An Evaluation of *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*

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Module Three Assignment Topic

SM/01/03

Make a detailed evaluation of a coursebook or set of materials that is used in your own working context. You should consider both the syllabus followed and the methodology employed.

1 Introduction

This purpose of this paper is to evaluate *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*, one of the coursebooks used at the Foreign Language Institute of Yonsei University in Seoul, Korea where I work. The paper will follow this format: after describing the evaluative framework to be employed, I will comment on the particulars of my working situation and the country and cultural contexts. Next, I will evaluate the book according to four general guidelines, with particular emphasis on the syllabus and methodology used, illustrating my points with excerpts from the book as well as references to claims made by the authors and relevant outside sources. I will close with a summary and overall evaluation in which the reader will learn that, despite certain shortcomings related especially to methodology, the book is in general deemed satisfactory for our purposes.

2 Background to the study

2.1 The evaluative framework: Cunningsworth's four guidelines

For the purposes of this evaluation, I will adopt the four-guideline approach proposed by Cunningsworth (1995: 15-17). These guidelines are broad principles that underlie much longer and more familiar checklists of the type commonly used in "predictive" evaluations, i.e. those done when choosing a book for a certain course (Ellis, 1997: 36). By themselves, however, the guidelines support the present academic investigation by allowing detailed comment on the syllabus and methodology employed. They also follow a logical progression from general to particular.

Cunningsworth's four guidelines are as follows:

- Guideline One: *Coursebooks should correspond to learners' needs. They should match the aims and objectives of the language learning program.*

- Guideline Two: *Coursebooks should reflect the uses (present and future) which learners will make of the language. Select coursebooks which will help to equip students to use language effectively for their own purposes.*

- Guideline Three: *Coursebooks should take account of students' needs as learners and should facilitate their learning processes, without dogmatically imposing a rigid 'method.'*

- Guideline Four: *Coursebooks should have a clear role as a support for learning. Like teachers, they mediate between the target language and the learner.*

2.2 The working context

My working context is a language institute attached to a major Korean university. The courses are not-for-credit, are aimed at the general public and usually consist of 100 hours of instruction over 10 weeks. The learners range in age from 21-65 and include university students, working people, housewives and retirees who are usually studying English for one or more of the following reasons: for academic purposes (many intend to study abroad in the future); to help obtain better jobs or promotions; for international travel; and for general interest's sake.

The stated goal of the Yonsei English program is to produce learners who can speak English "both accurately and fluently." The basic courses focus on "general English" with an emphasis on oral communication. In the case of most levels at the institute, there is no external syllabus – the coursebook represents the syllabus. Sinclair and Renouf would criticize this as a "degenerate syllabus" (1988: 146) and argue that an external syllabus is necessary, but care is taken at the institute among the level coordinators to choose books whose contents complement, rather than overlap each other and which fit the general needs of the learners.

2.3 The country/cultural context

By the time they graduate high school, most adult Koreans have studied English for at least seven years. This instruction has traditionally concentrated on reading skills, vocabulary and grammatical form, although successive national curricula have tried to put more emphasis on communicative competence, functional over grammatical syllabuses, and fluency over accuracy (Kwon, 2000: 60-61). Oral communication traditionally has been under-emphasized, with the result that the average Korean learner of English will have received only 210 lifetime hours of listening and speaking instruction (Kim and Margolis, 2000: 39).

For this reason, courses like the one at Yonsei University are seen by both teachers and students alike as aiming at the "activation of passive knowledge". The typical student is one who McDonough and Shaw describe as having "a very good 'usage' background but [who] needs a course which will activate language use" (1993: 68). Learners expect lessons to be engaging and motivating, in contrast to the "boring" methods they experienced in their school days. Lessons are expected to emphasize oral communication through pair- and group-work but must generally include a focus on form also.

Despite the contrasts with traditional state-school instruction, classes at institutes like Yonsei's are still influenced by the Confucianism which infuses Korean attitudes toward education. Teachers, even if non-Korean, are still seen to be "main actors" in the classroom and learning English is still "typically viewed as a teacher-centered process rather than a student-centered effort." (Park and Oxford, 1998: 107). As we shall see, this has implications for the methodology to be employed.

3 Guideline One: Learner needs and program aims

Coursebooks should correspond to learners' needs. They should match the aims and objectives of the language learning program.

3.1 Statement of audience, aims and objectives

According to the authors, *New Headway Upper-Intermediate* is meant for use by adult and young adult learners and provides about 120 hours of language learning (Soars and Soars, 1998). The authors claim that the course "combines the best of traditional methods with more recent approaches, to help students use English both accurately and fluently". These traditional approaches "emphasize a clear focus on grammar with in-depth analysis and explanation, thorough practice activities, and the exploitation of texts for comprehension and stylistic appreciation." On the other hand, "communicative approaches" are also employed which "emphasize the importance of individual students' contributions to work out rules for themselves, and to express personal opinions."

This combination of the traditional and the communicative appears to be key to the *Headway* philosophy. The underlying premise seems to be that traditional approaches are effective in developing formal competence but in themselves are not enough. This idea has a strong history among methodologists and coursebook writers. Writing about teaching approaches found in coursebooks before the advent of the communicative approach, McDonough and Shaw note that:

> … language learners were required, above all, to manipulate grammatical forms accurately, and … this procedure was the main measure of competence in a foreign language … It was argued that this type of teaching produced 'structurally competent' students who were often 'communicatively incompetent' (Johnson, 1981), able perhaps to form correct sentences …. but unable to transfer this knowledge to talk about themselves in a real-life setting (1993: 21)

Hence the need to supplement with communicative approaches, which aim "to (a) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and (b) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication." (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 66).

Headway's authors present the equation as simple: make up for the deficiencies of one approach by supplementing from another. But as we shall see in section 5 on methodology, this combination of form-focused and meaning-focused modes of instruction is potentially problematic and not at all straightforward.

3.2 General organization

Further insight into the aims and objectives of the book can be gleaned from the contents "map," which illustrates the general organization of the material. Figure 1 below shows two sample units.

	Language Input			**Skills Development**			
Unit	**Grammar**	**Vocabulary**	**Postscript**	**Reading**	**Speaking**	**Listening**	**Writing**
6 – People, places and things	Relative clauses	*-ed/-ing* adjectives Synonyms in context	English signs	The man who could buy anything – a gap-fill exercise about Bill Gates I've never seen anything like it' – a strange person, place, and a thing	Describing a picture Exchanging information about a strange person, place and thing Group work – devising an advert	Seven radio ads	Describing your favorite part of town
7 – Doing without	Verb patterns Reduced infinitives	Consumer durables Hot verbs (with *get*)	Soundbites	Letters between Sean and his grandmother – an exercise on verb patterns The family who turned back the clock' – a family who give up all domestic appliances for three days	Discussion – domestic life fifty years ago things you couldn't live without Discussion – the pros and cons of television	A song – Fast Car, by Tracy Chapman	Contrasting Ideas Writing about an invention you couldn't live without

Figure 1*:* Two sample units from *New Headway Upper-Intermediate's* contents table (Soars and Soars 1998)

As can be seen, meaning is put in the foreground with the establishment of a topic or theme for each unit (e.g. *Doing without*), which threads through the various strands of content. Meanwhile, the importance of form is also made obvious by the prominent placement of grammar in the second column. The contents have been divided broadly into "language input" and "skills development," a pattern which represents what Cunningsworth calls a combination of "rules-based" and "performance-based" approaches. The accuracy/fluency continuum mentioned in the aims stated by

Headway's authors can be "neatly encompassed by linking accuracy to grammatical understanding and fluency to language practice and skills work." (Cunningsworth, 1995: 19).

3.3 Initial conclusions

Insofar as the book's simple goal of a balance of accuracy and fluency matches that of our program at the institute, the two appear to be generally compatible. The book provides plentiful opportunities for "activation" through skills work and communicative tasks, while the "traditional" grammar instruction allows for accuracy development and may also have the appeal of familiarity to some students. A closer look at the language included, to see if it is appropriate to the needs of a general English course, will be the focus of the next section.

4 Guideline Two: Usefulness and relevance – the syllabus

Coursebooks should reflect the uses (present and future) which learners will make of the language. Select coursebooks which will help to equip students to use language effectively for their own purposes.

4.1 Syllabus type

A brief glance at the inside cover will be enough to identify *New Headway Upper-Intermediate* as an example of content-based approach to syllabus specification – one which itemizes the language (and skills) to be learned and makes mastery of these the criteria by which to judge success of learning. White has classified this as a Type A syllabus, one which asks the question, "What is to be learned?" The answer is generally a list of "grammatical structures, categories of communicative function, topics, themes or communicative and cognitive skills." (White, 1988: 46). A rationale for Type A syllabuses can be found in Swan (quoted in McDonough and Shaw), who argues that

> When deciding what to teach to a particular group of learners, we need to take into consideration several different meaning categories and several different formal categories. We must make sure that our students are taught to operate key functions … to talk about basic notions … to communicate appropriately in specific situations … to discuss the topics which correspond to their main interests and needs … At the same time, we shall need to draw up a list of phonological problems … of high priority structures, and of the vocabulary which our students will need to learn. In addition, we will need a syllabus of skills …(1993: 47-8)

We can contrast this with the Type B syllabus, which views language more holistically and asks the question, "How is it to be learned?" In Type B syllabuses the specification of items would not

include grammar or functions but rather tasks or topics, with the aim being to "involve learners in the exchange of meanings as soon as possible." (Willis, 2000: 19)

> The belief which lies behind the holistic Type B syllabus is that the best way to learn a language is by using that language, and that a focus on form should be subsidiary to language use. Through language use, both productive and receptive, learners become aware of language form and gradually adjust and develop their own language in light of this.

Considering Korean learners' primary need for "activation", it might seem appropriate to forego content-oriented books like *Headway* and adopt one incorporating a Type B syllabus instead. Moreover, many have questioned the wisdom of itemizing language items when in fact it is asserted that learning cannot be predicted. Research has shown that linguistic development is more a matter of unpredictable acquisition rather than predictable learning (Ellis, 1988, Skehan, 1996 and Skehan, 1998).

However, the reality is that Type A syllabuses

> …represent the conventions upon which the most widely used language course books have been based and indeed, the most popular newly published materials continue to draw upon this tradition. The reluctance to break away from established tradition reflects, no doubt, widespread teacher and student preferences and expectations on the one hand and the caution and realism of publishers on the other. (White, 1988: 47)

So *Headway's* approach, while perhaps conservative, is also representative of the bulk of coursebooks which are available on the market, and availability is perhaps as equally fundamental a criterion as syllabus to consider in evaluating materials.

Returning to Figure 1 above, we can see how the authors use the categories of *language input* and *skills development* to organize the various syllabus strands. The contents of these two categories shall be looked at now in more detail.

4.2 Language input

Headway divides up its language input into three major categories: grammar, vocabulary and "Postscript". The contents are summarized in Figure 2 below.

Unit	Grammar	Vocabulary	Postscript
1	overview of tense system active and passive auxiliary verbs	compound nouns word formation	dates, numbers and spelling
2	present perfect simple and continuous	guessing meaning synonyms 'hot' verbs: *take* and *put*	exclamations (including countable and uncountable)
3	narrative tenses (past simple, past continuous and past perfect	adjectives that describe character word formation with suffixes and prefixes	expressing interest and surprise (reply questions and echoes)
4	quantity expressions countable and uncountable nouns	lexical set: exports and imports words with variable stress	social expressions
5	future forms tense usage in clauses	word pairs (binomials) 'hot' verbs: *be* + adverb or preposition	telephone conversations (beginning and ending)
6	relative clauses participles infinitives	*-ed / -ing* adjectives synonyms in context	English signs
7	verb patterns reduced infinitives	lexical set: consumer durables 'hot' verbs: *get*	'soundbites'
8	modal auxiliary verbs (for expressing probability) (for other uses)	collocations: 'making sentences stronger' adverbs and adjectives adverbs and verbs	exaggeration and understatement (idioms, expressions and discourse)
9	questions and negatives	groups antonyms in context	being polite (requests and refusals)
10	expressing habit (present and past)	lexical set: words and phrases related to money	time expressions
11	hypothesizing (about the present and past)	idioms	moans and groans
12	noun phrases articles and determiners adding emphasis	homophones homonyms	linking and commenting (adverbials)

Figure 2*: New Headway Upper-Intermediate's* language input syllabus (Soars and Soars, 1998)

4.2.1 Grammar

The book seems to live up to its promise to provide an "in-depth treatment of grammar." Each unit contains at least one grammar point, often two or more presented as a contrast. Approximately one-fourth to one-third of the material in each unit is given over to grammar-related presentation and practice material. As can be seen from the table, there is a great deal of emphasis on the verb phrase and tenses, which Willis has called "heavily slanted" (2000), but also some work on the noun phrase as well (in Units 4, 6 and 12). There is no indication of what considerations went into the selection and grading of this material. Sinclair and Renouf (1991) assert that such content is often not based on an analysis of language but on an analysis of other coursebooks and pedagogic grammars.

The book also claims to devote some attention to the "grammar of spoken English", with work on areas such as "being polite, linking and commenting adverbs, exaggeration and understatement, and lexis in discourse (Soars and Soars, 1998). This apparently refers to the material in the postscript section. Grammar may be an ill-chosen name for this material, as it seems much more lexical in nature – as opposed to things like such as ellipsis or tags, which have been identified by McCarthy and Carter as grammatical features of spoken English. However, the language in the Postscript section is nevertheless likely to be useful to Korean learners insofar as it represents "particular features of vocabulary use which mark it out as belonging to spoken rather than written domains" (McCarthy and Carter, 1995: 214).

4.2.2 Vocabulary

The authors lay claim to a "well-defined lexical syllabus" designed to help learners with the "systems" of vocabulary, and the contents of Figure 2 seem to support this. Many of the elements correspond directly to aspects of word knowledge that Carter (1987) has identified as important for second language learning, e.g. multiple meanings (Units 4 and 12), rules of word formation (Units 3 and 6); and collocation (Units 2, 5, 7 and 8). Also included is a focus on "delexicalized" verbs, such as *get, put,* and *take* (Units 2,5 and 7), which Sinclair (1991: 153) asserts are common in English but have been underrepresented in coursebooks. Such a "system-focused" vocabulary syllabus could go a long way in helping Korean learners, who traditionally have learned vocabulary on a word-by-word basis, concentrating on denotational meaning to the near exclusion of all other aspects of word knowledge. (It should be noted, however, that the practice of learning vocabulary in lexical sets (Units 4, 7 and 10), which *Headway* and many other coursebooks advocate as an efficient approach, has been criticized recently by Nation (2000), who cites research showing that it leads to cross-associations and therefore interference in recall.)

4.2.3 Postscript

This last division seems to be something of a catch-all category encompassing functional language (Unit 5), discourse features of conversation (Unit 12) and a lexical set of time expressions (Unit 10). As noted above, some items here are useful but others are clearly not relevant for Korean learners, for example, the material on English signs (Unit 6).

4.2.4 Variety of English

One very important additional aspect of the language input is the variety of English used in *Headway* – the book is clearly meant for learners who wish to study British English. Surveys have shown, however, that Korean students overwhelmingly prefer an American variety of English, both in the accent spoken by their instructors and in the teaching materials employed (Gibb, 1998). This mismatch has the potential to create serious disappointment among learners and must be addressed by the teacher if this book is to be chosen for a Korean context. One solution is to supplement the book with listening and vocabulary material including North American accents and lexis.

4.3 The skills syllabus

Although some have argued against including the four skills in any syllabus specification on the grounds that they relate more to methodology (see Willis, 2000, for example), the skills components of the book will be examined here for the sake of organizational clarity and brevity.

4.3.1 Receptive skills

Working backwards from the items in the skills development portion of the contents map (see Appendix A) we can outline *Headway's* receptive skills syllabus as below in Figure 3, in terms of the subskills they are meant to develop.

Reading	Listening
• skimming (all units) • scanning (all units) • note-taking and summarizing (e.g. Unit 4) • reading for inference (e.g. Unit 2) • appreciating literature (e.g. Unit 3)	• listening for gist (all units) • listening for detail (all units) • note-taking (e.g. Unit 5) • perception listening, i.e. discriminating sounds (e.g. Unit 10) • making inferences (e.g. Unit 2) • musical appreciation / fun (Units 1 and 7)

Figure 3*: New Headway Upper-Intermediate's* receptive skills syllabus (Soars and Soars, 1998)

There appear to be an adequate variety of subskills addressed here. True to the authors' claims, the book contains at least one reading or listening text in each unit. Many units contain two, although in such cases the first is a simplified text designed to present or practice a grammar point rather than to develop skills. The texts meant for skills development are generally longer and more authentic (e.g. the listening texts include false starts, overlapping speakers' turns, etc.) and in several cases are truly authentic.

While the variety of task types is impressive, the same cannot be said of the choice of text types. Much of the selection of the reading material seems to have been made on the basis of interest of

topic, and while interest is important for motivation (Rivas, 1999) it arguably limits the type of practice and exposure students will receive. As has been noted, many learners at the institute are planning to study abroad someday, which might argue for a few more texts in an academic style (e.g. reports and lectures) rather than so much popular journalism. The issue of language variety also comes into play here as students tend to complain about the difficulty of understanding the British English accents heard on the accompanying tapes.

4.3.2 Productive skills: Speaking

Without exception, the speaking tasks in *Headway* follow on from, or serve as warm-up material for, the language presentations and other skills work in each chapter. The types of tasks included are as follows:

- discussions (all units)
- controlled information gaps (unit 2)
- roleplay (units 2 and 11)
- a class survey (unit 5)
- a general knowledge quiz (unit 9)
- a short talk/presentation
- a short drama
- jigsaw information-exchange activities associated with the readings in units 1, 6 and 10

On the one hand, this is admirable in that speaking practice is so well integrated and the book can boast many opportunities for personalization, which Cunningsworth says is an important responsibility of coursebook writers (1995: 19). On the downside, however, Cunningsworth says activities such as those above "do not actually teach how to organize conversation in English" (1995: 70).

While the discussions which predominate in *Headway* are useful for developing fluency, it can be argued that an approach which also incorporates speaking subskills or strategies is warranted in the case of Korean learners. Margolis (in press) has found that when faced with limits in their ability to communicate intended meanings, Korean learners tend to make most frequent use of "disengagement strategies" which involve going outside the interaction for help, and made the least use of "engagement strategies" (e.g. circumlocutions and asking their interlocutor for clarification) which allow the interaction to continue.

Unlike *Headway*, some coursebooks do address such strategy needs in units with titles such as "Explaining what you mean" and "getting around vocabulary" (see for example, *Advanced Conversation*, Geddes, Sturtridge and Been, 1991).

4.3.3 Productive skills: Writing

Cunningsworth says that most writing activities in general English coursebooks are of a controlled or guided kind "where a model is given and the students' task is to produced something similar, usually based on additional information given."(1995: 80). In addition to teaching the mechanics of writing at sentence level, the coursebook writer should also include material to familiarize learners with discourse structure and the relationship between type of writing and conventions for organization and expression. These are both addressed in *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*, as are certain subskills of writing, as illustrated in the table below.

Sentence- and paragraph-level discourse features	**Exploring different reasons for writing**	**Writing subskills**
• Position of adverbials • Contrasting ideas • Joining sentences with conjunctions and adverbs • Word order and focus of attention	• A book or film review • Research and report writing • A biography • Writing about a period in history • A play with stage directions • Describing a career	• Recognizing/using formal versus informal styles in letters • Proofreading • Note-taking

Figure 4*: New Headway Upper-Intermediate's* writing skills syllabus (Soars and Soars, 1998)

In a general English course like Yonsei's, a limited, product-oriented syllabus such as this seems reasonable. A more involved approach incorporating work on writing processes such as brainstorming, organizing, conferencing and redrafting, will probably be needed for learners with better-defined needs to write in English, but for them an ESP course on academic writing is available at the institute.

5 Guideline Three: Learning needs and methodology

Coursebooks should take account of students' needs as learners and should facilitate their learning processes, without dogmatically imposing a rigid 'method'.

5.1 Case study: a sample unit

As noted earlier, the authors claim to have combined the best of traditional approaches (e.g. "in-depth treatment of grammar" and "thorough practice activities") with communicative approaches

(e.g. letting learners work out rules for themselves and express personal opinions). Further, the authors employ an approach they call *language in context*, where "students see and/or hear the target language and have tasks that prompt its analysis and use." Grammatical areas "are treated in greater depth so that students begin to perceive the systems that underlie the language."

Let us examine a sample to see this methodology at work. I have chosen material from Unit 2, which focuses on present perfect simple and continuous.

The unit starts with a short "Test your grammar" quiz, which the teacher's notes say is to guide students into the focus of the unit and provide an engaging start, but which should not be dwelt on for long. Following this is a textual presentation incorporating pictures, written text and listening material on the theme of travel and tourism, which introduces the famous explorer David Livingstone and a fictional modern-day backpacker. The target language has been embedded in the written text and the listening script.

Students first perform comprehension-related tasks to process the texts for meaning, checking answers in pairs and discussing the characters, and then are led into some pronunciation work and grammar questions focusing on conceptual aspects of the target language. The object is to have the learners formulate rules about when the various forms are used, and why (e.g. the present perfect continuous is used "to emphasize the length of time that the activity has lasted over hours, days, weeks, months, or years leading up to the present.") These rules are reinforced in a "language review" section later in the unit and in the grammar reference in the back of the book.

This is followed by a "bank" of controlled practice activities, the first two focusing on question formation and the differences in concepts between the various usages of the verb forms. Both of these exercises use information and examples from the presentation. Another exercise asks learners to explain conceptual distinctions between two or three examples sentences (e.g. "I've been reading all morning." versus "I've read four chapters.") and a third provides sentences with errors of form and concept that must be corrected.

A freer "listening and speaking" section follows, consisting of an information gap and a role play based on a fictional entrepreneur, both of which suggest use of the target grammar.

5.2 Discussion

A few points can be made about the methodology illustrated here, in light of claims made by the authors.

5.2.1 "Language in context", or PPP?

The approach closely resembles the present-practice-produce paradigm (or PPP). Every unit in the book starts with a semi-authentic text meant to provide a context for examples of the target language, which is followed by controlled (and in some cases freer) practice activities. The PPP model, though still used widely around the world, has been criticized for a variety of reasons, some of which are mentioned below.

5.2.2 Emphasis on grammar rules

This methodology puts great stock in knowing rules about grammar. Ellis (1988, quoted in White, 1988: 46) says that such rules may contribute to "analytic knowledge about the language – its parts, rules and organization ... [but] this kind of knowledge … is not available for 'unplanned discourse', that is, the kind of language use which occurs in spontaneous communication where there is no time or opportunity to prepare what will be said." What is needed instead, Ellis asserts, are activities or tasks to develop "'primary processes', which automatize existing non-analytic knowledge." Many teachers of English in Korea are likely to agree if they reflect on their experience. Often the learners already know the rules being taught but nevertheless have trouble deploying the forms accurately, or at all, in real-time communication.

5.2.3 Production-based practice

The practice activities included in *Headway* are presumably meant to address the need to automatize learners' analytic knowledge. Most would agree that exercises here are well-written and thorough. However, Ellis and others have criticized approaches based on productive practice of language forms, citing research which shows that they do not lead to predictable gains in language ability (1988).

Nevertheless, it is widely acknowledged that learners will usually expect some element of productive practice as part of class work and are likely to feel disappointed if it is not provided (Hopkins and Nettle, 1994). My own classroom research supports this claim: in a questionnaire given to 18 students, all of them agreed that productive practice of new language forms was necessary to be able to use the new language in natural communication.

5.2.4 Inductive learning or "rule-hiding"?

Another point of interest is the authors' claim that these materials encourage students to work out rules for themselves, which suggests an inductive approach to learning. Inductive approaches have been associated with higher motivation and better understanding and retention (Gollin, 1998). *Headway* does indeed include "grammar questions" in each unit which ask students to analyze the target grammar, but it is debatable whether this truly constitutes an inductive approach. One might say learners are free to work out the rules for themselves so long as theirs match the ones prescribed by the book. Johns describes this approach as "rule-hiding."

> The materials writer decides what rule or rules are to be taught and writes a set of examples (sentences or pseudo-text) to encapsulate them. The task of the learner is to work in the opposite direction and to recover the rules from the examples. (1991)

Johns asserts that such an approach "may show no discernible advantage over the more traditional deductive approach." Gollin, on the other hand, says approaches such as *Headway's* can be called a "modified inductive" approach, which she claims can actively engage learners mentally, "which is not only more motivating but can lead to more thorough learning" (1998: 88).

5.2.5 Adaptability

As noted above, *Headway's* practice activities are often closely integrated with the presentation material. While this renders the coursebook more coherent, it also makes it harder to adapt away from a presentation-style approach. Teachers and learners may find this quite restrictive.

5.3 General observations

Korean learners who are familiar and comfortable with grammar-based instruction such as this will perhaps feel at home with the way the book organizes its learning activities. The emphasis on productive practice is also likely to give many the impression that the material is goal-oriented and that they are making progress. One the other hand, it can be argued that Korean learners would benefit more from a topic- or task-based methodology, feeling as they do that communicative ability is paramount and that meaning-based instruction will provide more chances to activate their passive knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.

6 Guideline 4: Support for learning

Coursebooks should have a clear role as a support for learning. Like teachers, they mediate between the target language

6.1 Organization, layout and presentation

New Headway Upper-Intermediate is attractively laid out, with glossy pages and liberal use of color and photographs. Sections are clearly labeled and modularly placed on the page to minimize distraction. There are headings or labels for each section and exercises and activities are always introduced with clear instructions. The map of the book clearly lays out the contents, and cross references indicate where learners can find further grammatical information in the back. The strong visual element is likely to attract Korean students, whom Stebbins (1995: 111) has discovered in her research to be consistently visual in their learning styles. Importantly, the visual material is often integrated into the language or task focus, unlike many textbooks where it simply serves as window dressing. The biggest complaint to be made here is that very little space is provided for learners' written answers.

6.2 Opportunities for reinforcement, revision and self-study

As mentioned, the book includes a grammar reference which summarizes and expands on the material covered in each unit, complete with example sentences and diagrams. A list of new words and expressions introduced in each unit is also included, as are tapescripts for all the listening material. There is also a workbook which provides a great deal of additional practice and language input, coordinated with the material in the student's book. While building on the main language input, the workbook also includes additional material on phrasal verbs, prepositions and phonology. In my experience it has proved useful both in class and for homework assignments.

6.3 Subject content, social values and topics

The authors seem to have taken pains to avoid cultural offense. Women and minority groups are presented respectfully. However, some of the material seems aimed at an audience studying in the UK (e.g. English signs in Unit 6 and Soundbites in Unit 7) and may therefore be difficult to render relevant and engaging to Korean learners. The topics include a well-chosen mixture of the serious and light-hearted (see Appendix B), from children's jokes to homelessness, and are nicely developed in the language input and skills development material, as has been mentioned.

7 Summary and overall evaluation

To sum up, *New Headway Upper-Intermediate* is well designed, well written book which provides a great deal of support for learning. As has been noted, the book offers a good balance of work on accuracy and fluency while the overall emphasis is clearly on oral communication. The authors have taken pains to provide numerous opportunities to engage learners in terms of topics, language and skills. The language input is useful and relevant, especially the material focusing on the grammar of speech and vocabulary systems, although the language variety is not ideal. The book also tries to incorporate a discovery element by asking learners to formulate rules based on their observations of language in use. The primary disadvantages lie in the methodology, which is somewhat restrictive and rests on some arguably shaky theoretical foundations. The approach to accuracy work is rule-based and behaviorist, though it is acknowledged that this may be what Korean students are accustomed to and expect. It is questionable whether there is enough speaking practice of a useful type. In general, however, the book's faults are outweighed by it strengths and these can be overcome through adaptation and supplementation.

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Appendix A: Skills development contents from *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*

Unit	Reading	Speaking	Listening	Writing
1	'Home is where you make it!' – a gapfill exercise about a man with an unusual home 'People who emigrate' – two families who move to another country (jigsaw)	Exchanging information about families who emigrated Discussion – the pros and cons of living in another country	A song – Hellow Muddah, Hello Fadduh	Correcting language mistakes in two informal letters Identifying mistakes in common
2	'Death by tourism' – how tourists are ruining the places they visit on holiday	Information gap and roleplay – the Virgo Group Discussion – tourism Discussion – your earliest memories	'World traveler and lavender farmer' – an interview with Natalie Hodgson	Note-taking Position of adverbials Writing a biography
3	'Girl barred from top store' – an exercise on tenses about a girl who was barred from Harrods An extract from *The Mayor of Casterbridge,* by Thomas Hardy	Talking about books Questions about books	The news A dramatized version of the extract from *The Mayor of Casterbridge* Three people talking about a book they've liked	A review of a book or film
4	'The business woman who went to Australia and made a fortune' (jigsaw) 'Three thousand years of world trade' – an extract from an encyclopedia	A class survey of shopping habits A maze – you've decided to open a restaurant, but how will you go about it? A group-decision making exercise	An English couple who opened an English restaurant in France talk about their experiences	Note-taking Research and report writing
5	'This is your captain speaking' – an exercise on tenses 'I'll marry you, but only if …' – an American couple's prenuptial agreement leaves nothing to chance	Discussion – who makes the best couples? Exchanging information about three people's arrangements to meet	Vox pops – eight people talk about the future The reunion – three old friends arrange to meet (jigsaw)	Formal and informal letters recognizing formal style writing an informal letter
6	'The man who could buy anything' – a gap fill exercise about Bill Gates 'I've never seen anything like it!' – a strange person, place and a thing (jigsaw)	Describing a picture Exchanging information about the strange person, place and thing Group work – devising an advert	Seven radio advertisements	Describing your favorite part of town
7	Letters between Sean and his grandmother – an exercise on verb patterns 'The family who turned back the clock' – a family who give up all domestic appliances for three days	Discussion – domestic life fifty years ago Discussion – things you couldn't live without Discussion – the pros and cons of television	A song – *Fast car*, by Tracy Chapman	Contrasting ideas *whereas* *However* *although* Writing about an invention you couldn't live without
8	'Jane Austen, the hottest writer in Hollywood' – the famous English novelist who is enjoying a revival	Talking about the lives of famous people Discussion – the lives of women past and present	One side of a phone conversation An interview with Tim Rice, who wrote the lyrics to *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and Paul Nicholas, who played Jesus	Writing a fan letter
9	'Mysteries of the universe' – puzzles that have plagued human beings for thousands of years.	General knowledge quiz Discussion – retelling a story from another point of view	'Saying I won't' – a radio program about people who change their mind at the altar A song– *Waiting at the church*	Joining sentences Conjunctions *whenever, unless* Adverbs *anyway, actually*
10	'Living history' – the 100-year-old lady who lives in the past 'People and their money' – who's rich and who's poor these days? (jigsaw)	Giving a short talk about your first friend or teacher Attitudes to money Homelessness	Homelessness – interviews with people who live on the streets, and those who try to help them	Writing about a period in history
11	'Who's life's perfect anyway?' – two people's lives 'Things we never said' – a short story about a failed relationship, by Fiona Goble	Roleplay – two lovers tell each other the truth Acting out a dramatic scene	A radio play, based on the text 'Things we never said' 'Family secrets' – two people talk about a secret in their lives	Writing a play with stage directions
12	'It blows your mind' – eye-witness accounts of the first atomic explosion	Discussion – famous photos of the twentieth century Discussion – how the atomic bomb changed history	Children's jokes Various people describe great events of the twentieth century	Describing a career Word order and focus of attention

Appendix B: Topics by unit from *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*

Unit	Topics	Unit	Topics
1	Being away from home Emigration Living abroad	**7**	Domestic and family life Modern conveniences Things you couldn't live without Television
2	Travel and tourism The environment	**8**	Famous people Jane Austen The lives of women Broadway stars and musicals
3	Funny and embarrassing stories Appreciating literature Books and film	**9**	Trivia and general knowledge Mysteries of the Universe Romance Weddings
4	Commerce and trade Shopping Going into business Business problems	**10**	Comparing life then and now Money Being rich and poor Homelessness
5	Future plans and arrangements Marriage and romance	**11**	Regrets and complaints Romance and failed relationships Family secrets
6	Bill Gates Strange people, places and things Advertisements Your favorite part of town	**12**	Icons Michelangelo The first atomic bomb explosion Famous photos of the Twentieth Century Great events of the Twentieth Century Children's jokes