

Evaluating English in action 1 coursebook: An analysis of skill development and pedagogical effectiveness in EFL instruction

Evaluación del Inglés en acción 1: Un análisis del desarrollo de habilidades y la efectividad pedagógica en la instrucción EFL

Avaliação de English in action 1: Uma análise do desenvolvimento de habilidades e da eficácia pedagógica no ensino de EFL

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Abstract

This study evaluates the textbook English in Action 1 to assess its effectiveness in developing reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills at the CEFR A1 level. Aimed at serving as a model for novice teachers, the research addresses the broader pedagogical goal of ensuring that English as a Foreign Language coursebooks promote authentic, communicative, and well-scaffolded learning experiences. Employing a qualitative methodology, the analysis draws on rubrics and checklists from established literature to evaluate skill-specific components and their coherence with stated objectives. Each of the textbook's eight units was examined in terms of text quality, task design, authenticity, scaffolding, and communicative relevance. The findings indicate that while the textbook shows strong alignment with CEFR A1 descriptors in listening and speaking, it demonstrates notable weaknesses in writing authenticity, reading text variety, and opportunities for spontaneous learner output. Pronunciation and strategy instruction are also underdeveloped. Despite these limitations, the coursebook provides a clear framework for foundational language development and can be considered a practical resource for beginner learners. However, its effective classroom implementation depends on teacher mediation and the inclusion of supplementary materials to enhance learner autonomy, critical thinking, and engagement with real-world communicative tasks.

Keywords: *Coursebook Evaluation, English Skills; English as a Foreign Language; Teaching and Learning.*

Resumen

Este estudio evalúa el libro de texto English in Action 1 para determinar su efectividad en el desarrollo de las habilidades de lectura, escritura, comprensión auditiva y expresión oral en el nivel A1 del MCER. Diseñada para servir como modelo para profesores novatos, la investigación aborda el objetivo pedagógico más amplio de asegurar que los libros de texto de inglés como Lengua Extranjera promuevan experiencias de aprendizaje auténticas, comunicativas y con un andamiaje adecuado. Empleando una metodología cualitativa, el análisis se basa en rúbricas y listas de verificación de literatura establecida para evaluar los componentes específicos de cada habilidad y su coherencia con los objetivos declarados. Cada una de las ocho unidades del libro de texto fue examinada en términos de calidad de los textos, diseño de tareas, autenticidad, andamiaje y relevancia comunicativa. Los hallazgos indican

que, si bien el libro de texto muestra una fuerte alineación con los descriptores del MCER A1 en comprensión auditiva y expresión oral, demuestra debilidades notables en la autenticidad de la escritura, la variedad de los textos de lectura y las oportunidades para la producción espontánea del alumno. La instrucción en pronunciación y estrategias también está poco desarrollada. A pesar de estas limitaciones, el libro de texto proporciona un marco claro para el desarrollo del lenguaje fundamental y puede considerarse un recurso práctico para los estudiantes principiantes. Sin embargo, su implementación efectiva en el aula depende de la mediación del profesor y la inclusión de materiales suplementarios para mejorar la autonomía del alumno, el pensamiento crítico y el compromiso con tareas comunicativas del mundo real.

Palabras clave: Evaluación de Libros de Texto; Destrezas de Inglés; Inglés como Lengua Extranjera; Enseñanza-Aprendizaje.

Resumo

Este estudo avalia o manual *English in Action 1* para determinar sua eficácia no desenvolvimento das habilidades de leitura, escrita, compreensão oral e expressão oral no nível A1 do QECR. Com o objetivo de servir como modelo para professores iniciantes, a pesquisa aborda o objetivo pedagógico mais amplo de garantir que os livros didáticos de Inglês como Língua Estrangeira promovam experiências de aprendizagem autênticas, comunicativas e com suporte (andaime) adequado. Empregando uma metodologia qualitativa, a análise baseia-se em rubricas e listas de verificação da literatura estabelecida para avaliar os componentes específicos das habilidades e sua coerência com os objetivos declarados. Cada uma das oito unidades do manual foi examinada em termos de qualidade do texto, *design* da tarefa, autenticidade, suporte (*scaffolding*) e relevância comunicativa. Os resultados indicam que, embora o manual mostre um forte alinhamento com os descritores do QECR A1 em compreensão oral e expressão oral, ele demonstra notáveis fraquezas na autenticidade da escrita, na variedade dos textos de leitura e nas oportunidades para a produção espontânea do aluno. A instrução em pronúncia e estratégias também é subdesenvolvida. Apesar dessas limitações, o manual fornece uma estrutura clara para o desenvolvimento fundamental da linguagem e pode ser considerado um recurso prático para alunos iniciantes. No entanto, sua implementação eficaz em sala de aula depende da mediação do professor e da inclusão de materiais suplementares para aumentar a autonomia do aluno, o pensamento crítico e o envolvimento com tarefas comunicativas do mundo real.

Palavras-chave: Avaliação de Livros Didáticos; Habilidades de Inglês; Inglês como Língua Estrangeira; Ensino e Aprendizagem.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, coursebooks have become increasingly significant in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) as primary teaching materials and frameworks for structuring learning experiences (Richards, 2001). A well-designed coursebook should balance difficulty and accessibility, provide authentic and culturally relevant content, and align assignments with learning objectives that foster communicative competence, as highlighted by Nation and Macalister (2010) and Tomlinson (2013). However, research has shown that many EFL coursebooks fall short of these standards, often prioritizing controlled practice over authentic language use and decreasing opportunities for student autonomy, critical thinking, and communicative practice (Öztoprak et al., 2024).

In order to ensure that EFL coursebooks adequately support language development and accommodate the demands of a diverse variety of learners, it is imperative that they be evaluated. Systematic evaluation highlights strengths and weaknesses and provides recommendations for improving instructional design (Escudero, 1992).

The present study examines the textbook *English in Action 1* (Sotomayor-Cantos et al., 2024), designed for beginner-level learners at Universidad Técnica Estatal de Quevedo. This article addresses whether the coursebook effectively promotes balanced development of the four language skills and aligns with pedagogical principles that ensure meaningful and communicative learning. This study aims to serve as a model for novice teachers, the research addresses the broader pedagogical goal of ensuring that English as a Foreign Language coursebooks promote authentic, communicative, and well-scaffolded learning experiences.

2. Literature Review

Why is it important to evaluate a coursebook?

The importance of coursebooks in language teaching leads the way to the evaluation of them. Evaluating the teaching materials, especially course books, can help teachers to understand more about language learning, evaluating their physical makeup, practical concerns, and different sections of them, namely vocabulary, reading, grammar, language functions, and pronunciation practice (Haghi, 2013).

How to evaluate reading?

In EFL, reading is commonly acknowledged as a fundamental skill that promotes academic growth and language acquisition. Effective reading instruction, according to Nation and Macalister (2010), must strike a balance between challenge and accessibility, providing students with intelligible input through both extensive and intensive reading practices. Reading improves comprehension, vocabulary expansion, fluency, and general linguistic skills, they stress. Simultaneously, Tomlinson (2013) emphasizes the importance of relevant and captivating reading materials that aim to elicit both emotional and cognitive engagement. He states that to foster curiosity, introspection, and individual response—all of which lead to a deeper connection with language and culture—teaching should transcend mechanical tasks.

Richards (2001) emphasizes the value of reading as a means of achieving linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness, and self-directed learning. He promotes exposing students to a wide range of books that are pertinent, culturally diverse, and diversified while including techniques like scanning, inferring meaning, predicting, and skimming. This perspective is supported by Grabe and Stoller (2002), who see reading as a quick, effective, and intentional process. They emphasize that automatic word recognition, a solid lexicon, and the application of adaptable strategies are necessary for fluent reading. Additionally, they list other academic reading goals that necessitate flexible approaches and critical interaction with texts, including information retrieval, knowledge integration, argument critique, and writing modeling.

McGrath (2016) believes that presenting reading as an intentional, engaged action needs to be incorporated into more general communication objectives. He highlights the need for reading materials to be pedagogically deliberate, pertinent to students' interests, and created with language development, comprehension, and critical thinking in mind. Additionally, he supports scaffolding through organized pre-, while-, and post-reading activities that draw on existing knowledge and encourage introspection and application. This scholar emphasizes the value of student participation, supporting students in choosing texts, posing questions, and co-creating activities in line with Tomlinson (2013). These methods encourage independence, drive, and ownership, indicating that to promote academic achievement and individual development, reading teaching in EFL must incorporate linguistic, strategic, and emotive components.

How to evaluate writing?

In today's rapidly changing landscape of global literacy, it's crucial that writing tasks in EFL coursebooks align with students' actual writing needs. When assignments reflect the types of written communication learners use in daily life, they become more engaging and motivating. Research has shown a gap between the writing learners do in their everyday lives and the tasks they are given in EFL coursebooks (Vue, Hall, T. E., Robinson, Ganley, Elizalde, & Graham, 2016).

Nation and Macalister (2020) highlighted that digital technology has influenced every stage of the writing process, prompting a reevaluation of its components and their application. Firstly, it has introduced innovative writing types that educators should incorporate into their teaching. Secondly, it has transformed the way we access and collect information.

Thirdly, it has altered the very process of writing itself. Lastly, it has reshaped how feedback is provided and how language support is integrated during writing. Therefore, an evaluation of writing tasks must include this influence.

Karchmer-Klein (2018) argued that the existence of digital tools has provided learners with opportunities to voice their minds. She also suggests that, instead of attributing weak writing skills to technology, educators should explore both its possibilities and limitations. More importantly, they should broaden their teaching strategies to help students understand when and how to tailor their writing for different contexts. Bridging the gap between in-school and out-of-school writing experiences is essential—otherwise, we risk disadvantaging students by focusing solely on traditional written language in a world increasingly shaped by multimodal communication.

How to evaluate listening?

The evaluation of listening activities should focus on their quality and ability to promote important cognitive processes such as literal, inferential, and strategic comprehension. Gkomptzia (2024) evaluated listening activities in educational contexts and emphasized that reviewing them with specific criteria such as content appropriateness, format clarity, and pedagogical relevance allows for improving their effectiveness and making them more inclusive and motivating.

Effectively designing and evaluating listening activities involves identifying problems before putting them into practice, such as content that is too complex or too far removed from the student's level. Bourdeaud'hui et al. (2020) designed a listening comprehension test and worked specifically on criteria such as content validity, item analysis, and adjustments for differential function, which corroborates the relevance of evaluating the structural effectiveness of the activity before measuring individual results.

In addition, applying rubrics to evaluate and analyze specific activities encourages continuous improvement of teaching resources and practices. Sönmez (2019) applied a rubric with multiple criteria for future teachers to evaluate and analyze their own listening activities, achieving gradual improvements in clarity, applicability, and pedagogical relevance.

How to evaluate speaking?

Research on speaking assessment has converged on three key areas: the definition of speaking as a construct, the design of analytic rubrics that operationalize this construct, and the validation procedures that ensure reliability and fairness. The CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020) provides updated descriptors for spoken interaction and production, clarifying what learners at A1 can achieve in terms of basic communication.

The revised CEFR Manual (Council of Europe, 2020) explains procedures for aligning examinations and classroom assessments to CEFR levels, emphasizing specification, standard setting, and validation. Luoma (2004) frames speaking as a context-sensitive skill that requires analytic rating scales to capture interactional management, grammar, and intelligibility. Recent studies (e.g., Demirel & Fakazlı, 2021; Öztoprak et al., 2024) confirm that coursebooks tend to offer controlled interaction opportunities but provide fewer tasks for extended production. Moreover, studies in Language Testing in Asia (2025) and others highlight the importance of reliable rubrics, rater training, and validation evidence in classroom-based assessment.

Why is it important to evaluate objectives and activities in a coursebook?

Evaluating the objectives and activities in an English coursebook requires alignment with pedagogical principles that ensure meaningful learning. Biggs and Tang (2011) emphasize the concept of “constructive alignment,” where learning objectives, teaching activities, and assessment tasks must be coherently connected. When evaluating course books, this principle becomes essential to determine whether the objectives stated are not only clear and measurable but also support deep

learning outcomes. A coursebook that promotes surface-level memorization or lacks alignment between its objectives and tasks may hinder student engagement and performance. Thus, evaluators should critically assess whether the instructional activities genuinely support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

From a psychological and educational standpoint, Coll, Martín, and Palacios (1992) argue that meaningful learning occurs when new knowledge is connected with learners' prior knowledge and experiences. In this regard, English course book activities should be evaluated based on their capacity to foster active cognitive engagement and personal relevance. If activities are too mechanical or disconnected from learners' real contexts, they may fail to promote the internalization of language structures and skills. Evaluators should consider whether tasks are developmentally appropriate, scaffolded, and varied to support diverse learning styles and levels of proficiency, reflecting a constructivist view of language learning.

Moreover, Escudero (1992) and Gagné et al. (2005) provide frameworks for evaluating curricular and instructional materials that are highly applicable to course books. Escudero (1992) emphasizes the importance of evaluating materials based on their coherence, functionality, and adaptability to specific educational contexts. Meanwhile, Gagné et al. (2005) propose a systematic instructional design model where objectives must guide the selection of content and activities. In light of these perspectives, the evaluation process should include a review of how well the course book's activities are sequenced to support progressive skill development and whether the materials facilitate motivation, feedback, and practice opportunities. Such criteria ensure that course books not only transmit content but also support a structured and learner-centered instructional process.

3. Method

The coursebook *English in Action 1*, first edition, by Sotomayor-Cantos, Camacho, Cordova, Gavilanez, Moncayo, Quishpe, published in 2024 was evaluated. First, the reading activities; second, the writing activities; third, the speaking activities; fourth, the listening activities; and fifth, the relationship between the activities and the objectives proposed in each unit (8 units in total).

First, a thorough analysis of every reading passage and the activities that go along with it was done to assess the reading portions of the coursebook. An EFL Reading Evaluation Rubric (1–3–5 Scale) was applied to the coursebook in order to gather data. The evaluation criteria were provided by the rubric, which was based on the ideas of Tomlinson (2011), McGrath (2016), Nation & Macalister (2010), Richards (2001), and Grabe & Stoller (2013). The researchers meticulously analyzed and documented observations for three primary categories and subcategories: Text Quality and Selection (authenticity, cultural relevance, language level, variety, and layout-length), Skills and Task Design (subskills covered, question types, task sequencing, strategy instruction, and learner interaction), and Support and Scaffolding (vocabulary support, visual aids, teacher resources, digital support, and differentiation).

A qualitative analysis was carried out once the data was collected. Based on the noted observations and the detailed explanations in the rubric, a numerical score of 1 (Weak), 3 (Acceptable), or 5 (Strong) was given to each criterion within the three primary categories. A final qualitative interpretation of the materials was made using the total score that was generated by adding up all the scores. This interpretation was based on the scoring ranges specified in the rubric: 15–34 (Weak), 35–54 (Acceptable), and 55–75 (Strong). The reading resources received a final score of 47, which classified them as "Acceptable," meaning that while they are useful, they might benefit from modifications or further assistance to meet the best standards for EFL instruction. Thus, the study progressed from observations to individual ratings and, ultimately, to a thorough qualitative assessment of the coursebook's appropriateness.

Second, the writing class activities from the coursebook were evaluated. Writing task design evaluation requires careful consideration of multiple criteria. Key aspects include the clarity of task instructions, alignment with learning objectives, and the appropriateness of the assessment methods. Furthermore, the task should be challenging yet achievable, fostering the development of specific writing skills and encouraging students to engage with the content (Raid & Kroll, 1995).

To evaluate the writing class activities, two checklists elaborated by a Stevkovska (2024) to assess both the design and the authenticity of the tasks were slightly modified and used. In addition, a quantitative component was added by counting the number of checks and then obtaining the percentage of checks over the total of evaluation criteria. The assignments were analyzed based on 11 dimensions: clarity of instructions, presence of a writing model, appropriateness of language level, relevance to learners, diversity of tasks, creativity, cultural awareness, adaptability, integration of ICT skills, assessment criteria, and feedback mechanisms, as shown in Table 5. Authenticity was evaluated using criteria such as real-world context, intended audience, communicative purpose, task authenticity, incorporation of authentic materials, and overall task authenticity, as displayed in Table 6.

The process involved several steps: initially, the writing activities were identified and described, as seen in Table 4. They were then assessed using the checklist to evaluate the structure and design of writing tasks, followed by an analysis of their authenticity using the corresponding checklist. Based on these evaluations, conclusions were formulated to highlight best practices for creating authentic writing tasks that incorporate effective assessment and feedback methods.

Third, we evaluated the pedagogical quality of the listening activities. This evaluation was carried out using an adapted rubric focused on five fundamental pedagogical criteria, prioritizing the gradual progression of listening skills from literal interpretation to meaningful oral production. Its structure has considered the key stages of the listening comprehension process, in line with recent research on language acquisition and listening skill development (Vandergrift & Goh, 2018; Nation & Macalister, 2021), such as pedagogical structure, clarity and quality of the audio, suitability for the level, comprehension developed, and post-listening activities. Each criterion was rated on an ordinal scale from 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent).

Fourth, the study applied a CEFR-aligned analytic speaking rubric to Units 1–8 of English in Action 1. The rubric consisted of ten criteria: communicative functions, production/interaction, cognitive load, interactive pattern, meaningful context, models and frames, lexical support and pronunciation, input/output balance, instructions and student talking time (STT), and observable criteria. Each was scored on a 0–4 scale, drawing from CEFR descriptors at the A1 level. The procedure involved mapping speaking tasks in each unit against the rubric, assigning scores, and providing qualitative justifications. The approach follows the CEFR Manual's emphasis on observable learning outcomes and task–descriptor alignment.

Fifth, according to criteria proposed by Gagné et al. (2005), a rubric was developed to evaluate the activities based on the objectives. The eight units in the book were evaluated based on the 19 proposed objectives.

4. Results

Reading

The evaluated EFL materials for CEFR A1 learners exhibit strengths in language appropriateness, formatting, and layout, with clear structure and suitable content length for beginners. While the controlled vocabulary and grammar support the target proficiency level, the materials lack authenticity and cultural diversity, relying heavily on U.S.-centric content and offering limited text variety, primarily focused on descriptions and dialogues. Reading tasks emphasize basic comprehension skills such as skimming and scanning but rarely address higher-order thinking or strategic reading, and there is minimal scaffolding or explicit strategy instruction. Learner interaction is somewhat encouraged through pair work, though opportunities for deeper, collaborative engagement are scarce. Support resources offer limited vocabulary assistance,

inconsistent use of visual aids, and minimal teacher guidance, with few digital enhancements or differentiation strategies, see Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1 - EFL Reading evaluation – Textbook: *English in action 1*.

Category	Criterion	Score	Observations
1. Text Quality & Selection	1.1 Authenticity	3	Texts are generally adapted and simplified, suitable for EFL learners, but they lack authenticity (no actual blogs or newspaper articles, for example).
	1.2 Cultural Relevance	3	The content steers clear of stereotypes, and it occasionally discusses various contexts, though primarily from a U.S.-centric perspective.
	1.3 Language Level	5	In line with CEFR level A1. The language is controlled, using beginner-appropriate vocabulary and basic structures.
	1.4 Text Variety	3	There is little diversity (descriptions, conversations), the explanatory and narrative genres are not used very often.
	1.5 Layout and Length	5	Headings and space are used effectively, and the layout is neat. Texts for reading are brief and easy to handle.
2. Skills & Task Design	2.1 Subskills Covered	3	Inference and critical reading are uncommon; literal comprehension, scanning and skimming are prevalent.
	2.2 Question Types	3	Most of the comprehension questions are literal. They occasionally involve basic inference (guessing questions).
	2.3 Task Sequencing	3	There isn't much scaffolding during reading, although a few units provide post-reading questions and follow-up assignments.
	2.4 Strategy Instruction	1	Explicit instruction in strategies such as rereading or prediction was not identified.
	2.5 Learner Interaction	3	Though it lacks more introspective or cooperative exercises like annotation or group synthesis, it does include pair talks following reading.
3. Support & Scaffolding	3.1 Vocabulary Support	3	Occasionally, glossed vocabulary is used. There is some context use, but no organized recycling.
	3.2 Visual Aids	3	Some visual support: understanding is aided by a few pictures, headlines, and attractive formatting.
	3.3 Teacher Resources	3	Contains an answer key, but the student book lacks any clear pedagogical guidance or recommendations for differentiation.
	3.4 Digital Support	3	The book only contains audio. No other integrated digital tools, or QR codes.
	3.5 Differentiation	3	Although the tasks are not specifically scaffolded for differentiation, they are reasonably adaptable for mixed levels.
Total Score		47	Acceptable – Usable with some revisions

Source. This rubric is based on Tomlinson (2011), McGrath (2016), Nation & Macalister (2010), Richards (2001), Grabe & Stoller (2013). It provides specific scoring criteria (1 = Weak, 3 = Acceptable, 5 = Strong) for evaluating reading materials based on these key categories.

Table 2 - EFL Reading evaluation rubric (1-3-5 scale).

Category	Criterion	Score	Description
1. Text Quality and Selection	1.1 Authenticity	1	Fully artificial, lacks real-world connection.
		3	Adapted texts with some authentic elements.
		5	Real-world texts (e.g., news, blogs, websites).
	1.2 Cultural Relevance	1	Contains stereotypes or lacks diversity.
		3	Limited representation, avoids overt stereotypes.
		5	Inclusive, diverse, culturally sensitive content.
	1.3 Language Level	1	Too easy or difficult; not aligned with CEFR.
		3	Generally matches CEFR level, some mismatches.
		5	Matches CEFR level precisely; appropriate challenge.
	1.4 Text Variety (Genres, Topics)	1	Only one genre or narrow topic focus.
		3	Some variation in genres or topics.
		5	Diverse genres (narrative, dialogic, expository) and themes.
	1.5 Layout and Length	1	Poor formatting, overcrowded or overly long.
		3	Adequate layout and manageable length.
		5	Clear, readable layout and ideal length for level.
2. Skills and Tasks	2.1 Subskills Covered	1	Focuses only on literal comprehension.
		3	Includes 2-3 subskills (e.g., scanning, inference).
		5	Covers full range (skimming, scanning, inference, critical analysis).
	2.2 Question Types	1	Only literal questions.
		3	Literal and inferential questions included.
		5	Includes literal, inferential, and critical questions.
	2.3 Task Sequencing	1	No clear stages; tasks unorganized.
		3	Basic pre- and post-reading tasks included.
		5	Fully structured pre-, while-, and post-reading tasks.
	2.4 Strategy Instruction	1	No strategy guidance.
		3	One or two strategies introduced (e.g., prediction).
		5	Multiple strategies modeled and practiced.
	2.5 Learner Interaction	1	No interaction; tasks are individual only.
		3	Some pair or group tasks.
		5	Encourages peer discussion, annotation, reflection.
3. Support and Scaffolding	3.1 Vocabulary Support	1	No support provided.
		3	Glossaries or context clues are used.
		5	Glossary, context clues, and recycling included.
	3.2 Visual Aids	1	None or poorly chosen visuals.
		3	Some relevant images or diagrams.
		5	Highly supportive visuals and clear formatting.
	3.3 Teacher Resources	1	No teacher support materials.
		3	Basic answer keys provided.
		5	Keys, teaching notes, and pedagogy tips included.

3.4 Digital Support	1	No digital compatibility or materials.
	3	Some audio or online activities available.
	5	Fully integrated digital support (audio, online tasks).
3.5 Differentiation	1	One-size-fits-all content.
	3	Some adaptation possible for mixed levels.
	5	Easily adapted for various learner needs and abilities.

Source: Authors.

Table 3 - Interpretation by range of scores.

Score Range	Interpretation
15–34	Weak – Unsuitable for use without major adaptations.
35–54	Acceptable – Usable with some revisions or support.
55–75	Strong – High-quality material, ready to use or adopt.

Source: Authors.

Overall, while the materials are functional and usable, targeted revisions in authenticity, cultural inclusivity, task variety, strategic instruction, and support systems are necessary to optimize their effectiveness.

Writing

The evaluation of the writing components in the textbook reveals significant variability in quality, consistency, and alignment with pedagogical best practices. As the book targets true beginners, the initial three units exclude writing tasks; however, from Unit 4 onward (excluding Unit 6), writing activities are included. Unit 4 performs strongest, meeting 79% of evaluation criteria, while Units 5, 7, and 8 demonstrate moderate alignment. Clarity of instructions, age appropriateness, and scaffolding of vocabulary and grammar are inconsistently applied, weakening instructional coherence. Although the language level is generally suitable for A1–A2 learners, task relevance, diversity, and creativity remain limited, with few opportunities for original expression. Cultural inclusivity and ICT integration are present in select units but are not systematically incorporated. Assessment practices are notably underdeveloped, lacking rubrics and self- or peer-assessment tools. Furthermore, the authenticity of writing tasks—including audience awareness and communicative purpose—is uneven, with Units 5 and 8 showing the strongest alignment, see Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Table 4 - Writing activities instructions per coursebook unit.

Unit	Writing instructions
1	(There is no writing activity for this unit.)
2	(There is no writing activity for this unit.)
3	(There is no writing activity for this unit.)
4	Write 1 sentence for each conjunction.
5	Look at the pictures and write sentences.
6	(There is no writing activity for this unit.)
7	What rooms are in your house? Describe your house.
8	What qualities make a job a ‘dream job’ for you?

Note. This table shows the instructions of the writing class activities for each unit of the coursebook. Source: Authors.

Table 5 - Evaluation checklist for the design of the writing activity for each unit of the coursebook.

Evaluation criteria	Coursebook's units							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Clarity of instructions:								
Instructions clearly written	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate for the age group	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Presence of a writing model:								
Writing model provided	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vocabulary and grammar were previously taught.	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriateness of language level:								
Vocabulary and grammar are appropriate for A1-A2 level.	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relevance to learners:								
The topics are related to learners' interests.	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diversity of tasks:								
There are different types of tasks.	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creativity:								
The tasks promote creativity and expression of their own ideas	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural awareness:								
Topics are culturally inclusive	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are opportunities for learners to share their own cultural experiences	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adaptability:								
Assignments can be adapted to different contexts and classroom dynamics.	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integration of ICT skills:								
Learners are allowed to use different types of digital tools.	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment criteria:								
Assessment rubrics provided	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feedback mechanisms:								
Peer feedback or self-assessment is provided	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total of checks out of 14 evaluation criteria	NA	NA	NA	11	6	NA	6	7
Percentage of matching criteria	NA	NA	NA	79%	43%	NA	43%	50%

Source. Adapted from M. Stevkovska (2024).

Table 6 - Evaluation checklist for the authenticity of the writing activity for each unit of the coursebook.

Evaluation criteria	Coursebook's units							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Intended audience:								
Instructions clearly written	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicative purpose:								
The task has a communicative purpose, that is, beyond language practice	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The purpose is relevant and meaningful to the learners	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Task authenticity:								
The tasks reflects writing activities that learners will encounter in real life with the use of digital technologies	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Incorporation of authentic material:								
Authentic materials are provided in the assignment whenever possible	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural authenticity:								
Cultural perspectives are authentic and appropriate for the learners' background	NA	NA	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total of checks out of 6 evaluation criteria	NA	NA	NA	1	5	NA	0	5
Percentage of matching criteria	NA	NA	NA	17%	83%	NA	0%	83%

Note. This table displays the evaluation criteria checklist for the design of the writing class activity for each unit of the coursebook.
Source: Authors.

Table 7 - Total components evaluation criteria.

Evaluation components	Coursebook's units					Total
	4	5	6	7	8	
Design evaluation	79%	43%	0%	43%	50%	
Authenticity evaluation	17%	83%	0%	0%	83%	
Average	48%	63%	0%	22%	67%	40%

Note. This table displays the average of the design evaluation criteria scores and the authenticity evaluation criteria scores.
Source: Authors.

Overall, the writing components would benefit from more consistent implementation of authentic, communicative, and culturally relevant tasks, as well as enhanced assessment and instructional support.

Listening

The evaluation of the listening components in the coursebook English in Action 1 reveals a generally effective and consistent approach, particularly regarding audio clarity and level appropriateness, which align well with CEFR A1–A2

standards. The audio materials are clearly recorded and suitably matched to learners' proficiency levels, and the pedagogical structure is systematically organized across most units. However, the development of deeper listening comprehension skills is limited, as evidenced by consistently low scores in this area, likely due to a lack of varied question types and scaffolding techniques. Post-listening interaction shows some improvement in later units, with Units 4–8 offering more opportunities for engagement through discussions and reflections. While Units 4–8 demonstrate stronger integration of listening skills, with the highest total scores (16/20), Unit 2 lags behind, scoring 13/20 and highlighting the need for pedagogical enhancement, see Tables 8 and 9.

Table 8 - Rubric for the Evaluation of Listening Activities in EFL contexts.

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Acceptable (2)	Insufficient (1)
Audio clarity	Very clear audio, with natural pronunciation and appropriate rhythm.	Understandable with slight difficulty.	Some sections unclear or with interference.	Audio difficult to understand or with frequent interference.
Level appropriateness	Content fully aligned with level A1-A2	Slightly challenging.	Mismatched in some respects	Well above or below the student's level.
Pedagogical structure	Well-differentiated pre-, during-, and post-listening phases.	At least two clear phases.	Only one identifiable phase	No evident didactic structure.
Developed comprehension	Promotes literal, inferential, and critical comprehension.	Literal comprehension predominates with some inference	Only literal comprehension or superficial recognition	Does not promote relevant listening comprehension skills.
Post-interaction	Creative and communicative post-interaction activities.	Repetitive but useful.	Limited and poorly connected to the audio	Absent or irrelevant

Source: Adapted from I. S. P. Nation & J. Macalister (2021); and L. Vandergrift & C. C. M. Goh (2018).

Table 9 - Assessment results of listening comprehension activities.

Unit	Audio clarity	Level appropriateness	Pedagogical structure	Developed comprehension	Post-interaction	Total score
Unit 1	3	4	4	2	2	15/20
Unit 2	3	4	2	2	2	13/20
Unit 3	3	4	3	2	2	14/20
Unit 4	3	4	4	2	3	16/20
Unit 5	3	4	4	2	3	16/20
Unit 6	3	4	4	2	3	16/20
Unit 7	3	4	4	2	3	16/20
Unit 8	3	4	4	2	3	16/20

Note. The table presents the scores obtained from the evaluation of listening activities of the 8 units. Source: Authors.

To improve the effectiveness of the listening sections, future revisions should focus on enriching comprehension development and expanding interactive, post-listening tasks.

Speaking

The evaluation of the speaking components across Units 1–8 of English in Action 1 demonstrates consistent alignment with CEFR A1 communicative functions, particularly in supporting basic interaction through practical and age-appropriate contexts such as greetings, possessions, routines, homes, and jobs, see Tables 10 and 11.

All units scored 35 out of 40, reflecting solid performance in grammar-vocabulary alignment, contextual relevance, and instructional clarity. Tasks are well-scaffolded through sentence frames, visuals, and vocabulary lists, and pair or group activities are present to increase Student Talking Time. However, speaking output remains largely controlled and formulaic, with heavy reliance on teacher-led modeling and limited opportunities for spontaneous, extended communication. Pronunciation receives minimal attention across all units, typically limited to spelling or isolated stress exercises.

Table 10 - Speaking skill assessment rubric.

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Acceptable (2)	Insufficient (1)
Communicative functions A1	Tasks clearly reflect A1 functions (greetings, introductions, personal info, routines) with variety and relevance.	A1 functions present but repetitive or missing some key situations.	Functions are limited or only partially aligned with A1.	Functions inappropriate or outside A1 range.
Production/ interaction	Encourages multiple turns, authentic Q&A, peer/group interaction.	Interaction present but mainly controlled or scripted.	Minimal oral production; mostly one-word answers or isolated phrases.	Little to no oral production/interaction.
Cognitive load A1	Simple lexicon and grammar, supported by concrete contexts; fully A1 appropriate.	Generally appropriate but includes some more complex items.	Uneven cognitive demand; mixes A1 with higher-level structures.	Inappropriate; overload or lack of progression.
Interactive pattern	Varied tasks (pairs, groups, interviews) emphasizing learner autonomy.	Mostly pair or whole-class tasks, limited variety.	Teacher-centered activities; minimal peer interaction.	No real interaction encouraged.
Meaningful context	Authentic, everyday, and relevant contexts for young adults.	Contexts are appropriate but somewhat limited or repetitive.	Contexts weak or artificial, limited relevance.	No meaningful context provided.
Models and frames	Clear models and sentence frames that guide production.	Includes some models/phrases but not systematic.	Few or unclear models provided.	No models or structural support given.
Lexical support/ Pronunciation	Essential vocabulary well-presented plus pronunciation/intelligibility activities.	Adequate vocabulary, minimal phonological support.	Insufficient vocabulary and little/no pronunciation support.	No lexical or pronunciation support.
Input/ Output	Balanced input (dialogues, vocabulary) and output (guided/free production).	Strong input, output present but short and controlled.	Output scarce; input dominates.	Output nearly absent.
Instructions A1 / STT	Clear, simple instructions; high STT (>70%).	Instructions understandable; moderate STT.	Instructions unclear or too complex; low STT.	Instructions inadequate; STT not supported.
Observable criteria	Learning outcomes are explicit, measurable, and observable.	Outcomes observable but not always measurable.	Outcomes vague or implicit.	No observable performance criteria.

Source: Adapted from Council of Europe (2020), Demirel and Fakazlı (2021), Öztoprak, Yilmaz, and Can (2024), and Zou and Zhang (2025).

Table 11 - Assessment results of speaking activities.

Criteria	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8	Total score
Communicative functions A1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32/32
Production/ interaction	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	24/32
Cognitive load A1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32/32
Interactive pattern	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	24/32
Meaningful context	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32/32
Models and frames	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32/32
Lexical support/ Pronunciation	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	24/32
Input/ Output	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	24/32
Instructions A1 / STT	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	24/32
Observable criteria	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32/32

Note. The table presents the scores obtained from the evaluation of listening activities of the 8 units. Source: Authors.

While the materials provide clear, measurable outcomes and effectively build foundational speaking skills for A1 learners, they would benefit from greater emphasis on freer production, learner autonomy, and explicit pronunciation practice to enhance communicative competence.

Alignment between the learning objectives and activities

Overall, the evaluation of the units reveals good alignment between the learning objectives and the proposed activities in most cases. It is observed that most units have a "High" alignment, indicating that the activities designed in the book allow the stated objectives to be achieved. Units such as 1, 3, 4, 7, and 8 stand out for their methodological consistency, as both the alignment and the whole assessment are high and do not require significant adjustments, see Table 12.

However, there are some units with "Medium" alignment, such as 2, 5, and 6, which reflect a partial correspondence between what the student is expected to achieve and the available activities. Unit 5 presents a special case: although several of its objectives have a high alignment, one of them shows a low alignment, as there are no activities that adequately develop reading comprehension among friends, leading to a "Not Adequate" rating for that specific objective. This finding suggests that the unit requires specific adjustments, such as the incorporation of specific reading activities.

Regarding the overall assessment, most objectives were considered "adequate," reflecting a generally coherent and functional instructional design. However, some units were rated "Partially Adequate," such as units 2, 5, and 6, due to specific gaps in vocabulary or content. For example, it is recommended to increase the number of prepositions of place (Unit 2) and expand the vocabulary about family members (Unit 6).

Table 12 - Results by unit on the alignment between objectives and activities.

Unit	Objectives	Alignment between objectives and activities (High / Medium / Low)	Overall assessment Adequate, Partially adequate, Not adequate	Comments
1	Be able to say hello and make introductions	High	Adequate	
	Be able to say good-bye and exchange contact information.	High	Adequate	
2	Be able to identify and discuss personal and classroom objects.	Medium	Partially adequate	Increase the number of prepositions of place for objects.
	Be able to discuss the location of items.	High		
3	Be able to compare personality traits and appearance, using the verb to be.	High	Adequate	
	Be able to establish differences between people of different countries and nationalities.	High	Adequate	
4	Be able to discuss work and free-time clothes; colors	High	Adequate	
	Be able to discuss the weather and what people are wearing	High	Adequate	
5	Be able to talk about cities, nationalities, time.	Medium	Partially adequate	Increase the number of nationalities
	Be able to use time expressions.	High	Adequate	
	Be able to ask and answer in present continuous with Wh questions.	High	Adequate	
	Be able to describe people activities.	High	Adequate	There are no activities that can be used to achieve this goal. At least one activity have to be included.
	Be able to skim and read for details in messages between friends.	Low	Not adequate	
6	Be able to discuss transportation and family members.	Medium	Partially adequate	Increase vocabulary about family members
	Be able to discuss daily and weekly routines.	High	Adequate	
7	Be able to describe houses and apartments.	High	Adequate	
	Be able to discuss furniture and dream homes.	High	Adequate	
8	Be able to discuss jobs and workplaces using simple present Wh-questions.	High	Adequate	
	Be able to discuss opinions about jobs using Be + adjective and adjective + noun.	High	Adequate	

Source. The authors designed this rubric based on the criteria of Gagné, Wager, Golas, and Keller (2005).

These observations suggest that, although the coursebook meets the basic objectives, it would be beneficial to strengthen certain content to improve the depth of learning.

5. Discussion

The assessment of the English reading component in Action 1 reveals both advantages and disadvantages in relation to the main ideas presented in the literature on EFL reading. The coursebook's overall score of 47 suggests that it is both acceptable and usable; nonetheless, it requires modifications to optimize its instructional effectiveness. Through both rigorous and extended methods, Nation and Macalister (2010) contend that reading teaching should offer a balance between

accessibility and challenge. When it comes to text variety and authenticity, English in Action 1 falls short, even though it is successful in providing texts that are manageable in length and linguistically adequate for beginners (CEFR A1).

Students are not exposed to actual language use when simplified and modified texts are used, which inhibits their ability to develop their vocabulary, fluency, and deeper comprehension. Tomlinson (2013), in contrast, emphasized the need for relevant and captivating materials that elicit curiosity, introspection, and emotional engagement. This request for resources that encourage students to engage cognitively and emotionally with the reading process is not often met by the coursebook's preponderance of brief, utilitarian texts.

The design of tasks and skills is another important concern. While Grabe and Stoller (2002) stress that fluent reading necessitates versatile technique use and critical interaction with texts, Richards (2001) emphasizes the need of exposing students to a variety of texts and teaching them strategies like scanning, anticipating, and inferring meaning. However, there is little teaching of higher-order abilities like inference or critical reading and a strong emphasis on literal understanding.

Despite the occasional appearance of scanning and skimming, strategy training is not systematic or clear. Furthermore, there is frequently insufficient scaffolding in task sequencing, with little use of structured pre-, while-, and post-reading activities. The ability of students to modify their reading for various contexts, which Grabe and Stoller (2002) define as critical for academic and lifetime reading success, is compromised by this underdevelopment of strategy training.

Lastly, it is worthwhile to take a closer look at the coursebook's interactive and helpful features. According to McGrath (2016), reading should be included in communicative objectives and bolstered by scaffolding exercises that encourage introspection and practical application. Even though English in Action 1 provides pair work discussions following reading, it hardly ever includes assignments that promote annotation, group synthesis, or individual reaction. As a result, there are few opportunities for student autonomy and involvement, which contradicts Tomlinson's (2013) and McGrath's (2016) emphasis on encouraging motivation and ownership through student choice and participation. Similarly, visual aids and vocabulary glosses are available but are not often incorporated into a larger plan for recycling and strengthening new language. Multimodal engagement is further limited by the absence of digital resources beyond audio recordings, which could otherwise improve understanding and foster learner autonomy.

Overall, English in Action 1 offers manageable language, a straightforward layout, and accessible content, making it a good place for beginning EFL readers to start. However, it exhibits shortcomings in learner autonomy, strategy training, authenticity, and variety when compared to top frameworks.

The evaluation of the writing elements of the textbook reveals clear deficiencies in terms of quality, authenticity, and instructional support. While some portions adhered to good teaching practices, others lacked writing assignments altogether, which disrupted coherence and hindered students' development. The choice of exercises was limited, with little chances for creativity and assessment, even though the language level was generally appropriate for A1–A2 learners. Beginner-friendly writing models were not always provided, and scaffolding and instruction were not always consistent. The lack of comments and rubrics further limited students' opportunities to evaluate and enhance their work. Writing assignments consequently frequently felt less interesting and significant, which reflected a larger issue in EFL classrooms: the discrepancy between textbook assignments and the kinds of writing that students come across in their everyday lives (Vue et al., 2016).

These results align with previous studies on materials designed for beginners. This pattern is also shown in Konrad et al. (2018), who noted that A1–A2 writing assignments frequently lacked genuine objectives and failed to adequately distinguish across competency levels. Similarly, despite the growing prevalence of process-genre methods in textbooks, activities frequently fall short of fostering audience awareness or genuine communication goals, according to Na and Lee (2019). This textbook's uneven authenticity emphasizes how crucial it is to connect students' experiences outside of the

classroom with their writing assignments. Ignoring multimodal and real-world communication runs the danger of decreasing learner motivation and engagement, according to Karchmer-Klein (2018).

The assessment also pointed out flaws in the assessment and scaffolding. The same deficiencies in authentic evaluation noted by Natalia et al. (2018) are reflected in the absence of rubrics, chances for peer or self-assessment, and post-writing activities. In a similar vein, the lack of organized feedback runs counter to research showing that peer and instructor comments can greatly enhance writing results (Lv et al., 2021). Also, this textbook did not use ICT-based tools to improve the writing process, despite the fact that Nation and Macalister (2020) remind us that digital technologies have changed feedback and support. This omission is a lost opportunity to engage with the realities of modern literacy practices.

The uneven application of ICT, innovation, and cultural material is another drawback. While some classes included digital technologies and cultural views, their use was inconsistent. Research highlights that authentic and culturally relevant materials boost student motivation (Albiladi, 2019). Similarly, digital resources can help students develop their voices, broaden their genres, and modify their writing for various audiences (Nation and Macalister, 2020; Karchmer-Klein, 2018). But because these components were seldom included in the textbook, students had fewer opportunities to express themselves creatively and multimodally—two things that are crucial in the twenty-first century.

In summary, the evaluation points to both, areas of strength and areas needing improvement. The design of certain units demonstrates that it is possible to create effective writing tasks even for beginners, and some authentic activities show promise for boosting engagement. Nevertheless, the lack of consistent scaffolding, task variety, and assessment tools underscores the need for further development. Addressing these gaps involves better alignment between classroom tasks and learners' everyday writing (Vue et al., 2016), intentional integration of digital tools (Nation & Macalister, 2020), and more support for multimodal expression (Karchmer-Klein, 2018). Taken together, these steps would move the textbook closer to current pedagogical standards and the demands of global literacy.

The findings are consistent with previous research indicating the limited incorporation of inferential activities in A1-level books (Saleem, 2020; Martín Peris, 2019). This trend restricts the development of advanced cognitive skills, which are essential for progressing to intermediate levels. Furthermore, although pedagogical structures exist, their use is limited by the repetitiveness of post-listening tasks.

Across Units 1–8, the strongest dimensions were communicative functions, meaningful contexts, and scaffolding through models and sentence frames. Learners were consistently provided with relevant topics such as introductions, possessions, routines, and jobs, which are all embedded within familiar, real-life contexts. In addition, learning outcomes were observable and measurable, making assessment straightforward. However, weaknesses appeared systematically in the areas of learner production, student talking time, and pronunciation support. Speaking activities were largely controlled, restricting opportunities for spontaneous communication.

These results suggest that while the coursebook successfully operationalizes CEFR A1 descriptors in a structured and accessible way, it underrepresents the interactive and creative dimensions of speaking. This echoes Luoma's (2004) argument that speaking cannot be reduced to rehearsed dialogues; rather, it requires the ability to negotiate meaning in unpredictable contexts. The high rubric scores reflect strong alignment with CEFR descriptors, but the consistent shortfall in freer production tasks indicates that learners may emerge with accurate but inflexible speaking skills.

The findings align with prior research by Demirel and Fakazlı (2021), who observed that CEFR-based coursebooks often privilege controlled practice over extended interaction. Similarly, Öztoprak et al. (2024) concluded that while coursebooks provide useful frames and scaffolding, they insufficiently promote open-ended speaking. The recurrent limitation in pronunciation support also reflects concerns raised in Language Testing in Asia (2025), which emphasizes that intelligibility

and phonological control are key components of CEFR-based speaking competence yet are often marginalized in instructional materials.

The practical implication of this analysis is that teachers using *English in Action 1* should supplement the coursebook with tasks that encourage freer communication, such as information-gap activities, role plays with minimal prompts, and spontaneous discussions. From a theoretical perspective, the findings underscore the importance of balancing input-rich, scaffolded activities with opportunities for output that foster fluency and interactional management. Moreover, systematic integration of pronunciation training would better support the CEFR goal of intelligible communication at A1.

A limitation of this study is that it focused exclusively on coursebook analysis without classroom implementation. While the rubric provided reliable insights into design and alignment, actual learner performance might differ when variables such as teacher mediation, classroom dynamics, and learner strategies are considered.

Further studies should triangulate rubric-based coursebook analysis with empirical classroom data. Classroom observations, learner interviews, and spoken performance assessments would enrich the understanding of how CEFR descriptors are enacted in practice. Future research may also compare *English in Action 1* with other A1-level coursebooks to identify broader trends in how CEFR is operationalized across materials.

The results obtained from the evaluation of the analyzed coursebook reveal a generally positive trend in terms of alignment between learning objectives and proposed activities, although they also highlight specific areas for improvement. This situation can be analyzed in light of the constructive alignment model proposed by Biggs and Tang (2011), who argue that effective teaching requires coherence between learning objectives, instructional tasks, and assessment criteria. In the units evaluated, particularly those with "high" alignment, a strong correspondence between these elements is observed, which favors the achievement of meaningful learning. However, units with "Medium" or "Low" alignment show a partial disconnect between what is expected of the student and the actual learning opportunities offered, a situation that, according to the same authors, can compromise the quality of the educational process.

From a psychological and pedagogical perspective, the adaptation of content and activities to the developmental and cognitive characteristics of students is fundamental. Coll, Martín, and Palacios (1992) emphasize that school learning requires that new knowledge be meaningfully integrated with students' prior knowledge through active knowledge construction processes. In this sense, the observations collected in some units—such as the need to incorporate more prepositions of place or expand vocabulary about family—suggest an opportunity to enrich teaching proposals and facilitate this meaningful connection. The fact that some activities do not fully achieve their objectives reflects a need for pedagogical review, which considers the level of development and the real needs of students as the central axis of the curriculum design.

Finally, the evaluation of curricular materials, as Escudero (1992) emphasizes, must consider not only the internal coherence of the resource but also its functionality and adaptability to the specific educational context. Similarly, Gagné et al. (2005) emphasize that instructional design must be based on clear objectives that guide the selection of content and activities, allowing for a logical progression in learning. From this perspective, the findings support the need for a specific review of certain course units, such as Unit 5, where one of the objectives lacks activities to support it, which affects the overall assessment. This shows that, while the book largely meets quality standards, its effectiveness could be increased through a review that reinforces instructional alignment, expands content in key areas, and ensures the inclusion of activities that comprehensively address the stated objectives.

6. Conclusions

Based on the comprehensive evaluation of the coursebook *English in Action 1*, across reading, writing, listening, and speaking components, the following conclusions can be drawn. While the coursebook provides a solid foundation for beginner-

level EFL learners, particularly in terms of reading and speaking, it lacks the depth and variety required for fostering critical literacy, learner autonomy, and higher-order thinking skills. Despite its accessibility and alignment with CEFR A1 standards, the absence of authentic texts, genre diversity, and strategic scaffolding limits its potential for comprehensive language development.

The coursebook's writing component is significantly underdeveloped and fails to meet essential design and authenticity criteria. With less than 40% of the evaluated criteria fulfilled, it is imperative that writing tasks—particularly those involving meaningful contexts, models, and feedback mechanisms—be systematically integrated into later units to support balanced language instruction.

Listening activities are appropriately leveled and well-structured but overemphasize literal comprehension, hindering the development of inferential and critical listening skills. This finding suggests the need for revised post-listening tasks that promote meaningful oral interaction and align more closely with communicative language teaching principles.

Speaking tasks are clearly aligned with CEFR A1 communicative functions and are well-scaffolded; however, they fall short in promoting extended, spontaneous interaction and pronunciation development. This reflects a broader trend in CEFR-based materials that prioritize controlled input over freer, student-led communication, underscoring the need for more dynamic speaking opportunities.

A more inclusive, context-sensitive, and pedagogically aligned design process is essential to ensure that coursebooks meet the diverse linguistic and developmental needs of learners. Strengthening the instructional alignment, cultural relevance, and adaptability of teaching materials will enhance their effectiveness and ensure that they contribute meaningfully to communicative competence in EFL contexts.

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