own aim and by looking to the activity, the authors have been consistent in their communicative language teaching approach by breeding confidence in the learners.

Background of the Students. It is a colorful and engaging course that has been designed to meet the needs of seven-year old 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Iraqi students. The course pays great attention to the student and teacher educational background by having Arabic translations in the Teacher's Book so that there are clear instructions on how to utilize the text and teach English effectively to Iraqi students. The text is written as a continuation of the *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* text, as can be seen in the first unit of the *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* book where there is a revision of language from *1<sup>st</sup> Primary*. Then, in later units new language is being introduced. In the Teacher's Guide, the authors give some advice on how to teach English to young children. In addition, they state some educational characteristics that teachers should be aware of. The book also considers the suitability for

students' age since it includes many fun and enjoyable activities such as: games, puzzles, role-playing tasks, songs and stories. The book uses simple language and topics that are interesting to Iraqi seven-year-old children since it includes topics that are appropriate for Iraqi culture due to cultural references and familiar Arabic names, Iraqi clothing, and even structures that are familiar sites in Iraq. The Teacher's Book explains that units are written with a topic that creates context for learning and encourages interest in young learners about themselves and the immediate world around them. Moreover, students are encouraged to be active participants in their language learning and to develop age-appropriate language skills.

Language Skills. As in 1<sup>st</sup> *Primary*, the course provides integrated activities that involve the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening texts in the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Primary* book are represented in instructions; songs and rhymes, sounds; words and phrases; short conversations; descriptions of people, places and things; and short stories supported by extensive illustrations. At the beginning of the book, most of the listening tasks are similar to the 1<sup>st</sup> *Primary* book. However, as the course progresses, 2<sup>nd</sup> *Primary* includes some activities that are built to enhance specific skills that are essential in the listening process. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) identified six core skills that are considered essential to the listening process which are: "listen for details, listen selectively, listen for global understanding, listen for main ideas, listen and infer, and listen and predict" (qtd. in Marianne Celce, Donna, and Marguerite 78-79). 2<sup>nd</sup> *Primary* uses three listening skills which are: listen for details, listen for global understanding and listen selectively. On the one hand, most of the book activities are listening for details such as listen and say, listen and find, listen and repeat, listen and recognize words, listen and tick, listen and number, and listen and point. For example, in Unit 4 Lesson 2, the students have to listen to a conversation and identify the settings (see Appendix F). This brief revision exercise



has a picture of the zoo and there are animals in their cages and the student has to listen to an exercise and write the correct number in the blank provided to illustrate listening comprehension. In Stage 1, students are tasked to match the picture with the correct written statement to show listening comprehension of prepositions and basic statements using “be” as a verb. Another activity is to confirm answers (see Appendix G). In the “Listen, say and find” activity, students are asked to listen for information and remember what they heard and find it in the picture. In Stage 2, students are asked to point to the contents of Deena’s lunch box after listening to the text on the page which helps them to associate the spoken words with the printed word and begin to learn the skill of reading to check. In Stage 3, the students are tasked with asking and answering questions with the auxiliary verb “do.” For example, “Do you want a watermelon?” is the actual question, but the students are tasked with naming the fruit in the picture, which checks for vocabulary development and the ability to say the names of these fruits which is an assessment of the students’ progress in speaking. Stage 4 and Stage 5 are extended activities that go to page 108 of the text that extend into developing the ability to write. On the other hand, there are some tasks that enhance listening for global understanding such as listen and match activity. For example, in Unit 3 Lesson 2, teachers ask questions to show interest in the students’ own understanding of the text (see Appendix H).

Moreover, there are a few listening activities that are based on the skill of listening selectively. For example, the stories in 2<sup>nd</sup> primary are long, but the students have to pay attention to particular parts of the story and ignore unnecessary information. For example, students do not need to know all the vocabulary and language that is used in the story, but instead they need to focus on the general meaning and pay attention to specific words and sentences in the accompanying pictures of the story. For example, in Unit 7 Lesson 8, students

are instructed to listen, look and read. Instructors are given guidance to do a pre-reading exercise to prepare students to listen to the story. The use of visual aids assists students in understanding the story and enables them to successfully take in the information on the familiar story of the rabbit and the tortoise. This lesson in *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* is a clear example of selective listening due to the large amount of information.

*2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* also includes top-down and bottom-up activities. In the top-down activities, the listener uses background knowledge of the topic and genre to create meaning such as listening for the main idea/gist, predicting, drawing inferences and summarizing. Whereas in the bottom-up activities the listener uses text details such as sounds, words and grammar to create meaning. These activities include listening for specific details/key words, recognizing word order patterns, and recognizing words that are similar to L1. There is wide support that “both the bottom-up and top-down process are needed for listening comprehension and that successful listening in a second or foreign language depends to a large extent on a learners’ ability to engage in both sets of processes effectively” (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Snow 77). To enhance the listening of learners and make the listening comprehensive for the learners, it has to be based on schema, or the background knowledge of the learner. Therefore, the language has to be from the world around the learner and from their personal experience. Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Snow stated that “this type of knowledge allows listeners to process information in a top-down manner, where gaps in comprehension are filled by what they know about the topic” (77). Moreover, the knowledge of language is very important to support the listening process as Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Snow have stated “to facilitate top-down as well as bottom-up processes, knowledge of the language system, discourse, and pragmatics are equally important” (77).

Moreover, there is a wide range of speaking activities in *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* that include songs and rhymes; question and answer exchanges; short conversations; talking about pictures; and talking about topics. Furthermore, there are many opportunities for speaking in the classroom. For example, there are a lot of activities such as group work, pair work, or playing games. The *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* also provide top-down and bottom-up speaking activities such as: retell a story, sing a song, role play, say letter sounds, do a survey, repeat a word, and listen and repeat parts of a dialogue. Thus, teachers should encourage students to use English during these activities to fully engage and immerse the students in the language.

In EFL *2<sup>nd</sup> primary*, reading follows structured progression from letters and words to the reading of specific words in phrases and sentences, to the global comprehension of texts. Children are exposed to a variety of genres, including instructions, stories, descriptions and conversations. Text quantity and complexity increases as children progress through the course. Reading practice takes place in the activities section. *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* uses a variety of approaches to help student's bridge the gap between the first stage of word and sentence recognition and the more complex process of reading text. The three approaches are audio-assisted reading, reading familiar or memorized texts, and reading aloud. First the audio-assisted reading approach is when students listen to words, phrases, sentences and texts while following in their books. In the first units, the students are not expected to read, but simply to identify the word from its location on the picture, or from its position in the sentence. For example, students listen to the audio and point to the appropriate picture (see Appendix I). Later in the book, the students will be expected to listen and read the individual words, phrases and short texts. This helps students to make a connection between sounds and spelling and reinforces recognition of individual words. Second, memorizing a text takes place in two main ways: memorization for a purpose, for example, to

perform a conversation; incidental memorization, such as parts of the songs and rhymes, and the repetitive text in the stories. Speaking helps reading. For example, when a song becomes familiar over time, the students can join in easily. When they are asked to go back and read the text of the song, the familiarity encourages successful reading. Finally, verbal reading activities are very useful to students at this level because they have the following benefits: They reinforce sound/spelling relationships, they get the students to express themselves at the sentence level and above all, they can be carried out in groups and pairs, and they can be carried out effectively (and success leads to success).

Writing is divided into two areas: the mechanics of writing and activity of writing. There are many activities that encourage students writing. First, the students need to learn the letter formation. For instance, in unit one students need to learn the letter “H.” The teacher has to make a clear demonstration on the board by saying the letter movement, e.g., “Raise your hand. Down, up, around and down” (letter h). Ask the children to stand up and draw the letter in the air – the teachers have to turn their back to the children when they make the motions so the children can see the letter the right way round. The teacher has to draw it big and small. Then, ask the children to draw the shape on the table with their finger. Teachers should encourage children to trace the letters and check ‘start’ and ‘finish’ points, movement direction of the letter, height differentials and lifting the pencil. Most of the early writing exercises involve tracing to label pictures, and recognizing missing letters. Later the students are expected to complete sentences by choosing and copying words, or by composing their own short sentences.

General Content. The book language, topics, situations and contexts are suitable for the students’ ages and level. It can be seen that most units are centered on a topic. The topics can be considered authentic because all the topics are focused on the world around the students. For

example, Unit 2 has lesson topics like: "I like fruit, my school lunch, in the café, the menu, and the big carrot." As can be seen in the listed lesson topics, all topics are related to food and all the vocabulary is being taught and used in the world around the students. Therefore, *2<sup>nd</sup> primary* is suitable for students' proficiency level. Consequently, *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* topics may be considered better than the 1<sup>st</sup> grade because they keep a theme. Moreover, there are plenty of "real life" pair work activities in *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary*, such as talking about family or hobbies, talking about likes and dislikes, and ordering food. Thus, the authors have connected language previously introduced in *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* and have revised it and expanded on this vocabulary's usage in *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* general content.

Quality of Practice Materials. As in *1<sup>st</sup> Primary*, the second half of the book is the activity section. As is stated above, there are plenty of exercises to enhance the four language skills. The book consists of controlled activities and semi-controlled activities. The controlled activities such as: warm up exercises which include songs, play, and dance; diction exercises which include copying letters words, and sentences; identifying exercises which include matching activities such as: match and write, match number with pictures and words, match words with pictures, match initial letters with pictures, and match words with settings; reading aloud which includes stories, songs, and exercises; and role-play to demonstrate the conversation. The semi-controlled activities in *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* include: storytelling, cued narrative/dialogue, and information transfer.

A few example exercises that encourage students to be active participants in their learning process and to develop their language skills are placed in the Appendices (F-K). The lesson plans in the Teachers' Guide explain how to teach these integrated skills exercises where activities generally move from listening to speaking, and then from reading to writing. Moreover,

all directions are clear for both teachers and students. The instructions are written above the exercises clearly in *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* and further details are provided in the Teachers' Guide. It can be noticed from the teachers' guide that teachers are often required in the lessons to organize their students into pairs. For example, in Unit 2 Lesson 1, teachers should put students in pairs to tell each other about their likes and dislikes. According to Brown, "Pair work is more appropriate than group work for tasks that are (a) short, (b) linguistically simple, and (c) quite controlled in terms of the structure of the task." (Brown, 231) Moreover, each lesson has its own exercises that vary from tracing and copying to listening and reading. The grammar is introduced inductively in *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary*. The first unit reviewed grammar from the *1<sup>st</sup> Primary*. However, new grammar is being introduced in the later units. For example, in Unit 2 students will learn to ask and answer question "Do you want a watermelon? Yes, please. No, thank you" (See Appendix G). Students will also learn to use the articles a/an "Do you want an orange, it's a lemon." More grammar is being introduced communicatively such as simple present tense, present progressive, and possession "has/have." Appendix I is a perfect example of teaching present progressive inductively through the use of an integrated approach where students are asked to listen, look and point in Stage 1 and the actual text is listed above the photos of the characters. In addition, the students are asked to play a game in Stage 2 where one student describes a person in the picture and the second student listens and says the name. These grammatical expressions are being learned inductively since the rule is not presented to the students directly, but rather through contexts. For example, simple present tense is presented in Unit 4, Lesson 3 without referring to the rule "I'm hungry, I'm thirsty." The book also provides two review units in both Units 4 and 8. It is sufficient because it allows the students to review the covered materials in previous units. Moreover, each review unit has four lessons that have extra review exercises.

Sequencing. The sequencing of the textbook is a continuation of the skill building approach used in *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* with an emphasis on providing integrated speaking activities that give opportunities to repeat language, practice pronunciation and develop fluency in a meaningful context. Moreover, recorded materials provide a model for speaking activities and a reference for pronunciation both for students and teachers. For example, the first unit of the *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* book reviews language from *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* and introduces new language in later units. Each unit ties into previous skills that were learned and builds on them. For example, the *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* teacher's book begins with a getting started section that allows teachers to gain rapport in the classroom by getting students to communicate in English even though they are instructed to use Arabic to find out what words they know. This shows the sequential arrangement of the texts and a skill-based progression.

Vocabulary. The book pays sufficient attention to words and word study. As is mentioned above, each unit concentrates on a topic and all lessons are focused on a group of vocabulary that is relevant to each other. For example, Lesson 3 in Unit 3 is about a house. Thus, all the vocabulary is related to the house such as: bathroom, kitchen, and garden (see Appendix J). Moreover, the book has exercises to enhance the vocabulary learning. For example, in Unit 3 Lesson 3, Stage 1, the students learn the words “bathroom, bedroom, dining room, garden, kitchen, sitting room, and sofa. First, the teachers have to introduce the unit topic which is “Here’s my house,” then the teacher introduces the vocabulary by having the students listen to the track and look at the pictures. Then, the students will listen and repeat and point to the pictures. In Stage 2, the students will practice the vocabulary using a mime game. Teachers are asked to introduce the game to the students using Arabic and then ask for a mime for each of the rooms. The mimes will brush teeth for bathroom, sleep for bedroom, stir a cooking pot for kitchen, eat for dining

room, sit and watch TV for living room, and water flowers for garden. The students will of course mime with the present progressive in mind, but they are learning to associate an action with the specific room where that action takes place. The instructor will say one of the rooms and the students will mime the correct action. Later, students will do this activity in pairs. Stage 3 further enhances the vocabulary learning, by having teachers instruct students to listen and speak using the vocabulary just learned and review the vocabulary from Unit 3 Lesson 2 where students were asked to answer “Where’s the monkey?” (Appendix H). By performing this task, students will reinforce previously learned vocabulary (prepositions) and further understand the new vocabulary just learned. Students will review vocabulary in the listen and match tasks by listening and drawing a line from the person to the room (see Appendix K). The progression of vocabulary in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade is more relevant and frequent than the vocabulary presented in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade due to the practicality of the language and increased activities using language from *1<sup>st</sup> Primary*.

Format. The book is colorful, attractive, usable, and durable for the students’ ages and levels. The book typing font and size are suitable, which makes the book easy to read and not too busy. As in *1<sup>st</sup> Primary*, the book started with a picture of the main character in the book, Zack. Then, on page 2, and page 3 there is the Icon key and the book map. The icon key gives students ideas about the type of activity they are going to do, while the book map provides a summary of the alphabet words, vocabulary and language covered in each unit. As in *1<sup>st</sup> Primary*, a committee from the Ministry of Education English curriculum edited the book. Overall, the book format is good and clear for both teachers and students.

Accompanying Materials. The course provided some supplementary materials such as flash cards, posters, audio, and video. The flash cards are colorful and very clear. There are five



posters: my body, my house, numbers and days of the week, birthday party, and my day. All the posters use pictures featured in the students' book. Although it is better to use the posters where specified for a change of focus, they are not essential for any individual lesson. Moreover, the course includes audio which contains the dialogues, stories, songs and rhymes which are used in the lessons. In addition, the audio includes a Teacher Resource File (pages 196–7) which helps teachers who want more support with their pronunciation. The video is for telling stories; the stories in *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* are mostly in the folk tradition and are, therefore, familiar in content or in form. The visual support is very important in telling a story because it helps students bring meaning to the listening text in an enjoyable way.

Teacher's Guide. It can be noticed that the *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* Teacher's Guide is a good source for teachers. It has a full introduction which outlines the rationale behind the methodology. As in *1<sup>st</sup> primary*, Unit 1 is presented in both English and Arabic to support teachers while they become familiar with the course, its components, and methodology. The aims and language focus of each unit are clearly presented in the book map so that teachers can see the complete scope and progression of learning. Every lesson has detailed notes to guide the teacher. The lesson notes clearly state the lesson aims, materials and language and organize the lesson into small, accessible steps for easy teaching. However, the lesson plans that are provided in the Teacher's Guide are long and the lesson time is short. Thus, teachers do not have enough time to go over all the steps that the plan recommends. Moreover, at the back of the Teacher's Book, there are audio transcripts, a list of picture/word cards and space for teachers to write their own personal notes.

Table 10 shows that most criteria in the *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* scored either 4 or 5, while the Teacher's Guide scored 3. The total score for the textbook's criteria is 41. To conclude, the book is excellent according the scoring skills (see Table 2).

Table 10: Evaluation of *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* Textbook

Categories	Excellent (Score 5)	Good (Score 4)	Fair (Score 3)	Bad (Score 2)	Very Bad (Score 1)
Goals of the course		4			
Background of the students		4			
Language skills		4			
General content		4			
Quality of practice materials		4			
Sequencing		4			
Vocabulary	5				
Format	5				
Accompanying materials		4			
Teacher's Guide			3		
Total score	41				

***English for Iraq: 3<sup>rd</sup> Primary.*** When reviewing this text book, several factors need to be considered.

Goals of the Course. This course has been developed for teaching English to eight-year-old children in the third year of primary school. It builds on and embeds the language and skills that children have learned in their first and second years of English at school. As with the previous two grades, the course has set up aims to be accomplished. In the Teacher's Guide, each unit

begins with a list of objectives categorized under the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. These objectives are followed by lists of key language and key words. *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* aims are an expansion of the two previous texts' aims; the differences are that students will continue to improve their skills in pronunciation, develop basic conversation skills such as expressing simple ideas and needs, asking questions, talking about friends and family, and routines in English. Moreover, students will be exposed to longer sentences and utterances of English, be granted more opportunities to use the language communicatively with peers in both controlled and free practice activities, will continue to build their basic reading skills using phonics and whole-word recognition, and practice and develop their confidence and competence in writing and spelling. Moreover, the authors tried to accomplish their aims through the activities that are stated in each unit.

Background of the Students. As in the previous grade books, the authors provide the characteristics of eight-year-old students, and give some advice on how to deal with them. Some of these characteristics are that: students are more social – enjoy using language to communicate, show more highly developed thinking skills, have higher emotional maturity, enjoy problem solving, have longer concentration spans, are capable of handling more independent activities and can help their peers, and are creative with language. It also can be noted that the book pays attention to the students' backgrounds in order to review what the students studied in the previous books. The revision includes more vocabulary and grammar when compared to the *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* and Iraqi culture is represented through some of the pictures and names. For example, the main characters names are Hassan, Reem, Zeena and Sami. The culture is also presented through clothes and school uniforms. Sociocultural themes are seen throughout the text in the way students are shown how to count with their fingers on page 13, an Iraqi flag is seen above a

school on page 46, girls are always shown wearing either dresses or skirts outside of school and a uniform during school, and most men are pictured with either a mustache or beard.

Language Skills. The book includes the four language skills. In the *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary*, listening is represented in instructions, songs and rhymes, words and phrases, short conversations, descriptions, and short stories. Moreover, activities to develop the students' skills of listening have been introduced such as: listen for details, listen for global understanding, and listen selectively. The listening tasks that are presented in the *1<sup>st</sup>* and *2<sup>nd</sup>* *Primary* are only one-way (nonparticipatory) while the ones that are presented in the *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* are mixed between one-way (nonparticipatory) and two-way (participatory) listening tasks such as describe and draw activities. For example, in Unit 3 Lesson 7 students will hear the characters saying at what time they do daily activities. The teacher should tell the students that they should only listen without writing anything the first time. Then, the teacher will play the track for the second time and ask students to draw the times in the table. After that, the teacher will put students in small groups to check the answers (see Appendix L). *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* also has many integrated activities that require that students describe clothing, daily routines, and places in a town after listening. Other listening texts are mainly used as models for speaking; however, these always involve an element of listening for understanding, too. The listening activities in the *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* follow a basic procedure for listening tasks as follows: discuss any picture and establish the context; explain what they heard, demonstrating if appropriate; play the track and students listen and follow; play the track a second time and students listen and do the task; elicit answers, showing interest in the students own understanding of the text; confirm answers by playing the track again to conform answers if necessary and/or resolve any uncertainties; use the information for consolidation or transfer.

Speaking activities include songs and rhymes, question and answer exchanges, short conversation, talking about pictures, and talking about topics. The *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* has different types of tasks for assessing speaking: imitative speaking tasks such as: (1) minimal pair repetition, word/phrase repetition, and sentence repetition; (2) intensive speaking tasks such as: directed response, read-aloud, oral sentence completion, oral close procedure, and direct response; (3) responsive speaking tasks such as: question and answer-open-ended, and question elicitation; (4) interactive speaking tasks such as: role plays, and games; (5) extensive speaking tasks such as: picture-cued (extensive) storytelling, and retelling a story.

Reading tasks in *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* progress from recognition of single words and short phrases to global comprehension of short descriptions, set of instructions, conversations and picture stories. Reading tasks include reading words, phrases, sentences, instructions, conversations, short descriptions, and short answers. There are more words on the pages of student materials compared with previous levels. However, as the authors stated in the teacher's book "students should not be expected to read all this text, particularly the lyrics of songs or words in the story" (21). Moreover, at the age of eight-years-old, it is natural that there is a broad spread of ability in literacy skills, both in L1 and L2. Therefore, the teachers should make allowances for this when assessing progress in reading. The reading tasks in the *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* are supported by visual and audio aids. Moreover, *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* includes some reading literacy activities such as: spot the difference, look and say/count, word searches, sequencing, pictures, using visual aids to support meaning, and using punctuation to support meaning.

Writing is divided into two areas: the mechanics of writing and activity writings. The first two units of the activity book are designed to take students through a guided revision of handwriting for all lower case and upper case letters and numbers. Then, in the later units, they

will learn how to spell some high frequency words, and write simple sentences. In *1<sup>st</sup>* and *2<sup>nd</sup>* *Primary*, the emphasis was on letter formation rather than position and height differentials. Once children have mastered formation, increasing attention should be given to the position of the letters and the ascenders and descenders. Additionally, in *3<sup>rd</sup>* *Primary* students begin to master the first steps towards faster, confident cursive script by learning to end each letter with a “flick” stroke, which is important when they come to join their writing later on. The writing activities in *3<sup>rd</sup>* *Primary* includes tracking, matching, gap filling, completing charts/tables, spacing words in a sentence, ordering words in a sentence, and freehand writing. In addition, some of the writing assessment tasks in *3<sup>rd</sup>* *Primary* are imitative writing such as: exercises in handwriting letters and words, copying, listening cloze selection tasks (listen and write), spelling tasks, and one-word dictation tasks while other writing assessment tasks are intensive (controlled) writing such as: ordering tasks (re-order a list of words in random order).

General Content. In *3<sup>rd</sup>* *Primary*, language skills are more emphasized than in the other grades. Moreover, *3<sup>rd</sup>* *Primary* has longer sentences, more grammar and more questions and answers. Lesson topics are related to the students’ lives. However, the units do not have any theme but follow the previous texts in the organization of review or revision material. For example, in *2<sup>nd</sup>* *Primary*, Units 1, 4, and 8 are revision units and the same is true for *3<sup>rd</sup>* *Primary*. However, there is no correlation between lesson topics except for a progression of grammar and vocabulary. For example, Unit 3 Lesson 1 is called “My Family,” while the second lesson is about “My Bedroom” and the third lesson is about “Happy Days.” Therefore, the units do not have a theme to follow. However, this textbook has more authentic language than the previous books. For example, most of the songs are content actions that most children do in their daily lives. In Unit 1 Lesson 2, students are encouraged to participate when the track is playing. This would be an

example of authentic language because students do activities such as standing up and sitting down throughout their school day and even at home (see Appendix M). The textbook introduces appropriate content, as well as situations and context in this example because the content actions are performed throughout their daily life, especially at school. The proficiency level is in line with previous texts in the series and becomes progressively more advanced. Moreover, the proficiency level moves from a beginner's text where more imitation is necessary to become familiar with English, to an intermediate level where actual conversations occur between students about real life events. For example, when looking at language and word lists from Units 2 and 3, there is the presentation of more questions ranging from basic Yes/No questions, Wh-questions, on to questions involving ability and likes where students can converse with each other about their personal tastes and their habits. The level of proficiency is more advanced, but suitable for eight-year-old children who enjoy sharing their viewpoints on a variety of topics and want to express their independence.

Quality of Practice Materials. The students' book focuses on listening, reading, and speaking language skills, while the activity book focuses more on writing skills. The activities aim to develop and practice students' literacy skills. The first two units have reviews of the mechanics of handwriting to consolidate proper formation of letters (both lowercase and uppercase) and further develop early writing, spelling, and word-recognition skills. In subsequent units, there is progressive practice and development of reading and writing skills focusing on letter/sound combinations, spelling of high-frequency words, word order and putting words together to make sentences and short paragraphs. The materials use a variety of child-centered and communicative activities to make sure that learning is fun and meaningful. The activities vary from controlled to free techniques. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> *Primary* consist of only controlled and semi-controlled

techniques. However, the *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* has free activities such as role play and simulation activities. An example for free activities can be seen in Unit 8 Lesson 4, where teachers put students in pairs and let them read and follow the model provided in the earlier activity to talk about themselves and their family. This activity is considered free since it is a simulation activity which is “involving complex interaction between groups and individuals based on simulation of real-life actions and experiences.” (Brown 186). Each lesson includes a variety of interaction patterns and supports individual work, pair work and group work such as action songs and rhymes, stories, information gaps, surveys, Total Physical Response, role plays, crafts, guessing games, board games, moving games, matching games, and information transfer. According to Brown “children (up to the age of about 11) are focused on the here and now, activities should be designed to capture their immediate interest” (103). Therefore, the teacher should prepare for an active class “with physical activity, such as having students act out things (role-play), play games, or do Total Physical Response activities” (Brown 103). Moreover, CLT emphasizes pair and group work because collaboration has several benefits for learners as Richards states that “they can learn from hearing the language used by other members of the group, they will produce a greater amount of language than they would use in teacher-fronted activities, their motivational level is likely to increase, and they will have the chance to develop fluency” (“Communicative Language Teaching Today” 20). Therefore, most of the *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* lessons often require instructors to organize their class into teams, small groups, or pairs.

The instructions in the activity and students’ books are clear for both the teacher and students. The language that is used in the book is functional and the grammar is implicit. In other words, there is no focus on abstract grammatical rules and patterns. For example, in Unit 3 Lesson 6, students are being taught the simple present through meaningful conversation reading.



Here students are being taught about a daily routine. Teachers in this lesson ask the students to get in a group and point to a picture and get a group to tell you what Sami is doing his during afternoon such as “I eat lunch,” “I watch TV,” “I help dad,” “I clean my room,” “I play games,” and “I draw pictures.” Then, the teacher will play the track and ask students to listen and track the words with their fingers. Next, the teacher should ask students to read each phrase again. After that, the students work individually to write what they do in the morning, afternoon, and at night by copying the activities onto their paper (see Appendix N). Thus, in the above example, the students are learning about simple present through listening, reading, and writing activities, but the teacher does not explain grammar using the term “simple present.” The children at this stage call “concrete operations.” Therefore, “they cannot grasp the metalanguage we (adults) use to describe and explain linguistic concepts” (Brown 102). After every three units, there is a unit to revise the materials that are covered in the previous ones. Thus, Unit 4 and Unit 8 are the two revision units. Moreover, 3<sup>rd</sup> Primary includes some activities that are motivating and simulating. For example, students have to create four words from the letters in the circle and spell them on page 34 in the activity book (see Appendix O). Another example of a stimulating activity can be found in Unit 6 Lesson 3. During this activity, the teacher should put students in small groups of 4 and get them to write the names of the four children in their group in the first column. The students should ask each other, “*How do you go to school?*” to the four other students. They should listen to the answers and tick the appropriate columns. When the teacher finishes, the teacher has the students read their charts and explain how their friends go to school. The teacher should model the proper question by asking “*How does /Mohamed/ go to school?*” The teacher needs to encourage the students to reply in full sentences. For example, “*He goes to school by bus*” (see Appendix P).

Sequencing. The book does not follow an apparent sequence until an evaluator looks at the first two texts from the series. It can be said that the authors chose a variety of topics that are interesting for eight-year-olds and put them together in a progressively harder grammatical context with expanding vocabulary.

Vocabulary. The 3<sup>rd</sup> *Primary* introduces more language and more useful vocabulary. Children learn key content words that are suggested by the lesson topic. They also learn grammatical words such as prepositions, pronouns and question words in formulaic chunks. It can be noted that there are some vocabulary words that are recycled across the different units, which is good because the students need to see words several times in different contexts in order to establish their meaning and to remember them. It can be seen that the vocabulary words that are introduced in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are more advanced than the ones that are introduced in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> *Primary*. The modeling of the vocabulary words in sentences and supporting them with pictures to enhance the learning process is excellent. Most of the vocabulary words that are used in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are considered authentic because they enhance most actions that eight-year-old students may do in their daily lives. For example, in Unit 3 Lesson 5, “My Day” each vocabulary word is inserted into a meaningful sentence with a picture to illustrate the vocabulary meaning (see appendix Q1). However, it looks like there are many vocabulary words in this book. For instance, in Unit 3 Lesson 6, students have to learn daily routines that Sami does during the afternoon such as “I eat lunch,” “I watch TV,” “I help dad,” “I clean my room,” “I play games,” and “I draw pictures” (see Appendix P). They also have to learn what Reem does before she goes to sleep, such as “I brush my teeth,” “I wash my face,” “I brush my hair,” and “I go to sleep” (see Appendix Q2). Thus, it seems like there are many vocabulary words to study during one class.

Format. The overall format and typesetting is clear. As in *1<sup>st</sup>* and *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary*, the book started with a picture of the main characters. Then, it is followed by the Icon key and the book map pages. The book map provides a summary of the aims of each unit and key language and vocabulary. However, the *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* book map is more extensive in its content, grammar, and vocabulary and the text is more organized to progress from simple grammatical structures to more advanced grammatical structures. This is evident when looking at the unit overviews and that now spelling has become part of the objectives. There is more information than the *1<sup>st</sup>* and *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* book maps. The general layout is not busy since the unit does not follow a theme, lessons have headings such as “My Town,” which is the heading in Lesson 1 Unit 6, while the third lesson in the same unit has the heading “Let’s Go.” Overall, the general format for the book is clear.

Accompanying Materials. *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* provides useful supplementary materials such as a Teacher’s Guide, activity book, mini pictures, flash cards, posters, audio, and video. The visual aids such as the picture/word cards and displays are an integral part of the course and are used in many lessons. There are a number of activities in the course during which students will produce work that can be displayed in class. The displays enhance the student language learning because it can be a useful reminder of vocabulary and language and it makes the classroom a brighter and more attractive setting in which to learn. The audio provides a rich variety of recorder materials such as songs, dialogues, stories, rhymes, instructions and descriptions. The songs and stories are intended to be a fun way in which students can familiarize themselves with the language. The audio is considered a model for students since it gives students an opportunity to listen to the natural stress and rhythm of English. The audio program provides an accurate model for speaking activities and gives both children and teachers a reference for pronunciation. The

recordings also form an essential part of the reading development; students acquire an understanding of the relationships between sounds and symbols as they listen and follow the text in their books. Audio-visual material helps children learn as Brown states that “audiovisual aids like videos, picture, tapes, music—all are important elements in children’s language teaching” (103).

Teacher’s Guide. Moreover, the Teacher’s Guide is a very useful source for the teacher because it includes some general advice on how to teach children this course at this age. Moreover, it includes warm- up activities, lesson notes, listening scripts, additional activities (extension and support), homework ideas and language games. As with the *1<sup>st</sup>* and *2<sup>nd</sup>* *Primary*, the introduction and the first unit is written in both Arabic and English as opposed to later units which are only written in English. At the back of the Teacher’s Guide, there are audio transcripts, a list of picture/word cards and space for teachers to write their own personal notes. Hence, the Teacher’s Guide can be considered suitable for non-native English speaking teachers. Most of the criteria scored 4 (good), while one criteria — the quality of practice materials and format — scored 5 (fair). It can be noted from Table 11, that the total score for the criteria of the textbooks is 41. Therefore, the book can be considered good. (See Table 11).

To conclude, the average score for all three textbooks from *English for Iraq* series is 39.3. The lowest score was 36 (*1<sup>st</sup> Primary*) and the highest score was 41 (*2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* and *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary*). See the table below to see results across the Robinett categories. The main reasons for *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* to have a higher score are the richness of vocabulary, topics kept a central theme, and the amount of semi-controlled activities and the reading and writing activities. The main reason for *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* to have a high score is the quality of practice materials since the speaking activities range from controlled to free. This is unlike *1<sup>st</sup>* and *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* because these texts

only had controlled and semi-controlled speaking activities. The main reason for *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* to have the lowest score is the lack of authentic vocabulary, unclear sequencing, and the lack of speaking activities that were even semi-controlled.

Table 11: Evaluation of *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* Textbook

Categories	Excellent (Score 5)	Good (Score 4)	Fair (Score 3)	Bad (Score 2)	Very Bad (Score 1)
Goals of the course		4			
Background of the students		4			
Language skills		4			
General content		4			
Quality of practice materials	5				
Sequencing		4			
Vocabulary		4			
Format		4			
Accompanying materials		4			
Teacher's Guide		4			
Total score	41				

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a detailed analysis for the research results that are presented in chapter 4, and will attempt to answer the research questions and provide some suggestions and solutions. This study was conducted to explore the new EFL education policy and practice that has been applied in the Iraqi schools since 2014. The research questions that were directed toward the study are:

1. What are the positive and the negative aspects of the new education policy for elementary EFL in Iraq, especially in terms of school equipment and materials, age grading, and new methodology.
2. Is the teachers' training that is sponsored by the Iraqi Ministry of Education as part of the new educational policy effective in developing teachers' skills in using the new textbook?
3. How effective is *English for Iraq* as an EFL textbook regarding its format and contents, students' goals and needs, and teachers' ability to use it?

The data analysis was divided into three parts: the survey, the interview, and the textbook evaluations. Firstly, the survey questions were collected from 50 teachers who use *English for Iraq* in their teaching. The survey contains 24 questions concerning the new education policy in terms of school equipment and materials, age grading, textbooks, and methodology. Secondly, interviews with two Beirut-trained teachers who teach in public elementary schools and use *English for Iraq* in their teaching were conducted. The interview consisted of 10 questions that investigated the effectiveness of the training program in developing teachers' skills in using the new textbook. Finally, the research evaluation examined the effectiveness of *English for Iraq* as an EFL text. The researcher's evaluation for the textbooks was based on both qualitative and

quantitative analysis and utilized a Robinett checklist. The researcher will attempt to answer the research questions by integrating all collected data.

The first research question addressed what are the positive and the negative aspects of the new education policy for elementary EFL in Iraq, especially in terms of school equipment and materials, age grading, and new methodology. The new education policy includes many rules and this study shows that the positive aspects of the new language education policy are as follows:

- Introducing English as a compulsory subject in the first grade of all elementary schools.
- The hours set by the Ministry of Education to teach English in elementary schools is sufficient.
- Using the communicative language teaching approach in the new series *English for Iraq*.

On the other hand, the negative aspects are as follows:

- Schools do not have the resources to utilize the activities of the textbook, such as tape recorders for listening drills and projection screens for displaying content.
- There is no document that states the new language education policy clearly.

An important finding from survey question 8 is that most teachers (66%) found that the audio-visual activities in the textbooks are effective in facilitating both instructor teaching and student learning. However, schools do not have the resources to utilize the activities of the textbook, such as tape recorders for listening drills and projection screens for displaying content. Therefore, when teachers were asked if they use the textbooks' audio-visual activities inside classrooms, 23 said that they do not use them, while 21 said that they do use them. The reason behind this answer is that some schools have recorders, but they do not have projectors. Another reason for this result is that some teachers are buying the audio recorders with their own money. One teacher commented that he bought the MP3 from his own money, but he cannot afford to buy

the screen projector. However, when teachers have been asked whether they are using the CD that is provided with the book to tell stories in class, most teachers (72%) stated that they do not use it. The reason behind this answer is that most schools do not have computers and/or screen projectors to play stories. In their book "Video in Action: Recipes for Using Video in Language Teaching," Stempleski and Tomalin (1990) argued that using moving pictures can be considered an essential addition to the teacher's resources and they also stated some advantages of using video inside language teaching classrooms. First, video motivates student learning because it introduces language in an attractive way through combining moving pictures with sound in an understandable way. Second, it helps students to communicate better in the target language. Finally, it allows students to understand non-verbal language by just looking at the facial expressions and body language while listening to the stress, intonation, and rhythm of the language (qtd. in Abunowara 10).

Using technology in the classroom becomes important to present authentic materials in an understandable way. As shown in the literature review according to a UNESCO survey, Iraqi schools need to have at least "7,000 science laboratories, 3,000 computer laboratories, 3,000 language laboratories, 2,500 library rooms, and 3,000 gymnasia for physical education." This survey also indicates a requirement to have visual aids, at least "one overhead and slide projector, TV/VCR, and two heavy duty photocopiers in each location" ("Iraq, Education in Transition Needs and Challenges" 5). Though the UNESCO survey was collected in 2004, according to this research the problem still exists. Most Iraqi schools still lack equipment and materials such as furniture, computer labs, language labs, and libraries. The UNESCO survey results are confirmed by this study through the survey responses of most teachers who agree or strongly agree to questions 9 and 20 that their schools do not have the needed resources to play the textbook audio-visual



activities. Moreover, when teachers were asked “what is your recommendation to improve the textbooks *English for Iraq*,” almost half of the respondents (44%) stated that schools need to be provided with supplementary materials such as flash cards, posters, tape recorders, and screen projectors (see figure 1). Additionally, some teachers (13%) expressed their desire for language labs that contain all the required supplementary materials. Several instructors acknowledged that the lack of facilities have caused difficulty in implementing CLT in the classroom. Lack of resources can be the cause of inattentiveness from students due to the necessity of visual aids to give sufficient context. Moreover, when resources are lacking, it can cause disruptions in lesson planning and reduce the quality of teaching according to the author of the study in Lao (Vongxay 2). To conclude, this study shows that there is a lack of school equipment and materials.

Regarding another aspect of the education policy, age grading, the survey results of question 2, 3, 4, and 21 reveal that most teachers (48%) do not think that introducing English at the age of 6 causes interference with their native language learning, while 22% of them were neutral, and another 30% think that it affects their students’ native language. This result agrees with the opinion of many scholars who think that “the earlier the better” as Torras, Tragant and García have stated “The younger they are, the more they are like sponges, the more they absorb, the more they retain.” (142). Moreover, there are many studies that suggest that children who learn English at early ages are better than the learners who learn the language as adults, in both the pronunciation skills (Asher and Garcia 1969, Munro, Flege and Mackay 1996, Oyama 1976, Tahta, Wood and Loewenthal 1981) and syntax (Harley 1986, Harley and Hart 1997, Johnson and Newport 1989, 1991, Patkowski 1980, Schachter 1990) (Torras M.R., E. Tragant and M.L. García 104). The repeated results of various cited studies strengthen the theory that “younger is better.”

Thus, it can be said that introducing English from the first grade is a positive aspect about the new Iraqi language education policy.

In addition, when teachers were asked if it is better to teach children to read and write in their first language before teaching them how to read and write in another language, most teachers (42%) did not agree with the statement while other teachers selected agree and strongly agree (30%) with the statement. However, a high percentage of teachers have a neutral viewpoint (28%). It is evident from these responses that most teachers do not mind children learning the English language while learning Arabic. Regarding these results, there are studies that have found that learning a foreign or second language may help to raise the intelligence of some students and may enhance first language learning. A research study on bilingual development shows that children who know L2, develop metalinguistic awareness better than children who know just one language (Bialystok 150). Another study shows that children who learn Italian as their foreign language can read English better than the children who do not learn it (Yelland et al. 441). Thus, previous research supports the overwhelming positive response from the survey about introducing English to Iraqi children in first grade. To conclude, the results and comparable findings show that teaching English from first grade does not confuse students and does not have negative effects on their mother language literacy skills.

Another positive aspect about the new language education is the hours that are specified to teach English. In the elementary schools, there are two 40-minute sessions a week. According to the survey results, most teachers (42%) feel that the Ministry's allotted hours to teach English in schools are sufficient while 34% of teachers think that the time is insufficient, and 24% opt for neutral. Though most teachers state that the scheduled time is sufficient, a high number state that

the hours are insufficient. Therefore, due to the high percentage of negative responses (34%), there is a necessity to do further studies to find a more concrete answer for this aspect of the policy.

Another positive aspect of the Iraqi language education policy is the teaching methodology. As is mentioned in the literature review, the new series *English for Iraq* uses the CLT approach. Based on survey responses, most respondents (84%) found that using the CLT approach is useful in teaching English. The findings on CLT help to establish this methodology as the premiere approach that enhances the ability to learn English. CLT has a significant impact on creating authentic communication for students, as it helps them to develop a better communicative skill (Tasi 2007). With that skill students have a better chance to get higher-paying job opportunities or to continue their studies abroad (Liao 11). A number of researchers consider CLT as the foremost language teaching methodology that will help learners significantly improve their communicative skill (Laio 2000; Savignon 2002; Ying 2010). In summary, one can say that this paper is in line with studies that encourage the CLT approach. It shows that *English for Iraq* emphasizes learning English through interaction and meaningful communication such as task-completion activities (games, puzzles), and other activities for which the students complete tasks in the target language and improve language retention. To conclude, CLT is fundamental to the success of the *English for Iraq* series.

Before addressing further survey question findings, additional outcomes concerning CLT need to be discussed. First, findings from interviews pointed out that most Iraqi teachers have a beginner/intermediate level of proficiency in English. As a result, the teachers' lack of fluency becomes a hindrance to CLT. Instructors with a low-level of English proficiency have difficulty in adopting CLT in EFL classrooms effectively (G. Ellis 215). Moreover, a lack of resources also hinder student language acquisition. In addition, Karim states that a lack of belief in the ability of

a teacher can also contribute to the ineffectiveness of implementing CLT in an EFL classroom (64). In a study of Chinese teachers it was found that teachers with a limited level of English were unable to alter teaching methods, and CLT requires teachers to have a high level of English in order to improvise inside the classroom, whether adjusting the lesson from a textual perspective or changing a teaching technique to better enhance student-centeredness (Penner 3). Overall, CLT adoption can be hampered by the inadequate language proficiency of the teaching staff; however, this can be remedied through additional teacher training and increased exposure to English through multimedia to improve fluency.

Next, another difficulty faced by Iraqi English teachers that affects the effectiveness of CLT is the large number of students in the classroom. Class sizes on average range from 40-90 students which can completely eliminate the effectiveness of CLT adoption. Both Teacher A and Teacher B referred to class size as a problem that prevented them from implementing skills acquired in the training program, specifically in their ability to conduct group work and allow students to role play. According to Karim ill-equipped classrooms or lack of ability to change the classroom setting prevent full implementation of CLT activities like role-play and group work (83). Moreover, classroom discipline becomes nearly impossible when confronted with a large class size and can be described as "out of control" (Qiang and Ning 2). In addition, large class size gives students few opportunities to speak and be observed and evaluated by their instructor. Moreover, lack of individual attention, physical constraints, and disciplinary issues can be added to the list of obstacles to implementing CLT effectively in an EFL classroom (Hayes 109). Large class sizes can further make implementation of CLT difficult, especially for inexperienced teachers. In fact, according to (Kennedy & Kennedy, 1996; Hayes, 1997; Harmer, 2000; Ying, 2010), teachers considered it nearly impossible to perform close monitoring in large classrooms

which are crucial in CLT activities (Vongxey 20). Teachers A and B had difficulty paying attention to students' pronunciation and could not offer corrective measures to assist students in improving their language nor could they closely observe students in group work.

Another negative aspect of the new language education policy is that there is no clear document that states the policy. It is difficult to get an accurate picture of the language education policy since all the information comes from separate government documents. Moreover, these documents may be with the school's principal and sometimes the principal files this information without telling teachers about it. Thus, most teachers do not know the terms of the new policy. This can explain the survey results for both question 18 and 19. Question 18 asks if the Ministry of Education allocates some money for teachers to buy supplementary teaching materials such as printing visual aids and posters. About 30% of teachers agree and strongly agree while, 64% disagree or strongly disagree agree. Teachers should not have different answers for this question since it asks about a term stated in the policy of the Ministry of Education; therefore, all teachers should have the same answer. Thus, it is conclusive from their answers to this question that teachers do not have a clear picture about the new policy. When teachers answer question 19 concerning whether teachers are allowed to use outside material that are not approved officially by the Ministry of Education, teachers have different answers. About 64% said that they are allowed while 24% of teachers stated that they are not allowed to use unapproved materials. Thus, it is evident that these questions asked about very basic information from the language education policy are not clear to many teachers. The result is not conclusive because teachers had different answers for these questions. Thus, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education implement a training system that includes comprehensive distribution of important policies in both physical and

electronic form that are accessible to administrators and instructors that clearly state all the terms of the new language education policy.

The second research question is aimed at examining the effectiveness of the training program sponsored by the Iraqi Ministry of Education to develop teachers' skills in using the series *English for Iraq*. To examine the effectiveness of the Beirut training program, two teachers were interviewed. The results of these interviews show that both teachers A and B found the training program valuable and practical. They stated that they learned how to apply new methods and new techniques for using the new textbooks. They also stated that they became more skilled in using *English for Iraq* and have more knowledge of how to apply CLT. Moreover, they noticed progress in their students' level and grades. It can be concluded that the result of these interviews were in line with the Ministry of Education survey which states that 90% of the trainees found the training program effective to them (Abd). However, they found the length of the training program excessively short and intensive, and was not sufficient to train teachers in CLT. As teacher A stated "The training refreshed my memory about the CLT approach but I think it was not enough since the training time was short. Therefore, the trainers tried to compress it all together and go quickly. In my opinion, I think we need more CLT training." Moreover, when a teacher was asked how to teach grammar, he stated that he teaches grammar rules explicitly to his students versus inductively per CLT guidelines. That shows that the teacher needs more training with CLT. According to Karim, while university-level EFL teachers often utilize grammar explanation, since communicative language teaching does not restrict teachers from teaching grammar (Karim 78), it is not recommended to teach grammar with young learners due to the limitation of their cognitive development (Brown 102). Moreover, grammar should be taught "only to facilitate students' "meaningful use of English, not to hinder the communicative flow of the class (Karim 78). Thus,

further training is the best remedy for primary school teachers in order to facilitate ease of communication in their classrooms.

In addition, teachers were not able to apply the multitude of techniques and methods that they learned in the training program due to the high number of students in each class, the lack of access to supplementary teaching materials, and the lack of audio and visual equipment. Teacher B also added that each school has to have at least one language lab that has all the equipment that teachers may need to teach and use the new textbook *English for Iraq*. His request is in line with other teachers' recommendations to have a language lab, and also in line with the request of some teachers who participated in the Beirut program such as trainee Saba Abbas who suggested "that the Ministry of Education should provide our schools with language labs and technology to make the teaching process easier for both students and teachers" (Abd). Moreover, 19% of respondents to the final open-ended question in this study commented on the absence of language labs which further indicates the need to improve the teaching resources by providing language labs at schools.

Moreover, the survey results of question 14 show that not all teachers received training to use the new textbooks *English of Iraq*. Almost half of the teachers (46%) did not receive the training while 42% of them received it. However, when teachers were asked if the training was helpful, 40% of teachers chose "disagree" and "strongly disagree," while, 32% opted for "strongly agree" and "agree," and 28% chose "neutral." Generally speaking, the result shows that while the selected group of teachers that attended the training program in Beirut were required to train teachers when they returned to Iraq, there were mixed results of these domestic trainings. That affected the expected result of the training because the trained teachers were not able to apply the techniques they had learned in Beirut efficiently. Moreover, there was a lack of technology such as visual aids to enhance the training program and make the application of the materials more

practical. As one of the Beirut-trained teachers pointed out, she couldn't be as effective in her training session since there was a lack of visual aids and technology that could help the training session be more productive (see interview with teacher B). For instance, there were several tutorial videos that were supposed to be presented during the training, but she was unable to show the videos due to a lack of tools such as a projector, computer, or even a TV in her class. Therefore, it is evident from the interview and the survey's results that the training program that was provided in Beirut was successful, but the trainings that were provided in Iraq were not as effective, especially since there was a lack of equipment and technology in the Iraqi classrooms. To conclude, lack of resources made the training program a challenge as well as having trainers who lacked experience in teacher training.

Despite the efforts of the Ministry to provide training for the teaching staff, 40% of teachers didn't receive any specific training. Moreover, 42% of those who received training considered it ineffective. In fact, a lack of CLT training is a major setback toward the successful implementation of CLT and more importantly, CLT training requires in-service training programs which could improve the strength of teacher methodology (Li, 1998; Karim, 2004). This can explain why Teacher B had difficulties implementing the training received due to a lack of on-going training and training that seemed to be over compressed. Gamal and Debra stated that the lack of training can result in a barrier to the successful managing of an EFL classroom using CLT activities (qtd. in Vongxey 23). In conclusion, training has to be conducted on various levels, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally to increase the familiarity and reinforcement of key principles of CLT.

The third question is intended to examine the effectiveness of *English for Iraq* as an EFL text regarding its format and contents, students' goals and needs, and teachers' ability to use it. As



mentioned in the literature review, the textbooks, teachers' syllabus and lesson plans are set up by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the textbooks that the Ministry of Education selects are playing an important role for teachers who use textbooks and teacher's guides daily. As a result, English textbook evaluation is important in Iraq for the validation of textbooks used in the process of English learning. Since, *English for Iraq* was issued and adopted recently, urgent evaluation was needed. The evaluation was divided into two sections: the survey questions analysis and the researcher textbook analysis. The survey responses reveal positive opinion about the textbooks. Teachers' ratings are positive for questions 1, 16, 6, 11, 13, 23, 12 (see Table 3). The teachers' answers show that most teachers (76%) found *English for Iraq* an effective textbook to teach English. Additionally, about 52% of the teachers think that *English for Iraq* is the best textbook they have used based on their teaching experience. In the survey, there were a couple of questions that were asked about the textbook content in vocabulary, cultural representation, and visual aids. When the teachers were asked if they thought that the vocabulary chosen in the textbook is relevant to students ages and levels, 6 teachers (12.00%) opted for strongly agree, and 22 teachers (44.00%) selected agree, while 4 teachers (8%) chose disagree, and 7 teachers (14%) opted for strongly disagree. This shows that most teachers believe that the vocabulary chosen in *English for Iraq* is relevant to students at this age and level. The survey result also indicates that teachers (42%) think that the Iraqi culture is well represented in the content of *English for Iraq*. Moreover, a high percentage of teachers (80%) consider the textbook visual aids as useful in introducing and revising the meaning of vocabulary words. In addition, most teachers (78%) agreed that the instructions in the Teacher's Guide are useful and they do follow them. The teachers also agreed that the textbook is a useful guide for non-native teachers of English. 70% of teachers strongly agree or agree with this notion. Conclusively, teachers have expressed their ability to use the

textbooks and the Teacher's Guide in their daily classroom usage which is an indication of the effectiveness of the series to teach English.

However, when teachers were asked about their recommendations to improve the textbooks, *English for Iraq*, (see Figure 1) about 18% of the respondents had concerns about letter recognition. About 25% of respondents showed that they prefer their students to learn the alphabet before learning vocabulary while 19% of teachers believe that it is impossible to follow the lesson plans that exist in the Teacher's Guide. 19% of the teacher respondents suggest that the textbooks should be more suitable for the students' ages and levels. Another 19% of teachers' respondents suggested reducing vocabulary words in the textbooks. The research analysis is in line with the survey responses. The research found that the *English for Iraq* series are effective and suitable for the students' age and level. However, there were some comments that are similar to what teachers suggested in the open-ended questions. First, the vocabulary in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade was suitable for the students' age and level, but vocabulary of the third grade book is too extensive. Second, the lesson plans in the Teacher's Guides are long and teachers cannot follow them since the class period is only 40 minutes. While, *English for Iraq* is easy to use and teach, there are still areas that can be improved. As Grant stated that there is no perfect book (8). The survey results and the researcher analysis clearly indicate that the textbook series *English for Iraq* are effective books regarding their vocabulary, culture, visual content, and ability to motivate students to learn and use English (question 23). However, some teachers made some recommendations to improve the textbooks such as providing the textbooks' supplementary material, increasing the number of letter recognition activities before introducing vocabulary, extending the class period to fit the lesson plan, improving the suitability of textbooks for the students' ages and levels, and providing language labs.

In conclusion, this study has provided empirical evidence that supports the introduction of English language teaching to young learners in Iraq. Moreover, it provides supporting evidence for the effectiveness of the textbooks series *English for Iraq*, and supports the use of it in the Ministry of Educations' curriculum. The study also found evidence for the need for training sessions to improve the ability of the teaching staff to effectively teach Iraqi students. While ESL programs have been introduced in various countries across the globe, Iraq needs proven methods and effective texts to enhance the ability of Iraqi students to compete and succeed internationally. The findings of this study provide evidence that the Iraqi government needs to focus on improving the infrastructure of the country to support this important education policy. Without supporting facilities, this language policy has a decreased chance to actually make a difference. Moreover, teacher training facilities and/or programs need to be improved in order to handle the demand of these dedicated professionals who wish to serve their clients, the future of Iraq. In addition, there is a need to do teacher observations and to give critical feedback to teachers in order to improve the series *English for Iraq*.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

The Iraqi Ministry of Education adopted a new language education policy which states that English is a compulsory subject that has been introduced from the first grade for all elementary schools with the new series of textbooks *English for Iraq* utilized as part of the curriculum and the adoption of CLT as the teaching methodology. Moreover, the Ministry of Education arranged training programs in Erbil and Beirut to prepare teachers to teach the new textbooks by using the new methodology. However, without assessing the quality of training and materials, the Ministry cannot verify the effectiveness of this new policy. Therefore, the primary objective of this study was to investigate the positive and negative aspects of the new Iraqi education policy. The second aim of the study was to examine the effectiveness of teacher training that is sponsored by the Iraqi Ministry of Education in developing teacher skills in using the new textbook. The third aim was to examine the effectiveness of *English for Iraq* as an EFL textbook regarding its format and contents, students' goals and needs, and teachers' ability to use it. Fifty-two primary school English teachers who work for the Iraqi Ministry of Education in public schools participated in this study. Multiple instruments such as a survey, interviews and researcher evaluations were used to collect data.

A major finding from this research was that the lack of technology and supplementary materials in the Iraqi schools affects many aspects in the language education system in Iraq. This study showed that teachers cannot apply many of the book activities and teaching techniques due to the lack of technology and visual aids. Moreover, the interviewed teachers stated that the lack of facilities have caused difficulty in implementing CLT in the classroom. The lack of technology

and the supplementary materials also affect the quality of the training programs that were held in Iraq. Teacher B acknowledged that she could not play the educational videos due to the lack of the technology in her class which affected the quality of training.

The interviewed teachers also identified large class size as one of the problems that prevented them from practicing and adopting CLT activities in their class. They also added that it is very difficult to manage activities such as group work, pair work, and games in large classes and this problem prevented them from implementing skills acquired in the training program. Moreover, the study has identified some of the positive aspects in the language education policy such as: age grading, the hours that are set by the ministry for English classes, and the adoption of CLT. However, the study also identified some negative aspects of the policy such as: lack of materials, and no clear document stating the policy.

This study showed that teachers and the researcher evaluations found the series *English for Iraq* to be effective EFL textbooks for young learners. However, both the researcher evaluations and teachers found the vocabulary for the *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* to be too extensive and that it needed to be limited. Another finding about the textbooks is that the *1<sup>st</sup> Primary* vocabulary is introduced before students have completely learned the alphabet. Moreover, vocabulary from the *1<sup>st</sup>* and *3<sup>rd</sup> Primary* books are often not related to the unit topic. However, the *2<sup>nd</sup> Primary* book was the best textbook in terms of vocabulary being effective and contextually relevant. In summary, both the researcher and the teachers found the series to be effective EFL textbooks that enhance English language learning. Further research could examine the textbooks by adopting a different textbook evaluation checklist.

The study also found from the interviews and the survey results that the training program that was provided in Beirut was effective and helped teachers to develop their teaching skills and

use CLT in their teaching. However, the program was compressed and intensive and teachers felt that they needed more input and ability to practice since the CLT approach was new to them. Conversely, the trainings that were provided in Iraq were not effective due to the lack of visual-aids, technology and the trainers' lack of teacher training experience. It is important that proper teacher training is conducted to increase the general knowledge of the CLT approach. Moreover, the study showed that almost half of the surveyed teachers did not have any training to use the new textbooks. Thus, urgent training is needed for these teachers since the lack of CLT training prevents these teachers from successful implementation of CLT. This finding has practical applications since the establishment of an Iraqi CLT training center could be the most cost-effective solution for the training issue. Moreover, lack of teacher training can result in a barrier to the successful managing of an EFL classroom using CLT activities (Gamal and Debra, 2001).

The most obvious limitation of this research was the sample size of the interviewed teachers. This study gains validity with a larger sample size. Moreover, in the interview some teachers did not answer the questions appropriately. Therefore, the researcher had to repeat the questions and rephrase questions to attain an effective answer. Moreover, some respondents provided short answers lacking detail. This study was further limited by the inherent limitations of the methods of gathering data. In particular, class observation should be conducted to examine how teachers teach *English for Iraq* and the quality of the instructors' CLT approaches inside classrooms. This would give the results more objectivity, since teacher skills could be recorded directly by the researcher.

Overall, the major findings of the research indicate that Iraq has developed a good curriculum for EFL, but there are two main factors preventing widespread success. First, the lack of training of teaching staff, and second, the lack of technology and other supplementary material

such as visual aids being available in classrooms. One recommendation for the Ministry of Education is to establish a CLT Language Training Center in Iraq for proper and widespread training of teaching staff throughout the country. An additional recommendation is that each school acquire a dedicated language lab to accommodate the use of supplementary materials and technology for the English teaching staff. As the country recovers, infrastructure will be developed or repaired to support the Ministry's education policy.

The researcher has the following ideas for further study:

1. Class observations could be conducted in conjunction with teacher training to examine the ability of teachers to use the textbook and the new methodology. This would give the results more objectivity, since teachers would be assessed on their adaptation of what they learned in CLT training and those findings could be recorded directly by the researcher/trainer.
2. Further studies could be conducted on the level of training received by university students in EFL CLT training. How many class hours are required by the university? Are there practical hours where these students are trained under experienced instructors in real classroom environments? Since training outside of Iraq is limited due to various obstacles that restrict travel, there needs to be an objective to provide the proper methodology training within the country in order to enhance the language learning experience.

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## APPENDIX A: Survey Questions in English.

### Language Education policy survey questions

Note: This survey is designed for educational research purpose only.

#### Teacher's information:

Gender: Female ☐ Male ☐

Age:

Year of experience:

Grade you are teaching:

---

\*Please choose the best answer for each of the following:

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The new <i>English for Iraq</i> is an effective textbook to introduce English as a second language.					
2. The hours set by the Ministry of Education to teach English in schools is sufficient.					
3. Starting teaching English from first grade can confuse students and affect their mother language literacy skills.					
4. It is better to teach children to read and write in their first language before teaching them how to read and write in another language.					
5. The materials used in teaching English should be improved to improved and incorporated alongside other activities.					

6. The Vocabulary chosen in textbook are relevant to students' ages and grade levels.					
7. The visuals are useful in introducing and revising the meaning of vocabulary words.					
8. The audio-visual activities in the textbooks are effective in facilitating both instructors teaching and students learning.					
9. My school has the resources to utilize the activities of the textbook, such as tape recorders for listening drills and projection screens for displaying content.					
10. I use the textbooks audio-visual activities inside classrooms for better learning experience, especially with speaking and listening exercises.					
11. Iraqi culture is well represented in the content of <i>English for Iraq</i> .					
12. Overall, the new textbooks are a useful guide for non-native teachers of English.					
13. Based on my teaching experience using several books for teaching English, I think that this latest version is the best one.					
14. I received training to teach the new textbooks					
15. The training was helpful in directing teachers on how to use the textbook and how to perform the required activities.					
16. I think the instructions in the teacher's guide are useful and I try to follow them as much as I can.					
17. I use my own supplementary teaching materials.					

18. The Ministry of Education allocates some of the school budget for teachers to buy supplementary teaching materials.					
19. Teachers have permission to use outside material, such as supplies that have not been approved officially by the Ministry of Education.					
20. I use the CD that is provided with the book to tell stories in class.					
21. I found using the communicative language teaching approach useful in teaching English.					
22. Students responded well to the materials in the textbooks.					
23. <i>English for Iraq</i> motivates students to learn English and use it outside the classroom.					

What are your suggestions to improve the series *English of Iraq*?

\_\_\_\_\_

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## APPENDIX A2: Survey Questions in Arabic

### English for Iraq بحث خاص عن المنهج الدراسي

#### 1. الجنس

☐ ذكر

☐ أنثى

#### 2. العمر

#### 3. عدد سنوات الخبرة

#### 4. المواد والمراحل التي تقوم بتدريسها

#### 5. ظلل الاجابه التي تجدها مناسبة لكل من الاسئلة التالية

	أوافق بشده	أوافق	محايد	لا أوافق	لا أوافق بشده
اعتقد ان المنهج الجديد والمسمى "انكلش فور اراك" فعال في طريقة تقديمه للغة الانكليزية	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
عدد الحصص المخصصه لتدريس اللغة الانكليزية يعتبر كافيا لتأهيل الطلاب للمسوى المطلوب	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
البده بتدريس اللغة الانكليزية من الصف الاول يمكن يتداخل مع تعلم اللغة العربيه وبالتالي مؤديا الى مشاكل في مهارات القراء والكتابه باللغة العربيه	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
أفضل تدريس القراءه والكتابه باللغة العربيه وترسيخها لدى الطلاب قبل البده بتدريس اللغة الانكليزية	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
يجب تطوير المناهج المستخدمه في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية ودعمها بالنشاطات واستخدام التكنولوجيا	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
تعتبر المفردات المستخدمه في المنهج مناسبه لآعمار الطلاب	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

الصور المستخدمة في الكتاب كانت مفيدة في إيضاح معنى الكلمات	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
تسهيل الفعاليات المرئية والصوتية المستخدمة في المنهج عملية التدريس والتعليم على حد سواء	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
تحتوي مدرستي على الوسائل التعليمية الضرورية لعرض الفعاليات كمختبرات اللغة والحاسبات والتسجيلات	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
تخصيصاً " اقوم باستخدام الفعاليات الصوتية والمرئية داخل الصف	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
يعتمد المنهج الثقافة العراقية بصورة عامة في محتوياته	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
يعتبر المنهج الجديد بشكل عام دليل جيد لي كمدرس لا يتكلم اللغة الانكليزية كلغة ام	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
بناءاً على خبرتي في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية، اعتقد ان المنهج الجديد هو من افضل الكتب التي استخدمت في تدريس اللغة لحد الان	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
دخلت دوره تعليميه خاصه لتدريس المنهج الجديد	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
كانت الذوره التعليميه فعاله في توجيه المعلمين على تدريس المنهج وتطبيق فعالياته	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
احاول على قدر الامكان اتباع الخطه التعليميه الموجوده في كتاب المدرس	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
استخدم وسائل ايضاح اخرى غير المنهج لتسهيل ماده للطلاب	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
تخصص وزارة التربيه والتعليم مبالغ للمعلم لشراء وسائل ايضاح من غير المنهج	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
يسمح للمعلمين باستخدام وسائل تعليميه اضافيه للمنهج من غير الحصول على رخصه من وزارة التربيه والتعليم	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
اقوم باستخدام الاقراص المدمجه المتضمنه في المنهج لعرض القصص داخل الصف	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
احد الطريقه التواصليه مفيده لتعليم اللغة الانكليزيه	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
استجاب الطلاب بشكل جيد للمنهج	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
حفظ المنهج الجديد الطلاب لتعليم اللغة الانكليزيه واستخدمها خارج الصف	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## APPENDIX B: Teachers' Interview Questions about the Training Program

### Teachers' Interview Questions

Note: This survey is designed for educational research purpose only.

#### Teacher's information:

Gender: Female ☐ Male ☐

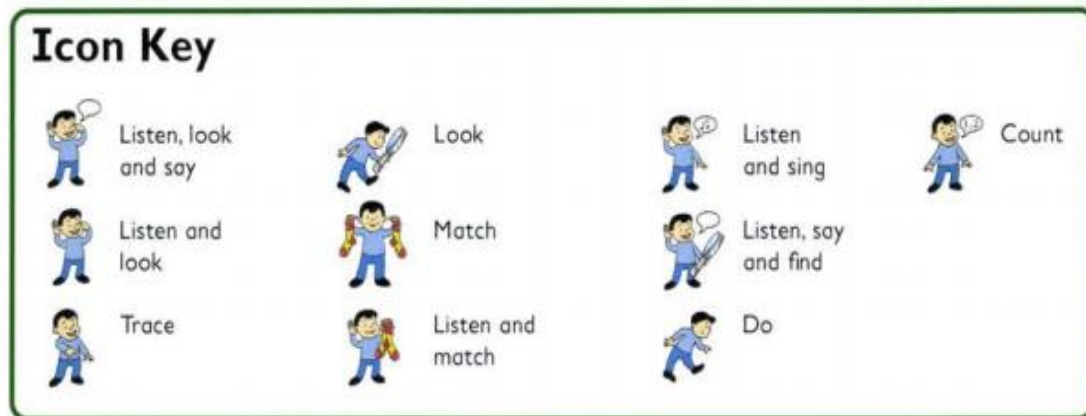
Age:

Year of experience:

Grade you are teaching:

- 1- Why did you feel that the training was worth your time?
- 2- What made the training successful?
- 3- What were the biggest strengths and the biggest weaknesses of the training?
- 4- Describe what you liked about the venue and presentation style?
- 5- Where did the Ministry of Education arrange for training to take place in Iraq? What were the results of the training? How should the training or venue be improved?
- 6- How did the training session accommodate your personal learning styles?
- 7- How effective is the Iraq training in comparison to the training offered out of country?
- 8- How have you put anything you learned from the training into use?
- 9- How have you been able to teach your new knowledge, skills, or attitudes to other teachers?
- 10- How has your teaching behavior or attitude changed?
- 11- What changes in the performance level of your students have you noticed? (i.e. their grades, their levels).
- 12- What has prevented you from applying the new methods and techniques? In other words, what resources are lacking that inhibit your teaching performance or effectiveness?
- 13- How did you improve your teaching after the training?
- 14- What things did you do differently in your teaching after the training?
- 15- Please explain why the training program was sufficient to train teachers in CLT?
- 16- Please describe how you use Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in your classroom teaching, that is, how you use CLT when you teach a new lesson, present new teaching materials, teach grammar, organize group work, let students practice and do exercise in class, assign homework outside the classroom, etc. Please describe in detail and share your stories.
- 17- What has hindered you from teaching your students to communicate in English?
- 18- What skills do you think are needed most for English teachers teaching *English for Iraq*?
- 19- What level of English proficiency do you consider your level of English? (Fluent, Advanced, Intermediate, Beginner) How would a low-level of English proficiency hinder CLT in a classroom?

**APPENDIX C: Icon Key is an Example to Improve That *1st Primary* is dependent on Listening Activities.**



APPENDIX D: Example of the Vocabulary in *1<sup>st</sup> Primary*.

**Unit 1**  
**Lesson 7**

e egg elephant

Hello. I'm Robbie.

I'm Rosie.

I'm Ahmed.

I'm Nada.

1

12

## APPENDIX E: Book Map in 1<sup>st</sup> Primary.

	Aims	Activities
<b>Unit 1: My house</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to become familiar with the rhythm and sound of English.</li> <li>• Begin to understand the left-to-right direction of written English.</li> <li>• Begin to understand simple classroom instructions given in English.</li> <li>• Begin naming and recognizing letters a-f.</li> <li>• Begin to participate in classroom activities in English.</li> <li>• Identify and name objects and identify the sounds of letters (phonic awareness).</li> <li>• Respond to greetings Hello, Goodbye and some questions.</li> <li>• Identify and name six colours.</li> <li>• Practise hand and pencil control in preparation for writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening and repeating language models.</li> <li>• Identifying sounds.</li> <li>• Joining in songs and a rhyme.</li> <li>• Matching objects and initial letters.</li> <li>• Playing language games.</li> <li>• Role playing short exchanges.</li> <li>• Colouring letters and objects.</li> <li>• Drawing lines, circles and shapes.</li> <li>• Decorating a name card.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 2: At school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become more familiar with the rhythm and sound of English and the left-to-right direction of written English.</li> <li>• Develop confidence and willingness to participate in activities.</li> <li>• Develop understanding of classroom instructions and carry them out.</li> <li>• Develop alphabet recognition and naming, and phonic awareness.</li> <li>• Identify more objects and describe their colour.</li> <li>• Make progress in pre-writing activities.</li> <li>• Understand a story.</li> <li>• Identify pictures described in short sentences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening and repeating language models.</li> <li>• Listening and identifying sounds and pictures.</li> <li>• Joining in songs, a rhyme and a picture story.</li> <li>• Role playing a short conversation.</li> <li>• Playing language games.</li> <li>• Matching letters to objects beginning with the letters.</li> <li>• Tracing vertical curved lines to complete letters and colouring letters.</li> <li>• Asking and answering questions about objects.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 3: My toys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make progress in imitating the rhythm and sound of English.</li> <li>• Demonstrate increasing willingness to participate in activities and to use English.</li> <li>• Carry out classroom instructions and commands.</li> <li>• Develop alphabet recognition and naming, and phonic awareness.</li> <li>• Name more objects and describe their colour.</li> <li>• Ask and answer questions about age and quantity.</li> <li>• Recognize and trace numbers 1-10.</li> <li>• Count to 10.</li> <li>• Identify pictures described in phrases and short sentences.</li> <li>• Demonstrate improved pencil control in tracing straight and curved lines and in colouring activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening and repeating language models.</li> <li>• Listening and identifying sounds and pictures.</li> <li>• Joining in songs, a rhyme and a story.</li> <li>• Colouring, drawing, counting and matching.</li> <li>• Playing language games.</li> <li>• Role playing short exchanges.</li> <li>• Asking and answering questions.</li> <li>• Tracing numbers 1-10.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 4: Revision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidence in using vocabulary and language presented.</li> <li>• Willingness to participate in classroom interaction.</li> <li>• Willingness to listen in English.</li> <li>• Understanding of classroom procedures.</li> <li>• Complete recognition and naming of the lower-case alphabet.</li> <li>• Develop phonic awareness.</li> <li>• Develop pre-writing activities by forming some letter shapes.</li> <li>• Trace numbers 1-10.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening and repeating language models.</li> <li>• Playing language games.</li> <li>• Counting objects.</li> <li>• Performing songs and rhymes.</li> <li>• Talking about a picture.</li> <li>• Matching letters and pictures to objects.</li> <li>• Colouring according to a key.</li> <li>• Tracing and copying letters.</li> </ul>



APPENDIX F: Example of Listening to a Conversation and Identifying Setting Activities.

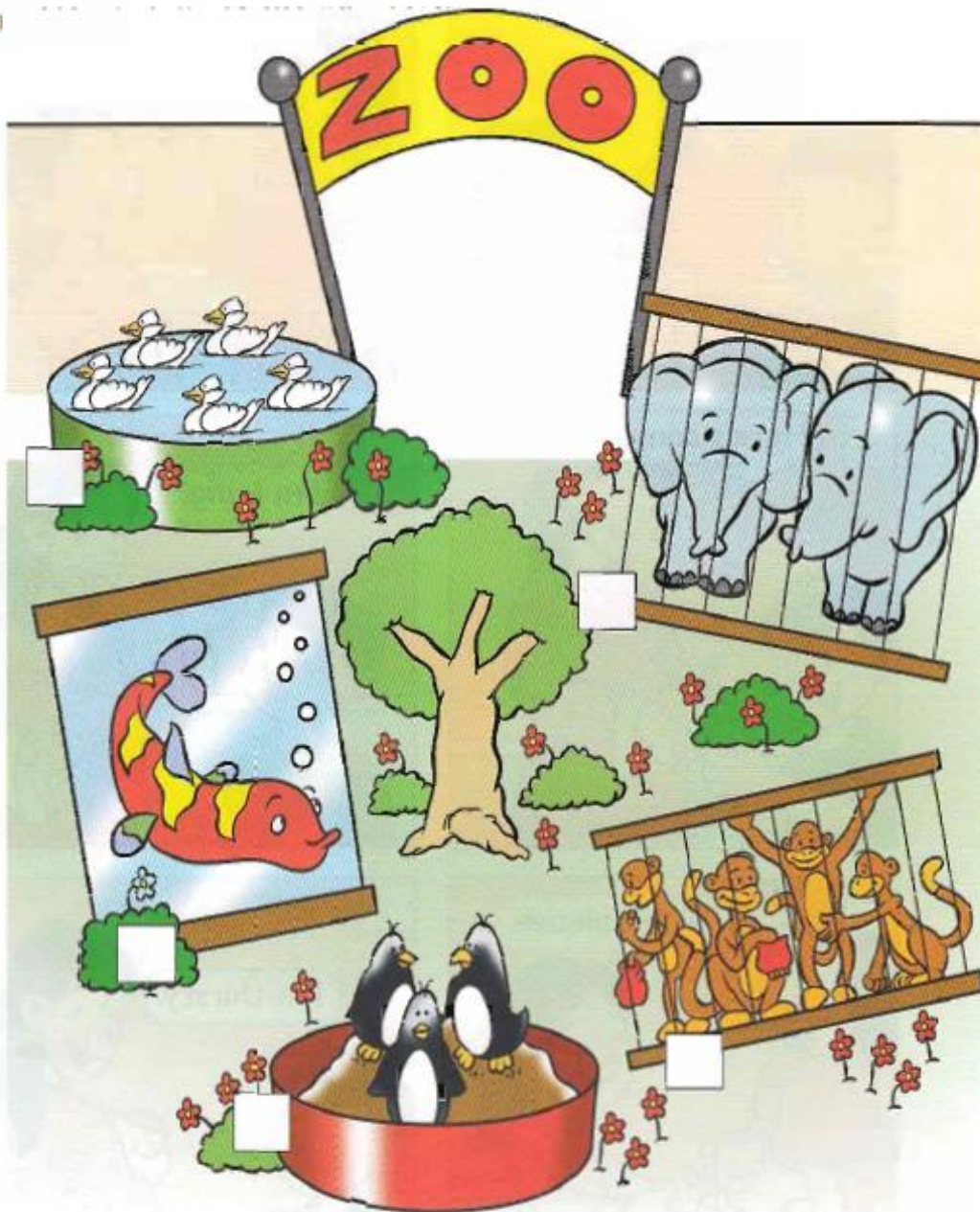
Lesson 2

## Who am I?

Revision



Listen and write the numbers.



APPENDIX G: Example of Confirm Answers Activities in 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary.

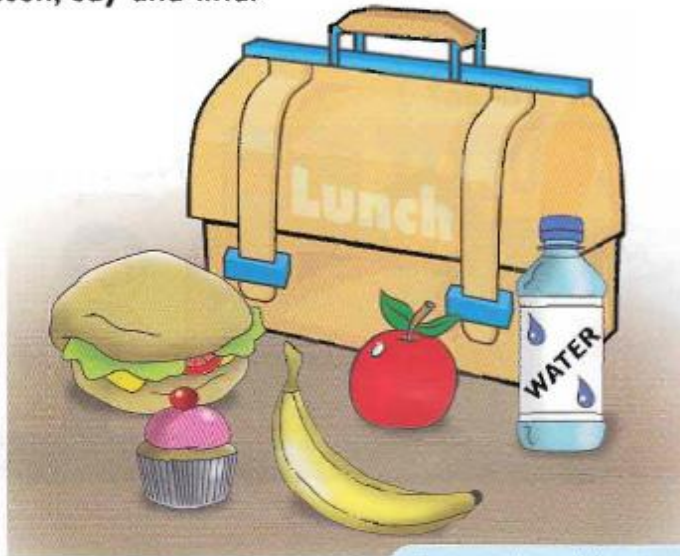
Unit  
2

Lesson 6

## My school lunch



Listen, say and find.



Listen, look  
and read.



In my lunchbox there is a sandwich, an apple and a banana, a cake and some water. Yummy!

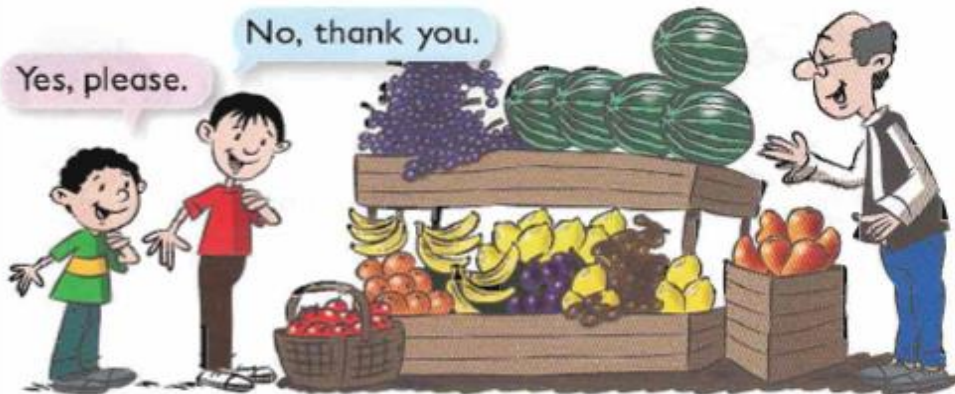


Ask and answer.

Do you want a watermelon?

No, thank you.

Yes, please.





APPENDIX H: Example of Teachers Eliciting Answer activity in 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary.

Lesson 2

## Where's the monkey?



Listen, look and say.

1



in the hat

2



on the hat

3



under the hat



Listen and match.

1



2



3



4



5



6



Read and match.



1. The balls are under the hat.
2. The ball is on the hat.
3. The balls are in the hat.
4. The balls are on the hat.

☐
☐
☐
☐

APPENDIX I: Example of Reading Activities in 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary.

**Unit**  
**5**

Lesson 5

**Layla's wearing a black skirt.**

 Listen, look and point.

 She's wearing a black skirt and a blue shirt.  
She's wearing shoes. She has a bag.

Layla!



.....

 Play a game.





42

APPENDIX J: Example of Vocabulary in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary.

Unit  
3

Lesson 3

Here's my house.



Listen and say.

Where's Deena?

In the dining room.



Where's Hadi?

In the bedroom.



Where's Kareem?

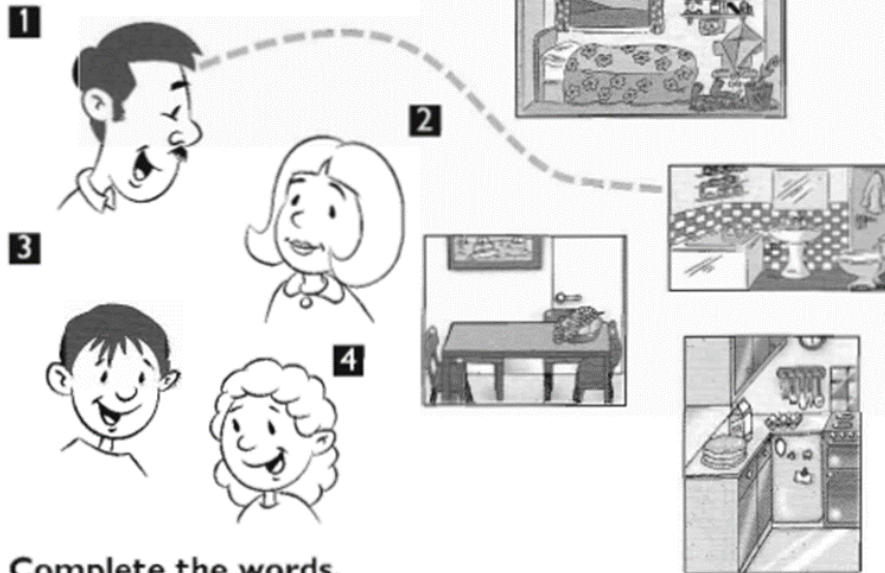
In the bathroom.



**APPENDIX K: Example of the Exercises that Enhance the Vocabulary Learning in 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary.**

**Lesson 3**

**2 Listen and match.**



**3 Complete the words.**

Is dad in the b\_\_throom?

Yes, he is.

Is mum in the d\_\_n\_\_ng room?

Yes, she is.

Is Hadi in the b\_\_droom?

No, he isn't.


Is Deena in the k\_\_tch\_\_n?







No, she isn't.



APPENDIX L: Example of tow- way (participatory) Listening Tasks.

**Unit 3** Lesson 7 **What's the time?**


 Listen, point and say.

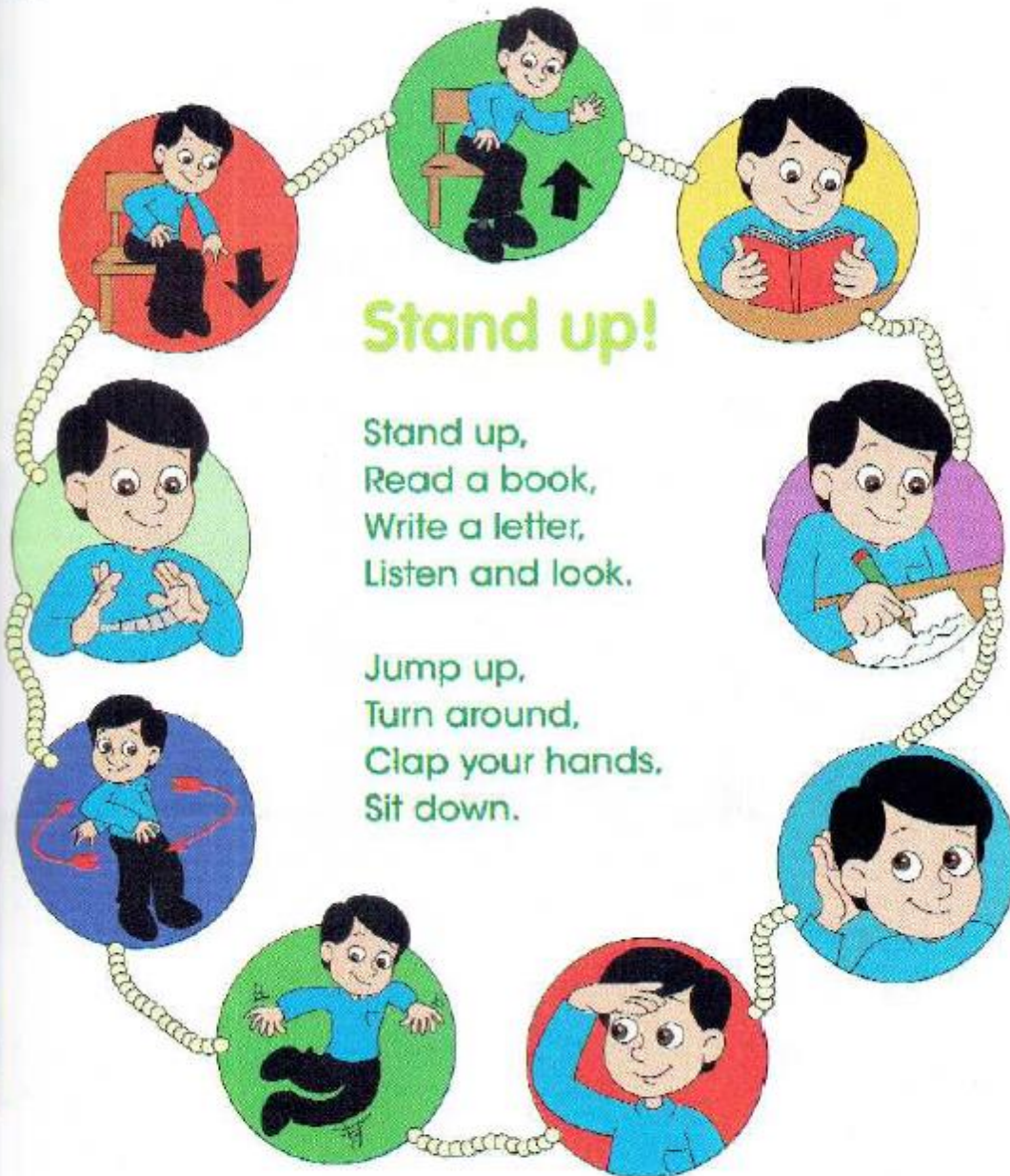
	
at 6 o'clock	at 8 o'clock
	
at 12 o'clock	at 3 o'clock
	
at 7 o'clock	at 9 o'clock

50

APPENDIX M: Example of the language that is being used in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Primary.

Lesson 2

 Listen and say the rhyme.



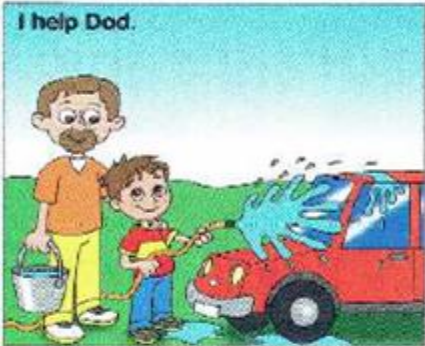

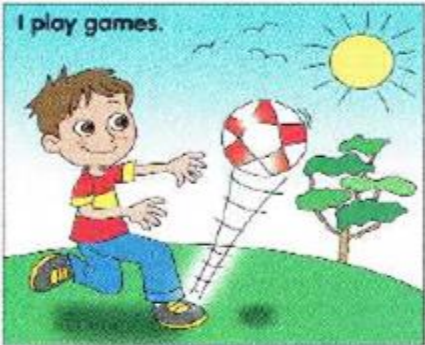





APPENDIX N: Example of Grammar and Vocabulary Teaching in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Primary.

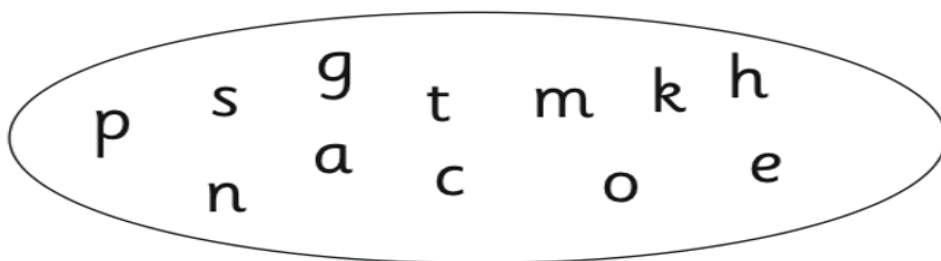
**Unit 3** Lesson 6 **Sami's afternoon**

 Listen, look and read.

<p>I eat lunch.</p> 	<p>I watch TV.</p> 
<p>I help Dad.</p> 	<p>I clean my room.</p> 
<p>I play games.</p> 	<p>I draw pictures.</p> 

## APPENDIX O: Example of Motivating Activities.

► Find 4 words and spell.



1

3

2

4

## APPENDIX P: Example of Stimulating Activities.

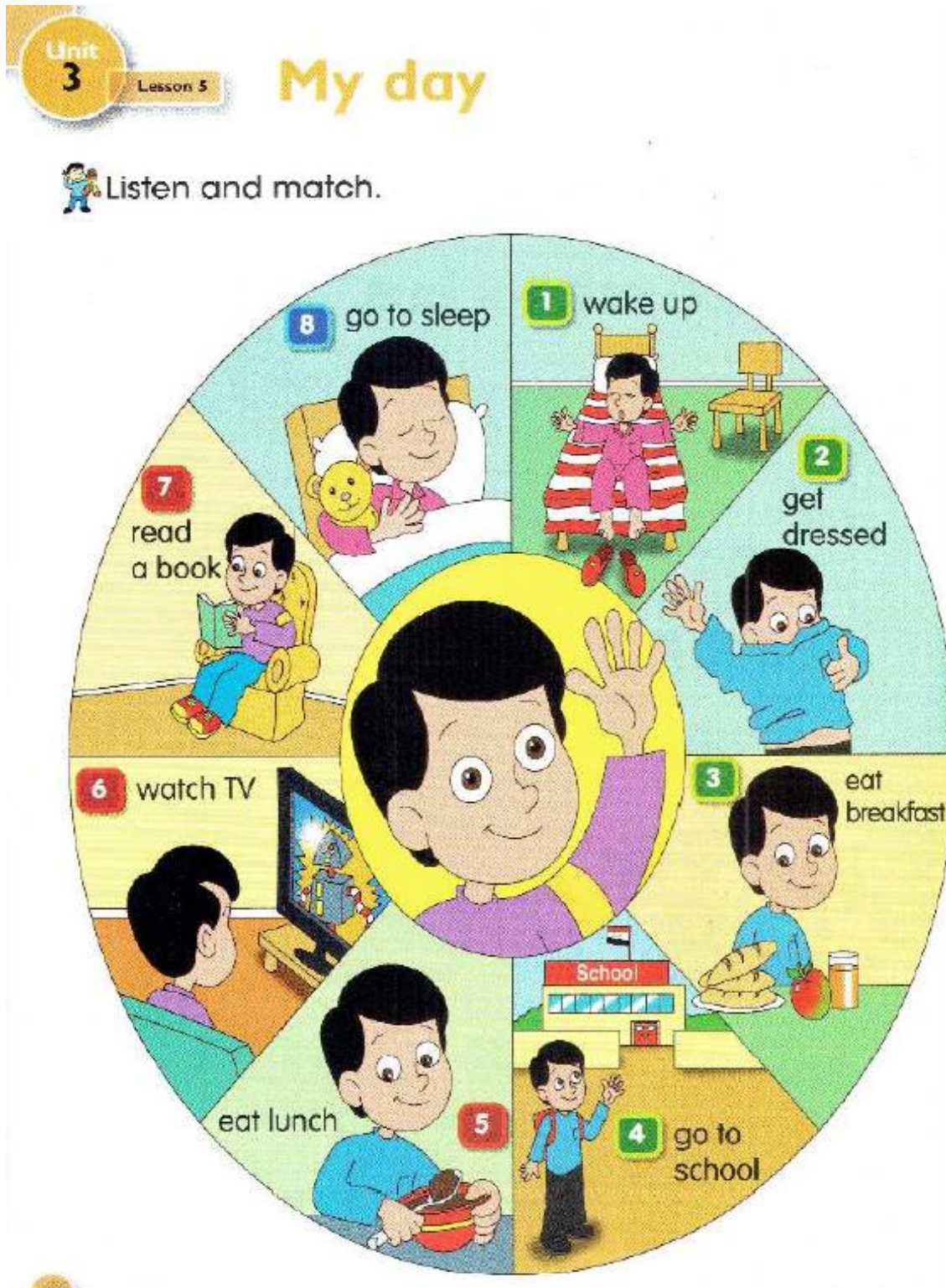
► Ask, answer and tick (✓).

How do you go to school?

Name	by car	by bus	by bike	on foot




APPENDIX Q1: Example of Vocabulary Teaching in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Primary.




APPENDIX Q2: Example of Vocabulary Teaching in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Primary.

**Lesson 6** **Reem is sleepy**

 Listen, look and read.

 I brush my teeth.

 I wash my face.

 I brush my hair.

 I go to sleep.

 Make a book.

 Write the title.

 Draw.

 Write.

 Write page numbers.

 Punch holes.

 Tie.

49