**Textbook Evaluation**

1. **Textbook**

A textbook is defined as “a book used for instructional purposes, especially in schools and colleges” (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 124).

1. **Evaluation**

Evaluation is “the collection of, analysis and interpretation of information about any aspect of a programme of education or training as part of a recognized process of judging its effectiveness, its efficiency and any other outcomes it may have”.

1. **Textbook Evaluation**

Tomlinson et al (2001) defined textbook evaluation as “an activity in the field of applied linguistics that enables teachers, supervisors, administrators and material developers to make judgments about the effect the material have on the people who use them”.

1. **Purposes of Textbook Evaluation**

* The intention to adopt new coursebook/textbook.
* To identify particular strengths and weaknesses in coursebook already in use.

1. **Types of Textbook Evaluation**

Three types of evaluation are suggested by Cunningsworth (1995):

* **Pre-use Evaluation:** it takes place before its use. The evaluator looks at future or potential performance of the textbook. This type of evaluation goes through two steps: the description (analysis) phase and the interpretation (evaluation) phase. In the description phase, the content of the textbook has to be carefully described in terms of scope and sequence, organization, types of texts and exercises included. It is about identifying:
* aims and objectives of the textbook
* level of the book
* skills addressed
* topics covered
* situations it is intended for
* target learners
* time required
* components
* number and length of units
* organization of units

The second step is considered difficult as it is based on subjective judgments which differ from one evaluator to another. During this step, a number of checklists should be developed to help the evaluators do their work. Evaluation addresses the following issues:

* Goals
* Syllabus
* Theoretical framework
* Methodology
* Language content
* Organization
* Teacher appeal
* Learner appeal
* Ancillaries
* Price
* **In-use Evaluation:** it takes place in the course of its use. It takes place to monitor/check the effectiveness of a new textbook or to assess a used well-established one to change it. In other words, it focuses on how well the textbook functions in the classroom and depends on monitoring the book whilst it is being used by collecting information from both teachers and students.

Observation, record of use (documentation), meetings, and written reports are among the methods used to collect data in this type of evaluation.

* **Post-use Evaluation:** it takes place to check the strengths and weaknesses of a textbook/coursebook to see whether it needs to be changed in the future or not.

1. **Criteria for Textbook Evaluation**

Cunningsworth (1995) proposed four criteria for evaluating textbooks, particularly coursebook:

* They should correspond to learners’ needs. They should match the aims and objectives of the language learning programme.
* They should reflect the uses that learners will make of the language. Textbook should be chosen that will equip students to use language effectively for their own purposes.
* They should take account of students’ needs as learners and should facilitate their learning processes, without dogmatically imposing a rigid method.
* They should have a clear role as a support for learning. Like teachers, they mediate between the target language and the learner.

To evaluate an EFL textbook, Cunnigsworth (1995), proposed a checklist that is organised under the following categories:

1. Aims and approaches
2. Design and organization
3. Language content
4. Skills
5. Topic
6. Methodology
7. Teacher’s book
8. Practical consideration