

Teachers' Perceptions on the Implementation of “*Bahasa Inggris Karakter Peduli Lingkungan*” as Teaching Material for Junior High School Students in Semarang City

Suwandi¹ Senowarsito² Sophia B, Th. Cicik³

^{1,2,3}English Education Department, Universitas PGRI Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding author. Email: dr_suwandi2@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to reveal whether or not the book developed entitled “*Bahasa Inggris Karakter Peduli Lingkungan*” as teaching material for Junior High School Students implemented at several schools in Semarang city could fulfil the needs of the teachers and students and is appropriate to be used as teaching material. One hundred and seventy one (171) students of Junior High School students were taken as samples. They were taught English by using the above developed teaching material and then posttest was given. The result shows that the mean score of the posttest was 76.5 indicating that the students' English competence belongs to a good category. So, it can be stated that the book could enhance the students' understanding on English. Besides, questionnaire was also given to the teachers to find out their perception on the appropriateness of the book. The questionnaire contained the aspects of the content appropriateness, the performance/presentation, and the language used. Based on the teachers' perception it shows that the content appropriateness got score of 67, 21% which belongs to a good category and 19,67 % of excellent; the performance/presentation got score of 62,63% (good) and 7,69% (excellent); and the language used got 73,38% (good) and 9,52% (excellent). So based on teachers' perception, most of them stated the book developed was in the category of good and excellent and thus, it can be concluded that the book developed by the researchers is suitable to be used as a teaching material for Junior High School as it fulfills the needs of the teachers and students.

Keywords: *environmental caring, teaching material, perception, implementation*

1. INTRODUCTION

Developing teaching material which fulfills the needs of the students and teachers needs great persistent efforts for it's time, energy and finance consuming. First of all, researchers have to observe as many schools as possible to find out the books provided and learn whether or not they are compatible with the current curriculum. Then researchers have to observe the problems faced by the teachers and students concerning the books provided by the schools viewed from their content, the presentation, the language used and the performance. Based on the data collected, the researchers then formulate and develop the material as expected by the students and teachers. When the draft is done, it should be tried out to find out whether it is already suitable and acceptable or not. The try out might not only be done once but it could be twice or three times in order to get the best acceptance of the teachers and students.

Many English book designers may be successful in developing English books for the English teaching and learning process at schools but not many of them were developed with reference to a certain kind of character

building. The book tried out here entitled *Bahasa Inggris Karakter Peduli Lingkungan* is the book designed not only to enhance students' English proficiency but also to build the students' consciousness on taking care of the environment. It is hoped that after learning English using this teaching material, students will have better understanding not only on the English itself but also the environmental caring. They will have better attitude and behaviour towards the environment, and have the habits of keeping the environment clean. They will be much aware of the fact that by keeping the environment clean will contribute to their health, flood prevention, environmental destruction, and the beauty of the environment.

It is realized that the formation of habits does not take a short time but a long one where the process through regular repetition, the behaviour will automatically become a habit. A habit may initially be triggered by a goal, but over time that goal becomes less necessary and the habit becomes more automatic. Realizing that language is the primary means through which school activities are conducted to achieve the goal (Schleppregrell, 2004:23) and the activities which are

done over time will form habits; therefore, the teaching material of English language needs to be designed by referring to the habit formation with some activities that encourage the students to keep the environment clean either at home or at school. The themes of the lesson are better to be environmentally focused and activities should be related to them including preventing flood, disposing waste, sweeping garden, and visiting friends in the hospital etc. Therefore, the objectives of this study are first to reveal whether or not the teaching material developed is in favourable to the students by referring to the students' result of the posttest. Second, it is also of importance to find out the students' and teachers' perception on the appropriateness of the teaching material viewed from its content, performance, etc. Third, it is also important to know whether or not the teaching material gives positive impact to the students' attitudes toward environmental caring.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Beyond focusing on the discussion on the necessity of developing English teaching material, it is also of importance to deal with Education in general. As it is admitted by many scholars, education is the basic need for every human being since he or she has been in the womb for its function is to develop his or her competence and to build his or her character. A baby, for example is in the condition of helpless but the fact that he or she owns competence that needs to be developed and it is believed that through education the potencies will simultaneously develop well. Education gives guidance and direction to the goals to be achieved. According to the Law No. 20, 2003 chapter 2, article 3, the Indonesian national education is to develop and to build the character, as well as to build the dignified civilization within the framework of enriching the life of Indonesian nation and to develop the potencies of the students. In realizing the students' potencies, curriculum is needed. Curriculum is a set of plans and settings of the objectives, content, and teaching material as well the teaching methods employed for achieving the objectives of education. Richards (2002:39) argues that curriculum is all activities in which children engage under the auspices of the school. This includes not only what pupils learn, but how they learn it, how teachers help them learn using what supporting materials, styles and methods of assessment and in what kind of facilities. Dubin and Oshtain (1986:34-35) differentiate between curriculum and syllabus; curriculum contains a broad description of general goals by indicating an overall educational-cultural philosophy which applies across subjects together with a theoretical orientation to language and language learning with respect to the subject matter at hand. While syllabus is a more detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements which translate the philosophy of the curriculum into a series of planned steps leading towards more narrowly defined objectives at each level. The components of syllabus in curriculum 2013 are core

competence, basic competence, teaching material, evaluation, time allotment and learning sources. From the components mentioned above, it is quite clear that one of the important components of the syllabus is teaching material as the primary input of the students to learn the language and therefore, it needs to be selected for its content which is in line with the goals of national education. The goals of the Indonesian national education as stated in Law no. 20, 2013 and in curriculum 2013 are among others to build the young generations to be creative, innovative, smart, and to have good behaviour and attitudes and thereby developing teaching material should also be addressed to achieve those goals. Teaching materials could function not only as guidance but also as the tools used for the teaching learning process. Therefore, if the goal of education is intensively to build the students' character, it is suggested that the teaching material and the kind of character such as the environmental caring awareness should be integrated in it. All content and activities in the teaching material should be directed to elaborate the students' awareness on the environmental caring. Besides, curriculum 2013 also mandates that all lessons including the English lesson should employ scientific approach through observing, questioning, trying and associating. With this approach, it is believed that students will be accustomed to think critically and hence can face the problems and solve them easily. In short, by referring to the above ideas, the development of English teaching material should be addressed to the development of the students' attitudes, skills and knowledge and the content, the activities created should reflect the building of students' character.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

Research and Development (R&D) design was employed in this study (Borg and Gall (1983: 772) because the researchers tried to develop English teaching material which fulfilled the needs of the teachers and students. In this phase, field testing phase, the researchers tried out the teaching material to a large scale of population, one hundred and seventy one (171) students from 7 schools of junior high schools in Semarang city. After several times teaching using the teaching material developed, posttest was given to find out whether or not the students' understanding on English was good. Besides, questionnaires were also distributed to the teachers to find out their perception on the appropriateness of the teaching material used. Observation was done in order to find out the students' awareness on the environmental caring. Several teachers were interviewed to ascertain the appropriateness of the teaching material used in teaching English at junior high schools.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

With regard to the experts' suggestions and the result of focus group discussion among English teachers, the book which formerly contained 10 chapters changed into 8

chapters. They are (1) Keeping the Environment Clean, (2) Visiting Friend and Family in the Hospital, (3) My Activities on Holiday, (4) The Beautiful of Old City in Semarang, (5) Knowing Things around Us, (6) Appreciating Friends' Work, (7) Being a Good Student, (8) Preserving the Artwork. The book was evaluated in terms of its content appropriateness, performance, and language used, each of which is shown in the following figure.

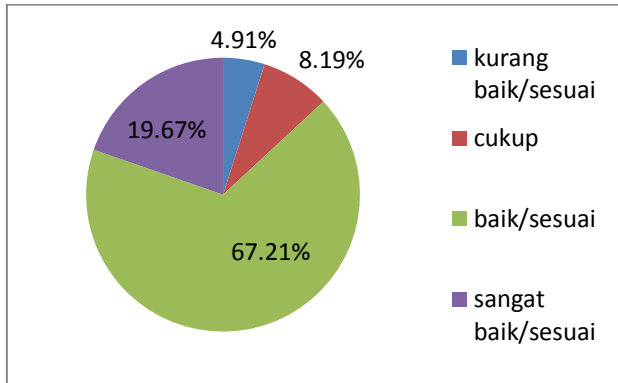


Figure 1 Content Appropriateness

Figure 1 shows that the teachers' perception on the teaching material was on sufficient (8,19%), good (67,21%) and excellent (19,67%) and only a few of them said insufficient. Thus, it can be concluded that the book developed belongs to "a good category" which means that the themes, the topic of discussion, the exercises in every chapter of the book is in accordance with the core and basic competences of the 2013 curriculum.

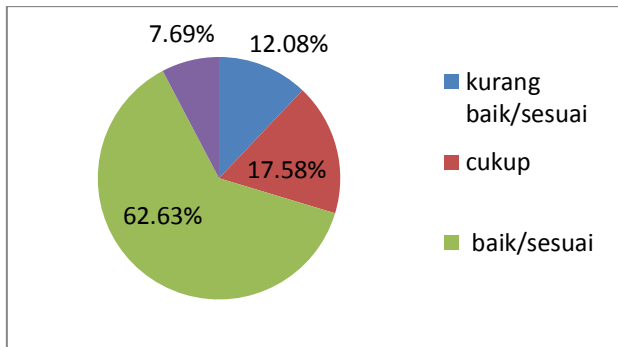


Figure 2 The Performance of the Book

Figure 2 shows that the teachers' perception on the performance of the book including the presentation of the material, the appropriateness of the pictures presentation, colors composition, cover and the book size belongs to a good category where 62,63% of the teachers stated good, 7,69% excellent and 17,58% sufficient. Thus, based on the graphic above it can be stated that the performance of the

book belongs to a good category and is considered to be fulfilling the needs of the teachers.

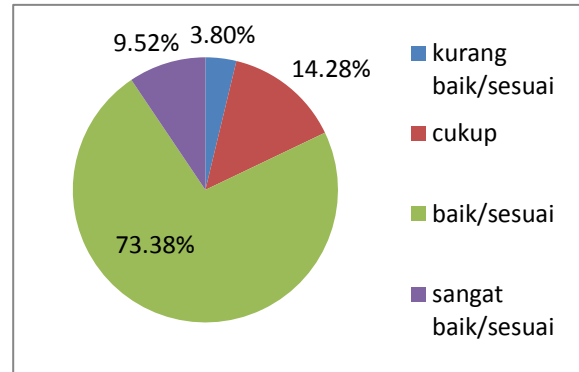


Figure 3 The Language Used

Figure 3 shows that 9,52% of the respondents chose excellent, 73,38% chose good, 14,28% chose sufficient and 3,80% insufficient. So, the language used in the book based on the figure belongs to a good category. It means that it is communicative, interactive, motivating, easy to be comprehended, easy to be used by the teachers and the level of difficulty is sufficient. In short, the book developed by the researchers fulfills the needs of the teachers for its content appropriateness, performance and the language used.

In relation to the students' English competence after being taught using the material developed, the result shows that the students in different schools achieved different posttest scores as shown in the following table.

Table 1 The Overall Mean Score of the Respondents

| NO | Name of schools | Average scores |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 | SMP A | 82,75 |
| 2 | SMP B | 79,55 |
| 3 | SMP C | 96 |
| 4 | SMP D | 78,71 |
| 5 | SMP E | 61,85 |
| 6 | SMP F | 49,73 |
| 7 | SMP G | 86 |
| TOTAL | | 534,59 |
| MEAN SCORE | | 76,37 |

From the table above, it can be seen that the overall mean score of 171 students is 76, 37 in which this score is more than the passing grade. Only two schools get the average score of less than the passing grade; this is may be due to the unintelligent input or whatsoever; however several of them got excellent and good scores.

Surprisingly, based on the result of the interview to the English teachers, almost all of them stated that they were

satisfied with the development of *Buku Bahasa Inggris Karakter Peduli Lingkungan*. They said that the teaching material does not only enhance students' English understanding but also encourages the students to be active in class for there are media that accompany the material. The media which are directly connected to the environmental caring could make the students aware of how important to keep the environment clean that can avoid flooding, environment destruction, and sickness. Then unconsciously they did like as exposed in the media, throwing rubbish in the rubbish basket, sweeping the floor of their own classes, dusting the tables and chairs etc. Their attitude toward the environment was quite positive.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

As it was stated earlier, teaching material plays an important role in educating the students to be better in attitude and behaviour. The fact that the material developed for the teaching of English to the students of junior high schools could enhance their English understanding and even could change their attitude and behaviour due to the insertion of character building in the material. If formerly they were apathetic or uninterested in keeping the environment clean, after being taught using *Buku Bahasa Inggris Karakter Peduli Lingkungan*, they had great concern on it. So it can be concluded that the teaching material integrated with character building material gives twofold advantage. On the one hand, it can enhance students' understanding on the English itself and on the other hand, it can enhance the students' awareness on the environmental caring. Thus, it can be suggested that teachers of English should not rely on the teaching material provided by the schools but they can create their own which is much more applicable for the students. Besides, it is also suggested to use the teaching material developed for it is proven can encourage students' English understanding changed their attitude and behaviour toward environmental caring better.

It is quite clear then that if character values are integrated in the teaching material. It does not mean that students learn merely on character but they learn it through the medium of language. Character is the content in the teaching material where is stressed in the high school syllabus that should be taught to the students. Quoting from Hawkins (2001:375) that the first goal of instruction is to teach the content, not to see the content as a vehicle for the acquisition of a language. What is meant by content here is the use of environment caring as the subject matter which may consist of topics or themes based on the students' need to be integrated to the teaching material. The themes or topics as the basis for teaching run through activities that happen in the classroom (Cameron: 2001: 180) and the teacher in this case has to provide exposure to the language as well as opportunities for learning the environmental caring. The researchers, therefore were obliged to develop an English teaching material by integrating the values of environmental caring under the

consideration in pursuit of the objectives, in the one hand, students get the knowledge of environmental caring that can be practiced directly in their daily activities and on the other hand, they also learn the language.

This study employed research and development (R&D) design (Borg and Gall (1983: 772) because the researchers tried to develop English teaching materials based on environmental caring character for Junior High School students. The respondents of this study were 306 students and 25 English teachers taken from 10 Junior High Schools in Semarang. They were given questionnaire to be filled out in order to obtain the information on their perception toward the availability of the English teaching material used at present and on their needs for the English teaching materials based on the environmental caring character. Besides, the researchers also observed students' attitudes and behaviours toward the efforts of taking care of the environment. The answers of the questionnaire were quantified using Likert scale and therefore quantitative and qualitative data were obtained. The qualitative data were obtained from the observation and interview, while the quantitative data were obtained from questionnaire.

REFERENCES

- [1] Schleppegrell, Mary J. (2004). *The language Of schooling: A functional linguistics perspective*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- [2] Richards, Jack C. (2002). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [3] Dubin, Fraida and Olshtain, Elite. (1986). *Course design: Developing programs and materials for language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [4] Depdiknas .2003. Undang-undang RI No.20 tahun 2003.tentang sistem pendidikan nasional.
- [5] Borg, W.R. & Gall, M.D. Gall. (1983). *Educational research: An introduction, fifth edition*. New York: Longman.
- [6] Del Hawkins, Roger J. Best, Kenneth A. Coney. (2001). *Consumer behavior, building marketing strategy*. International Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies Inc.
- [7] Cameron, Lynne. (2001). *Teaching languages to young learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.