

**AN EVALUATION OF TEXTBOOK “*ENGLISH IN FOCUS*” USED BY
EIGHT GRADE OF STUDENTS IN
SMP MUHAMMADIYAH 4 SURAKARTA**



**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements Degree of English
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by :

AUDINA EKA ROSANTI

A320140043

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH EDUCATION
SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH SURAKARTA**

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By:

Audina Eka Rosanti

A320140043

Approved to be Examined by Consultant



(Hepy Adityarini, Ph.D)

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by:

AUDINA EKA ROSANTI

A320140043

Accepted and Approved Board by Examiners of
School Teacher Training and Education
Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta
on November 16th, 2018

Team of Examiners:

1. Hepy Adityarini, Ph.D.
(Head of Examiner)
2. Drs. Doko Srijono, M.Hum.
(Member I of Examiner)
3. Muamaroh, Ph.D.
(Member II of Examiner)

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Audina Eka Rosanti

A320140043

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan pandangan siswa di SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Surakarta tentang kualitas buku teks “English in Focus” sesuai dengan kriteria Greene & Petty tentang textbook bahasa Inggris yang baik. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah dua Siswa kelas 8 SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Surakarta. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dengan dua siswa kelas VIII SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Surakarta. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar siswa setuju bahwa buku tersebut telah memenuhi kriteria buku pelajaran bahasa Inggris yang baik menurut Greene & Petty. Namun, salah satu siswa menganggap buku teks “English in Focus” belum menghargai perbedaan pribadi pengguna karena ia masih kesulitan untuk memahami isi buku teks tanpa penjelasan dari guru.

Kata Kunci: kualitas buku teks, persepsi siswa.

Abstract

The study aimed at describing the view of students in SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Surakarta concerning the quality of English textbook “*English in Focus*” according to Greene & Petty’s criteria of good English textbook. The type of this study is qualitative research. Subject of this study was two Eighth grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Surakarta. The data were collected through interview with two students of eightgrade of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Surakarta. The results showed that the students mostly agreed that the book has fullfilled the criteria of good English textbook according to Greene & Petty. However, one of students perceived “*English in Focus*” textbook has not yet appreciated the personal differences of the user since he still feel difficult to understand the content of the textbook without teacher explanation.

Keywords: quality of textbook, students perception.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Sheldon (1988, p. 237), whether we like it or not, textbooks "represent for both students and teachers the visible heart of any ELT program". Moreover, Hutchinson and Torres 1994, p. 317 generally think of textbooks as "providers of input into classroom lessons in the form of texts, activities, explanations, and so on". In addition, materials should elevate learners' interest and attention so that it could affect their English language learning as a foreign language (Tomlinson, 2001: p. 34). Regarding English teaching and learning materials, specifically textbooks, Tomlinson (2001: p. 34) stated that the students

can learn more if the textbooks they use consist of lots of white space and different activities. According to him, such activities can develop learners' confidence by engaging them in using the target language.

According to Zohrabi (2011: p. 121), material evaluation should be the top priority of any curriculum. Generally speaking, since no textbook can be perfect, textbook evaluation is very important to clarify the suitability of the sources and find the best one (Gholami, Nikou & Soultanpour, 2012: p. 99). In addition to these, because textbook evaluation involves production, assessment, and adaption of materials, it is necessary for teachers to regularly execute evaluation processes that guarantee the pedagogical contribution of the books to both learning and teaching procedure and also become sure of their suitability for not only the context, but also the learners who use them (Azizifar, 2009: p.77).

The evaluation of a textbook seems like a tedious task. Since the relatively new English Textbook is being used by junior high school students, it is important that it passes strict examinations such as physical appearance, design and illustration, objectives, content, flexibility, teaching skills, teaching methods, practice and testing. This is the only way for parents, teachers and students to be sure of good and reliable learning. The Importance of this choice is that this textbook has recently been published and its evaluation will be an urgent need and a important meaning. Evaluations can provide a reference to the subsequent revision and improvement of certain aspects of this fundamental textbook and related material as well. Another reason behind the choice is that this book is building blocks for major English education and this reason is not fully accurate and strong. It can be debated easily.

2. METHOD

The type of study is descriptive qualitative which the main purpose is to describe the quality of "*English in Focus*" textbook according to Greene & Petty's criteria of good English textbook at SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Surakarta.

The object of this study are the English teacher and two students of eight grade. The school located at Jl. Ahmad Yani Tempurejo RT.05 RW.11, Sumber, Banjasari, Surakarta 57138.

The study used interview method for collect data. The goal of interview was to get information about the quality of “*English in Focus*” textbook for Eight grade students. The technique for analyzing were qualitative analyzed through following steps; identifying key words, coding, reducing, overlapping codes, displaying data analysis, and drawing conclusion.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the study.

3.1 Finding

This section reports the findings from the interview. The interview was used to find out the quality of textbook entitled “*English in Focus*” according to Greene and Petty’s 10 criteria of good English textbook. The ten criterias are:

Criteria 1. Textbooks should ‘attract students’ who use them.

The students were asked the view whether “*English in Focus*” textbook interesting. Students have two perceptions. Student A agree with the author and teacher A. However, student B has different perception. The student’s coments can be seen as below:

Student A : *Lumayan. Isinya lumayan.*

Pretty fair. The content pretty fair.
(Author translation)

Student B : *Menarik. Isinya sudah jelas.*

It is interesting. The contents were clear.
(Author translation)

Based on the answers above, students A agree that the English textbook entitled “*English in Focus*” was quite attractive to be used learning process. However, student B said that the textbook was attractive.

Criteria 2. Textbook should be able to ‘provide motivation’ to the students who use them.

The students were asked the view whether “*English in Focus*” textbook has given motivation and kind of example. The studens also supported the teacher’s perception. The student’s comment can be seen as below:

Student A : *Iya. Ingin baca ceritanya.*

Yes. (I) Want to read the story. (Author translation)

Student B : *Iya. Jadiin mau baca.*

Yes. So, (it) makes me want to read.
(Author translation)

Based on the answer above student A and student B believe that the English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" has been provided motivation.

Criteria 3. The textbook 'contains illustrations' that attracts students who use it

The students were asked the view whether "*English in Focus*" textbook has given can attract to study hard or not. The students have two perceptions. It is different from the author analysis and the teacher perception. It can be seen below:

Student A : *Bagus. Isinya bagus.*

(It's) Good. The contents are good.
(Author translation)

Student B : *Bagus. Gambar yang ada diceritakan ceritanya itu bagus.*

(It's) Good. The picture in the stories is good. (Author translation)

Based on the answer above, student A's and student B's perceive the English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" presents the pictures that are less attractive for students.

Criteria 4. Textbooks consider 'aspects of linguistic to fit the abilities of the students' who use them.

The students were asked the view whether "*English in Focus*" textbook are difficult or not and what are the examples. The students also supported the teacher perception. The comments can be seen as below:

Student A : *Lumayan. Karena nggak terlalu bisa bahasa inggris.*

So so. Because not be able to learn English. (Author translation)

Student B : *Hmmm lumayan hehe. Isi-isinya, isi didalam bukunya.* (Less enthusiastically expression)

Hmm so so hehe. The contents, in the material. (Author translation)

Based on the answer above, students A and B believe that the textbook has been ordered that difficulty levels according according to their abilities. It means that English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" is quite easy to use in learning process.

Criteria 5. The contents of textbooks 'should be closely linked to other subjects', even better if it can support with a well-planned so everything is unified and integrated roundness.

The students were asked the view whether "*English in Focus*" textbook related to other subjects and what are there if any, what subjects. The students perception also supported the author's analysis and teacher's perception. the comment can be seen below:

Student A : *Ada. IPS (Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial). Iya.* (less enthusiastically expression)

There is. IPS (Social Science). Yes. (Author translation)

Student B : *Ada. Kayak IPA (Ilmu Pengetahuan Alam). Didalamnya soalnya ada penjelasan tentang bunga-bunga.*

There is. Like Natural Science. There is explanation about flowers in it is exercise/ tasks. (Author translation)

Based on the answers above, student A and student B agree that English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" has relationship to other subjects. Although their answers were different.

Criteria 6. Textbooks 'can stimulate, stimulate private activities' of students who use it.

The students were asked the view whether "English in Focus" textbook can make or stimulate them to work on exercise/ tasks which exist the in it. The students perception also supported the teacher perception. The comment can be seen as below:

Student A : *Belum pernah. Iya.* (less enthusiastically)
Has never been. Yes. (Author translation)

Student B : *Nunggu disuruh sama guru. Hehe enggak.*
Wait to be told by the teacher. Hehe no.
(Author translation)

Based on the answer above, student A and student B agree that English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" cannot stimulate students to work on the tasks without being asked by the teacher.

Criteria 7. Textbooks must be 'firmly protected from the vague concepts', so that's not confused students who use it.

The students were asked the view whether the text, pictures and the content of textbook "*English in Focus*" are clear and does the examples clear? Which part?. The students shared the same view with the author. The comment can be seen as below:

Student A : *Sudah. Rata-rata sudah jelas.*
(It) does. The average is clear. (Author translation)

Student B : *Sudah. Diteks percakapan. Iya.*
(It) does. In conversation text. Yes. (Author translation)

Based on the answers above, student A and B's perception of textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" has very good content and it is clear to understand. Criteria 8. Textbooks must have a clear and firm 'point of view' so that it can be the viewpoint of the faithful user.

The students were asked the view whether how is the book "*English in Focus*" presented, regarding the preparation of the material and where is the focus of on the book "*English in Focus*". Then, is there any similarity in each chapter. The students also supported the author's analysis and the teacher's perception. The comments can be seen as below:

Student A : *Sesuai. Sama.*

(It is) Appropriate. Same. (Author translation)

Student B : *Sama. Iya*

(It is) same. Yes. (Author translation)

Based on the answers above, student A and student B agree that English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" already show the point of view. It can be seen in every chapter which always indicate the existence of language skills. This book also shows the teaching's way from easiest to the difficult.

Criteria 9. Textbook must be able to "provide stabilization, the emphasis on cultural values".

The students were asked the view whether "*English in Focus*" textbook have cultural values and what kind of the example?. The students's perception also supported author's analysis and teacher's perception. The comments can be seen as follow:

Student A : *Ada. Pertemanan.*

There is. Friendship. (Author translation)

Student B : *Ada. Kayak persahabatan gitu..*

There is. Like a friendship. (Author translation)

Based on the answers above, student A, and B agree that the textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" provides stabilization on cultural values.

Criteria 10. Textbook must be able to appreciate the personal differences of the user.

The students asked were the view whether “*English in Focus*” textbook can be suitable or already suitable for the characteristics of different students and what are the example, students who are active in class may capture material faster than students who are less active. Or maybe there are some students who easily grasp the material if it is explained/explained first. The students A supported the teacher’s perception. In other view, the student B has a different perception. The comments can be seen as below:

Student A : *Nunggu dijelasin. Iya.*

Wait to be explained. (Author translation)

Student B : *Iya. (tidak perlu menunggu dijelaskan oleh guru) Iya.*

Yes. (no need to wait for the teacher explain)

Iya. (Author translation)

Based on the answers above, student A perceive that the textbook entitled “*English in Focus*” is not appropriate to be used in English learning. It is different from the perception of student B who agree that the textbook was good enough to be used in English learning process.

3.2 Discussion

In this part, the study discussed the findings related the research questions. The study analyzed the quality of English textbook entitled “*English in Focus*” according to Greene & Petty’s criteria of good English textbook. The discussion of the findings is presented according to the research questions.

3.2.1 How is the quality of “*English in Focus*” textbook according to Greene & Petty’s criteria of good English textbook?

The English textbook “*English in Focus*” shows that, out of the 10 criteria according to Greene & Petty’s, there are 5 criteria which accordance with the use of the English textbook in the English classroom for Eight grade. However, there are also 5 criteria that was not found in English textbook in the English classroom

for Eight grade. It means that the English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" is suitable for using in the English classroom.

The result of the current study is different from previous study. Agustina (2014) analysed "*English in Focus*" textbook for Eight grade junior high school in SMP/MTs. She found that, first, this textbook corresponded to learner's need. Second, this book reflected the uses (present or future) that learners will make of language. Third, this textbook took account of students' needs as learners and facilitated their learning processes, without, dogmatically imposing a rigid 'method'. Fourth, this textbook had clear role as a support for learning. The percentage of communicative task is 43.75%, it means that the "*English in Focus*" is average in developing the communicative task. So the quality of the "*English in Focus*" in developing the communicative task is average of the criteria which are suggested in this study. And the percentage of types of material in CLT is 74.95% it means that the "*English in Focus*" is very good in developing the CLT material as applied in this study.

3.2.2 What is the view of teacher in SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Surakarta concerning the quality of "*English in Focus*" according to Greene & Petty's criteria of good English textbook?

Based on the findings from the interview with the teacher, it shows about the teachers' perception on the quality of good English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" according to Greene & Petty's. The ten criteria according to Greene & Petty (2006), the teacher's comment that there were 6 criteria, were suitable to be used in English classroom by using English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*".

The result of the study is match with the previous study. Siti (2013) investigated the teachers' perceptions towards the use of textbook, their strategies and difficulties in using the textbook in the classroom. The participants of the study were two English teachers at an Islamic senior high school in Cirebon. This was descriptive study using qualitative method as the approach. This study employed three techniques in collecting data: questionnaire, observation and interview. The findings revealed that the teachers perceived positively towards the textbook. The teachers considered that the textbook suited the students' need,

teachers' need, syllabus and examination. In using the textbook, the teachers used strategies to make an adaptation on textbook by modifying task, adding and omitting the materials. There were two main difficulties faced by teachers; the level of difficulties of the material and limited aids for teaching. The result of the study is expected to broaden teachers' knowledge about criteria of good textbook and to promote meaningful and communicative purpose for future textbooks.

3.2.3 What is the view of students in SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Surakarta concerning the quality of "*English in Focus*" according to Greene & Petty's criteria of good English textbook?

Based on the findings from the interview with the students. It can be seen from the comment between student A and student B in their answers from the interview. It shows students' perception on the quality of good English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" according to Greene & Petty's student A said that there were 9 criteria that were suitable to be used in English classroom by using English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*".

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of interview of students, there were the students gave a perception of the quality of the English textbook entitled "*English in Focus*" according to the 10 criteria by Greene & Petty's of good English textbook. They agree that the textbook is in accordance with their way of learning.

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