

A Critical Analysis of Tasks in EFL Textbook: A Case Study of Sunrise 12

Saman Ebadi

PhD in TEFL, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

Ibtehal Morad Hasan

MA Student in TEFL, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

Abstract

Nowadays, under the influence of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), most global materials try to involve learners in the process of learning by introducing several types of tasks and activities whose aim is to promote learners' interaction. The purpose of the study was to extract and classify the type of tasks included in Sunrise 12 English instruction textbook currently taught to school students in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). This text book was addressed to advanced language learners. Analyzing the extracted tasks based on Nunan (1999) taxonomy of task types, it was evident that the linguistic as well as the creative tasks were the most frequent and affective, interpersonal, and cognitive tasks, respectively, were the least common pedagogical tasks presented in *Sunrise 12*. The results of this study could be helpful for KRI's English teachers to assist them to become more aware of different task types used in Sunrise English program textbooks to better select the most suitable ones for their purposes. The findings might also help Sunrise material developers in order to develop and enrich the presented ELT materials with more communicative tasks.

Keywords: Sunrise program, Nunan classification, Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI)

Introduction

The twenty-first century' dominant approach to language teaching is communicative approach (Savignon; as cited in Celce-Murci, 2001). The strong motivation behind this language teaching approach is learner's ability to communicate in a particular target language (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Nunan, 2004) since learning a language is considered one of the 21th century' most important skills. Given this prevalent approach, the English Language Teaching (ELT) stakeholders (teachers, material developers, syllabus designers and etc) practice efforts and concerns to prepare the twenty-first EFL/ESL learners to communicate successfully in different English language domains. From this perspective, therefore, classroom materials and activities are designed and presented in such a manner "to reflect the real life situations and demands" (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 8).

Language textbook, which is "play[ing] a central role in language classes" (Chappel, 2009, p. 141), is considered as "the next important factor in the second/foreign language classroom after the teacher" (Riazi, 2003, p. 52). Hence, the inclusion of appropriate and authentic activities or tasks would enable our prospective English language learners to function successfully in different domains in English language.

A task could be defined "as a piece of meaning- centered work that makes learners comprehend, produce and communicate in the target language" (Rozati, 2014, p. 1277). Nunan (1989) defines task as a piece of classroom work involving learners in understanding, directing, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is on the meaning rather than the form. Nunan (2004) made a distinction between target tasks and pedagogical tasks. According to him, target tasks refer to language use in the world beyond the classroom. Pedagogical tasks, on the

other hand, refer to language use that occurs in the classroom. More precisely, pedagogical task is viewed as:

“any structured language learning endeavour which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. Task is therefore assumed to refer to a range of work plans which have the overall purposes of facilitating language learning – from the simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem-solving or simulations and decision-making. (Breen, 1987, p. 23)

From this perspective, it is intuitively safe to state that exposing the EFL/ESL learners to the tasks and real-world activities is probably one of the most salient characteristics of today’s methodologies of English language teaching.

3

In the past, the main methods used in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) context were the grammar-translation method, the direct method, and audio-lingual method (Al-Hamash & Abdul-Rahim; Al-Chalabi; as cited in Ahmed Abdullah, 2015). However, the Ministry of Education in KRI launched the *Sunrise* program in 2007. *Sunrise* is based on the communicative approach (Macmillan publication; as cited in Sofi-Karim, 2015) integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing with an explicit focus on grammatical structures for Kurdish school students. Due to “its link to CLT methodology, Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) has gained considerable attention among material developers and instructors” (Alemi, et al., 2013, p. 43). Therefore, English language instructional materials, particularly textbooks, are enriched with the communicative tasks fostering the learners with communicative strategies contributed into the successful English interactions in the world beyond.

Given this premise in mind, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the ELT course book of ‘*Sunrise 12*’ (2007) currently taught in KRI’s student schools, in terms of its tasks according to Nunan's (1999) framework. To this end, the research posed the following questions:

1- What kinds of task types are utilized in the *Sunrise 12* English language course book?

Literature review

2.1. Communicative Language Teaching

Earlier views of language learning focused primarily on the mastery of grammatical competence (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Nunan, 1999; Richards, 2006). Language was generally approached as a system of rules and the task of the language learners was to internalize these rules (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Nunan, 1999). According to Celce-Murcia, language communication was considered and discussed in terms of four language skills. Hence, these “four skill categories were widely accepted and provided a ready-made framework for methods manuals, learner course materials, teacher education programs” (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 14). Learning a particular language was “under the control of the teacher” (Richards, 2006, p. 4), and the “priority for learners was to master the structures of the language, and, in this process, considerations of meaning were seen almost as peripheral” (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 9).

However, during the 1970s, the linguists theorized language as a system for the expression of meaning that different learners use in different communicative ends (Nunan, 1999). This approach known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is considered as a turning point in the history of language teaching methodology due to the creating of “the most pervasive changes to teaching practice” (Nunan, 1999, p. 9).

CLT is generally regarded as an approach to language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). As such, CLT reflects a certain model or research paradigm, or a theory (Celce-Murcia, 2001). It is

based on the theory that the primary function of language use is communication. Its primary goal is for learners to develop communicative competence (Hymes; as cited in Richards, 2006). In other words, its main goal is to make use of real-life situations that necessitate communication owing to the reason that “communicative competence is viewed as mastery of functions needed for communication across a wide range of situations” (Richards, 2006, p. 11).

CLT does not adhere to one particular theory or method (Grandl, 2008). According to Celce-Murcia (2001), CLT draws its theories about learning and teaching from a wide range of areas such as cognitive science, educational psychology, and second language acquisition. Given this assumption in mind, it is safe to contend that the learner needs and preferences are probably considered the main keys in any language program’s effectiveness developed based on CLT principles. Accordingly, “the goal of the CLT depends on learner needs in a given context” (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 27) since it may accommodate different learner needs and preferences in implementing and practicing a particular language program.

One might surmise that the CLT approach overlooks the formal aspects of language since the expression of meaning is the primary goal of this theory (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). However, it ought to be acknowledged that this indirect approach to second language instruction (Celce-Murcia, et al.; as cited in Rozati, 2014) views the grammar as an important component of language and makes the learners “focus best on grammar when it relates to the communicative needs and experience” (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 25). Put it in simple terms, mastery of linguistic elements is important, but the emphasis is on the process of communication in which linguistic mistakes are tolerated and considered a natural outcome of improving communication aptitudes (Celce-Murcia, 2001, Nunan, 1999). Therefore, the social context of the communicative event is crucial to providing meaning to the utterance (Grandl, 2008; Richards, 2006).

It is worth mentioning that the integration of the four skills in which the communicative competence takes place has an important consequence for the aims of communicative teaching. As these four aspects are deeply connected to each other, their development must be simultaneous (Nunan, 1999; Richards, 2006). Accordingly, CLT focuses on using authentic language as it is used in a real context in which students develop competency to figure out a speaker's or writer's intention (Sánchez, 2011). More precisely, this development is probably better achieved through authentic communicative tasks practiced in the womb of the language classrooms (Grandl, 2008; Celce-Murica, 2001, Nunan, 1999; Richards & Rogers, 2001; Richards, 2006; Sánchez, 2011).

2.2. Task-based Language Learning Approach

Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) was first developed by Prabhu in Bangalore, southern India, in 1987. Prabhu (as cited in Alemi, et al., 2013) believed that students may learn more effectively when their minds are focused on the task, rather than on the language they are using. Allwright (as cited in Rozati, 2014) was among the first people who argued about the effectiveness of tasks as an input to learning that asked for the need of language instruction and focused on the need for language use. This approach of language teaching deals with “the crucial role of experience for an effective learning” (Devey; as cited in Rozati, 2014, p. 1273) and the learning process is viewed a set of communicative tasks that are directly linked to the curricular goals they serve (Brown; as cited in Alemi, et al., 2013).

Littlewood (2004) considers TBLT as a development within the communicative approach, in which the crucial feature is that communicative tasks serve not only as major components of the methodology but also as units around which a course may be organized.

One of the main characteristics of the TBLL is the authenticity of both the texts and the tasks (Richards, & Rogers, 2002). Authenticity means that the texts used should not be manipulated or adapted and the tasks should represent authentic communicative situations of the everyday English-speaking culture.

According to Richard and Rogers (2002), another main characteristic of TBLL is the deductive way of working with grammar. The deductive way of teaching grammar implies that students have to try to understand the new grammar rules by doing some exercises and then compare their guess with the grammar explanations, those in the textbook or those given by the teacher.

2.2.1. Task vs. Exercise

The word task is referred to the special kind of activities carried on in the classroom (Sánchez, 2004, p.41). In the words of Bygate, Skehan and Swain (as cited in Skehan, 2003, p. 3), a task is an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective. In this perspective, task is viewed as “a piece of meaning-centered work that makes learners comprehend, produce and communicate in the target language” (Rozati, 2014, p. 1277). However, exercise is considered any activity in which the learners have no communicative purpose (Ellis; as cited in Littlewood, 2007).

According to Nunan (1999), “the essential difference between a task and an exercise is that a task has a non-linguistic outcome, while an exercise has a linguistic outcome” (p. 25).

Consider the classroom activity of *listening to a weather forecast and deciding what to wear*. Nunan argues that this is a task in which the outcome will be the selection of appropriate clothing. According to him, “this is a non-linguistic outcome, and success will be measured in non-linguistic terms (whether the person is too hot, too cold, or comfortable)” (p. 26).

The differences between the task and exercise have been summarized in Table (1):

Table 1: The Task and Exercise Differences

A task ...	An exercise ...
is directed towards learning a SL	does not have to be directed towards learning a SL
represents communicative situations from real life and as such it is contextualized	Is not contextualized and do not have to represent a situation from real life
can be defined as a unit within the classroom work	is never a unit within the classroom work
focuses on how to communicate (content)	focuses on linguistic elements (form)
focuses on multiple language elements and skills	focuses on a particular language element or/and skill
students are free to choose the way of carrying it out.	has a defined way to be solved and usually there are not many choices
entails at least some degree of unpredictability in the reactions	the answers or reactions to an exercise are use to be pre-defined
its assessment is done through observation and raised awareness	as a rule it can be corrected directly by an exercise key

2.3. *Evaluating Sunrise Program in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI)*

As it was mentioned earlier, KRI’s English language program focused primarily on the mastery of grammatical competence. Language learning was viewed as a process of mechanical habit formation. Good habits were formed by having students produce correct sentences and not through making mistakes. Errors were to be avoided through controlled opportunities for production (either written or spoken). By memorizing dialogs and performing drills, the chances of making mistakes were minimized. Learning was very much seen as under the control of the teacher. However, in the academic year of 2007-2008 KRI’s traditional “English language program was replaced by a new one entitled *Sunrise program* [emphasis added] which is based on communicative approach” (Rajab, 2013, p. 1736).

Under the new English language program the textbooks and syllabuses were designed and cultivated based on CLT to improve Kurdish English language learners' communicative competence through using real-life and communicative tasks.

This program has recently been under some very limited investigations due to the fact that most of the Kurdish students are not able to communicate appropriately in real situation of English world despite exposure to this program (Sofi-Karim, 2015).

For example, in a recent study, Sofi-Karim (2015) contended that *Sunrise program* failed to meet the students' needs for various reasons including sociocultural factors of *collectedualism* (a term that he introduces to combine the two extremes of collectivism and individualism), the dearth of English specialized teachers, insufficient English teacher training, deficient infrastructure, and inadequate communicative activities.

In another analysis, Hassan and Ghafor (2014) concluded that *Sunrise* was a well-designed and appropriate program for foreign language teaching and learning, however the teaching and learning environment in the KRI was not completely appropriate for applying this program. Furthermore, these researchers contended that more teacher training courses would be administered to familiarize the teachers with this program and the techniques of teaching it. Despite the fact that Macmillan publication reports on the implementation of CLT approach in *Sunrise program*, there is no study to further reports on the presence of CLT principles in these program materials, particularly the language textbooks. Therefore, the current study is seeking to investigate and categorized the types of the included tasks in the textbook of *Sunrise 12* taught in Kurdistan student schools based on the assumption that task-based approach is originated from the CLT (Rozati, 2014).

Methodology

Material

In this study, the student book of *Sunrise 12* (2007) as an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction textbook was evaluated. *Sunrise 12* is chosen from a series of student textbooks addressed to the more advanced learners. The *Sunrise* series provides each level of 1-12 of the teacher's book, the student's book, the activity book, and CD (Sofi-Karim, 2015). The student book of *Sunrise 12* is divided into 8 units. After every three units there is a review that offers self-assessment. This review contains activities for vocabulary, reading, writing and oral communication, as well as tests of grammar and culture. The grammar explanation of each unit is found in English at the end of each unit (except the revision units). At the end, the book is provided with a long literary story entitled as "*Introduction to the Literary Reader*" followed by key words relevant to the 8 Episodes of this long literary text. The textbook is also ended with appendices elaborating on some formal aspects of English language (such as affixes, pronunciation practices, etc.), pragmatic features (such as formal and informal use of words), punctuations, regular and irregular forms of the verbs. Finally, the *Sunrise 12* is closed with an English-Kurdish glossary. The latest edition of this series is from 2007.

Design of the study

The present study is mainly a qualitative study investigating different tasks types including (a) cognitive tasks, (b) interpersonal tasks, (c) linguistic tasks, (d) emotional tasks and (e) creative tasks across an English language textbook titled as "*Sunrise 21*" currently practiced for teaching English as a foreign language to Kurdish high school students in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). In the selected textbook, first, all of the included tasks were extracted and then manually coded

based on Nunan (1999) taxonomy of task types. The study is also quantitative in which the frequency and percentage of each type of task has been calculated and tabulated.

Nunan (1999) classified tasks to different groups according to the strategies underpinning them. He divided tasks into five major groups each one consisting sub-groups. As the whole, 20 different task types were categorized under the main types of cognitive, interpersonal, linguistic, affective, and creative. This typology was selected to be utilized in this investigation “since it defines each type of tasks clearly and gives examples for each one that makes it more comprehensible and practical” (Alemi et al., 2013, p. 49).

Cognitive tasks

Cognitive tasks, as a major category constitute eight task types as sub-categories including: classifying, predicting, inducing, note taking, concept mapping, inferencing, discriminating, and diagramming. Nunan (1999) also gave a definition for each of these task types.

- **Classifying:** putting things that are similar together in groups
- **Predicting:** predicting what is to come in the learning process
- **Inducing:** looking for patterns and regularities
- **Note taking:** writing down the important information in a text in your own words
- **Concept mapping:** showing the main ideas in a text in the form of a map
- **Inferencing:** using what you know to learn something new
- **Discriminating:** distinguishing between the main idea and supporting information
- **Diagramming:** using information from a text to label a diagram

Interpersonal tasks

Interpersonal tasks constitute two task types as sub-categories including: cooperating and role playing.

- **Co-operating:** sharing ideas and learning with other students
- **Role playing:** pretending to be somebody else and using the language for the situation you are in

Linguistic tasks

The third type of tasks is called linguistic tasks which in itself include: conversational patterns, practicing, using context, summarizing, selective reading/listening, and skimming.

- **Conversational patterns:** using expressions to start conversations and keep them going
- **Practicing:** doing controlled exercises to improve knowledge and skills
- **Using context:** using the surrounding context to guess the meaning of an unknown word, phrase, or concept.
- **Summarizing:** picking out and presenting the major points in a text in summary form
- **Selective reading/listening:** reading or listening for key information without trying to understand every word
- **Skimming:** reading or listening to get a general idea of a text

12

Affective tasks

Nunan (1999) divided the affective tasks into three sub-groups which are: personalizing, self-evaluating, and reflecting.

- **Personalizing:** learners share their own opinions, feelings, and ideas about a subject
- **Self-evaluating:** thinking about how well you did on a learning task, and rating yourself on a scale
- **Reflecting:** thinking about ways you learn best

Creative tasks

By creative tasks, Nunan (1999) means brainstorming tasks which encourage learners to think of as many new words and ideas as they can.

Result

Tasks in Micro-level

In this section, the frequency and percentage of different kinds of tasks in Sunrise 12 are presented in micro-level.

Table 2: The Frequency and Percentage of Task Types in Micro-level

Task Types	Frequency	Percentage
Classifying	1	.43
Predicting	0	0
Inducing	6	2.62
Note Taking	0	0
Concept Mapping	1	.43
Inferencing	7	3.05
Discriminating	3	1.31
Diagramming	3	1.31
Cognitive Task (Total)	21	9.17
Cooperating	23	10.04
Role Playing	15	6.55
Interpersonal Tasks (Total)	38	16.59
Conversational patterns	4	1.7
Practicing	36	15.72
Using context	3	1.31
Summarizing	0	0
Selective reading/listening	44	19.21
Skimming	16	6.98
Linguistic Task (Total)	103	44.97
Personalizing	13	5.67
Self-evaluating	0	0
Reflecting	0	0
Affective Task (Total)	13	5.67
Creative	54	23.58
Creative Task (Total)	54	23.58
Total	229	99.98

As the table (2) indicates, almost most of the tasks were covered in Sunrise 12. However, some of the tasks had not been included in the textbooks. Given the cognitive tasks, *Inducing* (6%) and *Inferencing* (7%) are the most frequent types of cognitive tasks but there was no evidence of both the *Predicting* and *Note taking* tasks. The frequency of *Discriminating* and *Diagramming* tasks were the same (1.31%) and there was only one task of *Classifying* and one task of *Concept Mapping* within *Cognitive Task* category.

The table (2) further shows that there were 23 *Cooperating* tasks (10.4%) along with 15 *Role Playing* tasks (6.5%) within the Interpersonal Tasks included in *Sunrise 12* English textbook. Therefore, the *Cooperating* tasks were more frequent than *Role playing* tasks in the analyzed textbook.

Given Linguistic tasks, there was no evidence of Summarizing task. However, all of the other sub-tasks were covered within this category of task. More in details, *Selective reading/listening tasks* (amounting to 19.21%) as well as *Practicing* tasks (amounting to 15.72%) were the most frequent kinds of linguistic tasks among the whole extracted tasks in the scrutinized English language textbooks. Skimming was another more frequent linguistic task accounting for 6.98% of the whole tasks extracted within 8 units of the analyzed textbook. *Conversational Patterns* (1.7%) and *Using Context* (1.31%) were the least kinds of linguistic tasks included in Sunrise 21 English instruction textbook.

As Table 2 demonstrates, the only sub-task of Affective Task category was *Personalizing* task accounting for 5.67%. There was no evidence of two other sub-tasks, namely, *Self-evaluating* and *Reflecting*.

Considering Creative Task category, almost one fourth of the whole of the extracted tasks included in *Sunrise 12* English textbook addressed to the Kurdish school students at advanced level. As the Table (2) shows, the total number of the Creative task was accounted for 54 instances (23.58%) which is the most frequent sort of task in the analyzed textbook.

Tasks in Macro-level

The Figure (1) indicates the percentage of the included tasks in macro-level in the *Sunrise 12*.

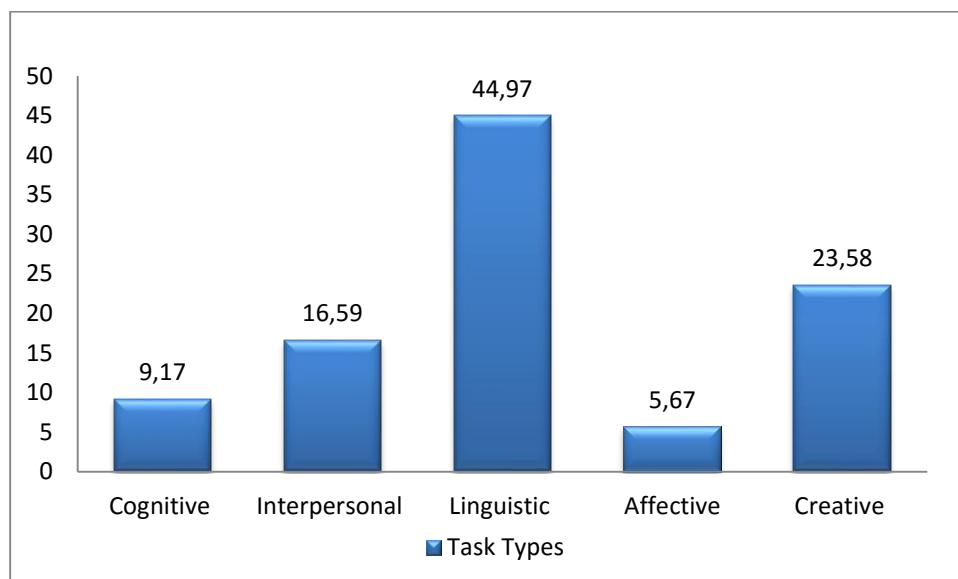


Figure 1: Different Task Types in Macro-level

As figure 1 indicates, linguistic tasks are the most frequent type of task included in *Sunrise 12* textbook of English language instruction in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). Creative tasks are the second prevalent kind of task in this textbook accounting for 23.58%. However, interpersonal (16.59%), cognitive (9.17%), and affective tasks (5.67%) are respectively the less frequent kind of tasks in *Sunrise 12*.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, we evaluated the *Sunrise 12* as an English language instruction textbook currently taught to the high school students of Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) at advanced level. The

purpose of the study was to extract and classify the type of tasks included in this textbook according to Nunan (1999) taxonomy of task types.

Analyzing the whole content of the *Sunrise 12* from a micro-level point of view, the results of the study indicated that, more or less, most of the task types were covered by *Sunrise 12*; however, no *Predicting*, *Note taking*, *Summarizing*, *Self-evaluating*, and *Reflecting* was found in the content of this EFL textbook (Table 2). Furthermore, the macro-level analysis of the tasks showed that the *Linguistic* tasks were the most and *Cognitive* along with *Affective* tasks were the least frequent types of tasks imbedded in *Sunrise 12* (Figure 1).

Predicting and *Note taking* strategies are sub-categorized within the *Cognitive* type of tasks.

According to Nunan (1999) *Predicting task* “results in more effective learning” owing to the reason that “the learners are adequately prepared for the new materials” (p. 187). Note-taking task requires the language learners to write down the important information in his/her own words.

Since providing and introducing the *Cognitive tasks* are more frequently common among intermediate and advance learners (Celece-Murcia, 2001; Nunan, 2004), it is intuitively safe to conclude that *Sunrise 12* textbook addressed to the Kurdish school students at advanced level might not be able to fully foster the Kurdish students communicative competence in English.

Therefore, it is required that this student textbook be adequately enriched with cognitive tasks to equip the Kurdistan English language learners with communicative competence owing to the reason that communication via language is more significant than just knowing the rules.

Therefore, it is appropriate that the other cognitive tasks be included adequately in the future editions of *Sunrise 12*. Our analysis further showed that, inferencing “as an extremely important strategy” (Nunan, 1999, p. 187) is not sufficiently included in this textbook (Table 2). This kind

of task provides the learners with the opportunities resort to their background knowledge in learning new language items. In fact, the adequate presence of this sort of task, particularly in advanced level, is in line with this hypothesis that “learning is basically making links between what is new and what is already known” (Nunan, 1999, p. 187).

In addition, our analysis also showed that *inducing*, as another subcategory of cognitive task, was not adequately presented in the securitized textbook. The insufficient presence of *inducing* task is probably due to the reason that in *Sunrise 12* the grammar aspect of the English language is presented deductively at the end of each unit. This manner of grammar instruction could be considered as a “notoriously challenging learning task” (Alemi, et al., 2013, p. 52). According to Sanchez (2011), one result of this way of teaching grammar would be that this may affect the self confidence of the student and therefore to make it difficult for him/her function in the second language outside the classroom. Given this premise in mind, the widely accepted methodology of teaching grammar within communicative language approach is that the grammar must be subordinated to the communication of meaning in authentic situations so that the language learners might be encouraged to induce or “refer more often to the context of the grammar point” (Alemi, et al., 2013).

Another important *Cognitive task* which has not been sufficiently presented in *Sunrise 12* is *discriminating*. This kind of pedagogical task enables the language learners to distinguish “between the main idea and supporting information both in aural and written texts” (Nunan, 1999, p. 188). According to this suggestion, it is assumed that these kind of tasks are probably presented to both intermediate and advance language learners owing to the reason that these learners are often exposed to the long aural or written texts in which a main (or some) idea(s)

is(are) often supported with adequate information. The insufficient presence of this sort of task in the student book of *Sunrise 12* may cause the Kurdish language learners of English not to be skilled in identifying the most important information in a text and thereby they might not fostered to be effective listeners and readers.

From this perspective, it is safe to conclude that the lack or inadequate presence of this task could be interpreted as a serious shortcoming of *Sunrise 12* in advanced level since the primary purposes of learning a foreign language are mainly fostering reading as well as listening comprehension skills (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Nunan, 1999).

The second category of task analyzed in this study is *interpersonal task* comprised of (a) Cooperative and (b) Role play tasks (Table 2). *Interpersonal tasks* make students work in pairs or groups to construct meaning. According to CARLA ¹(2016, para, 10), *interpersonal tasks* are spontaneous and require negotiation. Thereby, students use their ideas as well as experiences to reach agreement on negotiating the meaning using the target language. *Cooperating*, as an *interpersonal task*, is “particularly effective in language learning” (Nunan, 1999, p. 191) due to the reason that it motivates the students to communicate to each other in performing a pedagogical task. Our analysis showed that the presence of this task was almost satisfactory (10.04% of the whole included tasks; see Table 1). Accordingly, we could conclude that the presence of this kind of task might enable the Kurdish students of English to share their ideas and learn the English language with other students.

Role playing as another type of *interpersonal task* is considered as an important and effective strategy in foreign language teaching probably owing to the assumption that it has beneficial effects on the learner’s communicative competence and motivation (Raz; as cited in Alemi, et

¹ Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA): <http://www.carla.umn.edu>

al., 2013). Put it differently, *Role playing* provides an environment in which the students do not remain silent but rather may naturally speak in and listen to the target language (Oyabu; as cited in Alemi, et al. 2013). In this study, it was evidenced that only 15 instances (6.5%) of this significant task were presented in *Sunrise 12*.

Our analysis indicated that linguistic tasks (44.97%) were the most frequent than other types of tasks (Figure 1). This category is comprised of different tasks among which *Practicing* (15.72%) and *Selective reading/listening* were the most frequent than others (Table 1). In the words of Nunan (1999), *practicing* is a series of controlled exercise to improve particular knowledge and skills. *Selective reading/listening* task is a particular strategy that the learners utilize for key information without trying to understand every word (Nunan, 1999). In Nunan's view, this kind of task is of great significance due to the reason that it is "impossible as well as unnecessary to process every signal word in most listening [and reading] situations" (p. 192) in the genuine communicative situations.

Given the frequent use of *linguistic tasks* in *Sunrise 12* textbook, it is safe to conclude that albeit "the knowledge of grammar is essential for clarity of communication in both the written and the spoken form" (Alemi, et al., 2013, p. 53), this textbook would not be able to equip the Kurdish language learners of English to function appropriately in real communication domains since this textbook is consisted mostly of linguistic tasks to the detriment of other tasks (Figure 1).

Our analysis further showed that *affective tasks* (5.67%) were the less common types of tasks available in the scrutinized textbook (Figure 1). As it was mentioned earlier, Nunan (1999) divided the *affective* tasks into three sub-groups which are: (a) *personalizing*, (b) *self-evaluating*, and (c) *reflecting*. It is argued that adequate exposure of the learners to this set of language tasks would led the language students into autonomous language learners (Alemi, et al. 2013; Sánchez,

2011). Put it in simple terms, these kinds of tasks could probably motivate the language learners to make conscious decisions about what techniques and strategies they could do to improve their learning (Anderson, 2005). Therefore, the inadequate presence of *affective strategies* within the student textbook of *Sunrise 12* might not be able to foster the Kurdish language learners of English to reflect on their learning process. In other words, it could be concluded that the Kurdish school students exposed to *Sunrise 12* might not be able to “plan their learning, monitor their progress, or review their accomplishments and future learning directions” (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 8).

As Figure (1) indicates, after *linguistic tasks*, the *Creative tasks* are the most common tasks in the *Sunrise 12* and this can be considered as one of the main advantages in this EFL textbook. This is due to the reason that if language learners be exposed to tasks and situations in which they can produce something with the target language, they could readily move from usage to use phase in the process of language learning and thus the language they produce would be authentic (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Grandl, 2008; Nunan, 1999). According to Alemi, et al. (2013), this issue could be “more vital in intermediate and advance level of language learning” (p. 55).

Furthermore, research has confirmedly shown that challenging creative tasks could increase the language learners’ intrinsic motivation (Elliot & Dweck; as cited in Alemi, et al., 2013).

Our analysis on the student textbook of *Sunrise 12* taught to the advanced learners of English in KRI indicated that linguistic tasks were more frequent than other types of tasks (Figure 1).

Nunan (1999) believes that the application of some of these tasks will be used more frequently than others, “depending on the age and proficiency of the students, the skills being focused on, and the individuals learning needs” (p. 183). Given this premise in mind, it is logical that the authors of this textbook might further enrich this communicative-based coursebook with other

sorts of tasks. Accordingly, in advanced level of language learning, *cognitive tasks* might contribute into effective learning due to the reason that “the tasks requiring high levels of thinking ... will foster intrinsic reasons for learning” (Alemi, et al, 2013, p. 55). Furthermore, it is expected that in the subsequent editions of *Sunrise 12* the *interpersonal tasks* be also included adequately since these kinds of strategies make the students work in pairs and group work. On the other hands, learners working together in groups often indicate greater motivation, more initiative, and less anxiety regarding their learning (Celce-Murcia, 2001).

By and large, we may conclude that the existing tasks available in *Sunrise 12* might not sufficiently equip the advanced language learners to express their ideas in real life English communication owing to the reason that the other sort of tasks particularly *cognitive*, *interpersonal* as well as *affective tasks* are not adequately presented in this textbooks. Merely, the frequent use of *linguistic tasks* could not develop the Kurdistan language learners’ language proficiency at advanced level. The accuracy would be enhanced to the detriment of fluency. Therefore, in agreement with Sofi-Karim (2015), we may conclude that “the English syllabus *Sunrise* is not effective and fails to meet the needs of the Kurdish English learners in KRI” (p. 2). There can be no doubt that evaluating the official textbooks for learning English in KRI is a task of great importance to the future success of *Sunrise* English learning programs. Therefore, the future studies could investigate these textbooks in terms of pragmatic point of view. For example, one line of research may critically analyze the speech acts or the strategies of producing these pragmatic devices in this series of textbooks.

Furthermore, it would be very useful to discover and analyze the representation of gender (male & female) in the texts and pictures of this series of textbooks in different levels.

Still another line of research might compare and contrast the English textbooks of KRI's Sunrise program with those of Iraq Opportunities English program from different perspectives.

References

Ahmad Abdullah, B.M. (2015). Kurdish students' perceptions toward communicative language teaching at a university in Kurdistan region Iraq. *European Scientific Journal*, 1, 1857-7431.

Alemi, M., Jahangard, A. & Hesami, Z. (2013). A comparison of two global ELT course books in terms of their task types. *International Association for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media (IARTEM) Journal*, 5(2), 42-63.

Breen, M. (1987). Learner contributions to task design. In C. Candlin & D. Murphy (Eds.), *Language Learning Tasks*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

CARLA (2006). Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA).

<http://www.carla.umn.edu>

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Language teaching Approaches: An overview. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (Third edition)*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle

Chapelle, C.A. (2009). A hidden curriculum in language textbooks: Are beginning learners of French at U.S. universities taught about Canada? *The Modern Language Journal*, 93(2), 139-152.

Grandl, K. (2008). *Communicative language teaching in action: Putting principles to work*. Upper Saddle River, N.J: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Hassan, F.R. & Ghafor, O.F (2014). Assessing the suitability of “sunrise” programme to the Kurdish learners of the seventh basic grade in the schools of Erbil city. *Journal of Teaching and Education*, 3(3), 469-482.

Littlewood, W. (2004). The task-based approach: Some questions and suggestions. *ELT Journal*, 54(4), 319-326.

Littlewood, W. (2007). Communicative and task-based language teaching in East Asian classrooms. *Language Teaching*, 40, 243-249.

Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (1999). *Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Boston: Heinle /Thomson.

Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

O’Malley, J. M. & Chamot, A. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Rajab, F.M. (2013). English teachers’ perceptions towards using the English cultural elements in English language classes in northern Iraq: Duhok province as a sample. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 1736-1742.

Riazi, A. M. (2003). What do textbook evaluation schemes tell us? A study of the textbook evaluation schemes of three decades. *Anthology Series*, 44, 52-69.

Richards, J.C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rozati, S.M. (2014). Language teaching and task based approach. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(6), pp. 1273-1278.

Sánchez, O.R. (2011). Task based language learning: Can this add something relevant to the design of the Swedish textbooks for Spanish as a Second language? *An Unpublished BA Thesis*, Goteborgs Universite, Sweden.

Skehan, P. (2003). Task-based instruction. *Language Teaching*, 36(1), 1 – 14.

Sofi-Karim, M. (2015). English language teaching in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. *An Unpublished MA Thesis*, Webster University, Webster Groves, Missouri, USA.

Sunrise 12 (2007). Sunrise student's book 12. Beirut, Lebanon: MacMillan Publication.

Available at: <http://www.sunrisekurdistan.com/sunrise-secondary/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Sb12.pdf>