

An Evaluation of English Textbook Published by The Ministry of Education And Culture

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Abstract: This study evaluated the tenth grade students' English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia 2016 retrospectively. It had purposes to know whether or not the textbook has all the criteria expected in the adapted version of ELT Textbook Evaluation Checklist proposed by Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2015); as well as to know how this textbook can be improved. Three tenth grade English teachers in three different senior high schools in Jember were selected as the evaluators to give their opinion about the content of the textbook. The checklist result was counted to look for the average score from each criterion; and the result of the interview was analyzed using a procedure of analyzing qualitative data adapted from Creswell (2012). The findings revealed that this textbook has all the criteria expected in the checklist with the total average score of 2.95 (high usefulness); but there were some improvements needed dealing with suitability to learners, general content, grammar, pronunciation, exercises, reading, methodology, and listening. Therefore, 10 suggestions were given by the evaluators to overcome the problems in those criteria.

Keywords: *ELT Textbook Evaluation Checklist; retrospective evaluation; tenth grade students' English textbook.*

Introduction

Textbook is a published material which facilitates teachers to deliver the information to students in English language teaching and learning context. Teachers usually use textbook as guidance in teaching and learning process since it gives them information about syllabi, teaching methodologies, and the materials to be taught (Fatima, Shah, & Sultan, 2015). It also helps them understand, follow, and achieve the goal of the curriculum (Mukundan, Hajimohammadi, & Nimehchisalem, 2011). Besides the teacher, the students also use textbook as the main resource in learning the material as it provides some explanation about the materials and exercises even answer key to be studied by themselves. By using textbook, students could learn the materials that will be taught in class, so that they can prepare it before the class begins or before the teacher discusses the materials. To sum up, textbook plays an important role for both teacher and students in teaching and learning process.

Looking at its importance, it is necessary for the teachers to be able to select a suitable textbook to be used in teaching and learning process. The choice of textbook or language materials can determine the quality of teaching-learning (Mukundan & Kalajahi, 2013). If a textbook is considered a good book, it will be significantly helpful for the teachers and the students. It can facilitate the teachers to achieve their teaching objectives; and it can assist the students to improve their linguistic and communicative ability by providing some materials and exercises to help them. However, if a textbook has a low quality, students might get the wrong explanation or concept from the book. The worst, "the wrong materials are capable to produce failed language learners" (Khoo & Knight, 2015). It can be said that choosing inappropriate textbook can lead to students' failure in learning a language (Mukundan & Kalajahi, 2013). Hence, teachers should have known whether the textbook is suitable for the students or not before using it.

According to Sheldon (1988), as cited in Mukundan, Hajimohammadi, & Nimehchisalem (2011), there are two reasons why evaluating textbook should be done. First, it can help teachers select the appropriate textbook; and second, teachers will know its strengths and weaknesses. By doing so, teachers will be able to make appropriate adaptation of the materials in the textbook when it is necessary.

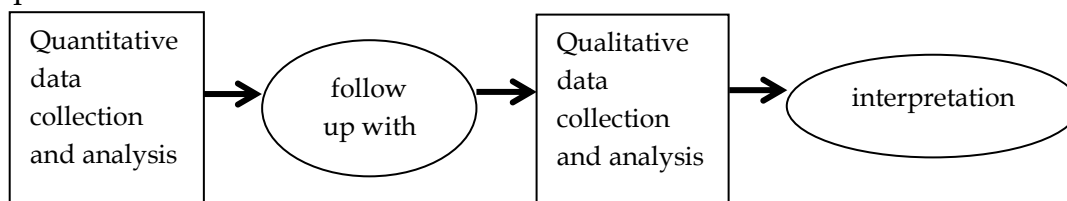
Previous studies analyzing English textbooks (OBE) in Indonesia had been conducted by several researchers with different checklist instruments. Fortunasari, Rukmini, Retmono, and Mujiyanto (2017) using adapted checklists of textbook evaluation and checklist of e-book standard; Anshar (2014) using evaluation checklist adapted from Skierso (1991). Another textbook entitled "When English Rings a Bell" had also been evaluated by Handayani (2016) using an adaptation of Litz' (2005) checklist; Hanifa (2018) using an adaptation of Harmer's checklist (2007). A textbook entitled "English Way" was also evaluated by Ferdian and Josephine (2016) using an adaptation of a checklist developed by Miekley (2005) and Zahan & Begum (2013). Another textbook entitled "Think Globally Act Locally" was also evaluated by Handayani, Suwarno, and Dharmayana (2018) using Abdel Wahab's textbook evaluation checklist (2013). Based on those previous studies, there is no previous study conducted in Indonesia using Mukundan and Nimehchisalem's evaluation checklist (2015). This checklist is believed as a good checklist since "it is comprehensive in its evaluative criteria and has been proved to have high validity (it has been approved by 207 ESL experts), economy (shorter time needed to complete the checklist), and reliability in its design with all items have equal importance" (Mukundan & Nimehchisalem, 2012; cited in Khoo & Knight, 2015). Thus, this research, will employ this checklist to evaluate the English textbook for tenth grade students published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia 2016 (Revised Edition). Therefore, this study had purposes to know whether or not the tenth grade students' English textbook has all the criteria expected

in the evaluation checklist from Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2015); as well as to know the way to improve this textbook in the future.

Method

Research Design

Mixed method research was applied as the design of this research due to its ability to gain data quantitatively and qualitatively. This research implemented explanatory sequential mixed method design adopted from Creswell (2012). It consists of collecting quantitative data first and then collecting qualitative data to help explaining or elaborating the result of the quantitative data (Creswell, 2012). The procedure is as follow:



(Adopted from Creswell, 2012)

Research Context

The textbook that was evaluated in this research was the tenth-grade students' English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture 2016 (Revised Edition). It is an EFL textbook written by Indonesian authors. This textbook was selected since it has been widely used by several senior high schools in Jember. Based on the preliminary study that had been conducted, the tenth grade English teachers who used this textbook stated that this textbook had merit and demerit. All of them felt that this textbook helped them much. It covered all the materials in the syllabus and curriculum, so that the teacher could make this textbook as guidance in teaching their students. However, teachers needed to look for other materials to support this textbook, such as looking for other exercises because it lacked exercises that were suitable with their teaching learning context.

Participants

Since this is a retrospective evaluation, the evaluators should have used the textbook at least in one cycle (Khoo & Knight, 2015). Hence, three tenth grade English teachers in three different senior high schools in Jember were chosen as the evaluators. All the teachers have taught English for at least 10 years. Thus, it can be concluded that they had enough experience in teaching English and had used different books as reference. Furthermore, all of them have already used the English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture 2016 (Revised Edition) as the main materials in teaching their students, so it can be assumed that they know the content of the textbook well.

Data Collection Method

Quantitative data were gathered through a checklist adapted from Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2015) to answer the first research question which was to know whether or not the textbook has all the criteria expected in the checklist. This checklist was adapted based on 2013 curriculum since this textbook was created based on 2013 curriculum. One sub-category, which is 'efficient layout of supplementary materials', was omitted since the teachers only got the students' book without any supplementary materials. Besides, 4 criteria were added to fit the specification of 2013 curriculum: it applies text-based learning approach; it contains some information about Indonesia culture; it supports the learning of other subjects, such as history, biology, and so on; and they cover the activities of analyzing, understanding, and producing text (written or spoken) sequentially. This checklist was distributed to the evaluators and it was also translated into Bahasa Indonesia in order to avoid misunderstanding among them (see Appendix for more details).

Qualitative data were then gathered by interviewing three evaluators to answer the second research question regarding their suggestions of improvement. The interview questions were formed based on the checklist result focusing on the criteria which had low scores. It covered the reason the evaluators gave low scores to some criteria and how they want to improve them. Thus, the questions were given to the evaluators who gave low score to the criteria in the lowest category.

Data Analysis Method

Quantitative data were first counted manually to look for the average score from each criterion by using formula adopted from Waluyo (1992) and interpreted by following scores interpretation guide adopted from Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2015): 0.00 – 0.80 for negligible usefulness, 0.81 – 1.60 for low usefulness, 1.61 – 2.80 for moderate usefulness, 2.81 – 3.60 for high usefulness, and 3.61 – 4.00 for very high usefulness. Then, qualitative data was analyzed by using a procedure of analyzing qualitative data adapted from Creswell (2012) as follow:

- a. Prepare data for analysis, which was interview transcript;
- b. Read through the data to explore the general sense of the data;
- c. Put them into table to tabulate the evaluators' answers;
- d. Draw conclusion on the result of the transcript analysis.

Findings and Discussion

This study aimed to answer two research questions which were to know whether or not the textbook has all the criteria expected in the adapted version of Mukundan and Nimehchisalem's (2015) evaluation checklist and to know the way to improve this textbook. From the result of the study, it was revealed that the tenth

grade students' English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture 2016 has all criteria expected in the adapted version of Mukundan and Nimehchisalem's evaluation checklist (2015). It was believed to be highly useful with the total average score of 2.95. All the criteria in the checklist got scores ranging from 2 – 4 (moderate usefulness – very high usefulness). Thus, evaluators' suggestions concerning how this textbook can be improved were focused on the 12 criteria in the lowest category, which was moderate usefulness category. The categories dealing with suitability to learners, general content, grammar, pronunciation, exercises, reading, methodology, and listening. There were 10 suggestions to be discussed in detail.

In terms of suitability to learners and methodology, two suggestions were given. The first suggestion was providing more group activities. This suggestion was given since the capability of the students in doing tasks was different. Some students can do the tasks easily and some students experienced difficulties in doing the tasks. Therefore, the evaluators had a notion that by providing more group activities, higher-achiever students can teach the lower-achiever ones in doing the tasks. In other words, this book does not meet the criteria proposed by Anshar (2014) that individual, pair and group activities should have the same portion. The second suggestion was beginning the activities from the easiest to the complicated one. This suggestion was given since the evaluator who taught English in rural area stated that sometimes students experience difficulties in doing HOT (Higher Order Thinking) activities in the textbook. This suggestion is in line with Brown (2000), as cited in Handayani (2016), who stated that students acquire language rules in natural order or starting from simple to complex.

To overcome the problem of the repetition of grammar items, the evaluator suggested to review grammar items which had been discussed in the previous chapter when explaining about other topics. The evaluator stated that it can prevent students from forgetting the materials and make students become more understand about the use the grammar items. It echoes Khoo and Knight's (2015) statement that recycling and repeating grammar items in subsequent chapters can encourage students' retention.

In terms of pronunciation, the evaluator suggested to integrate pronunciation learning with other skills, such as reading. This suggestion matches the specification of 2013 curriculum which stated that the teaching and learning of English must be integrated. Thus, teachers cannot teach pronunciation in isolation. It also confirms previous researcher's finding that "pronunciation practice should be integrated to facilitate the learners producing accurate spoken utterances" (Handayani, *et al.*, 2018). It means that, teacher should teach pronunciation with other skill to support learner's language production. In addition, Grant (1987), as cited in Fortunasari, *et al.* (2017), also stated that none of the skills cannot be used in isolation but rather in combination.

Two suggestions were given to overcome the problem concerning the conspicuousness of exercises. The first one was providing more challenging questions. It confirms Riddell's (2003) statement, cited in Handayani, *et al.* (2018), which stated that "good textbook should contain thought provoking issue to challenge the students". Furthermore, the evaluator also suggested providing multiple choice questions since there is no multiple-choice question provided in this textbook. It is in line with Handayani, *et al.* (2018) who also suggested providing multiple choice questions in evaluating an Indonesian English textbook entitled "Think Globally Act Locally". This kind of question will help students prepare them facing examinations which mostly in the form of multiple-choice questions.

To overcome the problem in terms of reading, looking for other interesting and appropriate texts was suggested. This suggestion was given since the evaluators found that some texts in this textbook were too long and less varied or monotonous. The text can also be simplified and adapted to overcome this problem. It is in line with Handayani *et al.* (2018), Khoo and Knight (2015), Fatima *et al.* (2015), and Ferdian and Josephine (2016).

Three suggestions were also given in terms of listening. The first one was providing listening sections in all chapters. It happened since the evaluator found that this textbook lacked of listening exercises. The evaluator was aware that listening must be in the beginning of learning process before students use their motoric such as writing and reading. Thus, all chapters must have listening section. The second suggestion was providing more authentic listening materials. It is in line with Tomlinson (2011), as cited in Hanifa (2018), who stated that good materials should expose learners to language in authentic use. If the students are used to be exposed with authentic materials, they will have better understanding about grammar, idioms, vocabulary, conversational rules, routines, and strategies that they will use in real-world. Therefore, it can engage students into real life situation and prepare them to enter community of native speakers (Brazil *et al.*, 1980; Levis, 1999; cited in Ferdian and Josephine, 2016). The last suggestion was considering various listening contexts, such as formal and informal context. By recognizing the context, the students will be able to predict the information that they will hear, different kinds of words, and style of language whether it is formal or informal that the speaker will use (Ahmed, 2015). It is also important to show the example and differentiation of formal and informal listening context. If the students are shown the example of formal and informal situation, they will feel more easily to differentiate the situations of formal and informal context. It is supported by Liddicoat *et al.*'s (2009) statement, as cited in Handayani, *et al.* (2018), "students need to engage with the ways in which context affects what is communicated and how".

Conclusion

The result of the study showed that the textbook has positive and negative points which can be used as reference for teachers in using this book in the class. The fact that, there are some improvement needed for this book suggests that teachers should not only depend on one book only. The evaluation and the suggestion show what teacher can do to make the teaching-learning process runs better. Besides, this finding also highlight some points that publisher or book author could consider to be implemented in EFL textbook so that students could get the most of it.

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Appendix

English Language Teaching Textbook Evaluation Checklist
Adapted from Mukundan & Nimehcisalem (2015)

<p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>I. General Attributes <i>Atribut Umum</i></p> <p>A. The book in relation to syllabus and curriculum <i>Buku dalam kaitannya dengan silabus dan kurikulum</i></p> <p>1. It matches the specifications of the syllabus. <i>Buku ini sesuai dengan spesifikasi silabus.</i></p> <p>2. Overall, the book has a nice feel. <i>Secara keseluruhan, buku ini memiliki nuansa yang bagus.</i></p>	<p align="center"> <input type="radio"/>0 <input type="radio"/>1 <input type="radio"/>2 <input type="radio"/>3 <input type="radio"/>4 <input type="radio"/>0 <input type="radio"/>1 <input type="radio"/>2 <input type="radio"/>3 <input type="radio"/>4 </p>
<p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>B. Methodology <i>Metodologi</i></p> <p>3. The activities can be exploited fully. <i>Aktivitas-aktivitas dalam buku dapat dimanfaatkan sepenuhnya.</i></p> <p>4. The activities can work well in most classroom situations. <i>Aktivitas dapat berjalan dengan baik pada kebanyakan situasi kelas.</i></p> <p>5. It applies text-based learning approach. <i>Buku ini menerapkan pendekatan pembelajaran berbasis teks.</i></p>	<p align="center"> <input type="radio"/>0 <input type="radio"/>1 <input type="radio"/>2 <input type="radio"/>3 <input type="radio"/>4 <input type="radio"/>0 <input type="radio"/>1 <input type="radio"/>2 <input type="radio"/>3 <input type="radio"/>4 <input type="radio"/>0 <input type="radio"/>1 <input type="radio"/>2 <input type="radio"/>3 <input type="radio"/>4 </p>

<p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>C. Suitability to learners <i>Kesesuaian dengan siswa</i></p> <p>6. It is compatible with the background knowledge and level of students. <i>Buku ini sesuai dengan latar belakang pengetahuan dan tingkat kemampuan siswa.</i></p> <p>7. It addresses learning targets. <i>Buku ini menunjukkan target pembelajaran.</i></p>	<p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p>
<p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>D. Physical and utilitarian attributes <i>Atribut fisik dan kegunaan</i></p> <p>8. It is appropriately priced. <i>Harga buku ini sebanding dengan isinya.</i></p> <p>9. Its layout is attractive. <i>Susunannya menarik.</i></p> <p>10. It indicates efficient use of text and visuals. <i>Buku ini menunjukkan penggunaan teks dan visual yang efisien.</i></p>	<p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p>
<p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>II. Learning-teaching content <i>Konten belajar-mengajar</i></p> <p>E. General content <i>Konten umum</i></p> <p>11. Tasks move from simple to complex. <i>Tugas berurutan dari mudah ke rumit.</i></p> <p>12. Tasks are varied. <i>Tugas bervariasi.</i></p> <p>13. Tasks support teaching objectives.</p>	<p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p>

	<p><i>Tugas menunjang tujuan pembelajaran.</i></p> <p>14. The language in the textbook is natural and real. <i>Bahasa dalam buku alami dan tidak dibuat-buat.</i></p> <p>15. The material is fairly recent. <i>Materi cukup up to date</i></p> <p>16. It contains some information about Indonesia culture. <i>Buku ini memuat beberapa informasi tentang budaya Indonesia.</i></p> <p>17. It supports the learning of other subjects, such as history, biology, and so on. <i>Buku ini mendukung pembelajaran pada mata pelajaran lain, seperti sejarah, biologi, dan sebagainya.</i></p>	<p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p>
<p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>F. Listening <i>Menyimak</i></p> <p>18. The book has appropriate listening tasks with well-defined goals. <i>Buku memiliki tugas menyimak yang sesuai dengan tujuan yang jelas.</i></p> <p>19. Tasks are authentic or close to real language situations. <i>Tugas bersifat otentik atau mendekati situasi bahasa yang nyata.</i></p> <p>20. Various listening contexts such as formal vs. informal contexts are considered.</p>	<p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p> <p>① ② ③ ④</p>

	<i>Buku ini mempertimbangkan berbagai konteks menyimak seperti konteks formal vs informal.</i>	
NA <input type="checkbox"/>	G. Speaking <i>Berbicara</i> 21. Activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication. <i>Kegiatan-kegiatan pada keterampilan berbicara dikembangkan untuk belajar tentang komunikasi yang bermakna.</i> 22. Individual, pair and group work are given equal emphasis. <i>Tugas individu, berpasangan, dan kelompok mendapat penekanan yang sama.</i>	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
NA <input type="checkbox"/>	H. Reading <i>Membaca</i> 23. Length is appropriate. <i>Buku memiliki panjang yang sesuai.</i> 24. Difficulty level is appropriate. <i>Buku memiliki tingkat kesulitan yang sesuai.</i> 25. Texts are interesting. <i>Teks dalam buku menarik.</i>	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
NA <input type="checkbox"/>	I. Writing <i>Menulis</i> 26. Tasks have achievable goals and take into consideration learner capabilities.	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4)

	<p><i>Tugas memiliki tujuan yang dapat dicapai dan sesuai dengan kemampuan siswa.</i></p> <p>27. Tasks are interesting. <i>Tugas-tugas dalam buku menarik.</i></p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>J. Vocabulary <i>Kosa kata</i></p> <p>28. The load (number of new words in each lesson) is appropriate to the level of students. <i>Beban (jumlah kata baru di setiap pelajaran) sesuai dengan tingkat kemampuan siswa.</i></p> <p>29. There is a good distribution (simple to complex) of vocabulary load across chapters and the whole book. <i>Ada pembagian beban kosa kata yang baik (sederhana ke rumit) di seluruh bab dan keseluruhan buku.</i></p> <p>30. New words are sufficiently repeated and recycled across the book. <i>Kata-kata baru diulang dan digunakan kembali di seluruh buku dengan cukup baik.</i></p> <p>31. Words are contextualized. <i>Kata-kata dalam buku disesuaikan konteks.</i></p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p> <p>0 1 2 3 4</p> <p>0 1 2 3 4</p> <p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>K. Grammar <i>Tata bahasa</i></p> <p>32. Grammar is contextualized. <i>Tata bahasa dalam buku disesuaikan konteks.</i></p> <p>33. Grammar items are repeated throughout the book.</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p> <p>0 1 2 3 4</p>

	<i>Item tata bahasa di dalam buku diulang di seluruh isi buku.</i>	
NA <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>L. Pronunciation <i>Pengucapan</i></p> <p>34. Tasks are useful. <i>Tugas-tugas di dalam buku bermanfaat.</i></p> <p>35. Tasks are interesting. <i>Tugas-tugas dalam buku menarik.</i></p>	<p>⓪ Ⓛ ② ③ ④</p> <p>⓪ Ⓛ ② ③ ④</p>
NA <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>M. Exercises <i>Latihan</i></p> <p>36. They have clear instructions. <i>Latihan-latihan memiliki petunjuk yang jelas.</i></p> <p>37. They are adequate. <i>Latihan di dalam buku memadai.</i></p> <p>38. They are interesting. <i>Latihannya menarik.</i></p> <p>39. They help students with mixed abilities. <i>Latihan-latihan membantu siswa yang memiliki kemampuan berbeda-beda.</i></p> <p>40. They cover the activities of analyzing, understanding, and producing text (written or spoken) sequentially. <i>Latihan-latihan mencakup kegiatan menganalisis, memahami, dan menyusun teks secara berurutan.</i></p>	<p>⓪ Ⓛ ② ③ ④</p> <p>⓪ Ⓛ ② ③ ④</p> <p>⓪ Ⓛ ② ③ ④</p> <p>⓪ Ⓛ ② ③ ④</p> <p>⓪ Ⓛ ② ③ ④</p>