

# EE-14 Analysis of Teaching and Learning the English Course of the Fourth Year Engineering Students

Daw Aye Aye Than

*Department of English, Technological University (Hmawbi)  
Yangon, Myanmar*

ayeayethan79aat@gmail.com

**Abstract**—Though today’s teaching and learning English in all educational institutions, especially, at all technological universities, is as a supporting subject, it must have been a really applied one for the learners in order to lead to lifelong learning. In this research, the contents in English Unlimited B2 Upper Intermediate Course book for the fourth year engineering students are presented in details (goals, language, skills, explore) with its strengths and weakness and how beneficial to learners it is. And also, what teaching and learning approaches are and can be applied in classrooms is involved in this study. This paper aims at investigating the current situations and results of teaching and learning the fourth year Engineering English course. The survey in this paper may help the Course co-ordinators and English teachers improve or innovate the curriculum, the teaching and learning methods, and finally the assessment methods of the students’ performance. In addition, the suggestions pointed out by some English teachers surveyed are sure that it will support for our institution to some extent.

**Keywords**— contents, strengths and weaknesses, teaching and learning methods, investigation, suggestions

## I. INTRODUCTION

Analysing something is a good one for almost all of the fields. Then, some corrections or innovations can be taken to be improvement for that relevant institution. In other words, it is also like a review.

This paper is about the analysis of teaching and learning English Unlimited B2 Upper Intermediate Course book, currently prescribed for fourth year engineering course at all technological universities in Myanmar. It is published by Cambridge University press. There may be other people’s reviews for this book. But, there may be different in results because there is a variety of country, culture and peoples in the world although English is used as a foreign or second language.

The course co-ordinators chose to set down this book as they see it to be useful not only for undergraduates but also for doing self-study up to lifelong learning. There are a lot of activities to be taken in practices. Thus, it can be said that it suits the teaching learning method, which is urgently needed to change in classrooms. On the other hand, the teachers and students often find it difficult in classes each. The traditional teaching method cannot completely be applied while this book is suitable with the learner-centred approach mostly. However, it is not so effective for some students, except for some who have good command of English. It has been prescribed since the 2017-2018 Academic Year. The authors of this book, (Alex Tilbury, Leslie Anne Hendra, David Rea and Theresa Clementson) say that it can offer an exciting way to use the Course book materials in class.

However good it is in other places, according to teachers and students in this study, there are some difficulties for them. It cannot be denied that it suits with the changing nature of education 4.0 because its contents encourage its learners to produce critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and team

work, group discussion, which are necessary soft skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

## II. ANALYSING ITS CONTENTS AND METHODS

In reviewing its contents, this course book can be said to be a well laid out one. This is because the main point of learning English, four skills, is presented in an interesting way for learners in different sections with colourful pictures. There are fourteen units with four main sections each in its contents: goals, language, skills and explore.

But, every unit of this book is divided into sections, with clear, practical goals for learning. Again, Speaking, listening, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation activities are involved in the first four pages of each unit, which help learners build their language skills and knowledge. Target Activity follows it to support the learners for putting together what they have learned. In Explore section, it starts with either a Keyword page, which looks at one or two of the most common and useful words in English or an Across Cultures page, and then an Explore Speaking or Explore Writing page. This section offers additional language and skill works for the purpose of helping learners become the better and more culturally aware communicators of English.

The Look again section looks like doing review exercises for the whole unit, extending the students’ learning and recycling language they met before. The e-Portfolio DVD-ROM gives useful reference materials for all the units and assessment to test their own learning. Wordcards help them test their vocabulary learning. As extra activities, candidates can do practices by using Self-study Pack, a workbook, progress test and interactive DVD-ROM. It is said that the DVD-ROM contains video and over 300 interactive activities.

To analyse four main sections of contents in each unit:

### 1) Goals-

They show the purposes of learning what students learn, whether it is in the form of reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary or grammar except for keyword page and look again sections. There are between four and six points as goals and they are concerned with not only text but also practices, experiences and background knowledge of the learners. In other words, they highlight the extracts or themes of learning the relevant portions. Target activity is a part of this section to give the learners the real situations of the relevant subjects with the listening practices mostly and tasks vocabulary in each unit.

### 2) Language-

In this section, learners have to study three portions which include grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. In grammar, students can learn tenses (Unit 1,2,14) in active voice form and passive voice form in Unit 4, habits and tendencies—past and present (Unit 2), two participle clauses (Present and Past) in Unit 5 and 7, conditional clauses –present and future (Unit 6), making deductions about the past (Unit-8), multi-word

verbs which are verbs with adverbs and prepositions (Unit 9,13), and V-ing forms and patterns after verbs (Unit 10 and 11). These grammatical rules are supports for learners in translating passages, producing written and spoken English in practice. Some reminds learners of uncertain things in a clear way, explaining these patterns with references and presenting them with exercises and practices. It is also not too difficult for every learner to do self-study as its reference explains how to use it in detail.

Studying vocabulary usage is also interesting and links with four skills. It sometimes comes with tasks, especially in listening. Mostly, it is lay out in matching types and the vocabularies are in word or words or expressions. So, learners get much knowledge which is useful in creating their own ones. These vocabularies and grammar usages are to be learned in reading, listening and samples of speaking, and to be produced in their own spoken words or written sentences. Learners get to know how to pronounce some words or sentences thanks to pronunciation sector, particularly which character or word is to be stressed or silent or linked with each other and which must be prominent. This helps them fluent in speech. It is practised with listening records.

### 3) Skills-

It can be seen that this course book has a good balance of four skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking. But, it has a little far more emphasis on reading and listening, and speaking than writing according to this section. These are to be done in activity works. In fact, there are a lot of activities in all four skills. The materials in the text are real life every step of the way to contribute to achieving purposeful, real life objectives. It is ideal for learners if these can be done effectively in classrooms.

### 4) Explore

In this section, five portions have to be learned, which are to explore key words, explore speaking, explore writing, across cultures and look again. The key words to be learned, which are involved in this book are “think, use, as, come, way, up and down, and put”. These words are to be studied in words and expressions as matching types, exercises, and listening activities. About explore speaking, the usage of words and grammatical structures can be studied through listening and translating scripts or what is listened. Not only that, speaking style can also be absorbed.

In studying explore writing, a variety of writings are to be learned. It is sure that learning these writings helps students apply them at present and in their business later. The different types of writing are how to write dramatic story, e-mail or letter, argument in a web posting, complaint about service, summary of a text, proposal and formal letter or e-mail of refusal. Through this sector, the usage of expressions and grammar forms can be found and students are asked to write others which are similar to the samples by using its usages.

Different kinds of accents in the world who use the English language as second or foreign language can be listened or heard and their different cultures about culture, special occasions, ways of communication, language, rights and obligations, health and healthcare, and recruitment through across cultures sector. These are to be learned in listening, vocabulary and doing speaking activities. So, this gives learners traditional, regional, educational, communicational knowledge and some makes them funny due to its jokes. Their accents may be different but their pronunciations are standards. Thus, it is like meeting with international speakers and practising learners’ ability to understand the various kinds of accents. This section builds

global relationship, developing learners’ intercultural competence as a fifth skill, leading to more sensitive and more effective communication (the authors of this book). The look again portion includes doing exercises about vocabulary, grammar and key word in each and the previous unit, and spelling and sounds with listening.

### *Methods used for teaching and learning English Unlimited B2*

About the teaching and learning approach, this English Unlimited B2 Upper Intermediate Course book focuses on student-centred approach. This emphasises on the students’ efficiency. The teachers have to motivate them as facilitators. So, in classrooms, students get into pairs or groups to brainstorm ideas. Sometimes, teacher-centred approach is turned to accomplish the target lessons in a limited time. When it is only on the way of teachers’ role, learners get bored and they become passive. In this study, 20 teachers who are responsible for the Fourth Year students were asked what teaching methods they used in class. The 50% of them gave responses to this survey that they used teacher-centred approach mostly and 50%, mixing the two methods. Without knowing the answers exactly, students would find it difficult in the exam. When the learner-centred learning environment is created by teachers, using experimental strategy such as role playing, games and interactive strategy, for instance, debates, discussions, problem solving, brainstorming, and peer learning, it can broaden the knowledge and the educational experiences for both teachers and students.

The most important two points are that students are accustomed themselves to dependent learning and they don’t have enough background knowledge. On the other hand, the teachers could not manage class control to do all activities in the text as class size is big or too big. As students, they would like their teachers to explain lessons for reading, grammar, and vocabulary usage. But most of the students realize that it is the time to change teaching and learning methods. So, they try to accept and catch up this method, the student-centred approach. The obvious thing when they change it is that they relax it, not being loaded down with it and taking actively in the class as they get involved in the learning process. Thus, the leading part of a teacher in class cannot be used even though the student-centred approach is not successful at all. According to the survey conducted to 100 fourth year engineering students in completing the questionnaire on which way they like to learn in class, 75% chose the learner-centred approach.

### III. INVESTIGATION ON STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING THE COURSE BOOK

Evdokia Karavas reported that a curriculum must provide goals of education, subjects to be taught, activities in which learners should be engaged, methods and materials, allocation of time and resources, and assessment of students and of the curriculum itself. As the book is really suitable with the student-centred learning environment, its contents can be done in an effortless way for some learners. To evaluate its contents, it has a balance of four language skills, but 80% of the teachers included in the survey agreed on that it has less reading passages to make good reading comprehension questions.

The authors of the book say that this Course book provides 80 to 90 core teaching hours, extendable to 120 hours using the range of extra materials in the teacher’s pack

with DVD-ROM. In fact, to be honest, teachers in all TUs have 15 weeks for the whole academic year, 3 hours a week. Then, they have insufficient time to manage the course because they have to run it for completing in the limited time.

**A. Strengths**

It is obvious to see that it has little strengths. To assess the materials in this book and methods that the teachers used in teaching the students, the surveyed educators answered to these facts as strengths:

- making learners rich in updated vocabularies
- enriching students with knowledge due to its readings about real life and some researches
- developing skills for learners with the help of activities (speaking, writing and listening, work assignment)

**B. Weaknesses**

In analysing its contents, the teaching staff were asked what would be the weak points of the English Unlimited B2 Upper Intermediate Course book and some difficulties they faced in classes, they gave these answers:

- lack of effective reading passages
- lack of complete grammar instructions
- having big class size
- not having enough human resources for teaching staff
- lack of necessary teaching aids for listening practices as they have to use Bluetooth instead of language labs and videos
- not attracting students to be interested in learning because they understand its contents well
- lack of sufficient time in class to be accomplished both course and effective teaching (only three hours a week)

The following table is the results of the study conducted the 100 students for the six questions.

TABLE  
RESULTS IN SURVEY FOR STUDENTS

Items	Number of students who were Satisfied	Number of students who were dissatisfied	Remark
Does it cover Reading Skill?	45	55	They wish to add technical or engineering readings
Does it include appropriate Writing skills?	90	10	They recommended to attach additional her other writings to it, especially graphic, argumentative) The writings are based on real world communication and personal experiences.
Does it Listening skills?	100	0	They agree on it fully.
Does it cover Speaking skills?	90	10	They don't have enough background knowledge in response to it at random

			though it is the foundation of real world communication. They don't have to do activities effectively in class
How far is Grammar useful to them?	70	30	Grammars in it are advanced and cover in four skills. But, there is a little exercise for tis relevant things.
How far is vocabulary usage beneficial to them?	80	20	Less exercises for doing extra ones. They want to include engineering terms in it as they are weak in it

For the questionnaire about which teaching learning methods they have to receive and would like to apply more, 50 % of them answered that they have the two mixed methods, both the teacher-centred and the learner-centred approaches. But, they really like to have learner-centred learning environment. They gave some reasons why they like this method. They are happy to take part in activities as pairs or groups. This makes them alert in learning and they can absorb the materials in their memory as they dislike memorization. The next thing is that they become more friendly with each other due to the main characteristics of this method: team work, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity. On the other hand, they cannot stay independently as they are not possible to ask questions in the absence of instructors.

As assessment method, it is 70 marks for two summative exams and 30 marks for tutorial, class works, attendance, and assignment. This marking scheme persuades the students a little to attend classes regularly.

IV. SUGGESTIONS

If the whole research is studied, it is necessary to adapt the course materials in four skills, vocabulary and grammar to suit the usefulness for engineers with the level of Upper Intermediate because the current course book is easy to understand for most learners. So, the course co-ordinators should consider the new curriculum seriously to be updated and really advanced.

It is vital for increasing the hours of English sessions, three hours a week, to at least six hours.

The most important thing is to reduce the class size. To be effective a teaching learning environment and under control in classroom management, there should be 20 students in each class.

To comply with the targeted teaching learning paradigm, assessment methods should be reformed in such a way that marks for the learners' performances in class should be given higher than the present. Their attendances should be considered to increase and so do for assignment works.

To be a well running and successful system, it is essential to supply this system with qualified human resources. In order to fulfil this sector, it is to recruit new teachers to this Technological institution and train them well.

In this age of development of technology, it is an ugly thing to use Bluetooth boxes in doing listening practices. The writers of this text reported that it brings all the content of the course into a single platform, allowing for immediate access to key resources, including all of the course book, images, videos and audio. Whether the learners have got a computer

and projector or interactive whiteboard, this software facilitates heads-up teaching, encouraging students to increase even more with each other and with their learning material. Thus, it is needed to support for essential infrastructures by the relevant government.

Finally, students need to be motivated to study much to keep up with other better students. According to 20 students, why learner-centred approach is not successful at all is that the educational levels of students in the same class are different. So, teachers should urge them to do self-studies a lot.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude the whole research for teaching and learning the fourth year English Unlimited B2 Upper course, it is necessary to have a balance between course materials, teaching learning approach and assessment methods. According to many researchers, a transition in curriculum and instructional approaches is needed. Such a transition will only be successful even if the students and teachers in teaching learning environment agree with the underpinnings of this so-called environment.

A mutual adaption of students' and teachers' instructional conceptions is required for a smooth transition. This encourages students to adopt a deep approach (Entwistle, 2003) and less likes to bring surface approaches (Gow and Kember, 1993).

Even if the course materials and teaching learning approach are balanced, the target of the education 4.0 can be demonstrated. If so, learners will be sure to have soft skills of 21 century. Again, these generations will be beneficial not

only to their areas but also to the country and the whole world as precious outputs or products.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am grateful to all those whom I have had great pleasure to work during this paper. Firstly, I would like to say special thanks to my head of Department, Daw Thwe Thwe Oo, who encourages all her inferiors including me to do studies and carry out research so as to sharpen our knowledge for developing our professional skills and our lifelong learning.

The second persons I owe a debt of gratitude are my colleagues from the Department of English, TU (Hmawbi) and the other English teachers from TUs in Myanmar, who helped me via e-mails, and the students in this survey for replying to my questionnaires.

Thirdly, I want to show respects to my old teachers since I was from childhood to advanced learner, and the authors who shared readings in books and on webs.

I am deeply indebted to all educators who are deserving gratitude.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents and family members who are the greatest supporters for my life due to their help of becoming like this researcher.

#### REFERENCES

- Bloom Taxonomy's Taxonomy  
English Unlimited B2 Upper Intermediate Coursebook  
Evdokia Karavas, Hellenic Republic National and Kapodistrian University of Athens  
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240524823>  
<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/13725747-english-unlimited-b2>  
John -biggs and Catherine tang -teaBarnhart Cynthia. (2003). "Airline  
[www.cambridge.org/corpus](http://www.cambridge.org/corpus)