

EVALUATING ENGLISH TEXTBOOK CURRENTLY IN USE AT “ENGLISH BITES” (ENGLISH EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAM EXISTED IN CIVIL AVIATION POLYTECHNIC OF SURABAYA)

Lusiana Dewi Kusumayati
Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya
E-mail : lusianakusumayati@gmail.com

Abstract

Facing global competition in aviation Industry, the cadets of Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya (Aviation Polytechnic of Surabaya) are suggested to take English extracurricular program held by POLTEKBANG language unit. It is in line with the institution's policy for the cadets to pass TOEIC test as one of requirements before graduating from the college. The textbook used at the course is one of the key elements for the success of the program. Considering its importance, textbook should be carefully evaluated and selected before being used. Textbook evaluation helps the teaching staff to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a particular textbook that is already in use. This research seeks to evaluate the suitability of the book, “New Headway”, towards students' needs. For this purpose, 25 students and 1 instructor were selected and data were gathered by using questionnaire. An additional component of the study consisted of a student's “needs analysis”. After analyzing data, it was shown that although the textbook had some drawbacks, it had met the students' need.

***Keywords :** textbook evaluation, English extracurricular program, Civil Aviation Polytechnic of Surabaya*

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks are considered as one of the key components in most TEFL programs. “A textbook can be referred to as a published material specially designed to help language learners to improve their linguistic and communicative abilities (Sheldon, 1987)”. Not only providing a framework for teachers in achieving the aims and objectives of the course, it also guides the teacher when delivering the materials. Interesting textbook also can motivate the students to like the lesson and become active participants during the class. Mukundan & Nimehchisalem (2012) state “the textbook is one of the crucial factors in determining the learners' success in language courses. Teachers or curriculum developers, therefore, should select this teaching material carefully”. In the selection of a textbook, it is important to conduct an evaluation to ensure that whether it is suitable or not.

The textbook that had been selected for evaluation in this study was New Headway Intermediate Students' Book written by two authors Liz and John Soars. It consists of a textbook, and an audio CD. The 'in-use' evaluation was designed to examine material that is

currently being used. A checklist adapted from Mukundan & Nimehchisalem (2012) was used for qualitative and quantitative evaluation. A survey of the learner's needs before textbook evaluation began was conducted. The target situation needs were analyzed. Tudor (1996), regarded target situation and learning needs analysis as objective and subjective needs analysis respectively. The former collects information about the actual requirements for language use as they exist in the target situation, while the latter addresses subjective perceptions of the course participants about what they feel the course should be like.

Literature Review

Cunningsworth (1995) identifies a textbook as a resource in presenting the material, a source for learners to practice and do the activities. They also provide the learners with a reference source on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Textbooks serve as a syllabus and a self-study source for learners. They also serve as a support for the beginning teachers who have yet to gain in confidence. It can be said that by using textbook, it can give a support for teachers and learners dealing with the materials of learning even though it does not mean that it plays dominant role in teaching and learning process.

There are many reasons for conducting textbook evaluation. Cunningsworth (1995) states one of the reason is to identify particular strengths and weaknesses in course books already in use. One other reason for textbook evaluation is that it can be very useful in teachers' development and professional growth. Ellis (1997) suggests that textbook evaluation helps teachers go beyond impressionistic assessments and it helps them to acquire useful, accurate, systematic and contextual insights into the overall nature of textbook material.

Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) state that there are three different types of material evaluation. They argue that the most common form is probably the 'predictive' or 'pre-use' evaluation that is designed to examine the future or potential performance of a textbook. The other types of textbook evaluation are the 'in-use' evaluation designed to examine material that is currently being used and the 'retrospective' or 'post-use' (reflective) evaluation of a textbook that has been used in any respective institution.

Litz (2005)'s study evaluated a university level textbook used in one of the language courses at a university in South Korea. A total of eight university instructors teaching that

particular language course and five hundred students had been surveyed. The study adopted a post-use evaluation approach focusing on how the textbook can meet student's and teacher's needs. Questionnaires were sent to both students and teachers to survey their post-use experience on their perceived pedagogical value of the content of the textbook and also practical considerations such as layout and design. A student learning needs analysis had also been conducted as the researcher felt that such analysis can help course designers to ensure that the teaching objectives of the language course are aligned with student needs.

Tok (2010), studied the book "Spot on" at the primary level in Turkey. After the evaluation, he interpreted this result that the book had some positive and negative characteristics. The good quality of the book was that it was not about one culture. It was also helpful for teachers for how to use. On the other hand, it also had some disadvantages that the book had not well developed and interested activities. The activities did not provide helping material in achieving objectives. It did not provide good communicative activities as well.

Zohrabi, et al (2012) evaluated the merits and demerits of English for high school freshmen in Iran from the viewpoints of teachers and students. They focused on seven sections of layout, vocabulary, topics and content, exercises, skills, pronunciation, function, and social and cultural activities. The results of the investigation pointed out that the book was grammar oriented and more emphasis was placed on reading more than three other skills, insufficient practice was provided for pronunciation with respect to target culture, no social and cultural activities were included and the layout of the book was believed to lack beauty.

METODE

Quantitative and qualitative methods have been used for analyzing and evaluating the data.

Design

The textbook being evaluated was being used by English extracurricular program at Civil Aviation Polytechnic of Surabaya. In-use analysis was used to examine the textbook as it is, with what may actually happen in classrooms.

Instruments

Questionnaire have been selected as the main instrument of the study. The levels of analysis used in the evaluation of the textbook include its design, table of contents, distribution of units, lessons and sections in the book. It also examines the treatment of the different skills, reading, listening, writing and speaking and the ways of assessment practices provided through the book.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of New Headway Intermediate Students' Book (for level 3)

There are 12 units in the book. Each unit includes 4 skills. The first lesson started with a listening and grammar section then moved on to reading skill and other skills. As a whole, the book has 124 activities which are divided among each lesson. The activities have been given to focus various skills. There was also an audio CD accompanying the student's book. The formal representation of the division and percentages is given below:

Tabel 1: Analysis of New Headway Intermediate Students' Book

Impressionistic view	Total		
Units in the book	12		
No. of activities in the book	124		
Activities per unit	9 - 15		
In - Dept view	Total activities	Per unit	Percentage %
Activities for Listening skills	15	1 - 3	12.1
Activities for Speaking skills	23	1 - 3	18.5
Activities for Reading skills	12	1	9.7
Activities for Writing skills	12	1	9.7
Activities for Everyday English	12	1	9.7
Activities for Vocabulary	21	1 - 5	17
Activities for Grammar	29	1 - 4	23.4

The result of textbook evaluation analysis stated that there was a difference in the percentage of skills. The author has given more emphasis to develop grammar that is 23.4 %. The lowest percentage includes activities in reading, writing, and everyday English.

Analysis of listening skills

New Headway Intermediate Students' Book has different activities on listening to develop the listening comprehension on different topic. Different purposes of listening have been given in the following table:

Table 2: Activities for Listening Skill

Units	Title	Types of listening activities	Page no.
Unit 1	My Wonders	Listening for key information	12
Unit 2	Sports	Listening for key information	21
Unit 3	Books and films	Listening for comprehension	28
Unit 4	Come round to my place!	Listening for key information	36
Unit 5	A weather forecast	Listening for key information	44
Unit 6	New York and London	Listening for comprehension	52
Unit 7	The busy life of retired man	Listening for description	61
Unit 8	Who wants to be a millionaire	Listening for key information	68
Unit 9	Brothers and sisters	Listening for key information	77
Unit 10	Collectors	Listening for comprehension	84
Unit 11	The forgetful penetration	Listening for comprehension	92
Unit 12	Noisy neighbours	Listening for gist	97

Analysis of Speaking skill

New Headway Intermediate Students' Book has following categories of speaking skill activity:

Table 3: Activities for Speaking Skill

Category	Frequency	Page number
Information gap	3	9, 25, 87
Discussion	11	12, 14, 34, 42, 52, 57, 65, 77, 98
Describing/ Talking	6	28, 32, 50, 71, 76, 92
Role Playing	3	33, 58, 98
Exchanging/Comparing information	2	81, 84

Different topics are given to each types of speaking activity. It has purpose to make the students speak fluently in different situation. Discussion activity has dominant frequency than others. Exchanging/ comparing information have less activity.

Analysis of Reading Skill

Categories of reading activities which can be analyzed from the book can be seen from the following table:

Table 4: Categories for Reading Skill Activity

Category	Frequency	Page Number
Descriptive	2	18, 58
Exposition	1	66
Informational report	3	10, 42, 74
Explanation	2	50, 90
Literary text	1	99
Biography	2	26, 82

The dominant category based on the findings above is informational report. All reading activities are well organized. The questions following each reading text includes reading for finding ideas, and detail information (explicit and implicit).

Analysis of writing skill

Categories of writing skills activity are given below in the following table:

Table 5: Categories for Writing Skill Activity

Category	Frequency	Page Number
Letter	6	103, 104, 108, 112, 118, 119
Narrative	2	106, 114
Descriptive	2	110, 116
Biography	1	117

Based on the findings, writing letter has more activity rather than others. In writing letter, the learner practices how join ideas by using words, finding and correcting language mistakes, and constructing their own letter. Formal and informal letter, emails, reservation letter and application letter are types of letter studied in the book. The other activity like writing narrative, descriptive, and biography are also attract interest of the learners.

Analysis of Vocabulary & grammar

Vocabulary and grammar are also important element of English. The following table explains following activities dealing with vocabulary and grammar:

Table 7: Activities related to vocabulary and grammar

Vocabulary	Page Number	Grammar	Page Number
Part of speech and meaning	60	Auxiliary verbs	7
spelling and pronunciation	12, 20, 25, 36, 44, 52, 60, 68, 76, 84, 93, 98	Naming the tenses	7
Word formation	60	Questions and negatives	7
Words that go together	60	Short answer	8
Keeping vocabulary records	12, 20, 25, 36, 44, 52, 60, 68, 76, 84, 93, 98	Past tenses	23, 24, 27
Collocations	25, 52	Modal verbs – obligation and permission	31, 33
Phrasal verbs	60	Future forms	39
Literal or idiomatic?	60	Questions with like	47
Separable or inseparable?	60	Verb patterns	49
Base and strong adjectives	68	Present perfect	55
Modifying adverbs	68	Present tense	15, 17, 18
Character adjectives	76	Present perfect passive	57
Compound nouns	84	Conditionals	63, 64
Verbs and nouns that go together	93, 98	Time clauses	63
Idioms	93	Modal verbs – probability	71, 73
		Present perfect continuous	78
		Time expressions	80
		Indirect questions	86
		Questions tags	88
		Reported speech	95

Analysis of Everyday English Category

Beside the skills and element of English, this book also contains the skills that will be used in the learners' daily life context. The following table analyzed the topic given:

Table 8: Everyday English Category

Category	Page Number
Social expression	13
Numbers and dates	21
Giving opinions	29
Requests and offers	37
Request in hotel	45
Signs and sounds	53

Category	Page Number
On the phone	61
Making suggestions	69
Agreeing and disagreeing	77
Expressing quantity	85
Informal English	93
Saying sorry	101

Discussion

Based on the results of need analysis, the students who join English extracurricular program in Civil Aviation Polytechnic of Surabaya wants to get English skills written and orally to support their major in studying in higher education. It is suitable with the expected outcome of English Bites that is “able to use English written and orally for specific purposes in the level of intermediate. This book fulfill the requirement because based on the dept analysis, this book consist of 4 skill learning. Besides, it also teaches 2 important elements of language and also everyday English is included as one topic.

The book is interesting for students because the visual part of the book is very attractive. It has dark blue as the cover with good color combination. The font of the book is big enough. It completes the explanation with pictures supporting the topic discuss. The activities included in the book were creative and challenging. Four language skills are discussed in an integrated way in the units, trying to include every skill in each unit and the activities for receptive skills were usually used as input for the activities of the productive skills. Among others, this book emphasizes grammar study. Each unit started with grammar study. When each skill being discussed, grammar focus will be discussed also. Less emphasize is on writing skill. Writing considered as the most difficult skill to learn according to some students, but it is also very beneficial in order to survive in daily life context. The topic dominant for writing skill is writing letter. It is beneficial but the other topics also need to be enhanced. Reading and listening section in this book is really interesting, the topic of listening and reading target meets the learners’ need.

From the result of questionnaire, 19 from 25 students or 76% students got above 135 when a questionnaire given to them. The total score when all respondent give their highest score is 152. It means that from the students’ point of view, this book is suitable to be used as parts of

teaching materials. The instructor agree that this book is suitable and love to use this book as parts of their teaching materials.

CONCLUSION

This study focused on the evaluation of the textbooks “New Headway intermediate students’ book” used for the students who join English extracurricular program at Civil Aviation Polytechnic of Surabaya. For the successful and effective evaluation, checklist was used quantitatively and qualitatively by using Mukundan and Nimehchisalem’s checklist (2012). The analysis and evaluation of the textbook included variety of task types, variety of topics, relevance of topics to learner’s interests, relevance of the materials to learner’s language needs. After textbook evaluation it found that this book is suitable to be used as parts of teaching materials in Civil Aviation Polytechnic of Surabaya.

REFERENCE

- Cunningsworth A. (1995). *Choosing Your Coursebook*. Oxford, UK: Heineman English Language Teaching
- Ellis, R. (1997). The Empirical Evaluation of Language Teaching Materials. *ELT Journal* 51 (1), 36-42
- Litz DRA (2005). *Textbook Evaluation And ELT Management:A South Korean Case Study*, Thesis. Retrieved on March, 10, 2009 from http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Litz_thesis.pdf.
- Mukundan & Nimehchisalem. (2012). Evaluative Criteria of an English Language Textbook Evaluation Checklist *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, Vol. 3, No. 6, pp. 1128-1134, PUBLISHER Manufactured in Finland.doi:10.4304/jltr.3.6.1128-1134
- Sheldon. (1987). *ELT Textbook and Materials: Problems in Evaluation and Development*. Oxford: Modern English Publication.
- Tok, H. (2010) . TEFL textbook evaluation: From teachers’ perspectives. *Educational Research and Review*, 5(9), 508-517.
- Zohrabi, M., Sabouri, H. & Behroozian, R. (2012). An Evaluation of Merits and Demerits of Iranian First Year High School English Textbook. *English Language Teaching*.