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EVALUATION OF ENGLISH ON SKY 3 TEXTBOOK

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ABSTRACT

This research evaluated the English on Sky 3 textbook used by Grade IX for Junior High School, which was evaluated by the ESL Teachers of the University of Saint Anthony Philippines. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions: (1) What are the results of the teacher's evaluation along: a) Content; b) objective; c) level of difficulty; d) illustration and lay out?; (2) What are the strength and weaknesses of the textbook? (3) What enhanced learning activities can be designed based on the results of evaluation?

Based on the summary and findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: (1) The English on Sky 3 textbook used by the teacher and students was evaluated based on the standard/criteria on textbook evaluation on content majority of the ESL teachers rated the book as suited to the abilities of the students. As to the objective in writing the book it develops skills in the three learning domain. And along the level of difficulty the book presents clarity in the direction, concretized the concept presented and can be done or completed independently in pairs or in teams and lastly as to the illustration and layout the textbook presents the visual images further facilitate ease of understanding on the part of the learners or readers as majority of the students are visual learners. (2) The strengths are the positive points of the book as it adheres to the criteria on textbook evaluation as to content the book has a strong points on the following; the content are suited to the abilities of the students and the book is relevant to the subject while the weak points are on logical arrangement of the book. And the book activities moderately invite inquiry, curiosity and critical thinking and objectives are moderately consistent with the objectives. (3) The proposed Enhanced learning activities entitled "Enhanced Learning Activities in English" was crafted based on the weaknesses of the evaluated textbook "English on Sky 3" published by Erlangga.

Keywords: *Textbook, Textbook Evaluation, English on Sky 3*

¹*Mengajar di SMP*

²*Dosen UAD*

A. Introduction

English as an international language is used by people all over the world. In English language teaching, the students are expected to master four skills, namely listening, reading, writing, and speaking. To help the students learn deeply about those skills, many textbooks were published to support the teaching-learning process.

Actually, materials, especially authentic materials, play a significant role in foreign language teaching. Textbook itself should correspond to learner's needs, help to equip learners to use language effectively for their own purposes, facilitate student's learning process, have a clear role in mediating the target language and the learner (Cunningsworth, 1995) .

Textbook is one of the teaching materials that play an important part to determine the success of English teaching and learning process. As a universal element of teaching, textbook is used by many teachers around the world in different levels of education. Some of them can't even separate themselves with textbook in the classroom. In addition, it can be seen their tendency to rely heavily on textbook and just use all of the items provided in

the textbook. Thus, textbook is also known as teachers' map, recipe, holy book or survival kit.

Textbook is a primary agent of conveying knowledge to the students by providing language input and language practice in a selected, easy, and organized way. Language input is presented in form of educational text, material skills, language concept, and even explanation. Hence, language practice is presented in form of activities, practice drills, exercise or worksheet. All those language input and practice are arranged orderly in a certain way that makes usually fit to be in a single volume of book, so it can be easily used by both teachers and students (Richards, Jack C., 2002). Furthermore, all the ready materials presented in textbook are also beneficial to provide sense of independence to the students, where they can actually learn by themselves without teacher's guide but rely on the instruction and guidelines provided in the textbook (Mohammad, R & Komari, R., 2007).

Selecting a textbook for use in particular context may be determined by a number of different individuals or group, such as Ministry of Education, a school principal, or a Head of Department. It is a situation where teachers have no direct control over textbook selection and just expected to use the textbook given although they are the one ultimately will use it in the teaching and learning process. However, teachers are expected to increase their awareness of students' needs as well as what part of textbook that is appropriate to be used, extended, exploited, and adapted (Cunningsworth, 2008).

Evaluation is a dynamic process which investigates the suitability and appropriateness of an existing practice. It is a useful device for both teachers and material writers as an underlying element in the development of innovations and modifications within the teaching /learning context (Ur, P: 2009). However, despite its important role in improving various aspects of teaching programs, evaluation is not still a well articulate and supported part of a project (Hargreaves, A). Hence, the significance of the textbook as a universal component of English language teaching is undeniable (Hutchinson, T. & Torres). An English textbook has an essential role in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. The use of English textbooks has a prominent merit for both teachers and students. Harmer states that the most important aspect of textbook use is for teachers to try to engage students with the content they are going to be dealing with.

According to Soori Textbooks are fully specified and pre-constructed materials that provide a certain amount of uniformity in what occurs in many different classes with different teachers and students, which serve the interests of accountability. Yasemin discusses an evaluation of the three English textbooks which have been prescribed for use in grade 4 classes by the Turkish Ministry of National Education in state primary schools. Teachers and students responded to a 37-item textbook evaluation scheme (Smiley Questionnaire) to express their perceptions concerning various aspects of the textbooks. Both groups of participants were also interviewed to gain further insights into the use of the textbooks. Findings revealed the extent of appropriateness of the three textbooks used by young learners of English. Suggestions are offered for the future revision and/or designing the textbooks for young learners of English.

B. Methodology

The researcher utilized the qualitative research method. The method was used to describe the content of the textbook. One of the purposes of this method is to identify bias, prejudice, or propaganda in textbook presentation (Donald Ary, Lucy C. Jacobs, and Christine K, 2010). In this study, the representation of content, objective, level of difficulty

and illustration and layout. Was included standard/criteria were adopted in the evaluation of the textbook English on Sky 3.

C. Research Instruments

The instrument used is the English textbook for the ninth grade students entitled English on Sky 3 for Junior High School. It is published by Erlangga in 2007. The textbook consists of 6 units with illustrations. It presents expressions and grammar with exercises to ease students' understanding. This study examines all units of the textbook including illustrations, language used, examples, theme and activities. The textbook is chosen because it is one of the textbook crafted based on the Curriculum 2013 besides the textbook is published by Indonesia Ministry of Education. The data-collecting process in this research there were ten (10) teacher evaluators – ESL teachers teaching in the junior high school of the University of Saint Anthony who evaluated the textbook, English on Sky 3 by Erlangga.

D. Data Collection

The data of this research was taken in the junior high school of the University of Saint Anthony. The researcher focused the study on (1) What are the results of the teacher's evaluation along: a) Content; b) objective; c) level of difficulty; d) illustration and lay out?; (2) What are the strength and weaknesses of the textbook? (3) What enhanced learning activities can be designed based on the results of evaluation?

E. Discussion

Results of the ESL Teachers Textbook Evaluation of the English on Sky 3.

This part reveals the ESL teachers textbook evaluation on English Sky 3 along the following standard/criteria; content, objective, level of difficulty, and illustration and layout. Textbook Evaluation can be used by teachers to help them in selecting textbook that is suitable with students' need in order to facilitate them to accomplish the learning objectives effectively¹. Through textbook evaluation, teachers are also able to figure out the strengths and weaknesses of a textbook before coming to a decision to use certain textbook, so the textbook will not be wasted. Moreover, this will enable teachers to make appropriate adaptations or supplementations to the material in their future instruction.

F. Findings

1. Teachers Evaluation of the English On Sky 3

A. On Content. The main category of textbook evaluation criteria besides general attributes which deals with the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and other language content (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation). This section presents the results of textbook evaluation on English on Sky 3 along content. The descriptive analysis presented the number of responses as shown on table 1. There were ten ESL teachers in junior high school of USANT who evaluated the textbook "English on Sky 3" that was used by the Indonesian teacher. Three or 30% of the teachers evaluated that the book was logically arranged verbally interpreted as evident but seven or 70% of the teachers evaluates that it was moderately evident, nine or 90% of the teachers observed that the book is suited to the abilities of the student interpreted as very evident but one or 10% of the teachers evaluated it evident. There were eight or 80% of the teachers recorded that English on Sky 3 is relevant to the subject with verbal interpretation as very evident but two or 20% of the teachers evaluated it evident. There is one or 10%

of the teachers observed discussion is clear and understandable as very evident but nine or 90% of the teachers

Table 1
Summary Evaluation on *English On Sky 3*

| On contents | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| Logically arranged | | | | 3 | 7 | |
| Suited to the abilities of the student | | | 9 | 1 | | |
| Relevant to the subject | | | 8 | 2 | | |
| Discussion are clear and understandable | | | 1 | 9 | | |
| The activities invites inquiry, curiosity and critical thinking | | | 3 | 7 | | |
| The activities are consistent with the objective | | | 1 | 2 | 7 | |
| On objectives | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| Describe the expected behavior of the students | | | | 8 | 2 | |
| Guide and challenge students in achieving the skills presented | | | 1 | 1 | 8 | |
| Develop skills in the three domain | | | | 10 | | |
| Develop the macro skills in English language | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| On Level of difficulty | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| Presents clarity in the direction | | | 1 | 9 | | |
| concretized the concept presented | | | 1 | 2 | 7 | |
| can be done or completed independently, in pairs, or in teams | | | 8 | 2 | | |
| On Illustration and layout | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| Variety of illustration & layout to achieve impact | | | 1 | 9 | | |
| Consistency in the use of headings, icons, labels, and italics | | | 2 | 8 | | |
| The illustration & layout stimulate students to be creative | | | 1 | 9 | | |
| The illustration & layout are functional | | | | 10 | | |
| The illustration & layout facilitate students visualizations without imposing visual images | | | 1 | 9 | | |

observed it as evident. Three or 30% of the teachers observed that the activities invites inquiry, curiosity and critical thinking as evident but seven or 70% of the teachers observed it as moderately evident. There is one or 10% of the teachers observed the activities are consistent with the objective as very evident, two or 20% of the teachers observed it as evident and there are seven or 70% of the teachers observed the activities as less evident.

Having known the data description of the ESL teachers on the English on Sky 3, the researcher was able to deduce that the content of the book as the prime criterion in giving substance must be given utmost consideration as the author of book published by Erlangga said the book features content that develops grammar, vocabulary and language function.

B. On Objective. A criteria for teachers in selecting quality textbooks for their students and to serve as a reference for textbook writers and developers of learning materials.

The data revealed that out of ten or 100% of the teachers one or 10% rated it as very evident and another one or 10% of the teacher rated it as evident and the eight or 80% of the teacher rated it as moderately evident. Describe the expected behavior of the students There is one or 10% of the teachers rated the book as a guide and challenge students in achieving the skills presented as very evident, and one or 10% of the teacher rated it evident, and eight or 80% of the teachers recorded it as moderately evident. All of the ten or 100% of the teachers found the book that it develops skills in the three learning domain as evident and that the book develops the macro skills in English language as moderately evident by the eight or 80% of the teachers and one or 10% of the teachers

as very evident and one or 10% as evident. The data reveal that these criterion on objectives must emphasize the intent of writing in setting the goal and rationale in writing the book.

C. On Level of Difficulty. It refers to the consistency with the curriculum requirements and the development of cognitive level of the students.

The data reveal the Level of Difficulty where ten ESL teachers evaluated that the book presents clarity in the direction rated by one or 10% of the teachers as very evident, and the nine or 90% teachers rated it as evident. While one or 10% of the teachers evaluated that the book concretized the concept presented as very evident, two or 20% of the teachers evaluated it as evident, and seven or 70% of the teachers evaluated it as moderately evident. There are eight or 80% ESL teachers evaluated that the activities in the book can be done or completed independently, in pairs, or in teams with verbal rating as very evident, and two or 20% of the teachers rated it as evident.

D. On Illustration & Layout. The elements on textbook evaluation pertaining to the illustration & layout that includes ornamentation, photograph, artwork body type, and display type.

The data show that along variety of illustration & layout to achieve impact one or 10% of the evaluators rated it as very evident and 9 or 90% of the evaluators rated it as evident. On consistency in the use of headings, icons, labels, and italics two or 20% verbally interpret it as very evident and eight or 80% rated it as evident. As to the illustration & layout stimulates students to be creative one or 10% of the evaluators marked it as very evident and nine or 90% as evident. And on the illustration & layout that are functional ten or 100% rated it as very evident. And lastly, as to the illustration & layout facilitate student visualizations without imposing visual images one or 10% of the evaluators rated it as very evident and 9 or 90% of the evaluators rated it as evident. It can be construed that visual images further facilitate ease of understanding on the part of the learners or readers as majority of the students are visual learners.

2. Strength and Weakness of the English on Sky 3 textbook

This section presents the results of the strengths and weaknesses of the English on Sky 3 textbook. The strengths are the positive points of the book as it adheres to the criteria on textbook evaluation. As to content the book has a strong point on the following; the content are suited to the abilities of the students and the book is relevant to the subject while the weak points is on logical arrangement of the book. And the book activities moderately invite inquiry, curiosity and critical thinking and objectives were moderately consistent with the objectives.

As to objective, the English on Sky 3 develops skills on the three learning domain, however, moderately weak on challenging the students to achieve the skills presented on the activities and moderately weak in **developing** the macro skills in English language.

On the level of difficulty, its strength is on the presentation of the book's clarity in its direction and that the activities presented can be performed by the student's independently in pairs or in teams and is moderately weak on concretizing the concept presented in the lesson.

As to illustration and layout the visual images further facilitate ease of understanding on the part of the learners or readers as majority of the students are visual learners.

3. Enhanced Learning Activities in English

This section presents the proposed Enrichment learning activities entitled **“Enhanced Learning Activities in English”** which was crafted based on the weaknesses of the evaluated textbook *“English on Sky 3”* published by Erlangga. The features of the learning activities are the Nature of the Communication process, Why communication is essentials?, Functions of communication, Elements of Communication, Basic Communication Skills, Effective Listening and Speaking, Reading, Writing, Portfolio Writing, Testing the Receptive Skills, Testing Reading, Testing Speaking, Testing Pronunciation, Testing Grammar, Testing Word Choice, Testing Writing

G. Conclusions

Based on the summary and findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The English on Sky 3 textbook used by the teacher and students was evaluated based on the standard/criteria on textbook evaluation on content majority of the ESL teachers rated the book as suited to the abilities of the students. As to the objective in writing the book it must develop skills in the three learning domain. And along the level of difficulty the book presents clarity in the direction, concretized the concept presented and can be done or completed independently in pairs or in teams and lastly as to the illustration and layout the textbook presents the visual images further facilitate ease of understanding on the part of the learners or readers as majority of the students are visual learners.
2. Based on the result of evaluation on the strengths are the positive points of the book as it adheres to the criteria on textbook evaluation as to content the book has a strong points on the following; the content are suited to the abilities of the students and the book is relevant to the subject while the weak points are on logical arrangement of the book. And the book activities moderately invite inquiry, curiosity and critical thinking and objectives were moderately consistent with the objectives.
3. The proposed Enhanced learning activities entitled **“Enhanced Learning Activities in English”** was crafted based on the weaknesses of the evaluated textbook *“English on Sky 3”* published by Erlangga.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were offered:

1. Textbook evaluation is a must for teachers, one should not rely on textbook evaluators. Teachers as a curriculum writer and implementer must personally examine the book and should consider the standards/criteria in textbook evaluation.
2. Teachers must capitalize on the strengths of the book and needs to review and revise weak areas presented in the book.
3. The **“Enhanced Learning Activities in English”** should be adopted to facilitate the English learning activities for grade IX junior high school.

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