EVALUATING NINTH GRADERS' EFL TEXTBOOK IN THE ETHIOPIAN EFL CONTEXT: VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR IN FOCUS

Addisu Sewbihon Getie

Wolkite University, Ethiopia

(sewbihonaddisu@gmail.com)

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to evaluate the ninth graders' EFL textbook in the Ethiopian EFL context from the perspective of Lexical Approach. To examine whether the principles of Lexical Approach designed by Lewis (1993, 2000, and 2008) were applied in the textbook, its vocabulary and grammar sections were critically evaluated, and to assess the teachability of the two skills in line with the contemporary literature on the lexical theory, the researcher selected vocabulary and grammar items from the entire textbook. The researcher included grade nine EFL teachers as participants because of their extensive EFL teaching experience at this level. The research data were collected employing documents and interviews as instruments and were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Findings of this study show that vocabulary and grammar skills are not presented lexically in this EFL textbook. In addition, these skills are neither presented in unison in the textbook nor are treated non-dichotomously. Overall, this study's findings indicate that the EFL textbook under study is not suitable for teaching vocabulary and grammar lexically. The researcher, therefore, recommends that extensive research be conducted to explore the impacts of the Lexical Approach on learners' competence of English as a foreign language in this EFL context.

Key Words: Lexical Approach;, vocabulary items; grammar items; EFL textbook evaluation

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengevaluasi buku teks EFL siswa kelas sembilan dari perspektif Pendekatan Leksikal. Untuk menguji apakah prinsip-prinsip Pendekatan Leksikal yang dirancang oleh Lewis (1993, 2000, dan 2008) diterapkan dalam buku teks EFL dalam konteks sistem pendidikan Ethiopia, aspek-aspek kosakata dan tata bahasa dari buku teks tersebut dievaluasi secara kritis. Untuk menilai kemampuan mengajar dua keterampilan tersebut apakah sejalan dengan literatur kontemporer tentang teori leksikal, peneliti memilih aspek kosakata dan tata bahasa dari buku teks tersebut. Peneliti memasukkan guru EFL kelas sembilan sebagai responden studi karena mereka telah mengajar siswa EFL di kelas ini selama beberapa tahun. Data penelitian ini dikumpulkan dengan dokumen dan wawancara dan dianalisis secara kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kosakata dan keterampilan tata bahasa tidak disajikan secara leksikal dalam buku teks EFL siswa kelas sembilan. Selain itu, keterampilan ini juga tidak disajikan secara serempak dalam buku teks atau diperlakukan secara non-dikotomis. Secara keseluruhan, temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa buku teks dalam konteks EFL ini tidak sesuai untuk mengajarkan kosakata dan tata bahasa secara leksikal. Peneliti merekomendasikan agar dilakukan penelitian ekstensif untuk mengeksplorasi dampak Pendekatan Leksikal dalam mengembangkan semua aspek kompetensi bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing peserta didik dalam konteks EFL ini.

Kata Kunci: Pendekatan leksikal; item kosakata; item tata bahasa; evaluasi buku teks EFL

INTRODUCTION

In Chomskyan tradition, grammar was considered as the prerequisite for effective communication. It was given more emphasis than lexis because Chomsky and his followers believe that grammar carries meaning, and grammatical errors become the cause for communication breakdowns. From this traditional method perspective, vocabulary and grammar are considered as two discrete segments of language, i.e. there is the dichotomy of these two sub-skills in EFL/ESL teaching. However, after the advance of computerized language data i.e. corpora in 1980s and 1990s and the publications of Michael Lewis's books (1993, 2000, 2008) on language use, many language experts departed from the Chomskyan beliefs and became the proponents of the notion which says that language consists of grammaticalized lexis rather than lexicalized grammar (Lewis, 1993, 2008).

Advocates of lexical chunks, and/or lexical approach, in general, argue that the English language should be taught lexically, or the traditional way of teaching English language (i.e. Chomskyan tradition of generative grammar) should be balanced with the fair distribution of lexical emphasis (treatment) in English language

teaching world (Pawley & Syder, 1983; Willis, 1990; Sinclair, 1991; Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Hill, 2000; Wray, 2000; Decarrico, 2001; Schmitt & Carter, 2004; Lewis, 2008; Timmis, 2008; Selivan, 2018). According to these experts, we teach lexis not grammar and vocabulary in the sense that treating these two language skills separately affects the nature of language itself since our mental lexicon does not consist of individual words but chunks. These language scholars hold the argument that the basis of language is lexis, not grammar, and lexis should be the organizing principle of language syllabus (e.g. lexical syllabus) so that target language teachers should teach vocabulary and grammar together (i.e. word combinations, chunks whether they are grammatical or ungrammatical).

More recently, Selivan (2018) claims that chunks and patterns can straddle the border between vocabulary and grammar; more specifically, chunks can also be structures that have traditionally been associated with grammar. They can include stems that can be used to build various sentences in English, according to this expert. Literature and previous research work clearly show that teaching grammar and/or vocabulary by using the Present-Practice-Produce paradigm is less effective than using the Observe-

Hypothesize-Experiment paradigm (e.g. Lewis, 1993; Scrivener, 1996; Skehan, 1996; Willis, 1990; Meisam & Mahsan, 2015). By considering modern analyses of real data, Lewis (2008) indicates "we are much less original in using language than we like to believe" (p.11). He holds the debate that this paradigm (PPP) is a deductive method which is based on the behavioristic approach and vocabulary and grammar are taught with teacher-dominated classrooms whereas, by referring to different pieces of evidence, Michael Lewis indicates an alternative paradigm i.e. Observe-Hypothesis-Experiment with which the vocabulary and grammar elements are taught by providing students with much enough opportunities to explore the essential lexical and grammatical expressions/ chunks. This method (i.e., OHE) allows students to identify and reuse the referred elements by themselves with the EFL teachers' facilitative role in the classrooms. Impliedly, it does mean that the Observe-Hypothesis-Experiment paradigm, which was founded from the inductive method, is much of student-centered.

Teaching the English Language depends on the coursebook, which is beneficial for the teachers and students in different ways. For instance, it helps achieve consistency and continuation; it again gives learners a sense of system,

cohesion, and progress (McGrath, 2002; Garinger, 2010). Thus, textbook evaluation is necessary to know its weaknesses and strengths to take measures. There are rational justifications for evaluating the student textbook from the lexical approach perspective from an Ethiopian context. Firstly, the study is done to create a kind of awareness for EFL teachers and learners to enable them to think that it is essential to see and view language through the lens of lexis since these days it is claimed that the focus of both teachers and students should be on lexis in language teaching. Secondly, doing such an evaluation study would be advantageous for the present researcher himself if the findings of the study might lead him to carry out another extensive research. After critically evaluating the textbook's vocabulary and grammar skills from the lexical approach view, the researcher would like to proceed to do extensive work. However, this would be practical if the findings show him the grade nine student textbook does not meet the criteria set to evaluate it from the lexical approach point of view. Thirdly, no textbook will be ideal for a particular group of students or class (Ur, 1999), so the researcher wants to study the textbook's suitability to teach vocabulary and grammar skills lexically. Furthermore, from a corpus

linguistics point of view, from which the lexical approach is grounded, the vocabulary and grammar skills are interfaced and should be taught in unison (Romer & Schulze, 2009); therefore, the researcher believes that it needs to assess the textbook from this insight. Yet again, Waters (2012) as cited in Norman (2017) argues in his general review of EFL methodology that the analysis of ELT coursebooks gives a reasonable indication of the extent to which any new approach has become part of standard methods.

Regarding the Lexical Approach, Smith (2005) stresses that for Lewis, the father of the Lexical Approach, language is composed of "chunks" of words, and the fluent speaker is one who has a vast number of these chunks stored in memory and can recall them as needed and combine them appropriately. According to Smith, the main classroom job is to get as many of these "ready-made" chunks into the learner's long-term memory as possible; the language learning aims to become so familiar with likely and probable combinations of and between chunks that one can produce them effortlessly. The mind stores and processes lexical chunks as individual wholes, and it is capable of storing large amounts of information in long-term memory, but the short-term memory (working memory) is much more limited in

producing language (e.g., in speech) (Newell, 1990; Schmitt, 2000). Therefore, it is suggested that it be more beneficial and efficient for our memory to recall chunks of the English Language as if they were one piece of information. Psycholinguistics theory also directly mirrors such an assumption. Again, Lewis (1993; 2000; 2008) presents that learning a language in chunk forms reduces the amount of time that learners exert; he calls this cognitive economy. Lewis states such an expression from a psycholinguistic point of view. Thus, what Schmitt and Lewis proposed seems to be compatible with the cognitive theories. It impliedly shows that the lexical and grammatical elements are better taught from the cognitive theories perspective since such theories are claimed to be cognitive-load reducing, i.e., reducing both the efforts and time of students.

The theory of language that informs the lexical approach is the so-called psychological theory of semantic priming (Hoey, 2014). According to him, in this theory, the target words are more quickly recognized when people are "primed" by being shown a related word first. Hoey (2005) asserts that classical theory holds the view that grammar is generated first and words are then dropped into the opportunities thus created. Therefore, his idea of lexical priming reverses the roles of

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lexis and grammar, arguing that lexis is complexly and systematically structured and that grammar is an outcome of this lexical structure. In line with this, Lewis (1993; 2000; 2008) proposes that lexis should be prioritized; grammar is subordinate to lexis. On the other hand, Leo (2018) states that the Lexical Approach has a basis on corpus linguistics. In his view, this approach developed after the behavior of words/phrases had been studied by using computer-based pieces of evidence.

The next question to address is: what do materials look like in the Lexical Approach? Lewis argues that input-rich classrooms are essential. He states that "Plodding through a coursebook unit by the unit is dispiriting for the learner; a supposedly tailor-made course can easily be disorienting" (Lewis, 1993 p. 180). He suggests the following materials be utilized in EFL/ESL language teaching and learning: The first resources are dictionaries which play significant roles in providing EFL/ESL learners as well as teachers with the lexical and grammatical information about a certain word/phrase (Lewis, 1993; Knight, 1994; Laufer & Hill, 2000; Chen, 2011). Particularly, Lewis states that a good dictionary means the one from the Cobuild range—which helps with meaning, stress, collocational range,

and archetypical examples since it (Cobuild range) conveniently and helpfully blurs the distinction between dictionary and grammar books.

The second rich materials that Lewis suggests are grammar practices that must fulfill the criteria such as natural co-text, supra-sentential practice, and well-chosen archetypical examples. Thirdly, working through a coursebook--perhaps, omitting bits, and almost certainly supplementing it—is almost always better than working entirely without a coursebook. The selective use and supplementing of a coursebook is more likely to be effective than a totally open approach (Lewis, 1993). Coursebooks usually involve different kinds of material, as Lewis shows, worthy of suggestion: texts, archetypical examples, explanations, activities and exercise, learner training, and awareness-raising. The fourth helpful material type that Michael Lewis suggests is real materials like printed texts, songs, videos, and TV (Lewis, 1993; Nunan, 1999). The last but not least helpful material type suggested for English language teaching purposes is the recording formats (1993). He demonstrates that collocations, the patterning of de-lexical words, institutionalized sentences, and sentence heads all suggest that one of the most important pieces of material the language student should have is a

large well-formatted 'file' in which new language can be recorded, organized, and if necessary reorganized.

In this study, the researcher intends to answer the following questions:1) To what extent is ninth-graders' EFL textbook suitable to teach vocabulary and grammar lexically?; 2) What do grade nine EFL teachers view about the suitability of the textbook for teaching vocabulary and grammar from the lexical point of view?.

METHOD

Research Design

The researcher used a descriptive case study design to undertake this research. The study aimed at describing the extent to which an Ethiopian grade nine EFL student textbook is suitable to teach vocabulary and grammar from the lexical approach point of view.

Sampling Technique

The researcher employed a purposive sampling technique to select the vocabulary and grammar tasks, activities, exercises, etc., occurring in the twelve units, to undertake the textbook analysis. Therefore, he deliberately took a look at all the sections containing only the vocabulary and grammar items based on the principles and perspectives of the lexical approach. Although some

experts, for instance, McDonough and Shaw (2003), point out that a close investigation of at least two units of a textbook is possible in order for an effective internal inspection to take place, the researcher preferred to check all the units of the student textbook. In this manner, he believes, to have a broader picture of the work, it is necessary to take all vocabulary and grammar sections from each of the twelve units of the textbook. Likewise, he employed this sampling technique (purposive) to select teacher participants for the study. The total number of EFL teachers at grade nine level at Fasilo Secondary and Preparatory School is nine. From this total population, the researcher purposely selected three sample teachers based on their teaching experiences.

Research Instruments

The researcher employed document analysis and an interview to gather data for the study. He utilized document analysis by adapting a standardized evaluation checklist designed by Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013). Tomlinson and Masuhara's evaluation checklist incorporated about 15 criteria. However, the researcher systematically adapted and collapsed the number of the criteria into 10. Following, he evaluated the vocabulary

and grammar tasks and exercises occurring in the textbook and the English Language Syllabus for grade nine from the Lexical Approach perspective. More briefly, he assessed the textbook whether or not chunking strategies and lexically-based strategies were presented in it to teach vocabulary and grammar in unison. Besides this, he analyzed the syllabus to see whether the lexical and grammatical contents were given special attention in the lexical approach point of view.

The other research instrument that the researcher utilized to gather data was a semi-structured interview. The researcher employed this tool to gather data from EFL teachers. He interviewed them about the Ethiopian grade nine EFL student textbook's suitability to teach lexical and grammatical elements from the lexical approach perspective. Even though EFL teachers, who teach grade nine students, may not be familiar with the concepts of lexical approach and lexical teaching, they were interviewed implicitly which means that the interview questions were based on the features of lexical approach rather than explicitly and directly requiring ideas from them.

Data Analysis

The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the collected data. In order to analyze data collected through document analysis, he employed the quantitative method. Based on the scales (ratings) developed by Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013), he assessed each of the items under the criteria to see the extent at which they (vocabulary and grammar elements) are presented lexically in the student textbook. According to these experts, the rating is 1-3, with 1 indicating 'unlikely to be effective in facilitating long term acquisition', 2 indicating 'likely to be partially effective in facilitating long-term acquisition', and 3 indicating 'likely to be effective in facilitating long-term acquisition'. Then, the mean of the scores for each of the items under 10 criteria was calculated. On the other hand, the data gathered through an interview were analyzed qualitatively. The researcher used qualitative data narrating and thematizing techniques.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Analysis of Vocabulary and Grammar Tasks and Activities

The data gathered through document analysis were analyzed item by item. The researcher adapted and utilized the checklist developed by Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013) in their general survey of six adult coursebooks.

Despite the fact that these experts designed the criteria for coursebook evaluation at adult stage, the criteria were general and could be suitable for every grade level student coursebooks/textbooks. Of course, the current researcher considered the levels of students while systematically adapting the criteria. Their criteria rest on the extent to which the coursebooks are likely to be effective in facilitating long term acquisition in general. Considering the students in an EFL context like the norm, culture, level, interest etc., he modified the criteria for evaluating the textbook. Besides, he adapted the evaluation checklist from Norman (2017) to make it lexically-nurtured. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the researcher critically and painstakingly contextualized the checklist to scrutinize the data based on the criteria. Like Norman (2017) who adapted and designed ten criteria based on Tomlinson and Masuhara's (2013) checklist, the current researcher also did apply these criteria. Therefore, the current researcher adapted the criteria which is lexically-emphasized from Norman (2017) and Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013) which is theoretically standardized. Particularly, as in Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013), this checklist employs a rating system of 1-3 to show the extent to which grade nine student EFL textbook reflects the criteria (i.e. with 1 meaning to little or no extent, 2 meaning to an extent and 3 meaning to a great extent) and an additional column for comments to explain the rating. For the sake of being reasonable for each of the extent, providing sufficient evidence for the criterion was necessary. Thus, comments were given as indicated blow.

In order to answer the first research question plainly, the evaluation checklist was utilized. Therefore, the first research question of this investigation is: To what extent is ninth-graders' EFL textbook suitable to teach vocabulary and grammar lexically?

1. *To what extent are lexis and grammar used as an organizing principle of the syllabus?*

   Rating: 1

   Comments:

   - Grammar activities are given priority

   - Vocabulary is subordinate to grammar

   - There is no way to show the integration of these two skills

2. *To what extent is there an overall focus on different types of meaning as opposed to purely fixed meanings?*

Rating: 2

Comments:

- Context is ignored to look for the meanings of words—context-free (e.g. p. 10). The meanings of words are not based on contexts (e.g. find out the meaning of the following words and write them in your vocabulary book. Words like recommend, monastery, medieval, panels…. (unit one, p. 20), etc. are listed in the book

- A little bit, different meanings are provided to show usages of modals. E.g. have to, need to, must, should, must, etc. (p. 13).

- Looking for synonyms and antonyms for single words not in chunk forms. Alternative ways to talk about future (about one meaning): the present continuous: going to, will / won't (p. 130)

- Matching one word with different definitions to make students aware of homonyms. For example, she can play tennis (is an auxiliary verb showing ability). I'd like a can of beans to please (a noun, a kind of container).

3. *To what extent is special attention paid to collocation and other lexical phrases across the syllabus?*

Rating: 1

Comments:

- Only one example--phrases/sentences with do/make (e.g. do business, do good with somebody, do a favor for somebody/ I made a cake, let's make a plan, make the decision, make an offer, etc.).

- Lexical phrases to express an indefinite point in time in the past (e.g. a long time ago, a week ago, three years ago, a minute ago, etc.) but have structural nature,

- The intention is not on lexis; it is rather on structure

4. *To what extent is there an attempt to raise general language awareness, not only discrete grammar points?*

Rating: 2

Comments:

- Form and meaning seem to be treated together. For example, 'the will future is often used to describe a sudden spontaneous decision which was unplanned.' (p. 17). 'It is very hot and airless

in this room. I will open the window' (unit one, p. 17).

- Adjectives and prepositions are focused although not in a chunk form.

- Adverbs are explained without contexts. E.g. Adverbs of frequency are explained prescriptively.

- Word finding creativity (e.g. 'find ten food words in the following grid. Write them in your exercise book. (p. 70)

- Verb and verb patterns are treated unnaturally since they are context-free explanations, not explorations.

5. *To what extent are texts authentic and of a range of types and lengths?*

Rating: 2

Comments:

- Very short texts are utilized, and some of them are local in nature like 'The media in Ethiopia' (p. 102), 'watching Television' (p. 12), true personal (about Ethiopian women) stories (pp. 113-14, 135), songs i.e. 'a proud old man' (pp. 125-6) incorporating some awareness-raising questions about similes, metaphors, imagery, repetition, alliteration;

- Listening text about local topics like Addis Ababa, an Ethiopian entrepreneur (p. 145) and questions about what students listened to. However, there is no focus on chunks/lexis.

- A short reading text about 'How technologies make our lives easy' and finding keywords from the reading.

- Comprehending short written text about 'festival in Ghana' and comparing this with Ethiopian traditional festival, interviews taken from local people…

- Articles (pp. 165-7) which emphasize on 'The Whirling Dervishes in Turkey', 'The Japanese tea ceremony', and Mexico – The Day of the Dead

- Extracts from papers (p. 219)

6. *To what extent are example sentences natural and do they contain lexical phrases, not just archetypical examples of structure?*

Rating: 1

Comments:

- Only some example sentences are natural to show patterns including I like swimming, I enjoy reading, I like doing exercises, etc.

- The traditional method seems to be used to treat 'if sentences' (e.g. unit four and eight) are provided.

- Simple past tense and zero conditionals are prescriptively treated; grammar-based methods seem to be presented in this regard (pp. 78, 194). Modal verbs are treated from structure perspective; (unit five, pp. 86-7).

- Treating tenses (e.g. future, simple present, simple past, present perfect, present perfect continuous etc. like closed sentences (sentence-level but not text grammar or supra-sentential features) that exist in isolation as opposed to having a sense of how they operate on a discoursal level.

- Sentence-based (not text-based) examples of sentence types are provided. As they are context-free, they are artificially explained (p. 104).

7. *To what extent are grammar explanations used mainly for students to check their own ideas against?*

   Rating: 1

   Comments:

   - Learners are requested to work with their partners to describe

how to make Ethiopian coffee. The focus is on the simple present tense and presents passive forms. For instance, it says 'One person gives an active sentence, and the other turns it into a passive sentence.'(unit for p. 75).

- No references are indicated to check their answers to the questions. Only dictionaries are preferred to check the definitions of words in different units.

- Some words which are taken from reading are defined in the pre-reading phase, then, students are requested to work with their partners to use the words to construct their own sentences.

8. *To what extent do tasks raise awareness of common language chunks?*

   Rating: 2

   Comments:

- Words are presented in isolation but not in chunk forms.

- Some words/phrases are provided/listed (a cake, business, a plan, an offer, favor, arrangements, good, a decision, harm an effort) for students to

make sentences by using 'do/make' (unit three, p. 41).

- Collocation examples are provided. Awareness-raising questions (e.g. Do you know any other collocations for words related to hobbies?) are raised for learners (unit three, p. 47).

- Chunks like okay, but, on the other hand …, but then again, look at it this way, even so … etc. are emphasized to introduce another idea (p. 122)

- Awareness-raising tasks like 'Imagine you were in a bank and wanted to withdraw some money from your account. What words or phrases would you use when talking to the cashier?' (p. 137)

- Only how to use sequencing words and expressions to join parts of a text together is explained.

- Funs with words with only words in isolation

- Words and/or chunks like to, so as to, in order to, so that, for are used to express purpose but are viewed as structural functions (p. 216).

- Linking words/discourse markers are explained in the form of

sentence close examples but not at discoursal level (p. 220).

9. *To what extent do exercises include learner training which encourages students not to translate word for word and promotes the use of dictionaries and/or concordance software?*

Rating: 1

Comments:

- Words are only defined by using explanations, and the phonetic transcription is also presented (p. 38, 189).

- Students are requested to discuss ways of classifying words to remember semantic relations.

- Students are advised to check dictionaries for definitions of food adjectives like bitter, sour, greasy, juicy, salty, tasty (p. 79). But, no collocation dictionaries and concordances are utilized.

- Students are requested to look up lists of words about HIV from dictionaries (but not collocation dictionary (unit five, p. 92).

- Matching words with their definitions by using word for word translation, and no

collocation dictionaries are used. (p. 123)

10. *To what extent are activities and tasks based on communicative outcomes and not purely on linguistic outcomes and accuracy?*

Rating: 2

Comments:

- Matching countries with their flags by looking at the map (p. 6); winning word games (p. 18); requesting learners to show distances from maps (pp. 23-24); word funs (unit three, p. 49); songs of the potter (p. 54); naming goods in the market with the pictures (p. 76).

- Words connected to cities, towns, and villages are provided for the groups in order to classify those (words) to their headings like transport, building, population, etc. The group with large entries will win.

- Completing the table with the correct form of adjectives and adverbs (but has a linguistic outcome)

- Completing a table with the correct form of the verb (but has a linguistic outcome) (p. 184)

- However, some tasks appear to be incorporating both linguistic and communicative outcomes.

Analysis of Teachers' Interviews

EFL teachers were interviewed in order to know their views about the suitability of the textbook to teach vocabulary and grammar lexically. Of course, there is similarity in the concept on the content of the evaluation checklist and teachers' interviews, but the latter one was used to triangulate the data obtained from document analysis of the textbook. As shown in the research question part of this study, the second research question was: What do grade nine EFL teachers view about the suitability of the textbook for teaching vocabulary and grammar from the lexical point of view?

Teachers were asked whether they use materials like collocational dictionaries, grammar reference, practice books, coursebooks, real materials (printed texts, songs, videos, TV etc.), and recording formats, and said 'yes' but they made sure that they use only dictionaries (e.g. Oxford Dictionary of English and Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary as T2 responded), grammar references, coursebooks, and practice books which they think help to teach the English language. Again, all three teachers

replied that they use songs. However, they are not even aware of collocation dictionaries, printed texts, videos, and recording materials. All these show that teachers may probably depend on grammar-oriented books rather than chunks/collocations. It is possible to infer from this that English language teachers at grade nine stick with grammar-based methods.

They were asked what techniques they use in teaching vocabulary: teaching words in isolation or teaching them with chunks and T1 said that he uses word for word translation, guessing meanings from the contexts, dictionary, etc., but he again said that he teaches words in phrase forms if the textbook invites him. However, teaching words in phrase forms is rare, he said. Besides, T2 replied that he teaches words in isolation; unfortunately, he is not aware of the chunks. T3 said that he does not know the so-called lexical chunks. Thus, it can be deduced that there are no opportunities to practice the teaching of words with chunks.

For the question 'How do you raise the awareness of your students while teaching vocabulary and grammar (what strategies)?' T1 replied that he requests his students to read a text and look for synonyms and antonyms for the words found in the texts. However,

he replied that he does not request them to identify how a certain language structure functions in a text as the textbook itself does not contain such tasks. T2 replied that he asks his students to get the meaning of some words from the reading passage, and he requests them to construct sentences with such words. T3 again replied that he asks his students vocabulary and grammar questions depending on a context (e.g. sport) since such a question helps him to know whether they are clear or not, as he replied. As to him, this technique helps him remind his students about the previous sections taught. From these responses, the researcher can presume that there is no one best technique. Therefore, all the awareness-raising methods that teachers use might be helpful, but the researcher has reservations in this regard. T1 and T2 are in line with what the state of the arts recommends but T3 is not. The researcher believes that context-free vocabulary and grammar teaching is outdated as stated by one respondent (e.g.T3).

They were also asked whether lexical chunks and their associated grammars should be taught, and T1 replied that it depends on the instruction presented in the textbook. T2 replied again 'yes', they should be taught in an integrated way. However, the intention of this respondent is not

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from the lexical point of view. The last respondent, T3 replied that he is not aware of teaching chunks and their structures. There is no intention to focus on chunks in the textbook, he replied. Thus, the researcher can infer from these replies that teachers do not understand the notion of teaching vocabulary and grammar in unison or what is called lexicogrammar so that it is unlikely to expect them to internalize it. The fifth question was "Do you use lexical awareness-raising tasks during English language classrooms? In what way?" T1 replied "No" and he revealed that such tasks are not provided in the textbook. However, T2 responded 'Yes", and he witnessed that such tasks are presented in the textbooks. Comparatively, he said, more emphasis is given for single words, not chunks. T3 said "yes" and elaborated it as follows:

I try to inform or tell my students about the contextual meanings of words in a reading passage, but I do not emphasize the rules that govern words used in the reading. There is no such direction in the textbook. Besides, the textbook requests students to translate some words found in the reading into students' mother tongue with the help of me. However, there is no opportunity provided to students to translate chunk-for-chunk translation in the textbook, so I do not apply it too.

Therefore, it is possible to say that their understandings regarding the lexical chunk awareness-raising tasks are too different. Whatever the case, generally, their responses show that there is no means for teaching language lexically in this regard. Not only lexical awareness-raising tasks but also the contents themselves are not given deliberate attention in and out of the EFL classroom settings. This might have been occurred because of the lack of lexical syllabus in Ethiopian English language teaching contexts.

The last question, "Have you ever used corpus-based materials to teach the English Language? How?", and all T1, T2, and T3 replied "No". They said that there are no opportunities provided for teachers about corpus-based materials to practice the English Language. Hence, the researcher supposes that the teaching practices of EFL teachers to the current researcher's context is outdated. It means that although the state of the art recommends that teachers, teacher trainers, and practitioners use authentic materials like the collections of written and spoken texts (corpora), teachers to the current researcher's context are not aware of them let alone implementing them.

Discussion

Under this section, the results obtained from the analysis/evaluation checklist and interviews were discussed concisely and compared with the previous studies. One of the purposes of this study was to answer the research question "To what extent is ninth-graders' EFL textbook suitable to teach vocabulary and grammar lexically?" After critically analyzing the textbook and the syllabus by using the 10 criteria or principles, the researcher came across the following mean score and its implications.

Table 1. EFL Textbook Evaluation Mean Score

Criteria	Textbook Evaluation Mean score (M)	Extent
Based on the *10 principles* which are essential for promoting long-term acquisition (see list of findings above).	*1.5*	There is *little* or *no extent* (i.e. unlikely to be effective in facilitating long term acquisition)

As can be seen in the above table, the mean score of the textbook evaluation is 1.5. Like Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013), the researcher used the rating system of 1-3 to show the extent to which the nine graders EFL textbook reflects the criteria (i.e. with 1 meaning to little or no extent, 2 meaning to an extent and 3 meaning to a great extent). More elaborately, these experts explained the meaning of the rating system as 1 indicating 'unlikely to be effective in facilitating long term acquisition', 2 indicating 'likely to be partially effective in facilitating long-term acquisition', and 3 indicating 'likely to be effective in facilitating long-term acquisition'.

Therefore, the mean score (i.e. 1.5) of the textbook evaluation of this study is under the rating system of 'unlikely to be effective in facilitating long term acquisition'. The results obtained from the analysis of teachers' interviews also show that the textbook is not suitable to teach vocabulary and grammar lexically. Mainly their responses indicate that grammar-based methods seem to be applied more rather than the lexical approach-based ones. The nature of the items listed in the evaluation checklist and interview questions are mainly on content and methodology. In one way or in another way, such items and interview questions had a similarity. Therefore, as their responses to these questions show, the textbook did not present the vocabulary and grammar lessons in a lexical way. With another expression, chunking strategies did not seem to be presented in the textbook so that teachers were not applying them. Generally, their responses informed the researcher that teachers were not aware of making use of the collocations, lexical chunks, and lexical grammar.

Furthermore, teachers' responses (e.g. interview question No.6) show that they do not use corpus-based materials/concordance software programs to teach the word patterns in their English language classrooms. This conforms to item No. 9 in the criteria (evaluation checklist), let alone the textbook, teachers did not hear about corpus linguistics from other experts, trainers, etc., as their responses show. Their responses to the interview question No. 1 and the analysis for criteria No.9 showed that collocation dictionaries were not used by teachers themselves and students. According to teachers' responses, the textbook invites them to use dictionaries to translate unfamiliar words from target language to students' mother tongue, but not in collocational forms. Generally, the analyses of textbook evaluation and teachers' interview responses show that the textbook is not suitable to teach vocabulary grammatically and to teach grammar lexically as per the lexical approach postulates.

There are a lot of studies conducted on the evaluation of vocabulary and grammar tasks and exercises both locally and internationally. Nevertheless, the focus of the studies was not from the lexical approach. Thus, the current researcher reviewed and synthesized some selected studies which are directly and indirectly connected with this study. The findings of this study were compared with the findings of other relevant studies which emphasized, in one way or another way, on the evaluation and analysis of vocabulary and grammar elements from tge lexical point of view. Němcová (2011), for instance, carried out a study on the Analysis of Business English Vocabulary within the Lexical Approach. The textbooks that the analysis emphasized on were called Business Vocabulary in Use (designed for intermediate and upper-intermediate job-experienced), Business Matters (suitable for intermediate or upper-intermediate Business English learners), and Financial English (designed for learners who are planning to start a career in the field of finance). This researcher found that even though the evaluated textbooks focus on different vocabulary fields and each textbook provides learners with different language items from the business sphere, the lexical principles are in a certain extent applied in all of them. However, the findings of this study were not in congruent with the findings of the present study.

Furthermore, Afshar and Bagherieh (2014) conducted their study on the Evaluation of Grammar and Vocabulary Consciousness-Raising Activities in Current ELT Materials. They focused on the EFL learners who

were at intermediate, high-intermediate and advanced levels and their teachers. After doing the analysis, they found out that although the five ELT books used different kinds of grammar and vocabulary activities, they did not include some of the major grammar and vocabulary consciousness-raising activities (e.g. making generalizations, cross-referencing, reconstructing, etc.). Indeed, the findings of this study were in line with the findings of the current study which means that findings of both the previous studies and the present study indicated that the vocabulary and grammar elements were not adequately presented in the textbooks, so these elements were not suitable to teach for the students in their respective grade levels. Moreover, the findings of this study were in line with the findings of previous studies conducted by Arslan and Erarslan (2019) and Kasuya (2000) focusing on the lexical analysis of textbooks at the 8th grade learners of English attending secondary schools in Turkey and Japanese high school respectively. The findings of both studies (present and previous) showed that the exercises appear to be unsatisfactorily created, do not encourage learners to examine them, and do not appear to raise learners' consciousness of the significance of the lexical elements.

Generally, the present study attempted to evaluate the vocabulary and grammar elements from the lexical approach point of view. It aimed at assessing the ninth graders' EFL textbook, whether it presents both skills based on the principles of the lexical approach. The attempt was to see if vocabulary and grammar tasks and exercises were suitably presented in the textbook so that the EFL teachers could apply or implement them without difficulties. The context, in which this study was done, makes a difference. Therefore, what makes this study unique is its perspective on language and language teaching. This insight would be presumed as a contribution to the field in general.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the analyses of results obtained from document analysis and teachers' interviews, the following conclusions are drawn: firstly, nine grader EFL textbook is not suitable to teach vocabulary and grammar lexically. This means that it does not apply the lexical approach. Both document analysis and teachers' interview results also show that the lexicalized grammar (grammar-based method) seems to be practiced. Indirectly, as the results indicate,

grammaticalized lexis is not yet given deliberate attention in the textbook and by the teachers. Secondly, the findings from document analysis and teachers' views show that it is possible to say that all the vocabulary and grammar activities and exercises found in the textbook do not target on multiword lexical phrases or lexical chunks in general. This, in one way or another, does not provide both the students and the teachers with the opportunities to be aware of at least the types of chunks and their functions in English language teaching, let alone applying them in and outside of the classrooms. Impliedly, to the present researcher's context, unless the lexical teaching and learning is paid attention in language teaching, there will not be a culture of adopting or adapting lexically-based instruction.

Suggestion

As this textbook evaluation is a case study, it is difficult to generalize the results/findings. Thus, extensive research should be conducted to know the impacts of the lexical approach on students' English language skills and competences. Then, because the textbook is not suitable to teach vocabulary and grammar lexically, as the findings show, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education should add the contents on collocations, lexical chunks,

lexical grammar, etc. in the English language syllabus. As the textbook is being utilized in grade nine level throughout Ethiopia, the government should give opportunities for English language teachers to participate in training too, at least, to raise their awareness about lexical chunks and lexically-based strategies to teach vocabulary and grammar.

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