

An Analysis on Reading Activities of an English Textbook Used at Eleventh Grade of SMA Negeri 1 Jambi City in Academic Year 2020/2021

Faradila Dian Arizal, Suyadi, Kartika Dewi

English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Batanghari University

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to analyze the reading texts provided in English textbook used in SMA N 1 Jambi City based on the criteria of reading text. The criteria are the variety, exploitability, suitability of content, the length or size, readability and authenticity of the text. In this research, the researcher used descriptive qualitative. Specifically, the research method that used in gathering the data is content analysis method. The data were gathered by reading all of the reading texts repeatedly to identify and classify the necessary data. There are seven reading text with different variety which includes narrative, expository, speech, play script and recount text. All of these texts were also provided with reading activities which is split into three phase including pre-reading, while reading and post reading activities. These texts have different topic and theme which also found to be suitable for high schools students. The topic and theme of the text are interesting and can be referred to the other subjects in their learning. However, the length of the texts are seems to be not suitable for high school students. Most of the texts were considered to be more suitable for students in lower level. The texts also met the readability criteria since the topic are familiar to the students and there is no over-detailed or oversimplified explanation within. Finally, the results also show that the texts are met the authenticity criteria, which means most of them are taken from authentic sources that relevant to the topic.

Keywords: *Reading Activities, Textbook*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the skills in English that has to be mastered by the students when they are learning English. Therefore, students have to learn reading as well as the other skills if they want to master English. Nunan (2003) explained that reading is a process of building the meaning of the text. Readers combine information from the text with their background of knowledge. While Alyousef (2005) believed that reading is an interactive process between the reader and the text which leads to automaticity or reading fluency. Therefore, reading is an active skill that needs so many times to practice and exercise. The improvement of the readers' comprehension is based on the effort they give to work on it. It means that the more they read, the better their reading comprehension.

However, to improve the students reading comprehension and understanding it is necessary to conduct a deeper analysis of the reading activities. The reason for this is that based on the researcher's experience in teaching practice, most of the students faced difficulties in reading English texts due to the

different English language features from their first language. The researcher found that most of the students felt bored, passive and unenthusiastic in learning reading in the class.

On the other hand, the role of the teacher in teaching reading is to convey or guide the students to gain some important message and get meaning from written text. The teacher should consider which learning materials to use in the class. A textbook is one of the learning materials which are commonly used for reading activities. According to Tomlinson (1999), a textbook is the main learning material which is usually used by teacher and students. There are sixteen criteria for a good textbook or course book which includes the overview, methodology, authenticity, assessment, materials, language, up to date, suitability, language skills, colours and font, practically, obtainability, course book content, teaching and learning styles, activity and comparison. In this research, the researcher will focus on reading as language skills criteria to analyze the book.

To make the students able to achieve better English learning in their reading skills,

they need English textbooks that have a good quality of reading activities. Reading activities should follow the pedagogical criteria for reading activities. According to El Kadaoui (2018), there are six criteria for reading activities which include the variety, exploitability, suitability of the content, length or size, readability and authenticity of the reading text. All of these criteria are important to provide the students with better reading activities that will improve their reading skills.

READING

Reading is an activity in which readers respond to and understand the text being read concerning their prior knowledge (Spratt, Pulverness, & Williams, 2005). These activities are carried out by the readers because they want to get information and knowledge from the text. In the process of getting information and knowledge, the readers try to connect what they read in written form to what they have already known about the text. Furthermore, Grabe and Stoller (2011) also explained that the main goal of reading is not to remember most of the specific details but to have a good grasp of the main ideas and supporting ideas, and to relate those ideas to background knowledge appropriately. In addition, Nuttal (1998) stated that the main focus of reading is not only in the language but also in the sense of the content of reading itself. In other words, teachers not only want the students to learn about how language is used for conveying the content but also want them to develop the skills they needed in order to become effective independent readers.

TEXTBOOK

Textbook refers to materials used in teaching English as a subject matter in a specific educational context, according to Nunan (2003) coursebooks are not written for a specific group of people, but written for a generalized target group for use in English or non-English speaking countries. According to Chambliss and Calfee, as cited by Muniroh (2016), textbooks are considered as the key to educational activities, since they provide students with many new and potentially interesting facts and experiences. The textbooks have a significant role as they are considered as the main way to deliver content

knowledge and to guide the classroom activities and for assessing what students should and should not learn (Freeman & Porter, 1989). A majority of teachers consider textbooks as the only teaching resource (Maffia, Dias, Brauna, & Cruz, 2003). So, Textbooks do not only influence what and how students learn, but also what and how teachers teach. Related to this research, the textbook also influences how the students learn reading. The standard of the reading activities based on the six pedagogical criteria of reading can influence how the students learn and develop their reading skills.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design of this study is descriptive qualitative. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) explained that descriptive is the characteristic of data in qualitative research. Specifically, this research will use the content analysis method to analyze the data. Anderson (2007) explained that content analysis is one of the many methods used in analyzing qualitative data. Content analysis can be applied to various studies including language studies, which concern analyzing the content of certain matters through reading, identification, and classification of the text which will be conducted by the researcher.

The subject of this study is the English Textbook for the second grade of senior high school. This book is developed based on the curriculum of 2013 which is launched in 2013 and published by Kemendikbud. This textbook is used by the second grade of SMA N 1 Jambi City. There are seven reading activities in this textbook that will be analyzed.

The technique which used in collecting the data is document analysis. This research analyse the book in order to collect the data. In analyzing the book, the first step is reading the textbook for second grade of senior high schools. After reading the texts in the textbook, the next step is identifying the texts based on the criteria of reading activity; variety, exploitability, suitability, length, readability and authenticity of the text. The last step of the research is classification. In this step, the researcher classifies the text based on

its criteria of reading activity whether each text meets the criteria or not. The researcher proposed the following rubric in order to do the scoring for each criteria.

FINDINGS

This research was conducted by reading all seven reading activity texts provided in the textbook. In order to analyzed all six criteria of reading, the researcher read all of the seven texts in the textbook repeatedly. Therefore, the researcher was able to identified the texts based on the criteria of reading activity; variety, exploitability, suitability, length, readability and authenticity of the text.

The research aimed to analyzed the reading text provided in English textbook used in SMA Negeri 1 Jambi City based on the criteria of reading activities. There are six criteria used to analyze the texts including variety, exploitability, suitability, text length, readability and authenticity of the text. Based on the data findings, the overall score based on the data analyzed is shown in the table below:

Table 1
Overall Score for Reading Criteria

N o.	Criteria	Text Number							Avg
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1.	Variety	3							3
2.	Exploitability	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
3.	Suitability	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	Length or Size	1	2	1	1	1	1	4	1.5
5.	Readability	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
6.	Authenticity	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	2.7

DISCUSSIONS

Based on the table above the score of the texts variety provided by the textbook is three which means that some of the text in reading textbook have the same types with different genre. The reason for this result is that the texts in the textbook are varied from narrative, expository, speech, play script and recount. However, from seven texts there are three narrative text with two different genres; fairy tale and short story. According to McCormick (2007), Marzban & Seifi (2013)

and Yuliana (2018) the most common text type used for improving high school students reading skills ability is narrative, expository and recount. Meanwhile, play script are usually used to improve their speaking skills (Fabio, 2015). Fabio explained that activities that involved play script offered the perfect tools to accomplish speaking environment, involving both the learner's intellectual and emotional sphere, and aiming to create a meaningful, pleasant and low-stress atmosphere. Moreover, they provided a range of language functions when recreating authentic communicative contexts. In addition, the same view also presented by Lutviana (2016). Lutviana explained that speech is the type of text that commonly used to improve the fluency in speaking.

The next criteria is the exploitability of the text which in this case, all of the seven text received three as the score analysis. It means that the reading activities only provide task and assignment that produce and develop written text. Based on the analysis, it is found that the activities provided in the textbook for each texts are monotonous. All of the texts has three major activities which includes pre-reading activities, reading activities and post-activities. These three phases of reading activities is known as contemporary reading task (Alyousef, 2005). Pre-reading activities is where the teacher try to motivate the students before the actual reading takes place. Drucker as in Alyousef (2005) suggested that pre-reading activities is used to related the students with the passage that they are going to read. In addition, Abraham (2002) suggested the teacher to activate the students' schema by discussing the title, subheading, structure, etc. The next phase is the activities while reading where the students develop their ability in reading by developing their linguistic and knowledge. Finally in the last phase, the post-reading activities is where the students enhance their reading comprehension through some kind of exercise such as matching exercise, close exercise, comprehension questions, etc (Haller as in Alyousef, 2005). However, the activities under three main activities are the same despite the different variety of text provided.

The third criteria is the suitability of the text to the students. The result found for all the text in this textbook is also three which implied that the topic and theme of reading text are interesting but not refers to other subjects that the students learn. The topic of the texts provided were mostly related to the human character and life, while there were only two texts that have topic and theme related to history. There is the positive correlation between the reading topic with the interest in reading (Charzyńska, 2015). In her research Charzyńska also explain that education level correlated positively with reading comprehension.

The criteria of the length or size of text received the average score of 1.5. The score of each text is varied, there is one text that received 4 and one other text that received 2 while the rest five of them received 1. In this case, the higher the score means that the more suitable the length of the text to the higher grades. Therefore, most of the text in the textbook are more suitable for the students in lower grades. Langeborg (2010) explained that Flesch Reading Ease formula ranges from 0 to 100, with easier texts scoring higher. It is in line with Flesch (2006) described that a text with a Reading Ease score of 100 should be 'easy for any literate person' while a score of 0 represents a text that is "practically unreadable". Based on the data findings, most of the text received Flesch ease scores more than 60 which means that those texts are easier than what the high school students should learn. Meanwhile, there is only one text that meet the score for high school students, text number two with the themes of bullying. Following this result, the textbook also provided one reading text that received the ease score less than 50 which is a little bit more difficult for the high school students. Based on these results it can be concluded that reading texts provided in English textbook is more suitable for the students in the lower grade than high school students.

The fifth criteria is the readability of the text. In this criteria all of the text received the score of 4 which indicate that the content of reading text are familiar to the students and does not contain any overly detailed and overly simplified explanation. This criteria is

also related to the suitability of the content which focus on the topic and themes of the text. The readability is about the familiarity of the text to the students and how the text provided information. Soltani and Malae (2015) found that the familiarity of the topic could improve the students language ability especially their reading comprehension. This result is supported by Norman (2015). Norman explained that the interrelationship between language skills and topic familiarity influence reading comprehension is significant. Therefore, based on the result found in this research, the texts provided in english textbook are significantly able to improve the students reading skills.

The last criteria is the authenticity of the text. The result found in this criteria is that six out of seven reading text received the score of 3 which implied that the reading text contains reference sources that are relevant but not up to date in accordance with the topics discussed. Meanwhile the other one text received the score of 1 which implied that the reading text contains reference sources that are not relevant and not up to date in accordance with the topics discussed. The reason for this result is that this text is not attached with the source where it was taken from. Santoso & Islam (2018) in their research concluded that reading comprehension score of the students taught using authentic texts is significance higher than those who are taught using non-authentic texts. Furthermore, authentic texts can improve the students reading comprehension especially in determining to main ideas, identifying supporting detail, identifying factual interaction, determining vocabulary related to the topic, determining pronounce reference and recognizing meaning of words. In contrary, Apsari (2014) concluded in her research that there is no significant outcomes that produced by learning reading with non authentic materials. However, it is recommended for the teacher to teach reading with authentic materials for a change in the learning process. Therefore, the students can learn in accordance to their ability and the task given would be more suitable (Berardo as in Apsari, 2014). In summary, although the reading texts provided in the textbook were mostly taken from out of date sources, they can still be used in teaching

reading as long as it is relevant with the content.

In sum, the reading texts provided in English textbook used in SMA N 1 Jambi city met the criteria of reading. The higher score is the readability of the text. All of the texts received the score of 4 which indicates it completely met the criteria. The criteria of variety, exploitability and suitability received the score of 3 each. This result indicates that the reading texts mostly met the three criteria. Authenticity of the texts in the textbook received the average score of 2.7 which implies that the reading texts almost meet the criteria for the authenticity. The reason for this result is because on of the text provided did not attach the source or reference where it was taken from. Finally, the length of the texts received the lowest average scores of 1.5. The result found that most of the reading text has the length of which is more suitable for the students below the high school grades. Meanwhile there were only two texts that meet the length or size for high school students or higher.

Based on the conclusion above, the research provided some suggestions regarding this research. The government should evaluate and improve the textbook for English subject. Therefore, the students can have the materials that is more suitable for their learning activities. Especially in selecting the reading text for reading activities. It is necessary to provide the students with the text which has the length that is match with their grades. As for the teacher, it is suggested to use more than one learning textbook in the teaching process. It would be more efficient for the students to have more than one learning source in their reading activities. Therefore, when one book does not meet the criteria of reading the teacher can provide the students with the better materials. Although, the criteria of reading in English textbook used in SMA N 1 Jambi City already have been analyzed, there are still many aspects that need to be focused on, such as the relation of each criteria to the students' improvement in their reading skills. Therefore, for further research, it is very necessary to explore extensively to those aspects related to reading activities and reading materials.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This research drew the conclusions as follow:

1. Reading texts providing in the textbook have several varieties which includes narrative text, expository text, speech, play script and recount text.
2. The score analysis for variety criteria of the textbook is 3 which indicates there are some of the text that have same type. The same score also received by the criteria of variety, exploitability and suitability which indicates that the reading texts mostly met the three criteria. Authenticity of the texts in the textbook received the average score of 2.7 which implies that the reading texts almost meet the criteria for the authenticity. The criteria of the length of the texts received the lowest average scores of 1.5 which indicates that the reading textbook does not meet this criteria.

REFERENCES

- Allwright, R. L. (1981). What do we want teaching materials for? *ELT Journal*, 5-18.
- Alyousef, H. S. (2005). Teaching reading comprehension to ESL/EFL learners. *The Reading Matrix*, 5(2), 143-154.
- Anderson, B. (2007). Pedagogical rules and their relationship to frequency in the input: Observational and empirical data from L2 French. *Applied Linguistics*, 286-308.
- Apsari, Y. (2014). The Use of Authentic Materials in Teaching Reading Comprehension. *ELTIN Journal*, 88-94.
- Bogdan, R. C. (2003). Data analysis and interpretation. *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*, 4.
- Charzyńska, E. (2015). *Text topic interest, willingness to read and the level of reading comprehension among adults – The role of gender and education level*. Katowice: University of Silesia.
- Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Revised ed.). Sage publications.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. Macmillan.
- Day, R. R. (1989). Selecting an ESL/EFL Reading Passage. *University of Hawai'i Working Papers*, 115-128.
- Dorn, L. J., & Soffos, C. (2005). *Teaching for deep comprehension: A reading workshop approach*. Stenhouse Publishers.
- El Kadaoui, M. (2018, July 31). *6 basic Pedagogical Criteria for Selection of Reading Text*. Retrieved from Morocco English: <https://moroccoenglish.com/reading-text-selection/#comments>
- Fabio, T. (2015). *Drama techniques to enhance speaking skills and motivation in the EFL secondary classroom*.
- Flesch, R. (2006). A New Readability Yardstick. *The Classic Readability Studies*, 99-112.
- Fox, G. (1989). Text selection and the role it plays in motivation. *The Language Teacher*, 8-10.
- Freeman, D. J., & Porter, A. C. (1989). Do textbooks dictate the content of mathematics instruction in elementary schools? *American educational research journal*, 26(3), 403-421.
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2011). *Teaching and researching reading*. England: Pearson Education.
- Hetherington, A. (1985). Assessing the Suitability of Reading Materials for ESL Students. *TESL Canada Journal*, 3(1), 37-52.
- Himayatiun, B. (2014). *The Teachers' Strategies in Overcoming Students' Difficulties in Comprehending Narrative Texts*. Cirebon: IAIN Syekh Nurjati .
- Langeborg, L. (2010). *Readability - An Analysis of English Textbooks for Swedish School Years 7-9*.
- Lutviana, R. (2016). Speech Contest to Improve Student's Fluency in Speaking. *Jurnal Ilmiah Bahasa dan Sastra*, 143-151.
- Kurnianto, A. (2016). An Analysis of Reading Materials on a Textbook for the Eighth Grader: Real Time an Interactive English Course for Junior High School Students Year VIII (Doctoral dissertation, Thesis. Yogyakarta: Yogyakarta State University).
- Maffia, A. M., Dias, L. S., Brauna, R. C., & Cruz, R. (2003). Analysis of teachers' performance in the selection program of science textbook. *European Science Education Research Association*.
- Mardasari, D. (2017). Reading Interest, Text types and reading Comprehension of English Education Study Program Students of FKIP Sriwijaya University. *The Journal of English Literacy Education*, 4(1), 44-58.
- Marzban, A., & Seifi, S. (2013). The effect of genre structure on reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 1043 – 1048.
- McCormick, S. (2007). *Instructing students who have literacy problems*. New Jersey: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

- Melvin, B. S., & Stout, D. F. (1987). Motivating learners through authentic materials. *Interactive Language Teaching*.
- Muniroh. (2016). *A Content Analysis of the English Textbook Entitled "When English Rings a Bell" for Grade VII of Junior High School Published by Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia in the Year of 2016*. Semarang: Walisongo State Islamic University.
- Norman, A. H. (2015). Topic of Familiarity and Vocabulary Knowledge: Implication for Instruction. *National Seminar Proceeding, Universitas Negeri Malang*, 98-104.
- Nunan, D. (1992). *Research Method in Language Learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific Region. *TESOL quarterly*, 37(4), 589-613.
- Nuttal, C. (1982). *Teaching Reading Skill*.
- Nuttal, C. (1998). Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language. *ELT Journal*, 1(48).
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Santoso, E., & Islam, S. (2018). The effectiveness of using authentic texts in the teaching reading comprehension. *ETERNAL (English, Teaching, Learning, and Research Journal)*, 166-180.
- Soltani, F. E., & Malae, N. (2015). The Effect of Familiarity with Academic Topics on Learner's Reading Proficiency As Measured By IELTS. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*, 78-88.
- Spratt, M., Pulverness, A., & Williams, M. (2005). *The TKT Course*. Cambridge University Press.
- Stevens, D. D., & Levi, A. J. (2013). Introduction to rubrics: An assessment tool to save grading time, convey effective feedback, and promote student learning. Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Tomlinson. (1999). *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* (2nd ed.). Alexandria: Virginia.
- Yuliana. (2018). *A Study on Reading Comprehension of Recount Text at SMP An Nur Pekanbaru*. Pekanbaru: Universitas Islam Riau.