A Mixed Methods Study of Interchange 2 and Four Corners *2* in Terms of Learner-Centeredness

Narjes Ashari Tabar[1], Farideh Kasehgari[2]

[1]Department of English, Qom Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qom, Iran (**Corresponding author**).
narcis.ashari@gmail.com
[2]Department of English, Qom Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qom, Iran.
kasehgari.farideh@gmail.com

Abstract

The paradigm shift from traditional language curricula to communicative ones necessitates the (re)evaluation of language materials from the perspective of learner-centered pedagogy. The purpose of this study was to compare two English coursebooks (i.e., *Interchange 2* and *Four Corners 2*) in terms of learner-centeredness based on the criteria of the existing theories. For the purpose of this mixed methods study, a directed content analysis (DCA) was initially done to develop a framework based on the related theories for evaluating learner-centeredness of the activities and tasks in language materials, involving six subcategories (i.e., information gap, open-endedness, contextualization, authenticity, discursivity, and skill integration). Moreover, fourteen types of learner-centered activities and tasks were identified from different theoretical sources, which fell under the six categories of the learner-centeredness framework. To validate the framework, it was expert-wised. It was found that the directed approach to content analysis supported and extended the existing theories of learner-centeredness using the contextual aspects of the phenomenon. In the second phase of the study, the types of tasks and activities in the two coursebooks were identified and analyzed through summative content analysis using the researcher-developed framework. Finally, the quantitative data gathered after coding the corpus were statistically analyzed to check whether there was any significant difference between the two coursebooks in terms of the learner-centeredness of their tasks and activities. The result of Mann-Whitney Test showed that there was no significant difference between the frequency of the learner-centered activities and tasks in Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2. The findings of this study may carry implications for the language instructors, learners, and material developers.

Keywords: authentic language, contextualization, discoursed language, information gap tasks, learner-centeredness, skill integration

1. Introduction

Teaching styles have always been an important issue for teachers in how to hold their classes (Jones, 2007; Reigeluth et al., 2017). For many years, the teacher-centered curriculum has been dominant in classrooms, and teachers make all the decisions concerning teaching methods, language materials, and the different forms of assessment in this instruction. In a teacher-centered approach, teachers spend extraordinary time and energy during their teaching, and usually, they do not achieve a satisfactory product (Garrett, 2008). In contrast, learner-centered methods are those "concerned with learner needs, wants, and situations (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 91). As Nunan (2013) asserted, "A learning-centered classroom is designed to carry the learner toward the ability to make critical pedagogical decisions by systematically training them in the skills they need to make such decisions" (p.53). In fact, ELT methods and post-methods revolve spin around learner-centeredness (Hall, 2017; Nunan, 2012).

There are two main reasons why a teacher should incorporate learner-centered teaching practices. Initially, they motivate students to broaden their knowledge (Ellis, 2017). Second, in addition to the importance of the cognitive component, the social and affective components and their role in second language acquisition through cooperative and collaborative activities should be highly valued (Donato, 2016).

Weimer (2002) stated that "because we so seldom see independent, autonomous learners and function in mostly teacher-centered environments, we forget how effectively some individuals assume responsibility for their own learning" (p.15). Duckworth (2009) also asserted that teacher-centered learning actually prevents students' educational growth. In contrast, in a learner-centered classroom, students are actively involved in what they learn, how they learn it, and when they learn it. In the same vein, Brown (2008) claimed that learner-centered pedagogy is more suitable for the more autonomous, and more self-directed learners who not only participate in what, how, and when to learn, but also construct their own learning experiences. In learner-centered classrooms, the teachers provide opportunities for learners to think and analyze the activities, interact with their peers, and collaborate with each other (Doyle, 2008). As the learners familiarize themselves with the process of their consciousness learning, they depend on the teacher less and participate in interactional activities more (Doyle, 2008).

Regarding the importance of the learner-centered approach and the mutual role between the teacher and learner, Kumaravadivelu (2006) stated that "The learner's cognitive capacity mediates between teacher input (stimulus) and learner output (response). The learner, based on the data

provided, is capable of forming, testing, and confirming hypotheses, a sequence of psychological processes that ultimately contribute to language development" (p. 118). While learner-centered teaching is not new (see Nunan, 1988), the popularity of communicative language teaching (CLT) has made it more crucial than ever to find innovative and efficient ways to engage students (Senior, 2006) since "The success of teaching rests largely on the student's involvement in the learning process" (Murphy, 1999, p.365).

Overall. several studies have been done on learner-centered teaching and its benefits on language learning (e.g., Gelisli, 2009; Philominraj et al., 2017; Sudiran & Vieira, 2017; Wolk, 2010); however, there is a scarcity of studies on the evaluation of coursebooks from the perspective of learner-centeredness. Regardless of the existing bulk of learner-centered studies (e.g., Reigeluth et al., 2017; Starkey, 2019; Weimer, 2002), it seems that no studies have been done on the activities and tasks in language coursebooks from the learner-centered perspective. All the same, although the focus of language pedagogy has reoriented in recent decades from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered approach (Muir, 2018), prearranged coursebooks still organize the core part of teaching processes in the Iranian educational system (Khajavi & Abbasian, 2011). Furthermore, although learner-centered approaches have been more successful than teacher-centered approaches (Van Viegen & Russell, 2019), learner-centered approaches have not received enough attention in Iranian EFL contexts; teacher-centered approaches continue to rule most Iranian EFL classes despite the fact that they fall short of their main objectives (Hemmati & Azizmalayeri, 2022), and the learner-centered features of the language materials remain in the vagueness.

In most language classrooms, learner involvement is strongly affected by the language materials. After all, it is the coursebook that outlines the topics and provides most of the activities that language teachers count on in the classroom. Although effective coursebook topics have been described as "provocative but not offensive, intellectually stimulating but not too arcane, and popular but not bland" (Hedge, 2000, p.351), there is no guarantee that the activities chosen will align with the interests and backgrounds of every student in every classroom across the globe. Thus, in the present study, the main intent was to develop a framework to evaluate the learner-centeredness of the language materials, and also find out whether there was any statistically significant difference between the activities of Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 in terms of learner-centeredness. To that end, the following two questions were put forward:

RQ1. What are the criteria of learner-centeredness in the current literature on English language teaching?

RQ2: Is there any statistically significant differences between the activities and tasks of Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 in terms of learner-centeredness?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Learner-Centered Language Pedagogy

The concept of learner-centered learning has been around for over 100 years and it has not been the primary model of design in public education (Ahmed & Dakhiel; 2019; Kaput, 2018; Van Viegen & Russell, 2019). Dupin-Bryant (2004) defined learner-centered teaching as a responsive, collaborative, problem-centered, and democratic style by which both the learner and teacher control how, what, and when learning happens. As Kumaravadivelu (2006) opined, learner-centered pedagogists follow a form- and meaning-based approach and help learners practice and produce grammatical as well as notional/ functional categories of language. As Nunan (2013) declared, it is so important for learner-centered curriculum developers to be supported at the local level by teachers who have the skills and knowledge necessary to help their peers plan, implement, and evaluate their educational programs. Nunan (2013) stated that learners do not learn what teachers teach. The reason for this matter mainly can be found in a mismatch at the level of the learning process. The solution is a continuum in the learning process domain, which can help and lead learners in the direction of autonomy, and supply them with process skills for negotiating the curriculum by encouraging learners to identify the strategy implications of pedagogical tasks. In the same vein, Nunan (2013, p.96) categorized the different levels of language learners as follows:

Table 1

Learner-centeredness: levels of implementation in the experiential content domain

Level	Learner action	Gloss
1	Awareness	Learners are made aware of the pedagogical goals and content of the program.
2	Involvement	Learners are involved in selecting their own goals and objectives from a range of alternatives on offer.
3	Intervention	learners are involved in modifying and adapting the goals and content of the learning program.
4	Creation	Learners create their own goals and objectives.
5	Transcendence	Learners go beyond the classroom and make links between the content of the classroom and the world beyond the classroom.

In the same vein, Savignon (2002) outlined five goal areas, which represented a learner-centered communicative approach to language learning as follows: a) The communication goal area that represents the learner's ability to use the target language to communicate thoughts, feelings, and opinions in a diversity of settings; b) The culture goal area that represents the learner's understanding of how the products and practices of a culture are indicated in the language; c) The connection goal area that represents the necessity for learners to learn to use the language as a tool to achieve process information in a variety of contexts, out of the classroom; d) The comparison goal area which is made to promote learner insight and understanding of the nature of the language and culture; e) The community goal area which describes how learners use the language during their lives both in communities and contexts. According to Jonassen (2000), learner-centered learning requires students to identify their learning objectives and select resources that will help them accomplish those objectives. This suggests that learner accountability and learners' involvement are the fundamental components of this approach (Cannon & Newble 2000) and all students' actions have meaning for them when they follow their own goals (Pedersen & Liu, 2003). Overall, the primary learner-centered approaches in ELT are: addressing learners' needs by integrating language and content (Lyster, 2017), increasing students' awareness of their active role through tasks and projects (Ellis et al., 2019), and guiding learners toward autonomy through peer cooperation and communication (Karim, 2018).

2.2. Tasks and Activities in Learner-Centered Approach

It is generally believed that language materials and activities should be coherent and consistent with theories of language acquisition and development, principles of teaching, the current knowledge of how the target language is actually used, and the evaluation of materials in use (*Richards & Rodgers*, 2014; Tomlinson, 2010). As Thomson (1992) has pointed out, activities and tasks should be more interesting in the ways that learners interact with the language than the result of the language use. Therefore, tasks play the roles of authenticity and meaningfulness for the learners who think that what they are doing is controlled, valuable, and real activity. In the same vein, Chen (2018) stated that working on activities and tasks and sharing ideas may result in learning cooperatively and constructively with peers. As Tin (2013) stated, language tasks should help learners use language for a real purpose. Learners should learn to use meaningful context and communicate as they do outside of the class.

Davies and Elder (2004) articulated that teachers, school administrators, textbook writers, and publishers recognize and formulate the

needs of the culture. It is important to link language, thought, and culture in language teaching. Class time should be spent on practices leading towards communicative language use and activities that learners require to do in class should be what they will have to do outside. Kumaravadivelu (1993) articulated that a communicative classroom seeks to promote interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning. In other words, they should be encouraged to ask for information, seek clarification, express an opinion, and agree and/or disagree with peers and teachers.

Doyle (2008) also mentioned the necessity for students to recognize the written and oral language that they use in their intended message. Students need to recognize how others may react or make personal judgments based on their language. This process will help them to make a great contribution to their understanding of adult communication. As Kumaravadivelu stated (2006), language teachers must foster meaningful communication in the classroom by using information-gap activities, open-ended tasks, contextualization, authentic language, language at a discoursed level, and integrating language skills.

Nunan (2013) argued that an information gap task is a kind of basic task type in TBLT in which learners in pairs, know related but different pieces of information. Information gap activities are used in second-language classrooms. As Richards and Schmidt (2010) explained information gap activities as an information which is done by some learners in a group of two or more persons or even between learners and their teachers. In the information gap, the learners may act more communicative rather than mechanical and artificial. Communicative language teaching enhances real communication between students.

Tin (2013) also defined information-gap or opinion-gap tasks as ones in which students have different pieces of information and in the process of this task should connect the information they have through communication. Information gap tasks can also be found in many free tasks, for example in the situation that learners want to use language to talk about familiar topics. In such tasks, learners use language to present known meaning part to their interlocutors who do not know that information.

Moreover, an open-ended task or choice of response is one type of different types of test items, which Richards and Schmidt (2010) presented as a free response item, also an open-ended response, "one in which the test taker is free to answer a question as he or she wishes without having to choose from among alternatives provided" (p. 592). As Nunan (2013) stated, an open-ended task can be answered with no limitation in other words, there is no single correct answer in an open-ended and it is recommended to use for advanced

level, whereas in a closed task there is a single correct answer or a limited number of correct answers.

Nunan (2013) also explained that if learners read a text on the topic of habits, they may be required to have an open-ended discussion on the topic of bad habits. Chinn et al. (2001) stated that open-ended questions are presented in a way that has no single correct answer and students can answer them in a number of different ways. Teachers typically are eager for learners answer to open-ended questions. In such tasks, they do not evaluate the answers as right or wrong. The increasing number of open-ended questions at higher levels indicates a partial shift in control over topics from teacher to student.

According to Richards and Schmidt (2010), contextualization which can be lexical or grammatical, provides information that can be used to understand the meaning of an item. In spoken context, it involves the verbal, paralinguistic, and non-verbal signs that help speakers understand the full meaning of speech of the speakers in context. Furthermore, Moltz (2010) considered contextualization helps with deep learning which is a combination of ideas and concepts across courses. If the target language takes place in a clear and realistic situation, contextualization may make the learning process profound, objective, and meaningful. In the classroom, contextualization can be used in a new word, or in a telephone role-play to practice functional language.

Klein and Samuels (2010) declared that writing to learn and writing across the curriculum are the other types of contextualization that are recommended to teachers appoint writing tasks to promote subject-area knowledge. Ellis (1994) pointed out that contextualization strategies are effective for learners who are at a fair level of second language knowledge. In the contextual approach, the role of learners is life and death. Learners are convinced to use the language creatively and collaboratively. The teachers emphasize some strategies like clarifying instruction goals, stressing their own preferred strategies, and encouraging the use of language in and outside the class to make a superb opportunity for language learners.

Gilmore (2007) defined, authentic language input as a kind of material that carries a real message and is created by a real speaker or writer for a real audience. In other words, authentic language materials are spoken or written language materials that have been produced in the field of real communication and produced outside of the classroom not for the purpose of language teaching (Nunan, 1999). "Texts which are taken from newspapers, magazines, etc., and tapes of natural speech taken from ordinary radio or television programs, etc., are called authentic materials. It is argued that these are preferred classroom

resources since they illustrate authentic language use" (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 43).

Richards and Schmidt (2010) opined that in the language teaching field, there is a difference between text material and authentic material because both of them are made for different purposes. Text in materials that have been specially prepared to practice specific teaching purposes and the texts and tapes which have been taken from real-world sources such as the mass media, are called authentic materials.

Searle (2002) mentioned that there are only four types of discursive goals that speakers can utilize by conversing: descriptive, deliberative, declarative, and expressive goals, each of which corresponds to others to fit between words and things. Searle (2002) defined the four goals of discourses and stated that how and when they may happen. The discursive goals are with the words-to-things that describe what is happening in the world, such as news, public statements, memoirs, forecasts, theoretical debates, confidences, and interviews. The deliberative discourses are with the things-to-words that deliberate goals that occur in future actions in which should accomplish a commitment in the world, such as negotiations, bargaining sessions, peace talks, discussions aiming at a friendly settlement, contracts, bets, sermons, and auctions. Declaratory discourses transfer the world by doing what one says. Such as official declarations like inaugural addresses, licenses, amnesties, testaments, discourses held in ceremonies of baptism, and judgments at court. Expressive discourses that express common attitudes of their speakers involve the exchange of greetings, welcomes, eulogies, cheers and boos.

Moreover, Richards and Schmidt (2010) defined classroom discourse, as the type of language used in classroom situations. Because of the special social roles that students and teachers have in classrooms and the kinds of activities they usually carry out there, discourse is often different in form and function from language used in other situations. For example, teachers like to answer a discourse structure with the initiation, response, and evaluation pattern. The units such as paragraphs are considered as examples of discourse and the field of discourse is related to events or what is being talked about. Nunan (2013) stated that tasks provide opportunities for learners to practice the key grammar and vocabulary in real-world texts just as in authentic communicative situations. Tasks also develop the skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in an integrated way. They make situations for learners to practice cooperating with other learners and with their teachers to creative use of the language they have learned.

2.2. Empirical Studies

Research on learner-centered materials in language classrooms is still dearth as it is thought that the teacher-centered method of teaching English is the predominant teaching style. All the same, Badjadi (2020) investigated the ways in which university instructors have adapted learner-centered education to the teaching of second languages. In doing so, a random sample of 128 instructors received a questionnaire and were interviewed. More crucially, by connecting the conceptual underpinnings of learner-centered education to teachers' views and practices within a specific setting, the analysis of qualitative interview data presented a contextualized framework.

Marwan (2017) conducted a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews and observation. There were twenty-five information technology students and their teachers in the sample. It was evident that using learner-centered pedagogy significantly improved learning, especially speaking. Additionally, the use of learner-centered pedagogy resulted in a classroom environment that was more expressive, appealing, and independent.

Lak et al. (2017) conducted research to determine how the learner-centered versus teacher-centered approaches affected the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL students. They came to the conclusion that the growth of Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension performance was positively impacted by learner-centered and teacher-centered training. However, it was shown that in order to improve the reading comprehension skills of Iranian EFL learners, learner-centered teaching was more effective than teacher-centered education.

Sudiran and Vieira (2017) reported on a small-scale qualitative study that was conducted as part of a university program that trains secondary school English language instructors. The program includes learner-centered materials design and implementation to examine the benefits and drawbacks of this approach to professional learning and autonomy. Interviews, classroom observations, and practicum portfolio analysis were used to gather data. The findings show that while there are obstacles related to their prior experiences, the unpredictable nature of the practice, and the prevailing pedagogical cultures in schools, trainees believe in and work toward developing learner-centered resources and autonomy-oriented teaching. For novice teachers, learner-centered teaching seemed to be an important but difficult activity that needed a supervisor's support.

Arroitia and Marquez (2014) investigated the focus of authenticity texts in textbooks for advanced students of English at B2 and C1 levels, according to the Common European Framework of Reference. For this study, a sample

of 60 texts used in six English textbooks from several prestigious publishing houses, drawing upon ten texts per book, were selected. The aim of this study was to examine whether the authentic texts selected in ELT textbooks meet a number of requirements in relation to their authenticity. The results showed that they were mostly descriptive or expository, representing British English variety.

Roshan (2014) studied a comparative critical evaluation of the New Interchange Intro and New Headway Pre-intermediate series. He employed in EFL/EFL contexts and some teaching experiences that teachers obtained from teaching these books in the context of Iran. The evaluation is based on, at first cultural and ideological and secondly, assumptions about language, language learning, and best practices. Findings revealed that both New Interchange and New Headway texts reflect ideological and cultural assumptions through their focus on the US and UK way of life respectively. In the field of language, the focus of the two books is both on form and meaning and the grammar is inductive and implicit.

Mcconachy (2009) explored the reasons for ignoring the role of sociocultural context in dialogues and dialogue-related activities using examples of dialogues from the New Interchange series. Many contemporary commercial English language textbooks were utilized as examples. This essay aimed to illustrate the ways in which this neglect materialized before making some recommendations for educators. It was found that in order to foster sociocultural meta-awareness, teachers may need to become more conscious of the overall significance of sociocultural context.

3. Method

3.1. Design

This study followed a design with two different methods: directed content analysis (DCA)and summative content analysis (SCA) (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). DCA was employed to analyze the extent of learner-centeredness in English language coursebooks. The approach to content analysis is used when the existing theories are to be extended or a new theoretical framework is going to be developed (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Since a theoretical framework for learner-centered activities and tasks was available in the literature, this approach to content analysis was adopted. This framework was developed to provide clear definitions, examples, and coding guidelines for every deductive category to specify the precise conditions in which a text can be assigned a category (Mayring, 2000). Then, SCA was run to identify and analyze the learner-centered activities and tasks in the contents

of two English coursebooks in terms of the framework developed through DCA. Finally, the researcher quantified the SCA data by counting the frequency of the types of learner-centered tasks and activities (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) to run inferential statistics beyond presenting descriptive data.

3.2. The Corpus of the Study

To carry out this research, Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 were selected as the corpus of the study to gather the required data. The first selection criterion was that these two coursebooks have a clear communicative approach. The second was that they have been developed based on the common European framework of reference (CEFR); therefore, their language proficiency levels are homogenous. Finally, the other selection criteria were their recency and prevalence in language institutes in Iran and across the world as language materials. According to Richards (2017), the Interchange series is a four-level series for adult and young-adult learners of English learners from the beginning to the high-intermediate levels. The series delivers a flexible unit structure and easy-to-use digital support, giving teachers the tools that they need, and empowering students to achieve their goals. Interchange 2 includes eight units. Every unit contains two cycles, each of which has a specific topic, grammar point, and function. The units contain a variety of exercises, including a snapshot, conversation, perspectives, grammar focus, pronunciation, discussion, word power, listening, writing, reading, and Interchange activity. The sequence of these exercises is contrived in dissimilar locations so the arrangement of exercises differs from unit to unit.

According to Richards and Bohlke (2012), Four Corners is a four-level communicative series, published by Cambridge University Press. The Four Corners series is informed by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and takes students from the A1 level (true beginner) through to a strong B1 level (mid-intermediate). Putting practical outcomes at the heart of its syllabus ensures that the language and situations covered do prepare students for life outside the classroom.

Four Corners combines effective communicative methodology and a practical "can-do" approach, giving students the language and confidence that they need to communicate accurately and fluently in English. Can-do statements mapped to the Common European Framework of Reference provide benchmarks to measure students' progress. Designed for A2 level, Four Corners 2 includes twelve units. Each unit contains nine pages and four lessons: A, B, C, and D. Part A consists of vocabulary, language in context, grammar, speaking, keep talking and sometimes listening and pronunciation are added to them. Part B includes interactions, pronunciation, listening, and

speaking. Part C includes vocabulary, conversation, grammar, speaking, keep talking, and sometimes pronunciation is added to them. Part D consists of reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Each part of the unit has its learning outcome and culminates in a personalized speaking activity. It follows the American accent. Each unit ends with a wrap-up page that consolidates the vocabulary, grammar, and functional language from the unit and encourages students to use different sources such as the internet, websites, and TV shows from the real world to learn more about a topic of interest.

3.3. Instrument

A framework for analyzing the extent of learner-centeredness in the English coursebooks was developed through DCA (Figure 1). To that end, the theoretical literature on learner-centered language pedagogy was deeply studied (i.e., Doyle, 2008; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Nunan, 1999, 2013; Richards & Schmidt, 2010; Searle, 2002). Then the clear definitions of the underlying category of this concept were identified. Moreover, the types of each underlying category (i.e., information gap, open-endedness, contextualization, authenticity, discursivity, and skill integration) were also found in the literature with their examples as guidelines for every deductive category (Table 3). Moreover, to enhance the validity of the deduced framework, two experts were asked to help validate the framework. Both experts, who were MA graduates in English language teaching, worked as the teachers of English language and had taught both coursebooks (i.e., Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2) at language institutes in Iran.

3.4. Procedure

The researcher aimed to investigate the learner-centeredness of the tasks and activities of the two corpora of this study. Initially, a framework was developed using a DCA method. To that end, the important concepts were identified and selected as initial coding categories based on the existing theories of learner-centered language pedagogy (i.e., Doyle, 2008; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Nunan, 1999, 2013; Richards & Schmidt, 2010; Searle, 2002). Next, the preexisting theories were used to determine the operational definitions for the types of each category. Then, the activities and tasks of the corpus of the study (i.e., Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2) were coded using the researcher-developed framework. After that, the codes were collected and listed using SCA. Finally, the coded quantitative data were fed into a statistical software and subjected to descriptive and inferential analyses.

3.5. Data analysis

Initially, the DCA or deductive category application was employed (Figure 1). It constituted a general framework for identifying and analyzing the learner-centeredness in two corpora of the study. Then, the quantitative data gathered through SCA of the activities and tasks of Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. To compare the mean ranks of the categories of the learner-centered framework, the Man-Whitney Test was employed.

Figure 1

Step Model of Deductive category Application (Mayring, 2000)
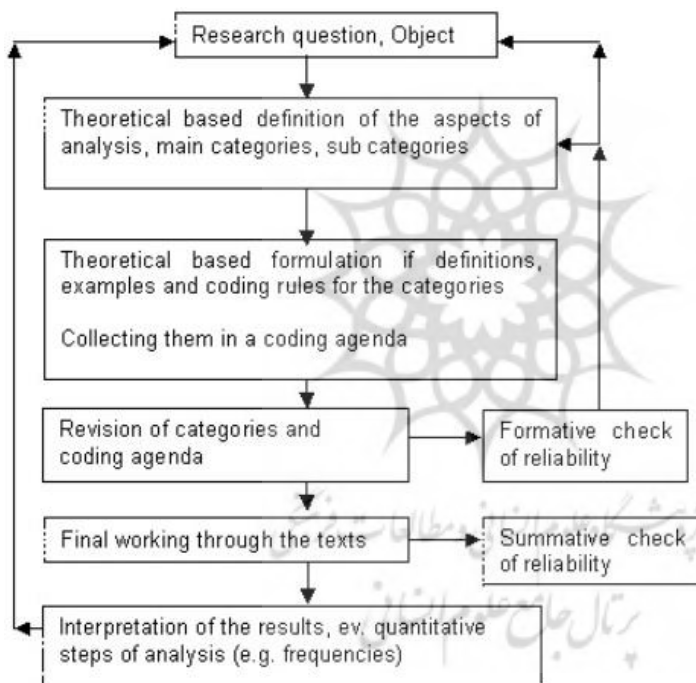
4. Results

4.1. Results of Qualitative Directed Content Analysis

Table 3 displays the results of DCA of the first phase of this study which was run to answer the first research question.

Table 3

A Framework for the Extent of the Learner-Centeredness of ESL Books

Characteristics	Types	Description	Source(s)
Information Gap	Spot the difference	Two or more learners are given similar but not identical pictures and are asked to discuss their pictures to identify the differences.	Richards and Schmidt (2010)
	Describe and draw(tell)	One student is given a picture, and must describe it to another student, who creates a drawing from the description.	Larsen Freeman (2000)
	Jigsaw activity	In listening or reading activities, different groups in the class may process separate but related parts of a text and then later combine their information.	Richards and Schmidt (2010)
	Compare and Contrast	Finding similarities and differences, building timelines, putting things in an outline, creating concept maps, finding the main ideas and significant details.	Doyle (2008)
Open-endedness	Discussion and Opinion exchange	Taking part in a small-group discussion on a topic. Working in a group sharing your opinion and giving reasons for your opinions.	Nunan (2013)
Contextualization	Lexical context/ Grammatical context	The verbal, paralinguistic, and non-verbal signs that help speakers understand the full meaning of a speaker's utterances in context	Richards and Schmidt (2010)
Authenticity	Audio-Visual/ Textual	Authentic language input can be drawn from various sources of audio-visual mass media technologies including TV, News, etc.	Nunan (1999)
Discursivity	Descriptive	Discourses that serve to describe what is happening in the world. Such are news, public statements, memoirs, forecasts, theoretical debates, confidences and interviews.	Searle (2002)
	Deliberative	Discourses that serve to deliberate on which future actions speakers and hearers should commit themselves to in the world. Such are negotiations, bargaining sessions, peace talks, discussions aiming at a friendly settlement, contracts, bets, sermons, and auctions.	
	Declarative	Discourses that serve to transform the world by way of doing what one says such as official declarations, inaugural addresses, licenses, amnesties, testaments, discourses held in ceremonies of baptism and judgments at a court.	
	Expressive	Discourses that serve to express common attitudes of their speakers such as the exchange of greetings, welcomes, eulogies, cheers, and boos.	

Skill integration	Writing Listening Reading Speaking	The teacher is expected to integrate language skills wherever possible. Language skills and other forms of language use, including gestures and mimes can be used.	Kumaravadivelu (2006)

As shown in Table 3, the six characteristics of learner-centeredness of tasks and activities were identified (i.e., information gaps, open-endedness, contextualization, authenticity of language, discursivity, and skill integration). Moreover, the types of learner-centered tasks and activities were unearthed from different sources in the related literature. The information gap constituted four types (i.e., spot the difference, describe and draw, jigsaw, and compare and contrast), open-endedness involved two types (i.e., discussion on a topic and opinion exchange), contextualization covered two types (i.e., lexical and grammatical), the authenticity of language led to two types (i.e., audio-visual and textual), discursivity resulted in four types (i.e., descriptive, deliberative, declarative, and expressive), and four skill integration types were identified.

4.2. Results of Quantitative Content Analysis

Table 4 shows the frequencies of the summative content analyses of the two books.

Table 4

The Frequency of Types of Tasks and Activities in Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2

Types	Interchange 2	Four corners 2	Total
Spot the Difference	15	40	55
Describe and Draw	2	13	15
Jigsaw Activity	27	48	75
Compare and Contrast	33	58	91
Discussion/Opinion Exchange	151	154	305
Lexical context	61	42	103
Grammatical context	51	47	98
Audio Visual	8	0	8
Textual	20	33	53
Descriptive	18	35	53
Deliberative	14	14	28
Declarative	1	0	1
Expressive	16	31	47
Integrated	57	36	93
Total	473	548	1021

Table 4 presents the frequencies of learner-centered types of activities and tasks. Discussion had the most frequency in both books; however, authentic language and declarative discursivity had the lowest frequencies in the two books. Table 5 shows the mean ranks in two books and the sum of the ranks.

Table 5
Mann-Whitney Test Results

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Interchange	14	13.57	190.00
Four Corners	14	15.43	216.00
Total	28		

As displayed in Table 5, the mean rank of Four Corners 2 is higher than Interchange 2. Table 6 shows the results of Man-Whitney test, which was run due to the data nominal nature (i.e., frequency counts) to answer the second research question (i.e., Is there any statistically significant differences between the activities and tasks of Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 in terms of learner-centeredness?).

Table 6
Test Statistics[b]

	exercise frequency
Mann-Whitney U	85.000
Wilcoxon W	190.000
Z	-.598
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.550
. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.571[a]

a. Not corrected for ties.

As shown in Table 6, the significance level is more than 0.05 (.571> 0.05); therefore, there was no significance between the frequencies of activities and tasks of Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 in terms of learner-centeredness.

5. Discussion

This study initially aimed to develop a theoretical framework for learner-centeredness of language materials based on existing theories to address the first research question (i.e., What are the criteria of learner-centeredness in the current literature on English language teaching?) The finding of the DCA phase showed that there was a shortage of such a framework in the literature and an attempt to develop such a valid framework was a sine qua non to fill the gap in the literature. To deal with the second research question (i.e., Is there any statistically significant differences between the activities and tasks of Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 in terms of learner-centeredness?), the researcher-developed framework in the second phase of the study (i.e., SCA) was employed to analyze the corpus of the study. It was found that the activities and tasks of Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 were not

different in terms of the framework categories. The results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between activities and tasks of Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 in terms of learner-centeredness. However, the pattern of learner-centered activities and tasks is not consistent throughout the two books as there is an abundance of some (i.e., discussion) and a dearth of others (i.e., declarative discourse). The present study is in line with Mcconachy (2009), who used examples of dialogues from the New Interchange series. It was found that the sociocultural contextualization in dialogues and dialogue-related activities is neglected.

Moreover, the finding that the two coursebooks are not authentic enough in terms of learner-centeredness is in line with the study of Arroitia and Marquez (2014), which showed that recently published English coursebooks, even at higher levels (i.e., CEFR B2 and C1) lack authentic language, as well as contextualization and argumentative discourse. Overall, it can be argued that the international developer and publisher of these language coursebooks (i.e., Cambridge) have not paid equal attention to different aspects of learner-centeredness in language materials development (Salimi & Nourali, 2021; Zohrabi et al., 2012), and they take an approach to ELT that contradicts SLA findings (Long, 2015).

6. Conclusions and Implications

The primary purpose of this study was to develop a theoretical framework for evaluating the activities and tasks of the language coursebooks in terms of the learner-centeredness criteria. Based on the findings of the first phase of this study, it may be concluded that directed content analysis can be employed as an appropriate analysis technique in this area of interest to extend or develop theoretical frameworks to fill the gaps. Based on the findings of the second phase of the study, which intended to compare the frequencies of the learner-centered activities and tasks in Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2, it can be concluded these coursebooks are the prime examples of the educational commodification to the disadvantage of educational ideals, leading an unrelenting push towards ELT for profit (Copley, 2018).

Some beneficiary groups can benefit from the findings of the present study. It is obvious that finding an appropriate learner-centered coursebook is difficult for language learners and teachers because there are a variety of coursebooks with different methodologies in the market (Jordan & Gray, 2019). Therefore, language learners and teachers may use the researcher-developed framework to overcome their hesitancy in choosing their ideal learner-centered coursebooks. This may also help language learners be encouraged to become independent in selecting coursebooks. Researchers in the field of language materials development and evaluation may also be

interested in this study. They can use this framework to evaluate other coursebooks. Language material developers and publishers may benefit from the present study by designing learner-centered activities and tasks in their future coursebooks.

The following limitations in this study have to be considered. This study compared Interchange 2 and Four Corners 2 in terms of learner-centered approaches to language learning; therefore, the findings may not be generalized to other language coursebooks. Another limitation was that these two coursebooks mostly identify with the American English variety; as a result, the findings may not be other coursebooks with other varieties of English.

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