
TEXTBOOK EVALUATION ON CURRICULUM 2013-BASED TEXTBOOK “WHEN ENGLISH RINGS A BELL” FOR THE SEVENTH GRADE

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Abstract

Textbook is one of the essential parts of teaching and learning process. Textbook evaluation, therefore, is important to be carried out in order to get better quality in teaching and learning process. In the recent curriculum, curriculum 2013, the government assigned to use the course book “When English Rings A Bell” (WERB). However the textbook has some weaknesses. This article is aimed at describing the result of textbook evaluation done by the researcher based on the construct of criteria of good textbook derived from some experts of textbook evaluation. The findings show that WERB does not cover all of the English skills namely reading and writing. Second, WERB is not in accordance with the principles of scientific approach teaching procedures. Third, WERB does not provide authentic materials for the students. WERB contains very simple tasks. Based on the result of textbook analysis, it revealed that it is necessary to have supplementary materials in order to give additional materials.

Keywords: textbook, textbook evaluation, Curriculum 2013

INTRODUCTION

The current curriculum implemented in Indonesia is called Curriculum 2013 (C13). Based on of *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan* number 68 year 2013, C13 has an objective, as follows:

“Kurikulum 2013 bertujuan untuk mempersiapkan manusia Indonesia agar memiliki kemampuan hidup sebagai pribadi dan warga negara yang beriman, produktif, kreatif, inovatif, dan afektif serta mampu berkontribusi pada kehidupan bermasyarakat, berbangsa, bernegara, dan peradaban dunia” (Permendikbud no 68 Tahun 2013).

It indicates that C13 has an objective to prepare Indonesian humans having life skills as both personal and citizens which are religious, productive, creative, innovative, and affective, and also be able to give contribution to social interaction, country, and culture of the world. C13 emphasizes on the integration among attitude, knowledge, and skill. The attitude competence consists of spiritual and social competence. The knowledge competence refers to the understanding of the conceptual comprehension in English such as social function and language features in sentences or text. Meanwhile, the skill competence refers to the abilities

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that must be achieved by the students, such as writing and speaking about an introduction. In short, students' knowledge and skills must be balanced with their attitude.

To achieve the goals of teaching and learning, the teacher needs materials from many teaching resources namely textbook, internet, mass media, and so on. Textbook is one of teaching resources which is commonly used by the teacher. A good textbook can be one of the factors determining the success of teaching and learning process. Moreover, Crawford (2002) suggests that good course books should be critically evaluated, viewing both their constraints and their promises. Moreover, Harmer (1991) states that textbook should have a number of characteristics: (1) they should engage the students by to be active in the learning activities, (2) they should have some purposes which are not purely linguistic - such as solving a problem or reaching a decision, and (3) they should be designed to maximize the range of language they will use, so they should not restrict students, for example, to specific grammar patterns.

Based on the Minister of Education Regulation number 71/2013 (*Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia nomor 71 tahun 2013*), it is assigned that the book entitled “When English Rings A Bell” (WERB) is used as the course book in English subject. The content of WERB is quite interesting. It contains many colorful pictures and some exercises. However, there are some points that are not included in WERB. The materials provided in WERB for seventh grade are still limited.

The above analysis was in line with the result of interview towards some English teachers. According the interview done by the researcher involving three English teachers of SMP Negeri 1, 4, and 12 Surakarta, they said that WERB for seventh grade has limited materials. They have to find another teaching resource in order to add the materials in teaching English. WERB for seventh grade does not accommodate the four skills of language, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There are some materials stated in the basic competence which is not included in WERB for seventh grade. Therefore, the researcher intended to evaluate WERB using the construct of a good textbook derived from some literature of EFL.

There are many criteria of good text books found in the literature. The first criterion is given by Sheldon. There are 21 criteria of a good text books (Sheldon, 1988), as follows:

1. A good textbook must have a clear objective (rationale). The objectives must be stated clearly. It must also be developed well through the needs analysis.
2. A good textbook must be accessible (availability). It must be easy to obtain. If the students or teachers need the textbook, it should be available for them.
3. A good textbook must have clear user definition or target of users (their age, culture, assumed background, probable learning preferences, and educational expectations).
4. A good textbook must have appropriate text and graphical material on each page. The layout of the textbook must be interesting for the students.
5. A good textbook must be clearly organized. It must include indexes, vocabulary list, headings, and other methods of sign posting that will ease the students search for the materials needed.
6. A good textbook must have good linkage or connections on terms of theme, situation, topic, pattern of skill development, or grammatical/lexical 'progression'.
7. A good textbook must be graded. The grading of the materials and activities in the textbook must be in order.
8. A good textbook must have good physical characteristics. In other words it should not be too large and heavy. It must also have enough spaces for students to write in.
9. A good textbook must have good appropriacy. It must be substantial enough or interesting enough to hold the attention of learners
10. A good textbook must accommodate authenticity. The content should be obviously realistic, being taken from L1 material not initially intended for ELT purposes. The materials and activities in the textbook must be authentic.
11. A good textbook must be sufficient. It should be complete enough to stand on its own. The teacher does not need to produce a lot of ancillary bridging material to make it workable.
12. A good textbook must not be cultural bias.
13. A good textbook must accommodate educational. It must be valid and meet the aim of education and the curriculum.

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14. A good textbook must have interactive and rememberable materials.
15. A good textbook must be flexible to be used.
16. A good (student's) textbook must be accompanied by a teacher book, tape script, and answer key.

Cunningsworth (1998) describes some criteria of a good course book, namely:

- 1) Textbooks should correspond to learners' needs. They should match the aims and objectives of the language-learning program.
- 2) Textbooks should reflect the uses (present or future) which learners will make of the language. Select course books which will help to equip students to use language effectively for their own purposes.
- 3) Textbooks should take account of students' needs as learners and should facilitate their learning processes, without dogmatically imposing a rigid 'method'.
- 4) Textbooks should have a clear role as a support for learning. Like teachers, they mediate between the target language and the learner.

There are two kinds of criteria that had been proposed by McDonough and Shaw (1993). They are external and internal validation.

- 1) External evaluation
 - (a) The intended audience
 - (b) The proficiency level
 - (c) The context in which the materials are to be used
 - (d) How the language has been presented and organized into teachable units/lessons
 - (e) The authors' views on language and methodology
 - (f) Are the materials used as the main 'course' or to be supplementary to it?
 - (g) Is the teacher's book in print and locally available?
 - (h) Is a vocabulary list/index included?
 - (i) What visible material does the book contain and is it actually integrated into the text?
 - (j) Is the layout or presentation clear or cluttered?
 - (k) Is the material too cultural biased or specific or represent minority groups and/or women in a negative way?

2) Internal evaluation

- a) The presentation of the skills and materials
- b) The grading and sequencing of the materials
- c) Where reading/ 'discourse' skills are involved, is there much in the way of appropriate text beyond the sentence?
- d) Where listening skills are involved, are recordings 'authentic' or artificial?
- e) Do you feel that the material is suitable for different learning styles? And is it sufficiently 'transparent' to motivate both students and teachers alike?

From those three literatures, the researcher formulates the criteria of good text book, as follows:

Table 1 Criteria of Good Textbook

| No | Points | Criteria |
|----|--------------|---|
| 1 | Objectives | It should be match with the objectives of the learning program It must have a clear objective It should correspond to the students' need |
| 2 | Method | It should be in accordance with the teaching method of the curriculum |
| 3 | Content | It must be valid and meet the aim of education and the curriculum It must have clear target users It must have interactive and rememberable materials It must not be cultural bias |
| 4 | Authenticity | Textbook should have some relation to real-life language use The materials teach something learners feel they can use |
| 5 | Organization | It must have good order of grading and sequencing of the materials |

METHOD

This article is categorized as a textbook evaluation research. In this research, content analysis was used in evaluating the textbook. Berelson in Gall (2003) defines content analysis as a research technique for the objective, systematic, and qualitative description of the manifest content of communication. There some procedures in evaluating the textbook based on Penny Ur (2009), they are: (1) deciding the criteria, (2) applying criteria, and (3) summary.

FINDINGS ND DISCUSSION

Based on the result of textbook analysis, it can be found that WERB for seventh grade has weaknesses of the five criteria of good textbook. WERB for seventh grade does not cover all of the basic competences available in the Curriculum 2013. Some English skills are neglected such as reading and writing. WERB for seventh grade is not in accordance with the scientific

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approach. Some teaching procedures do not reflect the principles of scientific approach determined by the government namely observing, questioning, associating, and communicating. For the content itself, WERB has a clear target user. However, for the cultural bias point of view, WERB provides some pictures of students wearing veild. WERB is used by all of the students in Indonesia, not only for moslems but also other religions. Another weakness is WERB does not contain authentic material. Authentic materials can be used to give model for the students especially for speaking the students need video, film, or recorded dialogue as the teaching model. The tasks in WERB for seventh grade are too simple. Regardless of the weaknesses of WERB, the organization of this textbook is quite good. It covers the sequences of the materials.

Based on the above analysis, WERB for seventh grade has some weaknesses toward the five criteria of a good textbook. WERB for seventh grade is designed based on the Curriculum 2013. As everybody knows that C13 applies scientific approach as the teaching method for all subjects including English. However, the content of WERB does not reflect the principles of scientific approach. A good textbook should be on line with the aim of the curriculum. Moreover, WERB for seventh grade does not provide authentic material which is good for teaching and learning. It is based on Nunan (1988) suggests that a good textbook should (1) be clearly linked to the curriculum they serve, (2) be authentic in terms of text and task, (3) stimulate interaction, (4) allow learners to focus on formal aspect of the language, (5) encourage learners to develop skills in learning–how-to-learn, (6) encourage learners to apply their developing language skills to the world beyond the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The success of teaching and learning process is determined by some factors. One of them is the materials available in the textbook. WERB for seventh grade was designed based on the current curriculum 2013. However, there are some weaknesses found in WERB based on the criteria of good textbook. WERB does not reflect to the scientific approach as the method implemented in C13. WERB also does not provide authentic materials. Regardless of those

weaknesses, WERB contains many interesting and colourful pictures. The organization of WERB is also quite good.

Based on the result of textbook evaluation, it is suggested to the government to revise WERB for seventh grade in order to achieve better learning. Moreover, the result of the textbook analysis can be the references for other researchers to design supplementary materials in order to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process in the recent curriculum.

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