

Evaluation of an ESP Textbook Entitled “Practice Your English Competence”: Teacher’s and Students’ Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Students’ needs should be taken into consideration in choosing textbooks for a vocational high school. This research aims to evaluate the relevance of a textbook entitled “Practice Your English Competence” to students’ needs of the multimedia major based on teachers’ and students’ perspectives. Data of this research were obtained from a multimedia class of a vocational high school in Bandung in the form of questionnaires and interviews. The data were analysed based on needs analysis proposed by Hutchinson and Waters, Nation and Macalister, in addition to evaluation survey questionnaires for students and teachers suggested by Litz. The results show that the book contains texts related to future employment, but the topics are not related to Multimedia. In other words, the book is not relevant to the students’ needs. However, this research suggests that the teacher should consider texts that are both related and unrelated to students’ expertise and future employment in choosing a textbook. The texts unrelated to the students’ expertise could be texts containing moral messages based on Curriculum 13 to balance students’ character development and skills for future employment.

Keywords: *English for Special Purposes, multimedia, needs analysis, textbook evaluation, Vocational High Schools*

1. INTRODUCTION

Alumni of vocational high schools are still not ready to work, and internships conducted have not received a positive response from the industry. This phenomenon deals with the implementation of Curriculum 2013 in vocational high schools that focuses on the suitability of textbooks that are used (Ramadhan & Ramdani 2014). Teachers should consider the textbook used in the class to achieve the success of Curriculum 2013 (Fauzi & Hanifah, 2019).

A textbook entitled “Practice Your English Competence” is written based on Curriculum 2013. English teachers at a vocational high school in Bandung choose this book because the book is considered more appropriate to vocational high school students rather than a book from the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia entitled “Bahasa Inggris: Stop Bullying Now Stand Up Speak Out”.

The book from the Ministry of Education and Culture is not only distributed to vocational high schools but also

to senior high schools. All chapters in the book use general English. In other words, there is no difference in terms of the contents for the vocational high school students and the senior high school students.

The textbook entitled “Practice Your English Competence” is written by Eka Mulya Astuti, M.A who graduated from the Master of Arts in Education study program. She has been teaching Bahasa Indonesia for expatriates since 2015. Her career as an English course lecturer and teacher is more than twenty years.

A vocational high school in which this study conducted has been implementing Technopark initiated by the government. The Technopark program aims to produce start-ups and enhance students’ English language skills through training for students and teachers (Djakarta Today, 2019). Therefore, the Multimedia major as a dominant part of start-ups is involved in this study to support the aims of Technopark.

Mindful of this overview, the “Practice Your English Competence” textbook is chosen by the researcher to evaluate the relevance of the textbook to students’ needs

of the Multimedia major based on teacher's and students' perspectives. It is important because the result of this study will help teachers in deciding materials used in the future as an effort to succeed the implementation of Curriculum 2013 in a vocational high school in Bandung.

There are several frameworks chosen for this study by considering the users of the textbook which are in the context of English for Specific Purposes of the Multimedia major. The frameworks are the need analysis proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Nation and Macalister (2010), in addition to evaluation survey questionnaires for students and teachers suggested by Litz (2005).

Richards (2001) proposes that analyzing learners' needs is a starting point in an ESP approach. The needs analysis aims to prepare teaching materials intended for students who need English in employment.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the needs analysis is divided into two categories which are target needs and learning needs. Target needs refer to what learners need to do in the target situation. They consist of necessities, lacks, and wants. Necessities are related to the demands of the target situation. Lacks deal with gaps between the target proficiency and the existing proficiency of learners. Lacks can be identified through the needs of learners. Want is related to awareness of needs that specify the ESP situation. The awareness is personal which means each learner might have different wants. The ideal wants should represent the wants of a group. On the other hand, learning needs refer to knowledge and abilities needed by learners in target situations.

In terms of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Nation and Macalister (2010) suggest four questions that could be asked to learners. The questions include:

1. Do learners need English for a special purpose?
2. Will learners use English for a wide range of purposes?
3. Do learners expect to learn certain things from the course?
4. Do learners have expectations about what the course will be like?

To achieve successful learning, both teachers and learners should be aware of the goals of each learning activity. Therefore, an introduction part of a textbook can include some explanation of the goals and what is the best way to achieve the goals. The responsibility for informing the learners of the goals and how to learn is included in special textbooks for teachers (Nation & Macalister, 2010).

With regard to the evaluation survey questionnaires proposed by Litz (2005), the questionnaires are shared with students and a teacher to reveal students' needs and evaluate the textbook through their perspectives.

Moreover, the questionnaires cover questions that are related to balance of activities, skills appropriateness and integration, subject content, and English types presented in the textbook.

Litz's (2005) survey questionnaire model is selected because it does not only evaluate the textbook but also takes into consideration students' needs which are the fundamental aspect of English for Specific Purposes, specifically in vocational high schools.

Curriculum 13 covers the scope of materials, the core and basic competencies with topics that are related and unrelated to future employment. In the scope of the material of the Curriculum 13, it is mentioned that the text types for the SMK students are as follows:

"Short and simple texts, authentic or semi-authentic for practical use in accordance with the field of expertise, accompanied by clear and reliable sources of reference." (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture number 34 of 2018, p. 43)

Thus, the texts intended for the SMK students are the texts which are really close to the field of students' expertise. It is in accordance with the competency standards of SMK graduates in terms of the English subject. The competency standard is "possessing the ability to use English and other foreign languages to carry out duties based on students' expertise" (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture number 34 of 2018, p.42).

Meanwhile, in the core and basic competencies of the Curriculum 2013, it is suggested that texts unrelated to future employment such as narrative texts related to folklore, procedure texts and biography texts could be provided for the vocational high school students.

This means that the materials of the texts taught to students do not have to be fully related to future employment. Prasasti, Solin, and Hadi (2019) add that even though folklore is not related to future employment, it has religious values, moral messages, education, and entertainment for the students. Moreover, the procedure text is useful to explain how a piece of machinery works and how to do something (Daulay, 2018). Therefore, the materials of the texts taught to vocational high school (SMK) students should provide various texts, both related and unrelated to future employment.

When a textbook as a part of teaching materials is not designed specifically for students' needs, adaptation and improvisation of the textbook should be allowed (O'Neill, 1982). Therefore, the findings of this study are expected to give recommendations for textbook writers and teachers to modify the textbook hence the textbook will be more suitable to be used by Multimedia students in vocational high schools.

2. METHOD

This part will elaborate the research methodology used in this study. The research design used in this study is qualitative design with additional quantitative data. There are data from multiple sources analyzed in this study. The data, including a textbook analysis, questionnaires, and interviews, are converged in the analysis process rather than analyzed separately. Each part of the data contributes to give a clearer understanding of the whole phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The qualitative design is used to analyze the data taken from the interview and the textbook. Meanwhile, the quantitative design is employed specifically for analyzing the data taken from the questionnaires by using descriptive statistical methods in the form of percentages of the frequencies.

Concerning the sampling technique, purposive sampling is chosen. The purposive sampling focused on participants with particular characteristics that are relevant to the research (Etikan, 2015). An EFL teacher and her 15 students from the class eleven of the Multimedia major at a vocational high school in Bandung are selected to participate in this study.

The teacher and the students are given questionnaires related to the need analysis and the textbook evaluation. The questionnaires consist of points that have been consulted to experts in Multimedia. The questionnaires for the students involve 43 items and 30 items for the teacher. The questionnaires for the students consist of 6 items related to their profile, 14 questions for the need analysis, and 23 items for the evaluation of the textbook. Meanwhile, the 30 items for the teacher are only related to the evaluation of the textbook. To confirm the results of the questionnaires, there are interviews conducted with one teacher and three students.

The data are analyzed based on the need's analysis proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) and Nation and Macalister (2010) in addition to evaluation survey questionnaires for students and teachers suggested by Litz (2005). This research aims to answer a research question: how the relevance of a textbook is entitled "Practice Your English Competence" to students' needs of the Multimedia major based on teacher's and students' perspectives.

For the analysis, the data are categorized into three aspects which are: students' needs, the teacher's perspectives, and the students' perspectives. Then, the findings of the questionnaires and the interviews are provided and compared to each other. Finally, the data are interpreted and reported descriptively.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 The results of the textbook analysis based on the Curriculum 2013

The textbook entitled "Practice Your English Competence" consists of ten chapters with various topics and contents. All of the topics and contents are based on the Curriculum 2013, explicitly stated on the cover of the textbook.

Moreover, each chapter also has grammar sessions such as reported speech, tenses, adjectives, nouns; and introduces various text types such as procedures, recount, descriptive texts, and expositions. It is in line with points in the core and basic competencies of the Curriculum 2013 that the texts should not only include topics related to future employment. Therefore, the textbook should cover both topics about future employment and entertainment or moral messages. However, there is no specific topic about Multimedia at all such as photography, videography, animation, digital marketing, advertising, etc.

3.1.2 The results of the needs analysis

Based on the need analysis, there are three skills that are needed by the Multimedia students. The skills are Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation. These three skills are considered as the skills that they are not really good at and their weakest skills of English as it can be seen in Table 1.

Therefore, this study will focus on proposing alternatives or revisions for these three skills: Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation.

Table 1. The data of students' strength and weakness

Skills	Strength	Weakness
Reading	73%	7%
Writing	40%	40%
Listening	47%	40%
Speaking	40%	53%
Vocabulary	13%	0
Grammar	0%	80%
Pronunciation	33%	60%
Speed of speech	0	7%

3.1.3 Students' and teacher's perspectives

There are three interesting perspectives between the students and the teacher which include (1) the relevance

to Multimedia, (2) topics, contents, and activities of the textbook, and (3) visual modes of the textbook.

First, most of the students believe that the topics and the contents of the textbook are not relevant to Multimedia. In the same vein, the teacher does not highly agree that the topics and the contents are relevant to Multimedia as can be seen in Table 2 (see the number 1).

Moreover, both the students and the teacher agree that the textbook does not provide sufficient technical vocabularies in Multimedia (see the number 2 in Table 2). Even though the textbook provides technical vocabularies, the words are not related to technical terms in the field of Multimedia.

On the other hand, most students need English for their future employment. There are 73% of the students who believe that they need English for employment. Additionally, most students state that they need English for Multimedia since they need to run software used for Multimedia.

Table 2. The data of students' and teacher's perspectives

No.	Evaluation Aspects	The students	The teacher
1	Topics and contents are relevant to Multimedia/future employment	33%	50%
2	Topics and contents cover technical vocabularies in Multimedia	27%	40%
3	Topics and contents are interesting, challenging, and motivating students	40%	70%
4	Multiple activities (work in groups, work in pairs, individual work)	33%	70%
5	Activities in the textbook encourage creative, original, independent responses	33%	90%
6	Topics and contents provide visual modes related to Multimedia	40%	50%

"Of course, in the field of Multimedia major, there are many terms in English. The examples are Rigging, Composition, Color Gradation, Perspectives, and others" (Student 4).

"Yes, because most of the technical language in computer/multimedia software is English" (Student 5).

"Yes, because many applications are in English by default, but it is also possible for multimedia work to use English frequently" (Student 6).

Thus, providing technical vocabularies related to Multimedia is important since the students need them in their future employment.

Second, the topics and the contents of the textbook are not really interesting, challenging, and motivating for students, contradicting the teacher's perspective (see the number 3 in Table 2).

The similar contradicting perspective can also be found in the question number three and four related to types of activities in the textbook and the responses toward the activities (see the number 4 and 5 in Table 2).

Third, based on the students' and the teacher's perspective, the topics and the contents of the textbook do not significantly provide visual modes related to Multimedia (See the number 6 in Table 2).

Moreover, in terms of the procedure text, there is no visual mode for the procedure text related to Multimedia at all. One of the examples could be seen in Figure 1. Additionally, there are barcode pictures in listening sessions (see Figure 2). The students could access the listening files by scanning the barcodes, installing the application provided by the book publisher, and downloading the audio files. Overall, visual modes provided in the textbook are in black and white.

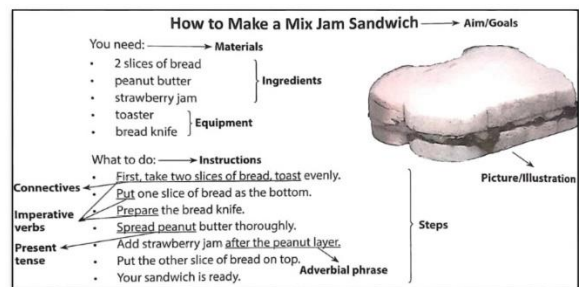


Figure 1 An example of a procedure text in the book

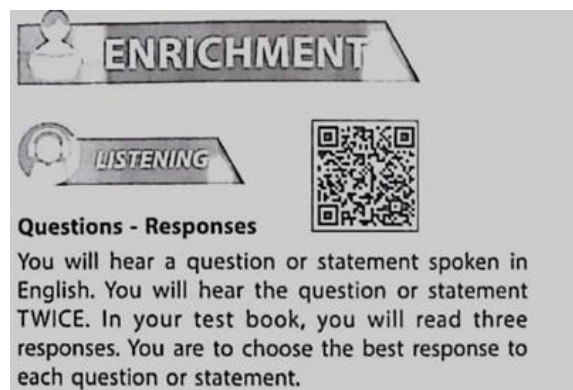


Figure 2 An example of a barcode picture in the book

3.2 Discussion

To answer a research question how the relevance of a textbook is entitled “Practice Your English Competence” to students’ needs of the Multimedia major based on teacher’s and students’ perspectives, there are three points that will be discussed in this session. The points include the results of the textbook analysis based on the Curriculum 2013, the students’ need analysis, and the students’ and the teacher’s perspectives.

First, from the textbook analysis based on the Curriculum 2013, the texts provided in the textbook do not fully reflect the scope of the materials in addition to the core, and the basic competencies of the Curriculum 2013. Textbooks should reflect curriculum, objectives of the language program, syllabus, and skills taught (Richards, 1998, as cited in Ramazani, 2012). The skills taught have not been fully reflected in the textbook because the textbook does not provide specific topics and contents for each major, in this case the Multimedia major. However, the textbook has been provided texts which are related and unrelated to future employment as it is suggested by the Curriculum 2013.

Second, based on the students’ need analysis, there are three skills most needed by the students. The skills are Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation. Concerning the vocabularies, it is in line with Kascakova (2016) who states that the teachers of the ESP course should teach vocabularies that are related to particular fields. Woodrow (2017) also proposes that the vocabularies should cover (1) technical or specialist vocabularies that could only be used inside a certain field since they are very specific; (2) semi-technical or sub-technical vocabularies which could be used both inside and outside the field; and (3) general vocabularies that could be used in any field. She believes that providing sufficient vocabularies will make the learning process effective.

In terms of grammar, the grammar sessions of the textbook have been provided sufficiently based on the various text types provided in the textbook. However, the students lack of practising grammar since the online learning time during the pandemic is limited as it is stated by the teacher.

“The difficulty is due to online learning, so to make it more interesting I browse videos from the internet to prevent students from getting bored. In addition, the study time is also reduced so not all materials in the book can be conveyed. Only materials that are related to the simple syllabus that we make.” (The teacher)

Regarding the pronunciation, the textbook does not provide a session for pronunciation practices. In addition, the vocabularies provided in the textbook are not

provided with phonetic information. Thus, the students do not have sufficient exposure to learn pronunciation.

From the teacher’s and the students’ perspectives, the textbook does not contain topics, contents, and visual modes which are relevant to Multimedia. Besides, even though the teacher disagrees that the textbook is not interesting, the textbook needs improvement to encourage the students to use the textbook. Features in the textbook such as the barcodes could be modified to provide more interesting features based on the students’ needs. The barcodes could be completed with audio files and videos to make students more exposed to technical vocabularies and pronunciation practices.

Therefore, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) should be emphasized in the textbook because ESP tends to be more specific and considers students’ needs related to future employment. Furthermore, the specific topics related to Multimedia should be provided to complete the scope of materials and competencies suggested by the Curriculum 2013.

3.3 Proposed Alternatives/Revisions (Modifications)

Based on the results of the questionnaires, there are three skills most needed by the students which are Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation.

In terms of Vocabulary skills, add technical vocabularies in the field of Multimedia such as opaque, sharp, shade, etc. Regarding Grammar skills, the texts related to advertising could be provided in the form of procedures texts. Since the procedure text is aimed at explaining how to do something, the instruction could be related to specific topics in the field of Multimedia such as advertising, digital marketing, photography, videography, etc. The reason is that the students will be more familiar with texts in the real work situations. In terms of Pronunciation, the revision suggested is providing more audio files and videos to practice pronunciation in the barcodes.

In addition, pictures capturing real future employment in the field of Multimedia could be provided as the visual modes of the textbook. The example could be seen in Figure 3.



Figure 3 An example of real future employment pictures as the visual modes.

4. CONCLUSION

In choosing the textbook, the teacher should consider that there are texts both related and unrelated to students' expertise and future employment. For texts related to future employment, the topics and the contents of the textbook should be in line with the students' needs. Moreover, the need analysis could involve students, employers, teachers, and other related parties as it is suggested by Chovancova (2014).

Moreover, it is recommended for the textbook writer to consult with experts from related fields to produce textbooks that contain relevant skills. Alternatively, the teacher together with the experts could write the textbooks for each major to cover all scopes of materials and competencies in Curriculum 13 and provide texts both related and unrelated to future employment. It is suggested in order to balance the teaching of moral messages for character development and the teaching of skills for future employment.

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