



Critical review of the English book “New Headway-Beginner” as a curriculum for Iraqi EFL learners’ non-departmental undergraduates

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ABSTRACT

The suitable choice of an English coursebook for EFL learners is important to provide learners with opportunities to receive and practice the language both in and out of the classroom. This research aims to evaluate “New Headway” textbook to determine its suitability as a curriculum in relation to the objectives of the teaching program and the requirements of the learners. A mixed-method approach was employed in this study, incorporating both theoretical and practical evaluations. It is based on the researcher’s teaching experience and the data gathered from the teachers’ questionnaire. The findings indicated that the syllabuses of the textbook have not adequately addressed the requirements of first-year EFL learners at the non-departmental undergraduate level, particularly those in Health and Medical Technical College. It is anticipated that this study will be advantageous for EFL/ESL specialists, as it highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook and offers recommendations for improvement.

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Keywords: Iraqi EFL learners, New Headway-Beginner, non-departmental undergraduates

مراجعة نقدية للكتاب الإنجليزي (New Headway-Beginner) كمنهج دراسي لطلاب البكالوريوس الدارسين اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في غير اقسام اللغة الانكليزية

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المُستخلص

يُعدّ اختيار كتاب منهجي مناسب للغة الإنجليزية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية مهم لاكتساب اللغة وممارستها داخل الفصل الدراسي وخارجه. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تقييم الكتاب التعليمي "New Headway"، لتحديد مدى ملاءمته كمنهج دراسي فيما يتعلق بأهداف البرنامج التدريسي ومتطلبات المتعلمين. وقد استُخدم في هذه الدراسة نهجٌ متعدد الأساليب، يجمع بين التقييمات النظرية والعملية. ويعتمد ذلك على الخبرة التدريسية للباحث والبيانات التي تم جمعها من استبيان المعلمين. أشارت النتائج إلى أن مناهج الكتاب المدرسي لم تعالج بشكل كافٍ متطلبات متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المرحلة الأولى، وخاصةً طلاب الكليات التقنية الصحية والطبية. ومن المتوقع أن تُفيد هذه الدراسة متخصصي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية/ كلغة ثانية، إذ تُسلط الضوء على نقاط القوة والضعف في الكتاب التعليمي وتُقدّم توصياتٍ للتحسين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، كتاب التعليمي (New Headway-Beginner)، طلبة البكالوريوس لغير اقسام اللغة الانكليزية

1. Introduction

It is important to note that textbooks are considered one of the most essential components of the classroom curriculum and syllabus. In 2004, Vellenga remarked that "the textbook is an almost universal element of English language teaching." While numerous copies of textbooks are available, only a few provide accurate knowledge necessary for learners' competence (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). This study intends to analyze and evaluate one of the textbooks from the New Headway series, specifically designed for beginners. It aims specifically to assess "New Headway," a textbook tailored for beginners, which has been officially adopted by the Ministry of Education since 2018. It is presently utilized for first-year EFL learners at the non-departmental undergraduate level across all Iraqi universities. The primary focus of this study is to evaluate the textbook's alignment with the objectives of the teaching program and the needs of the learners. The need to assess this particular textbook arises from its widespread use throughout Iraq, where its effectiveness plays a crucial role in shaping the language learning experience. As a teacher of English, the researcher has identified the necessity of analyzing and evaluating this textbook to ascertain its strengths and weaknesses, as well as its appropriateness for first-year EFL learners who are non-departmental undergraduates, particularly those at Health and Medical Technical College. Furthermore, the researcher has discovered, through discussions with teacher's specialists in linguistics, who utilize this textbook, that many express concerns regarding the simplicity of the activities and skills included, which forces them to rely on supplementary materials for teaching their students. The researcher posits that this textbook may be intended for learners whose proficiency level is below that of the participants in this study. Consequently, the analysis and evaluation of the textbook will provide insights into its suitability, specifically whether it has effectively met the learners' needs and enhanced their communicative language skills. More specifically, this study aims to investigate the extent to which this textbook has addressed the needs of first-year EFL learners who are non-departmental undergraduates, particularly those at Health and Medical Technical College. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no prior study has examined the "New Headway-Beginner" textbook for first-year undergraduate learners.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Background

The English language has held significant importance in Iraq's educational system for several decades. The introduction of English instruction in Iraqi schools commenced in 1873, with the aim of expanding all towns during the initial year of British occupation following the First World War (Kareem, 2009). It is noteworthy that English education begins in the third grade and extends through high school, with students primarily learning the language orally by memorizing vocabulary, the alphabet, and simple questions and answers in the 3rd and 4th grades. The 5th grade marks the students' first meaningful exposure to a foreign language, as they acquire fundamental skills and grammar rules, along with more advanced pronunciation techniques and more complex texts, such as short stories and novels. Consequently, by the time they reach the undergraduate level, students have developed a solid understanding of basic vocabulary and grammar rules. In Iraq, the majority of English teachers are non-native speakers. Many of these educators lack the capability to teach English effectively and proficiency levels, despite their language skills. Therefore, it is evident that assessing the textbooks used for English learning in Iraq is crucial for the future success of English language programs.

It is widely recognized that English language instruction plays a vital role globally, as it is perceived as a language of international significance. Consequently, teaching English requires substantial effort from all stakeholders, particularly the teachers who are central to the educational process. However, English teachers must also be provided with up-to-date knowledge and resources related to English language instruction. Consequently, scholars and designers made efforts to improve the process of teaching and learning English. Some like Bergmann and Sams (2007, & 2012, as cited in Al-Bahrani, 2020) focused on designing a model called "Flipped Classroom" to improve the process of teaching and learning English. Others focused on examining and reviewing the process of learning strategies and learners' skill to ultimately achieve the learning goal. Cases in point were: (Chamot, 2004; Oxford, Cho, Leung & Kim, 2004, as cited in Raftari, Vosoughi, & Al-Bahrani, 2013) and (Tajedin, 2001; Mohammad Rahimi et al., 2008, as cited in Raftari, KASHEF, & Al-Bahrani, 2012). The third direction was concerned with a thorough examination of the textbooks. This is because teaching English as a foreign language textbook heavily relies on the textbooks available in the market, making it challenging to identify a book that aligns with educational objectives.

2.2. Previous Research

Numerous prior studies have assessed various textbooks, as evaluation is crucial in the educational process for improving textbooks through modifications. In 2006, Mahmoud assessed the appropriateness of the English for Palestine-10 textbooks," utilizing a sample of 50 male and female English teachers. His findings indicated that the textbook in question is suitable but requires improvements and modifications. Al-Akraa (2007) evaluated the fifth introductory English textbook, "Iraq Opportunities 3," which was adopted by the Ministry of Education for elementary schools. This study employed a mixed-method approach to analyze the textbook, gathering insights from English language teachers who utilize it in their instruction, alongside the researcher's personal evaluation. The primary findings regarding the study's shortcomings highlight the limited role and inadequate representation of culture within the textbook, while its strengths include the appropriate use of grammar and vocabulary that are appropriate for the students' age and level. Another study conducted by Akef (2015) evaluated the second intermediate stage English textbook, "Iraq Opportunities." This evaluation involved 60 English teachers from 60 secondary schools. The results identified weaknesses in areas such as the stated objectives, overall presentation, teaching aids, and content. Fayadh (2017) carried out an evaluation of the English textbook "English for Iraq" for the second intermediate stage. This evaluation encompassed the textbook's content, vocabulary, structure, exercises,

illustrations, and other external qualities, in addition to a detailed EFL textbook evaluation checklist. The author provided significant recommendations for enhancing the textbook, such as aligning the content with course objectives and incorporating more engaging topics relevant to the learners' environment.

2.2 Evaluation of Textbooks

Assessing the materials used in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is crucial for educators and authors of these resources to address issues within teaching materials, thereby enhancing course planning and managing learning activities more effectively (Cunningsworth, 1995). This assessment can assist teachers in gaining accurate and valuable insights into the overall nature of the textbook materials (Ellis, 1997).

Most importantly, the evaluation provides teachers with a clear understanding of the content, including its strengths and weaknesses; this understanding can aid them in determining whether the content and methods of the textbooks are appropriate for a specific language teaching context and whether they align with course objectives, learners' needs, and teachers' beliefs (Anjaneyulu, 2014). It is crucial to differentiate between the analysis and evaluation of textbooks. As highlighted by McGrath (2002, p. 22), "analysis is a process that yields an objective, verifiable description, whereas evaluation involves making judgments." Cunningsworth (1995) recognized three categories of teaching material evaluation:

1. Pre-use (pre-evaluation): It determines the anticipated effectiveness of a specific instructional resource.
2. During use (in-use) evaluation: It is utilized for the assessment of the existing teaching materials employed by both students and educators. The process of in-use evaluation pertains to the capability of thoroughly and meticulously evaluating the tests, in addition to overseeing the materials during their application by gathering insights from both teachers and students (Wale, 2017). Richards (2001) outlined several methodologies for conducting in-use evaluation:
 - a. Observation: The emphasis is placed on observing the classroom to understand how educators utilize this book, demonstrating the impact of the book's syllabuses on the teaching and learning processes within the classroom.
 - b. Record of use: it displays documents from the book along with the rationale for selecting certain sections over others, in addition to the recommendations and modified syllabuses implemented in the classroom.
 - c. Feedback sessions: It illustrates how teachers are convening in groups to share their insights and experiences regarding the teaching of the book.
 - d. Written reports: Reports such as sheets or feedback from written formats like blogs or online forums are crucial for providing a brief reflection on the functionality of the components included in the book. This can indicate areas for improvement in the utilization of the book.
 - e. Teachers' reviews: teachers are requested to provide written evaluations regarding their experiences with teaching the book, wherein they can express their preferences for specific sections of the text.
 - f. Students' reviews: The students are requested to provide feedback regarding their experiences with the book.
3. Post-use evaluation: It is utilized to assess the material that has previously been employed, and it functions to gather information regarding the potential continued use of the book in upcoming programs.

This study will concentrate on the evaluation of the New Headway book in practical use, aiming to assess the value of the material based on the researcher's teaching experience with Iraqi EFL learners

and the data gathered from the questionnaire administered to the teachers.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research focuses on the analysis and evaluation of the first-year English textbook for beginners, titled "New Headway," which has been utilized in Iraqi universities since 2018. The study is descriptive in nature and includes a checklist that addresses both the internal and external qualities of the first-year textbook, New Headway.

3.2 Participants

This study's sample comprises 25 teachers, both male and female. They are specialists in linguistics and were randomly selected from various colleges to gather feedback based on their experiences in teaching this book. Each teacher has taught this book for a minimum of one year.

3.3 Instruments

The data collection for this study is divided into two main components. The first component involves a theoretical evaluation, wherein the researcher draws upon her teaching experience with this book for the assessment. The second component entails an empirical evaluation, which uses a checklist created to gather information regarding the textbook in this study. Additionally, the items within the checklist were formulated following a review of the literature, which highlights the characteristics of an effective textbook as recommended by educational experts. It is important to note that the checklist comprises 40 statements that have been presented to and evaluated by a panel of experts to confirm its validity. Subsequently, the checklist was revised in accordance with the feedback and suggestions from the experts to finalize the checklist. The checklist includes four primary items, along with one open-ended question at the conclusion of the checklist:

1. Layout and design
1. Subjects and language skills
3. Activities and methodology
4. Syllabus fit

In this research, a questionnaire was administered to 25 teacher's specialists in linguistics, featuring response options (strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, strongly agree) for the previously mentioned items. Consequently, this study employed a mixed-method approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative techniques. This integration is crucial to achieve a complementary blend of both methodologies, wherein "the qualitative should guide the quantitative and the quantitative feedback should inform the qualitative in a circular manner" (Dörnyei, 2007: 43). Furthermore, relying solely on quantitative methods is insufficient for capturing the depth of the data gathered. Thus, qualitative methods are vital to facilitate a more comprehensive evaluation of the book, incorporating suggestions from participants for its enhancement (Ibid.).

4. Data Analysis and Discussion of Results

The percentages of the teachers' responses to the items are presented to show their opinions about the textbook under review.

4.1 Book Design and Layout

It is essential to note that the "New Headway" series is utilized for EFL learners in Iraq during their second year. The design and layout of the book are evaluated based on 8 items in the questionnaire.

Table 1 displays the percentages of teachers' responses regarding the design and layout items.
Table1: Percentages of teachers' responses on items of design and layout

Items of design & layout	1 Strongly agree %	2 Agree %	3 Undecided %	4 Disagree %	5 Strongly Disagree %
1. The book is easy to obtain	88	12	0	0	0
2. The cover sheet is attractive including attractive pictures	96	4	0	0	0
3. The size of the book is easy to be carried	16	76	8	0	0
4. The quality of the paper is good	100	0	0	0	0
5. There is a clear content page which includes topics for each unit	100	0	0	0	0
6. the objectives of the book are clearly stated	52	12	12	16	8
7. There is a clear exercise with key and CD	92	8	0	0	0
8. The book includes purposes & guidance of using the book	0	4	24	60	12
Average	68	14.5	5.5	9.5	2.5
	41.25		5.5		1.5

As previously mentioned, the majority of educators concur on the items, as evidenced by the average responses for agree items being 41.25%, while the average for disagree items stands at 1.5%, and the average for undecided items is 5.5%. This indicates that most teachers are confident in the accessibility of this book, which is also straightforward in its design and presentation. Furthermore, the book is visually appealing, playing a significant role in enticing potential buyers. In particular, learners are drawn to the book due to the vibrant images and illustrations featured in 'New Headway - Beginner.' The hardcover is visually striking, adorned with illustrations, and provides easy access to essential information, including the book's title (New Headway), its level (Beginner), its type (Student's Book), the authors (Soars and Liz Soars), the publisher (Oxford University Press), and numerous green triangles that suggest the presence of engaging activities within the book.

It is important to highlight that the book features colorful and appealing images that illustrate the content of each activity within it. This, in turn, aids learners in comprehending the material and motivates them to engage with the activities more effectively. Additionally, this approach captures the learners' attention towards the knowledge presented and encourages them to visualize the narratives of the scenarios depicted in the book. On one hand, teachers concur on the high quality of the paper used, along with a well-organized table of contents, and there are clear solutions provided for the exercises, accompanied by a CD. It is also noted that this book comes with a student workbook and a CD that contains recordings of conversations, vocabulary exercises, pronunciation tasks, as well as listening and reading activities.

Moreover, the book includes answers to all exercises at the end, which eliminates any uncertainty regarding the answers, thereby preventing a decline in their ability to predict answers and communicate effectively in real-life situations. Conversely, some teachers express disagreement regarding the chosen topics, as the subjects and the illustrations included do not align with the students' areas of study. Ultimately, it appears that a majority of teachers feel that the book lacks a clear purpose and guidance, as indicated by an average of 60% of responses leaning towards disagreement. Overall, it can be concluded that the English materials in New Headway for beginners have been quite successful in capturing the learners' interest in the book.

4.2 Subjects and Language Skills

The topics and competencies outlined in the book are evaluated using four items in the questionnaire. Table 2 illustrates the percentage of responses from teachers regarding the items related to subjects

and skills.

Table 2: Percentages of teachers’ responses to items of design and layout

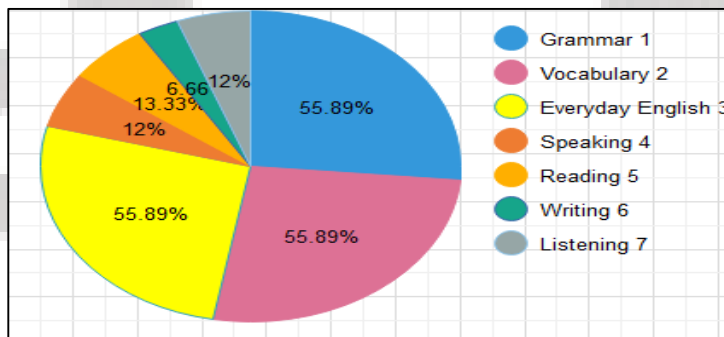
Items of subjects & skills	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly agree %	Agree %	undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
1. The subjects and skills are suitable for the aims of language learning in my college	0	0	0	8	92
2. The subjects & skills encouraged the students’ interest in further English language study	0	0	4	8	88
3. There is a balance distribution between the subjects and skills	8	12	0	24	56
4. I would like to choose this book for teaching in the classroom again	0	0	0	0	100
Average	2	3	1	10	84
	2.5		1		47

As indicated above, the majority of teachers do not concur regarding the appropriateness of the subjects and skills in relation to the objectives of language learning, as they have not equipped students with the motivation to pursue further studies in the English language. This is evidenced by the average responses to the disagree items, which stand at 47%, while the average responses to the agree items are merely 2.5%, and undecided responses account for 1%. The teachers assert that the subjects and content of the textbook are not aligned with the students' fields of study, suggesting that there should be engaging topics that encourage them to communicate in real-life situations. Consequently, they express a reluctance to utilize this book for teaching in EFL classrooms again. The textbook comprises 145 pages, covering major topics such as vocabulary, grammar, everyday English, and the essential skills (speaking, reading, writing, listening) across 14 units. Table (3) below illustrates the frequency of exercises and skills in the 'New Headway - Beginner' book for first-year students, reflecting the intended level of the textbook.

Table 3: Frequency of exercises and skills

Exercise type	Frequency & its percentage
Grammar	14(55.89%)
Vocabulary	14(55.89%)
Everyday English	14(55.89%)
Speaking	9(12%)
Reading	10(13.33%)
Writing	5(6.66%)
listening	9(12%)
	75

As illustrated above, the New Headway-beginner textbook consists of seven exercises that encompass various skills, namely: grammar, vocabulary, everyday English, speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills. It is evident that this book includes exercises focused on grammar, vocabulary, and everyday English (55.89%), speaking and listening skills (12%), reading exercises (13.33%), and



writing exercises (6.66%). On one hand, it appears that the book thoroughly addresses grammar and its application in contexts, indicating that grammar serves as a fundamental principle within the framework, alongside the use of vocabulary and everyday English, given their combined percentage of 55.89%. This assertion is supported by Soars & Maris (2002), who note that the 'New Headway-beginner' book provides an integrated syllabus with grammar as its central tenet. Another significant point is that grammar and vocabulary are presented in a somewhat random manner, interwoven with everyday English, as well as the skills of reading and speaking. Conversely, it is apparent that there is an imbalance in the distribution of language skills, with writing receiving less emphasis compared to other skills, as evidenced by its percentage of (6.66%), while speaking and listening skills account for (12%) and reading skills for (13.33%). Figure (1) illustrates the distribution of language skills and other exercises within the 'New Headway-beginner' book.

Figure 1

The distribution of language skills and other exercises in “New Headway-beginner” book

Regarding the reading task, the majority of exercise types presented in the book necessitated that students provide a selected response from either short passages or recorded text. These selected responses could range from a single word to a phrase or a complete sentence. The authors chose these task types to facilitate learners in understanding, organizing, and retrieving vocabulary.

As previously indicated, vocabulary development was integrated into the reading task. Additionally, other exercises involve answering comprehension questions, which are incorporated into the writing task. The book is structured to encompass four interconnected skills. For instance, reading skills are intertwined with speaking and occasionally with writing skills, among others. Consequently, the authors aim to unify all tasks and skills cohesively. The listening task offers learners the chance to become acquainted with the text and to train their auditory skills in recognizing the native language. In this regard, Majeed (2022) states that listening is essential for the development of other language learning skills since it is the fundamental language skill, and it plays a crucial role in our everyday interactions. Many teachers have noted that the writing exercises are quite limited, and students are required to provide responses for both writing and reading tasks. However, these exercises are restricted to generating words, phrases, and sentences rather than longer sentences and passages, as students need to gain experience in composing lengthy passages that relate to their interests and needs. In terms of the speaking task, learners typically describe pictures or respond to images of well-known individuals, which serve as the input for the speaking task. It is observed that learners predominantly utilize familiar vocabulary and structures to complete the tasks, as they have encountered in previous units. Furthermore, learners occasionally engage in role-play, but there is a noticeable absence of task types that involve discussions on interesting topics among them. In general, there are two books: the first is the 'student's book' and the second is the 'workbook with a key.' For instance, the title of unit 3 in 'New Headway-beginner' is 'all about you.' The primary topics of unit 3 are as follows:

- Grammar: am/are/is, my/your & this is
- Vocabulary: jobs and personal information
- Skills work: reading and listening roleplay
- Everyday English: social expressions

Regarding the second book, the workbook consists of exercises that require students to provide answers. The exercises include either completion tasks based on pictures or fill-in-the-blank questions related to topics from unit 3 of the first book, such as vocabulary, grammar, negation, and questions. Additionally, there is an exercise focused on listening skills, where students listen to a conversation and are then asked to answer questions based on what they heard. Both books require 90 minutes for

instruction, yet the total duration for each lecture is only 40 minutes. This indicates that there is insufficient time to cover both books adequately.

A critical observation made by teachers is that the book lacks exercises that develop skills necessary for communication on topics related to health and medical field. In this context, Ellis (1997) noted that "Subject-specific materials are essential to equip students with the skills and knowledge required for effective communication."

4.3 Activities and Methodology

The book's activities and methodology are evaluated using five items in the questionnaire. Table 4 presents the percentages of teachers' responses regarding the items related to activities and methodology:

Table 4. Percentages of teachers' responses to items of activities and methodology

Items of activities & methodology	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
1. Activities difficulty corresponded with student' level	0	28	24	44	4
2. The activities and language skills are distributed equally	0	0	0	38	62
3. The activities are interesting which urge the students to communicate in pairs and group effectively in a real situation	10	12	0	46	32
4. The methods of presenting and producing the activities are suitable to the students' level	0	12	0	8	80
5. Did the activities need improving	92	8	0	0	0
Average	20.4	12	4.8	27.2	35.6
	16.2		4.8		31.4

As indicated previously, a majority of educator's express disagreement concerning most of the items related to activities and methodology, as evidenced by the average disagreement rate of 31.4%, which surpasses the average agreement rate of 16.2% and the undecided rate of 4.8%. Many teachers have indicated that the manner in which activities are presented and produced does not align with the students' proficiency levels, and they do not foster real-life communication among students. They emphasized that the distribution of activities and skills is not equitable. Based on the researcher's experience as an EFL instructor, it has been observed that the method of presenting and producing materials is traditional, characterized by a non-authentic approach, particularly in the dialogues. These dialogues are specifically crafted for students, who are instructed to practice them in pairs, repeating them verbatim. Subsequently, students are tasked with creating additional similar conversations through substitution. The grammar section consists of fixed rules that students must successfully apply to complete the production phase. Consequently, students can easily deduce the answers, as the words are provided for them, requiring only selection from a list. They find these exercises tedious, especially since the participants in this study are first-year students at Health and Medical Technical College, who achieved scores exceeding 92% in English during their secondary education. According to Brown (2001, p.15), methodology encompasses "pedagogical practices in general ... [w]hatever considerations are involved in how to teach." Therefore, methodology is typically reflected in the types of activities chosen and the expected learning approaches of the

students. In this context, Soars & Maris (2002) noted that:

New Headway combines the best of traditional methods with more recent approaches to help students use English accurately and fluently. ... It provides a solid introduction to the structure of the language, gradually building students' understanding of basic grammar, equipping them with key vocabulary, and giving them skills to deal with simple social situations”.

Figures (2) and (3) below provide an example of matching exercise about vocabulary spot and listening skill in unit 3 respectively:

Figure 2

1 Match the jobs and the pictures.

a doctor	a nurse	a student	a teacher	a shop assistant
a bus driver	a businessman	a police officer	a builder	

1 a teacher 2 3

The vocabulary spot in “New Headway-Beginner”

Figure 3

T 3.11 Listen and look at the pictures.

OK sorry

1 A I'm sorry .
B That's _____ .

The listening skill in “New Headway-Beginner”

4.4 Syllabus Fit

Two items are selected to measure the syllabus fit in the questionnaire. Table 5 illustrates the percentages of teachers' responses to the items of syllabus fit.

Table 5: Percentages of teachers' responses to items of syllabus fit

Items of the syllabus fit	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
1. The grammar, vocabularies, and skills are suitable for the students' needs	0	0	0	72	28
2. There is a logical progression in presenting the vocabularies, grammar, and skills	92	8	0	0	0
Average	46	4	0	36	14
	25		0		25

As previously mentioned, a majority of educators express disagreement regarding the appropriateness of employing grammar and vocabulary rules, as well as skills tasks, due to their failure to address the needs of students, evidenced by an average disagreement response rate of 25%. Conversely, there is a consensus among most teachers concerning the logical progression of grammar, vocabulary rules, and skills tasks, reflected in an average agreement response rate of 25%. It is important to highlight that grammar, vocabulary, and skills are part of integrated syllabuses, with grammar serving as a fundamental principle in the teaching process. For instance, in unit 3, only a limited selection of personal and possessive pronouns is presented. Consequently, students are restricted to using only the structures introduced in earlier sections, which may hinder their motivation to utilize the language as native speakers do in real-life contexts. According to Richards (2001, p. 165), "planning the organizational structure in a course involves selecting appropriate blocks and deciding on the sequence in which they will appear," emphasizing the necessity for coherence among the materials in the textbook, progressing from simpler to more complex content. This coherence between syllabuses is crucial for learners, allowing them to transition logically from one section to the next. In New Headway-beginner, it is observed that both units (3 & 2) concentrate on the same topics of personal and possessive pronouns, as well as the grammar spot, indicating the authors' intention to provide students with more practice on these tasks. Furthermore, there appears to be logical coherence in the skills tasks, with unit 3 incorporating listening and reading, while unit 2 includes reading and speaking. This illustrates a logical progression between the units and throughout the entire textbook.

5. Strengths and Weaknesses

The objectives of any textbook should align with the goals of the teachers, which in turn must address the highest level of the learners' needs (Cunningsworth, 1995). As noted by Grossmann (2009), New Headway is a general English course designed for adults who lack prior experience in English.

Firstly, the syllabuses in 'New Headway' cater to the strengths of beginners; although they adhere to a traditional approach, they offer students the chance to build their confidence in communicating effectively with the materials presented in the textbook. Secondly, the syllabuses exhibit a logical progression between the units and throughout the textbook, especially in the skills tasks.

Thirdly, the syllabuses include a comprehensive vocabulary and essential grammar rules, along with skills tasks that enable students to cultivate adequate skills for practice in diverse situations. Lastly, all answers are provided at the conclusion of the book, granting students the chance to boost their confidence and reflect on their responses. In contrast, there are shortcomings in the materials utilized. The issue lies not within the materials presented in the textbook, but in the assumption that students possess a foundational understanding of English and require practice with tasks in real-world scenarios outside the classroom. In this respect, Shahin et al. (2025) indicate that curriculum developers should incorporate modern, genuine materials that facilitate real-world communication and represent a variety of cultural contexts. These materials should be customized to meet the needs of students with different levels of proficiency. It is noted that the conventional approach restricts students' performance, as they can only practice within the classroom, potentially leading to

difficulties in real-life communication. Another significant concern is that not all topics and content are pertinent to their field of study, which is the health and medical sector, thereby failing to connect their language learning with their major courses.

In conclusion, the level of New Headway is inappropriate for first-year students at Health and Medical Technical College, as they have studied English as a foreign language for a minimum of 11 years, and their scores in English subjects during secondary school have exceeded 90. This indicates that they possess a foundational understanding of vocabulary and tenses (such as directions, animals, numbers, etc.) necessary for communication in specific contexts. Consequently, they need to enhance their English skills to communicate as naturally as possible by the end of the course. It is more suitable for beginners who lack any knowledge of the English language.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The primary conclusions indicate that the majority of subjects and content are inadequate for the language learning requirements of students, as they do not relate to their area of study. Consequently, the syllabuses presented in the book do not meet the needs of first-year EFL learners who are non-departmental undergraduates, especially those studying at Health and Medical Technical College.

This material is more suitable for beginners who lack knowledge of the English language.

After discussing the results, the major conclusions and recommendations are as follows:

- 1) The book includes a variety of tasks and skills such as grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It also provides integrated syllabuses that encompass vocabulary and grammar, which serve as the guiding principle.
- 2) The percentage values reflecting the distribution of skills indicate an unequal allocation between writing and other skills, with writing receiving comparatively less emphasis. Furthermore, a significant drawback of the book lies in its content, particularly concerning speaking and writing skills, as these are not aligned with the students' areas of study, which would facilitate their communication in a context that interests them. It is recommended that the book be enhanced with excerpts from health and medical sectors that resonate with the learners' interests.
- 3) It has been observed that the syllabuses in "New Headway-beginner" adhere to a traditional methodology, which restricts students from generating new tasks as they enhance their communication abilities within the classroom. However, the syllabuses contain a wealth of vocabulary and fundamental grammar rules, along with skills tasks, which afford students the chance to cultivate sufficient skills for practice in a variety of situations.
- 4) The book's syllabuses did not cater to the requirements of first-year EFL learners who are non-departmental undergraduates, especially those studying at Health and Medical Technical College. It is primarily suitable for beginners who lack knowledge of the English language. This assertion is supported by teachers who used their teaching materials to fulfill the needs of the students. Consequently, the teachers emphasized the necessity for diverse types of exercises that encourage students to apply their skills in real-life situations.
- 5) The syllabuses exhibit a coherent logical progression both among the individual units and

throughout the entirety of the textbook, especially in relation to the skills tasks.

- 6) The book includes all the answers at the end, enabling readers to bolster their confidence and foresee the accurate responses.



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