

Teachers' Emotions in ELT Material Design

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Abstract—This paper addresses issues about the visual design of ELT materials. ELT texts are an important element in ELT teaching and learning. The purpose of this research is to find out teachers' emotions towards the available textbooks in the market. In addition, it also explores how teachers are experiencing positive and negative emotions in their use of ELT textbooks due to their visual design. Norman's [1]' three levels of emotion design' is applied as useful criteria for evaluating ELT textbook design. The result of this research hopes to identify the three levels of emotions design used as ELT textbook design criteria and how the current popular ELT textbook would perform. This study will have an impact on the design of textbooks for ELT materials at tertiary level.

Index Terms—ELT material designs, emotions, visual designs.

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching materials play an important role in teaching and learning especially at tertiary level. Teachers have to be very selective in choosing their ELT materials. Besides keeping in mind that their materials should help their students to master the language, teachers also have to ensure that the materials are interesting. However, despite having huge resources of books available in the market, teachers are still in a dilemma as to which is the best material to be used in their classroom. Many of the course materials used by the teachers at tertiary levels are completely faculty-made. Many teachers start their teaching journey as an exciting opportunity to educate others; unfortunately, after a while exploring or using these materials cause frustration. This is often due to having to adapt the materials, and the shoddy appearance of the text. It can be concluded that many of the teachers are not gifted graphic designers nor do they have the flexibility to spend more time creating a visually appealing layout for their materials even if they have the design skill. In this paper we synthesize a range of ideas on material design and also attempt to answer the question; do language teachers experience positive or negative emotion when using ELT materials due to their visual design? Norman [1] illustrates that there is a great potential to apply design into many different aspects or categories. Therefore teachers and learners can be motivated through the usage of visuals in designing their ELT materials. According to Norman [1] emotional design framework is suitable for product design which appeared to have great potential if applied to ELT materials.

The textbook is an almost universal element of ELT teaching. There are various textbooks being produced daily - locally as well as internationally to aid language teachers.

Furthermore teaching and learning will not be seen as a complete process until it has a relevant textbook. However do the visual designs of all the ready-made textbooks appeal to the teachers? Many of the teachers are frustrated because most of the ready-made textbooks available in the market fail to look at this point. This affects the teachers emotionally because they really have to struggle to make the learners interested in learning the subject. If these teachers are not emotionally positive about the visual designs in the textbooks then they cannot fully utilize them as a tool that helps them to organize their lesson both inside and outside their classroom.

This study hopes to discover how teachers are experiencing positive and negative emotions in their use of ELT textbooks. It will coincide with Norman's [1] 'three levels of emotion design' as useful criteria for evaluating ELT textbook design. Finally, the study hopes to identify if the three levels of emotions design were to be used as ELT textbook design criteria, how the current popular ELT textbook would perform.

Research Questions

Do teachers experience positive and negative emotion in their use of ELT textbooks?

How effective is Norman's 'three levels of emotional design' for evaluating ELT textbook design?

How would the current popular ELT textbooks perform, if the three level emotional designs were used as ELT textbook design criteria?

This study will have an impact on the design of textbooks for ELT materials. Evaluating materials is a complex process. We have to bear in mind not only construct validity or 'the extent to which a reviewer thinks that a book will or will not be useful to specified learners' but also how the teachers feel about it emotionally especially dealing with its visual designs. This study may have significant implications on the teachers' selection of ELT materials to suit them and their learners positively.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Donald A. Norman and His Three Levels of Emotional Design

Norman [1] states that it is necessary to have a cognitive behavioral psychology perspective to understand product design. He further explains in detail the three levels of what he terms 'emotional design'; the visceral level, behavioral level and reflective level. The visceral level refers to 'appearance' and 'gut-feelings' about a product. It illustrates the first impression of the product based on 'look, feel and sound'. The well-known automobile, the mini cooper is an example given of a product that scores highly at the visceral level, as the majority of the people who see this automobile gravitate towards liking it purely based on its style and flair.

On the other hand, the behavioral level focuses on a product's effectiveness of use. In other words the focus is on the product function, performance and usability. For example the Apple I pad is an example of a product that has overtaken the music industry with its high level of usability and function. Finally the reflective level illustrates a product's personality and its ability to connect with its user's 'self-image, personal satisfaction and memories'. Souvenirs can be the best example although they may not be generally aesthetically beautiful; they are able to trigger personal memories associated with the identification of the giver.

Circumplex Model of Core Affect

According to (Desmet, [2] ; Russell, [3]), 'Circumplex Model of Core Affect' is used to identify a persons' emotion when using a product. Positive and negative emotion can be organized through this model. It is organized around the graphical visual of a circle and this model places the positive emotions on the right side of the circle and the negative emotions on the left side as shown in Figure 1. This model shows that, emotions increase in intensity as one continues towards to the upper half of the circle, while decreasing in intensity while continuing towards the circle's lower half. This is a useful tool in allowing teachers to identify emotions when exposed to ELT materials.

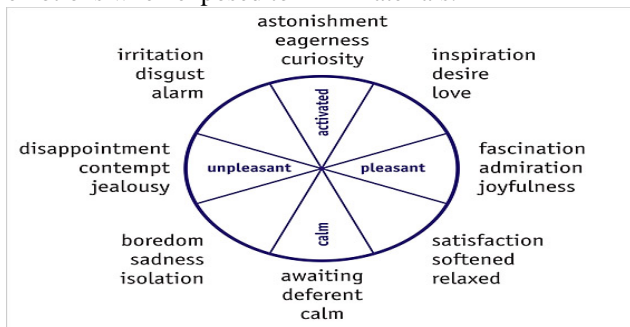


Fig. 1.Circumplex model of core affect (Desmet,2007; Russell, 1980).

Tomlinson[4] has examined the use and purpose of graphics in ELT textbooks. He stated that the important features in evaluating a material are clarity of layout, appeal of materials, impact of materials and easiness of use.

It is important to have positive and negative emotional experience as it gives motivation to learn; this has been as mentioned widely in the fields of educational psychology and educational technology (Meyer and Turner, [5]). Thus emotion does give an impact to a learner as well as a teacher. According to Gardner [6], the term motivation in language learning context is seen as 'referring to the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity'. Usually for language teachers, effectiveness of the ELT materials will indirectly motivate them to continue learning and teaching at tertiary levels. It has been stated that attention to visual literacy improves learning and teaching (Stokes, [7]); and improving visual design of instructional documents impacts student learning (Codone, [8]). On the other hand, other criteria are important as well to support language acquisition. Learning materials should provide exposure to English for authentic use in meaningful ways, promote such a use and provide opportunities for feedback (Masuhara[9] and Tomlinson, [10]). In short we can conclude that there is a relationship between positive and

negative emotions towards good and bad design of 'product and information'. Besides, there is a relationship between positive emotional experiences and motivation. Lastly, there is a relationship between good and bad design and motivation. Although visual design is vital, it is usually overlooked in the aspect of ELT Materials design. ELT Material design has great impact on the learning process, in regards to motivation and 'user experience'.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research was designed by using exploratory research model. 36 questions were administered to 50 English teachers (37 females and 13 males) at various tertiary institutions. 68% of the participants have 1 to 5 years experience in teaching, 20% of the participants have 6 to 15 years experience in teaching, and 12% of the participants have 16 to 25 years experience in teaching. Information on the subject group is demonstrated in Table I.

TABLE I: INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT GROUP

Variables	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	37	74
Male	13	26
Total	50	100
Experience in teaching		
1-5 years	34	68
6-15 years	10	20
16-25 years	6	12
26 and over	0	0
Total	50	100

The data collection instrument consists of two parts. The first is about the subjects' personal information; the second part focuses on the following four areas; 1) General attitudes toward textbooks, 2) Selecting favourite textbooks from the group according to different criteria (from the 3 levels), 3) Evaluating each textbook according to the 3 levels, and 4) Recording the primary emotion felt when using each textbook.

Fourth teen ELT Textbooks of various styles were selected for this study. They were divided into two groups as shown in the Table II below.

TABLE II: INFORMATION ON THE TEXTBOOKS

Number (N)	Styles
5	Conventional textbooks
9	Student book with a perceived stylized feature

The following is a list of the 14 books and brief descriptions of their unique characteristics:

Conventional textbooks:

- Rajeswary A., Khor E., Khatijah and Rema M., *Report Writing for Business and Professional Purposes*. Malaysia: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2009.
- Fong,W.C. A and Choy. T.O., *Easy Steps to Report Writing*. Malaysia: Marshall Cavendish,2006.
- Itule. B.D. and Anderson. D.A., *News Writing and Report for Today's Media*. New York: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2008.

Lesikar, Flatley and Rentz, *Business Communication Making Connections in a Digital World*, New York: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2008.

Mackey. D. M., *Send Me an Update. A Step-by-Step Approach to Business and Professional Writing*. New York: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2006.

Student books with perceived stylized features:

Forsyth. W., *Clockwise Intermediate*, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Solorzano. H. *North Star Reading and Writing*, UK: Pearson Logman, 2004.

NorehaTaib, AsiahJamil, Richard. C. Y and Noraizah Abdul Aziz, *Basic English 1*, Malaysia: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2002.

Ainul Rusmin Ghazali, Leong. A. C. K, Evanson. C.P., Karuthan. K., Marina Hj Ismail, Noorzan Haji Mohd Noor, Soraya Mohd Nasir & Nor Azni Abdullah, *Vision Focus on Reading & Writing*, Malaysia: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2003.

Wegman. B. and Knezevic.M., *Mosaic 1 Reading*, New York: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2007.

Khalijah Nur Mohamed, Harji. M. B and Siti Khadijah Abdul Wahab, *Traces Alpha 2 ; English for University Students*, Malaysia: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2006

Blac & Baky. M.P., *Mosaic- Academic Essay Development Writing*. New York: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2007.

Liz, Soars.J. and Falla T., *New Headway Advance Book*. UK: Oxford University Press, 2008

Applying the Three Levels of Emotional Design to the Textbooks

The three levels of emotional design were applied to the survey in two ways. First, teachers answered the following three questions when they evaluated each textbook individually:

“Is it attractive?” (*Visceral Level*)

“Is it enjoyable to use?” (*Behavioral Level*)

“Does it match my style/personality?” (*Reflective Level*)

Second, the teachers were asked to pick their most/least favorite textbooks from all 14 textbooks according to the criteria which matched the three levels of emotional design, as well as their most/least favorite textbook overall:

"Which textbook is your most & least favorite textbook?"

"Which textbook is most & least attractive?" (Visceral Level)

"Which textbook is most & least enjoyable to use?" (Behavioral Level)

"Which textbook matches your style/personality best & least?" (*Reflective Level*)

In addition, the Circumplex Model of Core Affect (Desment[2]; Russell, [3]) was applied to the survey by having the teachers pick one primary emotion they felt when using each of the 14 textbooks from the following list of emotions (adapted from the model):

- Excitement
- Enthusiasm
- Curiosity
- Happiness
- Satisfaction

- Calm
- Boredom
- Disappointment
- Frustration
- Stress

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey yielded a variety of responses. The results of significance were included. Table III sums up the general attitudes towards the visual design of ELT textbooks. From the ranking of the teachers’ responses, behavioral level features such as “easy to use”, “enjoyable to use”, and “clear layout” were ranked relatively higher than other features. Reflective level features, such as “stimulating topic”, “matches interests/hobbies”, “matches personality” were ranked next highest; visceral feature of “appearance” was regarded as least important out of all the features.

In regards to teachers’ emotions connected to the design/appearance of ELT textbooks the following opinions were determined:

88.9% % of the teachers agreed (strongly/somewhat) with the statement that design/appearance affected their learning. Most of the teachers liked Blac & Baky. M.P., *Mosaic- Academic Essay Development Writing*. New York: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2007.

76% of the teachers have sometimes or often experienced negative feelings because of the design/appearance of an ELT textbook. Most of the respondents stated Fong.W.C. A & Choy. T.O., *Easy Steps to Report Writing*. Malaysia:Marshall Cavendish,2006 gave them this negative feeling.

TABLE III: RANKING OF TEXTBOOK/HANDOUT FEATURES IMPORTANT TO STUDENTS

Number (N)	Features	Essential & Very Important
1	Easy to Use	92%
2	Matches Language Ability	97.4%
3	Enjoyable to Use	90.3%
4	Stimulating Topic	87.3%
5	Clear Layout	87.1%
6	Matches interests/hobbies	89.6%
7	Matches Personality	72.4%
8	Appearance	41.2

83.3% of the teachers have sometimes or often experienced positive feelings because of the design/appearance of an ELT textbook. A huge sample mentioned Solorzano. H. *North Star Reading & Writing*, UK:Pearson Logman, 2004 gave them a positive feeling. 93.9% of the teachers thought it was very or somewhat important to have positive feelings when using an ELT

textbook. Most of the teachers stated Liz, Soars.J. & Falla T., *New Headway Advance Book*. UK: Oxford University Press, 2008 demonstrated this feeling.

The following textbooks were the teachers' most and least favorite textbooks based on the three emotional levels, as well as the primary emotion felt with each textbook (according to the Circumplex Model of Core Affect):

Overall favorite: Wegman. B. & Knezevic.M., *Mosaic I Reading*, New York: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2007 (35.1% of teachers) Emotion: Excitement and Curiosity (51%)

Excerpt of teachers' comments: "Bold words, appropriate number of bold words. Good balance of color and black text, visuals are interesting and relevant."

Overall least favorite: Noreha Taib, Asiah Jamil, Richard. C. Y & Noraizah Abdul Aziz, *Basic English I*, Malaysia: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2002. (31.7% of teachers) Emotion: Boredom (35%)

Excerpt of teachers' comments: "No color", boring, no visuals, no designs."

Most attractive: Solorzano. H. *North Star Reading & Writing*, UK: Pearson Logman, 2004. Emotion: Enthusiasm (45%)

Excerpt of teachers' comments: "simple and easy to use."

Least attractive: Fong.W.C. A & Choy. T.O., *Easy Steps to Report Writing*. Malaysia: Marshall Cavendish, 2006. (22.1% of teachers) Disappointment (34.8%)

Excerpt of teachers' comments: "too small!"

Most matches personality/style: Forsyth. W., *Clockwise Intermediate*, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000. (39.1% of teachers) Satisfaction (66%)

Excerpt of teachers' comments: "interesting and relevant"

Least matches personality/style: Mackey. D. M., *Send Me an Update. A Step-by-Step Approach to Business and Professional Writing*. New York: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2006. (41.9% of teachers) Frustration (23%)

Excerpt of teachers' comments: "boring."

Most enjoyable: Liz, Soars.J. & Falla T., *New Headway Advance Book*. UK: Oxford University Press, 2008. (45.4% of teachers) Happiness (55%)

Excerpt of teachers' comments: "Good balance of color and black texts."

Least enjoyable: Rajeswary A., Khor E., Khatijah & Rema M., *Report Writing for Business and Professional Purposes*. Malaysia: Mc. Graw Hill Education, 2009. (38.3% of teachers) Boredom (44%)

Excerpt of teachers' comments: "No color", "It doesn't have any colors", "...only black/white."

The survey determined that among the 50 teachers who participated, Mosaic 1 Reading, North Star Reading & Writing, and Clockwise Intermediate were clear favorites among the 14 textbooks. However each of the three textbooks was liked for different reasons. Mosaic 1 Reading was favored for its bold words, the appropriate number of bold words and its good balance of color and black text; North Star Reading & Writing was praised for its simplicity and user friendliness; Clockwise Intermediate was well-received mainly for its interesting and relevant topics. On the other hand, the widest variety of emotions; "curiosity", "excitement", "happiness", "satisfaction", "boredom", and "disappointment" were more or less equally felt emotions of

the teachers. Also, textbooks were connected with negative emotions such as "frustration", "boredom" and "disappointment".

The following are some random observations from the data.

Student books with perceived stylized feature elicited stronger reactions than Conventional textbooks most probably due to design features available in the textbooks.

Student books with perceived stylized feature textbook design triggered stronger emotions (both positive & negative).

In regards to the three levels of emotional design, the following observations can be made:

Student book course books were largely favored over professionally-published textbooks. Behavioral level reasons, such as "easier to use" and "easier to understand" were cited.

Favorite overall textbooks and favorite books according to the emotional design levels were often different books. This means that one aspect or a combination of aspects of the overall favorite textbooks held a higher priority for the teachers than the qualities expressed by the three emotional design levels. This also means that the overall favorite textbooks had room to grow in regards to the emotional design levels.

Generally, in terms of fixed and open-ended responses to survey questions, the behavioral level was the most important to teachers; followed by the visceral, and then reflective levels. In other words, how enjoyable the textbook was to use was most important, followed by attractive appearance, and last, the degree in which the text matched the teachers' personality, style, interests, and hobbies.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this exploratory study, it was discovered that, indeed, the three levels of emotional design are different aspects of textbook design. The variety of responses for the individual textbook evaluation according to the three levels indicates this. The wide range of opinions in regards to the textbooks also confirms the assumption that every teacher is unique and has different styles, preferences, and interests. Textbook creators (both teachers and publishers) need to take into account.

In relation to the research questions set forth, this exploratory research does initially confirm that Norman's three levels of emotional design are useful criteria for evaluating ELT textbook design as indicated by the wide range and variety of responses when evaluating the textbooks according to the levels. Second, it was confirmed that teachers do experience both positive and negative emotions while using ELT textbooks (as expressed by the emotions articulated by the Circumplex Model). Last, if the three levels of emotional design were used as ELT textbook design criteria to evaluate current textbooks, the study found that no one textbook was consistently strong at all three levels. If textbook creators did take seriously the three emotional design levels, their textbooks might prove to be popular.

At the present moment, current published ELT textbooks

are deficient in their ability to fully engage teachers in an emotionally meaningful way. The world of product design strives to make "things" that are not only visually attractive, but pleasurable to use, and full of "product personality. Definitely it is not beyond the reach of textbook designers to apply the full-force of their creative skills and construct textbooks that score highly in all three levels of emotional design. In doing so, it is quite possible that teachers might learn to love their textbooks as much as they love their iPods.

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