

# **The Importance of Using Checklist in Measuring the Comprehensiveness of English Teaching Materials: A Systematic Literature Review**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this paper was to provide evidence pertaining to the practice of using checklists in analysing the comprehensiveness level of the English teaching materials prepared to be used during the teaching and learning process. A systematic literature review (SLR) of empirical studies exploring the practices of using checklists in analysing the English teaching materials was performed. A total of 12 papers were included in the SLR. It was discovered that the use of a checklist in analysing teaching materials could highlight the differences in teachers' perceptions; promote convenient methods to keep record; identify the strengths and weaknesses of the materials; encourage systematic method of analysis; offer flexibility for current changes; lead to adaptation of the existing materials. It is also suggested in the future, bigger-scale research should be conducted and repeating analysis using the similar checklist could be done in order to improve the accuracy in obtaining the data.

**Keywords:** Checklist Method, Comprehensiveness, English as a Second Language, Material Analysis

## **INTRODUCTION**

The increasing number of teaching materials specifically for English subject has been increasing tremendously in the education field. The materials highlighted here can be both the course book or the additional materials developed by educators. The rapid progression of the content in the materials is driven by the global changes that take place throughout the nations (Rosengren et al., 2012). Certainly, the changes made onto the materials would be based on the global needs and the challenges that learners acquire during their learning process (Grosbeck et al., 2019). Materials in the teaching and learning process can be both the course books and the additional materials that developed based on the adoption and adaptation process (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The course books or textbooks produce standardised syllabus that need to be learnt by the learners along the specific period of school terms and the culture of using course books has been conditioned to many schools around the world (Sikorova, 2005). Many scholars and educators labelled this course book as the main resource in the teaching and learning process. However, as more scholars conducted research on the practice of using course books, they found some of the weak points that could be addressed and highlighted. One of them would be the limitation of information delivery to the learners. As the course books provide a one-way communication mode among the learners, it could limit the distribution of information among the learners especially if they are not proficient in the language (Ahmadi & Derakhshan, 2016). There

would be another argument mentioning the disadvantages of the learners' self-exploration and discovery of the knowledge if the teaching and learning process pay much attention and reliance on the course book (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The exploratory development among learners will be slow moving when educators are highly dependent on the course books. Instead of allowing the learners to be proactively and positively creating and producing new ideas, the high dependency on the course books hinders this skill to be developed.

Consequently, the weakness identified from the course book urges educators to practise adoption and adaptation of material (Wondimagegn, 2020). These two practices would be the efforts done by educators in producing additional materials for the main materials. Adoption of materials occurs when educators choose and select materials that have been modified by professionals without doing any modification (Tomlinson, 2003). On the other hand, adaptation occurs when educators choose and select the materials and do some modifications to the materials using few strategies such as adding, deleting, modifying, simplifying, and reordering (Harmer, 2008). The changes made on the materials are aimed to cater to the learners' differences in their background and knowledge level (Lawrence & Tar, 2018). The adaptation made on the main resource is to ensure the flexibility and effectiveness of the materials on the learners (Liu, 2016).

Nevertheless, there may be few concerns that arose among scholars on the importance of analysing the materials to measure their compliance to the nation's needs and most importantly the learners' differences and abilities (McGrath, 2002). There should be an instrument needed to measure the effectiveness and the quality of the materials that suit the learners' needs and differences. A checklist for materials analysis is one of the acknowledged instruments used by many scholars to fulfil this aim (McDonough et al., 2013). The use of a checklist in analysing the teaching-learning materials allows the practitioners including researchers, teachers or even students to evaluate and assess the materials in an effective and practical way (Jusuf, 2018). Considering the significant usage of the checklist in the teaching materials analysis, the researcher decided to further discuss this topic through SLR. This study aims to get better insight on how impactful the use of checklists is in measuring the comprehensiveness level of the teaching materials specifically for English subject.

This SLR explained the importance of using the checklist in analysing the teaching materials for English subjects. There are many checklists developed by scholars from past years until recent to give awareness to the educators on the importance of analysing their teaching materials prior to using them with the learners. Apart from developing the checklists, there are also scholars who studied the effectiveness of using the checklists in analysing the teaching materials. The results obtained from these studies would be significant for the educators in making a checklist as one of their mechanisms in analysing the teaching materials. This SLR is organised into two categories to assess the effectiveness of using the checklist in analysing the teaching materials specifically for English subject: identifying the teachers' practice in using the checklist to analyse the teaching materials and finding the importance of using the checklist in the teaching practice. For this reason, this SLR aimed to answer the following research questions (RQ) which is, To what extent does the checklist assist the teachers in analysing the teaching materials? From this main research question, another sub-questions could be derived which are, what are the teachers' practice in using the checklist in analysing the teaching materials? and How could the checklist help the teachers in preparing their teaching materials?

## **The development of checklist models**

Tucker (1975) introduced the first evaluation checklist consisting of 10 internal and 8 external criteria for the analysis. The 10 internal criteria are labelled under 3 main criteria namely pronunciation, grammar and content. There are few significant features that could be highlighted in Tucker's checklist. He uses the term value scale to give importance to the context and merit scale in assessing the coursebook. The value scale is ranging from 0-5 and merit scale is ranging from 0-4. These figures aim to analyse the materials and the result would be displayed in Value Merit Product (VMP). This VMP is the product of multiplication of value scale and merit scale. Marianne Celce-Murcia, a Professor Emerita of Applied Linguistics at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1979 produced a checklist for textbook evaluation consisting of 5 main aspects. These include subject matter, vocabulary and structures, exercises, illustrations, and physical make-up which summed up to 25 items.

The progression of developing more checklists could be seen in 1983 when David Williams, a Senior Lecturer and Head of the Language Arts Section in the Department of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria produced a checklist consisting of 7 criteria. The criteria include general, speech, grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and technical. The weighting column in the checklist is used to measure the level of usefulness of the items in a particular second-language context, or at a particular educational level. For instance, scale 4 indicates that the item is very useful while scale 1 indicates not so useful item. On the right column of the checklist provides the 5-point numerical rating scale to evaluate the respective textbook based on the criterion listed in the checklist.

Leslie Sheldon, the director of ELT, Pitman Education and Training Ltd. in 1988 designed his checklist of 17 factors. From these 17 factors, they are further extended to 53 items in the checklist. Sheldon checklist more personalised evaluation as it provides column comment for practitioners to add comment about each factor together with the rating column that allows them to add pluses, minuses or stars. The measuring method in this checklist is no longer based on numbering scales. In fact, he uses rating scales ranging from *poor*, *fair*, *good*, and *excellent* to do the evaluation.

Litz (2005) evaluated a textbook called “English Firsthand 2” (EF2) that was used by Sung Kyun Kwan University in Suwon, South Korea. He designed a 40-items checklist reflecting seven main categories (*practical considerations*, *layout and design*, *activities*, *skills*, *language type*, *subject and content* and *conclusion*). In the findings, he discovered both strengths and weaknesses of the analysed textbook. It was found that the material was well conceived and provided sufficient supplementary materials. On the other hand, he also discovered that the materials practised repetitive activities that could lead to failure in promoting realistic discourse. Thus, the progression of developing the checklists for material analysis is continuous over the years. Scholars certainly work on the checklists that would best cater to the different needs of teaching and learning practices.

## **METHODS**

This section explains the workflow of the systematic review executed by the researchers on the targeted papers related to the importance of using the checklist in analysing the English teaching materials. For this research purpose, the articles were obtained and sourced via an online search engine (Web of Science, Scopus, ProQuest and Google Scholar) from the year 2002 to 2022. The sources are ranged within the specified timeframe (20 years) in order to ensure the findings related to the study are reliable, relevant and updated. In identifying, assessing and interpreting all available literature and factual evidence in answering the specific research questions, the researcher conducted a systematic literature review (SLR). The researcher has adopted the PRISMA protocol to be the guide in executing the procedure for the SLR (Taylor et al., 2021). This approach proposed a systematic procedure for a researcher to conduct SLR. PRISMA is an abbreviation of the procedure starting with research protocol where the researcher starts to define the research scope. The step continues with the appraisal where the researcher creates his pre-defined literature inclusion and exclusion. As the researcher works on the literature materials, he would synthesise them by extracting and categorising the data. In between, analysis of the data will take place where the researcher would narrate the result and finally reach the conclusion. Reporting is the last step to be done as the result would be exposed to the public.

There are few significant reasons for choosing the PRISMA protocol in this SLR. First, it can be explicitly executed and reproduced in conducting the systematic review work. The researcher can freely reanalyse the particular literature if there is a need to clarify further and seek evidence. Besides, this protocol can assess both quantitative and qualitative content. SLR can be obtained from both types of literature in obtaining the answers for the respective research questions. The process of doing this SLR started from March 2022 and ended in January 2023 (11 months).

Starting March 2022, the researchers formulated the research questions pertaining to the use of checklists in analysing teaching materials. This is to ensure that the articles searching process would not be too broad and unfocused (Okoli, 2015). In order to support the search for the keyword process, the researcher executed the following strategies including searching for papers related to material analysis using the checklist, citing significant keywords discussed in the primary studies and determining the synonyms that are related to the the materials analysis using the checklist.

There is no doubt that the researcher would find hundreds of papers that are related to the materials analysis using the checklist. However, the scope for searching the precise and accurate papers could be done when the researcher considers the following criteria to be more selective and focused. First, the content of the papers. The first review can be attempted from the topic of the paper and the variables applied in the study. The review could be practically aiming for the keywords that have the similar bearing to the research questions (Dawson & Ferdig, 2006).

The first 3 months of the study was taken by the researchers to accumulate all possible and related articles from the GS. There were 231 different keywords instigated by the researchers and a total of 542 manuscripts obtained as a result of the inclusion and exclusion criteria. 15 manuscripts were shortlisted after the screening process and it was identified 3 of them were not suitable. All the manuscripts were stored in the system name Mandeley Reference Manager Software that is widely used in academic writing to manage and organise the materials obtained from various resources (Basri & Patak, 2015).

A duration of 4 months was used by the researcher to discuss and assess the 12 manuscripts. The extracting data process was needed during this phase as the researchers had to code the data thoroughly to answer the research questions in the study (Webster & Watson, 2002). The data extraction process could be time-taking but the researchers followed the guidelines to make the process more efficient and directly reduce the risk of errors and bias (Taylor et al., 2021). Table 1 illustrates the summary of the guidelines practised by the researchers when extracting the data.

**Table 1.** The Summary of Guidelines for Extracting Data for Systematic Review

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
Duplication	Dual independent data extraction or verification of single extraction of all studies or, in rapid or restricted reviews, a random sample.
Anticipation	Anticipate potential problems during data extraction – conflicts, ambiguities, inconsistencies, missing data, and risk of making errors Outline solutions in the study protocol
Organisation	Having a clear comprehensive plan that allows flexibility Based on good data management A well designed data extraction form Pilot the data extraction form Reviewers trained or given detailed instructions
Documentation	Based on good bookkeeping Comprehensive Accurate Transparent

Source: (Taylor et al., 2021)

The researchers roughly spent 4 months to analyse and synthesise the data to be reported in the findings. The extracted data was organised in the matrix form layouted by the researchers based on the guidelines proposed earlier. The researchers then presented the findings by highlighting the present findings, the new findings and also addressing the future directions and opportunities (Okoli, 2015). The process of the systematic review mentioned is summarised in the PRISMA flowchart (see Figure 1).

## **Screening**

762 relevant manuscripts were sourced from the year 2002 to 2022 (20 years) using the Google Scholar search engine. The researchers compiled the manuscripts into a Checklist Corpus to get the better insight on the scholarly activity of using the checklist in analysing the English teaching materials.

## Search terms

The manuscripts were derived manually through the keywords search from the abstracts, title, and the listed keywords. For this SLR, the keywords were grouped into four categories ('comprehensiveness') AND ('Material analysis') AND ('Checklist method') AND ('English as a second language'). These categories and the related keywords are illustrated in Table 2.

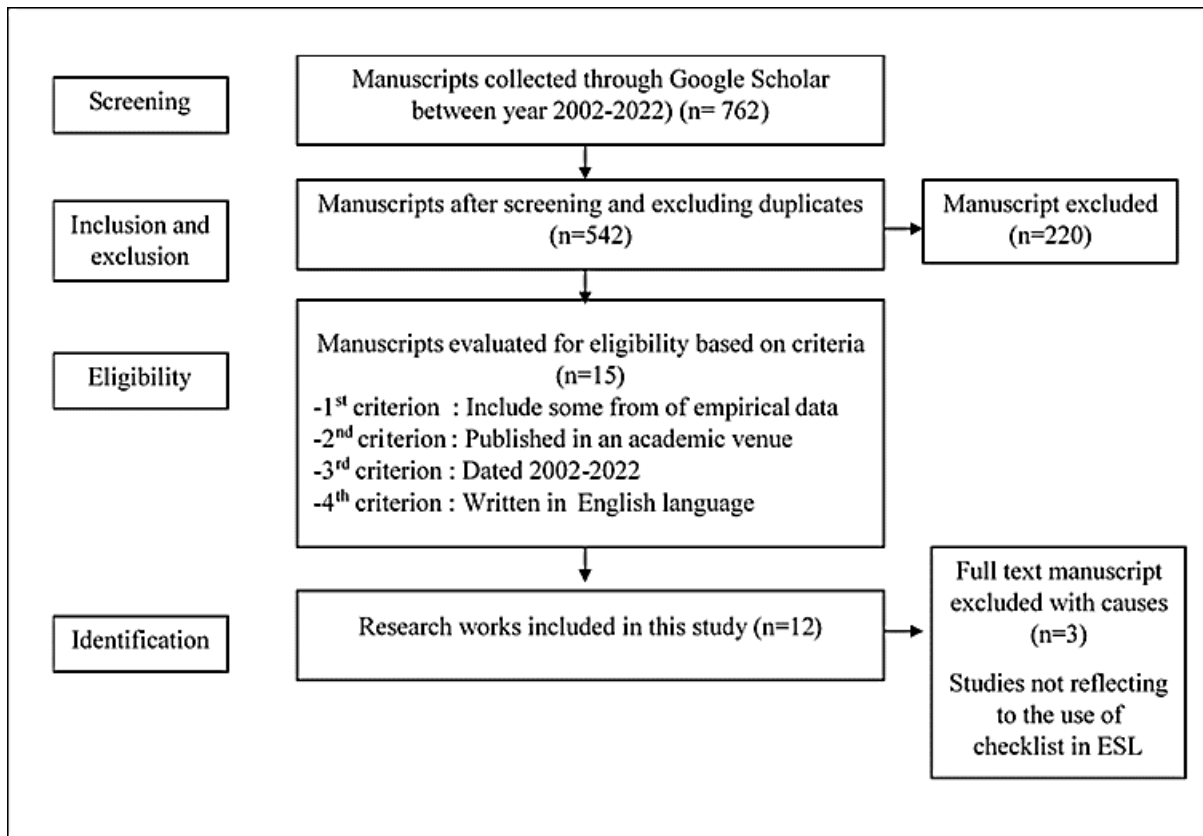


Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart

Table 2. The Categories and the Related Keywords

Keywords	Related Keywords
Comprehensiveness	("Comprehensive" OR "All-inclusive" OR "Broad" OR "Complete" OR "Inclusive" OR "Inclusiveness" OR "Extensive" OR "Extensiveness") 8 keywords
Material analysis	("Material testing" OR "Teaching material evaluation" OR "Teaching instrument analysis") 3 keywords
Checklist method	("Listing method" OR "Material analysis form" or "Instrument for material analysis") 3 keywords
English as a second language	("English as A Second Language" OR "ESL" OR "English as A Second Language Learning" OR "ESL Learning") 4 keywords

## Search results

During the process of screening, there were 762 manuscripts collected and 220 manuscripts were identified as duplicates; therefore, they were omitted from the collection of the manuscripts leaving 542 balances. These remaining manuscripts were thoroughly screened using the inclusion and exclusion criteria which resulted in 15 eligible manuscripts. From these 15 manuscripts, 3 were excluded from the collection due to its irrelevant issue to the ESL as two of them were discussions related to the medical field and the other one was about the technology field. Therefore, this leaves the collection to the total of 12 manuscripts. Table 3 summarises the list of papers identified from the journal.

**Table 3.** Number of Papers Identified from Each Journal

	<b>Journal</b>	<b>Number of papers accepted</b>
1	Eğitimde Kuram ve Uygulama	1
2	Canadian of Applied Linguistic	1
3	Education Resources Information Center	1
4	Wiley Online Library	1
5	International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences	1
6	International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature	1
7	Australasian Journal of Educational Technology	1
8	International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning	1
9	Jurnal Minda	1
10	California State University Library	1
11	International Journal of Education and Research	1
12	The Internet TESL Journal	1
Total		12

The summary of the selected articles and manuscripts from the online search engine (Web of Science, Scopus, ProQuest, and Google Scholar) for this SLR is tabulated in the matrix of Table 4.

**Table 4.** Summary of the Selected Articles for SLR

<b>Article 1 (Source: Google Scholar)</b>				
<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Simsek, M. R. (2017)	Confronting Culture in Local And Global English Coursebooks: Student Teachers' Preferences in Materials Adaptation	Method: quantitative  Design: Descriptive design	58 pre-service English teachers in an urban university  Instrument: Questionnaire /survey	Over 50% of the participants preferred to use the texts unchanged or delete them altogether, while chances of fixing the materials dropped steeply in the face of foreign culture influence  The few adapters appreciated their potential for raising gender- and cultural-awareness, and increasing classroom interaction. The overwhelming majority (74%) conceptualised culture as the embodiment of daily activities, current state of being and common way of thinking within a community, and seemed concerned about the appropriacy and comprehensibility of cultural content
<b>Article 2 (Source: Web of Science)</b>				
<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Alshehri, A. (2016)	Textbook Evaluation: Teachers' Perspectives on Cutting Edge	Method: Quantitive  Research Design: Descriptive	Twelve EFL instructors  Instrument: Checklist (adapted) by Litz	The instructors were largely satisfied with a majority of the textbook 's features. They were most satisfied with the textbook 's layout and design (mean score=3.74), followed by its subject and content (3.65), its skills component (3.63), its

				activities (3.55) and its language type (3.51). By contrast, the respondents' opinions of the textbook's practical considerations were unclear.
<b>Article 3 (Source: Scopus)</b>				
<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Ahour, T., Towhidiyan, B., & Saeidi, M. (2014)	The Evaluation of "English Textbook 2" Taught in Iranian High Schools from Teachers' Perspectives	Method: Quantitatively  Design: Descriptive	25 English teachers (8 females and 17 males) randomly selected from different high schools in Boukan, Iran  Instrument: 5-point Likert scale checklist with three criteria including subject and content, activities, and skills out of seven criteria in Litz's checklist	A majority of the teachers (84%) stated that the subject and content of the textbook is not generally realistic. About 88% of the teachers in this study believed that the subject and content of the textbook is not interesting, challenging, and motivating (item 3) and only 12% stated their agreement. Similarly, 88% stated their disagreement with the variety in the subject and content of the textbook; while, 12% agreed with it. 20 teachers (80%) stated that the textbook does not provide a balance of activities. majority of the teachers (88%) believed that the activities do not encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice for the students. 76% of the teachers completely disagreed or disagreed that textbook activities incorporate individual, pair, and group work.
<b>Article 4 (Source: Google Scholar)</b>				
<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
O'Connor, R. E., Sanchez, V., Beach, K. D., & Bocian, K. M. (2017)	Special Education Teachers Integrating Reading with 8th Grade U.S. History Content	Method: Qualitative  Design: Exploratory	Participants included 73 8th grade students with disabilities (77% with Learning Disabilities; 72% male, 45% English Language Learners) and four teachers.  Instrument: Document analysis	Special education teachers, who implemented reading instruction that included multisyllabic word decoding, academic vocabulary, and three comprehension strategies (generating main ideas, comparing and contrasting people, and events, and identifying cause and effect relations)  Students in the treatment outperformed controls on researcher-developed measures of word- and text-level reading comprehension, as well as in the history content that students in both conditions studied.
<b>Article 5 (Source: Google Scholar)</b>				

<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Sarem, S. N., Hamidi, H., & Mahmoudie, R. (2013)	A Critical Look at Textbook Evaluation: A Case Study of Evaluating an ESP Coursebook: English for International Tourism	Method: Qualitative  Design: Descriptive	A group of teachers who were using a textbook, English for International Tourism written by Dubicka and O'Keeffe (2003) Instrument: Evaluating a single specialized book using a checklist proposed by Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979).	The kind of syllabus designed in this book is to a great a skill-based syllabus; this book is written for pre-intermediate students, thus the vocabulary and grammatical structures must be appropriate to this level; there is no clear list of vocabulary items; these are either words matching with pictures or a list of words which have to be matched with their definitions; there is no indication to the previously learned vocabulary; the balance between listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills development in the book is not appropriate to the learners and learning situation; illustrations and pictures both cartoonist and real ones taken from either internet pages or real photos are encouraging and make the situations more real-like.

**Article 6 (Source: Google Scholar)**

<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Golpour, F. (2012)	Iranian junior high school English book series (Right Path to English) weighted against material evaluation checklists.	Method: Mixed method  Design: Descriptive	100 teachers who are currently using Right Path to English course book.  Instrument: Questionnaire and Document analysis	Using real pictures of objects and people can be much more elaborating and interesting to the students; the materials in the series are too biased and culture specific. That is, it is bound to Iranian culture; the instructions of exercises are not clear; exercises and drills in the series are too controlled to let the students develop helpful competencies for communication, it's due to the fact that series have been developed base on the structural view of linguists and behavioural view of psychology that emphasizes on learning language through repetition.

**Article 7 (Source: Web of Science)**

<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Thalman, S. (2014)	Adaptation criteria for the personalised delivery of learning materials: A	Method: Mixed method  Design:	Second phase: 74 authors  Third phase: 238 authors of the 128 systems that	The first four highest ranked criteria (content preferences, user history, knowledge structure and previous knowledge) have the highest frequency and occur in more



	multi-stage empirical investigation	Sequential design- starting with a qualitative explorative content :analysis and followed by confirmatory quantitative surveys	were not investigated in the content analysis  Instrument: Content analysis on 158 adaptive systems; Questionnaire	than 60% of the systems. It is notable that content preferences, which occur in 90% of the systems, appear to be a very common aspect within adaptive systems. An analysis of systems and criteria over time showed no obvious trend. Therefore, neither the number of systems, which fulfil certain adaptation criteria, nor the total number of adaptation criteria that had been fulfilled by the systems, saw an increase over the years.
<b>Article 8 (Source: Web of Science)</b>				
<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Kwak, S. (2017)	How Korean Language Arts Teachers Adopt and Adapt Open Educational Resources: A Study of Teachers' and Students' Perspectives	Method: Mixed method  Design: ethnographic-oriented methods	3 Korean language arts teachers and 129 students.  Interview  Instrument: Questionnaire	Teachers can customize reading materials and worksheets easily through the user-friendly EBS (Educational Broadcasting System) website.  Most teachers who made the EBS online video lectures are famous for their previous published books for students, for their prestigious educational backgrounds, and multiple experiences in educational fields.  Overall, these results indicate that teachers' authorities are re-asserted implicitly and may become a scapegoat by student preferences, EBS teachers' prestigious educational background, and teachers' own ironic awareness of the high quality of EBS resources.
<b>Article 9 (Source: Web of Science)</b>				
<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Hosie, P., & Schibeci, R. (2005).	Checklist and context-bound evaluations of online learning in higher education	Method: Qualitative  Design: Descriptive	Document Analysis using online Checklist  Instrument: Online Checklist	This approach is strongly slanted to a constructivist perspective, 'emphasizes the primacy of the learner's intentions, experience, and cognitive strategies'.  Quality of instructional design is critical and therefore needs to be a pre-eminent con-sideration in any evaluation of courseware.  Validation process would also need to involve a comparison with existing online quality

				checklists using expert reviewers.
<b>Article 10 (Source: Google Scholar)</b>				
<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Cassandra G. (2019)	Overidentification Of English Language Learners Into Special Education: A Checklist For Educators	Method: Qualitative  Design: Grounded theory	Peer reviewed articles  Instrument: Peer reviewed articles, mostly from the last 10 years	One of the biggest areas of needs was the importance of taking the pre-production phase of language acquisition as a serious part of language development, rather than as deficit in language acquisition  Students have made expected gains in response to high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive interventions.  Research shows that these considerations (literacy, decoding, fluency, key vocabulary and oral language skills) are important because if ELL students' vocabulary level in native language is low or very low, and ample time to develop vocabulary has passed, then the lack of vocabulary acquisition could indicate a potential disability and referral should be considered.
<b>Article 11 (Source: Google Scholar)</b>				
<b>Research/ Year Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Population/ Samplings Instrument used</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Şahin, S. (2020)	Developing a Checklist for English Language Teaching Course book Analysis	Method: Qualitative  Research design: Grounded theory	Prospective teachers of English as a Foreign Language pursuing an academic degree in teacher education at Augsburg University in Germany.  Instrument: The checklist Interview	With the help of a checklist, teachers can examine the strengths and weaknesses of a course book to decide how to supplement, modify, or replace it. Thus, a checklist operates almost like an "honest advisor" accompanying a teacher's experience with a new course book by commenting on its characteristics objectively.  Since the potential of the chosen course book affects students positively or negatively, the teachers should not be ignored as shareholders and involved in selecting course book. the needs and expectations of learners should be carefully considered by getting the teachers to use an

				evaluation checklist with appropriate criteria.
Article 12 (Source: Google Scholar)				
Research/ Year Publication	Title	Research Design	Population/ Samplings Instrument used	Findings
Almatard, A. (2019).	Developing An Evaluation Checklist for Identity in ESOL Textbooks (Doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University).	Method: Qualitative  Design: Descriptive	Analysing 5 units from 5 ESOL textbooks in the adult/young adult categories of the online catalogues of two major publishers of ESOL textbooks: Cambridge University Press, and Pearson English using the designed checklist  Instrument: Document analysis	The evaluation revealed some differences. First, in terms of race, Interchange added one more race group which was the Indian race. Furthermore, when it comes to the roles assigned to each race group issues were found in 3 textbooks.  In terms of gender, issues were found in 2 textbooks. In Four corners, all the high-ranking roles were assigned to female characters (e.g., manager, scientist). And in Summit, all the negative roles were assigned to the male characters (e.g., drug lord, drug trafficker). Third, in terms of social class, the representation of classes varied. First, the middle-class was represented the most in all the units. Second, the lower-class was represented only by 1 character.  If a teacher was conducting a pre-use evaluation, the findings could help him/her decide which textbook is more appropriate to his classroom.

Source: Adapted from Sastry, M. K., & Mohammed, C.(2013)

### Applying inclusion and exclusion criteria

The collected manuscripts for this SLR were to be accepted if the following criteria are followed:

1. The study showed distinguished empirical data.
2. Published in an academic journal.
3. The studies were conducted from the year 2002 to 2022.
4. The research is related to ESL.
5. The manuscripts were written in the English language.

These criteria would ensure the relevance and reliability of the manuscripts to be used in this SLR. The studies that lacked empirical data would not be included in this writing.

### Synthesising data

The data extracted from the manuscripts identified in Table 3 were retrieved and synthesised quantitatively. The analysis using the checklist in measuring the comprehensiveness of English teaching materials revealed some significant insights that reflect the research objectives in this SLR.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Highlight the differences in teachers' perceptions**

Scholars for years have seen checklists as one of the effective instruments in measuring the teaching materials used in the classroom. Though textbooks or course books have been designed and developed for classroom usage, there are still some angles and areas where teachers find the books are not suited to their students' level and needs. The studies (4/12 manuscripts) agreed that the course books designed may not be able to cater to the requirements of every student in the classrooms. The differences among the students' level and prior knowledge could hinder them to fully understand and relate the content in the course book (Ansary & Babaii, 2022; Sahin, 2020). Besides, the teachers' perspective on how to utilise the course book may be different from others (2/12 manuscripts). This is because the teachers would have the tendency of using the course book like how they have been taught to use it (Sahin, 2020; Golpour, 2012). Thus, this consequently creates different perceptions of the teachers on the course book; while ones see this course book as an advantage, the others may find it oppositely. There were 5 studies included in this SLR elaborated further on the weak points they encountered with the course book that they analysed in their studies. The designed course book may be too culturally specific and biased (Golpour, 2012). The way the content was designed in a certain course book may only depict a certain culture and environment where some students could not globally connect these ideas to their prior knowledge (Ahour et al., 2014). 4 out of 12 manuscripts discussed the similar concern about culture-bound course books where it may become disadvantageous to some learners. Nevertheless, as mentioned previously where some teachers might have different perceptions on the course book, the study conducted by Simsek (2017) discovered that the cultural element that is embodied in the course book has increased the interaction among the learners. This is because the interaction may be led by mutual understanding and the common community thinkin. Thus, this proves that there would be different perceptions encountered by the teachers when it comes to deciding the suitable course book to be used with the learners. Thus, the use of a checklist in analysing the teaching materials may be necessary in this scenario where teachers will measure the suitability of the materials used with the assessment made following the criteria set in the checklist.

### **Convenient method to keep record**

Besides, the checklist can be one of the convenient methods of keeping record for the comparison made between materials. The use of a checklist allows the information to be kept in the appropriate format (Tomlinson, 2012). The studies conducted (2/12 manuscripts) show how researchers make use of the checklists method to analyse different sets of materials for ESL. Ansary & Babaii (2002) for instance conducted material analysis over 10 ESL textbooks in their study. In the study, the researchers made significant remarks about the checklist used based on their analysis on the materials. They claimed that checklist is a convenient rating method that could provide a distinguished overview of the comparative analysis made on the materials. They also claimed that checklists become the efficient mechanism for recording and reporting the analysis made on the materials. Sahin (2020) in her study highlighted that the checklist can be a good assistance for the teachers in identifying the strength and the weakness of the materials in a short period of time.

### **Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the materials**

On the other hand, the use of the checklist leads to the discovery of the strengths and weaknesses of the materials. The studies included in this SLR reflected this aspect (2/12 manuscripts). The data obtained from the analysis made from the checklist could be presented in figure form. The studies conducted by Ahour et al. (2014) on the "English Textbook 2" for Iranian EFL second grade high school based on the 25 English teachers' perspective revealed that the content provided in the course book could not attain the majority of the learners' needs and differences. The analysis made on the course book was obtained from the adapted checklist developed by Litz. Meanwhile, the study conducted by Alshehri (2016) in getting the feedback from 12 EFL instructors on the textbook, Cutting Edge using the forty-item checklist developed by Litz revealed that they positively agreed on the textbook' features. The data from the checklist revealed that the instructors were most satisfied with the layout and design

(mean score=3.74), the content and subject (3.65), skill component (3.63), exercises and practices (3.55) and language type (3.51). Thus, these findings show how checklists can portray both strengths and weaknesses of the materials.

### **Systematic method of analysis**

The categories and items arranged in the checklists were explicit and easily comprehended by the users, teachers especially. Though there were other methods proposed by scholars to analyse the materials namely impressionistic and the in-depth method, checklist method is the most preferred method by the scholars as it is a combination from the other two (Sahin, 2020). The studies in this SLR (5/12 manuscripts) illustrate the variation of samplings chosen. There were 58 pre-service English teachers in an urban university (Simsek, 2017), twelve EFL instructors (Alshehri, 2016), 25 English teachers (8 females and 17 males) from different high schools in Boukan, Iran (Ahour et al., 2014), a group of tertiary level teachers who were using a textbook, English for International Tourism written by Dubicka & O’Keeffe (2003) (Sarem et al., 2013), 100 teachers who are currently using the Right Path to English course book (Golpour, 2012) and a group of prospective teachers of English as a Foreign Language pursuing an academic degree in teacher education at Augsburg University in Germany (Sahin, 2020). These samplings prove that the checklist method is favourable by different levels and types of samplings.

### **Offers flexibility for current changes**

Another advantage of using the checklist in analysing the materials is its flexibility in updating the items tested in accordance with the changes in the methodologies of language teaching (Ahour, 2012). The studies taken in this SLR (3/12 manuscripts) exemplified how the researcher did some adaptations. The Litz checklist for instance was adapted in the study conducted by Ahour et al. (2012). The original checklist developed by Litz highlighted three main categories namely subject and content, activities and skills with 40 items included. On the other hand, Ahour et al. (2012) in their study comprised 17 items (subject and content: items 1-5; activities: items 6-12; and skills: items 13-17) in the checklist but with the similar three main categories. The rationale for the changes in the existing checklist was to adapt and make it suitable for the teachers’ own teaching experience. Sahin (2020) on the other hand also did some adaptation of the few past checklists developed by scholars (Roberts, 1996; Littlejohn, 1998; Taiwo, 2013) to be used in her study. As a result, she came out with a checklist, Augsburg List of Criteria consisting of four main sections (design, content, text passages and activities, and visual context). Similarly, the changes made on the previous checklist was to cater to the changes in the current teaching and learning approaches.

### **The use of checklist leads to adaptation on the existing materials**

Based on the studies collected in this SLR (7/12 manuscripts), the discussions made based on the results obtained from the materials analysis using the checklists were greatly leading to the materials adaptation. Adaptation to the existing materials is done to make the materials best suited to the learners’ differences and needs and also create an effective learning experience for the learners (Sarem et al., 2013). Galpour (2012) conducted the materials analysis on the Right Path to English course book using the checklist and he found several weaknesses of the textbook. Based on the results, Galpour concluded that the instructions had to be clearer, the progression of the exercises should be from simple to more complex, and the designed exercises should allow the learners to develop their communication competencies. These identified points were deemed to be improved with the adaptation so that the materials could enhance the learners’ communicative competencies development. Thalmann (2014) similarly identified 13 adaptation criteria (content preferences, bandwidth, device requirements, knowledge structure, language, learning style, location, preferences for media types, presentation preferences, previous knowledge, user history, user request and user status) that need to be included after the analysis made earlier on the materials. It was expected the adapted materials made based on the weaknesses found from the analysis made could offer a better material to be exercised by the learners. Sahin (2012) concluded in her study that checklists could be the “honest advisor” for the teachers to truly measure and analyse the quality of the materials. Similarly, adaptation to the existing

materials should be done and the data obtained from the checklists could be the reference for the teachers along the process of adaptation (Kwak, 2017; Thalmann, 2014). Table 5 summarises the importance of the checklists in analysing teaching materials.

### **Future Direction**

A summary of suggestions for research in the future based on the panorama of the literature on the use of checklists in English teaching material analysis is provided. The researchers emphasised on the need of conducting the study on a bigger scale of samples (Ahour et al., 2014). The findings on the effectiveness of using the checklist in analysing the materials from a smaller group of people may not adequately represent the global view. In another way of looking at this situation, certain checklists used in the study were meant for a particular group of people with distinctive culture and background (Golpour, 2014). The bias issue may occur along the line in comparing the findings and results with other studies. Therefore, the idea of conducting research on a larger scale may reduce this issue and at the same time, the findings from the research can be accepted globally. On the other hand, it is also suggested to include different backgrounds of samples in using the particular checklists during the analysis (Ahour et al., 2014). They suggested to include researchers, materials developers, textbook writers, and teachers in order to get more reliable and accurate data.

On the other hand, most of the researches conducted using the checklists were executed once over the particular materials. The accurateness of the data to determine the strengths or the shortcomings of the materials could not be obtained over a single study (Alshehri, 2016; Ahour et al., 2014). Therefore, the study could be improved by utilising the similar checklists to analyse other materials or reanalysing the adapted materials using the similar checklist so that the accuracy and reliability of the data could be obtained.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings, it is concluded that the checklists have a significant role in analysing the English materials. Though there are experts who could give their opinions and views on the strengths and the shortcomings of the materials based on their expert judgement and assessment, the checklists can give opportunities for the teachers who are not trained to make this analysis in an effective manner. Besides, the checklists could offer an immediate and instant result for the teachers to determine the quality of the materials. Additionally, the checklists developed in the studies were mostly the adaptation made over the years by the scholars. Therefore, the practicality of using them for the materials analysis can be said to be convincing and reliable. The only difference of one study to the other was the items listed in the checklists where the researchers would make some changes to cater to the current teaching and learning experience. Certainly, even how great the materials could be improved from the analysis made using the checklists, teachers are the primary sources to disseminate the knowledge; not the course book or the textbook. However, to accomplish this vision, the teachers should fall back to the learners' profile (e.g through the needs analysis) and this could be presented through the assistance from the solid documentation; the checklists could be one of the methods.

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