

An Analysis of Curriculum 2013 English Textbook at Seventh Grade Students of Junior High School

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Abstract

Indonesia has just implemented a new curriculum called the 2013 Curriculum. The new curriculum brought a new textbook. This study aimed to determine to what extent did the 2013 English textbook curriculum meets the criteria of a good book in the form of Psychological Validity, Pedagogical Validity, and Process and Content Validity. This research used a descriptive method. The findings were taken through a checklist and interview instrument. Researcher filled in the checklist then conducted interviewed with the English regarding the use of the textbook. The results showed that Psychological Validity only fulfilled 54.76%, Pedagogical Validity was 52.78% and Process and Content Validity was 65.63%. Based on the research conducted, it can be concluded that the curriculum 2013 English textbook had not all met the criteria of a good book. Therefore, it was recommended that the Education Ministry and all stakeholders in the field of education should review the material and presentation methods in this book. For English teachers, it is recommended to improve their creativity and teaching abilities, prepare other resources for studying this book. For further researchers, it was hoped that they will be able to conduct research with a more in depth quiry.

Keywords: *Curriculum 2013, textbook*

Introduction

The Indonesian government has recently implemented a new curriculum called curriculum of 2013. The main purpose of these changes is to improve the quality of students' potential. The role of a teacher is needed for the realization of the objectives of an educational curriculum. A teacher should be able to guide and help students to build knowledge. To meet the expectations, a teacher needs an effective learning tool. One of the most important tools is the provision of textbooks as good and right reference for students.

The textbook is very important because it is one of the significant means of supporting the process of learning activities. In curriculum 2013 all schools in Indonesia use the same textbook. That is, if a textbook has been required for all schools in a country, then the first assumption is that the textbook is very good, so it can be used as a compulsory textbook. As a compulsory book, the curriculum 2013 English textbook is certainly assumed to be able to meet all the needs of the teaching and learning process with all the real conditions that exist in the field.

One condition that must be considered is that in the 2013 curriculum students learn English at seventh-grade of junior high school for the first time. They have never studied English at elementary school. Even if there are students who have mastered English at the elementary school level, it is because they learn outside the curriculum taught at school. From the design point of view, the textbook in the new curriculum also has far differences from the previous curriculum. If in the previous curriculum consisted of the textbook materials and their explanation as well as exercises such as multiple-choice, completion, true-false, essay, and so on. The new curriculum the textbook is full of pictures instead of explanation on the materials.

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive research. This method aimed to describe a phenomenon or object as the way it is. Sukmadinata (2006) explained that descriptive research is a form of research that aimed to describe the phenomena that exist, both natural phenomena and human-made phenomenon. Iskandar (2009: 61) pointed out that descriptive qualitative research is a research that systematic and subjective approach in describing phenomena or social phenomena in the field and understanding those phenomena as detail. In line, Gay, *et al* (2011: 395) emphasized that descriptive qualitative research aims to understand what is happening and why. It observed the components of the books, both material and how the presentation or illustration of the textbooks for seventh grade students. Object of this study was English textbook for seventh grade students, titled "When English Rings the Bell". This was because that textbook is legally used and compulsory for all schools in Indonesia. This book was issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture. It

also distributed freely for each school. It means, this was the only the book that formally used to support curriculum 2013 in Indonesia. There were some instruments used in this research. The researcher was the key instrument because he interpreted data obtained from the document and checklist. Besides the researcher, two others instruments were checklist and interview guide. The instrument will be validated by using content validity. To see the content validity of the instrument, the researcher showed the instruments to one of the lecturers as the expert to check that the instruments were valid and suitable to be used for this research or not.

Results

The results of the data were presented as follows.

Table 1. Result

No	Indicator	Score	Category
1	Psychological validity	54.76	Fair
2	Pedagogical validity	52.78	Fair
3	Process and content validity	65.63	Fair
Accumulation of percentage		57.72	Fair

From the findings above, it could be concluded that the indicators of psychological validity were not fulfilled optimally in this book. In this case, the book did not meet all the criteria contained in this indicator. The result showed the Psychological Validity score was 54.76% of all items. Meanwhile, pedagogical validity appeared in the lowest percentage score that was 52,78%. Furthermore, in process and content validity, the percentage of obtained score was 65,63%. By these results, the accumulation percentage of all indicators was 57.72%. It means the category for this book was Fair.

Discussion

The findings showed that only a portion of the checklist items was fulfilled by this book. The percentage in each indicator can prove the fulfillment of the items. Tomlinson (1998) noted the most significant role of the materials is to involve students in decision-making about their learning. In this case, it can be seen that the role of the textbook was not only limited as the source of the materials but more likely as the foster of learner's ability. At the same time as encouraging students to become creative, materials must provide opportunities for cooperative learning (Tomlinson, 2003: 47 and 48). Based on those opinions, it can be interpreted that through a book students can learn on their own. The book can be used as a trigger so they can learn and improve their abilities.

In further discussion, Tarigan (1993) stated some functions of textbook, and one of them was the textbook should consider the linguistic aspect. So it will be suitable with the learners' ability. In contrary to that idea, the material in this book did not take into account the students' abilities. Students were directly presented with advanced material, without first looking at whether students have mastered basic English or not. Like the example in material 1, students were directly confronted with Greeting material. While whether students already know the greeting or not, it was not discussed in the book. Whether students also know the greeting or not, was also not explained in this material. Students just presented greeting material without any explanation. Students were only presented images to determine the context when the greeting is used. For students who have already studied English, of course, it was easy for them because they have mastered it and it was not something new for them. For those who have never studied English, the material was something new knowledge for them. Therefore, this book cannot be said to be able to increase students' knowledge cognitively, because the determiner of it was the students' prior knowledge.

There were only little explanations about the material presented in this book. As Cunningsworth (1995) mentioned that one of the multiple roles of textbooks was as a reference source for learners on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc. But in this book there was almost no explanation about grammar. The attraction factor of this book was only because the images and writings in this book were full of colors and also the images in this book used colorful animations. This was in accordance with Tarigan (1993) statement which said that the textbook must be interesting and attractive toward the learners, so they will be interested in using textbooks. Tarigan (1993) also stated another function of the textbook, that was the textbook must be able to motivate the learners. On the other hand, the materials in this book were not directly related to students' motivation. It was consistent with the results of interviews with several teachers. They mentioned that there was no direct connection between the material and the appearance of the book on

student motivation. Student motivation arose based on the abilities and the desires of the students themselves.

According to Edge and Wharton (1998), materials can provide teachers the chance of learning more about the language and about methods of teaching in a way that permits them to put new ideas in line with their experiences of reflective practice to gain a synthesis of a wide variety of teaching-related schemata. As a friendly guide for them, teachers' notes provided for the teachers must be helpful and explicit. Teachers must get prompted to add, delete, change and manage. A chance of choice and control must be given to teachers, in order to encourage them to be creative, innovative, and re-reflective. (Tomlinson, 2003: 50 & 51).

In general, the material in this book is not too difficult for a teacher. The materials in this book mostly use English in everyday life. As Johansson (2005) stated that textbooks are regarded as the potentially implemented curriculum, the link between aims and reality. In this case, it is described clearly that textbooks are the link between aims in curriculum and the reality in the field or reality in the teaching and learning process. With this fact, it is not challenging for a teacher. On the other hand, this book is also equipped with instructions in every its learning process. The steps of the activities in this book have been arranged in such a way as to follow the existing material. This was what Cunningsworth (1995) mentioned that one of the multiple roles of the textbooks as the resource for presentation material. Because the activity steps have been arranged by the material presented in this book, then in the implementation of the learning process, the teacher can follow these steps. This did not demand teacher creativity. Even though they only rely on activities in this book, the teacher can carry out the learning process even they were a new teacher. As Cunningsworth (1995) mentioned the multiple roles of the textbook, and one of them was as a support for less experienced teachers who have yet to gain in confidence.

Tomlinson (2003) stated that process and content validity relates to the overall view the textbook writer holds, or wishes to project, about the nature of language. Judging from the instructions given in this book, students were not required to know the meaning of the sentence provided. Students were immediately introduced to the material without instruction to understand the meaning of the material first. Students were only asked to repeat the teacher's pronunciation and then directly practice it based on the example or see the illustrations of the material in the book. There was no help for difficult words found in this book. Explicitly students were only allowed to ask for help from the teacher or see the meaning of words through a dictionary. The materials in this book did not explain explicitly the pattern that must be mastered by students.

This contradicted with Cunningsworth (1995) who mentioned that one of the roles of textbooks was a reference source for learners on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc. Based on the findings above, it can be explained that the material in the book did not determine whether it was challenging or not. But, the determiner whether the topic was challenging or not was the student's prior knowledge. For students who have already mastered English, the topic is not challenging at all, because the material is only about daily life, such as greeting, objects in the house, objects in school, and other daily topics. The material contained in this book was not proven able to attract students' attention. Based on interviews conducted to some English teachers, it was known that students behave as usual towards the material in the book. This was contrary to what Tarigan (1993) stated that the textbook must be interesting and attractive towards the learners, so they will be interested in using textbooks. This book was contextual. The material in this book was realistic. It means, all the materials, texts and activities contained in the book are appropriate with real events in daily life and are experienced directly by students. This was consistent with what Tarigan (1993) stated that the textbook must simulate the personal activity of the learners. In addition, the material in this book also did not show any attack on certain races and social classes. As Tarigan (1993) stated the textbook must be able to respect the differences of the individual.

In terms of layout/graphics, the design of this book was good. The images contained in this book were clear and printed in full color. No print was blurry. In terms of size, this book was not too big and not too small, making it easier for students to carry it. Likewise, the layout was good. The distribution of portions between images and writing were appropriate. This makes it easy for students to learn. No picture covers the writing. From the printed results, it could be seen that this book was printed with maximum color density. This was proven by the results of printed images and writings that were not blurry. The color was clear without any blurring.

Conclusion

Based on the findings in the analysis of the curriculum 2013 English textbook, it was found that this book has not all met the criteria for a good book. This was proven by the acquisition of accumulation percentage which only reached 57.72. These percentages indicate that the overall criteria for this book are bad.

There were some suggestions on this research, they were; Education ministry and all stakeholders in the field of education should review the material and presentation methods in this book and adapt it to the students' initial abilities in general. Teachers should always improve their creativity and teaching abilities in using this book, so that students are more motivated to use this book. The teacher should prepare other resources for studying this book, related to the lack of exercises and explanations contained in this book.

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