

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TEXTBOOK (ENGLISH FOR IRAQ) FOR SIXTH PRIMARY IN THE LIGHT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING OBJECTIVES

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ABSTRACT. The purpose of this analysis is to examine the content of the textbook 'English for Iraq,' a pupils' book for the sixth primary stage, that has been taught since 2018-2019, considering the requirements for foreign language teaching. The key reason for this research is the need to discover if this newly implemented textbook meets the needs of new and current trends in standards.

The researcher reviewed a handful of books, previous studies, articles and related literature in order to understand from and agree on the appropriate procedures to be followed during the study. The researcher designed an analysis card to collect data relevant to the processing of the study.

The findings of the study reveal variance in the presentation of foreign language teaching objectives; there is no equality in the distribution of these objectives in the textbook. Communication objectives are prominent in contrast to the objectives of communities, connections and comparisons. The difference is also evident in the distribution of objectives across the units as the same objective may highly appear in one unit and hardly appear in another.

English for Iraq for the 6th Primary stage is a vibrantly coloured, engaging course book that builds on and embodies the language and skills that put more emphasis on communication than anything else, as connections, comparisons, and communities objectives almost seemed to be distributed equally across the textbook. The researcher points out that the distribution of these objectives among the units in the book should be more balanced, as there are some relatively neglected objectives. The results also reveal good employment for the topics in the textbook.

Keyword: Content analysis, English textbook, 6th primary, Objectives for Foreign Language Learning.

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INTRODUCTION

In Iraq, English was taught for the first time in 1873. At first English was taught in a few Iraqi schools as a second language (ESL) starting from first primary year, but later, it was expanded to the towns and decided to teach it from the fifth primary as a foreign language (EFL).

In October 2008, a new series of textbook was adopted by the Ministry of Education under the name "Iraq Opportunities" which had been used until 2014. Then a new series of English textbook being used till now is named (English for Iraq) which is put to use in the primary schools starting from first up-to sixth primary stages and it has been recently completed in September 2018.

The textbook plays a significant role in teaching-learning as it allows teachers to pass content to be learned over a long time. The textbook also makes it easier for students to understand what is being taught. Students will learn the lesson/topic at home with a textbook. Regarding the importance of textbooks, the ELT course book role serves to present written and verbal communication materials, encourage interaction, as references in vocabulary and grammar, as a source for classroom activities, and self-access or self-directed learning. (Jusuf, 2018:2)

Statement of the Problem

The curriculum is the tool used by a society to accomplish its goals and aspirations for a better future. The functional transition into metaphysical, psychological, intellectual and social senses is based on experimental and empirical studies. The curriculum include not only a variety of facts and expertise, but also observations, skills and new ideas. The elements of the curriculum must be incorporated and harmonized with the goals, materials, processes, teaching platforms and assessments. Such components will come from a contextual setting that establishes a clear connection between what is taught and what is learned. All of these must be continuously updated, innovated and improved based on input from the evaluation process.

The researcher considers that a detailed review of the content of the English textbook "English for Iraq" is needed since it was only released in 2018. This new textbook is therefore important to analyse after it has been taught if it fits with the requirements for foreign language teaching set by the National Requirements in the Foreign Language Education Project in preparation for the 21st century. These objectives reflect a new trend in learning and teaching that can guide our teaching by assessing classroom experience and results.

As a result of this, the major question of the study is:

"To what extent does the content of the English textbook "English for Iraq", pupil book for sixth primary matches the Objectives for Foreign Language Teaching?"

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study sets out two questions based on the main question to be answered for the purpose of the study:

- 1- What are foreign language teaching objectives that must be compared to the English textbook "English for Iraq" (6th primary pupils' book)?
- 2- To what degree does the content of the English "English for Iraq" textbook, the sixth primary pupil book, follow these objectives?

Purpose

The purpose of the analysis is to:

- 1- Determine the objectives for language teaching which correspond to the content of the "English for Iraq" textbook for pupils' in the 6^{th} elementary School.
- 2- Find out if the material of the English textbook "English for Iraq" is in line with these objectives.

Significance

This study is important because:

- 1- It is the first attempt to examine the new English textbook "English for Iraq" pupils' book for sixth Primary, in the light of the Foreign Language Teaching Objectives.
- 2- It may be a guide to designers and curriculum developers of local curricula and help them recognize the weaknesses and strengths in the Sixth Primary English textbook in order to avoid the weaknesses and improve the strengths at the innovation level.
- 3- It pays the attention of those responsible for teacher education programs in promoting the value of the content analysis method in English Curriculum.

Limitations

The analysis is conducted in accordance with the following limitations:



- 1- The study is focused on the analysis of the content of the "English for Iraq" pupils' textbook for the 6th primary grade, which takes into account the objectives for teaching the foreign language prepared by the national guidelines in the education of foreign languages.
- 2- The study analyses the textbook used in public and private primary schools in the Iraq.
- 3- The present research is carried out in the academic year 2019-2020.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The History and concept of Content Analysis:

Content analysis has a long history of communication, journalism, sociology, psychology, and business use. A growing range of researchers are using content analytics with increasing frequency. And in universities, the content analysis method is more often taught. By the mid-1980s, coverage of content analysis included over 84% of master courses in journalism. (Neuendorf, 2002: 27).

Content analysis is a research technique to produce replicable and valid inferences in the context of their use from the text (or other meaningful matter). (Ibid: 27)

As a technique, the analysis of content encompasses specialized procedures. It can be learned and divorced from the researcher's authority. As a research technique, the content analysis offers new insights, enhances the researcher's understanding of specific phenomena, or informs practical actions. The analysis of content is a scientific tool. (Krippendorff, 2004:18)

The reference to the text in the definition referred to above is not intended to restrict the content analysis to written material. The phrase "or other meaningful matter" indicates that, in the content analysis, images, maps, sounds, signs, symbols and even digital records can be included as data, that is, they may even be regarded as text-provided, they convey beyond of what can be sensed or observed about phenomena. The crucial difference between a text and what other research methods take as their initial step is that a text means something to someone, that produces meanings for someone else, and, therefore, that meaning must not be ignored and must not breach on why the text exists in the first place. The reading, the analysis and, the use of text within a social setting and can act as a good metaphor for content analysis (Ibid: 19).

The importance of content analysis in the Educational field:

The content analysis method occupies an important position in the field of scientific research and its importance is reflected in the roles that it can perform and its importance in the educational, media and political field, as it is, in the educational field, it helps:

- 1. Prepare terminal and daily educational plans.
- 2. Learn about the characteristics of textbooks and their content.
- 3. Know the trends in school textbooks and their interests.
- 4. Diagnose strengths and weaknesses in the content of textbooks with the intention of enhancing strengths and addressing weaknesses (textbook evaluation).
- 5. Reveal how responsive the textbooks content is to the objectives of the curriculum and how it is connected to it.
- 6. Reveal the level of response of textbook content to content standards testing and organizing it.
- 7. Define educational strategies, choose educational methods, and build school tests.
- 8. Know of the readability of textbooks and the ease with which the content is presented to learners.
- 9. Know how responsive the content is to learners' needs and interests.
- 10. Disclose the educational and psychological foundations and principles that the authors have adopted in preparing the content. (AlHashemi & Aatia, 2014: 175-176)



Drisko &Maschi (2016: 3) state that content analysis is neither monolithic nor straightforward. In social work textbooks, content analysis is generally portrayed as drawing on manifest content in existing documents. This choice makes the coding process appear literal, where in practice, it often requires a great deal of interpretation by the researcher. Thus, a distinction between more basic, authentic, and more interpretive approaches is fundamental to understanding the variation within a traditional content analysis. Understanding the multiple approaches to content analysis now available provides researchers with more choices, more excellent utility, and enhanced rigour for their projects. These three varying approaches to content analysis have several similarities and some striking differences. The three approaches to content analysis are:

I. Basic content Analysis:

Basic content analysis are those approaches that use word counts and other quantitative analytical methods to analyze data. Basic content analysts primarily code manifest data using deductively or inductively created code lists. Quantitative criteria are used to test the validity and reliability of the coding process. Basic content analysts typically sample existing texts initially produced by others for purposes other than current research. They strive to be systematic, objective and straightforward (Ibid: 3).

II. Interpretive Content Analysis:

Interpretive content analysis are those approaches that use researcher obtained summaries and explanations rather than word counts or other quantitative analytical methods. Interpretive content analysts code both evident and implicit or contextual communication content, usually using inductively created code lists. Researchers use qualitative criteria to measure the validity and reliability of analytical processes, although quantitative terms still used. Interpretive content analyzes typically draw on newly generated texts, but may also examine existing data sets. Interpretive content analysis seek to be systematic and explicit but do not necessarily assume objectivity (Ibid: 5).

III. Qualitative content Analysis:

Qualitative content analysis as an "approach of experimental, conceptually guided analysis of texts within the context of communication, following content analytical guidelines and step-by-step models, avoiding rash quantification." Based on the understanding of texts, focused on the researcher's chosen questions, the qualitative content analysis aims to establish carefully specified categories that are identified and modified by the researcher to ensure credibility and usefulness. The study of texts in the qualitative content analysis includes both the inductive interpretation of categories and the deductive application of those categories to specific data (Ibid: 6).

The Important Role of Textbook in the Classroom:

Textbook plays a significant role in the teaching-learning process when coping with the content to be presented to the learners. Richard (2001:251) refers to the role of materials in the teaching of languages in the textbook. It shall include the following:

- a. Source of motivation and suggestions for class events.
- b. Aid for less qualified staff who have yet to gain confidence.
- c. A syllabus (where learning objectives have already been identified).
- d. A source of information for presentation (spoken and written),



- e. A textbook is a book that is intended for "instructional use."
- f. Source of exercises for learning practice and communicative interaction;
- g. Guide source for learners on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.

Objectives for Foreign Language Teaching (OFLT):

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2001: 11) describes objectives as what needs to be learned at particular points in time and, from a broad viewpoint, what success should recognize as proof that learning has taken place.

Objectives are expressions about what students should know and be able to do, what they have to do to provide evidence of learning, and how well they are supposed to know or do. When formulating objectives, two things should be taken into account: what students have in the classroom, as well as, the pedagogical approaches that their teachers use to become the basis for a new assessment that will judge students' competence in the light of quality and progress towards high and challenging performance objectives (Phillips & Robert, 1999: 2).

Foreign Language Education project objectives for Foreign Language Teaching planned for the 21st Century was formally published at a special ceremony on 18 November 1995 at the annual meeting of the ACTFL (American Council for Foreign Language Teaching) in Anaheim, California.

It was the joint effort of the 11-member task force-level instructions, program models, and geographic regions were charged with the task of defining content objectives that students should know and be able to meet in foreign language education. As a result, the objectives Task Force identifies five goals areas that cover all of these reasons. They are: communication, culture, connections, comparisons and communities. (Lafayette, 1996:1-2 & SFLL, 1996 as cited in Almazloum, 2007: 47-48) Here is a concise related survey of the five targeted areas and objectives:

Communication:

Hall (1999: 15) presents an overview of the communication goal area. "Communication is at the centre of all social life. It is in our interactions with others that we create, express and maintains our identities, our interpersonal relationships and our group affiliations."

Culture:

Culture has become integrated into language learning, and understanding culture is an overall goal that requires a different kind of learning. There is optimism that attention will be paid to new objectives of culture and that the emphasis will be on performance rather than coverage, new approaches to assessment and potential new directions for research in culture learning (Lange: 1999: 66-67).

Connection:

Students gain knowledge and perspectives that are easily obtained via the creation of language relations. Students do not have to make the same connection or obtain the same information because they can be remarkable decision-makers in deciding what kind of information they need, when and how. Their interests, whether academic or non-academic, are expressed in their choice that could be beyond the competence of teachers—allowing for variation in the language output resulting from the work of an independent student (Met: 1999: 137-156).

Comparisons:



Fantini (1999: 165-168) discusses the outstanding points of comparison. In this sense, comparisons are one of the five goals of the national objectives for foreign language teaching. In comparison, there is a priority for the impact that learning a new language has on the possibility of the learner to develop hypotheses about how language works and the importance that language plays in one's life. In this case, there is an implication that learners go further than the surface structure to examine how language utterance carries meaning, how meaning is built-in language, and how different languages create meaning uniquely.

Communities:

When readers not only equate two cultures through their own words but also read to apply those observations in order to reach another cultural group through an act of communication involving two cultures, not just one, they read according to community objectives. In this case, the reader seeks to determine key rhetorical characteristics in the text, the conventions of the genres, and how personal intentions are expressed, so that they can indicate, for example, what they can say to those within a particular community within a culture. That is, readers are working on ways to turn themselves into a new world (the world of L2 or another era) out of their L1 or contemporary culture (Arens: 2000: 110).

Previous studies:

• Almazloum (2007):

This study intends to evaluate the content of the Grade Ten textbook for Palestine in light of the standards for foreign language learning. The results indicate a difference in the rate of repetition of the standards. The communication standards were in the first place, and the comparison standards were second-ranked to mark points of intensity. While communities, cultures and connection standards have weak frequencies in the given order, there is also a variance in the frequency of each standard within every unit of the textbook.

• Akef (2011):

The aim of this study is:

- 1. Assessment of the English textbook "IRAQ OPPORTUNITIES" for the 2nd intermediate stage through teacher perspective.
- 2. Review the comments and suggestions of the teachers to help develop the textbook.

The findings demonstrate that there is a massive lack with English textbook (IRAQ OPPORTUNITIES) for the 2nd intermediate stage in most of its areas, such as textbook: objective, general shape, teaching aids and book content.

Teachers' Guide: context material, technical guidelines and general features. The objectives of the textbook do not address the differences between students and the contents do not improve free writing opportunities.

• Al-Aqad (2017):

The objectives of this research are to evaluate Grade 11 and 12 student book for Palestine in the light of the American Council standards for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

The findings indicate a variation in the delivery of the five standards in English for Palestine – Grade 11 and Grade 12 student books. As a result, the five standards for the two grades (11&12) achieved the following results:

- 1. Communication 90.4% -84.6%.
- 2. Cultures 68.5% 68.1%.



- 3. Connections 70.5% 55.5%.
- 4. Comparisons 42.9% 42.3% and
- 5. Communities 53.8% 47.5%.

The two student books agreed on the highest standard of communication in both of them and the lowest standard of comparison in both of them.

• El Shawa (2011):

The study is concerned with evaluating the cultural content of the Palestine Secondary Stage (Grade 11 and 12) English textbooks in order to find out to what extent the contents of these two textbooks represent Palestinian and non-Palestinian culture and to find out whether these newly published textbooks are in line with the current universal trends in TEFL: intercultural language learning/teaching.

These were the most important conclusions:

- 1. The focus is more on the introduction of non-Palestinian cultures than on the history of Palestine.
- 2. A rich presentation of different countries and cultures from different parts of the world; therefore, a sense of intercultural learning is evident.
- 3. Absence of authentic texts for either Palestinian or Non-Palestinian countries.
- 4. There is no specific focus on supplying phrases and appropriate expressions for Palestinian youth to talk about and introduce their Palestinian issues to the world through English. The absence of Islamic themes has also been detected.
- 5. Within the Non-Palestinian subdivision the focus on the Target cultures: *products, practices, perspectives* comes first.
- 6. The traditions of both the Palestinian and the non-Palestinian communities are being incorporated with almost equal reference. Nevertheless, the opposite is true for the viewpoint.
- 7. The emphasis on the introduction of non-Palestinian culture products is more apparent than the Palestinian culture.
- 8. More than half of the behaviors contained in the two textbooks studied are culturally focused.
- 9. There are very few ways to compare cultures.

Mahmood (2016):

This work is carried out to evaluate the 1st-grade intermediate textbook entitled English for Iraq (Student's Book) from the viewpoint of English teachers who are teaching it. The research sample was (62) the 1st intermediate English teacher employed in the middle schools of the General Directorate of Education in Baghdad-Al-Rusafa/1 during the scholastic year 2015-2016. For data collection, a checklist was used.

The research findings indicate that:

- 1. It can be used as an appropriate textbook to be taught to the students of that grade.
- 2. It is also noted that there are no significant variations in the degree of evaluation, depending on the gender component.
- 3. The textbook in question is almost in line with the criteria set out in the checklist.

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methodology:

This study was designed as a descriptive-evaluative content analysis. Singh (2007: 65) states that descriptive research is used to characterize an occurrence, an incident or to provide Content Analysis of English Textbook (English for Iraq) for Sixth Primary in the Light of Foreign Language Teaching Objectives



a clear and reliable explanation of the phenomena being studied. It sets out the number of times something happens and helps to determine the descriptive statistics for a phenomenon, that is, the average number of occurrences or the frequency of occurrences. Things are measured as they are in a descriptive analysis.

This research focused on analyzing the content of English textbooks (English for Iraq) for the 6th primary stage.

3.2 Research Procedures:

The following procedures are adopted to achieve the objectives of the present study: constructing the research tool by collecting all the necessary data from various sources. Then reviewing the (pupils' book) carefully as well as obtaining the content validity of the tool by sending it to a group of specialists in the field of English, EFL methods of teaching, assessment and evaluation. After that, the researcher used the tool, and the data was handled statistically. Finally, the analysis and discussion of the results have been accomplished.

3.3 Research Sample:

This study sample is the sixth primary pupils' book: the book taught to the sixth primary school pupils in Iraq, which consists of eight units and 56 lessons. All teaching materials are included in the Pupil's Book, Units 4 - 8 are a revision for the materials presented in previous units and are way shorter with four lessons each instead of eight. Each unit has a magazine or story, or both.

3.4 Instrument of Data Collection:

The first step to conduct research on analyzing a book is the building of an analytical tool. The tool was personally administered by the researcher, with the assistance of academic staff of selected universities, to ensure a smooth administration. Hence, to collect, analyze, and describe data of an analysis card was generated on the agreement of the contents of the English textbook (English for Iraq) with the objectives for foreign language teaching.

3.5 Statistical Analysis:

The researcher used the following statistical processes:

- 1. Percentage as a means of calculating the frequency of data relating to the compatibility of standards and activities.
- 2. The reliability of the data of the analysis card is calculated by the coefficient of reliability.
- 3. The final data collected through the analysis card are calculated by means.

4.1 Findings and Discussions:

One of the purposes of the study is to find out and set the objectives for foreign language teaching as stated in the first research question" What are the objectives for foreign language teaching that the content of the English textbook "English for Iraq", pupils' book for 6th primary stage should match?"

After reviewing different resource (previous studies, related literature, publications from the university, and journals, the researcher found that the National objectives for Foreign Language teaching Planning for the 21st Century content objectives are the best ones to be implemented with little modification to it fit the Iraqi syllabus. These objectives are included in five-goal areas: communications, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities. Among



these goal categories, eleven objectives are distributed. They are also called the five Cs. The standards are:

Communications include three objectives, 'Communicate in Different Conditions Using English.'

Objective 1.1: Students participate in dialogue, provide and acquire information, convey emotions and feelings, and share opinions.

Objective 1.2: Students read and understand written and spoken language on a range of subjects.

Objective 1.3: Students provide information, meaning, and opinion, on a variety of subjects to class.

Cultures contain two objectives entitled 'Gaining knowledge of other cultures':

Objective 2.1: Students show an understanding of the relationship between culturally studied practices and perspectives.

Objective 2.2: students display an understanding of the relationship between the products and culturally studied perspectives.

Connections include two objectives entitled 'Connecting with Other fields of study and Acquire Information.'

Objective 3.1: Students use international language to strengthen and expand their understanding of other disciplines.

Objective 3.2: Students obtain information and understand the different viewpoints available only through the foreign language and its lifestyles.

Comparisons include two objectives entitled 'Building insight into the primary form of Cultures and language:

Objective 4.1: Students show recognition of the primary form of language by comparing the learned language and their own.

Objective 4.2: Students develop an understanding of cultural concepts through comparisons of the studied and their own cultures.

Communities have two objectives entitled 'Community participation at Home and Over the World':

Objective 5.1: Students use the language outside of classes.

Objective 5.2: Students demonstrate evidence of becoming lifelong learners by using the language to enrich and enjoy their personal lives.

After determining the objectives, the researcher designed an analysis card to collect relevant data on the second research question "To what extent are these objectives reflected in the content of the English textbook "English for Iraq" pupils' book for the 6th primary stage? " The objective of the analytic card is to track the activities in the pupils' book.

In this regard, the researcher set a scale for considering the weaknesses and strengths points, by measuring the arithmetic mean percentage for each objective and takes this value to determine whether the indicator is achieved or not. If the indicator percentage is equal to or above the arithmetic mean value, the indicator will be acceptable or strong. If the percentage of the indicator is smaller than the arithmetic average value, the indicator is weak. Several previous studies have been performed on this strategy like (Ghashoosh, 2018).

Table (1). Rate of occurrence and percentages of every objective within the textbook

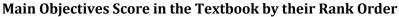
Tubic (1) Thate of occurrence and percentages of every objective within the tentsoon																		
Objective	Unit1		Unit2		Unit3		Unit4		Unit5		Unit6		Unit7		Unit8		Total	
3																	1	
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Objective 1.1	8	13.5 5	4	6.45	3	6.2 5	1	10	4	8.3	3	4.7 6	4	7.6 9	1	10	28	8.3 7
Objective 1.2	27	45.7 5	32	51.6 1	25	52. 08	6	60	23	47. 91	33	52. 38	28	53. 84	6	60	180	50. 94
Objective 1.3	24	40.6 7	26	41.9 3	20	41. 93	3	30	21	42. 75	27	42. 85	20	38. 46	3	30	49	38. 57
Objective 2.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 2.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 3.1	12	48	14	58.3 3	13	56. 52	3	60	16	57. 14	21	70	0	0	1	33. 33	80	47. 91
Objective 3.2	15	52	10	41.6 6	10	43. 47	2	40	12	42. 85	9	30	12	50	2	66. 66	59	45. 83
Objective 4.1	4	50	5	50	5	50	3	50	9	50	8	50	7	50	2	50	43	50
Objective 4.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objective 5.1	0	0	1	10	5	26. 31	3	50	1	5.2 6	2	6.5 2	5	38. 46	2	40	19	22. 03
Objective 5.2	18	50	18	90	14	73. 68	3	50	18	94. 73	19	90. 47	8	38. 09	3	60	101	60. 87



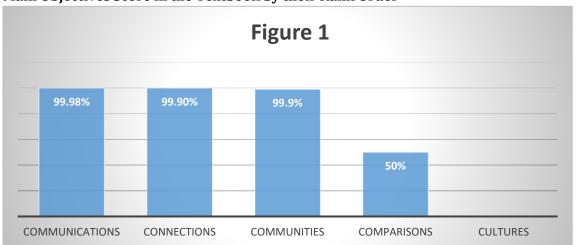
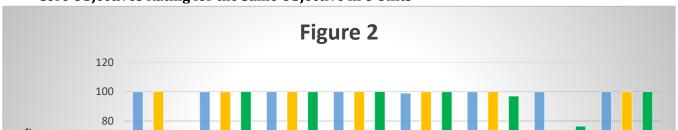


Figure 2 shows the percentage of rate of repetition for each goal area over the eight units in the textbook, out of the total percentage of frequencies for the same goal area. It is clear that over the units there is a varying range of frequencies.

Core Objectives Rating for the Same Objective in 8 Units





Take a look at figure (1) and figure (2) to see that the scores are varying for each objective through the textbook. It is noteworthy that communications objectives have the highest scores of all; with 352 frequencies, 99.98% distributed on eight units. At the same level there is Connections objectives; 150 frequencies, 99.90% then comes Communities objectives; 121, 99.9% and Comparisons objectives; 43, 50%. In the last place there is Cultures objectives which scored zero.

CONCLUSIONS

The study findings show a difference in the presentation of foreign language teaching objectives. The distribution of these objectives in the textbook does not show much balance. Unlike Communities, Connections and Comparisons objectives, it is clear that communications objectives are highly dominant. The variance is also evident in the unit-wide distribution of objectives as the same standard tend to appear in one unit and hardly appear in another.

English for Iraq for the 6th primary stage is a vibrant and engaging course that develops and integrates language and skills that emphasize communication rather than anything else, which is why communications objectives are most prevalent across the textbook. Although culture should be one of the most crucial issues addressed by the English language curriculum in public schools, no attention was given to it in this textbook.

Connections and communities objectives almost seemed to be distributed equally through the textbook. Students developing communicative skills are a way to make learning effective. Furthermore, as Met (1999: 137-156) highlights the importance of an integrated curriculum in foreign language teaching "enables learners to use the knowledge, understandings and skills needed from many areas to fulfil the needs of their personal lives, their jobs and their civic responsibilities, as problems are hardly ever solved by drawing on knowledge or skills from a single domain. It will be a platform for students to gain information or perform tasks outside the classroom in the real world. The emphasis this book has placed on communicative activities that build the link between language use and knowledge led us to conclude that, in general, the Iraqi curriculum applies the integrated curriculum or interdisciplinary instructions.

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