Investigating EFL Students' Perceptions about the Use of Beyond Textbook Materials for University Courses

Naeem Afzal[1]

[1] Department of English Language and Literature, College of Science and Humanities, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia

Correspondence: Naeem Afzal, Department of English Language and Literature, College of Science and Humanities, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia. Email: n.awan@psau.edu.sa

Abstract

Proficiency in English, in today's globalized atmosphere, needs to be prioritized. This can be achieved by incorporating diverse, dynamic, and productive strategies intended to improve language proficiency. The use of different beyond textbook materials for teaching skills courses such as reading, writing, listening and speaking can be one such strategy. This study advocates that student teacher's reliance should not always be based on prescribed textbooks, which may not always satisfy all students' needs in different circumstances. Instead, resources other than textbooks can be a supportive supplement. This quantitative study investigates EFL students' perceptions about the use of beyond textbook materials while studying skills courses in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU). The sample consisted of 68 student-participants: 30 males and 38 females studying in level three of 4-year BA program in the Department of English. Based on purposive sampling, only those student-participants were chosen who had already studied skills courses as freshmen. To collect data, a 20-item questionnaire was created, online, using Google Forms. The responses were collected using 5-point Likert scale containing agreement, frequency and quality response options. The findings reveal that students positively reacted to the use of beyond textbook materials for skills courses and acknowledged the contributions of such non-textbook resources towards learning EFL. This study is limited to a selected context. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies may focus on student-participants from different locations to, supposedly, achieve results that are more comprehensive. It is hoped, findings of this study will provide valuable insights for students, teachers, and future researchers alike in the context of EFL.

Keywords: EFL, students' perceptions, beyond textbook materials, EFL skills courses, PSAU

1. Introduction

Learning English has become an inevitable priority in today's globalized world. This can be achieved by incorporating diverse, dynamic, and productive strategies intended to improve language proficiency. Such teaching strategies promote the precise development of language skills, boost students' communication in the classroom, and undermine the traditional techniques of learning. They, also, foster motivation and autonomous learning even at the university level, where students have to study different English language modules containing vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, readings, and others (Macancela, 2019). In addition, teaching resources are critical for teachers and students in the learning process to increase learning quality. Without effective teaching resources, teachers struggle to improve learning efficiency, and students struggle to follow the learning process in a class. Teachers can impart knowledge to students by purposefully selecting authoring materials (e.g., texts, movies), which, unlike textbooks, are not created for educational purposes (Fitria, 2022).

Furthermore, the teaching-learning materials should not always point to student teacher's reliance on prescribed textbooks. Instead, it has been claimed that EFL teachers, even at a university level of education, showed a willingness to incorporate supplementary materials (beyond textbook resources) for several reasons. To cite, supplementary materials create motivation in students, promote their interest, overcome deficiencies in textbooks, provide extra language skill practice, enhance the textbook-based course content, reduce boredom, and so on (Afzal, 2023). Resources other than textbooks are helpful for teaching EFL. They are necessary for teachers to create motivation, which is one of the key elements influencing learning. These instructional resources connect to the learning objectives and topics of the course and serve as a complement to the curriculum. The main justification for using a supplement is that course materials may concentrate on a subject that students are not interested in or contain language or information that they are already familiar with. Then, a more challenging task with greater appeal would be required (Musaevna, 2020).

This study addresses the issue that formally assigned textbooks materials are predefined and limited in terms of time and content. These formal, knowledge and skill-based textbooks might make students bored because of their shortcomings, their repetitious exercises, and due to the fact that not all language learners may find the course material interesting. Additionally, course teachers are limited in their ability to deviate from the pre-designed course content. Moreover, mandated textbooks may not always match students' requirements in

different learning environments, and teachers may be required to generate their own additional materials (beyond textbook materials) or depend on third-party resources. On the contrary, it has been claimed/suggested that non-textbook resources are advantageous in several ways and are recommended to supplement textbooks (see e.g. Afzal, 2023; Musaevna, 2020). This study aims to investigate EFL students' perceptions on the use of beyond textbook materials while studying university courses. The study is driven by the pre-university EFL context, which significantly limits students' opportunities for improving their language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). It relies on two research questions. 1) What are EFL students' perceptions about the use of beyond textbook materials for learning skills courses in PSAU? 2) How does the use of beyond textbook materials contribute to enhancing skills courses?

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Context

English is taught as a second language in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) in order to improve English competence and put the country on the worldwide map as it attempts to meet Vision 2030 goals (Alharbi, 2023). The English language holds great significance in Saudi Arabia's global economic, political, and scientific endeavors. The Ministry of Education has taken over the responsibility to establish and enforce language policies in schools, both public and private, owing to the high demand for English proficiency. The English language has had a huge influence on Saudi society, prompting considerable educational reforms to fulfil the needs. English has become an indispensable tool for the people of Saudi Arabia in their quest for career advancement and nation building. It is no longer a mere language for communication but an essential asset in all major domains such as social, political, economic, and religious, both locally and globally. Saudi Arabia has significantly changed its EFL teaching policies to produce globally literate individuals who can contribute to the country's economy and academic status. English is now taught at all levels in schools and universities, and proficiency in English is essential for most professional jobs in the country (Afzal, 2023).

Arab EFL students generally struggle with a number of issues, especially when it comes to speaking and writing English. These issues also affect Saudi EFL students, especially in classroom settings where majority of recent graduates from high schools are incapable to hold even a brief discussion in English. The obvious reason can be ineffective teaching approaches used in high schools (Al-Tamimi, 2019). Saudi EFL learners' low achievement can also be attributed to curriculum, teachers, and methods (Alrabai, 2016). In the context of Saudi Arabia, most students receive their primary education in Arabic. However, when they progress to higher levels of education, they encounter a different atmosphere where teaching resources, including textbooks and lectures, are presented in English. This can cause a significant challenge for students who are not proficient in English. Teachers in Saudi Arabia use real resources like newspapers, magazines, and interview videos to aid students in reading and writing English (Alharbi, 2023). According to Almoslamani (2022), recently efforts have been made to raise students' awareness of learning strategies, in order to enhance the quality of learning in educational institutions in KSA and to achieve high performance standards at global level, as opposed to traditional rote-learning memorization that has been dominant. Given such as context, the current study aims to investigate the perceptions of EFL students on the use of beyond textbook materials while studying skills courses (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in PSAU.

2.2 Are Textbooks the Only EFL Instructional Material?

The teaching and learning activities and techniques identify the factors related to (1) the input including students, teachers, and instructional materials, (2) the process that includes research, leadership, and student services, and (3) the output factors such as employable graduates, knowledge generation, and economic development. Teaching and learning activities may also be evident in students' skills, attitudes, and research orientations. Hence, it is critical to provide an enabling atmosphere for successful teaching and learning skills. In addition, it is the duty of instructors to be adequately trained in the use of teaching aids and to have a thorough understanding of their topic in order to pass on accurate information to learners. The utilization of specific teaching resources allows students to have a more realistic idea of the context of what is being taught. Different types teaching aids (beyond text materials) improve classroom teaching and learning, capture students' attention, and motivate them to learn. It becomes easier for instructors to carry out the teaching-learning process. Teaching aids can help to make learning more exciting, less time demanding, allow students to actively execute something while learning by using their hearing or visual abilities (Ordu, 2021). Similarly, in the context of an EFL classroom, using different types of interactive materials allows students to apply their knowledge in a variety of circumstances, bridge the gap between teaching and reality, assist students in developing new concepts, and connect them to their own world. Such teaching techniques help teachers assess pupils' understanding by seeing how they interact with the material they are learning (Navarro, 2014).

Textbooks do have few drawbacks. To cite, textbooks may have inappropriate or irrelevant content or material for the class. The language of textbooks may not contain what is required or it may contain an excessive weight on some areas of language and insufficient on others. Activities included in the textbook may not have a proper proportion or illustrations or exercises might be tedious. Similarly, information incorporated in the textbook can be become outdated or the deadline for finishing the textbook portions/syllabus might not be achievable (Graves, 2000). No textbook is ideal and can satisfy the demands of every student or instructor. Every textbook has advantages and disadvantages of its own; therefore, no textbook intended for a wide audience can be ideal for every set of students. Textbooks are only a starting point for instruction; other resources can be used to supplement the content in order to meet the requirements and interests of students. As a result, such instructional resources are neither practical nor appropriate for use in classrooms. Furthermore, textbooks are overly inflexible, reflecting pedagogical, psychological, and linguistic preferences and prejudices. Language learning and teaching methods, strategies, approaches, procedures, and processes are imposed, determined, and controlled by textbooks. Aside from cultural

and social biases, textbook representations of the target language are unnatural, unsuitable, and unauthentic, and such language models and dialogues do not adequately prepare students for real-life circumstances (Radić-Bojanić & Topalov, 2016).

2.3 EFL Students and Textbooks

Nowadays, English is widely used by global community for various purposes, especially academics. Learning English has become crucial for students worldwide. However, learning English in non-English speaking countries can be more challenging than in English-speaking nations. The level of difficulty may be influenced by different factors such as learners' aptitude, motivation, environment, language-learning habits, and prior experience in learning foreign languages (Hibatullah, 2019). Students without a strong background in English language skills may struggle in EFL classes and encounter problems understanding lecturers, interacting with their teachers, and even failing to express their point of view in front of their peers. In the context of Saudi Arabia, in particular, Alhamami and Ahmad (2018) claimed that university teachers of an EFL program demonstrated negative attitudes towards English textbooks and found them insufficient in terms of addressing courses' objectives, language proficiency of students, their cultural sensitivity, and their academic backgrounds. Moreover, the content of such textbooks was found unsuitable and incompatible with learners' needs and teaching methodologies. Thus, the need to modify the textbook content and supplement it with authentic materials was suggested (Alhamami & Ahmad, 2018).

Teachers should use a textbook as a resource for their students, but it should not be the only teaching-learning source. They should use it as a guide and feel free to add, edit, and amend any content found in it, as well as to supplement it with a variety of outside materials. As argued, textbooks do not take into consideration students' background knowledge (Graves, 2000; Gak, 2011). Likewise, textbooks may be very limited in offering vocabulary component to the students inside a classroom. This factor can influence students' language learning, consequently (Bergström, Norberg, & Nordlund, 2023). Teachers' way of using resources significantly influence on students' learning: what and how teachers teach and students' learn. Therefore, teachers should supplement a textbook with materials from other sources by extemporizing, supplementing, exploiting, or by expanding. Engagement of different resources by teachers through modifications, adaptation and improvisation in fact target students' requirements, preserve the flow of classroom discourse, and carry out pedagogical goals (Li & Li, 2021). Students' reliance on textbooks as their sole source of knowledge might impede their capacity to delve further into a target language. Furthermore, this will de-skill teachers and limit their creativity in the classroom. Another disadvantage of textbooks is that some of them are developed for certain situations that may result in classroom disputes, such as cultural, political, and social conflicts (Alhamami & Ahmad, 2018).

2.4 The Beyond/Non Textbook Materials

The beyond textbook materials comprise all such supplementary resources that are used together with a course's primary materials. Teachers worldwide utilize them to support language comprehension, add value to the learning process, enhance EFL students' performance, maintain high success rates, and achieve promising results (Lai et al. 2022). Beyond textbook materials are beneficial resources that help students improve their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, as well as accelerate their language acquisition. Such materials include dictionaries, videos, email, CDs, YouTube, worksheets, readers, and grammar books. Other examples include newspapers, photos, and native speakers' speeches as well as teacher's guidance and discussions. The purpose of supplementary materials is also to enrich language learners' knowledge and experience. By utilizing a "pragmatic concept", material creators can incorporate various sources of feedback and enable instructors to take responsibility for the materials they use. Supplementary materials can have different purposes: instructional, experiential, elicitative, or exploratory. Instructional materials explain the language, experiential materials allow students to experience it in use and exploratory materials encourage students to use the language (Tomlinson, 2023).

It is essential to use authentic resources in EFL courses. For instance, audiotaped short stories and novels, TV commercials, comedy shows, quiz programs, cartoons, documentaries, sales pitches, radio advertisements, films, news segments, are some examples of materials that can be listened to and viewed. Genuine non-textbook materials can improve learners' pronunciation and listening skills, making them effective for language learning and teaching. Likewise, they can help non-native speakers to learn the target language culture including customs, attitudes, and social differences. Other authentic items that help improve students' reading and vocabulary skills include street signs, greeting cards, information brochures, restaurant menus, maps, and newspaper articles (Umirova, 2020). Non-textbook instructional resources are advantageous for both teachers and students in several aspects: they bridge gaps in textbooks, meet specific needs of EFL students, boost textbook-based course content, make teaching and learning more engaging, foster diversity, increase motivation, encourage students' participation and improve their understanding and performance. Equally, while teaching EFL, beyond textbooks resources contextualize teaching-learning situations, provide students with an opportunity to think critically, and break boredom and monotony (Afzal, 2023).

In addition, additional resources like books, communicative exercises, and web-based items can help develop skills, provide extra practice, and bring diversity to classroom teachings. These materials can be found from reliable sources like articles, magazines, newspapers, and videos. They should be distinct from the course-book contents. They offer benefits such as enhancing learners' confidence, addressing individual capabilities, increasing motivation, giving cultural knowledge, incorporating new concepts, providing visual context, and producing interest among others. Teachers consider a variety of factors when selecting and using supplementary materials such as needs, interests, and language abilities of their students, visual appeal, organization, relevance to the context, cultural and age appropriateness, and the potential for inspiring students to use their language skills (Spratt, Pulverness, & Williams, 2011). Language teachers use such

materials, which cater to their students' learning preferences, as textbooks often fail to meet specific requirements and goals. With diverse groups of students having varied learning needs, the topics covered in the textbook may not always be relevant or captivating to them. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to incorporate additional resources to ensure their students receive a comprehensive and effective learning (Riasati & Zare, 2010).

2.5 Previous Studies

In the context of Saudi Arabia, several past studies have focused on university students' education with different perspectives. To cite, Jameel et al., (2019) identified why Saudi medical students, studying at King Abdulaziz University, refrained from studying professional textbooks. A questionnaire was distributed to medical students, and 347 male and female students participated in the study. Shockingly, one-third of the students acknowledged that they face difficulties in grasping the content of textbooks due to their inadequate command of English, which consequently leads to a lack of interest in studying professional textbooks. In another study, Alshehri and Lally (2019) examined the attitudes of 42 university students towards using social media tools for learning. This study's data was gathered via a web-based survey. The results showed that all students had positive attitudes towards using social media as a supplementary tool to the curriculum. However, barriers such as distraction, conflicting Islamic religious teachings, privacy concerns, and cyberbullying were identified while using social media in the educational process. Further, in the context of Saudi Arabia, El Deen (2023) investigated why students get bored in English classes and how their boredom changes when taking language skill courses. It used a mixed-methods design, including a questionnaire and interviews with 20 students. The results revealed seven factors that caused boredom, including demotivation, low language learning ability, challenging tasks, unfamiliar teaching methods, teacher feedback, unchallenging tasks, and classroom mode.

In another study, Almoslamani (2022) examined the learning strategies that Saudi university students adopt and investigated whether or not there were differences in their use based on gender and academic achievements. The participants (365 students) were randomly selected. The study claimed that the most preferred learning strategies among students were micro strategies and study habits. Significant differences in strategy use were noticed between male and female students, with female students showing a higher preference. The study also found that learning strategies significantly predicted academic achievement. A study by Anas (2020) explored how students perceived the blended learning environment. The study used a mixed-method research design. The data was collected from 22 students at Bisha University. The survey comprised of 12 Likert items, which evaluated learners' experiences in three aspects of blended learning: multimedia learning materials, assessment, and interactive activities on Blackboard. The results indicated that learners preferred illustrated text materials to video, plain text, and audio materials. Participants also showed a preference for flexible assessments over non-flexible ones. Additionally, learners preferred embedded communication tools such as blogging, WhatsApp, wikis, discussion forums and collaborative activities.

The review of the above studies indicates that the recent past studies, conducted in the Saudi Arabian universities, have overlooked an important aspect of investigating students' perceptions on beyond the textbook materials while learning university courses. Therefore, this research aims to explore the opinions of EFL students in PSAU on the use of beyond text resources while studying skills courses (reading, writing, listening and speaking).

3. Methodology

This study uses a quantitative approach, which relies on pre-structured research questions and numerical data (Pilcher & Cortazzi, 2023) obtained via an online questionnaire. The purpose was to investigate EFL students' perceptions about the use of beyond textbook materials (non-textbook/supplementary sources) for university skills courses (reading, writing, listening and speaking). The sample consisted of 68 student-participants: 30 males and 38 females studying in level three of 4-year BA program in the Department of English in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. Based on purposive sampling, only those student-participants were selected who had already studied skills courses as freshmen in level one and level two of the program. In this case, they were able to evaluate their competence in language skills and were considered qualified to give their opinion about the skills courses textbooks and the use of beyond textbook materials in learning English. For this purpose, a 20-item questionnaire was structured, using Google Forms, to collect the data (responses). The online questionnaire was shared with students via male and female and faculty members teaching level three students. The questionnaire used 5-point Likert scale (Brown, 2010) including three types of response options: agreement (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree), frequency (always, most of the time, sometimes, hardly, never) and quality (very good, good. average, poor, very poor). The Google Form summary was used to visualize responses in percentage, to sort and analyze the data, and generate charts.

4. Findings and Discussion

This study investigated EFL students' perceptions about the use of beyond textbook-materials for studying English language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) as part of their university courses, in the Department of English in PSAU. The PSAU faculty members had already agreed that agreed that EFL textbooks for teaching skills courses might not always be adequate to achieve the desired objectives owing to several reasons. On the contrary, non-textbook resources were considered advantageous in several aspects. To cite, for instance, non-textbook resources promote interest, enhance participations and grant autonomy in teaching learning settings (see Afzal, 2023). Given this background, this study reveals the responses of 68 student-participants (male and female) studying in level three of 4-year BA program. The participants had already studied skills courses (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), they were quite

familiar with EFL textbooks and teaching approaches, and were considered qualified enough to share their experiences about beyond textbook-materials.

The analysis, Figure 1, shows students' level of competence in four skills. Overall, performance of the students in English language skills has been observed satisfactory.   However, it was noticed that not all students are very good or good at language skills reflecting that the university undergraduates lack competence in English. Instead, majority of the students are with average proficiency in language skills: reading (35.30 %,), writing (41.20 %,), listening (32.40 %,) and speaking (39.70%) respectively. Notwithstanding, they had already studied language skills for two semesters in level one and level two.   Hence, it is important to investigate the reasons/factors behind this average performance of students. In fact, it is mandatory that students should gain a high level of proficiency across all four skills to become competent users of English language.   In addition, at this level of education, there are still EFL students, though in small minority, with performance below average (poor), particularly, in speaking English (14.70%).   In general, it seems that speaking English is a problem for most of the participants in comparison with other skills.   However, it has been established that to understand fully the English language, it is crucial to be proficient in all four-language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are inextricably linked to one another – improving one also improves the others. Thus, the developments of four skills are interwoven, and they complement each other (Eslit & Valderama, 2023).

Student-participants' responses (male/female) - I

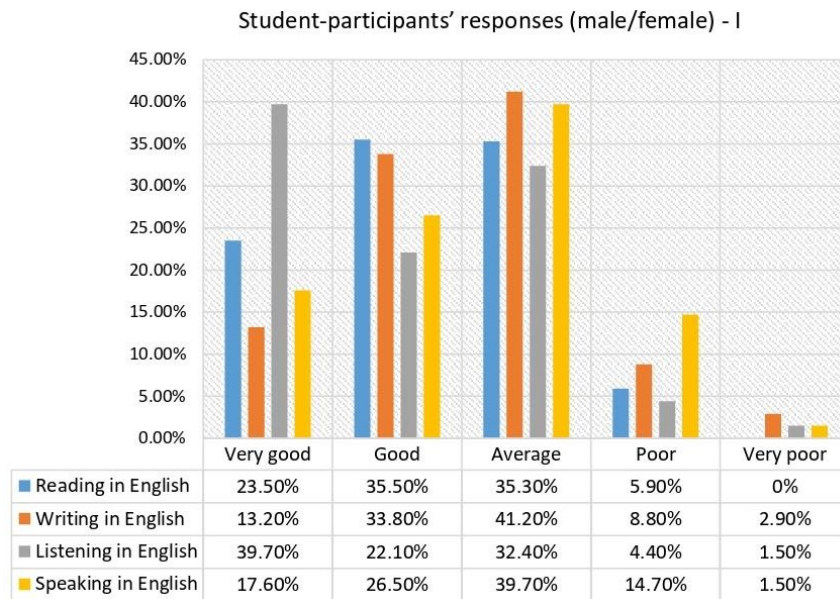|	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
Reading in English	23.50%	35.50%	35.30%	5.90%	0%
Writing in English	13.20%	33.80%	41.20%	8.80%	2.90%
Listening in English	39.70%	22.10%	32.40%	4.40%	1.50%
Speaking in English	17.60%	26.50%	39.70%	14.70%	1.50%

Figure 1. EFL Students' Perceptions about the Use of Beyond Textbook Materials

As shown in Figure 2, in response to the question of achieving excellence in English language, majority of the male-female participants gave a confirmatory response: they either strongly agreed (57.40%) or agreed (27.90%). Hence, it has been evident that all undergraduate students are fully aware of and endorse the increasing importance of the English language. However, majority of the participants also acknowledged that they face difficulties in achieving excellence in English or learning the reading, writing, listening and speaking English as shown by their responses: strongly agree 11.80% and agree 27.90%. In the context of Saudi Arabia, keeping in view that the country has experienced significant changes in its social and political climate in recent years, it is crucial to maintain international standards for English teaching while updating current facilities. The importance of globalization emphasizes the need for acquiring a second language, especially English, to facilitate communication between communities. This will enable people to convey their local customs and cultures to an international audience more effectively (Althobaiti, 2020).

Findings in Figure 2, in response to the questionnaire item that EFL textbooks are boring, point out that most of the students (48.50%) remained neutral but a small minority of 19% disagreed.   However, a considerable majority of participants (32.40%) either strongly agreed or agreed to this item.   In such cases, it is highly recommended to use beyond textbook resources in teaching English because they help in learning process, cater to students' unique needs, and make the course content more engaging. Moreover, non-native English speakers face difficulties in learning the language, as it is foreign to them. Therefore, in order to use and learn the language effectively, learners need to be actively engaged. By incorporating supplementary resources that cater to diverse learning styles of students, language learning is enriched and information is retained in a better way (Chérrez, Brito, & Ochoa, 2018).

Furthermore, an overwhelming majority of the respondents (strongly agree 26.50% and agree 45.60%) positively responded to the statement that they would like to study English language with the help of audio-visual teaching aids than simply relying on textbooks. According to Figure 2, on the contrary, a small minority of the participants stayed neutral (20.60%) and a few disagreed (7.4%). The finding conforms to the study by Afzal (2023) that university undergraduates often require resources beyond textbooks to enhance their study techniques. They

play a key role in improving the EFL environment and laying foundation for more comprehensive and engaging content. Moreover, such materials ensure that content for skills courses are up-to-date. These resources fill in the gaps that textbooks may not always meet the requirements of both teachers and language learners. To another question, whether or not EFL textbooks reflect students' culture, majority of the students remained neutral (39.70%). However, some of the participants (25%), though in minority, accepted that EFL textbooks fail to represent their culture. Similarly, 53% of the participants (strongly agree 11.80% and agree 41.20%) admitted that EFL textbooks mostly represent people from other cultures. Hence, there arises the need to induct beyond textbook materials that can truly represent students' culture and something that is native to them. As argued, local texts can be incorporated to provide students, for example, with reading materials that reflect their own culture. This way, learners can become more familiar with the materials and better understand their own culture through the context of English. This approach also allows learners to use English to share their culture with the rest of the world. It also benefits students' learning and promotes their culture by allowing them to use the target language they have learnt (Aminullah, Sada, & Sudarsono, 2019).

As illustrated in Figure 2, many participants (strongly agree 19.10%, agree 42.60%) approved that the use of non-textbook materials increases their motivation and opportunities for learning and help them understand and practice English better. On the other side, a low percentage of participants (29.40%) were undecided, neutral, and others disagreed (11.5%) with this questionnaire item. In giving their responses about the question that textbook exercises are always easy, 53% of participants either remained neutral or disagreed. To investigate the contribution of supplementary materials in teaching EFL courses, students were made to respond to this questionnaire item several times. On this occasion, about 57% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed. Hence, it is suggested that incorporating supplementary or beyond textbook resources should be exploited as a powerful method to boost learning outcomes. The faculty members have suggested that teaching and learning become more engaging with non-textbook materials. They promote diversity, increase motivation, stimulate student engagement, and produce an enhanced performance, and contextualization of EFL settings (Afzal, 2023). The analysis also revealed that majority of the student-participants (52.9%) either strongly agreed or agreed that EFL textbooks may not always represent real-life situations. Learning languages in real-world circumstances has many advantages, such as increasing motivation, engagement etc. Many authentic resources (beyond textbooks) can be used to learn a language. These include jokes, proverbs, short stories, anecdotes, drawings, caricatures, newspaper articles, public speeches, television shows, films, discussions, debates, and more. These materials are not created specifically for educational purpose, but they reflect the genuine and natural use of the language (Thakur, 2015).

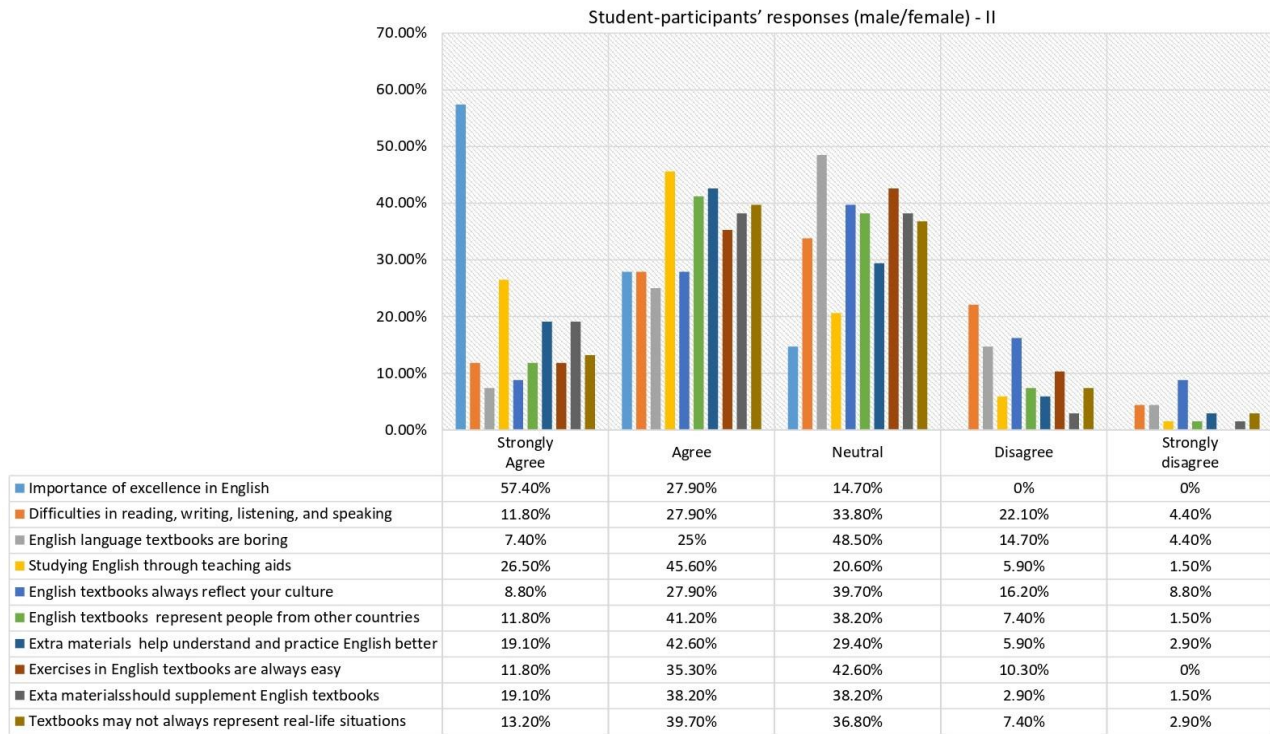| Student-participants' responses (male/female) - II	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Importance of excellence in English	57.40%	27.90%	14.70%	0%	0%
Difficulties in reading, writing, listening, and speaking	11.80%	27.90%	33.80%	22.10%	4.40%
English language textbooks are boring	7.40%	25%	48.50%	14.70%	4.40%
Studying English through teaching aids	26.50%	45.60%	20.60%	5.90%	1.50%
English textbooks always reflect your culture	8.80%	27.90%	39.70%	16.20%	8.80%
English textbooks represent people from other countries	11.80%	41.20%	38.20%	7.40%	1.50%
Extra materials help understand and practice English better	19.10%	42.60%	29.40%	5.90%	2.90%
Exercises in English textbooks are always easy	11.80%	35.30%	42.60%	10.30%	0%
Exta materialsshould supplement English textbooks	19.10%	38.20%	38.20%	2.90%	1.50%
Textbooks may not always represent real-life situations	13.20%	39.70%	36.80%	7.40%	2.90%

Figure 2: EFL Students' Perceptions about the Use of Beyond Textbook Material

Out of the total 68 male and female student-participants, a great majority responded negatively that EFL faculty members either sometimes (26.50%), hardly (26.50%) or never (26.50%) use extra materials (see Figure 3). This reflects that university teachers mostly rely on textbooks only. As suggested, the use of supplementary learning resources has proven to be an effective remediation method for students who acquire limited skills. In fact, the utilization of supplementary modular learning resources significantly increases and enhances student performance. This indicates that students who make use of additional learning resources tend to outperform those who rely solely on traditional classroom instructions (Ayado & Berame, 2022).
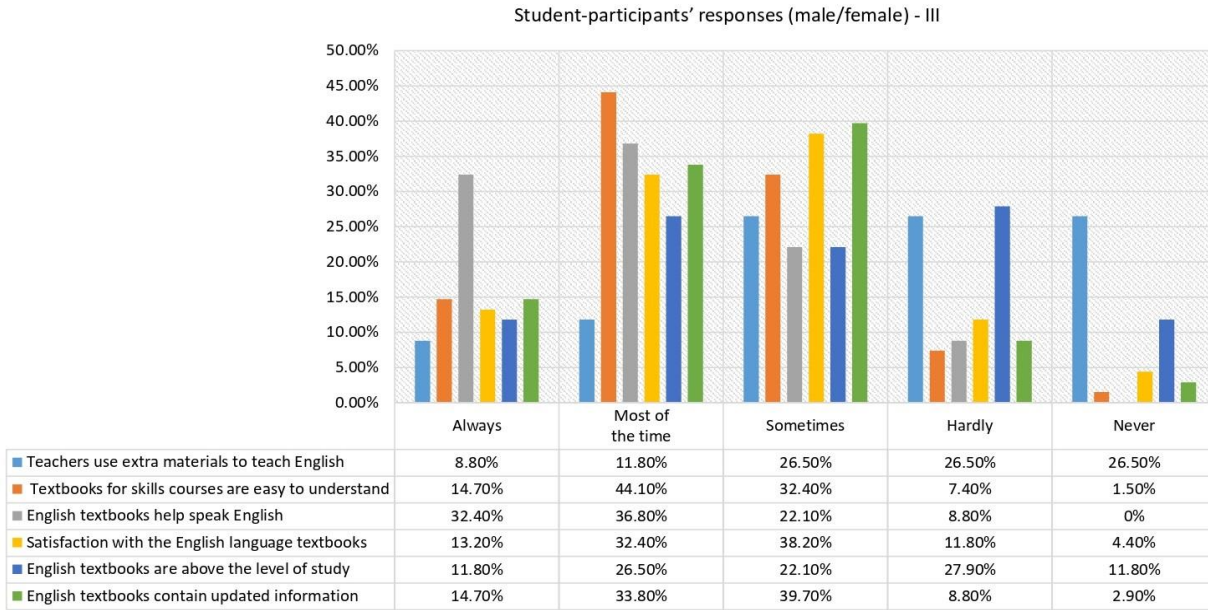
Figure 3. EFL Students' Perceptions about the Use of Beyond Textbook Materials

A distinguishable majority (always 32.40% and most of the times 36.80%) accepted that English textbooks have helped them speak English. On comparison, only a small minority (30.90%) responded negatively. Even though most of the students positively reacted that their skills courses books were easy to understand with the responses as always 14.70% and most of the times 44.10%, for others textbooks were either sometimes (32.40%), hardly (7.40%) or never (1.50%) easy. An overall majority of the participants agreed that the EFL textbooks were not always above their level of study (sometimes 22.10%, hardly 27.90% and never 11.80%). However, apparently for weak students the textbooks were above their level of study based on the responses: always 11.80% and most of the time 26.50%. In such conditions, there is again requirement to exploit beyond the textbook materials to cater to the need of students who consider that textbooks are above their level. It has been suggested that when teaching a language, instructors have at their disposal a plethora of resources beyond the standard textbook. These materials can be used to supplement the curriculum in a way that aligns with course objectives. In addition, they provide a more realistic representation of the way language is used in the real world. By exposing students to wide-ranging resources, teachers can create a more engaging and immersive learning experience that can help learners to learn language in a better way (Tonawanik, & Donavanik, 2019).

Still, not all the participants agreed that their textbooks were. They admitted that their EFL books do not usually contain an updated information. For instance, 39.70% of the participants chose the response option sometimes, 8.80% said hardly and 2.90% thought their books were never updated. Others found their book updated with their positive responses as always 14.70% and most of the time 33.80%. Similarly, not all the participants were, overall, satisfied with EFL textbooks taught to them in the university. To this questionnaire item, the responses of the majority of the participants were observed as sometimes 38.20%, hardly 11.80% and never 4.40%.   It has been advocated that to make the EFL textbooks more appealing to students teacher should rely on using beyond textbook materials. One of the most crucial elements influencing learning is motivation that can be achieved via supplementary teaching materials. They also assist teachers in supporting the course learning objectives and thus serve as a beneficial curricular supplement (Musaevna, 2020).

The present study has revealed the perceptions of PSAU students (male and female). It puts forth that PSAU English undergraduates of BA program stressed the need to compensate for the inadequacies in EFL textbooks. According to the findings, all 68 male-female participants exhibited a clear understanding and appreciation of the fact that having exceptional proficiencies in English language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) is an absolute necessity. This study also discloses that the students not only recognized the importance of these skills but they also demonstrated an eagerness to develop and refine them. A considerable proportion of respondents expressed their dissatisfaction by acknowledging that EFL textbooks are uninspiring and monotonous in certain circumstances. This suggests that the low level of engagement and enthusiasm from the learners may be attributed to the inflexible nature of textbooks as the only teaching instrument.

This study also advocates that PSAU students exhibited a clear preference for using beyond the textbook resources such as audio-visual aids while studying English instead of relying solely on textbooks. In addition, it has been noticed that EFL textbooks, which often represent content related to different nations or cultures, might not always be relevant to the personal situations of learners. Hence, it is recommended that incorporating a variety of non-textbook resources would enhance students' comprehension as well as increase their motivation and consequently make them successful language learners. Furthermore, many students agreed that EFL textbooks do not

always portray real-life events. Likewise, it was observed that despite students' preference not all EFL faculty members exploit supplementary materials. This shows that university instructors rely heavily on textbooks. Similarly, it was realized that not all the participants found EFL textbooks satisfactory and updated.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this research has been to delve into EFL students' perceptions about the use of beyond textbook materials for studying reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills as part of their PSAU courses. In conformity with teaching objectives of this study, 68 student-participants (male and female) were carefully chosen. They had already studies skills courses in level one and level two of their BA program. Thus, they were considered competent enough to give their views about EFL textbooks and teaching approaches they had experienced. This quantitative study yields positive results in the form of students' perceptions about the need of beyond textbook materials for creating a conducive EFL teaching-learning environment, their understanding and the importance of English language skills and their positive and negative experiences of EFL textbooks they used. By examining the perceptions of both the genders (male/female) specializing in English, this this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the subject.

This study concludes that beyond textbook resources are essential even for university freshmen studying skills courses. Hence, it emphasizes that beyond textbook resources reinforce the EFL atmosphere, set strong bases for learning, create an extended and stimulating content, and guarantee up-to-date curricula. To the expectations of this study, utilization of such non-text materials can expose students to an engaging and a dynamic classroom environment and keep them stay encouraged and concentrated. Simultaneously, the practice of such beyond the textbook maneuvers can help EFL faculty members to achieve the desired results. The analysis of the students' perceptions demonstrates that usage of non-textbook resources is strongly needed for several reasons such as to address gaps in textbooks, contextualize EFL settings, and improve students' comprehension and performance and to break boredom and monotony. Therefore, this study reiterates the use of suitable non-textbook resources in EFL classrooms even at the university level.

To its limitations, this study reveals students' perceptions about the use of non-textbook resources in EFL classrooms in a limited context. Therefore, it is proposed that future studies may focus on student-participants from different location to, expectedly, achieve a more comprehensive opinion. It is recommended to consider the findings of this study to meet the interests and needs of the students when teaching skill courses or designing course syllabuses. It is hoped that the findings of this research will help to fill the gaps in current literature and provide valuable insights for students, educators, and researchers alike.

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