

Final Paper María Andrea Niosi Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza, Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.

Niosi María Andrea.

Cita:

Niosi María Andrea (2006). *Final Paper María Andrea Niosi Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza, Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study* (Tesis de Licenciatura). CAECE, CABA, Argentina.

Dirección estable: <https://www.aacademica.org/maria.andrea.niosi/6>

ARK: <https://n2t.net/ark:/13683/pBRn/h2r>



Esta obra está bajo una licencia de Creative Commons.
Para ver una copia de esta licencia, visite
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.es>.

Acta Académica es un proyecto académico sin fines de lucro enmarcado en la iniciativa de acceso abierto. Acta Académica fue creado para facilitar a investigadores de todo el mundo el compartir su producción académica. Para crear un perfil gratuitamente o acceder a otros trabajos visite: <https://www.aacademica.org>.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.	
2. Method.	
2.1 Sample population.	
2.3 Technique.	
2.3.1 Data collection.	
2. Data processing.	
3. Literature review.	
3.1 The role of textbooks in a language programme.	
3.2 A general framework for analysing the materials.	
3.4 Criteria for textbook selection.	
3.4.1 The course-book as a flexible tool.	
3.5 Steps in the selection process.	
3.6 Discussion.	
4. Study report.	
4.1 Results.	
4.2 Analysis of the results.	
4.3 Conclusions	
4.4 Limitations.	
4.5 Intervention.	
4.6 Reformulated survey.	
4.7 Additional questions.	
5. Survey report.	
5.1 Survey results.	
6. Conclusions.	
7. Limitations and directions for further research.	
8. Reference bibliography.	
Appendix I: Survey.	
Appendix II: Data matrix.	
Appendix III: Reformulated survey.	
Appendix IV: Data matrix.	

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

1. Introduction

Since the Federal Law of Education was passed, the teaching of English as a foreign language has been implemented in the EGB, ESB, Polimodal and a large number of teachers were needed to take up the new courses. Thus, teachers with different educational backgrounds began to teach the language at state-run schools in the Province of Buenos Aires. This large population included graduates, under-graduates and people who had studied at private institutes with no teacher training or education at all.

The latter lack the necessary foundations to perform their jobs. Consequently, they also lack the scientific criteria for textbook selection within the framework of CLT, the approach favoured by the Curriculum.

Textbook selection is a critical decision to be made at any level of education. Although teachers may use a variety of teaching methodologies, course-books remain an important source of information and input for students. Besides, there is a close relationship between the selection of textbooks and the enhancement of the students' knowledge of the foreign language.

It is therefore the aim of this case study to address the following research question: On what criteria do teachers of English select textbooks at state-run schools for the ESB in Province of Buenos Aires?

In order to achieve this goal, we have set the following objectives:

1. To survey a group of teachers of English at the ESB in state-run schools in the district of La Matanza.
2. To design a survey in order to collect data.
3. To review the state of the art.
4. To process and analyse the data qualitatively and quantitatively.
5. To compare the teachers' criteria with the recommended ones in the reviewed bibliography.
6. To draw conclusions on the prevailing criteria about textbook selection.
7. To make suggestions as regards criteria for course-book selection to enhance students' academic growth.

We hope that this study might shed light on the issue as a contribution to the field of applied linguistics in this specific area and for our colleagues interested in the topic.

2. Method

The nature of this study will be mainly exploratory as we will explore whether teachers of English at ESB apply any scientific criteria for their selection of books in state-run schools in the district of La Matanza. It will also be descriptive as we will describe the results and we will compare the findings to arrive at valid conclusions.

As regards the design, we have chosen "case study" because its purpose is to focus on a particular situation without making generalizations. Besides, case

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

studies are of value refining theory and suggesting complexities for further investigations as well as helping to establish the limits of generalizations.

A case study with a descriptive design is essentially qualitative with quantitative back up. It is validated through statistic analysis as quantitative data is analyzed to support qualitative interpretation. Moreover, a case study is chosen to provide a different reading of reality.

2.1 Population

In our study, we will limit our research to the district of La Matanza, and within its boundaries to the ESB schools situated within a ratio of 10 km.

The target population is composed by teachers of English at the ESB schools selected in the district.

The immediate setting includes a group of forty school As regards the teachers' previous knowledge of English, most of the teachers in the ESB have been studying the language at private institutes and at teacher education colleges.

Concerning the course-books used, these adolescents have been using booklets designed by their teachers.

The schools are provided with a library. However, very few English texts are available for the students. Besides, the library does not have enough room for the students to read there. The learners can only consult different books three times a week. Moreover, a few bilingual dictionaries are available for almost five hundred students who attend classes in the morning or in the afternoon shifts every day.

In addition, the schools have only by fourteen classrooms with a student population of 40 students per room. Due to overcrowded conditions, the library has been converted into a classroom. Thus, the librarian finds herself immersed in a small office where the books are stored. What is more, Music and Art are taught in the same classrooms where the Spanish and English teachers give their lessons.

As regards teachers of English, very few of them are graduates from teacher-education colleges. Besides, some teachers have been teaching the target language since the Federal law was passed. Furthermore, half of the teachers mentioned have little knowledge as regards methodology and pedagogy as they are still attending classes at teacher-education colleges.

Regarding the students' background we need to mention that few parents have finished their studies at Primary or Secondary school. Thus, not all the members of the family can help the students to do their homework, especially the English one. Besides, these parents claim that they do not understand the foreign language. Actually, some of these people seem to be functionally illiterate as they lack the basic reading and writing skills required to fill in the forms related to the school admission.

2.2 Sample population

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

As the whole population involves a large amount of people, almost 2,000; we will focus our study on a population of thirty-five teachers. The group participating will be selected according to the following criteria:

1. Geographical distribution.
2. Teachers of English at state-run schools in the ESB.
3. Graduates from teacher education colleges.
4. Non-graduates from teacher education colleges.
5. Institute certified teachers

In this way, each subject in the selected population will have the same chance of being selected. (N=35).

2.3 Technique

2.3.1 Data collection

In order to collect data, a survey will be administered to thirty-five subjects selected at random but with their consent. The technique presents the following advantages:

1. It will be anonymous and thus it will control subconscious bias.
2. The respondents can complete it on their own.

The survey will be distributed to thirty-five subjects. It will be trialled in English.

This survey will be composed by seven closed-response questions and five open-response questions. Closed-response questions will be relatively easy to answer, to code, to analyse and to show reliability and validity. The use of open-response questions will provide a wide range of possible answers as these types of questions are mainly exploratory in nature.

2.3.2 The Survey

A number of basic questions in order to explore how teachers of English select textbooks in state-run schools in the ESB, in the district of La Matanza; Province of Buenos Aires, will be framed. (See, Appendix I). They will focus on the following issues:

1. Teachers' perceptions of textbook selection.
2. Teachers' responsibility for textbook selection at school.
3. Teachers' criteria when they are to select a textbook.

2.3.2.1 Question 1

How are the textbooks for English chosen at your school?

- a) *By you alone.*
- b) *By a group with whom you share responsibility for selection.*
- c) *By the head of the department.*

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

- d) *By your head master/ mister.*
- e) *Other.*

Question one targets at exploring whether the teachers' responsibility for textbook selection is a primary criterion to choose books at ESB. This is a closed-response question. Five descriptors are given for teachers to choose from. They are the most representative ones to explore how books are selected at schools. The indicators are: (see appendix I)

2.3.2.2 Question 2.

On what do you rely for preliminary information on textbooks? Please, feel free to give your answers and to choose more than one option.

- a) *Textbook publisher representatives.*
- b) *Catalogs*
- c) *The authors/s' representatives.*
- d) *Teachers' lounge conversation.*
- e) *Exhibits at conferences.*
- f) *Inspection copies.*
- g) *Pre-publication copies.*
- d) *Other.*

Question two aims at showing criteria as regards "authority" the teachers' attitude towards the source information as reference for choice. Besides, it intends to shed light whether reception of books is a factor which determines the selection of textbooks. This is a closed-response question. Eight descriptors are provided for teachers to choose from. Eight have been chosen as they are the most representative ones as regards book selection.

2.3.2.3 Question 3.

After you have reviewed several textbooks, how do you choose between them? Please, feel free to give your answer.

This is an open-response question which aims at revealing the criteria teachers use for selecting one book out of many.

2.3.2.4 Question 4.

Is "price" a consideration in your textbook choice? Why?

Question four is an open response question which targets at exploring if the students economic resources to buy books is a prevailing criterion on the selection of textbooks. Taking into account the price and the students' socio-economic background, teachers may learn about the students' possibilities to buy the book or not.

Question 5.

How do you decide if a text is difficult or easy for your students?

Question five is an open-response question which is addressed to uncover the teachers' criteria about book selection, taking into account the learners' previous knowledge of English. (See appendix I)

2.3.2.6 Question 6.

Do you think that a textbook should ... (please, feel free to give your answers and to choose more than one option)

- a. Support the official goals and curriculum?*
- b. Be written for a target age group and background?*
- c. Reflect the learners' preferences in terms of layout, design and organization?*
- d. Be sensitive to the students' cultural background and interests?*
- e. Other.*

Question six is a closed-response question which aims at exploring if teachers use any scientific criteria proposed by different authors.

Teachers are provided with five descriptors to choose from as they are the most representative. Besides, they can also provide rich information to be analysed.

The descriptors are five:

- a.** Support the official goals and curriculum.
- b.** Be written for a target age group and background.
- c.** Reflect the learners' preferences in terms of layout, design and organization.
- d.** Be sensitive to the cultural background and students' interests.
- e.** Other.

In the case of the descriptor "a", it tries to reveal if the teachers of English at ESB base their book selection taking into account the education policy established by the authorities of the Province of Buenos Aires.

Regarding descriptors "b, c, d", they try to uncover if they take into consideration their learners' preferences, cultural background, age and interests.

2.3.2.7 Question 7.

What do you like most about the textbooks available in the market?

This is an open- response question. It targets mainly at revealing whether the teachers' preferences and perceptions might be criteria for choosing textbooks.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

2.3.2.8 Question 8.

How do you decide if the textbook integrates the four areas of language (reading, writing, listening and speaking)?

This is an open- response question which aims at revealing if the selection of books might be influenced by the way authors integrate the four areas of language. This question also attempts to explore if teachers analyse the book or some of its units where the areas of language might be integrated or not by presenting units devoted to consolidation of the four skills. Besides, it also tries to check whether teachers believe that the integration is relevant or necessary.

2.3.2.9 Question 9.

Do you choose textbooks according to the methodological approach described by the author? Please, feel free to give your reasons.

- a.** Yes.
- b.** No.

This is a closed-question. It targets at exploring if the methodological approaches claimed by the authors play a central role when teachers select a textbook or whether they have their own criteria. Two possibilities are provided: yes or no.

2.3.2.10 Question 10.

What do you think the appropriate book for your students should be like...? Please, feel free to choose more than one option.

- a.** Up dated.
- b.** Colourful and full of pictures.
- c.** Aware of the students' cultural background.
- d.** The result of new methodological trends.
- e.** Other.

This is a closed-response question which attempts to describe the teachers' criteria for book selection.

Teachers are provided with five options to choose from. They can also provide relevant information to be analysed in the framework of the scientific criteria suggested by the reviewed literature.

The descriptor "Up Dated" is directed to find out if the subjects take into account fashionable events, sports and students' every day situations. The second option tries to reveal if colourful photographs or pictures are prevailing criteria for the selection. The third attempts to explore whether students' cultural background plays a central role when selecting books. The fourth indicator intends to reveal if the methodological trends sustained by

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

the authors is a criterion for teachers to apply when they select textbooks. Finally, the last open item is meant to explore if teachers apply any other criteria for the textbook selection.

2.3.2.11 Question 11.

How long have you been teaching English? Please, feel free to give your own answer.

- a) 0-1 year.*
- b) 2-5 years.*
- c) 6-10 years.*
- d) More than 10 years.*

This is a closed-question which targets directly at exploring the relationship between the teachers' experience and pedagogical background in the ELT and the criteria the teachers apply to select textbooks. This question also intends show if teachers, who have little or no experience in teaching English at state-run schools, apply the same criteria or not as teachers who have more than ten year of experience in ELT.

Teachers are given different descriptors to choose from. They were chosen in this order to cover the spectrum of teachers' experience in ELT.

2.3.2.12 Question 12

Where did you finish your studies to become a teacher of English?

- a) A teacher education college.*
- b) Non-official institutions such as "AACI", "Cultural Inglesa", "Instituto Cambridge" etc.*
- c) University.*
- d) other.*

This is a closed-question which targets directly at exploring if teachers who have teaching experience and a pedagogical background apply the same criteria for selecting books as teachers who have less experience or little pedagogical background.

Teachers are given different descriptors to choose from. They were chosen in this order to cover the spectrum of the teachers' pedagogical background in ELT.

2.4 Data Processing.

Once the surveys had been completed, we analysed the data statistically. To that effect, we used the excel-computer programme. The data will be

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

displayed by using column graphs to understand the distribution of the results, indicating in each case statistics markers like mode, tendency and average.

The survey will be trialled to test its reliability and validity. For that purpose, ten subjects other than the thirty-five originally selected will be invited to participate. (N=10).

2.5 Data Analysis.

The data will be analysed qualitatively and quantitatively using statistics and the excel programme. The results will be displayed using column graphs.

3. Literature review.

Over the past few years authors writing on ELT, have focused their attention on textbook selection and evaluation of teaching materials. (Littlejohn, 1999). Even though opinions have differed dramatically over effective teaching materials to make the students master the target language, the controversy has been especially vigorous as regards the selection and evaluation of textbooks.

For the purposes of this paper, we will discuss the following criteria for textbook selection stated and documented by Cunningsworth (1995), Cunningham (1995), Harmer (1998), Skierso (1991) & Ur (1996). Besides, we will also include aspects discussed by Littlejohn (1999) & Richards & Rodgers (2001) as regards the kind of analysis materials when educators select course- books for the English language classroom.

In the next section, we will explain the role to textbooks in a language program.

3.1 The role of textbooks in a language program.

Textbooks are a key component in most language programs. In some situations they serve as the basis for much of the language input learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the classroom. However, on other occasions, textbooks may serve primarily to supplement the teachers' instruction. In the case of learners, course-books may provide the major source of contact they have with the language, apart from input provided by the teacher. (Richards, J., 2001).

There are advantages and limitations when teachers and learners are dealing with textbooks. In general, textbooks provide structure and syllabus for a program. Besides, without textbooks a program may have no central core and learners may not receive a syllabus that has been systematically planned and developed. The use of textbooks in a program can ensure that the students in different classes receive similar content and therefore can be evaluated in the same way. (Richards, J., 2001).

Textbooks also provide a variety of learning sources and they enable teachers to spend time to teaching rather than materials production. Moreover, course-books can provide effective language models and input, they are usually visually appealing and this situation aids to enhance motivation. (Richards, J., 2001)

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

On the other hand, sometimes teachers may find that textbooks may contain inauthentic language, or perhaps they may distort context. As textbooks are often written for global markets, they may not reflect the interests and needs of the students and hence may require adaptation. Finally, the price of textbooks and their availability are variables when selecting course-books for their lessons as not many students have economic access. (Richards, J., 2001).

In the following section, we will discuss a general framework for materials analysis.

3.2 A general framework for analysing the materials.

Materials play a central role within the level of design and the instructional system. They are generally designed on the assumption that learning is initiated on and monitored by the teacher. Besides, materials are closely related to the methodology in use, where they play some specific roles. Thus, materials will: (Richards, J. & Rodgers T., 2001)

1. focus on the communicative abilities of interpretation, expression and negotiation.
2. focus on relevant, understandable and interesting exchanges of information, rather than on the presentation of grammatical form.
3. involve different kind of texts and different media, which learners may use to develop their competence through a variety of different tasks.

3.3 Examining the materials.

According to Littlejohn (1999), there are different levels of analysis that teachers should take into account when examining materials.

- a. Level one: it deals with the explicit nature of materials. That is to say, this level covers publishing house/houses, date of publication, author/s, physical aspects and components.
- b. Level two: it is related to what users require, as well as the objective nature of the materials, types of tasks, in which context and with what content.
- c. Level three: it deals mainly with the apparent underlying principles of the materials, such as the selection of sequencing of tasks and content. Besides, at this level, roles proposed for teachers and learners are taken into account. Eventually, it is at this stage where the role of the materials appears to be described as a whole.

According to Harmer (1998), teachers may be involved in the selection and evaluation of materials for their students at various stages of their professional lives.

Teachers may encounter different texts at meetings or conventions and they take ideas to make the most of their lessons. Thus, there are certain issues that educators should take into consideration when they are evaluating materials such as descriptions of their students and their needs, the attractiveness of the materials' layouts and design. Besides, teachers should examine how the lesson

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

planning is carried out and how this is related to the methodological aspects stated by the authors.

Next, we will apply scientific criteria for textbook selection.

3.4 Criteria for textbook selection.

The type of evaluation a textbook receives will reflect the concerns of the evaluator. Teachers may evaluate course-books taking into account different issues. (Cunningsworth, A., 1995).

- a. Textbooks should correspond to the learners' needs and they should also match the aims and the objectives of the language learning program.
- b. Textbooks should reflect the uses (present or future) which the learners will make of the language. Therefore, they must be chosen so that they aid the student to use the language effectively.
- c. Textbooks should take into account the students' needs and they should also facilitate the students' learning process, without dogmatically imposing a rigid method.
- d. Textbooks should have a clear role as a support for learning and they should mediate between the target language and the learner.
- e. Textbooks should be evaluated according to program factors, the teachers' and learners' factors and pedagogical ones.

Now, we will make a brief comment on course-books.

3.4.1 The course-book as a flexible tool.

Course- books are considered to be flexible tools for teachers to make the most of their lessons. Some issues as regards evaluation should be mentioned. According Cunningham (1995) teachers should:

1. Check a lesson unit.

In order to fulfill this goal, educators should evaluate:

- a) Content and balance: grammar, lexis, pronunciation, skills, integration and learning strategies.
- b) Aims: relevance, quantity and challenge.
- c) Methodology: telling vs. eliciting, input vs. discovery, teaching vs. testing, teachers centred vs. learners centred, fluency vs. accuracy and communication vs. practice.
- d) Materials: (i.e. texts, visuals, exercises, activities) methodology, relevance, quantity, sequencing and grading.
- e) Topics: relevance and interest.
- f) Texts: relevance to aims, complexity, authenticity, length and interest.
- g) Support: rules, explanation, guidelines.

2. Check materials with a lexical focus.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

For that reason, teachers should examine:

- a) Focus: single and multi-word items. Denotation and connotation, register and genre, collocation and affixation.
- b) Materials and procedures: meaning given to learners and learners' discoveries, context for presentation/discovery and practice, learners presented with language data to discover, understanding meaning and use, teaching vs. testing activities, balance between global or focused activities and balance between free or controlled activities and finally, type of activities (realistic vs. personalized)

3. Check materials with a grammar focus. That is why educators should evaluate:

- a. Focus: meaning, form, function and use.
- b. Methodology: deductive vs. inductive: form-meaning vs. meaning-form. Comprehension/interpretation vs. production.
- c. Data: context, texts vs. examples, amount, authenticity, clarity, accuracy, generality, amount of detail, exceptions and usefulness.
- d. Practice: context, amount, focus/form, meaning, use. Communication (purpose, audience), interest, personalization, effectiveness.

In the next section, we will comment some steps in the selection process.

3.5 Steps in the selection process.

A) Step I: Matching the textbook to the program and the course.

Prior to selecting a textbook, educators should thoroughly examine the program curriculum. If the goals and curriculum are clear and well-defined, the parallels with certain textbooks may become obvious. Besides, teachers should take into account if they are to use the complete series of textbooks or samples of different series. (Ur, P., 1996).

Another issue to be considered is whether the objectives of the textbook match the aims of the course. Teachers should consider that they probably have to supplement the course-book with extra materials. (Ur, P., 1996).

The next stage is identifying the appropriateness of the text for the intended learners. Besides, the content of the textbook should be sensitive to a range of cultural backgrounds and it should also allow for comfortable and safe discussion of cross-cultural experiences and concerns. (Ur, P., 1996).

B) Step II: Reviewing the skills presented in the textbook.

According to Ur (1996), improving learners' language skills is frequently the main purpose of ELT programs.

For the aim of the present paper, skills will be considered as the main areas of language: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

However, the skills taught and how they are integrated differ from course to course and program to program. Therefore, the effectiveness of each textbook in helping learners acquire the necessary skills must be considered.

The importance of cognitive styles should not be overlooked when evaluating a textbook. A text should cover a wide range of these skills, especially higher order skills such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

C) Step III: Reviewing exercises and activities in the textbook.

Considering Chall & Conrad's (1991) criteria, textbooks should contribute to the students' language development. They should include exercises that give students opportunities to practice and extend their language skills. Besides, there should be a balance between controlled exercises and those which stimulate the students' creativity and knowledge. What is more, exercises should build on and reinforce what students have already learnt and these activities should progress from simple-both linguistically and cognitively- to more complex and demanding.

A textbook should require more from students as their language skills develop so they are continually stimulated and challenged. Besides, the textbook should fulfill its role as a stimulus for communication.

Next, we will discuss the ideas exposed in the previous sections.

3.6 Discussion.

For the purpose of this study, we will consider the aspects proposed by Richards & Rodgers (2001) as regards the role of textbooks in a language programme and the role of the materials. In order to examine and to evaluate those materials, we should take into consideration the suggestions made by Littlejohn (1999) and Harmer (1998). These authors stated that teachers should take into account three levels of analysis in order to apply scientific criteria for materials and textbook selection for ELT in the framework of CLT. (see section 3, pages 10 and 11)

As regards textbook selection, we will apply the criteria suggested by Cunningsworth & Cunningham (1995). As we agree with them, coursebooks should be seen as flexible tools so teachers should evaluate and examine certain issues to make the most of their lessons. In this particular case, teachers should:

1. check a lesson unit.
2. check materials with a lexical focus.
3. check materials with a grammar focus.

Eventually, we will propose the three steps suggested by Ur (1996) when teachers are to select books. For this purpose, teachers should evaluate whether the textbook matches the programme and the course. Besides, teachers of English should examine whether the skills, exercises and activities presented in the book are reviewed, integrated or not. (see section 3, pages 12,13)

Finally, we believe that we should provide a definition of terms within the framework of the CLT, taking into account the suggestions made by the

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

discussed authors (see section 3, pages,8-13), in order to analyse the results and to draw some conclusions:

1. **Skills** must be considered as the main areas of language: reading, writing, listening and speaking.
2. **Development** should be understood as the development of strategies to consolidate reading, writing, listening and speaking.
3. **Consolidation** should be interpreted as the revision of exercises and activities.
4. **Book analysis** must be defined as materials evaluation.
5. **The learners' background and the students' background knowledge** must be understood as the learners' previous knowledge of English.
6. **Analysis of units** should be interpreted as the evaluating of:
 - a. Content and balance: grammar, lexis, pronunciation, skills, integration and learning strategies.
 - b. Aims: relevance, quantity and challenge.
 - c. Methodology: telling vs. Eliciting, input vs. Discovery, teaching vs. Testing, teacher-centred vs. Learner-centred, fluency vs accuracy and communication.
 - d. Materials: (i.e. texts, visuals, exercises, activities, methodology, relevance, quantity, sequences and grading)
 - e. Topics: relevance and interests.
 - f. Texts: authenticity, length and interest.
 - g. Support: rules, explanation, guidelines.
7. **Book analysis** will be defined as materials evaluation.
8. **Content** will be defined as grammar, lexis, pronunciation, skill, integration and learning strategies.
9. **Up-dated** should be understood as the expression of the students' preferences in terms of the use of the new technology such as the internet and the computer systems, and topics related to health, care, sports and enviroment.

4. Study Report.

4.1. Analysis of the Results.

As we stated in the method, we selected at random a number of state-run schools in the district of La Matanza and we visited them. Then, we invited a group of teachers of English at ESB to participate in the survey. After that, we administered the survey to these subjects. (N=10).

Once the surveys were handed in, we proceeded to process the data. In the following section, we will describe the quantitative results.

Question 1

How are the textbooks for English chosen at your school?

- a) By you alone.
- b) By a group with whom you share responsibility for selection.
- c) By the head department.
- d) By your head master/ mister.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

e) Other.

Definitions of categories

a= by you

b= by a group with whom you share responsibility for the selection

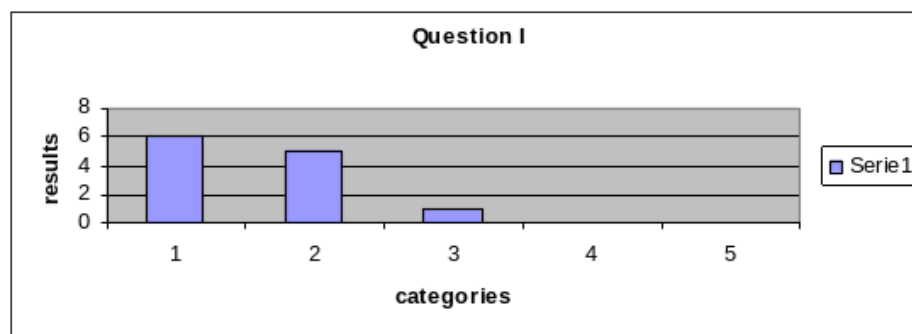
c= by the head of the department

d= by your head master/mister

e= other

Table I

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	6	60%
2	b	5	39%
3	c	1	10%
4	d	0	0%
5	e	0	0%
	average	2,2	
	mode	6	



Question one targets at exploring whether teachers' responsibility for textbook selection is a primary criterion to select books at ESB.

As regards this question (see appendix I), sixty percent of the teachers surveyed (6 out of 10) answered that they selected books by themselves (see table I). However, five teachers which represented thirty-nine percent of the sample (see table I) answered that they selected books with a group with whom they shared the responsibility for the selection. For the purpose of this analysis, the group should be defined as a group of colleagues.

Only one percent of the teachers surveyed (1 out of 10 teachers), (see table I) (1 out of 10, see table I) stated that the head of the department was in charge of the selection of books at school. (1 out of 10 teachers), (see table I). Apparently, head masters did not seem to be in charge of the selection of books at school as none of the teachers surveyed chose that option. (0 out of 10, see table I).

We may conclude that teachers tend to choose books by themselves.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Question 2

On what do you rely for preliminary information on textbooks? Please feel free to give your answers and to choose more than one option.

- a) Textbook publisher representatives.
- b) Catalogs
- c) The authors/s' representatives.
- d) Teachers' lounge conversation.
- e) Exhibits at conferences.
- f) Inspection copies.
- g) Pre-publication copies.
- d) Other.

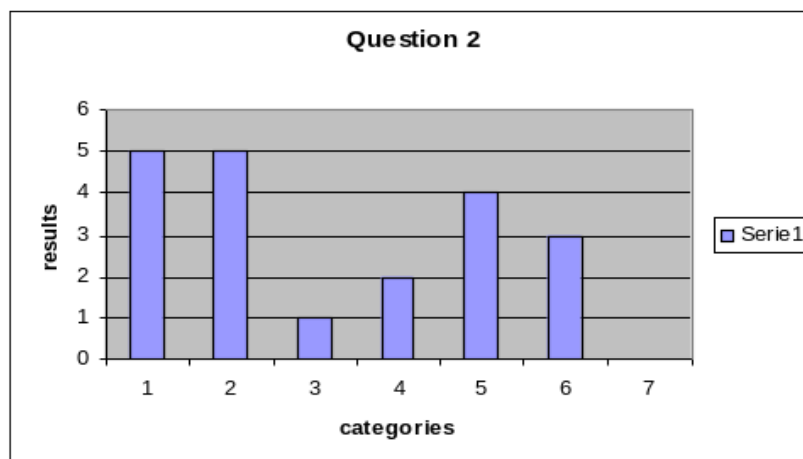
Definitions of categories

a= textbook publisher representatives
b= catalogs
c= authors' representatives
d= teachers' room conversation
e= exhibits at conferences
f= inspection copies
g= pre-publications
h= other

Table II

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	5	50%
2	b	5	50%
3	c	1	10%
4	d	2	20%
5	e	4	40%
6	f	3	30%
7	g	0	0%
8	h	0	0%
	average	2,5	
	mode	5	

Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza, Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.



Considering question two, mostly of the teachers surveyed seem to rely on textbooks publishers and on catalogs. This question attempts uncovering a criterion to shed light whether receptions of books is a factor which determines the selection of textbooks at ESB. Fifty percent of the teachers (5 out of 10, see table II) favoured those options. Besides, forty percent of the subjects (4 out of 10, see table II) chose option C.

Nevertheless, three out of ten teachers (30% of the subjects) opted in favour of inspecting copies for preliminary information on textbooks. (See table II). Apparently, teachers' room conversations are not sources for preliminary information about text-books as only twenty percent of the subjects (2 of ten teachers, see table II) stated in favour of this option. Nevertheless, none of the subjects declared to rely on pre-publications (see table II). Apparently, the tendency is to rely on textbooks' representatives and on catalogs. (See table II). We may conclude that the reception of textbooks for free seems to be a factor that determines the selection of textbooks at ESB.

Question 3

After you have reviewed several textbooks, how do you choose between them? Please feel free to give your answer.

Definitions of categories

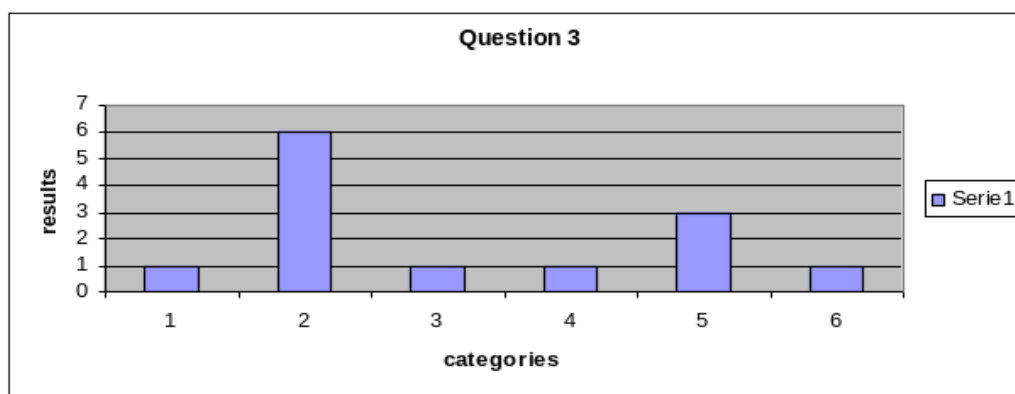
- a= content
- b= students' needs
- c= students' level and development
- d= topics
- e= students' background knowledge
- f= method

Table III

categories	categories	results	percentages
------------	------------	---------	-------------

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

1	a	1	10%
2	b	6	60%
3	c	1	10%
4	d	1	10%
5	e	3	30%
6	f	1	10%
	average	2,2	
	mode	6	



As regards question three (see appendix I), an open-response question, the answers were classified into categories in order to be analysed. In this case, six possible categories were selected: contents, students' needs, students' level and development, topics, students' background knowledge and method. This question aims at revealing the criteria teachers use for selecting one book out of many.

Sixty percent of the subjects (6 out of 10) opted for selecting books according to their students' needs. (See table III)

Besides, thirty percent of the teachers surveyed (3 out of 10, see table III) stated that they selected books according to content and according to their students' level of proficiency and development and to the methods used. (See table III). However, thirty percent of the subjects (3 out of 10) argued in favour of selecting books by only taking into account the students' background knowledge. (See table III)

Apparently, topics do not seem to be a relevant criterion when teachers are to select books as only ten percent of the subjects (1 out of 10) stated in favour of that option. We may conclude that teachers tend to select books taking into account their students' needs as sixty percent of the subjects (6 out of 10, see table III) opted for that category.

Question 4

Is "price" a consideration in your textbook choice? Why?

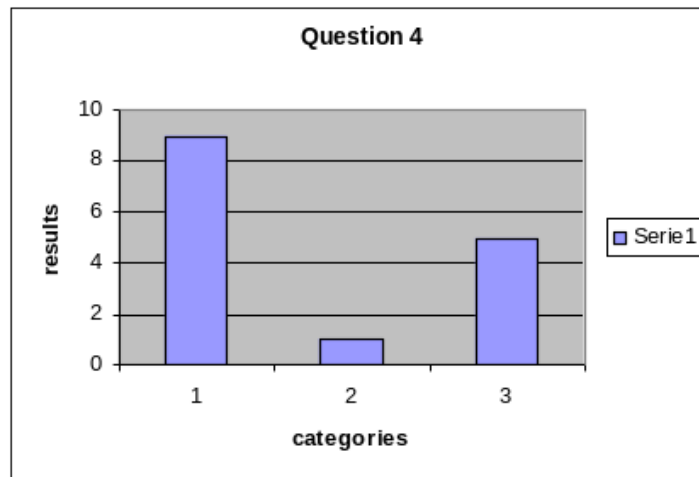
Definition of categories

Table IV

categories	categories	results	percentages
------------	------------	---------	-------------

Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza, Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.

1	a	9	90%
2	b	1	10%
	average	5	
	mode	9	



Regarding question four, an open-response question , two categories were chosen to classify the results: yes/no. (See table IV).

This question targets at exploring if the students economic resources to buy books is a prevailing criterion for the selection of textbooks. Taking into account the price and the students' economic resources, teachers may learn about the students' possibilities to buy the book or not. (See appendix I)

Ninety percent of the subject (9 of 10, see table IV) stated that price was taken into account when teachers are to select textbooks. (See table IV). However, only one teacher argued that price is not so relevant (See table IV)

However, the tendency is to be to select books depending on their prices. (See table IV). According to the results obtained, we may state that the textbook selection depends on prices.

Question 5

How do you decide if a text is too difficult or too easy for your students?

Definition of categories

a= vocabulary

b= structures

c= analysis of units

d= students' background knowledge

e= topics

f=content

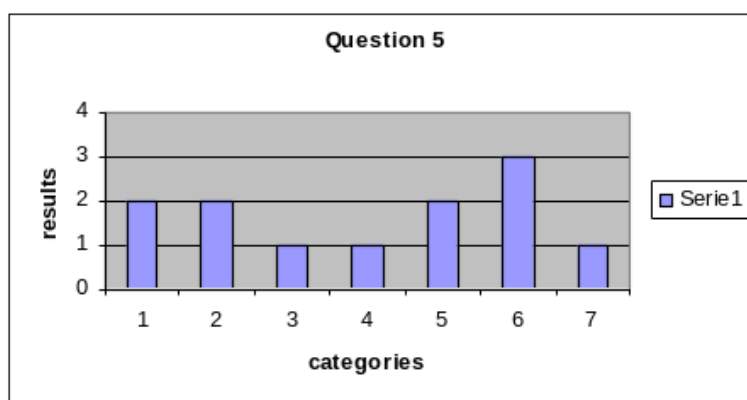
g= students'

feedback

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Table V

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	2	29%
2	b	2	29%
3	c	1	14%
4	d	1	14%
5	e	2	29%
6	f	3	43%
7	g	1	14%
	average	1,71	
	mode	3	



Question five is an open-response question. For that reason, the answers were classified into seven different categories: vocabulary, structures, analysis of units, students' background knowledge, topics, content, and students' feedback.

This question is addressed to uncover the teachers' criteria on selecting one book out of many, taking into account the learners' background. (See appendix I)

Forty-three percent of the subjects surveyed (3 out of 10, see table V) stated that they classified books into difficult or easy for their students taking into account their content. However, twenty-nine percent of the subjects (2 out of 10 teachers, table V) stated in favour of structures, vocabulary and topics.

Besides, fourteen of the subjects (1 out of 10) opted for the analysis of the units of the books. These subjects also seem to take into account the students' background knowledge. (See table V) This issue seems to be related to the students' prior knowledge. (see section 3, pages 12,13)

According to the results, we believe that the prevailing criterion for book classification into "difficult" or "easy" is to consider the content of the books. It is necessary to mention that "content" has been defined as grammar, lexis, pronunciation, skills, integration and learning strategies. (see section 3, pages 12,13)

Question 6

Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza, Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.

Do you think that a textbook should ... (please feel free to give your answers and to choose more than one option)

- a. Support the official goals and curriculum?
- b. Be written for learners' age group and background?
- c. Reflect learners' preferences in terms of layout, design and organization?
- d. Be sensitive to the students' cultural background and interests?
- e. Other.

Definition of categories

a= support the official goals and curriculum.

b= be written for learners' age group and background.

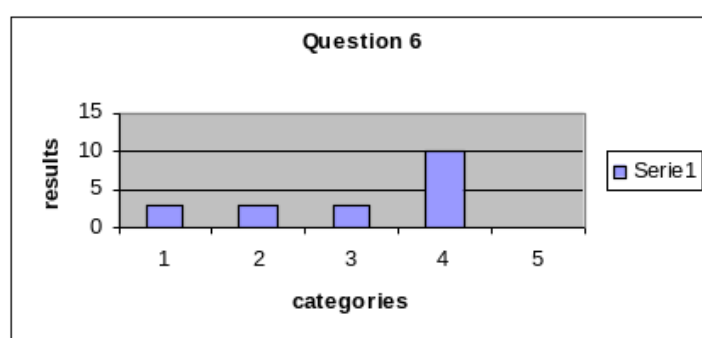
c= reflect learners' preferences in terms of layout, design and organization.

d= be sensitive to the students' cultural background and interests.

e= other.

Table VI

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	3	30%
2	b	3	30%
3	c	3	30%
4	d	10	100%
5	e	0	0%
	average	3,8	
	mode	10	



Question six is a closed-response question. On this occasion, teachers were given five descriptors to choose from. (See table VI)

This question attempts exploring if teachers use any scientific criteria proposed by different authors in the reviewed bibliography (see section 3, pages 8-13)

According to the results (See table VI), ten teachers believe that a textbook should be sensitive to the students' cultural background and interests as a hundred percent of the subjects (10 out of 10) opted for option "D". (See table VI).

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

However, thirty percent of the teachers surveyed (3 out of 10, see table VI) chose the options “A; B; C” (See table VI)

Question 7

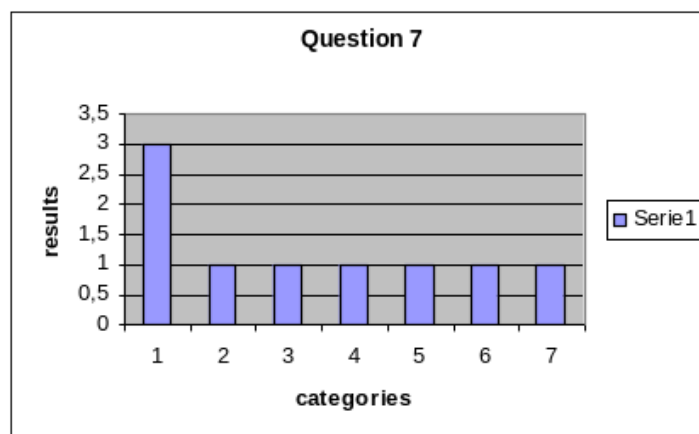
What do you like most about the textbooks available in the market?

Definition of categories

- a= topics organization.
- b= presentation of activities
- c=activities
- d= students' background.
- e= grammar.
- f= stories
- g= listening activities

Table VII

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	3	30%
2	b	1	10%
3	c	1	10%
4	d	1	10%
5	e	1	10%
6	f	1	10%
7	g	1	10%
	average	1,42	
	mode	3	



Question seven is an open-response question. (See appendix II).For the purpose of analysing the results quantitatively and qualitatively, the responses were classified into seven categories. The categories were: topic organization, presentation of activities, activities, students’ background, grammar, stories, and

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

listening activities. (See table VII). This question is addressed to reveal whether the teachers' preferences and perceptions might be a criterion for choosing textbooks.

According to the results (See table VII), thirty percent of the subjects (3 out of 10, see table VII) opted for option "topic organization". Ten percent of the teachers surveyed (1 out of 10, see table VII) were in favour of "presentation of activities, activities", "students' background", "grammar and stories". (See table VII). Besides, there is not a significant difference as B,C,D,E,F and G options as ten percent of the subjects (1 out of 10, see table VII) opted for them.

Apparently, the tendency is to prioritize "topic organization". (See, table VII).

Analysing these data, we may conclude that the teachers' preferences and perceptions about topic organization might be a criterion for textbook selection.

Question 8

How do you decide if the textbook integrates the four areas of language (reading, writing, listening and speaking)?

Definition of categories

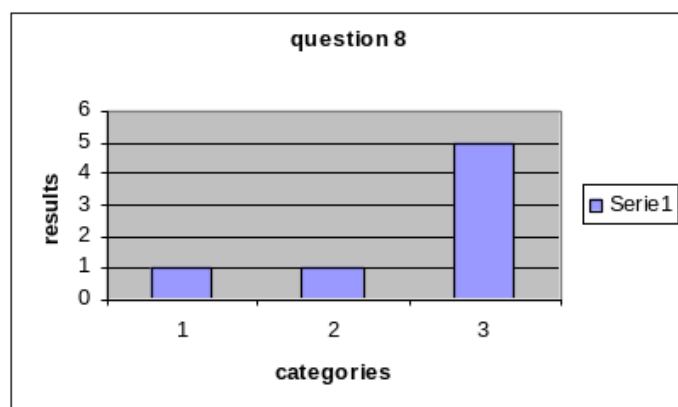
a= development

b= consolidation

c= book analysis

Table VIII

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	1	10%
2	b	1	10%
3	c	5	50%
	average	2,3	
	mode	5	



Question eight is an open-response question, which aims at revealing if the selection of books might be influenced by the way authors integrate the four area of language. This question also attempts exploring if teachers carry out an

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

analysis of the book or of some of its units where the areas of language might be integrated.

According to the results, fifty of the subjects surveyed (5 out of 10, see table VIII) stated in favour of book analysis. Apparently, they analyse books to check if they integrate the four areas of language.

However, ten percent of the subjects (1 out of 10) stated in favour of “development” and “consolidation” (See table VIII)

Nevertheless, the tendency is to check if the book integrates the four areas of language. (See table VIII)

Analysing the data qualitatively, it may be declared that the selection of textbooks might be influenced by the way authors integrate the four areas of language.

Question 9

Do you choose textbooks according to the methodological approach described by the author? Please feel free to give your reasons.

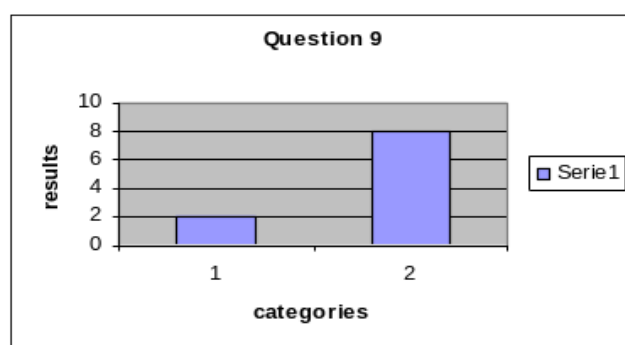
- a. Yes.
- b. No.

Definition of categories

a= yes
b= no

Table IX

categories	categories		results	percentage
1	a		2	20%
2	b		8	80%
	average		5	
	mode		8	



Question nine is a closed-response question, which attempts describing the teachers' criteria for book selection. (See appendix I)

Apparently, teachers tend not to take into account the methodological approach described by the authors when they are about to select textbooks as eighty percent of the subjects (8 out of 10, see table IX) stated that they did not choose

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

books according to the methodological approach described by the authors. Only twenty percent (2 out of 10, see table IX) opted for option B.

Taking into account the data, we believe that methodological approaches do not play a central role when teachers are to select books at ESB for the English lessons.

Question 10

What do you think the appropriate book for your students should be like...?
Please feel free to choose more than one option.

- a. Up dated.
- b. Colourful and full of pictures.
- c. Aware of the students' cultural background.
- d. The result of new methodological trends.
- e. Other.

Definition of categories

a= up

dated.

b= colourful and full of
pictures.

c= aware of the students' cultural
background.

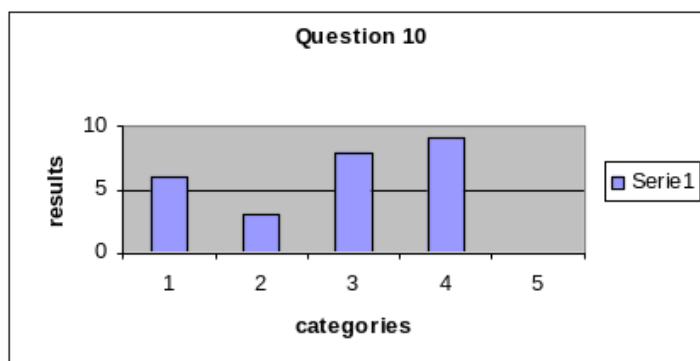
d= the result of new methodological trends.

e= other.

Table X

categories	categories	results	percentage
1	a	6	60%
2	b	3	30%
3	c	8	80%
4	d	9	90%
5	e	0	0%
	average	5,2	
	mode	9	

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**



As regards question ten (See appendix I), a closed-response question which attempts describing the teachers' criteria for a book selection, ninety percent of the subjects surveyed (4 out of 10, see table X) stated that an appropriate book for their students should be the one which is the result of the new methodological trends. Apparently, the teachers' arguments regarding methodological trends do not support what they do to select books at ESB. (See question IX, table IX). There is a contradiction between the beliefs they sustain and what they really do. In the previous question, teachers stated that the methodological approach described by the authors is not taken into account for textbook selection. However, these educators considered that books should be the results of the new methodological trends.

According to the quantitative data, textbooks should take into consideration the students' cultural background as eighty percent of the subjects (8 out of 10, see table X) stated in favour of this option. Sixty percent of the subjects (6 out of 10, see table X) stated that textbooks should be up-dated. (See table X). Besides, thirty percent of the subjects surveyed (3 out of 10, see table X) argued that the textbook should be colourful and full of activities. This criterion seems to be based on the amount of colourful pictures and activities.

Apparently, the tendency is to regard books appropriate for the students if they take into consideration the results of the new methodological trends. (See, table X)

Question 11

How long have you been teaching English? Please feel free to give your answer.

- a)** 0-1 year.
- b)** 2-5 years.
- c)** 6-10 years.
- d)** More than 10 years.

Definition of categories

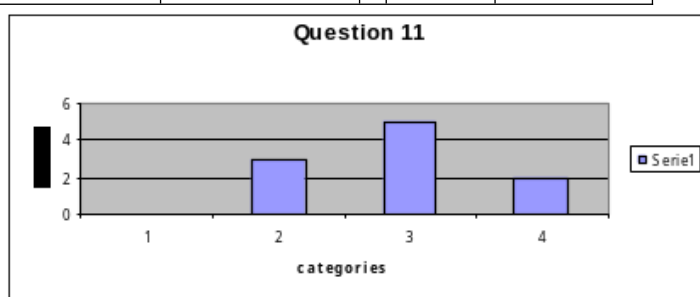
- a= 0-1
year.
- b= 2-5 years.
- c= 6-10 years.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

d= more than 10 years.

Table XI

categories	categories	results	percentage
1	a	0	0%
2	b	3	30%
3	c	5	50%
4	d	2	20%
	average	2,5	
	mode	5	



Question eleven is a closed-response question, which targets directly at exploring the relationship between teachers' experiences and teachers' pedagogical background in the ELT and the criteria they apply to select textbooks (see appendix I). It also aims at discovering whether the influence of the teachers' experience may determine some criteria to select books. The subjects were given five descriptors to choose from. (See appendix I)

Fifty percent (5 out of 10, see table XI) have been teaching English at ESB in state-run schools in the district of La Matanza and its boundaries, from six to ten years. Besides, thirty percent of the teachers (3 out of 10, see table XI) have been teaching English from two to five years.

Twenty percent of the subjects (2 out of 10, see table XI) stated that they have been teaching English for more than ten years.

Almost nobody opted for the one- year option. (See table XI)

Apparently, most of the subjects surveyed (10) have been teaching English in state-run schools in the district of La Matanza , from six to ten years. (See table XI)

Question 12

In what institution did you finish your studies to become a teacher of English?

- a. Teacher Education College.
- b. Non-official institutions such as "AACI", "Cultural Inglesa", "Instituto Cambridge" etc.
- c. University.
- d. Other.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Definition of categories

a= teacher education college.

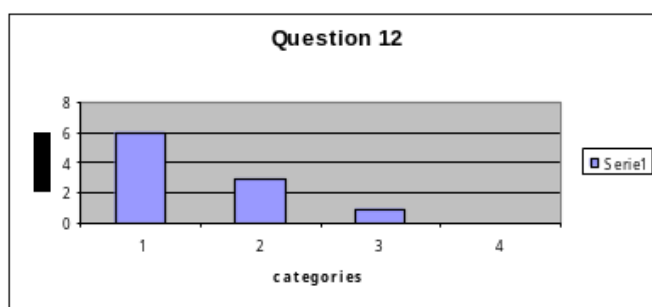
B= non-official institutions such as “AACI”, “Cultural Inglesa”, “Instituto Cambridge” etc.

c= university.

d= other.

Table XII

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	6	60%
2	b	3	30%
3	c	1	10%
4	d	0	0%
	average	2,5	
	mode	6	



Question twelve is a closed-response question, which targets directly at exploring if teachers who have a certain experience and a pedagogical background in ELT apply the same criteria for selecting books as those teachers who have little experience or pedagogical background. (See appendix I)

The subjects were given four descriptors to choose from. (See appendix I).

According to the results, sixty percent of the teachers (6 out of 10, see table XII) finished their studies to become teachers of English at teacher education colleges. Thirty percent of the subjects (3 of 10, see table XII) declared that they had finished their studies at non-official institutions.

Ten percent of the subjects (1 of 10, see table XII) stated that they finished their studies at university.

4.2 Conclusions and limitations.

According to the results obtained, we may be conclude that most of the teachers of English select books at ESB taking into account its price of the book, the students' needs, and the contents. Besides, the ideal books for these subjects should be the one which could be sensitive to the students' cultural background and interests. (see question six, pages 20,21)

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Taking into consideration the results (see 4.3, table II), the reception of textbooks for free seems to be a factor that determines their selection at ESB. Moreover, teachers of English tend to rely on catalogs, textbook publisher representatives and exhibits at conferences. Even though Harmer (1998), Littlejohn (1999) & Cunningham (1995) state that teachers should follow different steps to evaluate and select the coursebooks and materials used, textbook marketing plays a central role when teachers are to choose their coursebooks for ESB in this area the greater Buenos Aires. (see section 4.3, table II).

According to Harmer (1998), there are different issues to be considered such as descriptions of the students and their needs. Thus, materials should be evaluated regarding the students' needs, their cultural background, their interests and beliefs and the book availability.

Once we analysed the data quantitatively and qualitatively, we found out teachers of English at ESB in this area apply one of the suggested criteria by the cited authors as sixty percent of the subjects (6 out of 10, see table III) opted for "the students' needs".

If we compare these findings with the data collected regarding teachers' background knowledge, we may state that there is no significant difference between the criteria applied by those who attended teacher education colleges (3 out of 10, 30% of the teachers, see appendix II) and the ones who are not graduates (2 out of 10, 20% of the teachers, see appendix II).

Richards (2001) states that the price of textbooks and their availability are variables for coursebook selection because not many students have economic access. However, this is not a unique criterion to choose English books at ESB. After analysing the results, we may state that textbook selection depends on price as ninety percent of the subjects surveyed (9 out of 10, see table IV) supported this option.

The results obtained for question five (see section 4.3, table V) reveals that teachers apply content as a criterion for coursebook selection. Apparently, they do not carry out a complete books analysis as recommended by Cunningham (1995).

This author suggests some possible issues as regards evaluation of textbooks such as checking a lesson unit, checking materials with a lexical focus and checking materials with a grammar focus. (see section 3 pages 10-12)

It is interesting to highlight that 30% of the subjects (3 out of 10, see section 4.3 table v), who are graduates from teacher education colleges opted for "content" as a criterion for textbook selection. Apparently, teachers who are graduates from teacher education colleges apply one of the scientific criteria stated by Cunningham (1999) (see section 3 pages 10-12)

According to the quantitative results, one possible criterion for coursebook selection is that books should be sensitive to the students' cultural background and interests. This concept has been postulated by Cunningham (1999, see section 3.1).

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

As regards questions six, seven and eight we may conclude that teachers prioritize topic organization and the students' cultural background (see section 4.3, table VI, VII & VIII). However, they contradict themselves as regards methodology trends. In the case of question nine, eighty percent of the subjects (8 out of 10) state that the methodological approaches do not play a central role for a book selection at ESB. Nevertheless, an overwhelming majority (9 out of 10 subjects, 90%, see section 4.3, table IX) claim that books should be the results of new methodological trends. This contradiction becomes a paradox as regards what teachers claim they do and what really happens in the ELT classroom. They claim that they carry out the steps suggested by Ur (see section 3, pages 13-13) and eventually, they select books, which are mainly given for free. Besides, the price of the book plays a crucial role for the selection.

It might be concluded that there is no significant difference between the criteria applied by graduates and experienced teachers, who have been teaching English for more than six years, (see table XI & XII) as most of them apply the same criteria stated before and they also run into the same contradictions as regards methodological trends than as teachers who little experience or no experience at all.

Further, the teachers surveyed apply at least one of the criteria suggested by Cunningham & Cunningham (see section 3, pages 8-13) as ten of these subjects (10 out of 10, see table VI) stated that the book should:

1. support the official goals and curriculum.
2. be written for a target age group and background.
3. reflect their learners' preferences in terms of layout, design and organization.

Apparently, the tendency highlights the criterion that a textbook should be sensitive to the students background and interests. Besides, there is no significant difference between the criteria applied for teachers who have experience and they are also graduates in ELT, and those who have little experience and they are also under-graduates. However, teachers with teaching training knowledge tend to apply at least one of the criteria suggested by Cunningham. These teachers also follow at least one of the steps proposed by Ur (see section 3 pages 8-13)

4.3 Limitations.

We believe that the present study presents a number of limitations.

To begin with, we assumed that all the teachers of English at ESB in La Matanza use books in the ELT classroom. However, for that reason, we should have been included a question in the survey which explored the types of materials teachers use at ESB. Moreover, the survey should have been written in Spanish to reduce errors in interpretation caused by the use of L2.

As regards the open questions included in the survey, only one should have been included. Open-response questions present a number of disadvantages. For instance, they turn out to be relatively difficult and time consuming for respondents to answer. Thus, respondents may try to skip such questions. In addition, open-response questions tend to be difficult to code, to analyse and to

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

interpret. Besides, some of the answers might be irrelevant for the purpose of the survey as respondents are free to answer. (Brown J., 2001).

Finally, the demonstration of reliability and validity of open-response questions may prove more difficult because open-response questions do not lend themselves to statistical analysis in the same way as closed-response questions do. What is more, for the purposes of the analysis of open-response questions, we should classify the responses into categories and thus, the number of errors increases, decreasing the validity of the study. (Brown J., 2001)

In the next item, we will discuss our intervention.

4.4. Intervention.

According to the limitations and the results obtained, we conclude that the survey should be reformulated. Besides, some questions should be re-written. The use of the mother tongue should not be avoided. In this way, the frequency of errors to occur might be reduced and validity and reliability will be obtained. What is more, a number of new questions should be introduced as regards the use of textbooks in the ELT classroom and the use of the other type of materials such as photocopies taken from textbooks and teachers' own production as regards materials.

In this survey, a question aiming at exploring if teachers use textbooks or other materials in the ESB should be addressed. In the next section, we will explain the new design for our survey.

4.5 Reformulated survey.

As stated in the method (see section 2.3), a survey will be carried out in order to collect data. This new survey will be administered to twenty-five subjects different from the ten chosen for the trialling survey. Besides, this reformulated one will be piloted in Spanish to reduce errors of interpretation.

The number of open-response questions will be reduced to increase the validity and reliability of the study,

Taking into consideration the technique implemented in this study (see section 2), we will introduce a number of additional basic questions.

4.6 Additional questions.

4.6.1 Question one:

Do your students use textbooks to learn English?

- a. *Yes.(please, continue with question 3)*
- b. *No. (please, continue with question 2)*

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

This open-response question has been introduced in order to explore if teachers of English at ESB use textbooks or other type of materials for the ELT classroom. The respondents are provided with two descriptors to choose from: Yes/No.

(See appendix III)

4.6.2 Question two:

If you have provided “No” for an answer, what type of materials do you use?

- a. Photocopies taken from one or more books.
- b. A booklet with a selection of texts for the classroom.
- c. Articles taken from newspapers, magazines, leaflets, etc.
- d. Texts downloaded from internet.
- e. Short stories, novels, etc.
- f. Other. (Specify your choice)

This is a closed-response question which tries to explore the types of materials teachers of English use at ESB and how those are selected for the ELT classroom. (See appendix III)

Teachers are given six descriptors to choose from.

4.6.3 Question three:

Who chooses the English course books for ESB at your school?

- a. You
- b. A group with whom you share responsibility for multiselection.
- c. The head of the department.
- d. Your headmistress/mister.
- e. Other. (specify your choice)

This is a closed-response question which targets at identifying the people or person responsible for course- book selection at ESB. Teachers are given five descriptors two choose from. (See appendix III)

4.6.4 Question four:

What is the reason of your choice?

- a. Price.
- b. Colourfulness with pictures and photographs.
- c. Grammar exercises.
- d. Vocabulary exercises.
- e. Reading-comprehension exercises.
- f. Activity-book included in the coursebook.
- g. Speaking and listening comprehension exercises.
- h. Consolidation units.
- i. Other.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

This closed –response question targets at exploring if the teachers apply any scientific criteria as suggested in the reviewed bibliography (See section 3)
The respondents are provided with eight indicators to choose from. (See appendix III)

4.6.5 Question five:

*On what do you rely for preliminary information on English textbooks at ESB?
Please, feel free to give your answers and to choose more than one option.*

a= textbook publisher

representatives

b= the authors/'s representatives

c= teachers' lounge conversation

d= exhibits at conferences

e= inspection copies

f= pre-publication copies

g= the library you browse around

h= presentations given by the publisher houses

i= other

This is a closed-response question which attempts at showing a criterion, which intends to shed light whether the reception of books for free is a factor which determines the selection at ESB. Nine descriptors are provided for teaches to choose from. (See appendix III)

4.6.6 Question six:

What steps do you follow in order to select a book for the ELT lessons at ESB?

This open-response question is addressed at exploring the actions teachers carry out to select books at ESB. This also tries to discover the uncovering criteria for choosing one book out of many.

4.6.7 Question seven.

You think that the appropriate textbook for your students should be

- a. Up-dated.*
- b. Colourful and full of pictures.*
- c. Aware of the students' cultural background.*
- d. The result of new methodological trends.*
- e. Other. (Specify your choice)*

This is a closed-response question which attempts at exploring the teachers' perceptions when they are to select books for their students. Besides, this question also targets at discovering if teachers use any scientific criteria proposed by the different authors (see section 3). Teachers are provided with five

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

descriptors to choose from as they are the most representative ones and these can also provide enough information to be analysed.

4.6.8 Question eight:

Do you select a textbook according to the methodological approaches described by the authors?

- a. Yes. Why?
- b. No. Why?

This question attempts at exploring if the methodological approaches claimed by the authors play a central role when teachers of English are to select books at ESB. (See appendix III)

Two possibilities are provided “Yes /No” and the respondents are asked to account for their choices.

4.6.9 Question nine:

How do you decide if the textbook integrates the four areas of language (reading, writing, listening and speaking)?

This open-response question aims at revealing if the textbook selection at ESB might be influenced by the way authors integrate the four areas of language. (See appendix III). It also attempts at exploring if teachers carry out an analysis of textbooks or an evaluation of some of the units where “speaking, reading, writing and listening” are integrated by presenting units devoted to consolidation of the four skills. In this way, it also tries to explore if the subjects apply any of the scientific criteria suggested in the reviewed bibliography. (See section 3)

4.6.10 Question ten:

How long have you been teaching English?

- a. 0-1 year.
- b. 2-5 years.
- c. 6-10 years.
- d. More than 10 years.

This closed-response question targets directly at exploring the relationship between teachers’ experiences, teachers’ pedagogical background in ELT, their teaching experience and the criteria that those subjects apply to select course-books. It also aims at discovering whether the influence of teachers’ experience may determine some criteria to select books. Teachers are given four descriptors to choose from.

4.6. 11 Question eleven:

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Where do you teach English? (More than one option is possible)

- a. At private schools.*
- b. At state-run schools.*
- c. At private non-official institutions.*
- d. At teacher education colleges. (specify your choice)*
- e. At Universities.*
- f. Other. (Specify your choice)*

This closed-response question is addressed to explore the places where teachers teach English as a foreign language. It also aims at revealing if there is any relationship between the places subjects work and the criteria they apply for the selection of books. (See appendix III). Six descriptors are given for the respondents to choose from.

4.6.12 Question twelve:

Where did you finish your studies to become a teacher of English?

- a. Teacher Education colleges. (specify your choice)*
- b. Non-official institutions.*
- c. University. (Specify your choice)*
- d. Other. (Specify your choice)*

This is a closed-response question which targets directly at revealing if teachers who have certain teaching experience and a pedagogical background in ELT apply the same criteria for selecting books as the teachers who have little experience or pedagogical background. (See appendix III) The subjects are given different descriptors to opt for.

4.6.13 Question thirteen:

What certificate do you hold?

This open-response question targets at revealing if teachers at ESB are graduates from teacher education colleges. It also aims at exploring if teachers who have a certain experience and a pedagogical background in ELT apply the same criteria for selecting books as the teachers who have little experience or pedagogical background. (See appendix III)

5. Survey report.

As we stated in the method (page 1), we selected a number of state-run schools at random in the district of La Matanza and we visited them. Then, we invited a group of teachers to participate in the survey. This group was different from the previous one selected for the trialling survey.

We surveyed a group of teachers of English in the ESB three months later than the group answering the trialling survey. Then, we administrated the final survey to these subjects. (N=25). Teachers completed the surveys on their own at school and then we collected them.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Once the surveys were handed in, we proceeded to process the data. In the following section, we will describe the quantitative results of our surveys.

5.1 Survey results.

As we stated in the method (page 1), we will proceed to analyse the data quantitatively first .

Question 1

Do your students use textbooks for the ELT classroom?

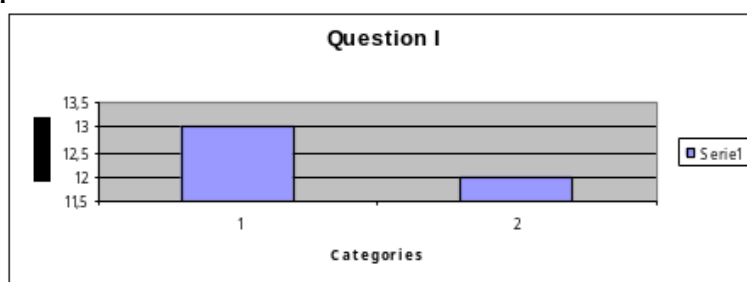
- a. Yes.(please, continue with question 3)
- b. No. (please, continue with question 2)

Definition of categories

a= Yes
b= No

Table I

¡Error! Vínculo no válido.



As stated, question one tries to explore whether teachers of English in the ESB use course-books or other type of materials in the ELT classroom.

Taking into account the answers obtained, fifty-two percent of the subjects surveyed (13 out of 25) stated that they used books for their English lessons in the ESB. The remaining forty-eight percent of the sample (12 out of 25 teachers, see table I) declared that they did not use textbooks for their lessons.

However, we believe that there is a tendency for using textbooks at ESB in the district of La Matanza.

Question 2

If you have provided “No” for an answer, what type of materials do you use?

- a. Photocopies taken from one or more books.
- b. A booklet with a selection of texts for the classroom.
- c. Articles taken from newspapers, magazines, leaflets, etc.
- d. Texts downloaded from internet.
- e. Short stories, novels, etc.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

f. Other. (Specify your choice)

Definition of categories

a= photocopies taken from one or more textbooks

b= a booklet with a selection of texts for the classroom

c= articles taken from newspapers, magazines, leaflets, etc.

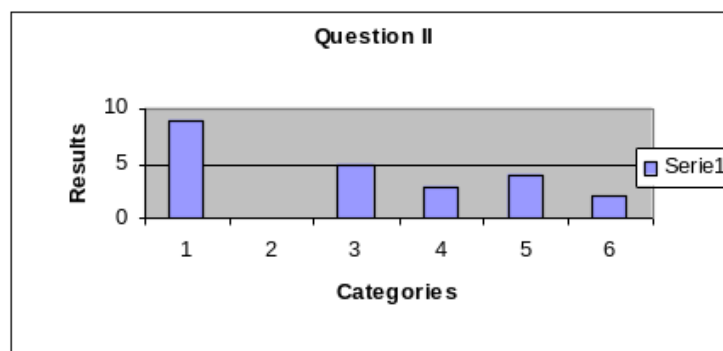
d= texts downloaded from internet

e=stories, novels

f= other

Table II

categories	categories		results	percentages	
1	a		9	36%	
2	b		0	0%	
3	c		5	20%	
4	d		3	12%	
6	e		4	16%	
7	f		2	8%	
	average		3,83		
	mode		9		



After discriminating , the number of subjects who used textbooks from those who did not, we proceeded to explore the type of materials the latter used.

According to the results, thirty percent of the teachers surveyed (9 out of 25, see table II) stated that they took photocopies from one or many books. Besides, twenty-percent of the subjects (5 out of 25, see table II) declared that they preferred articles extracted from newspapers, magazines and leaflets.

Another group, which represents twelve percent of the sample population (3 out of 25 subjects, see table II), opted for downloading texts from internet. Sixteen percent of the sample (4 out of 25 teachers, see table II) affirmed that they used stories and novels Few teachers (2 out of 25, 8%, see table II) said that they used

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

other types of materials. When they were asked to specify their choices, they answered that they produced their own texts.

After analysing the data , we may conclude that most of the teachers of English, who prefer other types of materials, use photocopies taken from different books.

Question 3

Who chooses the English course- books for ESB at your school?

- a. You
- b. A group with whom you share responsibility for selection.
- c. The head of the department.
- d. Your headmaster/mister.
- e. Other. (specify your choice)

Definition of categories

a= by you

b= by a group of teachers in charge of the selection

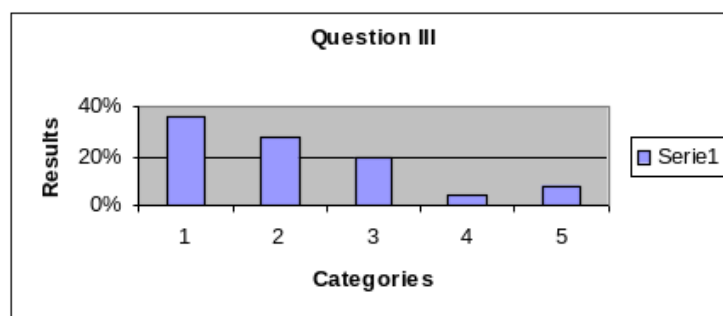
c= by the head of the department

d= by your headmaster/mistress

e= other

Table III

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	9	36%
2	b	7	28%
3	c	5	20%
4	d	1	4%
6	e	2	8%
	average	4,8	
	mode	9	



Question three tries to identify the people or person responsible for the course-book selection at different schools. This question reveals that teachers of English

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

at ESB tend to select books by themselves as thirty five percent of the subjects (9 out of 25, see table III) opted for option “a” (see table III). However, twenty-eight percent of the sample (7 out of 25 subjects, see table III) stated that there was a group of teachers in charge of the selection. Another group of subjects, which represents four percent of the sample (1 out of 25 teachers, see table III) declared that books were chosen by headmasters. Few subjects (2 out of 25, see table III), an eight percent of the sample population, favoured the option “other”. When they were asked to specify their choices, they answered that textbooks are selected by supervisors in charge of the district of La Matanza.

After analysing the data quantitatively and qualitatively, we may conclude that teachers of English at ESB are responsible for the course-book selection as the tendency is to select textbooks by themselves.

Question four

What is the reason for your choice?

- a. Price.
- b. Colourfulness with pictures and photographs.
- c. Grammar exercises.
- d. Vocabulary exercises.
- e. Reading-comprehension exercises.
- f. Activity-book included in the course- book.
- g. Speaking and listening comprehension exercises.
- h. Consolidation units.
- i. Other.

Definition of categories

a= price

b= colourfulness with pictures and photographs

c=grammar exercises

d= vocabulary

exercises

e= reading-comprehension exercises

f= activity book included in the course-book

g=speaking and listening comprehension

exercises

h= consolidation units

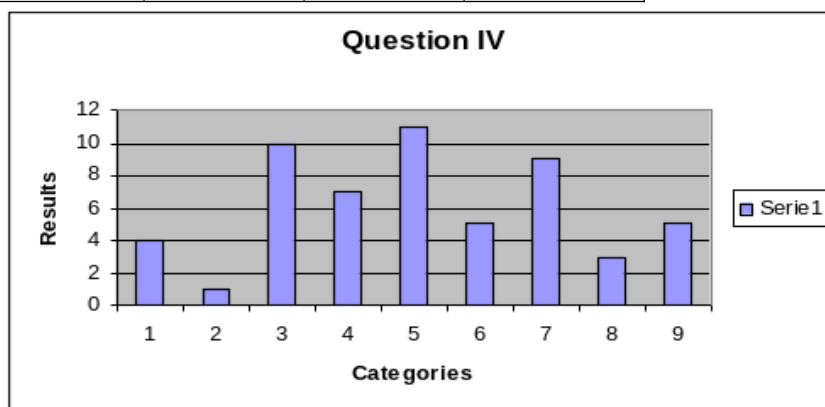
i= other

Table IV

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	4	16%
2	b	1	4%
3	c	10	40%
4	d	7	28%
5	e	11	44%

Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza, Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.

6	f	5	20%
7	g	9	36%
8	h	3	12%
9	i	5	20%
	average	5,5	
	mode	11	



Question four tries to reveal one of the criteria teachers of English at ESB apply for course- book selection.

Apparently, the tendency is to select books according to their reading-comprehension exercises as forty-four percent of the subjects (11 out of 25, see table IV) opted for that category. Forty percent of the sample (10 out of 25, see table IV) stated that they selected books taking into account their grammar exercises. Besides, thirty-six percent of the teachers surveyed stated that they chose course-books if those were provided with speaking and listening comprehension exercises.

If we compare the data, we may conclude that teachers do not seem to consider “price” as a prevailing criteria for a ESB book selection for only fourteen percent of the subjects (4 out of 25, see table IV) favoured that option. Neither do consolidation units nor colourful books with pictures and photographs appear as prevailing criteria for textbook selection because twelve and four percent of the sample (3 and 1 out of 25 subjects, see table IV) favoured this choice. Nevertheless, there seem to be some important issues that teachers take into account when they are to select textbooks. These are grammar and speaking and listening comprehension exercises as forty (10 out of 25 teachers, see table IV) and thirty-six (9 out of 25 teachers, see table IV) percent of the sample opted for those categories.

It is necessary to mention that the categories “activity book included in the course- book” and “other” were selected by the same number of subjects (5 out of 25, see table IV) which constituted the twenty percent of the teachers surveyed. We may conclude that one of the prevailing criteria for book-selection is to select books taking into consideration their reading comprehension exercises.

Question five

Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza, Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.

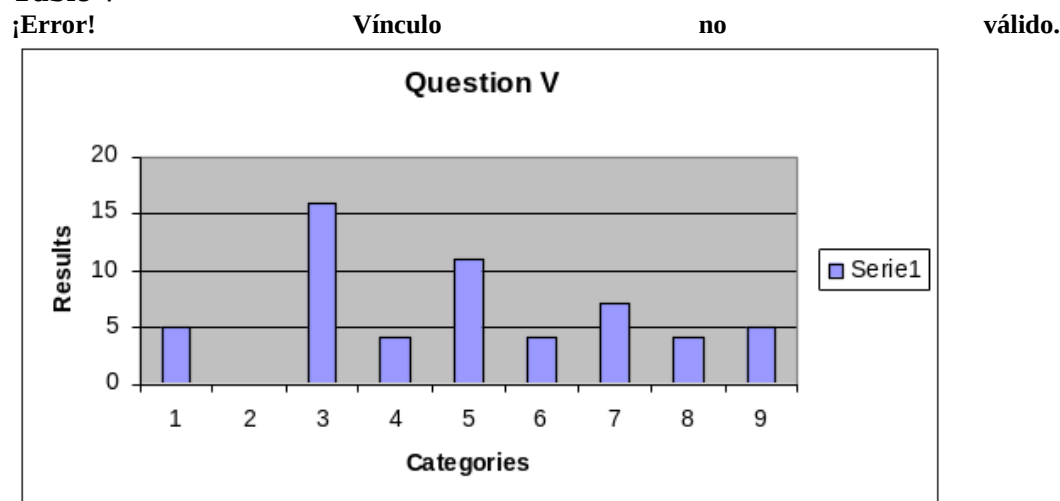
On what do you rely for preliminary information on English textbooks at ESB?
Please feel free to give your answers and to choose more than one option.

- a= textbook publisher representatives
- b= the authors/'s representatives
- c= teachers' lounge conversation
- d= exhibits at conferences
- e= inspection copies
- f= pre-publication copies
- g= the library you browse around
- h= presentations given by the publisher houses
- i= other

Definition of categories

- a= textbook publisher representatives
- b= the authors/'s representatives
- c= teachers' lounge conversation
- d= exhibits at conferences
- e= inspection copies
- f= pre-publication copies
- g= the library you browse around
- h= presentations given by the publisher houses
- i= other

Table V



Question five intends to shed light on whether reception of books is a factor which determines the selection of textbooks at ESB.

Sixteen percent of the subjects surveyed (4 out of 25, see table V) stated that they relied on exhibits at conferences, on pre-publication copies and on presentations given by the publisher houses. Another group which constituted forty-four percent of the sample (11 out of 25 teachers, see table V) rely on inspection copies. Besides, twenty-eight percent of the teachers surveyed (7 out 25, see table V) opt for consulting specialized bookshops when they are to select books.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

A small number of subjects (5 out of 25, see table V) constituted by twenty percent of the sample population affirmed that they relied on textbook publisher representatives.

Teacher lounge conversations seem to be a factor that determines the selection of textbooks as sixty-four percent of the subjects (16 out of 25, see table V) favoured that category. Apparently, teachers tend to consult their colleagues and their opinions seem to be relevant for textbook-selection.

Neither do authors' representatives nor other factors seem to influence the criteria for course-book selection.

Question six

What steps do you follow to select a book for ELT at ESB?

Definitions of categories

a= search for content

b= comparison of
books

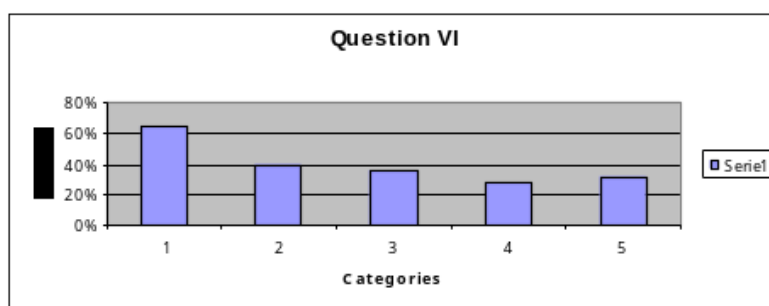
c= analysis of the units

d= needs analysis

e= conversations with other
colleagues

Table VI

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	16	64%
2	b	10	40%
3	c	9	36%
4	d	7	28%
6	e	8	32%
	average	10	
	mode	16	



**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

As regards question six , this is an open-response question, which aims at exploring the steps that teachers take for textbook selection. Besides, these issues are closely related to the scientific criteria proposed by the cited authors.

Forty percent of the teachers surveyed (10 out of 25, see table VI) declared that they compared books. Another group constituted by thirty-six percent of the sample (9 out of 25 teachers, see table VI) preferred to analyse the units of the course-books. However, thirty percent of the subjects (8 out of 25, see table VI) opted for conversation with other colleagues. A considerable number of teachers (16 out of 25, see table VI) which represented sixty-four percent of the sample, stated that they searched for content when they were to select books.

Therefore, we may conclude that most of the teachers at ESB search for content when they select books for the ELT classroom as sixty-four percent of the teachers (16 out of 25, see table VI) opted for it.

Question seven

You think that the appropriate textbook for your students should be

- a. Up-dated.
- b. Colourful and full of pictures.
- c. Aware of the students' cultural background.
- d. The result of new methodological trends.
- e. Support the official goals of the curricula.
- f. Other. (specify your choice)

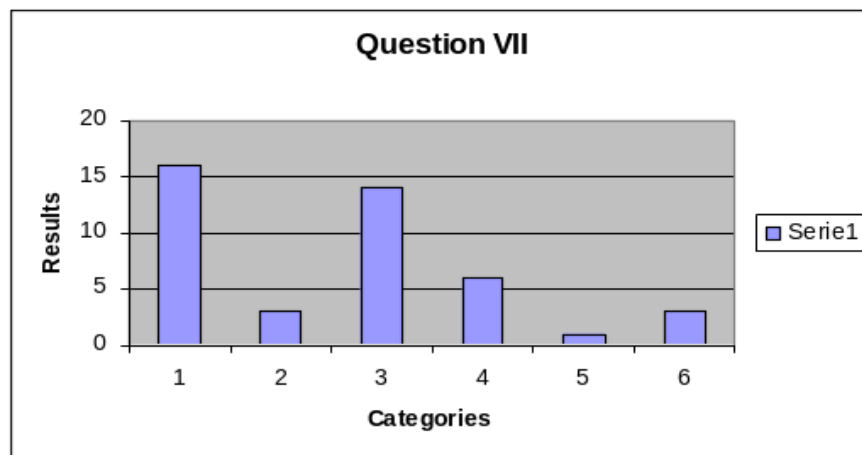
Definition of categories

a= up- dated
b= colourful and full of pictures
c= aware of the students' cultural background
d= the result of new methodological trends
e= support the official goals of the curricula.
f= other.

Table VII

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

¡Error! Vínculo no válido.



Question seven, which is a closed-response one, aims at exploring if teachers use any scientific criteria as proposed by different authors cited in the reviewed bibliography. (See section 3)

Fourteen percent of the sample population (6 out of 25 subjects, see table VII) stated that the appropriate textbook should reflect the result of the new methodological trends.

Besides, they declared that books should be aware of the students' cultural background as fifty-six percent of the subjects (14 out of 25, see table VII) opted for this category. As regards the item "other", the subjects provided two different options students' needs and integration of the four skills. Twelve percent of the subjects (3 out of 25, see table VII) declared that books should take into account the students' needs and it should integrate the four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking).

Sixty-four percent of the population agreed that books should be up dated.

Only one subject (four percent of the sample, see table VII) favoured the issue that an appropriate book should support the official goals of the curricula.

After analysing the data, we believe that teachers express their preferences for a course-book selection by choosing the up-dated ones.

Question eight

Do you select a textbook according to the methodological approaches described by the author/s?

- Yes. Why?
- No. Why?

Definition of categories

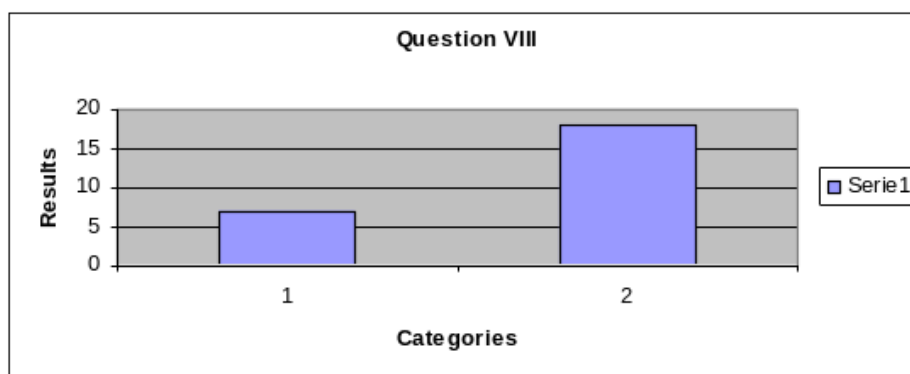
a= yes

b= no

Table VIII

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

¡Error! Vínculo no válido.



This question aims to explore if the methodological approaches claimed by the authors play a central role when teachers are to select books for ESB. (See appendix III)

Two possibilities are provided “Yes /No” and the respondents are asked to account for their choices.

Twenty –eight percent of the sample population (7 out 25 subjects, see table VIII) opted for selecting books taking into account the methodological approach described by the author/s. According to this group, lessons should be given incorporating a method and this should be related to the approach claimed by the different author/s.

However, a considerable number of teachers (18 out of 25) claimed that they do not select books based on the methodological approach claimed by the author/s. When these subjects were asked to account for their choices, they answered that they used their own criteria as regards methodologies and approaches. To begin with, this group implemented a combination of different approaches and methods to make their students learn and use the target language. Besides, they also asserted that this combination was based on the framework of CLT. Therefore, many methods and approaches might be used taking into account the students’ needs.

After analysing the data, we may conclude that teachers of English at ESB do not tend to select books based on the methodological approaches described by the author/s. In this way, the methodological approaches claimed by the author/s do not seem to play a central role for a textbook selection as seventy-two percent of the subjects (18 out of 25, see table VIII) opted for that category.

Surprisingly, the criteria to select books based on the methodological approaches described by the authors seems to play a secondary role as only twenty-eight percent of the teachers surveyed (7 out of 25, see table VIII) selected that category.

Question nine

How do you decide if the textbook integrates the four areas of language (reading, writing, listening and speaking)?

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Definition of categories

a= syllabus

b= book analysis

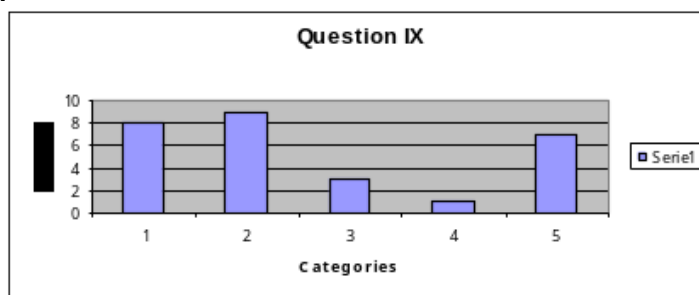
c= consolidation units

d= analysis of the whole set (coursebook, activity book and teachers' books)

e= no answer

Table IX

¡Error! Vínculo no válido.



This open-response question aims at revealing if the textbook selection in the ESB might be influenced by the way authors integrate the four areas of language. (See appendix III). It also attempts to explore if teachers analyse textbooks or evaluate the units where “speaking, reading, writing and listening” are integrated for consolidation. In this way, it also tries to explore if the subjects apply any of the scientific criteria suggested in the reviewed bibliography. (See section 3)

Twelve percent of the subjects surveyed (3 out of 25, see table IX) focused on units of consolidation. Another group constituted by thirty-two percent of the sample (8 out of 25 subjects, see section IX) declared that they analysed the syllabus. Thirty-six percent of the sample (9 out of 25 teachers, see table IX) asserted that they analyse the book. However, few subjects (1 out of 25, see table IX), who constituted four percent of the sample (see table IX), opted for evaluating the whole set of materials (course-books, teachers’ books and activity books).

According to the results, we may conclude that teachers of English at ESB focus on a book analysis and on the syllabus.

Question ten

How long have you been teaching English?

- a. 0-1 year.
- b. 2-5 years.
- c. 6-10 years.
- d. More than de 10 years.

Definition of categories

a= 0-1 year

b= 2-5 years

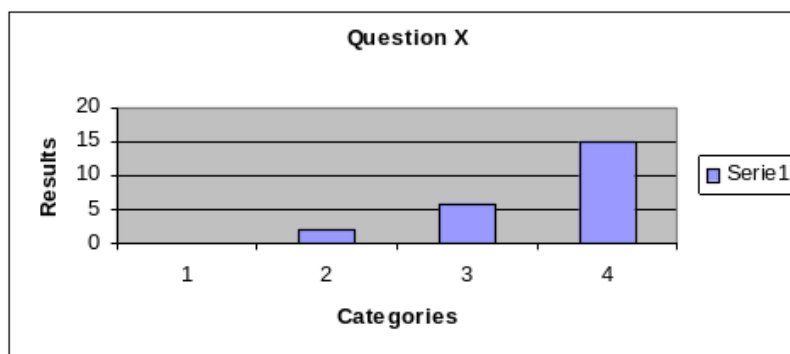
c= 6-10 years

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

d= more than 10 years

Table X

¡Error! Vínculo no válido.



This closed-response question targets directly at exploring the relationship between teachers' experience, pedagogical background in ELT and the criteria they apply to select course-books. It also aims to find out whether the influence of their experience may determine criteria to select books.

Question eleven

Where do you teach English? (More than one option is possible)

- a. At private schools.
- b. At state-run schools.
- c. At private non-official institutions.
- d. At teacher education colleges. (specify your choice)
- e. At Universities.
- f. Other. (Specify your choice)

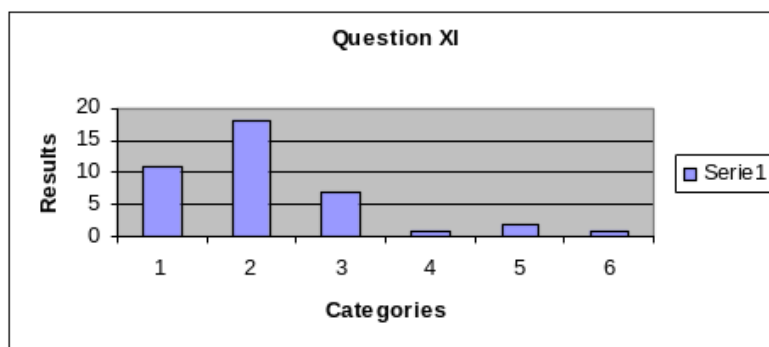
Definition of categories

a= private schools
b= state-run schools
c= private non-official intitutions
d= teacher education colleges
e= universities
f= other

Table XI

¡Error! Vínculo no válido.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**



This is a closed-response question which targets directly at exploring if teachers who have certain experience and pedagogical background in ELT apply the same criteria for selecting books that the teachers who have little experience or less pedagogical background. (See appendix III). With this question, we try to discriminate if teachers who teach at state-run or at private institutes or other places apply the same criteria as those who only teach at state-run schools.

Twenty percent of the sample population (7 out of 25 teachers, see table XI) stated that they taught English lessons at private non-official institutions. Besides, forty-four percent of the teachers surveyed (11 out of 25, see table XI) seem to teach English at private schools. Eight percent of the sample (2 out of 25 teachers, see table XI) declared that they worked as teachers of English at university.

Only four percent of the subjects (1 out of 25, see table XI) opted for teaching English at teacher education colleges and for giving private lessons.

Within, this group one of the teachers declared that she worked in a private teacher education college situated in Capital Federal.

According to these results, we may conclude that most of the teachers work only at ESB in state-run schools in the district of La Matanza as seventy-two percent of the subjects (18 out of 25, see table XI) opted for that option. Apparently, few teachers teach at state-run schools, at private-non official institutes and at private schools. (7 out of 25, 28% of the sample, see table XI). Seemingly, the teachers who work at state-run schools and those who work at private institutes tend to apply the same criteria for the selection.

Question twelve

Where do you finish your studies to become a teacher of English?

- a. Teacher Education colleges. (specify your choice)
- b. Non-official institutions.
- c. University. (Specify your choice)
- d. Other. (Specify your choice)

Definition of categories

a= teacher education colleges

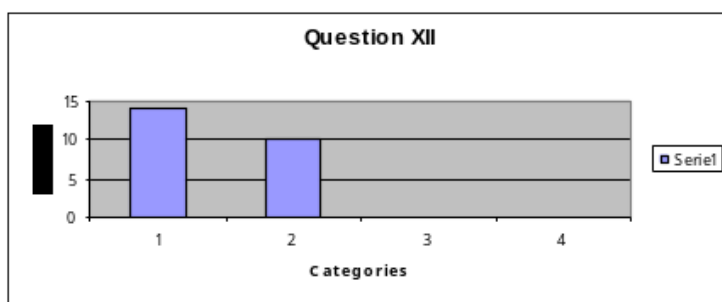
b= non-official institutions or institutes

Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza, Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.

c= university
d= other

Table XII

categories	categories	results	percentages
1	a	14	56%
2	b	10	40%
3	c	0	0%
4	d	0	0%
	average	5,75	
	mode	14	



This is a closed-response question which targets directly at exploring if teachers who have certain teaching experience and a pedagogical background in the ELT apply the same criteria for selecting books as the teachers who have less experience or little pedagogical background. (See appendix III) The subjects were given different descriptors to opt for.

- Teacher Education colleges. (specify your choice)
- Non-official institutions.
- University. (Specify your choice)
- Other. (Specify your choice)

Forty percent of the sample population (11 out 25 teachers, see table XII) declared that they were graduates from non-official institutions or institutes. The remaining sixty percent (14 out 25 teachers, see table XII) stated that they were graduates from teacher education colleges.

Surprisingly, almost nobody is a graduate from universities or other places of education as none of the teachers surveyed (0 out of 25, see table XII) opted for that category.

Apparently, teachers of English at state-run schools in the district of La Matanza are graduates from teacher education colleges as fifty-six percent of the sample (14 out of 25, see table XII) selected that option.

Question thirteen

What certificate do you hold?

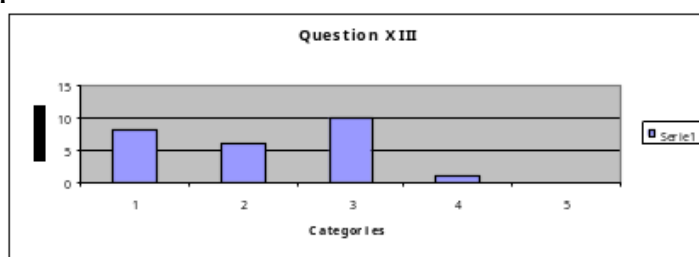
**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Definition of categories

a= teacher of English for Primary and secondary school (Capital Federal)
b= teacher of English for EGBII, EGB III and Polimodal (Province of Buenos Aires)
c= non graduates from teacher education colleges
d= teacher of English for Primary school (Capital Federal)
e= teacher of English for EGB II (Province of Buenos Aires)
f= translators.

Table XIII

¡Error! Vínculo no válido.



This open-response question targets at discovering if teachers of English at ESB in la Matanza are graduates from teacher education colleges. It also aims at exploring if teachers who have certain teaching experience and pedagogical background in ELT apply the same criteria for selecting books as those who have less experience or pedagogical background. (See appendix III)

The answers will be classified into different categories:

- teacher of English for Primary and secondary school (Capital Federal)
- teacher of English for EGBII, EGB III and Polimodal (Province of Buenos Aires)
- non graduates from teacher education colleges
- teacher of English for Primary school (Capital Federal)
- teacher of English for EGB II (Province of Buenos Aires)

Forty percent of the teachers surveyed (10 out 25, see table XIII) hold a certificate from non-official institutes and institutions. Fifty-six percent of the sample (14 out of 25 subjects, see table XIII) are graduates from teacher education colleges. Within this group, eight teachers (see table XIII), who represents thirty-two percent of the population (see table XIII) hold a certificate as teacher of English for the Primary and Secondary school issued by teacher education colleges situated in Capital Federal. Twenty four percent of the population (6 out of 25 subjects, see table XIII) declared that they hold a certificate as teacher of English at EGB II, EGBIII and Polimodal issued by teacher education college situated in the Province of Buenos Aires.

Only one teacher (1 out of 25, see table XIII), who represents four percent of the population (see table XIII), stated that she holds a certificated as a teacher of English for the Primary school issued by a teacher education colleges situated in Capital Federal.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Apparently, Few subjects seem to have only graduated as a teacher of English for EGB II from teacher education colleges situated in the Province of Buenos Aires. According to the results, teachers at ESB tend to hold certificates as teachers of English for Primary and Secondary school issued by teacher education colleges situated in the Capital Federal as thirty-two percent of the sample (8 out of 25 teachers, see table XIII) opted for that category.

6. Analysis and Conclusions.

In answer to the original research question, on what criteria teachers of English select text-books at state-run schools for ESB in the district of La Matanza, Province of Buenos Aires?- it is possible to conclude that, in spite of renewed methods and the teachers' exposure to bibliography based on book-selection, non-scientific criteria still remain solid . (See pages 10-14)

In the particular case of the group surveyed, few educators (9 out of 25 and 7 out of 25, see table VI, section 5.1) state that analysis of the units and needs analysis are acceptable criteria for a textbook selection. These results make it necessary to reflect on different issues:

- a. The teachers' perceptions of textbook selection.
- b. The teachers' responsibility for textbook selection at school.
- c. The teachers' criteria when they are to select textbooks.

- a. Teachers' perceptions of textbook selection:

In the present study, most of the subjects, apparently, prefer up-dated books with reading comprehension exercises. Besides, those course- books must also include grammar and speaking and listening comprehension activities.

These results indicate that teachers base selection on grammar and that they only apply one of the scientific criteria suggested by Cunningsworth & Cunningham (see section 3.6, pages 12-13).

According to Harmer (1998) and Richards (2001), the materials should be evaluated taking into account their role in the language programme, the planning of the lessons and the methodological approaches adopted by the authors. Besides, these authors state that the three levels of analysis should be carried out for the selection. (See section 3, pages 11-12-13). In the particular case of the subjects surveyed, seventy-two percent of the sample (18 out 25, see section 5, table VII) stated that they did not choose books according to the methodological trends described by the authors. Apparently, this criterion seems to be absent as very few teachers (7 out 25, 28% of the sample, see section 5, table VII) opted for that category.

Teachers' perceptions about new methodological tools such as the internet seem to be a prevailing criterion for selecting books at ESB. Neither do the goals stated by the Curricula nor the syllabus proposed for ELT in the Province of Buenos Aires appear to play a central role when teachers are to select books at ESB as few teachers opted for that category. (See section 5.1).

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

We believe that there is a relationship between the teachers' educational background, their experience and the criteria applied for course-book selection.

Apparently, teachers with more than ten years of experience and graduates from teacher education colleges to apply a more scientific criterion than those who have little or no teacher educational background at all. Graduates tend to select books taking into consideration, either the checking of a lesson unit or the methodological approaches claimed by the authors at least.

We may conclude that very few scientific criteria proposed in the reviewed bibliography (see section 3, pages 10-13), such as evaluation of materials with a grammar focus, for example, are applied

b. Teachers' responsibility for textbook selection at school:

After analysing the results qualitatively and quantitatively, we may assert that the teachers' responsibility for textbook selection plays a central role.

This is also related to the actions that teachers take for course-book selection. Apparently, teachers prefer to prioritize content as sixty-four percent of the sample (16 out of 25 subjects, see table VI, section 5.1) selected that category. Neither do comparison of books and analysis of units nor needs analysis seem to play a central role for book selection in this case study. (See table VI, section 5.1).

As regards the factors that may determine the selection of textbooks for this study, we may assert that conversations held by teachers in the teachers' room play an important role as sixty-four percent of the sample (16 out 25, see section 4, table V, pages 43-44) opted for that category.

c. Teachers' criteria when they are to select books:

As stated in the results (see section 5.1), we believe that the prevailing criteria for textbook selection in the ESB are mainly focussed on:

1. The actions teachers carry out for the selection.
2. The role of the methodological approaches.
3. The course-book as a flexible tool.

As regards the action teachers take for selection, teachers of English tend to prioritize content. Apparently, they only consider one level of analysis suggested by Littlejohn (1999) (see section 3)

If we follow the steps proposed by Ur (1996), Skierso (1991) and Chall & Conrad (1991) we may conclude that almost none of the subjects makes a textbook selection based on these actions.

Teachers do not tend to select books which support the goals of the curriculum as only four percent of the sample population (1 out of 25, see table VII, section 5.1) favoured this option. Furthermore, units for consolidation of skills do not appear to be relevant for the selection. Moreover, the revision of exercises and activities in the textbook does not tend to play a central role. Consequently, we may conclude that the three steps recommended for a course- book selection by

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

Ur (1996) (see section 3.5 pages 10-13) are absent as very few teachers (4 out of 25, see section 5) opted for any of them.

Taking into account the role played by the methodological approaches, we consider that the teachers of English in this research do not tend to select books according to the methodological approaches claimed by the author/s as seventy-two percent of the subjects surveyed (18 out of 25, see table VIII, section 5.1) chose that category.

Surprisingly, the third of analysis suggested by Littlejohn (1999) as regards the underlying principles of the materials, such as the selection of tasks and content, (see section 3) might not be relevant for our subjects' selection. Besides, Harmer (1998) recommended that the evaluation of materials should be related to the teaching and learning processes, cognitive style, strategies involved and developed and how communication is fostered

Cunningham (1995) (see pages 10-13) recommended that teachers should check a lesson unit, materials with a lexical and grammar focus. (See section 3)

According to the results obtained (see section 5.1), we assume that our subjects tend to evaluate materials focusing on content as sixty-four percent of the sample (16 out of 25, see table VI, section 5.1) favoured this option.

However, very few teachers (4 out of 25, see table IX, section 5.1) asserted that they analysed the whole set of materials (course-books, activity-books and teachers' books)

What is more, they claimed that they analysed books for the selection. Nevertheless, teachers only evaluate the content and the syllabus present in the book as thirty-two (8 out of 25) and thirty-six (9 out of 25) subjects (see section 5.1) opted for those options.

7. Limitations and directions for further research.

The results of this research should be interpreted in relation to its limitations. First, the method of participant selection made it impossible to ensure a balanced distribution of the sample, teachers of English at state-run schools in the ESB, graduates from teacher education colleges, non-graduates from teacher education colleges, uncertified teachers. As the whole population involves a large amount of people, we focused our study on a population of thirty-five people sampled at random and following the criteria described in the method (see section 2, pages 2-3). Therefore, the study described in this paper is limited to the perspective of 35 teachers. Although the participants' views may be similar to those of other teachers, it would be unreliable and unfair to suggest they represent all teachers' view on prevailing criteria for an ESB textbook selection in the Province of Buenos Aires.

Second, the inclusion of three open-response questions may have raised a number of errors as they have been rather difficult to analyse, to code and to interpret to show the validity of the study. (Brown, J, 2001)

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

However, it was necessary to include them in order to explore the teachers' perceptions about the topic.

Third, this case study presents apparent contradictions between what teachers claim they do to select books and their own perceptions. For example, they claimed that methodological approaches do not play a central role when they are to select books. However, they declared that it is necessary to evaluate materials taking into account grammar, methodology, pronunciation and lexis. For that reason, questions such as number six, seven and eight (see section 4.7 pages 40-45) should be reformulated to avoid this type of contradiction

Finally, we suggest that teachers should take into account the steps and the criteria stated in the reviewed bibliography (see section 3) in order to select books in a more scientific way.

To conclude, we believe that this paper might encourage the study of the criteria the teachers use to adapt the textbook to their students' needs when the book does not fulfill their students' expectations. It would be interesting to explore if teachers add extra materials to those provided by the textbook. If so, it would be necessary to investigate what criteria they apply for the selection.

8. Reference bibliography.

- Brown, J. (2001). *Using surveys in language programs*. Cambridge, UK: CUP.
- Chall, J. & Conard, S. (1991). *Should textbooks challenge students?* New York: Teachers College Press. Available at www.developingteachers.com
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Evaluating and selecting ELF teaching materials*. London, UK: Heinemann Educational Books. Available at www.gabrielatos.com/grammar/evaluation.htm.
- Cunningham, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebooks*. London, UK: Heinemann. Available at www.gabrielatos.com/grammar/evaluation.htm.
- Harmer, J. (1998). *The practice of English language teaching*. New York: Longman.
- Littlejohn, A. (1999). *The analysis of language teaching materials: inside the Trojan horse*. In Tomlinson (ED), *Materials development in language teaching*. (p.p. 190-216), Cambridge, UK: CUP.
- Richards, J. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge, UK: CUP.
- Richards, J. & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge, UK: CUP.
- Skierso, A. (1991). *Textbook selection and evaluation*. In Celce-Murcia (ED), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. (p.p. 432-453) Boston: Heinle and Heinle. Available at www.developingteachers.com.
- Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching*. Cambridge, UK: CUP.

Appendix I: Survey.

- 1) How are the textbooks for English chosen at your school?
 - a) By you alone.
 - b) By a group with whom you share responsibility for selection.
 - c) By the head of the department.
 - d) By your head master/ mister.
 - e) Other.
- 2) On what do you rely for preliminary information on textbooks? Please, feel free to give your answers and to choose more than one option.
 - a) Textbook publisher representatives.
 - b) Catalogs
 - c) The authors/s' representatives.
 - d) Teachers' lounge conversation.
 - e) Exhibits at conferences.
 - f) Inspection copies.
 - g) Pre-publication copies.
 - d) Other.
- 3) After you have reviewed several textbooks, how do you choose between them? Please feel free to give your answer.
- 4) Is "price" a consideration in your textbook choice? Why?
- 5) How do you decide if a text is too difficult or too easy for your students?
- 6) Do you think that a textbook should ... (please feel free to give your answers and to choose more than one option)
 - a) Support the official goals and curriculum?
 - b) Be written for a target age group and background?
 - c) Reflect learners' preferences in terms of layout, design and organization?
 - d) Be sensitive to the students' cultural background and interests?
 - e) Other.
- 7) What do you like most about the textbooks available in the market?
- 8) How do you decide if the textbook integrates the four areas of language (reading, writing, listening and speaking)?
- 9) Do you choose textbooks according to the methodological approach described by the author? Please feel free to give your reasons.
 - a) Yes.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

b) No.

10) What do you think the appropriate book for your students should be like...?

Please feel free to choose more than one option.

- a) Up dated.
- b) Colourfulness and full of pictures.
- c) Aware of the students' cultural background.
- d) The result of new methodological trends.
- e) Other.

11) How long have you been teaching English? Please feel free to give your answer.

- a) 0-1 year.
- b) 2-5 years.
- c) 6-10 years.
- d) More than 10 years.

12) Where did you finish your studies to become a teacher of English?

- a) Teacher education college.
- b) Non-official institutions such as "AACI", "Cultural Inglesa", "Instituto Cambridge" etc.
- c) University.
- d) other.

Appendix II: Data Matrix

Question	S 1	S 2	S 3	S 4	S 5	S 6	S 7	S 8	S 9	S 10
1	b	a	a	a	b	a,b	c	b	a	a
2	a,b	d,e	b,e,g	c,e	a,g	b,d	e	a,b	a,	a,b,d,g
3	content	method	sts' needs	sts' needs	s sts' back		sts' need	sts' need		sts' back
	sts' level			sts' back.		sts' need			sts' need	
	and development			knowled.		topics				
4	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
5	vocab.	analysis	topics	sts' back.	topics	topics	sts' feedback		0	content
	struct.	of units				vocab.		activities		
		content				content		tests		
6	c,d	a,d	b,d	b,d	a,b,d	d	c,d	b,d	d	a,b,c,d
7	topics	topic	topics	present.	present. Act		grammar	sts' back	sts' back	
	organiz.			listen.act		listen act	stories			sts' back
8	develop.	consolid.	book anal.	book anal	book anal		anal. Of unit			book anal
						book anal		0	0	
9	b	b	a	b	b	b	b	b	a	b
10	a,c	c,d	b,c,d	a,d	a,c,d	c,d	c,d	a,c,d	d	a,b,c,d
11	d	c	b	c	b	c	b	c	d	c
12	a	a	b	b	b	a	c	a	a	a

S= Subject.

Appendix III: Reformulated survey.

Estimado profesor y/o profesora:

Esta es una encuesta totalmente anónima para el trabajo final de la licenciatura en Inglés en la universidad CAECE. Por favor tenga a bien a contestar estas preguntas. Muchísimas gracias por su participación y colaboración.

- 1) Utilizan sus alumnos un libro de texto en la clase de Inglés?
 - a. Si. (ir a la pregunta 3)
 - b. No. (Continúe con la pregunta 2)
- 2) Si su respuesta ha sido negativa, ¿qué material usa?
 - a. Fotocopias de uno o de varios textos.
 - b. Un cuadernillo con una selección de textos para uso interno de la clase.
 - c. Artículos extraídos de periódicos, revistas, folletos, etc.
 - d. Textos extraídos de Internet.
 - e. Cuentos, novelas, etc.
 - f. Otros (especificar cual)
- 3) ¿Quién elige los libros de inglés para ESB en su escuela?
 - a. Usted.
 - b. Un grupo de docentes encargados para la selección.
 - c. Su jefe o jefa de departamento.
 - d. Su directora/ director.
 - e. Otros (especificar quien)
- 4) ¿Cuál es el motivo de su elección?
 - a. Precio.
 - b. Colorido en imágenes y fotografías.
 - c. Ejercicios de gramática.
 - d. Ejercicios de vocabulario.
 - e. Ejercicios de lecto-comprensión.
 - f. Tener incluido el libro de actividades.
 - g. Ejercicios de escucha y habla.
 - h. Unidades de consolidación.
 - i. Otro.
- 5) ¿En que tipo de información se basa antes de elegir un libro para Inglés en ESB?
 - a. De los representantes de las editoriales.

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

- b. De los representantes de los autores.
 - c. De conversaciones sostenidas en la sala de docentes.
 - d. De exhibiciones en conferencias.
 - e. De copias para su inspección.
 - f. De folletos de propaganda.
 - g. Del librero que usted consulta.
 - h. De charlas que ofrecen las editoriales.
 - i. Otros. (Especificar cuál)
- 6) ¿Que acciones realiza usted para elegir el libro de su curso de ESB?
- 7) Usted piensa que el libro de texto apropiado para sus alumnos debería ser...
 - a. Actualizado.
 - b. Colorido y con muchas ilustraciones.
 - c. Relacionado con el bagaje cultural de sus alumnos.
 - d. El resultado de las nuevas tendencias metodológicas.
 - e. Otros. (Especificar)
- 8) Elige usted el libro de texto siguiendo las metodologías descriptas por los autores?
 - a. Si. ¿Por qué?
 - b. No. ¿Por qué?
- 9) ¿Cómo decide usted si el libro de texto elegido integra las cuatro áreas del lenguaje (lectura, escritura, escucha y habla)?
- 10) ¿Cuánto tiempo hace que enseña Inglés?
 - a. 0-1 año.
 - b. 2-5 años.
 - c. 6-10 años.
 - d. más de 10 años.
- 11) ¿En dónde enseña Inglés? (más de una opción es posible)
 - a. En instituciones educativas privadas.
 - b. En instituciones educativas públicas.
 - c. En institutos privados no oficiales.
 - d. En profesorados. (Especificar)
 - e. En universidades.
 - f. Otros. (Especificar)
- 12) ¿Dónde terminó sus estudios para recibirse de profesor/a de inglés?

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

- a. Profesorado. ¿Cuál?
- b. Instituciones no oficiales, Culturales, o institutos.
- c. Universidad. ¿Cuál?
- d. Otro. (Especificar)

13) ¿Qué certificado obtuvo?

Appendix IV: Data Matrix

S	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
1	a	0	a	c,d, e,g,h	c	a	a,d	b	a	c	b	a	a
2	b	a	a	i	c	a	a,b	b	0	c	b	b	c
3	b	f	e	a,d e,g	c	a	a,b	a	b	d	b,c	b	c
4	a	0	a	f	a,f	a	a,c	a	0	c	b,c	a	a
5	a	0	c	i	e	a,b,c	e	b	c	d	a,b,e	a	a
6	a	0	c	i	h	a,b c,d	c	a	a,b,c d	d	a,b	b	c
7	a	0	b	h	c	e	c	a	a,b,c cd	d	c	b	c
8	b	a	a	h	e	c	c	b	a	b	b	b	c
9	b	a,c,e	a	f,g a,c,e	c,d,f	a,b,c d,e	a,c,d	a	b	c	a,b,e	a	b
10	a	0	c	c,d e,g	c,e	a,b,c c,d,e	a,b	a	b	d	a,b,e	a	d
11	b	a,c e,f	0	c,d e,g	c	b	a,c,	b	b	c	b	b	c
12	b	a,d	b,c	c,d e,f	c	0	a,c	b	a	d	a,b,	b	c
13	b	a,c,e	0	0	c	0	a,c	b	b	d	b	b	b
14	b	a,c,d	a	a,e	f	a	c	b	b	d	b	a	b
15	a	0	b	c,e g,i	a,c,h d,e,f	a,b,c d,e	e	b	b	d	a,b c,d	a	a
16	a	0	a	a	a,c e,f	a,b,c d,e	a,c	a	a	b	b	a	a
17	a	0	c	f	c	a	a,c,d	b	0	b	a,b	b	c
18	a	0	a	i	c	a	a	b	0	c	b	a	b
19	a	0	b,c,e	b,e,g	a,c,e f	a	a,b c,d	b	b	d	a,b,c	a	a
20	a	0	a,b	i	a,b	a,b c,d,e	c,e	b	b	d	a,b,c	a	a

**Prevailing Criteria for ESB Book Selection in the District of La Matanza,
Province of Buenos Aires: A Case Study.**

21	b	a,d,e	a	c,d,e	c,d,h	b	c,d	b	0	d	a,b,c	b	c
				g									
22	b	a	d	a,c	c,h	e	a,b	b	e	c	b	a	b
				d,e									
23	b	a	b	c,e,f	c	f	a,d	a	0	d	b	b	c
24	a	0	b	c,d,e	d,e	a,b,f	a,c,d	b	b	d	b,e	a	a
				g		c,d,e							
25	b	a,c,e	b	f,g	h	0	d	b	a	d	a,b	a	b

S= Subject

Q= Question