

## INVESTIGATING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE USE OF TEXTBOOK "WHEN ENGLISH RINGS A BELL" FOR LEARNING READING MATERIALS IN THE CLASSROOM

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**Abstract:** This research aimed to enhance the eighth grade junior high school students' on the use of textbook for learning reading materials in the classroom. In this research, the researcher was not intended to establish and prove hypotheses but it was aimed to describe the students' perceptions on the use of textbook for learning reading English materials in the classroom. The participants of this research were six students of the 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students at SMPN 2 Mojowarno. The design of this research was descriptive qualitative method. The research instrument of this research included the interview with two students were with the highest scores, two students were with the middle scores, and two students were with the lowest scores in English which were then analyzed thematically. The findings showed that the students' perceptions were divided into five themes: students' interest, textbook layout, students' difficulties, students' experiences, and students' benefits

**Keywords:** Reading; Students' Perceptions; Junior High School; Textbook

### 1. Introduction

Textbook is a prominent material that can lead several activities in the teaching and learning process. To qualify the material, questions are one of the important aspects in developing thinking among students through textbooks (Igbaria, 2013:201). In the teaching and learning process, textbook must be able to provide the students chance to practice by themselves independently. Textbook is created on the basis upon the curriculum that is established by the government.

Reading plays a significant role in students' academic life, because every activity in the classroom always has relationship with reading. According to Maxim (2009), reading has considerable role in the language teaching to strengthen the skills that are acquired by the students in listening, speaking, and writing. It means that reading affects the other skills of learning process. Reading can be silent (in our head) or aloud (so that other people can hear). Reading is one

of the language skills that must be taught to English language learners. According to Biddulph (2002:3), reading is an interactive process in which readers are actively engaged with the reading texts and build their understanding of the author's messages.

To fill the gap, in this research, focused on how students' perceptions on the use of textbook in teaching reading skill. Moreover, this theory is able to be adapted in teaching reading. The investigating in this study can improve the students ability learning in reading, there must be something happens in teaching and learning process relate to the students' perceptions in teaching reading. Therefore, the researcher conducts the research entitled "Investigating Junior High School Students' Perceptions on the Use of Textbook "When English Rings a Bell" for Learning English Materials In The Classroom.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Perceptions of Learning Reading Materials

Perception constitutes the process that is used by people to manage and interpret impression of their sense to give meaning to their environment. People that have a perception of an object can be positive or negative ways. Through perception, people can create a relationship with the environment. This relationship is done through their five senses. Those are vision, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Perception is an understanding that uses action in it, and perception is an understanding owned by an individual and is conveyed or indicated by the act. According to Schmitz (2009), perception is the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting information.

One of the most popular constructivist theories of perception is Gregory's theory (1990) as cited in the book "Perception Theories" by Demuth (2013:32). Constructivist theories assume that the process of perception is a highly active process of extracting sensory stimuli, their evaluation, interpretation and backward organization of sensory stimulus. One of the main features of Gregory's concept is the fact that it is able to clarify the reasons for our errors and inaccuracies quite well. One of the greatest advantages of his approach is that the process of perception is considered personal experience and is perceived to integrate feelings into a broader context of our beliefs and opinions. In conclusion, perception can be described because of an individual's interpretation of stimuli.

### 2.2 Textbook "When English Rings a Bell"

The English textbook *Bahasa Inggris* "When English Rings a Bell" is an English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. It consists of two parts, Students Book and Teacher Book. Both of them are compiled using scientific approach by one team. Bookkeeping and Curriculum Center of Ministry Education and Culture of Indonesia publish it.

In the Teacher Book, there are procedures for using the Student Book

completely from how to use it up to how to assess the students' ability. The Student Book is provided based on themes and it is begun by showing the aims of studying each chapter based on the basic competencies. Each material is compiled based on a scientific approach that consists of some steps, observing and questioning, collecting information, associating, and communicating.

### **3. Research Method**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

In this research, the researcher was not intended to establish and prove hypotheses but it was aimed to describe the students' perceptions on the use of textbook for learning reading English materials in the classroom. The appropriate research design was descriptive qualitative method. Mc Millan (1992:144) states that descriptive study simply describes phenomenon and the description commonly find in a form, percentage, or numerical data. This research used qualitative method because of its relation with the objectives of the research that was to provide the students' perception using textbook for learning English reading materials in the classroom.

#### **3.2 Research Data and Analysis**

This research used qualitative method because of its relation with the objectives of the research that was to provide the students' perception using textbook for learning English reading materials in the classroom. The participant is selected if she or he has the particular knowledge and experience. It is selected by cooperation with key informant who can help identify what is typical. The participants of this research were six students of the 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Junior High School. This study required six students as participants because it was enough to get the data. The selection of the participants was based on some criteria that is the students who ever use textbook as a media in teaching reading skill and the participants.

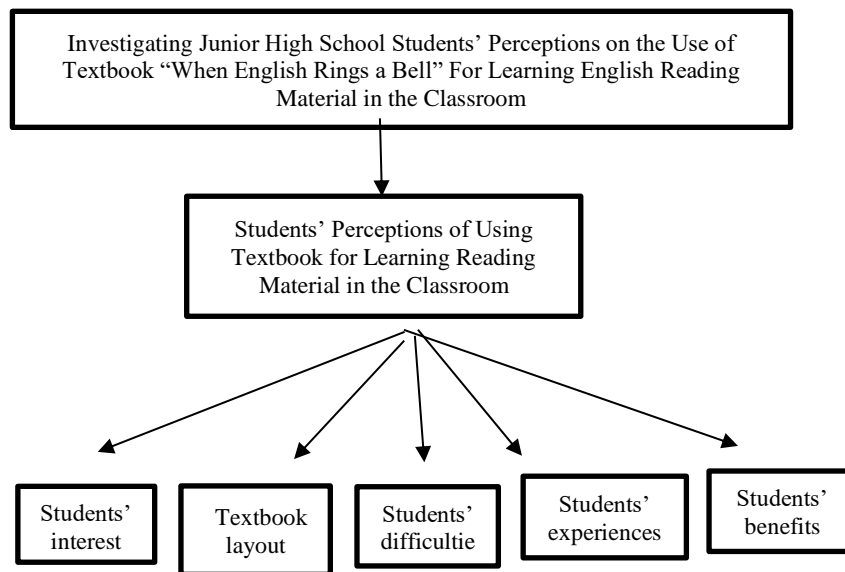
For the data collection method, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the six students interviewed. Semi-Structured Interview employs a blend of closed- and open-ended questions, often accompanied by follow-up why or how questions (Adams, 2015). We chose semi-structured interviews because we could get more in-depth information from the participants. We asked the participants a list of available questions then if another question arose, we immediately asked students to deepen their answers. This study required six students because it was enough to get the data processed. In conducting the interview, I prepared a list of questions for the interview. The list of questions explains how students perceive the use of textbooks in learning reading in class. The questions will focus on interest, textbook content, whether or not the text in the textbook is interesting, and how students think about the overall learning that

has been carried out. Every participant has their schedule for an interview, depending on the participants' readiness.

The data was analyzed by using the thematic analysis model adopted from Braun and Clarke (2006). They stated that thematic analysis identifies, analyzes, and reports patterns or themes in qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a flexible methodology since it is not bound to a specific theoretical perspective. The thematic analysis aims to identify themes and use the themes to answer the research question or address an issue.

#### 4. Research Result and Discussion

Based on the analysis result, it was found that of junior high school students' perceptions on the use of textbook "when English rings a bell" for learning reading material in the classroom. The students' perceptions were divided into five themes: students' interest, textbook layout, students' difficulties, students' experiences, and students' benefits. The results of the research showed that the majority of the students perceived that the use of textbooks in learning to read in class did not help them in the learning process.



*Figure 4.1* The Findings outline

##### 4.1.1 Students' Interest on Studying Reading Material Using Textbook

Students interest on studying reading material was the first subtheme of the five subthemes relating to the high school students' perceptions on the use of textbook "when English rings a bell" for learning reading material in the classroom. There were four important aspects observed under this subtheme through the interview process. The first aspect was about how the textbook could

arouse students' interest in learning reading. The second was about how the textbook provided sufficient interest in making reading learning easier for students, the third was whether the textbook was in accordance with the participants' interest in learning reading. In addition, the fourth aspect was about whether the textbook provided interesting text for participants. From the data analysis, it was found that all of the six participants perceived that the materials used in the textbook was not interesting for them. The materials were considered unattractive. Details of the four aspects can be reported as follows.

Based on the research data analysis to the first aspect of the first theme, how the textbook arouses students' interest in reading skills, it was found that the six participants perceived that the material provided in the textbook was not interesting.

No, miss. I feel that using textbooks in learning makes me feel difficult because the language, sentences, and meanings are difficult for me to understand. (*Participants 1, interview 01-08-2022*)

No, miss. I find it easier to understand directly from the teacher's explanation without using a textbook. (*Participants 2, interview 03-08-2022*)

Based on the research data analysis to the second aspect of the first theme, namely, the textbook provides material that makes students feel that learning to read is easier, it was found that six participants perceived that the materials provided did not make them easier to read.

I think learning to read using a textbook, especially to read the existing texts, is very interesting if there are pictures available to make it easier for students to understand the text. (*Participants 2, interview 01-08-2022*)

The translation of difficult words in the text made it easy for me to understand difficult words. (*Participants 3, interview 03-08-2022*)

When I read the text, I am very happy if under the text there are difficult words with their meanings, it makes me even happier to read. (*Participants 6, interview 03-08-2022*)

Based on the research data analysis to the third aspect, namely, students' interest in learning reading using the textbook "When English Rings a Bell", it was found that six participants perceived that they were not interested in the reading materials provided in the textbook.

No, because I find it very difficult to understand what is meant in the textbook. (*Participants 4, interview 03-08-2022*)

No, because the language used and the vocabulary are very difficult for me to understand. (*Participants 5, interview 03-08-2022*)

Based on the data analysis to the fourth aspect of the first theme, namely, whether the text available in the textbook is interesting, it was found that six participants perceived that they were not interested in the reading provided in the textbook.

Not interesting because most of the text is a full page. (*Participants 1, interview 01-08-2022*)

It is not interesting to me because it uses full English without a difficult word translator. (*Participants 2, interview 01-08-2022*)

#### **4.1.2 Textbook Layout on Studying Reading Material Using Textbook**

Textbook layout on studying reading material was the second subthemes of the five subthemes relating to the high school students' perceptions on the use of textbook "when English rings a bell" for learning reading material in the classroom. There were two important aspects observed under this subtheme through the interview process. The first aspect was about how the available assignments or exercises can help them in the process of learning the second was about how the textbook provided sufficient interest in making reading learning easier for students. From the data analysis, it was found that all of the six participants perceived that the materials used in the textbook was not interesting for them. The materials were considered unattractive. Details of the two aspects can be reported as follows.

The research data analysis to the first aspect, how the available assignments or exercises can help them in the process of learning to read showed that all research participants (six participants) perceived that they were not helped by the layout provided in the textbook.

No, because the layout given in textbook makes me even more confused to understand it. (*Participants 2, interview 03-08-2022*)

No, I like to learn through books but sometimes the location of the text and also the material does not match. (*Participants 3, interview 01-08-2022*)

The same result was also found to the analysis of the second aspect that was how the textbook provided sufficient interest in making reading learning easier for students. It was found that all the six participants perceived that the textbook did not provide sufficient interest in making reading learning easier for students

Some questions have no answers in the reading. (*Participants 3, interview 01-08-2022*)

#### **4.1.3 Students' Difficulties of Using Textbook for Learning Reading Material in the Classroom**

Students' difficulties of using textbook on studying reading material was the third subthemes of the five subthemes relating to the high school students' perceptions on the use of textbook "when English rings a bell" for learning reading material in the classroom. There were one important aspect observed under this subtheme through the interview process. The first aspect was about how students' perceptions of difficulties of using textbook for learning reading. From the data analysis, it was found that all of the six participants perceived that the materials used in the textbook was difficult for them, because they do not

know about the language and the vocabularies. Details of the aspects can be reported as follows.

Yes I have difficulty because I do not understand the language used in the textbook. (*Participants 2, interview 03-08-2022*)

I had a hard time because I did not know the meaning and the language was difficult to understand. (*Participants 3, interview 01-08-2022*)

#### **4.1.4 Students' Experiences of Using Textbook for Learning Reading Material in the Classroom**

Students' experiences of using textbook on studying reading material was the fourth subthemes of the five subthemes relating to the high school students' perceptions on the use of textbook "when English rings a bell" for learning reading material in the classroom. There were one important aspect observed under this subtheme through the interview process. The first aspect was about how students' experiences in learning reading using textbook is often using textbooks for reading class. From the data analysis, that students using or study using textbook accordance with teachers' reading assignments. Details of the aspects can be reported as follows.

Often use textbooks, especially for practice questions. (*Participants 1, interview 03-08-2022*)

Often use textbooks for learning English, especially reading after doing the questions. (*Participants 2, interview 01-08-2022*)

#### **4.1.5 Students' Benefits Studying Reading Material Using Textbook**

Students' benefits of using textbook on studying reading material was the fifth subthemes of the five subthemes relating to the high school students' perceptions on the use of textbook "when English rings a bell" for learning reading material in the classroom. There were one important aspect observed under this subtheme through the interview process. The first aspect was about how they think in studying reading using textbook, can improve their reading skill or not. From the data analysis, it can be concluded that students feel enjoy and happy to studying reading using textbook, because there so many text that can be read by students. Details of the aspects can be reported as follows.

I feel that textbook help me to hone my reading skills. (*Participants 1, interview 01-08-2022*)

Yes, because in textbook so many exercise I can read. (*Participants 2, interview 03-08-2022*)

The result relating to how the textbook could arouse students' interest in learning reading, which was known as the first sub-theme being investigated, showed that all the six participants perceived that they were not interested in the reading materials provided in the textbook. This result was in line with Andi Agustiana'

study (2021), who found that students had negative perceptions about the use of digital textbook in learning English, negative responses came from their experiences in the learning process. The theory is in line with Benny Hinn Manalu (2019), he found that the participants were more interested to read digital text.

The result relating to students' perceptions on the use of textbook for learning reading material is textbook layout, which was known as the second sub-theme being investigated, showed that the participants felt that the text and material sometimes not relevant with the syllabus, so the students sometimes don't understand about what the textbook means This result was in line with Harp & Mayer (1997) that conversely, inappropriate textbook layout and features may have detrimental effects on student learning and interest, and may render this resource ineffective.

The result relating to students' perceptions on the use of textbook for learning reading material is students' difficulties, which was known as the third sub-theme being investigated, showed that the students feel some difficulties in learning to read using textbooks, in that difficulty is a bit of the reason why students find it difficult to learn reading using textbooks. This is because if they felt difficult in studying text in textbook they cannot enjoyed. This result was in line with Coddington & Guthrie (2009) and Brown, Danvers, & Doran (2016), they found that guided reading questions positively affect the students' motivation and the students agreed that difficulty in reading comes from their low motivation or interest. This is different with my research results. The six participants expressed their opinions and perceptions about their difficulties in studying reading using textbook. Students feel they have some difficulties in learning reading using textbooks, one of which is the use of language or vocabularies that are difficult for students to understand.

The result relating to students' perceptions on the use of textbook for learning reading material is students' experiences, which was known as the fourth sub-theme being investigated, showed that six participants said that they often used textbook in learning reading. They feel that some of the assignments given in the reading material are sometimes not in accordance with the reading provided, but they still work according to the instructions from the teacher. They also often use textbooks as a medium for reading in class because of the large number of texts available in textbooks and can be used as reading exercises. This result was in line with Pang et al. (2003), reading about understands written texts and comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Reading comprehension involves both perception and thought. Then, the six participants also said that they feel difficult to studying reading using textbook because the text is so long, so they felt hard to understand. This supported by Harmer (2003) says that texts with longer sentences will be more



difficult to understand than shorter sentences. It can be concluded that the text is too long, the students will find it hard to understand about the meaning easily.

The result relating to students' perceptions on the use of textbook for learning reading material is students' benefits, which was known as the fifth sub-theme being investigated, showed that six participants said that they enjoy studying reading in textbook. They think that textbook can help them to improve their reading skills because the students can read so many texts. This result was in line with Patel and Jain (2008) who state that reading understands the meaning of printed words i.e. written symbols support this. Reading is an active process, which consists of recognition and comprehension skill. Reading is an important activity in life with which one can update his/her knowledge. Reading skill is an important tool for academic success. This is in line with Benny Hinn Manalu (2019), he found that the participants were more interested to read digital text.

### **Conclusion**

The result of this study can be concluded that the majority of the participants of this study perceived that the use of textbooks in learning to read in class did not help them in the learning process. Within the theme, there were five sub-themes: students' interest, textbook layout, students' difficulties, students' experiences, and students' benefits. Among the six participants, there were shown that the majority of the students perceived that the use of textbooks in learning reading materials in class did not help them in the learning process. The materials were considered unattractive. Only one sub-theme in the fifth sub-themes said that learning reading using textbook could help them to improve their reading skills using the text on textbook. They used text on textbook to learn reading skills in the classroom.

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