MALAYSIAN TEACHERS' EVALUATION

OF FORM ONE (KBSM) ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS:

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Research in textbook and materials evaluation which was the major focus in many ELT published articles and books in the 1980s are still lacking, even though one cannot deny its important role when choosing an appropriate text for any particular language course. In this thesis, I will present the outcome of my attempt on using a formal evaluative checklist (based on Tucker's (1975) and William's (1983) textbook evaluation scheme) with the Malaysian teachers on six different Form One textbooks. The mini textbook evaluation survey aims to find out the values of the new English textbooks (which are written and published under the recently implemented KBSM curriculum) and how they compare with one another, after being used for about six years with the Form One pupils (hence, a summative evaluation).

33 teachers from 12 different schools throughout four states in Malaysia have participated and give their full cooperation by completing a Textbook Evaluation Form-cum-Questionnaire. 35 criteria in the checklist serves as the main evaluative framework which have been adapted to suit the Malaysian educational context.

On the overall, this research has been a very rewarding experience for me, as it not only finds out how the Form One KBSM English textbooks fare with one another in the assessment, as well as shedding us with some light on the communicative potential of the books with the pupils' needs. The research, which in a way, is an experimental application of Tucker's evaluative scheme, has also taught me much on the development of textbook evaluative framework and its importance to teachers, even though they may not be actively involved in the selection of their textbooks, as Malaysian teachers are.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MALAYSIAN TEACHERS' EVALUATION OF FORM ONE (KBSM) ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

With the plethora of coursebooks available at present in the market for English language learners, it is not surprising if teachers, or course planners alike, find the task of selecting the appropriate book for their students difficult be it a proper coursebook or only as a supplementary. This is because, as most ESL/EFL (English as a Second/Foreign Language) teachers are fully aware, the role of textbook is actually very important as it embodies the core of the English language course itself – the content/syllabus, aims, values, and perhaps, most importantly, the current pedagogical approach and learning theories behind it. (Dubin 1978; van Els, et al, 1984:Low, 1989).

This is especially more evident when the published material is intended to be the <u>core</u> textbook, and not merely as a supplementary. Teachers, as well as students, are known to be quite dependent on the use of textbook as their point of reference, either in classrooms or for revision, as their English syllabus usually revolves around it. It is not surprising then when Dubin (1978: 128) describes the textbook as the "basic ingredient in language courses". This consequently requires teachers (and whoever is in the textbook selection committee) to be exceptionally selective when choosing a textbook, especially when there is a wide selection to choose from. The book selector has also to consider many factors that the book must meet such as the objectives **of** the course and the curriculum, the needs of the students, the course duration, the allocated budget, and many more. To sum it all up, choosing an appropriate textbook can be likened to making a sound investment, as highlighted by Sheldon (1988:237):

"The selection of particular core volume signal an executive educational decision in which there is considerable professional financial and even political investment."

Hence, in order to ease the task of assessing and selecting any particular textbook, a systematic evaluative checklist of criteria is considered to be necessary in guiding one's assessment of the many textbooks available. Among the proposed evaluative checklist which have received much publicity are the ones by Tucker (1975), Williams (1983) and Sheldon (1987).

In this thesis, I will present and analyse the findings of my experimental attempt on conducting a textbook evaluation procedure with the Malaysian Form One teachers (33 of them) on their current English textbooks (for Form One) under the new KBSM (Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah) curriculum. The curriculum (Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools) started out officially in 1988 and has gradually been implemented through all Malaysian secondary schools starting from Form One to Form Five (by 1993). The textbook evaluation procedure is based on Tucker's (1975) original work, as well as Williams (1983). The main objectives of this research would be further detailed in Chapter 3 (ASPECTS of the RESEARCH) but basically the primary aim is to get a kind of a preliminary summative evaluation on the Form One English textbooks from the relevant teachers as the books have now been in use for quite some time since they were first introduced in 1988. As there are quite a number of different textbooks being used by different schools throughout Malaysia, it would also be interesting to find out how the books compare to one another (though they are all more or less the same as the writers have to follow common specific guidelines laid by the Ministry of Education) and to see whether they match the end-users' needs (that are, the teachers and the pupils), as well as the specified curriculum and syllabus objectives.

However, before we can go into further details of the research itself, let us first of all, learn more about the contemporary. Malaysian educational system, with specific regards to the English syllabus, which like many other current language courses, has also been influenced by the communicative approach trend.   Some relevant aspects of the communicative approach would also be highlighted in this chapter.

1.1   **The   Contemporary   Pedagogical   Scene: Communicative   Approach.**

Communicative approach is very much the 'in thing' of today's English Language Teaching pedagogical practice and this is best described by Stern when he says:

> "the communicative approach has so profoundly influenced
>
> current thought and practice on language teaching strategies
>
> that it is hardly possible today to imagine a language
>
> pedagogy which does not make some allowance at all levels
>
> of teaching for a non-analytical, experiential or
>
> participatory, communicative component. "

(1993: 473 cited in Waldemar, 1988)

It is not actually a completely new,revolutionary approach and in fact, is based on the concept of 'communicative strategy', which is defined as "attempted communication in the target language" (Waldemar, 1988: 34) However, it must be stressed here that both the above terms ('communicative approach'; and 'communicative strategy') are not equally similar. Communicative approach is a comprehensive concept, covering not only a certain teaching strategy but also other

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pedagogical matters such as a certain set of objectives, methodological principles, a certain detailed teaching techniques and others. On the contrary, the communicative teaching strategy, according to Waldemar, concerns only on "a certain generally conceived teaching procedure which is supposed to trigger a definite, psycholinguistically definable strategy' of language acquisition". (ibid) However, the' latter is nonetheless, compatible with the current dominant trend, where direct communicative involvement in the target language is seen as the essential learning activity.

There are actually many ramifications that derive from the concept of the 'communicative approach' like the 'functional-notional' (Wilkins, 1976), but basically it is primarily manifested in the 1970s, and has since, evolved and been refined through the past two decades, while still maintaining its central principles. The main reason for the rise of communicative approach back then, was critically due to the growing dissatisfaction in the language teaching profession of the inadequate traditional 'grammar/translation' methods, as well as, the 1950s 'structural' methods. (Mitchell, 1994) Both of the mentioned methods stressed on grammatical competence of the language learner but not on his/her communicative competence: a key language theory of the communicative approach, popularised by Hymes (1972, cited in Mc Donough and Shaw, 1993).

Hymes' view on 'communicative competence' is that, a good language learner would have a good command of the grammar and vocabulary (linguistic knowledge) of the TL (target language), as well as knows how to apply the knowledge appropriately in different social situations. Michael Canale's definition (1983, cited in Mitchell, 1994) of what constitutes communicative competence, perhaps offers the best one among others who have tried to do so, and there are four components:

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1.   Grammatical   competence

(Linguistics knowledge – pronunciation, syntax and vocabulary)

2.   Discourse   competence

(Knowledge of the discourse governing rules)

3.   Sociolinguistic   competence

(Knowledge of using the correct speech and writing styles according to different situations, rules of politeness, etc.)

4.   Strategic   competence

(Knowledge of coping strategies, which can keep communication going when language knowledge is still imperfect – e.g. negotiating meanings, clearing misunderstandings).

We shall not be looking specifically at the historical development of the communicative movement in this paper, but during the earlier stage, the emphasis was more one syllabus design, "with a concern for specifications rather than organisation of the specified elements". (Brumfit, 1986). (The most profound work on syllabuses is perhaps the functional – notional one, developed by Wilkins, 1976) The communicative language teaching then, was still relatively traditional-based; "presentation-practice-exploitation" (Mitchell, ibid). As illustrated by Brumfit (1980 : 121) in Figure 1 below, the primary real change brought about by the communicative approach is basically the simple reversal of the traditional teaching procedure:

Figure 1

Traditional:

I	**II**	**III**
Present	→ Drill	→ Practise in Context

Communicative:-

Communicate as far as possible with all available resources	→ Present language items shown to be necessary to achieve effective communication	→ Drill if necessary
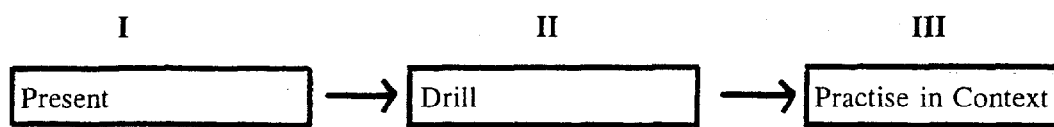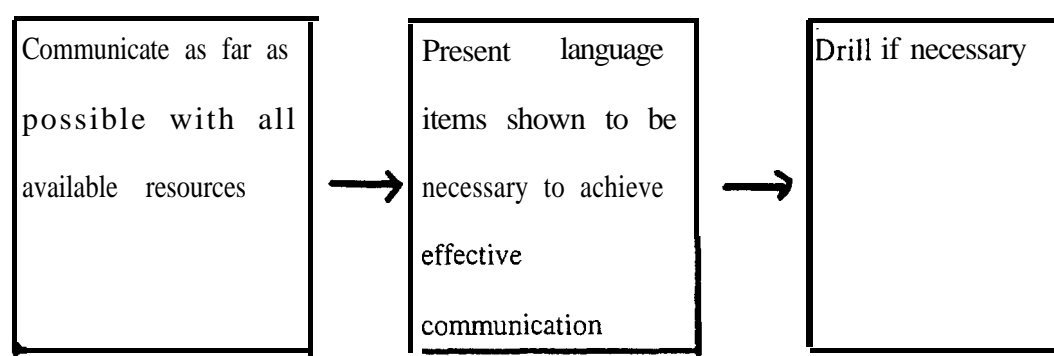
Fluency is given the central emphasis as the second one is more pupil-centred rather than the traditional teacher-centred. At present, the interest has shifted progressively towards the application of the approach itself in classroom processes, which involves a better language learning theory, as apposed to the earlier emphasis on syllabus specifications. According to Mitchell (ibid: 37), the language learning theory has now also stressed on the use of role plays and simulations in classrooms, instead of the usual speaking and listening activities. This is done in order to simulate real-life situations in the TL according to what is appropriate to the pupils' context. In addition to this, 'communicative' is not only confined to oral skills alone, but all the four language skills (Mc Donough and Shaw, 1993 : 26). Each

skill should not be treated in isolation but integrated well with one another, like the new Malaysian KBSM.

Furthermore, 'naturalness' should be accepted as second/foreign language learning process is increasingly viewed as similar to LI acquisition. Hence, meaning should be emphasised rather than form. As Mc Donough and Shaw puts it:

"'Communicative' implies 'semantic', a concern with the meaning potential

of language. "

(ibid)

However, this does not mean that grammar should be neglected. For teaching purposes, the communicative syllabus would have to be specified grammatically (Brumfit, 1984:50) as syntax is the most systematic generative system so far. The grading of taught items in the syllabus would be something like a cross-breed between functional and grammatical categories, while the generative system should be the foundation. Hence, the syllabus would be conceived as a grammatical ladder with a functional-notional spiral around it. (see Figure 2 below)
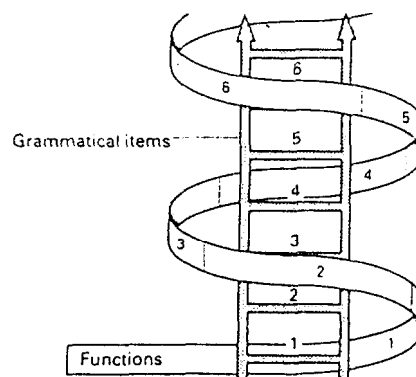
Fig. 2
(Brumf it, 1984)

Now, let us for a moment look at the typical characteristics of the communicative approach. Trudgill and Hannah (1982, cited in Maley, 1985 : 16 1) have summarised the minimal features that it should have as follows:

- Concentration on use and appropriateness rather than simply on language form (i.e. meaning and grammar)

- A tendency to favour fluency – focused rather than simply accuracy focused activities.

- An attention to communication tasks to be achieved through the language rather than simply exercises on the language.

- An emphasis on student initiative and interaction, rather than simply on teacher-centred   direction.

- A sensitivity to learners' differences rather than a "lockstep" approach (in which all students proceed through the same materials at the same pace).

- An awareness of variation in language use rather than simply attention to the language. (i.e. recognition of the many Englishes).

Some of the characteristics above have been touched upon previously but basically, any particular communicative teaching approach should at least feature a few of the above, if not all.

There are actually many pedagogical implications of the approach which will not . be elaborated here (see Waldemar, 1988 and Mc Donough and Shaw, 1993, for further explanation).   However, some of the inevitable effects as a result of the implementation of the approach are firstly, the changing roles of the traditional teachers and learners. Teachers are no more the dominant roles, but will now have to act as facilitators for learners who have more autonomy and are more active in

the English classrooms. Pupils interaction should be more emphasised and this can be done through small groupworks or pairworks.

In terms of materials, "diversity, and especially, authenticity have been the key concerns..." (Mitchell, 1994) The latter is very important, especially in dialogues presentation, as it simulates the 'real-life' English to the language learners. It can be motivating, as well as can be the perfect model for them (the learners) to use and learn how to speak English. Also, the materials will be task-oriented (or 'skills-based' as in the Malaysian context) instead of the traditional exercise-centred. The fours skills would also be integrated instead of isolated when taught to the learners.

1.2   **Malaysian Contemporary Educational Scene ▪ KBSM and the English Syllabus.**

KBSM (Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools) is actually a consequence of KBSR (Integrated Curriculum for Primary schools) which is developed after studying the proposal for change in the Malaysian educational system, stated in Laporan Jawatankuasa Kabinet (Cabinet Committee Report) (1979) (Kem. Pendidikan Malaysia, 1988a). The proposed changes are initially to upgrade and improve on the then educational system in order to meet new challenges set by the rapid growth of Malaysian industrial and economic development. KBSR was first implemented in 1982, starting from Standard One, and worked its way up to Standard Six in 1987. In 1988, it moved on to Form One and this marked the beginning of the KBSM. Its implementation has just been completed with the gradual covering of all forms in secondary schools (1993).

Its introduction in every subject focuses on the main goals of education as stated in the Malaysian National Education Philosophy : the spiritual, emotional, physical and

intellectual development of the Malaysian students [Kern. Pendidikan (1988a)] The NEP also stresses on developing the potential of the individual in a holistic and integrated manner through education. The Educational Philosophy aims in a way, reflects what Breen and Candlin (1979) suggests as the suitable purpose of a communicative curriculum.

> The overall objective should be on: "the development of the learner's communicative knowledge in the context of personal-and social development"

(ibid:9 1)

Thus, all subjects should be related to one another in striving to achieve the above aim. A very important aspect of the new curriculum is the inculcation of good moral values, especially through the language subjects – Bahasa Malaysia and English. This forms the central organising core of the language subjects.

1.2.1 The KBSM English Syllabus

English has long played a significant role in the Malaysian educational scene. Even though it is not accorded the same status as Bahasa Malaysia (which is the official national language), and has somewhat lost some of its glory after all the schools in Malaysia shifted to Bahasa Malaysia as their medium of instruction in the 1970s, English still remains as "a strong second language", and is made a compulsory foreign language subject in the educational system. There is recently a move from the government to consider using English as the medium of instruction at the tertiary level for all technological and science subjects. Without doubt, its importance is

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undisputable especially among the school leavers to gain stronger academic, social and economic mobility.

Bearing this in mind, successive revisions in the Malaysian school curricula have taken place in order to prepare the would-be-school leavers with at least some basic communicative English skills to help them with their future lives. The key personnel in the Ministry of Education have tried to make language learning more relevant and more accessible to students, and the new Integrated curriculum, both for the primary and secondary schools is the most current attempt in achieving the aforementioned purpose. In order to provide a range of teaching and learning styles to match differing abilities and levels of proficiency, the KBSM in particular, tries to reconcile the two dominant approaches in language learning, and they are what the Kementerian Pendidikan (1989) termed as:

i–   the academic ('ivory tower') approach – the conscious learning of grammar basically; and

ii–   the practical, communicative ('market place') approach

The new combined approach results in the KBSM (Integrated Curriculum) (and KBSR) where:

> "(it) rejects a narrow approach to English and instead advocates a 'whole person' integrated approach which views learning a language as one aspect of a student's personal development."

<div align="right">(ibid:xii)</div>

However, as a word of caution as put forward by Platt and Weber (1980:201) on the use of English in Malaysia, is that, real life communication would normally take place much in the urban settings only.

Integration of the four language skills, including the language content is the main emphasis in the English syllabus and all the skills are equally important. The integrated language elements are as follows:

Language Skills:

Listening (aural)

Speaking (oral)

Reading

Writing

Language   Content:

Phonology (Pronunciation)

Lexis (vocabulary)

Grammar

Discourse (language use above the sentence level)

All the above are closely linked to one another and that is why it would be rather appropriate to integrate them in the English language teaching, instead of teaching them in isolation. For example, when we write, we are not only concerned with writing skills per se, but also the grammatical aspect, correct vocabulary to be used, and we also need to be able to read what is being written. There must also be a "cyclical progression"; content should be treated so as to maximise learning when repeately and constantly used throughout the learning process in a different manner.

CHAPTER 2 - EVALUATING ELT TEXTBOOKS - AN OVERVIEW

With the recent advent of the communicative approach and the considerable popularity that it has gained worldwide, it is not surprising to see such an abundance of ELT materials everywhere (either localised or universally usable). The dominant role for coursebooks has been much greater than before. For many teachers and pupils, the textbook (coursebook) is really crucial as it is "the main teaching and learning aid" (Matthews, 1985 : 202), and is usually a representative of the syllabus as it determines much of the daily classwork and homework. Ideally, it is the concrete reflection of the current language pedagogy and the objectives of the intended English syllabus, and the school curriculum on the whole.

Even though it is strongly suggested in many language teaching courses that teachers should not rely solely on their textbooks in order not to be a 'servant' to them (Cunningsworth, 1984; Sheldon, 1987), the stark reality is that, 'home-made' teaching materials consume too much of the teachers' time cost and energy, and quite often, are not much welcomed by the students. This is so because, students, who are from more conservative educational traditions, strongly prefer to have 'solidly bound' textbooks than teacher's loose handouts, as to them, "the book spells knowledge". (Dubin 1978:129).

Given the centrality of textbook in any language courses as have been pointed out above, it is now becoming increasingly more important for teachers (and anyone relevant), to know how to select their books appropriately and on what criteria must their judgements be based upon. Also of consequential importance, is the development of appropriate techniques on materials/textbook evaluation, so as to assist and simplify the task of those who are involved in the textbook selection.

There is, at the moment, no single all-purpose approach to textbook evaluation (Low, 1989) as most ELT courses are localised to suit one's own particular needs (due to different goals of syllabuses and different levels and needs of language learners). However, the essential thing that one must know before evaluating any materials, is to ask oneself appropriate relevant questions, as well as sufficient amount of information to help him/her determine what is it that he/she expects from the textbooks. As defined by Mariani (1980), these are the four main stages that would help one when considering a coursebook:

1.   Define your local teaching situation;

2.   Define your programme;

3.   Evaluate your coursebook;

4.   Devise suitable adaptations.

2.1   **The Context of Evaluation**

         "The ability to evaluate teaching materials effectively is a very
         important professional activity for all (ELT) teachers. "

                                                      (Mc Donough & Shaw, 1993 : 63)

         Evaluating textbooks has gradually gained in importance, especially in the 80s, and
         more and more teachers are being made aware of this. It is one of the two means
         of resources that are available to the teacher to arrive at a good selection of books.
         (van Els, et al, 1984:298). The other one is 'textbook description' ‒ the collection
         and description of data on the form and content of the textbook itself.   The latter
         will not be elaborated here as it is usually unavailable, or inaccessible to most
         teachers throughout the world, and anyway, much of the existing textbook

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descriptions published in ELT journals in the forms of textbook reviews or publishers' information are only for certain types of textbooks which are not applicable/usable in most teaching contexts,

As have been highlighted previously, there can be many reasons why there is a need for teachers (or just anyone in the ELT profession) to assess materials and textbooks in the first place. However, basically the reasons can usually be subdivided into two types of scenario which determine why the teacher is involved with evaluating materials initially. The two situations are:

1)   where the 'open market' prevails;

2)   where the books are 'prescribed' (or 'semi-prescribed' as in Malaysia). Both of the above scenarios entail different natures of the evaluation process.

In the 'open market' situation, quite often most of the teachers are actively involved in the textbook selection as they are free to choose (within certain guidelines and framework, of course) among the many published materials the ones that match appropriately to their own teaching needs. The teachers have to really be able to select and discriminate effectively as it does not necessarily mean that the ones available on the market are totally faultless/flawless. Another point that these teachers have to remember is that professional and financial factors have to be seriously considered as textbooks can sometimes affect the success or failure of a certain language teaching programme, due to their (the books') prominent role. Generally speaking, a good textbook should be "interesting, motivating and useful,... easy to use, and needs little preparation", says Jane Revell, an award-winning textbook writer in the local New Straits Times (9/4/1994) but of course, there can be many other criteria to be considered as well.

As for the other teachers who are in the second situation, most of them, have very little choice open to them, except to make the best out of their books. However, in some cases, like in Malaysia, some teachers are able to work together with their Heads of English Department and other state key personnel when selecting the texts for their schools. For these teachers, they still need to know how to evaluate materials as it is seen as an awareness raising tool (Sheldon, 1987) to make them understand the way the materials are organized and the learning and teaching theories behind them, as well as to keep them abreast of the latest development in materials design and methodology that they are using. In return, it would assist them very much with adapting their books to suit the needs of their pupils and teaching, in realistic ways whenever the needs arise.

Another point that needs to be highlighted here is that, evaluating process, according to Mc Donough and Shaw (1993:66) is never a static procedure as it not only involves the usual preliminary evaluation done when first selecting the texts, but also should be carried out after the textbooks have been used for quite sometime in the classroom, and this is know as the summative evaluation. This second type of evaluation is the one that is being conducted in the research presented in this thesis.

Both of the above types of evaluation would normally include two stages: the external evaluation of the textbook, and the internal assessment. For the external evaluation, one would usually look at the general overall criteria of the text, which involves looking at how the book first impresses the selector with the contents organization, cover design and general quality. (sometimes knower as the 'flick' test). If the book passes this first stage, then only one would proceed into looking with more detailed of the internal contents – the presentation of taught items, the sequencing of content, etc. Here, the evaluative criteria would be more

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comprehensive, covering all relevant aspects of the textbook that are usually based on pedagogical framework – the skills covered, the objectives of the syllabus and the teaching/learning theories behind the material.

To illustrate clearly the stages involved in the evaluation process Mc Donough and Shaw (op cit) have come up with Figure 3 below to help us understand the usual procedures when assessing a textbook:

Macro-evaluation   ----->   inappropriate/potentially   appropriate   ———>
(External)

```
                              |
                              |
                              |

                              V

                            Exit
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Micro-evaluation ———> inappropriate/appropriate ———> adapt/select

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                              |

                              V

                            Exit
```
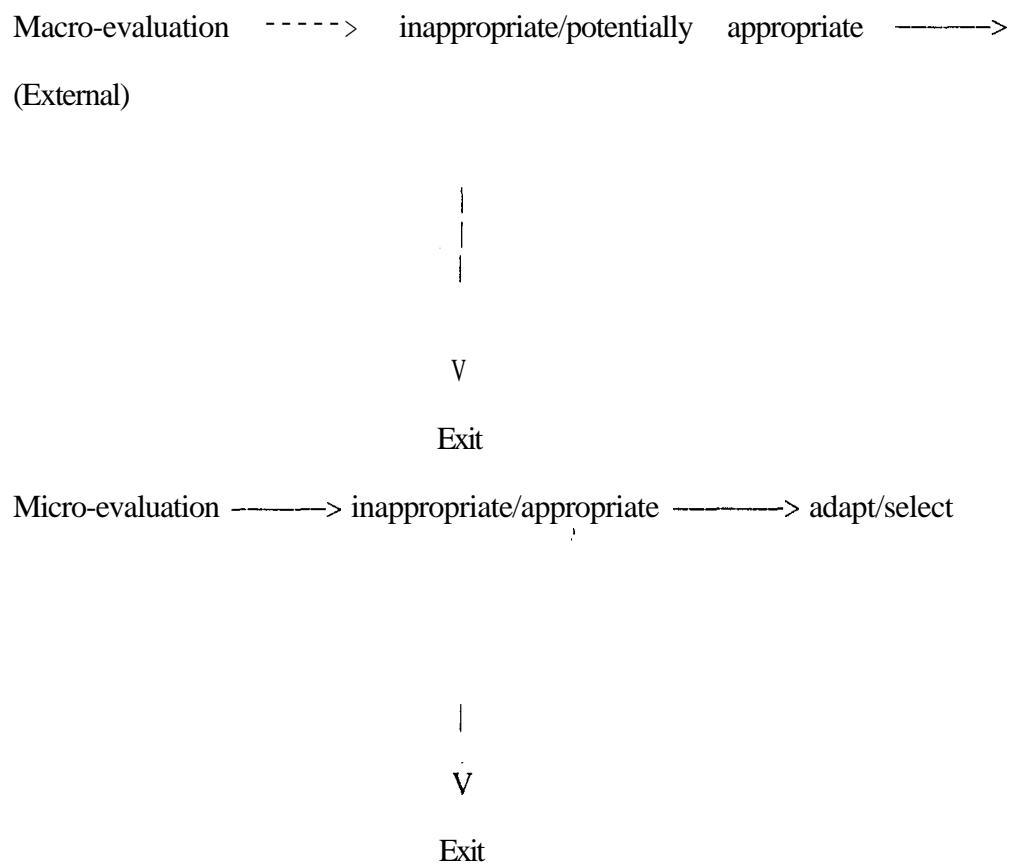
Figure 3

There are many research and articles that have been published on the different types/procedures of textbook (materials) evaluation, like Tucker (1975) which uses Comparative Display Form (as I will be using for my research purpose), Williams (1983),

Sheldon (1988) and many more. However, the interest, especially in the late 1970s and 1980s, was very much focused on suggesting different methods and evaluative criteria checklists to be used for ELT materials evaluation. None that I have come across so far, has been done on the actual application of the schemes suggested in actual real situations. This has been admitted by van Els, et al (1984), and Sheldon (ed.) (1987) in his book "ELT Textbooks and Materials: Problems In Evaluation and Development." And this is just what this thesis attempts to do, to see what are the problems faced and how reliable is Tucker's evaluative scheme would work when applied in Malaysian teaching situation, apart from analysing the evaluation results of the different textbooks used.

It is important to point out here that with regards to evaluating materials, there is no particular underlying theories as one would normally expect, except for its evaluative framework. This will be discussed and further elaborated as we go along on the aspects of the research, as well as in the findings analysis (Chapter 3 and 4 respectively) with special reference to Tucker's original work (as that is the basis design for my research) which has been slightly adapted for calculation analysis purposes.

As an overview, even though it is not explicitly stated, the impact of the current trend on communicative approach has also influenced the Malaysian new English syllabus, as has been discussed earlier. In summary, the main perspective on English language teaching in the Malaysian syllabus can be said to be a culmination of the 'communicative' and 'skills' perspectives (that is, which views language as the most important medium for communication, and to realise the view, the four skills should be equally emphasised) – two of the three main English language teaching perspectives that have been identified by Cunningsworth (1984:5).

CHAPTER 3 .   ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH

After looking to the theories and existing frameworks on materials/textbook evaluation, as well as the current Malaysian educational scene, including the implementation of KBSM (Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools), we are now going to turn our attention to the important aspects of the research. This chapter will be subdivided into several aspects:

    i)   context of the research;

    ii)   methodology (which includes the distribution of questionnaires, data collation and problems encountered);

    iii)   the Questionnaire.

3.1   **Context of the Research**

First of all, let me state the aims and purpose of why this 'mini textbook evaluation project' is carried out. Primarily, the research is intended to find out and to compare what the Malaysian teachers' feedback would de (namely, the Form One teachers), on the values of the different Form One KBSM English textbooks that they use. There is not much information at present, on the 'application-type' of research like the one I propose to do in the area of evaluating textbooks as admitted by van Els, et al (1984) and Sheldon (1987, 1988). Much less is even known in the Malaysian education context on the local teachers' perception (including the effectiveness) on the texts which are in use.

Hence, **I** think it is rather timely that a research attempting to evoke the above mentioned response from teachers should be conducted, with a specific focus on the English Form One textbooks under the newly implemented KBSM (Kurikulum

Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah), or the Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools. Although the issue on the effectiveness of the current approach employed in the KBSM and the book perse is not directly addressed in this research (as that is not my main focus at the moment), a few relevant questions which are thought to be appropriate, have been included in the questionnaire. This is done so, just to gauge the general perceptible responses from the teachers involved on how they view the text, as well as the success and effects of the new approach toward their pupils' English proficiency level.

As has been discussed in the earlier chapter, the 'integrated approach' of the new curriculum in many ways, reflects the commonly known 'communicative approach' — the contemporary of the ELT pedagogy. The KBSM is:

> "skills based, with emphasis on the integration of the four skills as well as language areas, and is aimed at enhancing students' communicative competence".

(Kern. Pendidikan Malaysia, 1989: xiii)

The gradual implementation of the Integrated Curriculum which began in 1988 for secondary schools has just recently been completed in 1993, covering inclusively Form Ones to Form Fives. As the new Form One English textbooks have been around and used for quite some time now (since 1988) compared to the upper secondary texts, I think it would be really apt and appropriate if an evaluative feedback from the Teacher-users on the different texts is conducted, albeit on a mini-scale. This is done as a kind of a (comparative) "in-use evaluation" (Grant, 1987), or a "summative evaluation" (Me Donough and Shaw, 1993), which literally

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means an assessment which is done after textbooks have been selected and been used in classrooms for quite some time.

Secondly, another aim of this research is an attempt to use a formal evaluative checklist, which has been adapted from Tucker (1975) and Williams (1983), on the local Form One teachers, and to see how reliable it is as an evaluative tool in assessing and comparing different textbooks used. Much discontent and grouses over the educational change on the local curriculum, have been voiced by practising teachers, especially regarding the pedagogical approach in English. However, most of the time, these are confined in the teachers' common rooms only, and sometimes, a few of these comments do reach the printed mass-media, but no other strong evidence in the form of research, has been proved.

Hence, in may opinion, with the use of a proper evaluative scheme like the one advocated in this research, one can at least try and gauge what the teachers' perception would be of the local textbooks, as they are "one of the major determinants of what gets taught" (Low, 1989:136) in the English syllabus as specified in the curriculum.

Coming to the practical side of the research, initially it was planned that at least, one secondary school from each 14 states in Malaysia would be approached at random so as to get a balanced comparative view on the textbooks which are available throughout this country. There are currently about ten Form One English textbooks being circulated and used in Form One classrooms. According to one reliable source, these book (which have been selected and commissioned by the Textbook Bureau of the Ministry of Education), are divided and distributed equally according to the 'textbook regional zoning system'. All the 14 states are divided

into their geographical regions of North, South, East, West and the East Malaysia. This is done in order to give equal share of the profit to all the textbook authors and publishers. That is why it can be difficult at times to find certain textbooks in other states than the ones designated for the book originally. (I am uncertain of the details concerning the zoning system as the correct information on this is difficult to access and not been made public, i.e. which books are for which states, and for which schools).

This has in a way, affected my initial plan and that is why, in the end, I only select schools which I have easy access to (the ones near my home in Alor Setar, and the ones where I have friends teaching there). At the onset, 15 secondary schools were approached and 55 questionnaires were distributed, either personally or through formal correspondence. As I did not have any idea which books were being used in these schools (or, in any other schools), the location of these schools were done at random (urban and rural) in four different states according to the reason given above (i.e. of easy accessibility). Again, 'red tape' problem was the reason why my choice of fifteen schools were limited to four states only. Proper approval letters from the central Ministry of Education, plus approval letters from the local state educational authorities are needed before one can go into any schools to conduct any research/survey. As I had quite a limited time and could not approach the schools in other states in person, I had to rely on my teaching colleagues (in some of the schools of those four states) who had agreed to give their cooperation without much administrative paperwork fuss. As for all the schools in the town of Alor Setar, I had approached and seen their Heads of English Department personally.

In the end, only 12 schools had given their cooperation through the 38 returned questionnaires I received from the teachers. (The other three schools (in Sabah,

Selangor and Wilayah Persekutuan) had, for some unexplained reasons, failed to return the questionnaires.

3.2   Methodology

The main source of primary data which forms the base of this research is through what I call, Textbook Evaluation Form-cum-Questionnaire (which will be referred to as just 'Questionnaire' hereafter). As explained earlier, 55 questionnaires were distributed to 15 schools but only 38 from 12 schools were returned. Out of the 38, only 33 are considered to be 'valid' or usable, i.e. fully completed. (see Chapter 4 for further explanation). Initially, about 5 questionnaires were allocated for each school, thinking that it would be easy to get responses not only from the current Form One teachers (depending on the school size, there are normally about two to four Form One teachers per school), but also from other teachers who have used the textbook before but are presently not teaching the Form Ones.

However, not many teachers in the latter position were willing to be involved as I found out later and also, as had been cautioned by most of my teacher colleagues during my pre-research correspondence with them. As a result, with the exception of SM Seberang Perak, only Form One teachers are mainly involved in this research and this has led to an uneven number of evaluators (teachers) representing each school. Below is the list of schools involved, including the number of teacher evaluators:

1.   SM Changlun,   Kedah   _   2

2.   SM Pulau Nyiur, Jitra, Kedah   _   4

3.   SM Seberang Perak, Alor Setar, Kedah   _   5

4.	SM St. Nicholas Convent, Alor Setar, Kedah –	2

5.	SM Sultan Abdul Halim, Jitra, Kedah	3

6.	SM Sultanah Asma, Alor Setar, Kedah	–	3

7.	Maktab Mahmud (P), Alor Setar, Kedah	–	3

8.	SM Beaufort, Sabah	–	3

9.	SMK Gadong, Sabah	2

10.	SM St. John, Beaufort, Sabah	–	2

11.	SM Agama Melor, Kelantan	2

12.	SM Bukit Bandaraya, Kuala Lumpur,

Wilayah Persekutuan	2

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All the teachers were given about two to three days' time to complete the questionnaires before they were collected and returned to me.

## 3.3	The Questionnaire

The questionnaire which is used in this research is 7 pages long, and consists basically of two main parts; the evaluative checklist form and 5 other relevant general questions regarding the teachers' comments on the new curriculum, the textbooks and their usage. It may seem quite long but actually 3 pages alone are devoted to instructions. (please refer Appendix 1). The rubric part (including brief explanation of the research) is deemed to be important as it is anticipated that the two rating scles (Weight (weighting) and Rating columns) could be confusing to the teachers as not many are familiar with this kind of formal evaluative checklist. Furthermore, I really need their in-depth evaluative assessment on their textbooks, and to do so, they must first of all, understand what is required from them.

The main part of the questionnaire is the textbook evaluation form and it is based on a combination of Tucker's (1975) Comparative Display Form and Williams' (1983) evaluation checklist. (note that Tucker's Value Merit Product Graph is not included in the questionnaire; it will be used however, in the results analysis). Most of the evaluative criteria have also been adapted to suit the Malaysian context. The technique of evaluation proposed here is quite similar to many others which involves two phases: recording and evaluating the data. To do these, the teachers must have the textbooks with them (as instructed in the questionnaire) and they then, have to skim through the whole textbook content in order to get an idea about the objective, organization and layout of the book. Then, going through the list of criteria in the evaluation form, they have to carefully examine and rate the book(s), and the criteria according to the two scales.

The two rating scales which are positioned on the left-hand and right-hand columns of the form deal with two different aspects, each with its own separate scales, and serve as the basis for the rating scheme.   For the first column on the rating form (the WEIGHTING), Tucker has named it the VS column (Value Score) and uses a numerical scale ranging from 0 to 5. Williams, on the other hand, who also based his evaluation checklist on Tucker's, just simply called it "Weighting" and used the same letter scales as mine, i.e. A – Very useful; B – Quite useful; C – Fairly Useful; D – Not useful. Both of the two terms pointed out above are similar in function, and the scale is used to measure the weighting (or importance) of each of the listed criterion according to how a teacher sees it. The weighting would of course depend upon the pupils' level and needs, as well as the curriculum objectives.

The relative weights in the Weighting scale are "arbitrarily assigned" (Tucker, ibid)

and tries to cater to a broad comprehensive value scale. However, it is up to anyone to either broaden or narrow it down as Williams (op cit) has done (including mine). Looking back retrospectively, I think it would have been better if the scale is decreased to only three (A – Very Useful; B – Quite Useful; C – Not Useful), especially in the context of my research, as the latter seems to be more' well-defined and not as misleading as the one suggested in the questionnaire. This is to do with the vague differences between the terms for 'B' (Quite) and 'C' (Fairly), which are not very clear cut.

The reason why I use letter – assigned weighting scale instead of a numerical one, as proposed by Tucker, is to differentiate it with the other scale (the BATING) on the right-hand column, in order not to confuse the evaluators. These four letters, however, do have numerical values but these are not indicated anywhere on the questionnair as they are meant for later calculation purposes on the comprehensive comparative analysis of the evaluations. The numerical values of the four letters can be referred be in Table 1 below.

Table 1

WEIGHTING (Left-Hand Column)/Value Scale
–> the importance of each criterion in the evaluation checklist to the Teacher-Evaluator.   (3) A – Very Useful   (2) B – Quite Useful   (1) C – Fairly Useful   (0) D – Not Useful

The numerical Rating Scale (or the Merit Scale) on the right-hand column of the questionnaire is for the teacher to express his/her assessment of the textbook as measured by each of the criterion. In other words, it is the awarded merits of the book itself on satisfying the criteria listed in the eyes of the evaluator. A range of 0 through 4 is used in this scale (refer Table 2 below). As pointed out by Williams (1983), this numerical scale is suitable for either absolute or comparative evaluations of textbooks.

Table 2

RATING (Right-hand Column)/Merit Scale

–>   the extent to which a given textbook satisfies each criterion on the checklist:
 	
     4 – To the greatest extent
     3 – To a large extent
     2 – to some extent
     1 – Just barely
     0 – Not at all

(On the questionnaire, the teacher needs only: to tick the appropriate column that he/she thinks the textbook deserves for the 'Rating part, but for the Weighting (Weight), he/she has to record the appropriate letter in the space provided).

3.3.1 Evaluative criteria Checklist

As stated earlier, in order to assess and record the merits of the Form One textbooks being used, the teachers need to measure them based on certain criteria which serve as the framework for the evaluation procedure. These criteria can be varied and evolved to suit one's teaching needs and specifications if one wants the evaluation to be more precise and refined. The criteria are the questions that one can ask oneself when assessing any

particular book, i.e. "what qualities do I expect from the book?" Many common-core criteria have been suggested to be used as checklist items (Matthews, 1985; Sheldon, 1988; Mc Donough and Shaw, 1993), and some of them could be universally applicable. (It must be highlighted here that, at the moment, most evaluative criteria are usually localised, and none of the widely suggested criteria are yet to be totally universally applicable due to the "isolationist nature" of ELT contexts worldwide (see Sheldon, 1988. 241).

For my research purposes, I have adapted and used quite a lengthy list of 35 criteria which are quite comprehensive (but are by no means exhaustive) to suit the contemporary Malaysian educational demands. These 35 criteria can be categorised into 11 major headings Areas of Criteria: Practical Considerations; Physical Characteristics; Subject & Content; Language Type; Activities/Exercises; Skills; Grammar; Vocabulary; Pronunciation; Writing; Reading. This suggested framework attempts to cover the four main aspects put forward by Williams in a scheme for evaluation – linguistic, pedagogical, general and technical (ibid:25 1). Instead of using questions for the evaluative criteria, I have employed idealised statements relating to the qualities being assessed as they would be easier for rating recording purposes. Most of them are self-explanatory (and that is why they are a bit lengthy) to assist the Teachers' understanding (as I was not around) during the evaluation of the textbooks.

(N.B. Please refer to APPENDIX 1 for following explanation):

=>   Practical Considerations (6 Criteria)

1 –   This is to do with the cost-effectiveness of the textbook with regard to its durability. (Quality is not the relative factor to cost as it would be assessed separately). This is quite an important factor to consider taking into account that the book will be used quite often throughout a school year.   In Malaysia, pupils have to bring the English textbook nearly every day (four times per schooling week) to school. Therefore, the books must not be too pricey and be able to withstand the 'normal' wear and tear of being frequently brought to school, and in and out of their school bags.

2 –   Another important factor to consider, given the young age of First Formers (twelve/thirteen years old). they usually need some kind of fun and attraction in order to get their interest going in learning something like English, which can actually be an 'alienating' experience to some as the level gets higher.

3 –   Under the National Education Philosophy the main priorities that need to be emphasised in the KBSM English Language Programme ₍Curriculum are : the Moral and Spiritual aspects, and the Intellectual aspects. (see Kern. Pendidikan Malaysia, 1989: Chap. 1) These aspects must be integrated into, all the four main skills activities via the

teaching of moral values and increasing students' learning autonomy, as well as active participation from them. Therefore, the textbooks should ideally take into account all the above notions to ensure its educational validity.

4 — The Teacher guide must act as a useful guidance to the teachers, in not only providing the answer keys and tape scripts but also sufficient open <u>advice</u> on how to exploit/supplement the course books.

5 — Are the usual attendant aids/extras to a coursebook available to the Form One teachers? (the most important one is normally the audio tapes, to be used for the Listening activities).

6 — The materials in the texts, as well as instructions and the general layout, must be clear and easy to follow, especially for the pupils to find their way through the book. This is very important as pupils usually rely on the texts, not only for doing their homework, but also for revision purposes.

=> Physical Characteristics (3 criteria)

7 — this is part of the 'flick-test' done initially when assessing a textbook. It covers basically everything technically related to the book which initiate out first impression — effective typeface, absence of typographical errors and

misprints, attractive choice of colours (if used) and illustrations, as well as well-designed covers.

8 — This is focusing specifically on the actual general layout/appearance of the presented materials on'the pages of the text. Ideally, they (the pages) should neither be too dense nor too sparse, and labelling of the different subtopics/activities under one unit must also be distinct so as not to confuse our young learners.

9 — Even if the illustrations are not in colour, they must ideally be used to its maximum effect so as to portray/clarify the taught items concerned, and not for cosmetics purposes. (In brief, the illustrations should be used for pedagogical reasons).

=> Subject and Content (4 criteria)

10 — This criteria is especially vital for newly presented items or specific skills, such as invitation letter-writing. Pupils should be guided and introduced, not only on new language structures but also new skill items that they may not be familiar with.

11 — As the textbooks are intended for Malaysian pupils, these factors (culture and urban/rural environment) must be taken into account and reflected in the content of the textbooks,

and since Malaysia is a multi-racial country, the above become more important to be emphasised. All aspects of the different cultures and races should be included without stereotyping on only one racial group in order to portray the 'uniquely harmonious living environment that all Malaysians are blessed with.

Also, the content must not only focus on the living aspect of the urban people (i.e. urban-related materials), as the books are also intended for the rural pupils who may not be very familiar with the urban lifestyle. Ideally, the content should deal with both to create a balanced outlook that will be familiar to both end-users.

12 — Actually, this criterion depends on the teacher's own initiative either to adapt or to simply stick with the way a particular item or skill is presented in the textbook. However, the book must also try to accommodate the practical constraints that are common to most Malaysian teachers like class size, lack of technical equipment and time. In other words, the content must not be too rigid in format, structure and approach. (Sheldon, 1988).

13 — The content should ideally be graded according to what is being specified by the KBSM English syllabus. The emphasis on 'Integration' should be evident as "it is one way of trying to make language learning in classroom more

like real-life communication outside...'

<div align="right">(Kern. Pendidikan, 1989:76)</div>

Hence, all the language content and skills should be integrated to help teachers to revise and reinforce previously taught language by recycling it in a different way (ibid). In short, the materials should be given a "cumulative and spiral treatment'.

<div align="right">(Yunus & Fernandez, 1987).</div>

=> Language Type (2 criteria)

14 – The language used and taught must be pitched at the target learners' appropriate level, and also, must consider the urban and rural factor of English exposure.

15 – This is an important factor as the language should reflect the 'communicative approach' advocated by the syllabus, hence, the use of 'real-life' 'English, and not artificial language, especially in the dialogues featured.

=> Activities/Exercise (3 criteria)

16 – A very important criterion as pupils will learn and understand better through activities that enable them to communicate like in real life.

17 – Related to the above, the communicative activities/exercises should be adequate so that the pupils can really make full use of their English periods to practice their English (the only time for most pupils to do so).

18 – The availability of revision exercises/units are important for pupils to consolidate what they have learnt, either on their own or in large-group situations.

=> Skills (2 Criteria)

19 – Again, this criterion is included to check on the Integration of the four main skills which is strongly emphasised under the new English KBSM syllabus. The language items should be well-integrated, and not taught in isolation. Also, equal emphasis should be given to all skills, which include aspects of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. This equality and the integration of the skills should be clear throughout the text.

20 – What is meant by 'appropriate skills' here are the extra skills which are useful and related to English language learning, like how to use a dictionary and, skimming and scanning. A good textbook should ideally include these types of skills as they are thought to be appropriate for the pupils at this Form One level.

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[For reasons of brevity, the 15 criteria of the remaining four main language skills would not be detailed here as they are quite self-explanatory and can be referred to from Appendix 1 – pp 5 to 6]

3.3.2 Close Questions

4 close questions and 1 open question are also included in the final part of the questionnaire.   They are basically on the teachers' own general opinions/comments on the textbooks that they are using, as well as the usage of the books in their classrooms. These questions are included so as to provide a back-up support (and in a way, validify) the evaluations that they have done formerly, as well as to provide us with more information on the textbooks themselves. The questions are regarding:

1)   the Teacher's overall satisfaction with their textbooks;

2)   the Teachers' opinions on the success of communicative approach toward:

    (a)   improving their pupils' English, and

    (b)   encouraging the pupils to use English;

3)   the problems they face when using their texts;

4)   the frequency of using 'outside' materials

5)   additional comments from the Teachers, either on their textbooks, or, on the textbook evaluation task itself.

These questions would be elaborated in the analysis of the research findings (Chapter 4).

CHAPTER 4 ▪ FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

This chapter will discuss the results of the questionnaires distributed to the Teachers based on their evaluation of the textbooks that they are using.   The analysis will consist of two main parts:

i)   Comparative Display Forms Analysis;

          (based on the 6 textbooks used by the teachers)

ii)   General comments/opinions of the Teachers about their English textbooks and their

          usage.

From the 55 questionnaires distributed to 15 secondary schools (through my acquaintances who are teaching there), only 38 were returned from 12 schools. Out of the 38, it was found that 5 respondents did not actually fully complete the questionnaire as requested, especially of the textbook evaluation form. Three filled in the MS column only, one just filled in the VS column while the other one left the form only half-completed.

Even though I have tried my best to give clear instructions at the beginning of the questionnaire, as well as to my 'representatives' (either to my colleagues or the Heads of English Department), I have actually anticipated that the above'problem would still occur despite the fact that all the evaluators' (respondents) are fully qualified teachers. One of the evaluators, who was also the Head of English Department at her school, stated in my brief interview with her that, many teachers, especially those who are teaching the Form One pupils, are not actually familiar with the task of critically evaluating the textbook that they are using (like the one in the questionnaire). She added that, although they are qualified and are locally trained in teachers' colleges, they are not much exposed in areas like textbook evaluation, as the upper secondary teachers (of Forms 3 to 5) are, who are mostly university

graduates, either locally or from overseas, Furthermore, although many do voice out their dissatisfactions over their textbooks, this is usually done informally, and very seldom, are they being given the chance to formally discuss critically, and at length, about the problems they face, and the suitability of a particular text for their classroom needs.   Several evaluators also mentioned that it was difficult for them to fill the VS column especially, as they were uncertain of the importance of each criteria. To them, all the criteria were equally important, but the irony was that none of them indicated so in their evaluations.

4.1   **Comparative Display Forms**

As has been discussed earlier in Chapter 3, the textbook evaluation advocated in this research is mainly influenced by Tucker's original work, which appears in his 1975 article entitled "Evaluating Beginning Textbooks'.   Briefly it is based on two rating schemes, each with its own separate scales, i.e. Value Scale (VS)/Weighting – the importance of each criterion to the Teacher; and Merit Scale (MS)/Rating – the extent to which a given textbook satisfies each criterion listed.

To present the results of the two rating schemes, Tucker (1975) has suggested on using a comparative Display Form, which consists of :

a)   a VS column

b)   a list of criteria in evaluation

         (similar to the ones used in the questionnaire)

c)   an MS column

d)   a VMP (Value Merit Product) column.

e)   a VMP graph

'(please refer to Appendix 2)

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The results of the text evaluation which are plotted on the graph, are termed Value Merit Products, i.e. the products of VS scores time MS scores, for each criterion accordingly.

For example, if a Teacher think that the first criterion ('offers overall value for money') as Very Useful (A), this would be equivalent to 3 (refer back to Appendix 1 – pg. 3), and is then multiplied by the MS score of the book itself as rated by the teacher, say 2 ('To some extent'). hence, the VMP score would be 6 for Criteria 1. The score is then transferred on to vertical line number 6 on the graph. For the odd -numbered VMP scores, they are dotted midway in between the even–numbered vertical lines. A line is then drawn, connecting all the dots of VMP scores on the graph. This line graph, which is in blue colour is the actual rating (or 'profile') of a textbook as evaluated by its evaluator.

This profile, will then be compared to the Ideal Profile of the textbook in order to show the extent of difference (or similarities) between the actual text rating and the ideal one. The latter is achieved by multiplying VS (Value Score) as ranked by an evaluator for each criterion by a perfect MS (Merit Score) of 4.   Similarly as before, the VMP score will be transferred and plotted on the graph and a line connecting all the dots of scores will be drawn. (This is the line graph in red).

4.1.1   How to read and interuret the VMP graph

This section is considered essential before one can actually proceed to the textbook analyses because for one who may not be familiar with Tucker's Comparative Display Form (CDF), he/she can actually find it difficult to

interpret the two line graphs displaying the VMP scores of the text analyses and the ideal one.

This is because, unlike the other ordinary graphs, where the rise and fall of the graph lines on the horizontal axis are easily indicated and interpreted, the graph lines in Tucker's CDF are not actually meant to be turned as such (the 'rise' and 'fall's). The purpose of Tucker's display graph is different. Here, the main objective is to compare the book's evaluation with its ideal profile, which means that one would expect to see how far or how near the distance in between the Text Analysed (T.A.) Profile and the Ideal one. In addition to this, note that the two axes, i.e. the VMP scores and the criteria, are also positioned differently than the x and y axes of the usual graphs (refer Fig. 4). This is most probably due to convenient purposes, as it would be easier to list out the criteria vertically than horizontally. The outlook, however, remains the same.

VMP   scores

Tucker's   VMP   graph
(in this CDF)   the common graph
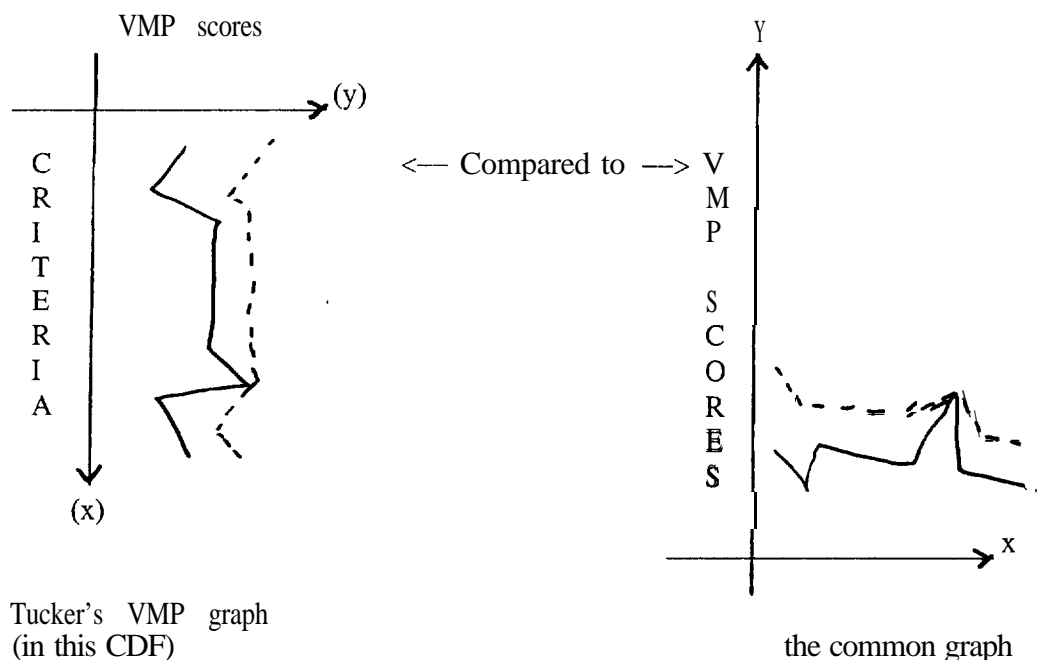
FIG. 4

In terms of interpreting the graph, I am left on my own to make my own
reasonable deduction as no details have been widely published anywhere,
either-by Tucker (1975) himself in the article where his first CDF appeared,
or by anyone else in the English Language Teaching field, on this matter.
The only information that has been much written, is on other related
matters, such as: how to evaluate materials/texts (e.g. Breen & Candlin,
1987); different types of checklists [e.g. Harmer (1983), Sheldon (1988)];
and, how to develop the checklist criteria to suit one's own situation
(Williams, 1983). The list goes on but none on the actual application of
Tucker's Comparative Display Form for any particular textbook evaluation.
(If there was any, most probably the work has not been made widely
available).

However, this does not mean that it is impossible for one to deduce logically of the interpretation of the graph. A careful analysis and a clear understanding of the function of the graph and its components, are necessary before a possible deduction can be made.

Before I proceed to elaborate on the basic terms (which I have coined myself) used quite frequently throughout later discussions, let me just highlight again that two profiles would be compared in the analysis – the Text Analysed (T.A.) profile and the book's Ideal Profile. The position of the Ideal Profile on the graph would always be on the outer side (or can be similar at certain points) of the T.A. Profile. This is so because the ideal VMP scores would always be more (or similar) to VMP scores of the text (the ideal VMP scores involve the highest possible/perfect Merit Score of 4).

When the ideal VMP score meets the books' VMP scores, at the same points, this can mean either an 'overlapping' point/'ideal' criteria, or a 'least important' criteria, if it has a VS of 0. (How this happens will be explained further later). The latter is so called because, just as its name suggests, the criteria is considered as the most unimportant one by the evaluator, and so has given it a 0 for its VS. As for the 'ideal' criteria, which normally happens when it is awarded the highest possible MS of 4, it means, a criteria which is considered the best one (or one of the best ones) for a book. The criteria has reached its optimum score and this situation is sometimes being referred to as having a nil (0) profile difference (or a 'zero' gap).

The size of gap between the two profiles is also another point that we would be analysing when looking at the VMP graph. The criteria which has or have) the narrowest gap (which measures from more than $0/>0$) is considered the strongest point for any one text, i.e. quite near reaching the ideal. On the other hand, any criteria which has the widest gap or biggest number of profile difference for a particular VMP graph, it is termed as the weakest area for the text in analysis. Only criteria which are of significant difference (either 'weak' or 'strong') will be highlighted in the textbook analyses later on (as sometimes, there can be a long list of 'weak'/'strong' criteria, i.e. when many falls under similar category of either one).

The overall position of the T.A. VMP scores is also important. Generally, the VMP scores (as listed in the VMP column) would fall between the range of 0 (the possible lowest) and 12 (the possible highest). This is derived from multiplying both the lowest VS (0) with the lowest MS (0), and the highest VS (3) with the highest MS (4). 6 is regarded as the VMP midpoint. Any points which fall below 6 are considered as low evaluative scores and anything above 6 is vice-versa.

The above are the terms which I will be using when describing the graphs for each of the textbook. However, before this section ends, I would like to highlight the importance of the Value Scale (VS). It plays a major role as it can influence a criterion performance, which in turn, would affect a particular book's overall outlook. This is so because the calculation of Value Merit Product, for both T.A. and Ideal Profile, involves the VS for each criteria. Therefore:

(i)   if VS = 0 (least important), but say, the book deserves MS = 3 for a particular criterion, the T.A. VMP would be 0 (VS times MS). Similarly, the Ideal Profile would also be 0 (VS 0 times Perfect MS 4). As both profiles score 0, it is considered as the, 'least important' criteria.

Below, further examples of other possibilities are given so as to illustrate clearly what one can expect from the VMP graph:

ii)   if VS = 3 (highest), but book does not merit anything (0) for a particular criterion, then:

$$\text{T.A. VMP score} = VS \times MS$$

= 0 (3 X 0) ; but for

$$\text{Ideal Profile VMP Score} = VS \times \text{Perfect MS}$$

= 12 (3 x 4)

This will create a very wide gap with a profile difference of 12 — a WEAK criterion.

iii)   In other cases, say VS = 1, but book scores highly for a certain criterion, say MS = 4 (highest possible), then,

T.A. VMP score = 4 (1 x 4),

and, for Ideal Profile = 4 (1 x 4) (similar VMP scores for both).

This consequently leads to 'overlapping points' where profile difference is 0. Thus, we can say that the criterion has reached its ideal score. (an 'ideal' criterion).

iv) Now, say we change VS to 2, and MS = 4.

Then,

T.A. VMP score = 8 (2 x 4)

and, Ideal profile VMP score = 8 (2 x 4).

Also similar VMP scores for both, which means an overlapping point/ideal criterion. In sum, what can be concluded here is that: if a criterion scores the highest possible MS, i.e. 4, it would automatically be the Ideal criteria with nil profile difference, BUT provided the VS is more than 0. (Otherwise, it would be a 'least important' criteria, as not only it has a nil profile difference, but also a NIL VMP score for both profiles).

4.1.2 Pre-Analysis

As the main purpose of this research is to find out how the Malaysian Form One English textbooks are evaluated by the teachers who are using them, the analysis of the Comparative Display Forms will be the important part of this paper. There are many ways actually to use the display form, especially if the evaluation is of several different books and of several different people's opinions. One of them, as suggested by Tucker, is to

display the opinions of several evaluators who are assessing one similar textbook, on the VMP graph, and these will then be compared to the Ideal Profile of the textbook. Another way is that, if several books are evaluated, different coloured graph lines can be employed to show the profiles of those different books. Similarly, the different profiles will be then contrasted to the Ideal graph line to find out how far or how near the books are from the ideal on any criterion.

(For the purpose of this research however, I have done some slight adaptation to the ones that Tucker has suggested and this will be explained soon.)

Based on the 33 responses from the questionnaires distributed, it is found that only 6 different textbooks are used by those teachers from the 12 different schools; there are actually about four other textbooks which are available for Form One pupils. However, a few of the 6 textbooks used are not well-represented as the questionnaires were distributed at random. It is also difficult to predetermine which actual English textbook is used by which school as no information is available to the public on this matter. Although there is the zoning distribution of textbooks to ensure equal market for all the Form One textbook writers by the Ministry of Education, some schools do not adhere to the prescribed texts due to unforeseen problems like the book's availability in the market or suitability for that particular year of pupils.

Below is the list of textbooks which would be analyses in this research and also, the number of schools using the books:

1) TITIAN BAHASA INGGERIS by Koh Suat Chin

    –   5 schools

2) LAUNCH INTO KBSM ENGLISH by Khong, Lee & Chan

    –   3 schools

3) CREATIVE ENGLISH 1 by S.C. Teoh & C. Nesamalar

    –   1 school

4) HEADSTART 1 by Noor Azlina Yunus & A. Fernandez

    –   1 school

5) INTEGRATED APPROACH to ENGLISH by Bernadette Koay–

    school

6) KBSM NEW WAY ENGLISH by Tan Bee Young

    –   1 school

As can be seen from the list, "TITIAN" happens to be the most represented one but this does not necessarily mean it is the most popular one among the 12 schools.

To analyse the evaluation data of the six textbooks, a comparative display form like Tucker's (1975) would be very useful as it can show us clearly on graphs, how the books are rated. Most importantly, comparisons can be made to see which book (s) is further or closer to each of its Ideal Profile. Tucker's graphic method and rating schemes are also flexible and can be adapted to suit one's particular needs, be it for a large group of evaluators, or a small one. In my case, I have slightly adapted his method of presenting the 33 responses and scoring by using mean evaluation instead. I will outline here briefly how their opinions are dealt with, before presenting them on the display forms, as well as the problems encountered.

After glancing through the evaluative responses of those 33 teachers, it is found that, for several schools, some of their responses were totally similar to one another. This does not reflect individual critical evaluation as I had hoped for initially. Even the open-ended questions have absolutely similar responses. This supports the assumption made by the Head Teacher which is raised previously, that claims many Form One English teachers are not actually very much exposed to evaluating textbooks or materials in general. Most of them, especially the young ones, appear to be very inexperienced when it comes to giving individual own opinions of the subject they teach or the text that they are using. A colleague of mine who acted as my medium, informed me that she really had to go through in details with the Form One teachers at her school on what was actually requested from them for each and every criterion evaluated, as they just could not make anything out of the textbook evaluation task. It seems that they just take for granted the text that they have to use and try to rush through the given syllabus before the exam comes.

In the end, I have decided to use mean evaluation in deriving VMP scores for each school, as well as for each textbook so that the books can-be easily compared. Another reason to justify why I resort to using mean in my analysis is that, it would be almost impossible and difficult to actually compare how the books are rated if the 33 opinions are not narrowed down (decreased) in some way as we are also going to evaluate the performance of 6 texts simultaneously. There would be so much data that we need to analyse that one could actually lose track of the textbook evaluation objective.

The comparisons would not be clearly illustrated due to the differing weights (VS) and ratings (MS) that one can possibly have from the opinions of 33 people (although some do give similar evaluation results). Furthermore, in my opinion, Tucker's Comparative Display Form (CDF) is quite flexible and one can adapt it to suit one's needs appropriately. The six textbooks form the subjects of this paper and hence, it would be clearer if we are able to compare the differences of how the six books are evaluated with their Ideal Profiles through mean evaluation of 33 evaluators, all displayed on six separate VMP graphs. Presentationwise, I think the focus of our analysis would neither be lost(or 'blurred') nor chaotic through this adapted method.

4.1.2a) Mean Evaluation Process

This section will explain how the mean evaluation is used in the process of narrowing down the opinions of the 33 respondents to 12 schools, and to finally, to 6 textbooks presented on 6 CDFs. (refer to Fig. 5) "Launch Into KBSM English" by Khong, Lee and Chan will be used as an example to illustrate the process which will be outlined below. 3 schools are using this text, i.e. SM Seberang Perak (5); SM Gadong (2); and Maktab Mahmud (P) (3). The following steps are applied to transfer the 10 evaluators' responses on "Launch Into.." onto a CDF:-

=>1. The VS scores and MS scores from the returned questionnaires are entered into their respective columns on the display form for each of the respondent.

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55 Questionnaires   Distributed to 15 schools

38 Questionnaires Returned from 12 schools

ONLY 33 USABLE

Results of 33 Analysed and Tabulated Onto

33 Display Forms

MEAN EVALUATION I

(according to schools)

Transferred to 12 CDFs

(for each school)

MEAN EVA. II

(accor. to textbooks)
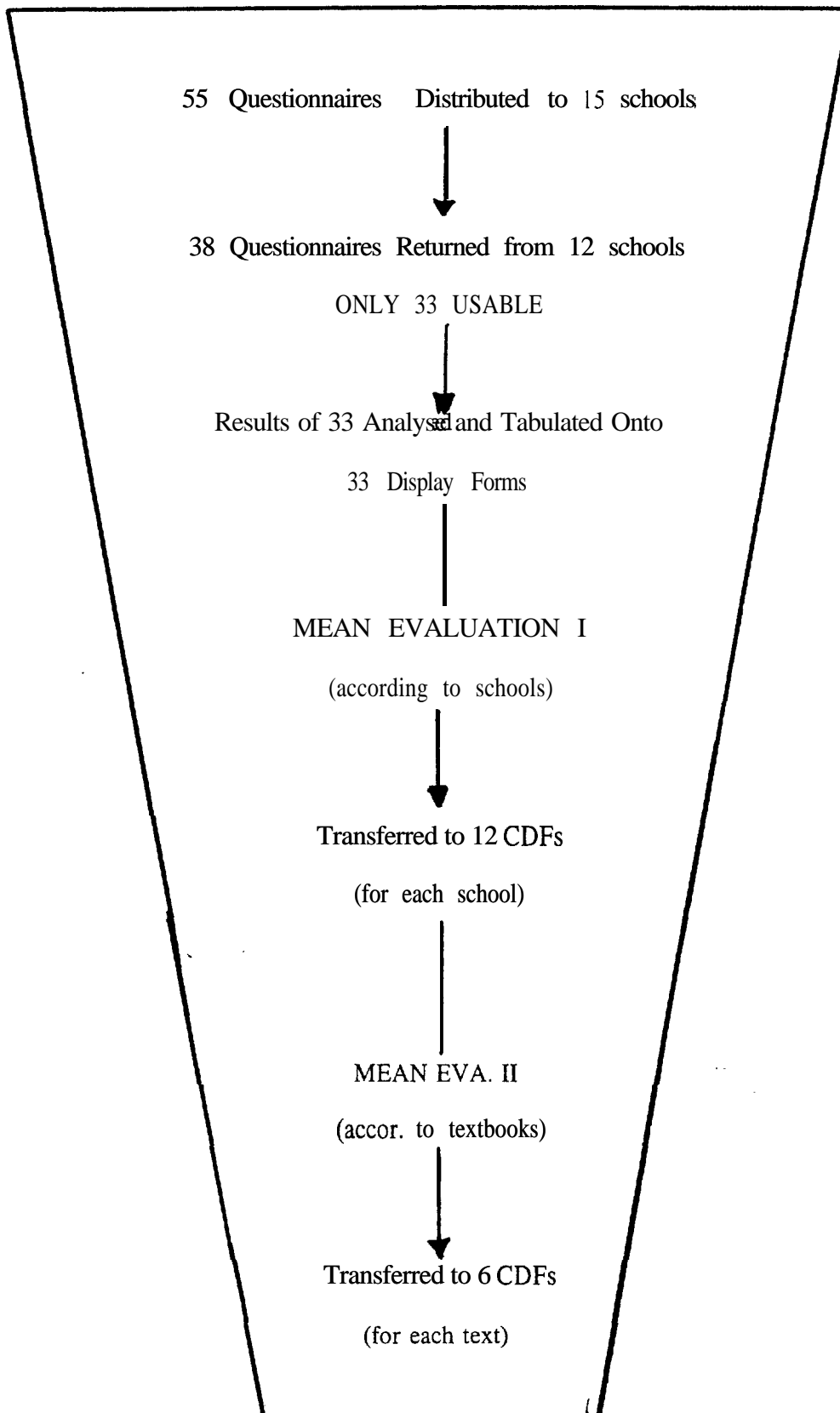
Transferred to 6 CDFs

(for each text)

Fig. 5 —   How Data Is Processed and Analysed Through Mean Evaluations.

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=>2. VS scores are multiplied by MS scores (for each criterion) to get VMP (Value Merit Product) scores. These are listed in the VMP column accordingly.

=>3. These VMP scores are then plotted onto the graph. <u>Blue</u> line is drawn to form a line graph.

=>4. Ideal Profile scores are next calculated, i.e. VS x Perfect Merit Score (4). These are directly plotted onto the corresponding graph lines; there is no Ideal scores column provided. <u>Red</u> line is used to represent the Ideal Profile VMP scores.

=>5. Now, to find the mean (MEAN EVALUATION I) of 10 respondents to represent their school's VMP scores. Let us take SM Seberang Perak as an example which have 5 evaluators. The VS for the 5 evaluators are all totalled up, and then are divided by 5 to find the VS mean for this school. Similar mean calculation method is applied for the MS scores. VS mean scores are then multiplied by MS mean scores to get new VMP mean scores. These, are then plotted onto a new graph and <u>blue</u> line is drawn again to connect all the scores: this would now be SM Seberang Perak's (mean) evaluation profile. An Ideal Profile for the book based on the school's VS means x Perfect merit Score of 4 are also drawn up to compare this with the former mean profile in order to see how the school's textbook is evaluated by the teachers.

The same process of finding Mean Evaluation I (of evaluators) is applied to the other schools which are using similar textbook. This will consequently lead us to 2 other mean CDFs of Maktab Mahmud's and SM Gadong's respective evaluators.

=>6. Hence, we now have 3 mean graphs of 3 different schools for "Launch Into KBSM English". In order to further narrow our scope of analysis, we now need to find the mean for the 3 different schools (Mean Evaluation II) for the textbook used. To do this, the means for all the scores (VS, MS and VMP) of all 3 schools are calculated and tabulated onto another form. And again, through the same process as Mean Evaluation I, the Ideal Profile is calculated. The line graphs, for this (the Ideal), and the former (the 3 schools' mean scores), are plotted and drawn with different colours to show comparison.

This process of finding the means of all the other schools is similarly repeated for the other 5 textbooks. It must be noted here that 4 of the textbooks do not undergo 'MEAN EVALUATION II process' as their evaluations are each represented by one school only, i.e. 1 school per textbook. Mean calculation is only done to the respondents' evaluations of those 4 schools. The 4 textbooks are:

1) CREATIVE ENGLISH I – SM Bukit Bandaraya, K.L.

– (Teoh & Nesamalar)

2) HEADSTART I – SM Sultan Abdul Halim, Kedah

– (Yunus & Fernandez)

3) INTEGRATED APPROACH to ENGLISH – SM St. John, Beaufort.

(Bernadette Koay)

4) KBSM NEW WAY ENGLISH – SM Convent, Alor Setar

(B.Y. Tan)

4.1.3 The Analysis

At the end of our Pre-Analysis, 6 Comparative Display Forms (graphs) have resulted, based on six textbooks used by the respondents of the twelve schools involved. The graphs, each representing one particular textbook, would be analysed separately in the following section, specifically focusing on areas of significant difference and interest between the mean evaluative scores and the ideal ones.

However, prior to that, there is one point that needs to be highlighted here. As the overall objective of this research is to find out how the Malaysian teachers would evaluate and rate their Form One English textbooks using my adapted version of Tucker's CDF, detailed analytical description on the textbook per se (for example, content, skills covered, grammar items taught) would not be included as one would normally expect from the usual textbook review. Instead, only matters which are of relevance to certain criteria (the ones highlighted) would be discussed. Brief factual information

on the textbooks would be given prior to analysing each graph to 'acquaint' the readers with each of the books, as well as two general facts (which follows shortly) relating to ail the books concerned:

a)   The only accompanying material available with the text'is the audio cassette (usually made available to schools only). All textbooks are supposed to have the accompanying audio cassettes with them (as evident in the Teacher guides) but they are now not widely available. Not many of the teachers who are involved in this research knows of its existence in their schools. This shows that the cassette which is meant for listening activities is under used or not used at all.

b)   ALL accompanying Teacher guides have of late been made redundant, that is made out of stock since early 1990s. No more copies of these are available from the book stores and the only ones that may be around are the old-copies that can still be found in the English Department of secondary schools. No one knows for sure why this has been so but according to one textbook supplier, the Ministry is in the process of phasing out the current Form One texts, and new ones of better quality and standard (still under similar KBSM syllabus) would be introduced, perhaps in the next five or six years' time.

I.   **TITIAN BAHASA INGGERIS (1988) by Koh Suat Chin**

Publisher   :   Delta

Prise   RM9

No. of pages   :   281

No. of evaluators: 14

Schools Using Text: i)   S   M   Sultanah Asma –   3

                        ii)   SM   Agama   Melor   –   2

                        iii)   SM   Pulau   Nyior   –   4

                        iv)   SM Changlun   –   2

                        v)   SM Beaufort   –   3

The distinguished title of this textbook – "TITIAN BAHASA
INGGERIS", which is in bahasa Malaysia, implies the idea of a
bridge as a stepping stone to the Malaysian pupils when learning
English. ('Titian' means 'bridge'). Language learning, specifically
English, is seen as "a stepping stone to the acquisition of knowledge
in other disciplines" (Koh Suat Chin, 1988 : vi).

Looking at the VMP graph of the book's mean evaluation (see
Appendix 2), one can clearly note the absence of any 'overlapping
point' or 'least important' criteria as the gap is quite obvious
between the two profiles. It measures between the range of 2 (the
nearest to the Ideal scores) and 6 (the farthest one) VMP **scores.**
None of the scores for the $T.A_i$ profile goes beyond the mid-score
mark (6). They are all either below 6 or at 6. This indicates that
the book has generally scored quite low and is quite far from

reaching the ideal profile, though none of its criteria reaches the lowest VMP point, which is 0. (The lowest scored is 2).

Three criteria, or areas, have been identified as the weakest points for "TITIAN" (the ones which have the widest gap) and they are:

a)   Availability of supplementary materials (Criteria 5);

b)   Guidance of language item and skills (Criteria 10);

c)   Appropriate progression (Criteria 13)

The last two have been given the highest possible weighting by the teachers who use "TITIAN", as seen from their VS scores (3), but not for the book's merits. This shows that the two Criteria are thought to be important for an English textbook as pupils in Malaysia, who mostly view English as a foreign language, do need some detailed guidance on English and its usage, and a good progression of teaching, from simple, common English structures to more complicated ones, is essential to ensure the pupils' success in learning English. However, it seems that the book falls short in these areas as proved by its low MS of 2. Meanwhile, what can be said for Criteria 5, i.e. 'availability of supplementary materials', is that, it supports the fact that no materials are actually provided to act as backup supports for the text.

As for the book's positive (or 'strong') criteria, that is, where the gap between the two profiles is at its narrowest, there is no specific criterion that can be highlighted and this is because, there are too many criteria which fails, under this category. Out of 35 criteria

listed, about 12 have a gap difference of 2 for the text being analysed. They are as follows:

a)   Value for money (Criteria 1);

b)   Reflects KBSM objectives (Criteria 3);

c)   Adequate guidance for Teachers (may be based on the old copy which is still available) (Criteria 4);

d)   'User friendly' (for Pupils) (Criteria 6);

e)   Good content layout (Criteria 8);

f)   Culturally related to Pupils (Criteria 11);

g)   Possibility for modification & exploitation (Criteria 12);

h)   Well-integrated (Skills) (Criteria 19);

i)   Completeness of presentation (Pronunciation) (Criteria 27);

j)   Related to taught structures & vocabulary (Writing) (Criteria 28);

k)   Availability of different types of comprehension (Criteria 32);

l)   Selective Passages with appropriate vocabulary level. (Criteria 34).

The obvious dividing gap, no 'ideal criteria' and the fact that all of its evaluated VMP scores are just at or below 6, show that, in general, Koh Suat Chin's textbook is not actually very popular with the teachers in all the 5 schools which use this text as their main source of teaching reference.

II.   CREATIVE ENGLISH (1987) by Teo S.C. & C. Nesamalar

Publisher   :   Pena Modal

Price   RM7.20

No. of Pages :   220

No. of evaluators: 2

School Using Text: SM Bukit Bandaraya

This is one of the four textbooks that does not go through MEAN EVALUATION II process as it is unfortunately, represented by one school. Again, the graph presents us quite a similar picture to that of "TITIAN'S", where there is a considerable gap between the two profiles. It also does not have any 'overlapping point' and the gap measurement here is from 1 to 6. (see Appendix 3).

The area which has the widest gap (profile difference of 6) is again, Criteria S – 'Availability of supplementary materials' (similar to "TITIAN"). Here, the criterion is considered as 'Quite Useful' by the evaluators (VS -3) but the book deserves only on MS 2 when evaluated. This indicates that the evaluators are not actually very satisfied with the quality of the material, i.e. the audio cassette, albeit essential for English language learning. Other weaker areas of the book which are worth mentioning here as having a profile difference of 5 are:

a)   Criteria 17   – Adequacy of practice and exercises

b)   Criteria 18   – Availability of consolidation exercises

c)   Criteria 24 – Appropriate word load (Vocabulary)

d)   Criteria 25 – Appropriate (vocab.) presentation in meaningful context

e)   Criteria 30 – Adequate step-by-step guidance (Writing)

f)   Criteria 35 – Various styles of passages (Reading)

On the other hand, Criteria 1 ('Value-for-money') is the only area that the book excels in as it has the smallest number of profile difference – 1. (The statement 'value-for-money' means a book which offers quality, in terms of durability and price). The book is actually quite cheap compared to other books in the market but in terms of durability, the quality is actually quite similar to the others (i.e. of average high quality) This is further supported by Criteria 7, where the book also offers 'good editing and publishing' quality. Criteria 7 is one of the other three areas which have the next narrowest gap, measuring a profile difference of 2. The remaining two are:

a)   Criteria 26 –   Adequacy of (pronunciation) practice.

b)   Criteria 27 – Completeness of (pronunciation) presentation.

Generally, most of the VMP, scores are of a mixture, mostly ranging either below or at midpoint 6. Very few exceeds VMP 6; there are only four criteria that do (refer back Appendix 3). This, coupled with the presence of the considerable wide gap for almost

all of the evaluative criteria, actually conclude that, Teoh's and Nesamalar's "Creative English 1" is also not very much favoured by its evaluators; hence, a similar low evaluative outlook to that of "TITIAN".

III.   **LAUNCH INTO KBSM ENGLISH (1987) by Khong, Lee & Chan**

Publisher   Eastview

Price   RM8.60

No. of Pages   272

No. of Evaluators   :   10

Schools Using Text   :   i) Malctab Mahmud (P) ‑ 3

                                 ii) SM Seberang Perak ‑ 5

                                 iii) SM Gadong   - 2

From the VMP Graph of this textbook (see Appendix 4), the gap that exists between the T.A. Profile and the Ideal one is not as distinct as that of the previous two, as the gap range varies from 0 to 4. It is worth noting that the zero difference mentioned here must not be mistaken as an 'overlapping point' as has been defined previously. Here, the scored VMP point is actually 0, and it is for Criteria 5, i.e. 'Availability of supplementary materials'. The criterion scored nil for its VS (as it is regarded the 'least important' one by the teachers), and very low for its MS. i.e. 1.

With regards to the VMP scores of the textbook profile, they are quite similar to "CREATIVE ENGLISH", where nearly all lies

below, or at, the midpoint 6, except for Criteria 3 and 7: 'reflects KBSM objectives' (8 VMP score) and 'quality of editing & publishing' (9 VMP score).

Criteria 7 is actually one of the strong points of the textbook, together with Criteria 13 ('appropriate progression'), as both have a profile difference of 1. In other words, these evaluative areas are where the gaps are at their narrowest. As for the text's weakest area, the criterion concerned here is Criteria 25 – 'Appropriate presentation in meaningful contexts' for Vocabulary, where the gap measurement is 4. This is then followed closely by these 3 other criteria, which have a profile difference of 3:

a)   Criteria 12 –   'Possibility   f o r (t e x t)
                              modification';
b)   Criteria 19 –   '(Skills) well-integrated'
c)   Criteria 20 –   'Availability of other useful
                              communicative skills'.

I am actually uncertain why the criteria above, especially Criteria 25, is evaluated as the weakest area for this particular textbook, as the words taught are all related to the theme/topic of each learning unit, and are not presented in isolation. In this text, the words are introduced first in each unit's reading passage where they are underlined in order to show the pupils their usage.

(It is worthwhile to note here that, it is actually difficult for me to comment and prove whether the above type of results are true or not, as they are evaluated by the Teachers. They are the ones who use and know the books thoroughly. This is considered as one of

the weaknesses of this type of systematic close checklist. Quantitative data is easily collated but there is no prove or additional information to check the truth of the data. Compare this to Harmer's (1991) material evaluation form and Sheldon's (1988) textbook evaluation sheet where spaces are provided for evaluators to give comments. Then again, evaluators may not make full use of these provided spaces, and moreover, this kind of subjective data may be difficult to quantify. Another possible alternative which is actually time-consuming, is to do follow-up interview–cum–discussion with the teachers concerned in order to find out the justification of their evaluation).

On the whole, "Launch Into KBSM English" has quite a low VMP scores as evaluated by the 10 teachers, albeit not very far towards reaching the Ideal Profile for some of its criteria. Compared to "CREATIVE ENGLISH", this one is slightly better as the gap between the profiles is narrower.

IV.   **HEADSTART I (1987) by Noor Azlina Yunus & A. Fernandez**

Publisher   Fajar Bakti

Price   RM7.20

No. of Pages   187

No. of Evaluators   :   3

School Using Text   :   SM Sultan Abdul Halim, Jitra

A narrow gap, measuring between 1 and 4, like that of "Launch Into...",is evident from' the VMP graph of "HEADSTART I'.

Again, there is no 'ideal criteria' and no 'least important' criteria for this text. (see Appendix 5).

Three criteria which have been identified as the weakest areas of the book for having the biggest score of profile difference of 4 are:

a)   Criteria 13 –   'Appropriate progression' (Subject & Content)

b)   Criteria 23 –   'Clear examples of required responses' (Grammar)

c)   Criteria 24 –   'Appropriate word load' (Vocabulary)

Glancing through the text content, I am again uncertain here whey the above three have been listed as the weakest points, especially for Criteria 23 and 24. All the grammatical items in the book, which are termed 'Language Points' by the authors, have all clear examples at the beginning of each exercise which guide the pupils of what they are expected to say and do. @lease refer to Appendix 8).

As for the Vocabulary load of the text, one can look of the sample (partial) vocabulary list in Appendix 9 and judge of   on their appropriacy to Malaysian pupils at this level. In may opinion, nearly all of the words listed are quite easy and of every day common words, compared to "KBSM NEW WAY ENGLISH" by B. Y. Tan (which will be discussed later on). Anyway, all textbook

writers which are commissioned by the Ministry of Education, have to follow a similar specific guideline for each area covered in their book, including the new vocabulary that should be taught, (refer to Appendix 10 p. 15). It is then, up to the writers to choose the number of words from the list so as to incorporate those words into their dialogues and reading passages for each unit. In other words, the vocabulary taught in one book, may be more or less similar to another one.

The same could be said of Criteria 13. All Form One text writers have to cover similar structural items and it is again, up to them to decide which one should be in Unit One and so on. The syllabus should steer away from the traditional steeply graded syllabus and be progressively integrated instead. The new curriculum (KBSM) places emphasis on communicative approach and all current texts have units which are thematically linked. The four language skills, which also include the sound system, grammar and vocabulary, are taught integratively through these thematic units. These skills are then, to be "built up cumulatively and treated in a spiral manner so that repetition and constant use will maximise learning". (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 1987). Even though the language material in this book is given a "cumulative and spiral treatment: (Yunus & Femandez, 1987 : iii), there is actually a "careful control of the level of difficulty" (ibid). And this therefore, should not lead to a problem of 'inappropriate progression' as claimed by the teachers.

As for the book's points of strength, these are the ones which have been identified:

a) Criteria 4 -- Adequate guidance for Teachers. (Perhaps, this is based from the old one which may still be available and is

used by the evaluators)

b) Criteria 10 -- Guidance of language items and skills. (Clear step-by-step guidance is given for nearly all kinds of exercises) -- refer Appendix 11

c) Criteria 18 -- Availability of consolidation exercises. (Evident from the Revision Units).

d) Criteria 27 -- Completeness of presentation. (PRONUNCIATION) (The book covers similar pronunciation items as the others BUT it also provides brief but good explanation on how the sounds are made and stressed

(which should be part of the presentation) – refer Appendix 11.

e) Criteria 32 – Availability of different types of comprehension.
(READING)
(a variety of comprehension exercises are available, ranging from 'fill-in-the blanks', short Questions, 'True//false' statements, multiple choice Qs, and etc.)

Finally, the VMP scores for the analyses text is also of a mixture of below, at, and above 6. There are three criteria which score above 6 VMP score, and only eleven which score below 6, much fewer than all the previous books discussed. This indicates that this book is much better compared to the other three books, though it still cannot be considered as one of the best yet, as it does not have any 'ideal criteria' at all.

V. KBSM NEW WAY ENGLISH (1987) by Tan Bee Young

Publisher   Jacaranda Buku

Price   RM8.60

No. Of Pages   269

No. Of Evaluators   :   2

School Using Text   :   SM Convent Alor Setar

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The displayed evaluation of this textbook as can be noted from the VMP graph (see Appendix 6) seems to be improving compared to the previous 4 graphs that have been analysed. This is so because, apart from the discerned narrow gap between the T.A. Profile and the Ideal one, which measures from 0 to 2, this book has <u>6</u> 'ideal' criteria (the ones with 'overlapping points') and no 'least important' criteria.

The six ideal ones, which score the highest possible MS point of 4 are:

a)   Criteria 4   —   Adequate guidance for Teachers

b)   Criteria 6   —   'User-friendly' (for Pupils)

c)   Criteria 8   —   Good content layout

d)   Criteria 14   –   Appropriate language level

e)   Criteria 16   —   Meaningful communicative activities

f)   Criteria 33   Passages related to pupils'

All, are some of the very important criteria which should be considered when evaluating a textbook, and it seems this textbook has nearly quite achieved the ideal outlook of how a good text

should be (though this is not conclusive yet). As for Criteria 4, what can again, be assumed here is that, the Teacher Guide (which I could not get access to) must be actually very good to achieve such a high MS score, and may still be used by the school Form One teachers.

This text, however, has no specific weak points (the ones with the biggest profile difference) as all the remaining criteria can be considered as to fall in this category, i.e. have a profile difference of 2 (which is actually quite small, and thus, not very significant). As for the VMP scores (for text analysed), they are overall much better than the others so far, as nearly all are above or at midpoint 6, and only three criteria are below the VMP middle score.

IV. **ENGLISH · AN INTEGRATED APPROACH (1987) by Bernadette Koay**

Publisher   : Longman

Price   RM7.80

No. of Pages   197

No. of Evaluators   :   2

School Using Text   :   SM St. John, Beaufort

The outlook for this book is quite similar to the "KBSM New Way English" when we compare the two VMP graphs on the Comparative Display Form (see Appendix 7). The narrow gap between the two profiles measures between 0 and 3. The book has

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no 'least important' criteria but 8 ideal ones, and they are as follows:

a) Criteria 3 — Reflects KBSM objectives

b) Criteria 8 — Good content layout

c) Criteria 11 — Culturally related to Pupils
                    (SUBJECT & CONTENT)

d) Criteria 13 — Appropriate progression
                    (SUBJECT & CONTENT)

e) Criteria 22 — Adequacy of structural model and
                    pattern display

f) Criteria 23   Clear examples of required
                    responses. (GRAMMAR)

g) Criteria 30 — Adequate step by step guidance.
                    (WRITING)

h) Criteria 31 — Exposure to different types of
                    writing.

`

(Some examples to illustrate certain criteria of the above (Criteria 22 & 30) can be referred to from Appendix 12).

The weakest criteria which has a profile difference of 3 is Criteria 20 — 'Availability of other useful communicative skills.' Again, like Tan's textbook, nearly all VMP scores are above or at 6 (midpoint). 12 criteria are below 6 while 8 criteria are above 6. This may actually seem that this text is slightly below the standard when compared to Tan's "NEW WAY", it has more below-six criteria. However, as we will see from the total of all MS scores

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for the six textbooks, it is Koay's text which stands out to be the best among all. This will be further elaborated in the next section.

(N.B.: Truthfully speaking, the results of the analysis (of the ratings) are a bit surprising as I personally would have thought "NEW WAY ENGLISH" would be the best as there is strong evidence of this throughout the content of the book, which covers all the listed evaluative criteria. However, as have been mentioned many times before, the results are subjected to the participating teachers' evaluation, and NOT of my personal opinion.)

4.1.4 Summary of Findings

To sum up what has been discussed in the analysis above, please refer to the list below to see the general outlook of each book's performance. It must be stated that:

i) the size of the gap between the Text Analysed and the Ideal Profiles;

ii) the number of 'overlapping points' or 'ideal' criteria;

iii) the overall positions of the VMP scores (of T.A), either below, at, or above 6, including the total number for each category (<6/6/>6), are all taken into consideration when deciding the rating positions for the six textbooks. Below is the summary in the best ascending order:

Sixth — TITIAN (K.S. Chin)

— a clear dividing gap, measuring between 2 (the narrowest and 6 (the widest).

— clearly ALL VMP scores for text is below or at midpoint 6. (< 6)

— thus, <u>no</u> ideal criteria and <u>no</u> 'least important' criteria (where VS = 0)

Fifth — CREATIVE ENGLISH 1 (Teo & Nesamalar)

— a similar gap to TITIAN's is present, ranging between 1 and 6 (which is quite wide).

— however, VMP scores for text are slightly better, as they are a mix of either below, at, or above 6.
[< 6 — 14 criteria; > 6 — only 4 criteria]
no ideal criteria and no 'least important' criteria.

Fourth — LAUNCH INTO KBSM ENGLISH I (Khong, Lee & Chan)

quite a narrow dividing gap, measuring from 0 to 4.

— 0 because of 1 'least important' criteria, where its VS = 0, and NOT as an ideal criteria.

— VMP scores for text analysed is also a mixture: below, at, or above 6.
[< 6 — 29 criteria (quite a lot); > 6 — only 2 criteria]

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Third –   HEADSTART I (N.A. Yunus & A. Fernandez)

–   Also a narrow gap like "Launch Into...". measuring from 1 – 4 VMP scores.

–   <u>no</u> ideal criteria and <u>no</u> 'least important' criteria.

–   VMP scores for Text Analyses is also a mixture of below, at, or above 6. However, the number of 'below 6' criteria is fewer than "Launch Into...".
[< 6 – 11 criteria: > 6 – only 3 criteria]

Second –   KBSM NEW WAY ENGLISH (Tan Bee Young)

a narrow gap is evident, between 0 and 2.

no 'least important' criteria but have <u>6</u> ideal criteria.

–   VMP scores are much better than all the previous texts as <u>nearly all</u> criteria have points of at, or above   6.

–   only 3 criteria are below the midpoint.
[< 6 – 3 criteria; > 6 – 6 criteria]

First   –   INTEGRATED APPROACH TO ENGLISH (Berdanette Keoy)

–   a narrow gap can <u>alos</u> be discerned, measuring between 0 and 3.

–   no 'least important' criteria but have 8 ideal ones.

–   nearly all VMP scores are also at, or above 6.
[< 6 – 12 criteria; > 6 – 8 criteria]

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The final point made above of "INTEGRATED APPROACH" may seem to present us with a poor outlook as it has more 'below 6 – criteria' than "KBSM NEW WAY ENGLISH", and in fact, even more than "HEADSTART I". However, as has been aforementioned, all aspects of the graph would be taken into account, and in the end, it seems that the one with the more ideal criteria has the advantage, and this, consequently, put Koay's textbook as the best one evaluated among the six.

To actually prove whether the above book rating, which is solely judged by analysing the graph display and the evaluative scales involved, I have attempted to calculate the total of Merit Scale points for each book, and have discovered that the above is true. (refer to Table 3).

"Integrated Approach to KBSM" is the best book evaluated as it has the highest total MS scores, as well as the best VMP Scores. The second best book is "KBSM NEW WAY ENGLISH", followed by "HEADSTART" by Yunus and Fernandez. On the fourth position is "Launch Into..." with a total MS scores of 87.5. "CREATIVE ENGLISH" is Number 5 and finally, "TITIAN" comes out as the most poorly evaluated book, as well as the one which has the lowest MS total. The results of this rating are based only on the evaluations of the teachers who participate in this research, which are actually of a small number and do not represent the evaluations of all teachers in Malaysia who are using the same six textbooks. Therefore, the rating that is presented in Table 3 should not be generalised for similar textbooks in other contexts or situations.

TABLE 3 : RAW TOTAL OF MS SCORES AWARDED TO EACH TEXTBOOK ANALYSED
(in ascending order)

Textbook Area of Criteria	TITIAN	CREATIVE	LAUNCH INTO...	HEADSTART	NEW WAY	INTEGRATED APPROACH
PRACTICALITY (6)	15	14.5	13.5	17	20	18.5
PHYSICAL (3)	7	8	9.5	9	9	10.5
SUBJECT AND CONTENT (4)	10	10	11	11	12	14
LANGUAGE TYPE (2)	4	5	5.5	6	7	6.5
ACTIVITIES/EXERCISE (3)	6	6.5	7	9	10	8.5
SKILLS (2)	5	5.5	5	6	6	6
GRAMMAR (3)	6	7	7.5	7	7	11
VOCABULARY (2)	4	4	5.5	5	6	6.5
PRONUNCIATION (2)	5	6	4.5	5	6	6.5
WRITING (4)	9	8.5	8	12	12	14.5
READING (4)	10	9	10.5	12	13	10.5
TOTAL (140)	81	84	87.5	99	108	113
	6th	5th.	4th.	3rd.	2nd.	1st.

N.B   i)   The total Perfect Merit Scale Scores for ALL 35 Criteria are 140 (4 x 35 = 140)

       ii)   For convenience purposes, the 35 Criteria on the Comparative Display Form have been Decreased to 1 I (total of main Area of Criteria).

The justification is quite obvious of why total scores of the books' MS scores are used. These are the actual merit points that are awarded for each book according to the criteria in evaluation. They indicate to us what a book deserves in the judgment of its evaluators. Value Scale scores, contrarily, are irrelevant in a way, as they do not give us any indication whatsoever, of the book's own performance. Although the teachers have to weigh their (criteria) importance in relation to the book evaluated, VS scores are not, actually subjected to the book per se, as MS is.

4.2   **Comments on the Textbooks and Their Usage**

In this part, I would present the percentage results of the responses from the
evaluators (teachers) to the questions posed at the end of my questionnaire. They
were included in order to provide me with more information on the teachers'
general feelings toward their textbooks and the usage. Basically, there are four
questions asked, in which the teachers have to tick the appropriate responses given,
and to give some of their comments as well, in the spaces provided. The last, fifth
question (an open-ended), is just to give them more space (and opportunity) to
voice out other points which might not have been touched upon previously. (please
refer Appendix 1 – pp.. 6 to 7) The four questions mentioned above are regarding:

1)   the Teachers' overall satisfaction with their texts;
2)   the Teachers' opinions on the success of communicative approach toward:
      a)   improving their pupils' English, and
      b)   encouraging the pupils to use English;
3)   the problems they face when using their texts;
4)   the frequency of using 'outside' materials in the Teachers' English classes.

The results of these four questions will be elaborated individually below, but as for
the 'additional comments' – question, only 3 out of 33 evaluators have responded;
the rest have left it blank. Even though these 3 responses may seem too negligible
for one to make an overall generalisation, I will, nevertheless, highlight them in my
overall conclusion of this second part of the chapter later.

Also included here, are the findings to one of the general details queried at the
beginning of the questionnaire which asks on who actually selects the textbook for

the school concerned. (At the time of designing the questionnaire, I did not know about the textbook regional zoning system, as this is made known only to those who are involved directly with the textbook production and distribution). Given the responses from the teachers, almost all (except for two) do not involve any English teachers in the selection of the textbooks, apart from the English key personnel, e.g. Heads of English Department.   The texts are either determined solely by the local/state education authorities, or with the school Heads of English.

This perhaps reflects clearly the aforementioned zoning system, where even though few books have been pre-determined by the central (and state) educational authorities to be used, say, in the Northern region, the schools (via the English Heads) can still have a final say to choose between the limited few allocated for their region. However, two schools claim that their English teachers, together with the Heads of English, and the local educational authority, are actually involved in the selection. The findings are as follows:

1.	SM Sultanah Asma	
2.	SM St. John's	
3.	SM Beaufort	LOCAL EDUCATIONAL
4.	SMK Gadong	AUTHORITY
5.	SM Agama Melor	
6.	SM Changlun	LOCAL EDUCATIONAL
7.	SM Convent	AUTHORITY &
8.	SM Seberang Perak	HEADS OF ENGLISH
9.	SM Sultan Abdul Halim	DEPARTMENT
10.	Maktab Mahmud (P)	
11.	SM Pulau Nyior	ALL THE ABOVE
12.	SM Bukit Bandaraya	+ ENGLISH TEACHERS

(A summary of which textbook is used by which school, as well as the number of evaluators, can be referred to from Table 4 . This should act as a guide to the readers as I will be referring to the texts and the schools frequently in my next section.)

4.2.1   Teachers' satisfaction with textbooks

[Q: Are you overall satisfied with the textbook and its use in the classroom, with regards to your own pupils?]

The reason why this question is asked directly after the textbook evaluation task, is that, it is to check and prove whether the response that is given here

School	No. Of Evaluators	= > (Total)	Textbook Used
SM St. John, Beaufort	2	=> 2	Integrated Approach to English (B. Koay)
SM Convent, Alor Setar	2	=> 2	KBSM New Way English (Tan Bee Young)
SM Sultan Abdul Halim, Jitra	3	=> 3	Headstart 1 (Noor Azlina Yunus and A. Femandez)
Maktab Mahmud (P), Alor Setar SM Seberang Perak, Alor Setar SMK Gadong, Sabah	3 5 2	=> 10	Launch into KBSM English (Khong, Lee and Chan)
SM Bukit Bandaraya, Kuala Lumpur	2	=> 2	Creative English (Teo, S.C. and C. Nesamalar)
SM Sultanah Asma, Alor Setar SM Agama Melor, Kelantan SM Pulau Nyior, Jitra SM Changlun, Kedah SM Beaufort, Sabah	3 2 4 2 3	=> 14	Titian Bahasa Inggeris (Koh Suat Chin)
= 12		= 33	= 6

TABLE 4 : A SUMMARY OF THE TEXTBOOKS AND THEIR EVALUATORS (ranked from highly rated ——> poorly rated)

would in any way, indicate some similarity to the evaluation of the textbook completed previously. The presumption here is, if the evaluator feels dissatisfied with his/her textbook, then the text evaluation scores would have to be low. If the answer is positive, then the text evaluation scores would be vice-versa.

On the whole, a majority of 57% of the teachers who complete the evaluation expresses their satisfaction toward the textbooks that they are using, while the other 43% do not. There is actually, some discrepancy here about the percentage figures because logically, those who should feel satisfied are the ones who have given high evaluative scores to the textbooks that they are using. These texts can be roughly termed as the three best scorers from all the analyses that have been made before. However, the number of evaluators who assess the top three books are only 7 out of 33. (refer Table 4) This only makes up about 2 1%, and not 57% as pointed above. Certain number of evaluators of some schools must have 'deviated' or give contradicting response to what they have just evaluated.

It is discovered that the total number of those who 'deviate' is 12, and this explains why there is such a big percentage of those who are satisfied, when the actual reality is different. 7 "TITIAN" evaluators, 1 for "CREATIVE ENGLISH" and 4 for "LAUNCH INTO..", have all claimed to be satisfied with their textbooks; their textbooks are actually the bottom three scorers. No plausible reason can be given to support this evidence as there is no comments at all given by the evaluators who have ticked 'YES'. What we can assume here is that, perhaps these evaluators do not actually realise that their overall evaluation (both fof VS and MS scores) outlook would turn out

to be low as there is a range of scale that they can choose from, either for the VS weighting or the MS rating. None of them has actually given a constant low score of say, 1, for all the criteria listed; most of the time the scores vary.

As for the 43% who have responded 'NO', most of them have given the reasons of "insufficient exercises" and "unsuitable content" for their dissatisfaction. Two contrasting opinions on the same textbook of "TITIAN" are found to be quite interesting as they show that the text is actually not very suitable for both rural and urban pupils.
Here are the two opinions given:

SM Beaufort :	"Not suitable for rural pupils or those
(a rural school)	who lack basic grammar.. . . will benefit certain level
	of students only". (It implies that the book is quite
	difficult).

SM Sultanah Asma:	"Content not too challenging and
(an urban school)	language used quite easy... exercises are too
	simple. "

Of course, these are only part of individuals' comments from two different schools and the comments they make are not necessarily representatives for all urban and for all rural schools in Malaysia.

4.2.2   The success of communicative approach according to the Teachers
[Q: Do you think that the current 'communicative' approach reflected

in the textbook has been successful toward:

a)   improving your students' English on the whole?

b)   encouraging them to use more English (inside/outside classroom)?]

There are two parts to this question as stated above and we shall be looking at them one by one. This question is asked to the teachers in order to find out what they think of the learning concept behind the new syllabus and curriculum.   The approach itself is not actually very new as the new curriculum of KBSM (and KBSR -- for primary schools) itself. However, in the New Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools (as well as for the Primary), the approach is being more emphasised through the integration of teaching the four language skills in English. Proficiency in English, especially in basic, everyday situations is the target aim of the new curriculum.

However, ever since the implementation of the KBSM, many teachers have criticised on its credibility, as well as, its suitability in the Malaysian context of learning English. Although English is seen as "the second most important language" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 1988b) to Bahasa Malaysia, its importance is only evident in urban settings. To many pupils and people who are living in the rural, and even in the semi-rural areas, English is more like a foreign language to them.   They just could not imagine themselves as to having to speak in English when dealing with basic, every day situations as featured in the new KBSM English textbooks. **To** prove whether the above claim is true or not, we will now see what the teachers generally feel about the adopted 'communicative approach', and its

effects to their pupils English.

a)   Improving Students' English

Surprisingly, 57% agree that the approach reflected in their textbook does help their students to improve their English, while 39% say it does not. (and 1 person say 'I don't know') However, many of those who view the approach positively say that the improvement is actually not that much (average) and only affects those pupils who are already good in English and those who have interest.   As for those who claim that the approach in the new KBSM does not actually have any effect on their pupils' English, the general comments that can be gauged from their responses is that the approach is basically successful in their pupils' oral skills, but not the others (especially writing). Their pupils' performance in English is viewed as not as good as the ones before the KBSM (& KBSR) is implemented because the current approach does not focus solely on the 'basics', i.e. grammar rules as it was done before in the traditional method.

b)   Encouraging The Pupils To Use English

There is an equal response to this question as 50% have said – "Yes, it does" and 50% have said "No, it doesn't". One of the teachers who gives a positive response comments that pupils are encouraged to use English, even if it is only in the classroom during

the English lessons, because there are many extra activities in the textbook that help them to practise their English. (The teacher is from SM Beaufort, Sabah (a rural school) and is using "TITIAN"). This comment is echoed by the teacher of SM Pulau Nyior, (a semi-urban) which is also using similar textbook, when she says that more discussions are held with pupils due to the activities available in the text.

On the other hand, one of the comments given by the other half who responded 'NO' to the question, is that there are inadequate examples of dialogues in the text that can be used as an example/model for the pupils to use English in class. (This comment is from Maktab Mahmud (P) which is using "Launch Into...") And another comment form SM Agama Melor, which also voices the same overtone over the dialogue models available in their textbook ("TITIAN") states that "the model used in too easy and artificial".

Overall, the responses to the two questions are quite surprising and interesting as they show the teachers' positive outlook and confidence in the new integrated (or familiarly known as 'communicative approach') advocated by the KBSM. It contradicts the general Malaysian, teachers sentiments on this matter which have been written and published many times in the local newspapers, especially when comparing their latest PMR (Lower Secondary Assessment) exam English results to the previous year's. In terms of pupils' English improvement, a majority agrees that the

'communicative approach' does help them to improve to some extent, whereas for encouraging the use of English, the response is equally divided on the matter.

4.2.3   Problems/Constraints When Using The Textbooks

[Q: Do you have any particular problems/constraints that may, in any way, restrict you to use the textbook effectively with your pupils?]

This question is posed in order to investigate the usage of the Form One textbooks in the classroom, specifically looking for any problems that the teachers might face during their teaching. I have given some ideas as to the kinds of problems that can occur but the teachers are free to add/substitute with other problems that have not been listed in the answer.

75% of the teachers admit that they do face some problems when using their textbooks and the major problems seem to be as follows:

1)   due to time constraint

2)   class is too large (too many pupils per class)

3)   lack A.V.A. equipment, like Overhead Projectors, cassette players, and even power mains socket.

4)   pupils' poor language proficiency.

[Most of the above problems are similar to the ones encountered by teachers interviewed by Mitchell (1988) in her study on the problems they faced when trying to implement an communicative approach syllabus.]

The first problem given above, which is the most popular problem cited by the teachers involved in this research , is actually a traditional, common renowned problem faced by many teachers in Malaysia. Especially with the recent emphasis on developing pupils' communicative competence through the suggested activities in the textbooks, and coupled with the still influential exam-oriented system (under the new curriculum, we are now gradually steering away from too much relying on it), time constraint is still one of the most crucial demands experienced by many English teachers.

Malaysian education system has long been known to be very exam-oriented. There are usually two exams during a school semester (year) which are the mid- and the final exams, and in between there are usually a number of class tests given out monthly. Usually, the teachers' main priority would be to cover as much of the syllabus as they can in order to prepare their pupils for the yearly final exams. However, in the rush of their doing so, quite often the pupils' needs and understanding of the content have not been taken into account, and in the end, the pupils are lost and are left behind. Now, with the new Integrated Curriculum, the number of language items to be taught have all been standardised, as can be seen from the Content pages of all the textbooks concerned, as well as from the Form One English Syllabus Specifications. However, as our results have shown, the teachers still find that there is not much time to cover the average 24 units thoroughly with their pupils, either for those who are teaching in the rural or in the urban schools.

And I think this can be attributed to the problem of low English proficiency among the pupils, which in a way, impedes the smooth teaching of the units

as prescheduled. From the details given by the 12 schools regarding their 1993 first PMR (Lower Secondary Assessment) exam English results, which replaces the former SRP (Lower Certificate of Education) exam, very few actually have high percentages of passes. Out of the 12, only five can be said to have good, strong results in that subject. The rest, generally, reflects low English level among their pupils as indicated by the low attainment percentages.   The list of the schools with their respective 1993 PMR English results are as follows:

1. SM Sultan Abdul Halim (HEADSTART)   — 100%

2. SM Sultanah Asma (TITIAN)   — 100%

3. Maktab Mahmud (P) (Launch Into...)   — 98%

4. SM Bukit Bandaraya (Creative English)   — 95%

5. SM Convent (NEW WAY)   — 82%

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6. SM Pulau Nyior (TITIAN)   — 57%

7. SM Seberang Perak (Launch Into...)   — 45%

8. SM Changlun (TITIAN)   — 43%

9. SM St. John's (Integrated Approach)   — 40%

10. SM Beaufort (TITIAN)   — 33%

11. SM Agama Melor (TITIAN)   — 27%

12. SMK Gadong (Launch Into...)   — 12%

[It is interesting to note that, crudely, there is no strong correlation between the textbook used and the PMR English percentages if we compare the above list with Table 3   previously (on our textbook rating).

However, one must remember that there can be many other factors, such as school environment, learning and teaching factors, etc. (which will not be discussed here), that can be attributed to. Anyway, this research only focuses on Form One texts, and not the Form 2s and Form 3s as well, which are all included in the PMR.]

Another major problem is to do with the large size of English classes, and again this problem is faced by both rural and urban schools. The ideal ratio of students per teacher should be around 25: 1, and this is important, especially for language classes like English, where communication between pupil:pupil and teacher:pupil is much being practised. However, many of the English classes in schools which I have been to, and from what the teachers told me, have about 40 to 50 pupils per class. Obviously, oral pair works, or even group discussions would be almost impossible to do in such a big class. The 'communicative approach' which features these type of activities in classrooms, has to be abandoned and most teachers, in the end, resort to the traditional approach of 'teacher-dominated classroom' instead, which is more practical in this circumstance.

The third reason which is given, is basically to do with the technical problems of certain schools, which in a way, has affected the success of implementing the new approach in English classes as outlined in the new curriculum. It can vary from not having the proper OHP equipment to more serious basic problem of lack of infrastructure, as mentioned by the teachers of SM Beaufort, a (quite) rural school in Sabah. The main problem that they are facing is to do with the unavailability of electrical main sockets. The accompanying audio cassettes that the pupils can listen

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to when using the textbook and other 'outside' listening materials, like relevant, appropriate songs, are 'denied' to the pupils as there is simply insufficient power sockets for the classrooms at SM Beaufort.

Finally, one problem (mentioned previously) faced by SM Seberang Perak teachers is to do with their pupils' overall poor language ability, which has in a way, restrained them from doing more communicative activities in the classrooms. (Their last PMR English results : 45%). Hence, on the whole, the general outlook posed by this question is that: 'YES' – the majority of teachers do face some kinds of problems when using their textbooks, while only 2 1% says 'NO'.

4.2.4 The Frequency Of Using 'Outside' Materials

[Q: How often do you use 'outside' materials (either to supplement or to substitute) the materials in the textbook, when teaching English?]

The response to this question should actually tally with the response to the question posed in 4.2.1, and it is found, that, to some extent, it does. Most of the people who have said that they are not generally satisfied with their textbooks, have given the reasons of "insufficient exercises" and "unsuitable content".   And, hence, logically if they are not satisfied with their texts, they should do something to rectify the situation, and look for other materials to either substitute or supplement the ones in the texts. From the responses given, the above assumption is found to be true.

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A majority of 53.6% admits that they do SOMETIMES use 'outside' materials so as 'to stimulate pupils' interests' (main reason given) and 'to give more practice – writing skills and grammar'. 42.9% meanwhile, says they OFTEN or regularly use their own supplementary materials, and these are those who strongly feel dissatisfied with their texts. The main reason for using 'outside' materials quite often in the classrooms is because 'the content (and the exercises) in the text are not stimulating nor challenging enough for their pupils'. Some say that there are just simply insufficient suitable exercises in the textbook for their pupils (SM Gadong & SM Pulau Nyior).

(It is interesting to observe that all the schools which use the three best-rated books have responded 'SOMETIMES' ,as opposed to 'OFTEN', when asked about the frequency of their teachers using 'OUTSIDE' materials. This shows that they are quite satisfied with the content in their textbooks and do not really need to look elsewhere for other materials; except occasionally. Also, similar reason is given as to why they use non-textbook materials in their classrooms, and it is basically to 'create/stimulate interest' or 'to break monotony' among the pupils).

Only 1 person (or 3.6% has indicated 'RARELY' in his/her response and no comment is given as to why this is so. Therefore, on the overall, a majority of the evaluators DO use their own 'outside' materials, which can either be taken/adapted from other texts or the ones that they have made themselves in order to suit the ability of their own pupils.

4.2.5   Summary On The Teachers' General Comments/Opinions

On the whole, the questions which have been added at the end of my questionnaire, have to some extent, shed us some light on the teachers' overall feelings toward the textbooks that they are using and their usage in classrooms.   The first and the last questions (on frequency of 'outside' materials) have given some proof that the textbook ratings, which has been analysed previously, are actually reliable as supported by the teachers' responses and comments from these questions.

Even though none of the evaluators have much bothered to answer the very last question asked in the questionnaire (i.e. for their additional comments/suggestions), three teachers from three different schools do provide some comments which are quite worthy to be highlighted here. One of them, who is from SM Convent, Alor Setar, claims that their textbook ("NEW WAY ENGLISH") is already 'appropriate' with their students and is satisfied with it. This comment has indirectly justified the overall evaluation of the textbook by the teachers of the school concerned, in which the book has been rated as the second best out of the 6 texts evaluated.

Another contrasting comment, which nevertheless does justify the rating of the textbook concerned, comes from SM Bukit Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur, which uses "CREATIVE ENGLISH" (the fifth best book). The teacher comments that the new KBSM integrated approach which is reflected in the textbook is not very good as it is unsystematic at all. The pupils are not taught the basic grammar rules as the way it was done before, and hence,

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they (the pupils) are left 'to grope around' to deduce the rules for themselves. Hence, a feeling of dissatisfaction is voiced out here by one of the evaluators who is using one of the poorly rated textbooks.

Lastly, a lengthy comment of dissatisfaction is again voiced by one of the teachers at SM Beaufort, Sabah (a "TITIAN" – user) who has elaborately pointed out that:

> "Activities in the text should cater to all level of pupils, and not only to certain level. Texts should include lots of grammar exercises, sentence patterns and drills as the Teachers are all SL speakers themselves. Teachers need to have a lot of samples/exercises themselves before they can teach pupils. Teachers need to have a 'model', i.e. a textbook especially for rural students. As English is an L2, therefore, there should be more examples provided."

His comments might be biased toward advocating for the traditional method of teaching grammar, but the main point is there, in which he strongly feels that the current texts do not actually cater very well to all pupils, especially for those in the rural. Again, the rural/urban dichotomy is raised here, and this is actually a recurring lament of many experienced teachers over the new textbooks (and the syllabus, on the whole) as has been highlighted, for example in the New Straits Times (1/12/1993). The current texts generally are found not to be very suitable for the use of rural pupils as the context and the level of language taught seem to be a bit too advanced for them and 'unrealistic'.

But then again, would it be possible that this general feeling of dissatisfaction toward the new implemented curriculum for the Malaysian education system is actually due to the teachers' own reluctant attitude in accepting the change? This is because, it has been proven that teachers are actually the least susceptible to change whenever there is a curriculum innovation, such as the new KBSM curriculum in Malaysia, and this is because:

> "teachers' attitudes are a product of values and attitudes
> within a particular culture. "

(Young & Lee, 1985: 184)

The results which have been analysed and discussed in the second half of this chapter, nevertheless, have shown a quite positive outlook in terms of the teachers' acceptance and confidence in their textbooks as well as the curriculum on the whole (despite the few odd strong comments highlighted). It does not mean here that these comments should be discarded or taken lightly but the feeling of dissatisfactions would always be around. The positive overall outlook may actually indicate that these groups of teachers (of 12 schools) do have some faith in the new KBSM and generally accept it as they can see that there is some potential in the new curriculum toward creating better English learners in the future. Hopefully, the current problematic situations that many of them are facing would be improved very soon.

CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSION

From the results of the findings brought about by this research, it seems that a number of conclusions can be drawn regarding the importance of textbook evaluation, as well as the use, and the Form One textbooks themselves throughout the seven-year of KBSM implementation in the Malaysian educational scene. First, it is proven in this research that, with the use of an adapted version of Tucker's textbook evaluation scheme and Comparative Display Form, the evaluation of six of the Malaysian Form One English textbooks by the relevant teachers who are using them is possible and has been quite a worthwhile 'experimental' experience.

A textbook rating based on the Form One teachers' evaluations has resulted, though it must be stressed here that this rating of the six texts should not be considered as the ultimate textbook guide for those who are interested to find out which is the best Form One English text in Malaysia. This is only a small-scale research which only uses the evaluations of 33 evaluators from 12 schools, and hence, the findings (and the rating) does not actually represent the general evaluation of the whole Malaysian Form One teachers population. What is more important here is not the rating, but the implication of the evaluation task itself, which shows that Tucker's original work on textbook evaluation is generally workable, and if adapted to suit one's local needs can be a worthwhile exercise to gauge the local teachers' perception about their textbooks.

Secondly, in terms of the current Form One textbooks themselves, the overall evaluation scores (based on the total MS scores) are actually low and not very impressive, despite the general positive outlook drawn by the teachers' comments in this research. Even the best one, which is "ENGLISH — An Integrated Approach" (Koay, 1987) only scores 113 out of the highest possible 140. And, looking at all the scores (refer back to Table 3), there is

generally, not much difference between them. Perhaps, this can be attributed to the reason that since all of the textbooks have to closely abide by specific guidelines pertaining to the content and language items taught (specified by the Malaysian Ministry of Education), they are, more or less, quite similar to another (though not quite). What can be generally concluded here, however; is that all the textbooks do actually match the current pedagogical demands, as the pupils' learning needs and interests (to some extent) despite the relatively low scores.

Nevertheless, whatever the scores may be, the issue on the unsuitability of certain textbooks (regarding their contents) to rural pupils as has been highlighted in the discussion of the findings, must not be forgotten. As evident in the previous 1993 PMR results (the first one replacing SRP exam which was abolished in 1993), there is quite a wide gap between the performance of rural and urban pupils' about 50 per cent for the former and 70 per cent for the latter (New Straits Times − 1/12/1993). This may be due to several other factors, but there is no denying that the content of the English syllabus, taught and relayed through the textbooks can be one of the attribual factors as well, as portrayed by the general lament of lower secondary school teachers in the media (including the comments of one particular teacher which is highlighted in Chapter IV). Although the reason has not been publicised yet, the Ministry is presently, in the process of 'revamping' all the current KBSR (for Primary) and KBSM (Secondary) textbooks, particularly for the subjects of Bahasa Melayu and English. This is done for the sake of improving and upgrading the quality of existing texts, and turning them into hopefully, a better textbook package, which will incorporate: 1) Textbook; 2) Exercise & Activity Book; and (3) Teacher's Guide. (Kern. Pendidikan Malaysia, 1993).

The third point that should be raised here is concerning the importance of textbook evaluation. Even through the issue of materials and textbook evaluation my not be the rage anymore in the present '90s as it was two decades ago, [when many articles have been published on creating and improving materials checklists for the wide use of all ELT practitioners e.g. (Tucker, 1975; Van Lier (1979); Mariani (1980); Breen & Candlin (1987)], the issue should not be left neglected. With the abundant published ELT materials around, plus the fact of learners' preference toward the use of textbooks, it is becoming more important for teachers to be able to scrutinize and evaluate for themselves those published materials before any selection is made.

Even like in the case of Malaysia, where most of the time the majority of the teachers are not actually involved in the textbook selection for their schools, as this is usually done by the Heads of English Department and/or the local education authorities, they (the teachers) must be exposed to the various textbook/materials assessment schemes and methods, perhaps during their teacher training courses or through practical workshop sessions (post-training courses). The key objective is not only to update their knowledge on the current developments of this issue, but also force them "to examine in a positive light the views of language learning which inform their teaching. " -- (Hutchinson 1987:44). And especially with the new curriculum innovation or change, like the Integrated Curriculum of Secondary Schools in Malaysia, a consistent evaluation approach and constant evaluation exercise are vital in order for one to judge

> "the wisdom of the initial selection, in terms of how well
>
> things have worked in practice, and whether the book has
>
> provided an adequate link with subsequent materials,
>
> textbooks or courses". (Sheldon, 198735)

Here, the teachers' feedback and evaluation as one of the main users (pupils are the other

main users) are important and should be heard, as they can give a more reliable and realistic judgment based on their teaching skills, knowledge and experience.

Although in the Malaysian case, all of the current school textbooks are 'prescribed' and published with the approval of the Ministry of Education, this should be no reason for the local teachers to merely accept and rely on the texts for classroom use without questions. There is actually an urgent need for constructive textbook evaluation by all teachers, which should be made public (especially among those who are involved in the education profession), as their assessment is actually related to many of what Sheldon (1987) terms as "chalkface grievances" voiced by the teachers themselves, as well as by concerned parents on the effectiveness of the new KBSM curriculum. (Of course, this does not mean that 'blind condemnation' on the current textbooks: with particular reference to English, is suggested here).

As all the secondary school texts are actually gearing up toward and preparing the Malaysian teenage pupils for their PMR (Lower Secondary Assessment) examination in Form 3, and SPM (Malaysian Certificate of Education) in Form 5 – the two most important secondary school exams before entering the tertiary learning institutions, teachers and parents (especially), are becoming more and more concerned as to whether the change brought about by the new curriculum will have any improvements or benefits to the pupils' educational performance (with reference to English, in our case) or vice-versa. And here, the textbooks used would play a major part as they are the most tangible reflection and means of what is being taught to the pupils at schools.

Fourthly, and most important of all, is regarding the textbook evaluative techniques themselves. Various elaborate and sophisticated assessment strategies like the one by Tucker (1975) (which I have adapted for the 'purpose of this research), Cunningsworth

(1984) and Williams (1983), do not actually result in "a foolproof formula by which all materials can be unerringly judged" (Sheldon, 1957 : 5). Just like what have been observed in the findings of the evaluations in this research, there are at times, doubts, which are raised as to why certain points are being evaluated so and so by the evaluators involved, as there is no obvious congruence between what the text actually is and the evaluative scores given. A more detailed and comprehensive approach combined with sophisticated, systematic checklist may be the answer but this, again, my not lead us to unquestionable solid quantitative data. What is more essential here is actually a consistent applicable framework in the textbook evaluation exercise so as not to confuse teachers who at times, may need to be able to make the selection and judgement for themselves.

More future research on the issue of evaluation materials or textbooks for English Language Teaching should be carried out, not merely on the issue of improving the existing techniques and approach, but also on the implications of these techniques (and the new ones) when applied in real situations. This kind of experimental application should be widely published so as to inform teachers, in general, the effectiveness and reliability of these evaluative strategies, and also to expose them to various types of evaluative schemes in order to develop a more critical constructive mind toward their local textbooks (or any available published materials in the market).

As Fauzi Shamin (1992) proposes, the existing materials checklists, can actually be used as "awareness raising tools" in teacher training courses, "not only to identify 'fit' between materials and courses, but to explore WHY the materials are as they are, and what learning and teaching theories lie behind them" (ibid).

In my opinion, the above sums up nicely why materials evaluation is so important, especially to teachers in countries like Malaysia, which are undergoing a curriculum change. Hence,

perhaps future researchers who are interested in the issue of materials/textbook evaluation, should concentrate on developing "a common criteria grid and scoring system" as suggested by Sheldon (1987 : 6) which could be widely applicable to suit all kinds of teaching contexts.   The system should be teacher-friendly and be made known to all practising teachers so that the text evaluation task would become something which is routine and familiar to all. It must be stressed here that textbook evaluation is not a 'once-in-a-while' exercise for the teacher-users. Ideally, the task should be done on an ongoing basis, not only on the onset of selecting the textbooks, but also during and after using the texts. Therefore, I would like to suggest here that, if would be a good improvement if all teachers, with specific reference to Malaysia, are made more involved in this important issue of evaluating their textbooks in the future. I am almost certain that there will be a lot to be learnt from this exercise which can be implemented initially on individual school levels. Of course, as Sheldon, (1988:245) has admitted, textbook evaluation is actually:

> "a subjective, rule-of-thumb activity, and that no neat
> formula, grid or system will ever provide a definite
> yardstick. "

Nevertheless, as has been pointed out before, there are actually many important reasons why teachers need to know and use formal textbook evaluation regularly in their teaching careers.

Finally, the findings and analyses discussed in this research may initially seem to be beneficial and relevant only to the Malaysian secondary school teachers, particularly to the Form One teachers, and other relevant educational practitioners.   However, if looked at a wider application level, the evaluative framework   and scheme used in this paper, can actually be adapted and evolved to suit different' levels and types of materials in other local

Malaysian teaching contexts.

On the overall, the main objective of this research, which is a kind of experimentation to find out and analyse the Malaysian Form One teachers' comparative evaluation on the values 'of the KBSM English textbooks, has been quite successful (albeit a small number of participants and, who are largely, not very familiar to an evaluation checklist). Though not detailed, it has also shed us some light on the general 'communicative potential' of the textbooks now that the new curriculum is in full swing.

To conclude, it is hoped that the discussion and analyses forwarded in this paper, would generate further research on methodological development to be studies and applied, with a wider teaching audience. This is to profit, and to assist the teachers worldwide, in making relevant assessments of their books, as well as providing them with insight into the underlying organisational theories and principles of those printed materials. Special emphasis on finding universal evaluative parameters would perhaps be the crucial next step forward towards the advancement of materials development and evaluation as it would develop "a more coherent, thoughtful enterprise" (of textbook evaluation) (Sheldon, 1988:245) then what it is to teachers, at present.

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I am currently conducting a research into evaluating the new (KBSM) Form 1 English testbooks and would be very grateful if you could spare some time to assist me in assessing the Form 1 textbook that is currently used at your school.

From your responses, I would be particularly interested to find out the answers to these questions:

How Well Does the Textbook <u>MATCH</u> :

- YOUR own students' learning needs and interests (taking into account language level and urban/rural school factors);

    and

- the underlying principles and communicative objectives of the KBSM syllabus.

Please note that this in NOT a commercial survey aiming to promote any particular textbook/author/publisher but, purely an academic one with the main objective of eliciting honest, evaluative responses from Malaysian English teachers, specifically :

- the Form One English teachers;

    and

- those who may be familiar with the book (and may not necessarily be teaching Form 1 at present).

I would greatly appreciate if you could give as much thought and be as critical as possible when completing the Textbook Evaluation Form-cum-Questionnaire.

<u>BEFORE YOU PROCEED, PLEASE! ! :</u>

1) HAVE THE FORM 1 TEXTBOOK WITH YOU

    (It would help you to complete the questions much quicker)

2) NOTE THAT THE TEXTBOOK EVALUATION FORM REQUIRES YOU TO ASSESS TWO ASPECTS :

(P.T.O.)

a) *<u>WEIGHTING</u> of criterion

    (on the left-hand column)

- As you go down the list, please indicate the importance of each criterion/statement about the textbook, to YOU, as a teacher, by choosing any of these letters :

    A - Very Useful
    B - Quite Useful
    C - Fairly Useful
    D - Not Useful

Then, write the selected letter in the left-hand column, i.e. before each criterion / statement.

b) ** <u>RATING</u> of textbook

    (on the right-hand column)

- With regard to each criterion/statement, please tick (√) in the appropriate numbered columns, on how satisfactory the textbook is, in meeting the listed criteria.

The rating continuum is as follows:

4	3	2	1	0
To the greatest extent	To a large extent	To some extent	Just barely	Not at all

[YES ---------------------------------- OK ---------------------------------- NO]

TEXTBOOK EVALUATION FORM

(As a few other schools are also involved in this survey, please ensure that all details are completed for easy data collection).

Name of school : ....,.....

School's last PMR results for English : . . . . %

Currently teaching English to Form One ?   YES / NO

Who actually selects this textbook for your school ? (has / have the final say)

> local state education authority / Headmaster or Headmistress or The Principal / Head of Department / Others, i.e. ....,.......
>
> (please delete the inapplicable)

TEXTBOOK FACTUAL DETAILS

Title : ....

Author(s) : ....

Publisher : ....

Price : ,,,.............,.....,,.....................................

For your convenience, below is the summary of what you have to do. You can do the evaluation for both WEIGHTING (of crireriaj & RATING (of the textbook) either simultaneously, or, one at a time.

* WEIGHTING (Left-Hand Column)	** RATING (Right-Hand Column)

Please indicate by letters, the importance of each criterion to you, as a teacher, on the checklist below :
    A - Very useful
    B - Quite useful
    C - Fairly useful
    D - Not useful
	Please tick (✓) in the appropriate numbered columns, the extent to which a given textbook satisfies each criterion on the checklist.
	   4 - To the greatest extent YES
	   3 - To a large extent |
	   2 - To some extent OK
	   1 - Just barely |
	   0 - Not at all N O

[If you still find the evaluating task confusing, please concentrate on the RATING column first].

"WEIGHT	- This textbook:	**RATING				
A/B/C/D	• PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS	4	3	2	1	**0**
	- offers overall 'value for money' (in terms of durability & price)					
	- is lively and stimulating to the students					
	- reflects the objectives of the current syllabus under the KBSM					
	- has adequate guidance in the Teacher's guidebook to use the textbook					
	- has available accompanying materials (e.g. workbooks, audio tapes, etc.)					
	- is 'user-friendly' (i.e. clear for pupils to use it on their own for classwork/homework)					
	• PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS	4	3	2	1	**0**
	- shows quality in editing and publishing (cover, graphics, illustrations, etc.)					
	- has good general layout of content presentation (not too dense or too sparse or cluttered)					
	- has good illustmtions which are useful in clarifying the teaching items					
	• SUBJECT AND CONTENT	4	3	2	1	0
	- gives introductory guidance in the presentation of language items and skills					
	- relates content to the learners' culture and environment					
	- allows teacher to modify and exploit the content whenever possible with teachers' own materials					
	- has appropriate progression of 'new' language items (simple -> difficult)					
	LANGUAGE TYPE	4	3	2	1	0
	- has the appropriate language level for your students					
	- has authenticity in language and style, i.e. like real-life English					

*WEIGHT	· This textbook:	**RATING				
A/-B/C/D	· ACTIVITIES /EXERCISES	4	3	2	1	0
	• promotes a variety of meaningful communicative activities in the classroom					
	- provides sufficient activities and exercises for pupils to practice the taught items / skills					
	• offers effective consolidation exercises for revision in the book itself					
	· SKILLS	4	3	2	1	0
	- integrates the four individual skills well with one another (i.e. Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking)					
	• includes appropriate skills which may be useful for the pupils when using English					
	· GRAMMAR	4	3	2	1	0
	- stresses meaningful situations and a variety of communicative techniques for teaching grammatical items					
	• provides adequate models featuring the structures to be taught (via examples, dialogues, tables, etc.)					
	• shows clear examples of the kinds of responses required in practise drills and exercises					
	· VOCABULARY	4	3	2	1	0
	- has reasonable vocabulary load appropriate to your students' level					
	• presents vocabulary in appropriate meaningful contests to facilitate understanding (instead of as isolated vocabulary i terns)					
	· PRONUNCIATION	4	3	2	1	0
	- stresses the importance of correct English pronunciation with enough pronunciation exercises for students to practise on					
	• suggest ways of demonstrating and practising speech items (e.g. the correct pronunciation / intonation of particular sounds / words / sentences)					

*WEIGHT	This textbook:	**RATING				
A/B/C/D	• WRITING	4	3	2	1	0
	• relates written work to structures and vocabulary taught before					
	• relates written work to the pupils' age, interests, and environment					
	- demonstrates techniques for handling aspects of composition writing through guided practice in the early stages					
	• provides practice in different types of written work (e.g. dictation, writing reports, narratives, etc.)					
	. READING	4	3	2	1	0
	• offers different types of exercises to develop comprehension skills (e.g. True / False statements, simple short Qs, inferent-type Qs)					
	• relates reading passages to the students' background					
	• selects passages within the vocabulary range of the students (i.e. not too difficult / too simple)					
	• selects passages reflecting a variety of styles of contemporary English (e.g. newspaper articles, letters, dialogues, etc.)					

Finally,

• Are you overall satisfied with the textbook and its use in the classroom, with regards to YOUR own pupils?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Comment ....

• Do you think that the current 'communicative' approach reflected in the textbook has been successful toward :

a) improving your students' English on the whole?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Comment ....

b) Encouraging them to use more English (inside or outside classroom) ?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Comment ....

- Do you have any particular problems / constraints that may, in any way, restrict you to use the text book effectively with your pupils ?

    Yes ☐   physical - class too large / technical - no mains socket or A.V.A

            equipment/ time constraint / others, i.e. ....
                (please underline the applicable)

    No ☐

- How often do you use 'outside' materials (either to supplement or to substitute) the materials in the textbook, when teaching English ?

Often ☐   Sometimes ☐   Why do you do so ? ....

                                    ....

    Rarely ☐   Why not so ? ....

- Any other additional comments (positive/negative) about the book and/or the evaluation ? (Suggestions for further improvement for future Form 1 textbooks / evaluation survey would be most welcomed).

(The information given in this questionnaire will be treated with strict confidence).
THAN-K YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND CO-OPERATION.

IZA/MASX/UUM

3 In pairs, ask and answer questions like these about Sook Mei's day
What does Sook Mei do at (give time)?

What time   does she (give name of activity)?
When

Don't forget to use: , , ,   , etc.

4 Now quickly write down your daily routine. Write what you do and the time you do it.
Like this:

• get up at 5:30
• go to school at ●
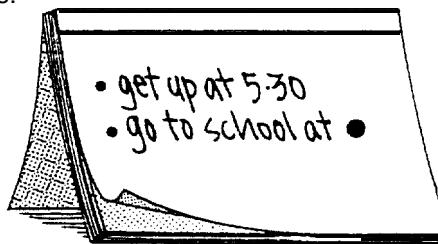
Mention what time you have your meals, do your homework, play sport, help your parents, watch TV, etc. Take turns with your partner to ask about his/her day.

Example

People's Habits. Adverbs of frequency

5 In pairs, ask and answer questions like these about the table. Answer truthfully!

Do you get up early?
Yes, always do.
or Well, I usually/often/sometimes do.   or No, I never get up early.

		Do you	
100%	always	get up early	clean the car
		help your mother	read comics
	usually	tidy your room	listen to cassettes
		read the newspaper	go to a movie
	often	feed the cat	water the plants
		watch television	help clean the classroom
	sometimes	go to bed late	wash the dishes
		do your homework	help cook the meals
0%	never	ride your bike	look after your younger
		sing in the bathroom	brothers and sisters

➤ ☐ 6 Work in small groups

Say what you   always   have for breakfast.
                usually   have for lunch.
                o f t e n   do on Saturday morning.
                sometimes   do on Sunday evening.
                n e v e r   do at night.

➤ ☑ 7 Write six sentences about yourself. Say what you always/usually/often/sometimes/never do.

Talking about interests and hobbies at free time

☐ 8 Match the pictures with the words

a swimming
b taking photographs
c collecting postcards
d playing football
e fishing
f making paper flowers

☐ 9 Practise this dialogue in pairs.

Sharan What do you do in your free *time,*
Hasnina? Have you got a hobby?
Hasnina Well, I sometimes (1) _____.
Sharan Do you play a game?
_____ Yes, I usually play (2) _____
with my sister in the evenings.
Sharan Are you interested in music?
Hasnina I like listening to (3) the radio but I
don't play a musical instrument.

Sharan Do you collect anything?
Hasnina No, but my sister collects
(4) _____
Sharan 'What do you like to do on the
weekend?
Hasnina Well, I (5) _____ and
(6) watch television, and
(7) _____

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~~Appendix 2~~: Word List

This list shows you the page on which each new word appears. Words in the Form 1 list are in italics.

A

a	1
able (adj.)	17
to accept	126
an accident	81
across	33
an actor	70
an address	60
an adventure movie	26
an aeroplane	41
after	27
an afternoon	23
again	26
age (n.)	52
ago (adv.)	10
air (n.)	113
an air-conditioner	19
an airport	89
an album	1
all	19
all right	34
along	17
always	43
a m	1
a.m.	.73
among	67
an amount	76
an amphibian	134
a n	11
and	1
angry (adj.)	27
an animal	6
announcemen t	135
an announcer	73
another	113
an answer	48
to answer	48
an ant	99
an anthem	161
any	39
anymore	79
anything	39
an aquarium	15
an area	78

to arrange	76
an arrangement	128
to arrive	36
art (n.)	31
an art gallery	84
ashamed (adj.)	57
to assemble	73
an athlete	136
athletics (n.)	54
attap (adj.)	92
attractive (adj.)	26
an aunt	2
to award	56
awful (adj.)	53

B

baby	1
back (prep.)	26
bad (adj.)	17
a badge	45
badminton	26
a bag	147
baggage (n.)	99
baju kebaya (n.)	63
to bake	7
to baker	7
bald (adj.)	64
a balloon	58
balsam	158
a bamboo	35
a banana	35
band	73
a bangle	67
a bank	35
a bank, of a river	36
a barber	82
to bark	35
a basket	76
a basketball	19
a bat (in sport)	165
bathroom	11
batik (n.)	64
a baton	138

a beach	84
beak	157
a bean	35
a beard	64
to beat	68
beautiful (adj.)	64
because	58
abed	45
a bedroom	11
a bee	15
beef (n.)	35
a beetle	99
to beg	122
to behave	60
behaviour (n.)	160
behind	4
a belief	160
to believe	46
a bell	36
a belt	67
beside	4
better (adj.)	38
between	A
a bicycle	15
big (adj.)	35
bird	5
a biscuit	45
black (adj.)	60
a blouse	63
blue	63
a boarding school	36
boat	46
to boil	154
boiled (adj.)	17
book	11
a bookshelf	11
boring (adj.)	51
to be born	27
to borrow	127
a bottle	87
bottom (adj.)	37
to bowl	89
a box	3 s
a boy	1

a brake	113
brave (adj.)	56
bravery (n.)	56
breadman	113
breakfast (n.)	30
to breathe	156
brick (adj.)	91
a bride	141
a bridge	92
bright (adj.)	57
to bring	37
a brother	1
brown (adj.)	36
a brush	48
bud	158
to build	71
a bunch	37
a burger	19
Burma	68
a burn	120
burnt (adj.)	149
to burst	58
a bus-stop	28
a business	49
a businessman	74
busy (adj.)	76
but	3
a butcher	91
a button	114
to buy	35

C

a cabbage	18
a calculator	15
a calendar	14
to call	21
a camel	18
to camp	59
can	55
a canary	18

APPENDIX 10- excerpt from FORM ONE ENGLISH SYLLABUS SPECIFICATIONS
(1988b)

6.0 Word List for the English Language Programme for Secondary Schools .
Form I .

1. The word list consists of items which need to be taught in the
contents under which they are Listed. These items can be also
be taught in other relevent contents. Words with asterisks (*)
are words not iound in the Suggested Vocabulary List for the
Primary School English Language Programme nor in the Form I word
list.

2. Words derived from the same root word, and having the same
meanings arc listed as one tern.
e.g. drink, drinks, drank drinking.
Adjectives and adverbs chat are formed by adding prefixes and
suffixes are Listed as one item.
e.g. unclean, slowly.

3. Words that have the same form but have different meanings are
listed as separate terns. e.g. 'present' as in birthday present'
and 'present' as in 'present a g i f t'.

4. A verb with an asterisk is given in its root form, followed by its
third person singular present tense form, its simple past tense form,
its participle form if ic is not the same as the simple past tense form,
and i t s -ing form and other selected parts pf speech.
e.g throw (v) (throws, threv, thrown, throwing) (throw (n) .
A noun with an asterisk is given in its singular form followed
by its plural form and other selected parts of speech.
e. g book (n) (books) (v) .

5. Word. endings such as - ed (passed), - ied (studied),
. s (meets), and - ing (meeting) can be added to verbs,

6. Some items have more than one word e.g. line up, on the left,
I'd like to come.

7. Sentences that follow items with asterisks give examples of
' the vays in which these items can be used,

6.1 Games *in school*

badminton (n)

* baton (n) (batons)
  Pass the baton to the nex runner.

catch (v)

drop (v)

* firmly (adv)
  Hold the racquet firmly in your hand,

football (n)

* friend (n) (friends)
  My friend and I play badminton in the evening.

* game (n) (games)
  The game I like to play is badminton.

* goal (n) (goals)
  Kick the bail into the *net* and score a goal for your team.

goalkeeper (n)

* hit (v) (hits, hit, hitting)
  Hit the shuttle-cock over the net.

hold (v)

kick iv)

* mark (v) (marks, marked, marking)
  Mark your opponent and stop him from getting tde ball.

net (n)

* opponent (n) (opponents)
  Do not let your opponent get the ball.

* pass (v) (passes, passed, passing)
  Do not keep the ball too bong. Pass the ball to your friend.

play (v)

player (n)

* point (n) (points)
  She won the match by five points.

* racquet/racket (n) (racquets/rackets)
  You need a badminton racquet to play the game.

* relay (n) (relays)
  R&hid was the first runner in the 400 mettes **relay.**

ring (n)

referee (n)

run (v)

* runner (n) (runners)
  He is the fastest <u>runner</u> in the school.

  school (n)

  score (v)(n)

* service (n) (services)
  The game starts with a <u>service</u> by Johan.

* shuttle-cock (n) (shuttle-cocks)
  Don't hit the <u>shuttle-cock</u> into the net.

* singles (n)
  Ahmad is a <u>singles</u> player in the team.

  team (n)

  throw (v)

2. <u>Directions – places in school.</u>

  across (p)

  along (p)

  at (p)

  before (p)

  behind (p)

  be tween (p)

  canteen (n)

* corridor (n) (corridors)
  The principal 's office is at the end of the <u>corridor.</u>

* direction (n) (directions)
  Follow my <u>directions</u> and you will find the place.

  first (adj.)(adv.)

  floor (n)

* go down (v) (goes down, went down, gone down, going down).
  <u>Go down</u> the stairs to the ground floor.
  The canteen is on the right.

* go up (v) (goes up, went up, gone up, going up).
  Go up the stairs to the principal's office.

* ground (adj.)
  The canteen and office *are* on the <u>ground</u> floor.

  in front of (p)

  Library (n).

near (p)

next to (p)

place (n)

office (n)

- on (p)
  My classroom is on the first floor,

- on the left (p)
  The small room on the left is the study room.

- on the right (p)
  The library is on the right. Next to it, is the art room,

opposite (p)

second (adj.)

- staffroom (n) (staffrooms)
  The staffroom is on the first floor of the building.

- stairs (n)
  Go down the stairs.

straight (adv.)

- tum left (v) (turns left, turned left, turning left)
  At the end of the corridor, turn left. .

- turn right (v)
  (turns right, turned right, turning right)
  Walk down the stairs and turn right.

3. Message

- c a n (v)

- invite (v) (invites, Invited, inviting)
  I invited him to my house on Hari Raya Day.

- meet (v) (meets, met, meeting)
  Please meet me in the library,

message (n)

please (imper.)

tell (v)

- thank (v) (thanks, thanked, thank&)
  I gave him a present. lie thanked me for it.

4. Information - places in school

big (adj.)

book (n) (books)
There is a book on Malaysian birds in the library.

borrow (v)

card (n)

clean (adj.)

drain (n) (drains)
The drain behind the canteen is very deep.

draw (v)

dustbin (n)

eat (v)

keep (v) (keeps, kept, keeping)
We must keep the library clean and neat.

large (adj.)
My school has a large canteen.

line up (v) (lines up, lined up, lining up)
Everyone has to line up to buy food in the canteen.

many (adj.)
There are many kinds of books in the library.

neat (adj.) neatly (adv.)

noise (n)

page (n) (pages)
Do not write on the pages of the books.

... back (v) (puts back, put back, putting back)
Put back the newspapers after reading them.

quiet (adj.)

rubbish (n)

shelf (n) (shelves)
Our school. library has a shelf for dictionaries and atlases.

small (adj.)

tear (v) (tears, tore, torn, tearing)
Do not tear any pages from the books.

write (v)

'5. Furniture

bathroom (n)

• bed (n) (beds)
There is a bed in my room.

bedroom (n)

• bench (n) (benches)
We sit on benches in the canteen.

chair (n)

classroom (n)

cupboard (n)

desk (n)

• dining room (n) (dining rooms)
There is a table with six chairs in the dining room.

• furniture (n)
The only furniture in my room is a bed and a chair..

kitchen. (n)

• living room (n) (living rooms)
There is a sofa in the living room.

sofa (n)

• stool (n) (stools)
We sit on stools in the science room.

table (n)

6. Labelled pictures

bottom (adj.)

centre (adj.)

picture (n) (pictures)
This is a picture of a busy street.

top (adj.)
In the picture, there is a building. On top of the building,
there is a bird.

7. **Timetables** — class, *personal*

afternoon (n)

• class (n) (classes)
titer the assembly the students **went** back **to** their classes.

evening (n)

fourth (adj.)

Friday (n)

• homework (n)
I do my <u>homework</u> at nine o'clock every evening.

• interval (n) (intervals)
We have an <u>interval</u> at ten o'clock everyday.

• lesson (n) lessons
The **history** <u>lesson</u> starts at **nine o'clock on Mondays.**

Monday (n)

• morning (n)(mornings)
We have assembly every Honday **<u>morning</u>.**

night (n)

• period.(n)   (periods)
We have an English <u>period</u> everyday,

• personal (n) ,
I **write** the things I want to do in my_personaltimetable.

• recess (n)
The class goes fat **Physical** Education before <u>recess</u>.

Saturday (n)

• study (v) (studies, studied, studying)
I **<u>study from</u>** eight to nine o'clock everyday.

Sunday (n)

third (adj.)

• timetable (n) (timetables)
We write all the lessons for **the week in the timetable.**

Thursday (n)

Tuesday (n)

Wednesday (n)

8. **Lables** – packages, tins

- content (n) (contents)
  The <u>contents</u> of this tin weigh. 100 grams.

  Kilogram(me) (n) (kilogrammes)

- label (n) (labels)
  The <u>label</u> on this tin of biscuits tells us where the biscuits are made.

- litre (n) (litres)
  This tin contains one <u>litre</u> of cooking oil.

- made in
  This packet of biscuits is <u>made in</u> Malaysia.

- package (n) (packages)
  This <u>package</u> contains fifty packets of sweets.

- poison (n)
  This packet contains rat <u>poison</u>.

- tin (n) (tins)
  The contents of t-his tin must be used within two days.

  weight (n)

9. **Description of people**

- bald (adj.)
  My grandfather has no hair on his head. He is <u>bald</u>.

- beard (n) (beards)
  The old mm has a **<u>beard</u>**.

  beautiful (adj.)

  black (adj.)

- careful (adj.) (carefully)(adv.)
  My sister looks left and right before crossing the road.
  She is a <u>careful</u> person.

- careless (adj.)
  He is a <u>careless</u> boy. He often loses his money.

- curly (adj.)
  The baby has <u>curly</u> hair.

  e a r (n)

  eye (n)

  fat (adj.)

• greedy (adj.)
Ali shares his food.   He is not greedy.

grey (adj.)

hair (n)

handsome (ajd.)

hardworking (ajd.)

helpful (adj.)

honest (adj.)

• impolite (adj.)
The boy was impolite.   He spoke rudely to his father.

kind (adj.)

lazy (adj.) lazily (adv.)
That student was lazy.   He did not want to do his homework.

long (adj.)

nose (n)

old (adj.)

people (n)

polite (adj.)

pretty (adj.)

proud (adj.)
He is a proud person.   He talks to only a few people.

round (adj.)

sharp (adj.)

short (adj.)

shy (adj.)

tall (adj.)

thick (adj.)
thin (adj.)

10. Occupation - shopkeeper, policewoman

    buy (v)

    cooking oil (n)

    deliver (v)

    flax (n)
    Puan Ramlah sells <u>flour</u> and rice in her shop.

    goods (n)
    The shopkeeper delivers <u>goods</u> in a van.

    gun (n)

    occupation (n) (occupations)
    His <u>occupation</u> is selling motor cars.

    direct (v)(directs, directed, directing)
    Hiss Chin is a **policewoman.** She <u>directs</u> traffic at a **road junction.**

    policewoman (n) (policewomen)
    The <u>policewoman</u> helps to direct traffic on the **road.**

    police station (n)

    sell (v)

    shop (n)

    shopkeeper (n)

    traffic in)
    <u>Traffic</u> on the road is heavy during the rush **hour.**

    uniform (n)

    weigh (v)

    weighing scale (n) **weighing** scales).
    The shopkeeper uses a <u>**weighing** scale</u> to **find out** the **weight** of
    a packet of rice.

11. Vehicles - bicycle, **boat**

    bell (n) (bells)
    The bicycle has a <u>bell</u>,

    bicycle (n)

    boat (n)

    brake (n)

- chain (n) (chains)
  He cannot use the bicycle as the chain is loose.

  cycle (v)

- engine (n) (engines)
  The boat has an engine which makes it go fast.

- handle bar (n) (handle bars)
  She has a bicycle with a red handlebar.

  lamp (n)

- oar (n) (oars)
  The oars are used to row the boat.

- passenger (n) (passengers)
  The boat can carry six passengers,

- pedal (n) (pedals) (v)
  The bicycle has two pedals.

- row (v) (rows, rowed, rowing)
  He rows the boat with oars.

- seat (n) (seats)
  There are ten seats on the boat.

- things (n)
  The boat also carries things such as boxes and food packages.

- tyre (n) (tyres)
  The bicycle has two tyres.

- vehicle (n) (vehicles)
  People use vehicles to move from one place to another.

- wheel (n) (wheels)
  His bicycle has coloured wheels.

12. Description - places in school

- counter (n) (counters)
  The canteen has a counter for drinks.

- librarian (n) (librarians)
  The librarian looks after the library.

  magazine (n)

  newspaper (n)

- notice board (n) (notice boards)
  The instructions are written on the notice board.

- rack (n)(racks)
  The magazines are kept *on a* rack,

13. Description - flowering plants, animals as pet6

  animal (n) (animals)
  The cat is an animal.

  beak (n)

  brown (adj.)

  bud (n)

  claw (n)

  feather (n)

  fin (n)

  flower (n)

  four (n)

  fur (n)

- gill (n) (gills)
  A fish breathes through its gills.

  green (adj.)

- leaf (n) (leaves)
  The leaves of this plant are small.

  leg (n)

  orange (adj.)

  paw (n)

- pet (n) (pets)
  The rabbit is kept in the house. It is a pet.

  petal (n) (petals)
  The hibiscus flower has five petals.

  pink (adj.)

  plant (n)

pot (n) (pots)
Some flowering plants are grown in pots.

purple (adj.)

r e d (adj.)

root (n)

scales (n)

seed (n) (seeds)
The balsam plants grow from seeds.

smell (n)
The rose has a sweet smell.

soft (adj.)
The rabbit's fur is soft.

stem (n)

tail (n)

thorn (n)

two (n)

whiskers (n)

white (adj.)

wing (n)

yellow (adj.)

14. Description - Sports Day, Teacher's Day

announcement (n) (announcements)
The sports teacher made an announcement that Azmi was the best runner.

balloon (n)

band (n) (bands)
The school band played the national anthem . .

cake (n)

captain (n) (captains)
The captain of Blue House received the trophy.

cheer (v) (cheers, cheered, cheering)
All the students <u>cheered</u> the runners.

clap (v)

crowd (n) (crowds)
A large <u>crowd</u> came to see our school sports.

dance (v)

decorate (v)

drink (n) (v)

flag (n)

food (n)

• fun (n)
We all had lots of fun at the party.

• guest (n) (guests)
The Menteri Besar was a <u>guest</u> at our school sports.

House (n)

march (v)

• party (n) (parties)
All the teachers in the school came to the <u>party</u>.

present (n) (v)

prize (n) (prizes)
Rosli received the first <u>prize</u> in the 100 metres race.

speech (n) (speeches)
The school captain gave a <u>speech</u>.

Sports Day (n)
The students are preparing for <u>Sports Day</u>.

song (n) (songs)

* stage (n) (stages)
Mr. Lee, our games master, went up the <u>stage</u> and sang a song.

talk (n)

Teachers' Day (n)
Teachers' Day is celebrated on May 16th.

tent (n)

variety show (n) (variety shows)
The students had a <u>variety show</u> on Teachers' Day.

winner (n) (winners)
The <u>winner</u> of the cross country race received the gold medal.

15. <u>Language functions – greetings, introducing, thanking, inviting,</u>
     <u>accepting, refusing</u>

     Hello,

     Hi.

     Good morning,

     Good afternoon,

     God evening,

     • Good ▪※◌≈♦▨

     • Ian _____.

     • My ▪▨◌ⅿ ※· _____,

     • This ※· _____ ◢

     • Meet _____ .

     • Please come to _____ ⌐

     Thank you.

     • I'd like to come.

     • I'm sorry I can't come.

     • Let's, _____ ⌐

16. <u>Letters – informal</u>

     Dear

     · Yours sincerely

17. <u>Entry Forms</u>

     age

     • Borrower's name

     class

     • date of birth

     • date borrowed
     * date returned

     • female

male

name

· **sex**

· signature

Key

n   — noun

v   — verb

a d). — adjective

adv. — adverb

p   — preposition

imper. — imperat ive

4

Writing

Planning a composition

1   Students usually do not like to write compositions. They say, 'I do not know what to write.' 'Is this the right answer?' 'Is this what the teacher wants?'

Write what you know and what you feel. Be honest and do not worry what your friend is writing about. Your composition becomes interesting if it is your own and different from the others.

Collecting material

Writing a composition is like building a house. You need materials. To build a house you need — bricks, cement, tiles, wood, etc. To write a composition you need ideas. To get ideas, let's play a game.

WORD GAME

When I say   , what do you think of? rain? warm clothes? air-conditioner? monsoon? ice-cream? snow?

When I say   , what do you think of? pet? fur? Siamese? fish? dog? rat? scratch? tree?

When I say   , what do you think of? Quickly write down the words.

Check your words with mine. You may or may not have some of the words.

Piano? guitar? drums? Rock? Michael Jackson? Wham? loud? noise? fun? concert?

Writing a composition

My   mother

2   Write a composition about your mother. Write as many sentences as you can. First quickly write down all the words that come to your head when you think of mother. Good. Now you have got some ideas.

Then go back to page 42 and page 44 and look at the sentences you used in 'Sook Mel's Day' and 'Talking about interests and hobbies'. Use sentences like these. Thirdly, here are some questions to help you

1 What does your mother do?

She is a	housewife. or She	sells things in a
	clerk.	shop/market.
	teacher.	works in a factory
	nurse.	does business.
4	farmer.	rears chickens.
	salesgirl.	makes things.

2 What does she do at her place of work?

She	looks after her family.
	teaches English.
	looks after the sick.
	plants padi.
	sells clothes in a shop.

3 What does she do at home?

She	cooks.
	washes.
	cleans.
	●

4 What does she do in her free time?

She	plays badminton.
	listens to the radio.
	watches television.
	visits friends.
	helps the poor.
	joins the Women's Club
	makes cakes.

Doing your own correction

You have to learn to check your written work. Look at your composition on 'My Mother'. Copy and complete the following checklist.

| POINTS	YES	NO
1 all the full-stops at the end of the sentences.		
2 all the capital letters clearly written.		
3 all the words properly spelled.		
4 all the 's' added to the verbs, e.g. cleans, likes, works.		

Now correct these sentences. There is one mistake in each sentence.

1 Rahim collects school badges and enjoy going to school parties.
2 Hee Keat his father and brother go fishing on Sundays.
3 School finishes at twelve forty-five
4 Does Sharan collect anything
5 Mother usually watch television in the evening.

Enrichment

Starting a collection

1 Why not start a collection?
  Look at these collections.
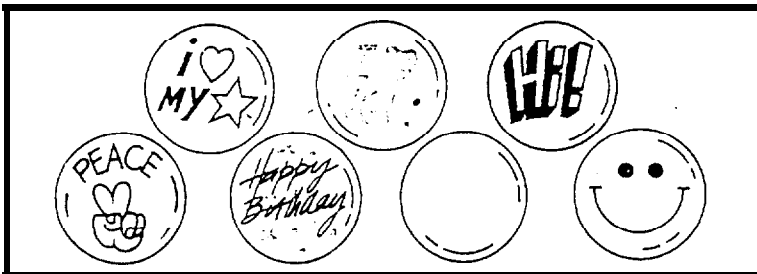
1 Brian Selvaratnam, a thirteen-year-old boy from Kuala Pilah, collects badges. So far he has collected 56 badges.

2 Maggie Lim, thirteen years old, loves combs. She started her collection in 1984 and she now has 30 colourful, plastic combs.
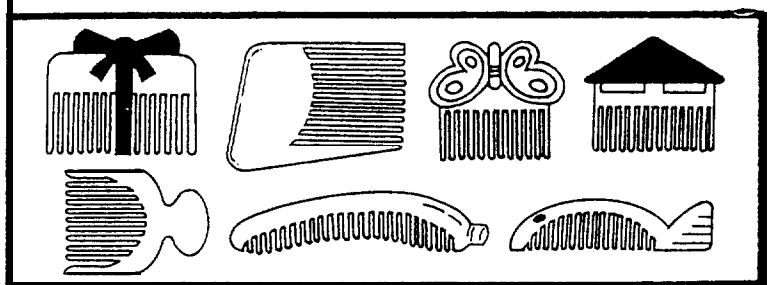
2 Ideas for collections: erasers, pencil sharpeners, bottle tops, sports badges, football stickers, soft drink tins, stamps, cigarette packets, matchboxes, autographs, sea shells, coins, old bus tickets, postcards, etc.

12 Now say what you've got in your room.

– I've got a.

13 Have you or your family got any of these? Write sentences like these:

I've got a football.
   a piano.
   a bicycle
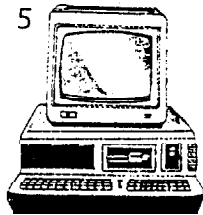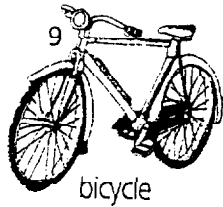
1 piano

2 cat

3 bird

4 penknife

5 computer

6 radio

7 calculator

8 Calendar / calendar

9 bicycle

10 badminton racket
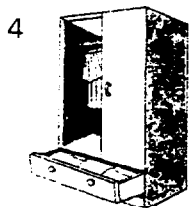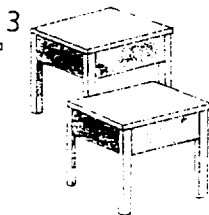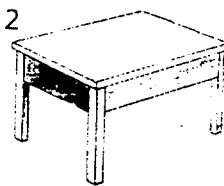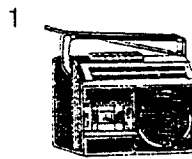
11 torchlight

12 telephone
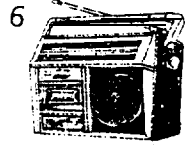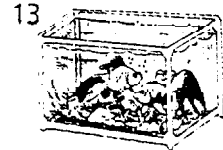
13 aquarium

14 football

14 Whose radio is this? Look at the pictures of the bedrooms on page 14
Now look at these pictures. Work in pairs. Ask and answer like this:

Whose radio is this?
3 It's Mat Nor's

· Whose desks are these?
They're Noni and Nona's.

1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8 9
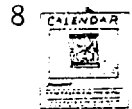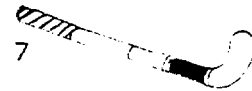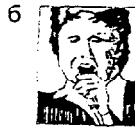
➤ *Listening*

Pronunciation practice

3 /iː/
1 This is a long sound. Let your lips make a wide smile.

1 h , m , she
2 bee, feet, meet, see, sleep, street, sweet,
3 easy, cheap, east, ice-cream, neat, repeat,
4 nice, piece, sieve
5 ceiling, seize

2 /i/
This is a shorter sound. Say these words quickly. Repeat them.

bin, city, dish, fish, n, s, Ink, live, sing,
tin, thin, this

3 Read these sentences aloud. Be very careful with the sounds in colour. Put more stress on the words or syllables with a stress mark ( ) before them. An arrow means that the word or syllable is stressed and the tone of the voice goes up or down in the direction of the arrow.

1 She says that it's a ↘ b.. ..
2 I think she's going to ↘ sleep.
3 'Do you 'want ↗ th s?
4 'Where do you ↘ l ve?

15

8 Writing

a) Durai went to the home of his friend, Seng Leng, to invite him to go on the outing. Seng Leng was not at home, so Durai wrote this message for him. Complete Durai's message.

b) Fatimah went to Swee See's house to tell her about the outing. She wanted to invite Swee See to go with her. Swee See was not at home. Pretend that you were Fatimah. Write a message to leave at Swee See's home.

c) Pretend that your class is going on an outing. Your friend is absent. Write a message to leave at your friends house. Say who are going, the place, date and cost of the outing. Tell him/her when he/she must let the teacher know.

Seng Leng,
        Would you like to go
.... next. . . . ? All she . . . . in
our .... are going in 0 .... on
.... 4th May.
        The . . . . is $4. Please
tell me if you want . . . . .
Then you must . . . . Tuesday.

Durai

9 Giving an opinion

Tomorrow five boys will run in the 100 metres race at school. They have practised at school. Their fastest times in practice races are shown in the box at the right.

Practice Times	
Seng Leng:	14.2 seconds
Jamali:	13.8 seconds
Peter:	14.4 seconds
Mohd Isa:	**13.4** seconds
Sabki:	**13.7** seconds

Writing
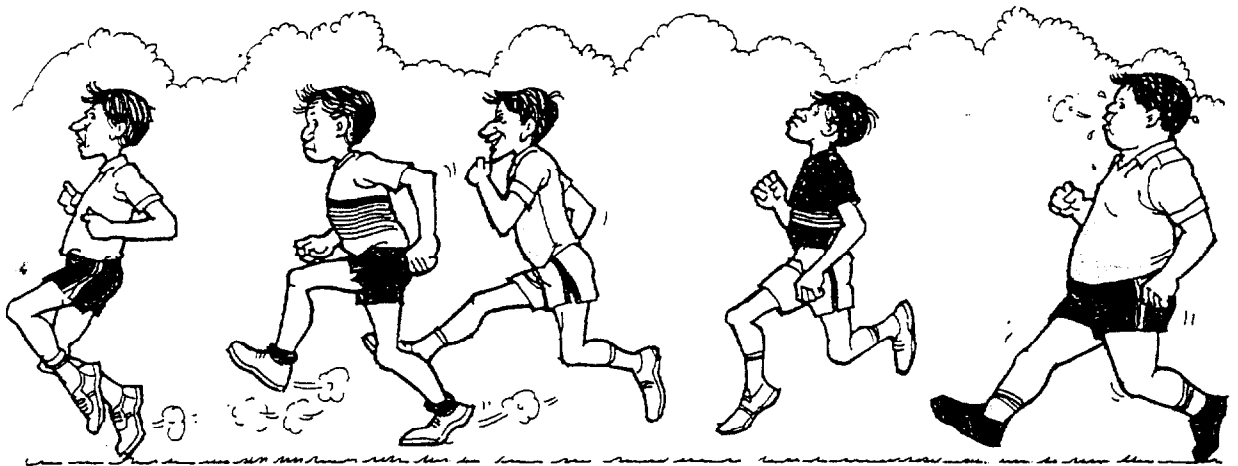
a) Salmah collects stamps. Look at these pictures. Then write out the sentences in the right order.

- She leaves the wet stamps to dry.
- Then she sticks the stamps in her stamp album.
- She puts the stamps on water.
- First Salmah cuts stamps from envelopes.
- She fastens a stamp hinge to the back of a stamp.
- She takes the stamps off the wet paper.

b) Write about "My Hobby",

or:

Pretend that you were Mrs. Tan. Write about the stamps you gave to Saimah and the money Encik Yusof gave to you.

2 Making comparisons (1)

Look at the 'family tree' in 1.
older   Mr. P. Chin is older than Mr. S. Chin.
younger   Mrs. K. Lam is younger than Mrs. S. Chin

a) Make up more true sentences with 'older than' and younger than'

b) Now answer these questions:
    1. Who is the youngest child in the Chin family?
    2. Who is the oldest child in the Chin family?
    3. There are four adults in the Chin family.
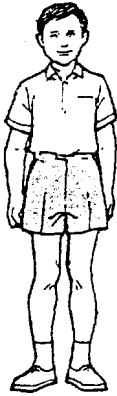   (i) Who is the oldest?
      (ii) Who is the youngest?

c) Look at the 'family tree' of the Chin family in 1 again.
    1. Draw the family tree of your own family.
    2. Make up true sentences about people in your family. You can make comparisons. You can write about family relationships as in the answers in 1.

3 Making comparisons (2)

a) Look at these two children.
Do you agree with these sentences?
1. Ramli is older than Karim.
2. Karim is younger than Ramli.
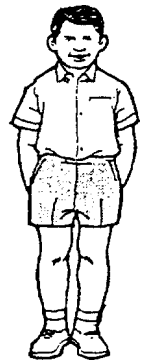3. Karim is shorter than Ramli.
4. Ramli is taller and thinner than Karim.
5. Karim is fatter and heavier than Ramli.
6. Ramli is lighter than Karim.
7. Ramii is not shorter than Karim.
8. Karim is not taller than Ramli.

Ramii

age: 13
height: 1.64 m
weight: 48 kg

Karim

age: 12
height: 1.58 m
weight: 52 kg

b) Two shtdents can stand at the front of the class. They can say their age, height and weight. Another student can write this on the board.
Then make up sentences like 1-S.
Change the students several times.

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