Presenting Materials for Grammar Instruction: An Analysis of Current English Language Textbooks in Sri Lankan universities

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The aim of this paper is to analyse the use of materials for grammar instruction in two English language textbooks practised for the compulsory English language programme conducted by Department of English Language Teaching at Sabaragaamuwa University, Sri Lanka. In this regard, the study questions as to what extent do the materials used for grammar teaching in the textbooks provide learners opportunities to use the language meaningfully in real life situations. To answer this question, the study carried out a detailed content analysis of the manner in which the grammar tasks have been presented in the two textbooks used for the first year students: *Communicate in English Year I Semester I* and *Communicate in English Year I Semester II*. Qualitative content analysis was carried out as the methodology of data analysis. The results revealed that the manner of presenting materials for grammar in both textbooks do not motivate students using the target language relevant to the real life situations in meaningful contexts, as both textbooks provide grammar structures in a prescriptive way through explicit grammar instruction. Thus, the study concluded that the two textbooks should be modified in presenting materials of grammar; explicit descriptions of grammar rules and prescriptive mode with mechanical grammar exercises should be replaced by authentic materials for grammar instruction which can provide many opportunities to use the target language in real life contexts.

Key words: English, textbooks, presenting materials, grammar in contexts

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisa penggunaan materi pengajaran tata bahasa terhadap dua buku teks bahasa Inggrisyang digunakan pada program studi bahasa Inggris di Universitas Sabaragaamuwa, Sri Lanka. Pertanyaan yag diajukan penelitian ini adalah sejauh mana materi di buku teks memberikan kesempatan penggunaan bahasa pada situasi. Untuk menjawab pertanyaan tersebut, analisa isi kualitatif dilakukan terhadap dua buku teks yang digunakan mahasiswa tahun pertama: Communicate in English Year I Semester I dan Communicate in English Year I Semester II. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukan bahwa

penyajian materi tata bahasa di kedua buku tidak memotivasi siswa untuk menggunakan bahasa target yang relevan dengan situasi nyata, karena kedua buku teks menyajikan struktur tata bahasa secara eksplisit. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa penyajian instruksi tata bahasa di kedua buku tersebut harus dimodifikasi. Latihan tata bahasa yang eksplisit harus diganti dengan materi otentik yang dapat memberikan kesempatan penggunaan bahasa dalam konteks nyata.

INTRODUCTION

The textbook plays an important role in any language teaching programme, so it is the most essential resource for English language teaching programmes as well. Textbook defines the content and teaching/learning activities that will benefit teachers and students. Cunningsworth (1995) identifies a textbook as a resource in presenting the material, a source for learners to practice and do activities such as vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, listening, reading, speaking and writing. In a scenario like this, it is very important to have interesting materials within the textbooks as that has become the only mode which is continuously used by many English teachers/lecturers in Sri Lanka. In the Sri Lankan education system, the most common method of conducting English language programmes is adhering to a prescribed textbook from primary school to secondary school. English textbook is the major source of English language teaching and learning process in Sri Lankan universities as well. Thus textbooks play a vital role in shaping the minds of young people with the deeply rooted ideology that without textbooks nobody can learn English.

This study is based on the English language textbooks used for the Core English Language programme (CEL) conducted by the Department of English Language Teaching (DELT) at Sabaragamuwa University in Sri Lanka. DELT as a department plays a massive role in improving the English language proficiency of undergraduates majoring various subjects in the whole faculty –Social Sciences & Languages. The department offers a compulsory course for English language named Core English Language (CEL) Level I, II, III, IV commencing from the first semester, first academic year continuing up to the second semester, second academic year. The two textbooks prescribed for the first year CEL programme at the Faculty of Social Sciences & Languages are *Communicate in English Year I Semester I*, and *Communicate in English Year I Semester II*. In addition, there are two other textbooks prescribed for the two semesters of the second year: *A Handbook of English Grammar* and *Explorations*. However, this study deals only with the textbooks practised by the first year students, as the impression the students get for the English language programme during their first academic year should be positive, so findings will help reforming the materials presented for grammar teaching.

The evaluation procedure for CEL programme is carried out by continuous assessments (CA) within the lecture hours, and finally through exams at the end of each semester. In continuous assessments, students' oral performance in the communicative activities is tested while other three skills in English –reading, writing, and grammar are tested in the semester exam paper. Continuous assessment is an opportunity given to score marks before the semester examination, Within this evaluation system, continuous assessment proved very unsuccessful as it never helped students either to be proficient in speaking skills to gain marks that will be added to the final paper. With low marks for the continuous assessments, students find it difficult to get more marks for the examination paper which is highly grammar-oriented. The

most recognized problem with regard to CEL programme is students' failure in semester examinations and their ignorance of importance of using English in real world contexts.

The unspoken truth behind students' failure in this compulsory English subject is that their lack of interest and motivation in learning and using English language to communicate with one another. Thus, students' poor performance in using English language in authentic situations is yet another significant factor to be considered in this research as learning a language is not merely to pass tests but to use communicatively. The more a student is spoken to and speaks in English, the better they are in overall communication. The more they learn English as an isolated skill that is only practiced in a class and only tested in exams, the less effective. Transfer of knowledge to real world use, especially when we are talking about a "skill" is directly related to time spent practicing in real world situations. Direct teaching and practice is especially important in the beginning stages, no one would argue that, but authentic practice is what bridges the "gap" from theory to practice, once the basics are automatic. As a staff member with first-hand experience in teaching this compulsory English language course (CEL), the major problem of students' weak performance in semester examinations is especially concerned in this research in order to explore what kind of changes in the current textbooks can enhance students' motivation to learn English, not merely pass exams but to use English in their day-to-day activities.

In spite of current debates on grammar teaching and language learning, very few studies have analyzed grammar acquisition in language textbooks. In order to fill this gap, Fernández (2011) explored how grammar is taught in beginning Spanish textbooks. His study reveals that grammar lessons in textbooks are based on traditional approaches, however, there is a recent trend of using contextualised activities in the ESL classrooms. He mentions that, "The traditional and questionable controlled production-based approach to teach grammar may be giving way to a more theoretically sound approach, where grammar is thought to be acquired by the processing of meaningful input" (p. 165). Thus, through this research, the form-focused approach has been presented in a much more contextualized way, with meaningful input and sound research.

Asakereh at al (2019) have explored listening and speaking activities in ELT textbooks in Iranian school system with regard to English as n Lingua Franca (EFL) features. Through a detailed content analysis, they have elaborated that most of the selected textbooks do not provide a variety of situational contexts to engage in speaking/listening activities; this study encourages national and international ELT textbook designers to use authentic presentations and tasks to make students fluent in English. However, this study does not make any inquiries on the material presentation of grammar in the selected Iranian textbooks.

As there have been no considerable number of previous studies on English language textbook analyses in Sri Lankan context, this study focused more on textbook evaluation research criteria and principles as to examine in what way other researchers have developed frameworks to analyse teaching materials and content in language textbooks. The area of textbook analysis has been developed during these last decades providing several "checklists based on which a book could be analyzed in detail in order to assure its usefulness and practicality with such factors as proficiency level of students, learners' needs, course objectives, gender, and many other contextual factors" (Sarem, Hamidi, & Mahmoudie, 2013, p.373). Terrell (1990) proposed a five parameter framework to describe methodological trends

in Spanish language textbooks. This study explores grammar-focused activities and the communicative instructional approach to language learning in beginning level textbooks. For analysis of methodological trends the following parameters were evaluated: '(a) communication activities/grammar exercise; (b) contextualization/non-contextualization; (c) meaningful/role; (d) open/closed (divergent/convergent); and (e) interactive/non-interactive'.

Cunningsworth offers a principled and thorough approach to course book evaluation and practical evaluation criteria, with specific reference to ELT course books. Cunningsworth's checklist for evaluation and selection contains 45 questions, covering criteria such as aims, design, language content, skills, and methodology, as well as practical considerations such as cost and obtainability. He states that, "that careful selection is made, and that the materials selected closely reflect the aims, methods, and values of the teaching programme" Cunningsworth's theory which states that "the aims of teaching programme should determine the course materials to be used and not vice-versa" (Cunningsworth, 5, *Evaluating and Selecting*) has been incorporated as the major aspect of evaluation in this content analysis of the two textbooks. (Cunnignsworth, 1995).

The content of a course needs to be presented in a way that meets course objectives and learning outcomes. Tomlinson (2003, 2010, 2011) and Ellis (2014) outlined a detailed list of second language learning principles in 7 guidelines.

'Principle 1: Learners' attention to linguistic features of the input and exposure to meaningful and rich input.

Principle 2: Learners need opportunity to use language that ensures communicative purposes.

Principle 3: Materials should facilitate learner self-investment.

Principle 4: The content and methodology of teaching should be aligned with the goals and objectives of the unit lessons.

Principle 5: The learner will master what is being taught when they are ready to acquire second language forms.

Principle 6: Textbooks should take in account that the positive effects of instruction are usually delayed.

Principle 7: Learners need opportunities for interaction and output production'.

These sets of principles identify important instructional practices that ensure textbooks designers know language teaching and course design can more adequately maximize language learning and help learners internalize the target language. This list of principle approaches serve as a very effective framework to create new checklists to carry out evaluation processes of English language textbooks nationally and internationally. When language materials are presented with suitable instructions, activities, techniques, and procedures, learners are able to become fluent and extract regularities from the content presented. A range of activities should be presented to ensure meaning-focused input and output, and language-focused learning. According to Nation and Macalister (2010), meaning-focused activities are comparable to information-gap activities, short talks, conversations while doing a task, dialogue, discussions, problem-solving discussions, and role plays. On the other hand, language-focused learning involves working with spelling practice, blank-filling activities, sentence completion or sentence combining activities, drills, structure-input activities and consciousness-raising tasks (Ellis, 2010). With regard to evaluative Criteria of textbook designing Curriculum Principles,

Nation and Macalister (2010) have introduced eight components that are part of the curriculum design process: '(a) considering the environment, (b) discovering needs, (c) following principles, (d) goals, (e) content and sequencing, (f) format and presenting material, (g) monitoring and assessing, and (h) evaluation'. The course designer should be aware of what content the textbook is going to cover and the order of presentation that will be able to enhance students' knowledge of language. Lessons should be organized around vocabulary, grammatical structures, or written and spoken discourse for students to use language in communicative contexts. Course content can be based on topics, themes, situations, and tasks. The course designer also has to organize content related to the sub-skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Out of these eight components of curriculum designing, the fifth and sixth criteria have been adapted for my study as to analyse the manner in which the materials for grammar instruction have been presented in the selected English language textbooks in Sri Lankan context.

This study would be significant in the field of ELT due to several reasons. Though researchers/scholars have published new approaches of teaching English as a second language, most of these findings are dealt with how to improve communicative competence, so researches with regard to grammar teaching seem to be less. Scholarly studies based on presenting materials for grammar teaching either through textbooks or communicative events seem to be fairly less in the field of ELT. There have been some researches on topics like Communicative language teaching (CLT) and inductive language teaching with authentic materials, however, during my long-term experience as a learner as well as a lecturer in English language, I have not seen any of these findings have been implemented at school level or university level. It is visible that most of the English language textbooks in Sri Lanka are designed with traditional methods like Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method. Many teachers make use of a method called PPP (present-practice-produce) during their teacher education and they apply it regularly and faithfully thereafter. PPP is a widely spread practical application of teaching L2 grammar (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 4). This method of Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) is often found in most English language textbooks in Sri Lanka. Presenting new grammar rules is often followed by grammar exercises in the textbooks, however, production of language in terms of communicative events is rarely found. So the necessity to conduct a new research on current textbooks came into prominence as to highlight the importance of reformations in particular, presenting materials for grammar in the current textbooks used for CEL. So, this study would be a valuable source of evidence to future researchers and curriculum developers with regard to textbook analysis research and material preparation for textbooks.

This study aims to analyse the presentation of materials for grammar in two textbooks practised for the compulsory English language programme named CEL (Core English Language) conducted by Department of English Language Teaching, Sabaragamuwa University. In this regard, syllabus issues dealt in the textbook analysis research focused mainly on the materials presented for grammar instruction including language data and examples of grammar rules, the exercises and tasks used to make language production. Thus, in this research, my objective is to find alternatives to revise the materials used for grammar in current textbooks that can address the fact that learning English should be aligned with real life situations which automatically enhances grammar knowledge through constant usage of the textbooks in real-life contexts.

METHODS

A detailed evaluation of the textbooks has been carried out based on qualitative content analysis (QCA). In order to conduct this qualitative content analysis, several guidelines of textbook evaluation criteria introduced by previous scholars have been adapted as a method of analysis. Investigating the materials used for grammar instruction, the study examines the aims and objectives expressed in each textbook as to see whether they clearly determine the presentation of content and materials. According to the aims and objectives of the two textbooks used for this study, it is emphasised that communicative ability should be improved at the end of the semester. Based on this fact, the study incorporates two principles of textbook evaluation introduced by Tomlinson (2003, 2010, 2011) and Ellis (2014): (a) learners need opportunity to use language that ensures communicative purposes. (b) materials should facilitate learner self-investment. In this regard, the study examines whether there are sufficient tasks and activities in the textbooks that provide meaning communicative events and if the students will have opportunities to use the target language as a result of working with the textbooks. As this study mainly involves in qualitative content analysis, topics, themes, situations and tasks utilised in the content used for grammar were examined; content analysis is focused on how the materials for grammar instruction have been presented in the prescribed textbooks. Grammar acquisition and the pedagogical approaches to grammar teaching in textbooks were scrupulously examined to find out whether such grammar focused lessons inculcate motivation and interest in students to learn the English language. The reasons as to why many number of students get failed in semester examinations was addressed at this point in order to make necessary changes in grammar-focused lessons in the textbooks.

As this research mainly focuses on investigating the manner in which the materials for grammar instruction have been presented, the materials for this study are the two textbooks used for the CEL programme for first year students. The two textbooks prescribed for the two semesters of the first year CEL programme is named '*Communicate in English - Year I Semester I*, *Communicate in English Year I Semester II*'. The content of these four textbooks have been taken as the materials for the content analysis carried out in this chapter. For this study, two representative units from each of the two textbooks practised by first year students were chosen to examine the content of lessons used to teach grammar. Two units were selected as representative data for each textbook, since all the units included in each book follow a model pattern. In other words, all the units include the same sections, approximately the same number of activities, and the same types of practice based on a unit model. Accordingly, it is not necessary to take data from all the material since the same pattern is repeated in all the units of the two textbooks. The examples of grammar rules and explanations and also exercises used throughout the units of both textbooks have been extracted in the analysis as evidence.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Both textbooks follow the same design of material presentation and content formation. *Communicate in English Year I Semester I* consists of 5 units in which each unit has been categorised into 12 sections as indicated below. The third section on reading allocated in each unit is omitted in *Year I Semester II* textbook; therefore, each unit consists of only 11 sections.

Table 1: Allocation of language skills in each unit of the two textbooks

Year I Semester I	Year I Semester II
Speaking	Speaking
Listening	Listening
Reading	Reading
Speaking and Listening	Speaking and Listening
Grammar	Grammar
Humour	Humour
Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading	Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading
Vocabulary	Vocabulary
Listening (Song)	Listening (Song)
Writing	Writing
Reading Strategy	Read, Think and Discuss
Read, Think and Discuss	
(*Communicate in English Year I Semester I*)	(*Communicate in English Year I Semester II*)

This sequence is used throughout all the lesson units. At the end of the textbook for Year I Semester II, the appendix I provides a table of a long list of verbs in their different forms in order to facilitate students to differentiate regular verbs and irregular verbs and their different uses under different tenses. In addition, there is Appendix II as well which provides a Phonemic chart to improve pronunciation of students.

In both textbooks *Communicate in English Year I Semester I* & *Communicate in English Year I Semester II*, in every unit, there is an explicitly detailed grammar lesson which elaborates different uses of the particular grammatical structures in different sentences. See the grammar lesson found in the very first unit to teach Be verb in *Communicate in English Year I Semester I*:

Table 02: Presenting Materials for Grammar in Unit 01

Grammar
'Be' as full verb.
Present: **am, is, are**

       I am an undergraduate of Sabaragamuwa University.
       Supun is an engineer.
       The children are in the garden.

Past: **was, were**

       The play was very interesting.
       The students were in the classroom when the teacher came.

Future: **will be**

       Tomorrow will be Thursday.

Be as full verb (uses)

  i.   Be is used to give information about a person or a thing:

          Kumari **is** a lecturer in a university.
          Gold **is** a precious metal.
          Europe **is** a continent.
          The lane **was** very muddy.

  ii.   Be can be used to express mental or physical condition:

          He **is** very worried about his son.
          Sumitra **will be** miserable when she gets to know
          her G.C.E. Advanced Level exam results.
          I **am** not well.

    iii. Be is used to express age:

          How old **are** you? I **am** twenty years old.

          (*Communicate in English Year I Semester I*, p.9)

It clearly indicates that this grammar lesson has not been placed on an appropriate context in real life situations. The grammar lessons in all five units in each text book have been structured in this manner indicated in the above extract, so these prescriptive grammar lessons are followed by a large degree of mechanical language practice involving controlled activities with repetition and substitution drills. The following is an example of language practices used in Unit 1:

Table 03: Grammar Practise Exercises in Unit 01

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1. Fill in the blanks with am/is/are/was/were/will be
      1. They …………… very tired. They are resting under a
    tree.
      2. Yesterday …………. a bad day for me I hope tomorrow
    ……………… good.

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3. Why ……………. your clothes on the floor?
4. Who …………. that man with a moustache?
5. I …………. sick of eating the same food every day.
6. There ……………. only ten people at the meeting
yesterday
7. There …………….. heavy showers tomorrow.
8. My friends …………… angry with me.
9. I ………….. (negative) very happy about this.
10. Maithri and Kamala …………… the best of friends.
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(*Communicate in English Year I Semester I,* p.10)

This type of activities and exercises classified as mechanical practice consist of substitution drills and repetition of model sentences, which are used as essential techniques to memorize grammar patterns. So, real meaning is not facilitated by these activities. They are designed to practice the use of particular grammatical items. When the first year first semester, first unit in the given English textbook comprises this kind of explicit grammar instruction indicated in the above extracts, it reveals the presenting materials for grammar in the textbook creates a teacher centred ESL classroom. The manner in which the grammar structures have been presented in both textbooks follow this same style which promotes deductive language teaching/learning process. It is quite ironical to find the name of the textbooks as *Communicate in English*, which is the exact aspect absent in all the units. In each unit, though there are separate sections on speaking and listening in each unit, these skills have been taught in isolation to grammar, which is yet another issue to be dealt in future researches. In both textbooks, it reveals that the practice of sentence completion (usually with grammar activities in isolation) lacks authentic language negotiation. Another example can be found in Unit 2 in which simple present tense active voice model sentences are followed by the activity given below:

Table 04: Grammar Practise Activity in Unit 02

In small groups, study the above examples carefully and work out the rules for forming the simple present tense affirmative, negative and interrogative. Read out to the rest of the class and discuss with your lecturer. (*Communicate in English Year I Semester I*, p.30)

This activity promotes interaction with each other in the target language, however, discussing the rules for forming the simple present tense sentences does not include meaningful practice in authentic situations, so, real communication is not facilitated by these activities. Grammar in context is absent in all units in the textbook used in semester 1. Another example of an activity without context is extracted below:

Table 04: Grammar Practise Activity in Unit 02

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb in brackets.
i. Mihiri ………….. (like) pineapple but she …………………
(not like) mango.

ii. Our lectures...................... (start) at eight in the morning and
………………… (finish) at five.
iii. Those children …………….. (attend) a school in remote
village.
iv. At what time ………… you ………….. (go) to bed?
v. Punchihamy ………….. (sell) only fruits in his stall. He
………………..(not sell) vegetables.
vi. ………………. your friend ………….. (know) about this?
vii. …………….. you ……………… (believe) in astrology?
viii. A rolling stone ………………. (gather) no moss.
ix. Too many cooks …………..(spoil) the soup.
x. When ……….. you…………….. (visit) your friends?

(*Communicate in English Year I Semester I*, p.31)

In Unit 2, simple present tense passive voice has been structured in a very prescriptive manner without meaningful context. See the following example extracted from Unit 2:

Table 06: Presenting Materials for Grammar in Unit 02

Simple Present Tense (Passive Voice)
In the previous section you learnt how to use the Simple Present Tense in the Active
Voice. In this section you will learn how to use the Simple Present Tense in the
Passive Voice.
First let us see what is meant by voice.
Voice: Who/what serves as the subject in a clause.
Active Voice: The subject is the doer of the action.
Subject Verb object
1. Sri Lankans *eat* **rice** for lunch.
Passive voice: The subject is the receiver of an action or the thing or person affected
by an action.
Subject verb agent
2. **Rice** *is eaten* by Sri Lankans for lunch.
Sentences 1 and 2 illustrate the difference between active voice and passive voice.
'**Sri Lankans'** which functions as the **subject** in the first sentence becomes the
agent in the second sentence. (Very often it is dropped). The agent is the doer of
the action.
Rice which functions as the **object** in the first sentence functions as the **subject** in the second sentence. (It is the receiver of the action)
The verb eat in the first sentence is changed to is eaten in the second.

(*Communicate in English Year I Semester I,* p. 34)

Explicit description of grammar rules and structures has been presented throughout all the grammar sections in both textbooks practised for the first year students. Yet another example can be drawn from unit 4 which does not facilitate learners for self-investment in using the target language.

Table 07: Presenting Materials for Grammar in Unit 04

Present Perfect Tense (Active)
Affirmative
Has/have + Past participle
My uncle has built a new house. He will be moving into it soon.
The children have gone back to their classrooms. They are not in the playground.
Negative
Has not/Hasn't/ Have not/ Haven't + past participle
My father has not/hasn't built a new house yet.
The children have not/haven't gone back into their classrooms yet. They are still in the playground.
Interrogative
Has/Have + subject + past participle
Has he built a new house?
Have they gone back into their classrooms?
The following adverbs may be used with the present perfect tense:
already, ever, just, never, not yet, so far, till now, up to now
Uses
1. To talk about past events with results in the present. (Recent past)
The taxi has arrived. (It is waiting at the gate)
My brother has gone out. (he is not at home now)
2. To talk about an action that started in the past but is still continuing in the present.
    He has worked in that hospital since 1990. (He started working in that
      hospital in1990 and he is still working there.)
    I have taught the tenses to you for two weeks. (I started teaching the tenses
    to you two weeks ago and am still teaching you the tenses.)
(*Communicate in English Year I Semester I,* p. 81-82)

Perfect tense in active and passive voice sentences have been structured in a mechanical way through many examples; this explicit description of grammar rules and structures is followed by a series of sentence practice exercises as follows:

Table 08: Grammar Practise Exercises in Unit 04

Exercise I
Select the correct word from the brackets.
1. I (has, have) bought a new dress.
2. Menusha (has, have) gone on a field trip.
3. Saman (has, have) completed the report.
4. My friend (has, have) sent me an email.
5. The boys (has, have) put up a tent.
6. The dog (has, have) eaten the cake.
7. The farmers (has, have) ploughed their fields.
8. One of my friends (has, have) bought me a sari.
9. All the students (has, have) brought their English books.
10. That incident (has, have) taught me a good lesson.

Exercise II
Change the following sentences into the negative form.
1. He has built a new house.
2. They have done their homework.
3. The workmen have finished their work.
4. I have had my dinner.
5. She has bought a sari.
6. My uncle has parked his car in the garage.
7. The police have caught the robbers.
8. My sister has cooked lunch.
9. The students have swept the classroom.
10. The teacher has taken the children to the zoo.
(*Communicate In English Year I Semester I p.83-84)*

Exercise III
Change these sentences into the interrogative form.
1. He has applied for a job.
2. Nimal and Cassim have got through the exam.
3. All the students in the class have done their homework.
4. Sunil has broken the record for high jump.
5. We have completed lesson two.
6. He has lost his dog, Brownie.
7. Our teacher has given us a lot of homework.
8. Those women have made beautiful table mats.
9. All the students have brought flowers to decorate the hall for the prize-giving.
10. Ranjith has drawn a beautiful picture.

Exercise IV
Fill in the blanks with the present perfect form of the verb in brackets.
1. The bell ………………….. (ring). Go to your class.
2. My brother ………………….. (go) to a party. He is not at home now.
3………….. you ever ………… (meet) the President of your country?
4. I ……… already ………….. (send) you an email.

………… you ………… (not receive) it yet?
5…………….. the post man ……………. (come)?
6. Where …………… all the children ………….(go)?
7. Why …………………….. (bring) your English book?
8. Someone ……………… (steal) my chain.
9. He ………………….. (not eat) for three days.
10. I …………………. (work) in this office for ten years but I ……………… (not got) any promotion so far.
11. Why ………………….the mechanic ……………… (not repair) the car yet?
12. I …………… often ………….. (see) that man but I ………….. never……………(speak) to him.
13. Who ………………….. (mess) up this place?
14. The film ………………. (not start) yet.
15. Someone ………………. (take) my pen.
16. My uncle ……………… (deposit) a hundred thousand rupees in the bank so far.
17………………… anyone …………… (lose) a wristwatch?
18. My friend ………………… (not speak) to me up to now.
19……………….. you ……………. (complete) the project?
20. Who ………………(write) my nickname on the board?
(*Communicate In English Year I Semester I p.83-84*)

After this grammar practice at a stretch, the last exercise has been given as a 'write the answer' question which is similar to a comprehension passage question. Though it includes good questions regarding different real life situations, the weight given for actual use of target grammar points was not amalgamated with communicative events.

Table 09: Grammar Practise Exercises in Unit 04

Exercise V
Answer the following questions using the present perfect tense.
1. What films have you seen this month?
2. How many Sinhala/English books have you read this year?
3. How much money have you spent this month?
4. Which of your friends haven't you seen for some time?
5. How many tenses have you learnt so far?
6. How many times have you been to the zoo?
7. Have you been to the Colombo Museum?
8. How long have you learnt English?
9. How many questions have you answered so far?
10. How many phone calls have you made since the beginning of this week?
11. How many English books have you read this year?

> 12. How many places have you visited this year?
> 13. How many letters have you written this month?
> 14. How many emails have you sent to your friends?
> 15. How long has it taken for you to complete this exercise?
> (*Communicate In English Year I Semester I p.83-84*)

Adding more burden to students, another grammar lesson on adjectives is given in the vocabulary part of the same unit, so students seem to be very much exhausted with grammar exercises on filling the blanks and forming sentences by using the particular grammar rules. It is visible that there is no balance between various kinds of grammar instruction, practice exercises and form-focused tasks, so that learners cannot internalise different grammar points to make meaningful production in their communication. In units 3, 4 and 5 in both textbooks, apart from the explicit grammar lessons, there occurs more grammar under the vocabulary part. Therefore, the emphasis on grammar becomes too much for weak students. For example, in Unit 3 of *Communicate in English Year I Semester I*, there is a grammar lesson for present continuous tense in a detailed manner with all rules; in the meantime, there is another detailed lesson under vocabulary section on classification of nouns under the following subtitles:

> proper nouns/common nouns,
> countable/uncountable nouns,
> concrete/abstract nouns,
> collective/group nouns,
> singular/plural nouns,
> regular/irregular ,
> animate/inanimate,
> compound nouns

Though with many examples under each category of nouns, the manner in which the material is presented is not motivating students, especially the weaker ones. Even the exercises given do not motivate students learn how to use nouns communicatively as they have only to identify the type of nouns and just to do category of nouns of a given list: for example,

Table 10: Grammar Practice Exercises in Unit 03

> There are 25 nouns in this list of words. Identify them. Say what kind of noun each is.
> Use 10 of the nouns in sentences.
> fox chicken sing pretty young basin film army cattle fast some high
> pupil teach surgeon knife carve rupee flow went finger
> come night toy bring bush frock slowly write novel poem
> mason builder frighten bangle engineer singer say mad
> chalk stool peacock pour sit
> (*Communicate in English Year I Semester I*, p. 65)

When there is more than one lesson on grammar in one unit, students find it less interesting about the whole subject. Gap-filling exercises are followed up by an extra task

asking the learners to make sentences, i.e. put the words in an appropriate context. This is generally a fruitful way of checking if the learner really knows the meaning of a word. It is, however, difficult to judge how many aspects of the word are known by the learner, in other words, how many different contexts the word can occur in. So, lack of context is a serious issue in both textbooks.

In *Communicate in English Year I Semester II*, the manner of presenting materials to teach grammar is not motivating mainly because terminologies of grammar are highly emphasised than the actual usage of grammar points in practical situations. Even the exercise given focuses on terminologies rather than practical usage. See the following extract:

Table 11: Presenting Materials for Grammar in Unit 02

Clause Elements
Clause elements or sentence elements are the five building blocks with which we build sentences. They are: **Subject, Verb, Object, Complement and Adverbial**. Now look at these sentences:
1. The boy drank three bottles of coke last evening.

In the above sentence *The boy* is the **subject** who does the action, *drank* is the verb which refers to the action, *three bottles of coke* is the **object** which is the receiver of the action and *last evening* is the **adverbial** which tells us when the action is **done**. The adverbial can also tell us where an action takes place or in what manner an action is done.
2. The students went to the gymnasium soon after lectures.

In the above sentence, *The students* is the **subject**, *went* is the verb, *to the gymnasium* is the **adverbial** which refers to the place of action and *soon after lectures* is also an **adverbial** which tells us when the action took place.
3. The old beggar seemed hungry.
In the above sentence, *The old beggar* is the **subject**, *seemed* is the **verb**, and *hungry* which an adjective is the **complement** which gives us some information about *The old beggar*. A **noun** or **noun phrase** can also function as a **complement** in a sentence.
4. My best friend is Shantha.
In the above sentence, *My best friend* is the **subject**, *is* is the **verb** and *Shantha* is the **complement**.
5. My cousin is a very nice boy.
In the above sentence, *My cousin* is the **subject**, *is* is the **verb** and *a very nice boy* which is a **noun phrase** is the **complement**.
Exercise
Say whether the words underlined in the following sentences are subject, verb, object, adverbial or complement:

i. Sanjay is a clever boy.

ii. That boy is bullying his sister.

iii. The toddy tapper fell off the coconut tree.

iv. Ranjith has gone to Malaysia.

v. My uncle has built a new house in our village.

vi. My neighbour is a terrible nuisance.

vii. My brother made a beautiful kite yesterday.

viii. The police arrested the thief.

ix. The children are in the classroom.

x. My father helps the underprivileged children.

xi. Chandra is very efficient.

xii. The clown amused the little children at the circus.

xiii. The mayor is very popular among the people.

xiv. Tomorrow will be a holiday.

xv. My mother is preparing lunch
  (*Communicate in English Year I Semester II*, p. 25-26)

This extract is an evidence of poor presentation of the topic, 'clause elements' which does not provide any space for the learners to learn the language in proper context. In other words, these prescriptive lines about rules and usage of grammar structures in the given example sentences causes learning English in isolation; even the exercise given demands attention for terms and rules rather than real life use. Here the PPP method has been used in a very unsuccessful manner as the presentation of grammar rules are not followed by any type of practice or even language production activities; grammar tasks have not been formed to allow language production. This lesson in Unit 2 is followed by a series of patterns of sentences with just two examples as follows:

Table 12: Presenting Materials for Grammar in Unit 02

Basic sentence patterns.
In the previous section, you learnt about five clause elements. They are really the building blocks with which we construct clauses/sentences. We can construct different sentence patterns using these clause elements. Let us see how some of the basic sentence patterns are constructed with these clause elements.
Pattern I - S V
Subject + Verb (Predicator)
Dogs bark.
The baby cried.
Pattern II - S V A
Subject + Verb (intransitive) + Adverbial
The boy went to the shop.
The baby cried loudly.
Pattern III – S V Od
Subject + Verb (transitive) + Direct Object
My mother made a cake.
Ranjith started the car.
Pattern IV – S V Oi Od
Subject + Verb (ditransitive) + Indirect Object + Direct Object
The teacher gave her students chocolates.
Chandran bought his brother a bicycle.
Pattern V - S V C (Noun Phrase)
Subject Verb (link) + Subject Complement (Noun Phrase)
He looks a beggar.
Kanthi is a good dancer.

Pattern VI – S V C (Adjective)

> Subject + Verb (link) + Subject Complement (Adjective)
> The play was very interesting.
> Manel felt very sad.
> **Pattern VII – S V O C (Noun Phrase)**
> Subject + Verb (transitive) + Object + Object Complement (Noun Phrase)
> They kept him a busy person all the time.
> We consider him a terrible nuisance.
> **Pattern VIII – S V O C (Adjective)**
> Subject + Verb (transitive) + Object + Object Complement (Adjective)
> The judge proved the man guilty.
> I found his idea good.
> **Grammar Exercise:**
> Write two sentences of your own for the above eight sentence patterns.
> (*Communicate in English Year I Semester II*, p.26-27)

These two extracts clearly indicate that the manner of presenting materials for grammar might hinder the students' interest towards the subject. Thus, throughout the entire textbook, more emphasis is given on grammar with lack of meaningful practice and communicative activities. Most of these grammar exercises can seem to be artificial because of lack of context, so as a better solution, it is effective to use extracts of longer authentic texts to teach grammar. The analysis reveals that most of the lessons in both textbooks have been structured in a way that promotes deductive way of teaching. A deductive approach often fits into a lesson structure known as Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP). When teachers use deductive method of teaching, they first present the rules explicitly and then the learners practice and apply those new rules in various tasks. This results in bored and unsatisfied students who can produce correct forms on exercises and fill-in-the blank tasks but may make errors when they try to use the language in context. So the verb tenses in grammar exercises without context in both of these textbooks may lead students see that many unacceptable sentences as correct.

Discussion
The aim of both textbooks is to acquire grammar relevant to meaningful contexts. The content analysis of both textbooks enclosed the fact that this aim has not been achieved as both textbooks provide content to teach grammar in isolation. The two textbooks are named as *Communicate in English Year I Semester I* and *Communicate in English Year I and Semester II*, in order to emphasis the fact that these two textbooks are aimed communication if so, even the materials presented for grammar should be aimed for the communication. However, this aim of communication has not been fulfilled according to the detailed content analysis of the of grammar instruction in both textbooks. Today, the tendency is communicative approach to language teaching, learners need to have the opportunity to be highly engaged in the process of language learning through negotiating for meaning in communicative interaction with other pupils. According to Nation and Macalister, learners need opportunity to use language that ensures communicative purposes, in the meantime, materials should facilitate learner self-investment. So, inclusion of authentic communicative activities that could provide opportunities for students to try out their own language production in communicative contexts is a significant aspect that has not been considered in presenting materials in both textbooks analysed in this study.

We learn any language to communicate, not only to study grammar rules and pass the exams. Passing the exam becomes easier if the language is learnt in authentic contexts as appropriate language use is important in real life communication. In learning a language, learners need to have opportunities to think and communicate in the target language. To promote this kind of interaction, learners must be given tasks to engage in authentic situations where students can generate spontaneous language and experience the process of how language is used in communication. Both textbooks reveal the fact that there are no authentic materials sufficiently included to satisfy young learners.

Yet another weakness in all the textbooks analysed is too much grammar lessons with explicit rules. Learning grammar rules with a lot of descriptions hinder the students learning the language enthusiastically. In addition, many lists of words –verbs, nouns, adjectives – have been provided throughout the units without any proper contexts. Listing out nouns under different subtitles should not be the method of presenting the content to attract the students for the subject. Teaching grammar non-communicatively is a weak aspect in the two textbooks, so there will not be spontaneous language production throughout the first academic year. Lack of context and sufficient number of examples in grammar lessons is an issue to be dealt in revising the content of these textbooks.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the two textbooks reveals that lack of communicative activities is a serious threat found in the current textbooks. Furthermore, it reveals that inclusion of many grammar lessons in each unit in both textbooks is a reason to distract students from enjoying the learning process of English language. Most grammar tasks do not motivate students to learn the language for communication, as they tend to do fill-in the blank exercises without proper context. Free composition tasks were not included as follow-up activities. There is not enough guidance to use relevant grammar in meaningful contexts. The overall analysis reveals that grammar tasks in these two analysed textbooks are not aligned with the aims and objectives given by the author. The explicit nature of presenting materials and exercises for grammar creates a teacher centred ESL classroom which may cause harmful effects on students' attitudes towards English grammar. So, as a better solution to avoid these negative effects, the presentation of content and materials should be revised by replacing the explicit terms, definitions and terminologies of grammar with authentic materials that can induce students learning complex grammar points in truly communicative events. In addition, it will help students become more engaged in the process of grammar learning to use the target language correctly in the real life situations.

In order to make amendments to the current textbooks used for CEL programme at Sabaragamuwa university, I suggest that these two textbooks can include innovative tasks for group work even for writing, reading and grammar also. It enables lecturers/instructors giving more attention to students on individual basis. It is important to teach the language in an enthusiastic manner with a lot of group activities even for reading, writing and grammar, not only speaking and listening. There is another misconception among ESL textbook designers that only speaking activities can have group tasks. This fact was continuously visible in *Communicate in English* textbooks. Presenting materials for grammar should be carefully done in order to create team spirit in learning grammar unconsciously. So, another important

amendment that should be done is to the present text books is to create a combination of activities in a single unit without making a division of the five major areas of language with subtitles like 'writing', 'grammar', 'speaking' and 'listening' etc. Just a simple picture or a small dialogue can have numerous activities on writing, speaking, listening and also grammar.

English language textbook must be very colourful with lot of pictures. Teaching grammar to weak students is always a challenging task for teachers/lecturers. So, finding innovative strategies help them approach the students positively. Including these picture-based activities in the textbooks used for CEL programme would be very useful to motivate students to learn vocabulary and the correct use of language in the proper context. In the pictures, they can see the situation or the context in which certain words and phrases are used rather than reading grammar rules on a black and white pages in traditional grammar books. Inclusion of pictures and images to teach the language provides more space and creativity for lecturers to change their teaching methods as well. Pictures can be selected according to different subjects such as household activities/daily routine, school life, travelling moments, holidays, childhood memories and describing people/things. In my understanding, the best approach to teach grammar is to allow the students to speak based on the images they find in pictures.

As another important suggestion, I stress the use of information-gap activities in second language classrooms because it enables learners using the language they are learning to interact in realistic and meaningful ways. Information-gap activities help to develop fluency by engaging students in meaningful, comprehensible and ongoing communication in which they should negotiate meaning, use communicative strategies, correct misunderstanding and work to avoid communication breakdown. Information gap activity approach is an effective method to get students speaking spontaneously. So they should communicate with one another to complete the task successfully. Engaging in information gap activities, students do not have all the information that they need to complete the task, so they have to work in groups to acquire the missing information; once they learn the missing information by speaking to one another in the groups/pairs, they can fill the gap and complete the task. In order to prepare information gap activities, there should be a separate teacher's manual along with the relevant textbook as the guidelines for the practical task should be included in the teacher's manual. There should be the space and freedom for lecturers/instructors to select the materials while providing two/three sample materials to use in the classroom at frequent times.

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