THE COMMUNICATIVE CRITERIA FOUND IN 10TH YEAR OF PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH COURSEBOOKS

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ABSTRACT:
This thesis is a materials evaluation using communicative criteria. This topic is chosen considering that coursebooks are important teaching tools and communication ability is now a standard in pedagogical field. It aims to find the communicative criteria applied in the coursebooks. The writer attempts to find the criteria application and finds that the materials in the coursebooks apply to some extent the communicative criteria concerning the language knowledge, interaction, and language practice and use. The materials in the coursebooks are analyzed with constructed communicative criteria from Communicative Language Teaching principles by Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011). This study method is qualitative. The data are taken from English coursebooks for 10th Year of Public Senior High Schools in Indonesia. In conclusion, the coursebooks are fairly communicative because most materials apply one or more communicative criteria, except for materials in Vocabulary and Pronunciation sections. Further studies can be conducted on the materials suitability with students' needs, the language skills and components and communicative competence taught.

Keywords:
Materials Evaluation, Communicative Language Teaching

One form of commonly used teaching material is coursebook. It facilitates learning by constructing the structure of the course, serving as the basic content of the course or as the supplement of the teachers' instruction, and providing the main input for the students (Garton and Graves, 2014). To know the value of the coursebook, materials in the coursebook can be evaluated by conducting a materials evaluation using a checklist. The checklist contains some key indicators to identify the strengths and the weaknesses of the coursebook. Those key indicators are named as criteria by Cunningsworth (1995).

The checklist used in this study is a constructed checklist of communicative coursebook criteria based on Communicative Language Teaching principles by Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) which cover a vast scope of the criteria of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Communicative coursebook criteria were chosen to be evaluated in this study because CLT now becomes more accepted in pedagogical field as the importance of the mastery of communicative competence of the target language gets more attention in language teaching and learning (Cunningsworth, 1995).

This study attempts to find whether the communicative criteria were applied in the evaluated coursebook materials. For that reason, this study asks two questions. The first question was which communicative criteria are applied in the coursebooks. The second question was to what extent those criteria are applied.

Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) proposed some Communicative Language Teaching classroom principles. Those principles explain the characteristics of a language classroom that applies CLT. Some of those principles are taken as the basis of this study, particularly for constructing the checklist for this study. The Communicative Language Teaching principles that are used for this study are related to the goals of using CLT, the role of the students, the characteristics of the teaching/learning process, the nature of student-student interaction, the way the feelings of the students are dealt with, the view of the language, and the areas of language and language skills emphasized (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011).

The first principle is about the goals of using CLT. CLT goal is the ability to communicate with the target language. For that reason, the teaching of the language does not focus on form only, but on meaning and language functions as well. Also, the ability to utter a language function in various forms and the ability to use a language form for various language forms are presented (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011).

The second principle is related to the role of the students. Students' role is viewed as *communicators* (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p. 122). Therefore, students need to learn how to communicate clearly. Also, the ability to communicate is prioritized over the complete mastery of the target language forms (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011).

The third principle is about the characteristics of the teaching/learning process. CLT teaching/learning process is dominated by communicative intended activities. The examples of such activities that are typically used activities in CLT are language games, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks. Another characteristic of CLT teaching/learning process is the use of authentic material, which shows the real language use outside classroom. Besides, the activities in the CLT teaching/learning process have to apply three communicative features: information gap, choice and feedback as proposed by Morrow (1981, as cited in Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2011, p. 122).

The fourth principle is regarding the nature of student-student interaction. In communicative classroom, students interact a lot. The interaction can be in *pairs, triads*, or others (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p. 123).

The fifth principle deals with the feelings of the students. Students are given the chance to express their thought. Secure feeling is also developed in a CLT classroom by encouraging cooperative interaction between students (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011).

The sixth principle is related to the view of the language. Language is viewed as communication. Therefore, besides the knowledge of language form and meaning, the knowledge of language function is also emphasized. Moreover, different degrees of formality in utterances are taught (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011).

The seventh principle is related to the areas of language and language skills emphasized. Because language functions tend to be more emphasized than language forms, the lessons are organized around function rather than form (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p. 120). For that reason, the various grammatical forms can appear together in a lesson to utter one function. In addition, language is presented at suprasentential level. Furthermore, all of the four language skills are given equal priority and taught from the beginning (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011).

There are two similar studies that inspired the writer in conducting a materials evaluation. The first was *An Evaluation of the Third Grade Intermediate English Coursebook in Saudi Arabia* (Al-Yousef, 2007). It was a materials evaluation on a third grade Intermediate English coursebook titled *Say It in English*. The study used combined quantitative and qualitative approach. It was conducted by interviewing teachers supervisors and student and by asking them to fill in the number to evaluate a set of criteria in a Textbook Evaluation Tool (TET) modified by the writer, Al-Yousef.

The second similar study was *Palestinian EFL Teachers' Attitudes Towards English Textbooks Used at the First Three Grades of Elementary School* (Hammad, 2014). The study was done by the writer, Hammad, on the lower elementary grades coursebooks, *English for Palestine*, used in Gaza. It applied both quantitative and qualitative methods and was done by distributing questionnaires to 70 teachers and by conducting semi-structured interviews with 12 teachers.

METHOD

This study used qualitative approach, in form of materials evaluation. The data sources and the data for this study were 10th Year Senior High School coursebooks used in Indonesia public schools. The titles of the coursebooks were *Bahasa Inggris untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas X Semester 1* (*English for the 10th Year of Semester 1 Senior High School*), and *Bahasa Inggris untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas X Semester 2* (*English for the 10th Year of Semester 2 Senior High School*). The instrument of this study was the writer herself.

The data was collected by downloading the first semester coursebook from the government website, *http://bse.kemdikbud.go.id/buku/ bukusma*, and by downloading the second semester coursebook, which was not available in the government website, from an unofficial website. Then,

the second semester e-book validity was checked by borrowing a printed second semester coursebook from a Public Senior High School (*SMK Negeri*) teacher.

After collecting the data, the writer determined that the theory used for the basis of this study was CLT principles by Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011). Then, the theory was used as the basis for the writer to construct a checklist. The data was analyzed based on those constructed checklist.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first criteria group is the criteria concerning the language knowledge. It consists of nine criteria.

The first criterion in the group is about the presentation of the language knowledge. Language forms are presented mostly in Grammar Review sections and sometimes in the other sections such as in Warmer, Dialog, Speaking, and Writing sections. Chapters one until five and Chapter thirteen applies this criterion by presenting the knowledge of language forms with the functions and meanings. The example is the material in the Speaking section in Chapter 1 which presents the language form yes/no question with the language function guessing. Some linguistic form presentations are not accompanied by enough presentations of the knowledge of language functions and meaning, such as the material in the Grammar Review section in Chapter 6. That material presents the form noun phrase without much emphasis on the language function and meaning.

The second criterion in the group is about variations in uttering a language function. The creativity of utterances in the coursebooks is presented frequently in the first four chapters. The examples are materials in the Dialog sections in Chapter 2. Those materials show many ways to utter the language functions complimenting and showing care. However, later not much knowledge of language variation for conveying a language function is presented.

The third criterion in the group is about knowledge of various functions in one form. Although the materials provide some knowledge of variations in uttering a language function, they do not emphasize the various language functions that one form can serve. The coursebooks do not provide specific parts or material to explain a form's various language functions.

The fourth criterion in the group is about the knowledge of degree of formality and politeness. Much knowledge of different formality degree in using the language is presented in Chapter 2. For example, some utterances and contexts which have different degree of formality are provided in the form of conversation pictures in the materials in Dialog section in Chapter 2. However, in the other chapters, the formality level of the language is dominated by more same level communications, which are between students of the same age.

The fifth criterion in the group is about the priority on language function over linguistic forms. The first five chapters of the coursebook and the thirteenth chapter apply this criterion by focusing on these language functions: introducing oneself, complimenting and showing care, expressing intention, congratulating, and describing. However, most of the linguistic forms presentations in the other chapters focus on the forms themselves rather than on the language functions.

The sixth criterion in this group is about language use above the sentence level, or at suprasentential level. The coursebooks provide a lot of chances to interact with suprasentential level input and to work on that level in forms of mails, passages and dialogues, as well as a song. Also, they apply this criterion by emphasizing the knowledge of text parts, main ideas, supporting ideas and purposes in Text Structure sections. However, the pronunciation and some vocabulary focused materials are still presented below the sentence level. The examples are the materials in the Pronunciation Practice in Chapter 1 and 2 which present the language as words and phrases, and the material in the Vocabulary Exercises section in Chapter 3 which presents the language as sentences instead of above the sentence level.

The seventh criterion in this group is about balance presentation of four language skills. Some materials present the language skills as integrated skills. For example, the materials in the Reading section in Chapter 1 and 9, and the material in the Text Structure section in Chapter 5, use a text to work on various tasks on that cover the four language skills. However, in many parts of the coursebooks, it was found that the skills are still taught separately.

The eighth criterion in this group is about the written and spoken communication forms. The materials provide frequent opportunities to interact with communication forms throughout the coursebooks although not in every chapter. For example, the materials provide interactions with mails as in Chapter 1, dialogs as in Chapters 2, 3, and 16, greeting cards as in Chapter 2, announcement as in Chapter 9, stories as in Chapters 14, 15, and 17.

The ninth criterion in this group is about the authentic materials. Very few authentic materials are used in the coursebooks. The examples are the material in the Reading section in Chapter 9 which presents authentic announcements, and the material in Listening to a Song section in Chapter 18 which presents an authentic song. Some further activities promote the use of authentic materials. However, the authentic materials are accessed outside the coursebooks, such as in the internet or in story books.

The second criteria group is the criteria concerning the interaction. It consists of two criteria.

The first criterion in the second group is about the students' chance to interact with each other. The materials provide a lot of chances for the students to interact with each other. However, the intensity of the interaction is different. For example, in some materials in Vocabulary Builder section, the students interact only briefly by matching their answers with each others' answers. On the other hand, in the Speaking section, the students can have more interaction.

The second criterion in the second group is about interactive communicative activities. The materials contain many activities that apply this criterion. The examples are language games such as in some materials in the Warmer section, role plays such as in some materials in the Speaking and Dialog sections, and editing simulation such as in the material in the Writing Section in Chapter 6 in which the students play the role of editors and discuss with their partner how to improve a piece of writing.

The third criteria group is about the criteria concerning the language practice and use. It covers two criteria.

The first criterion from the third group is about the chance for the students to practice to communicate. Every chapter in the both coursebooks has some materials that apply this criterion. However the extent the materials give the chance is different.

Related to amount of communicating chance given, some provide the chance to communicate very little amount of message, while some others provide the chance to communicate a lot of message. For example, the Reflections section materials ask the students to check their comprehension, so that answer would be limited to short and limited discussion or answer. In contrast, some materials which belong to Dialog and Speaking sections give chances to communicate larger amount of the target language. For example, in Chapters 6, 10, and 16 some materials that apply this criterion give the students chances to practice to communicate orally and those in Chapters 1, and 4 give the opportunity to practice to communicate in the written form.

Related to the availability of the chance to utter their thought, in every chapter, the students get the opportunity to utter what they feel about the lesson and how far they feel they have understood the materials in the chapter, which is in the Reflection sections. Also, the materials in the coursebooks provide the chance to express their feeling about many subjects of discussion in some other materials such as in the Warmer section in Chapter 3 which lets the students to give their opinion about vacation destinations, the material in the Writing section in Chapter 3 which provide the chance to convey their preferred holiday plan, and the material in the Speaking section in Chapter 14 which gives the chance for the students to convey their thought about what the character in the story should have done with the magic item.

Related to the purpose of communication, some of the chances to communicate are purposeful, while others are not. There are some chances given for the students to use the language with certain motive or purpose of communication. Some communications are purposeful as in some Writing sections, where certain information is meant to be delivered to a pen pal or a friend such as in the materials in the Speaking section in Chapter 1, and in Chapter 7 where the writer/speaker have certain intentions which are for introducing him/herself and to share an interesting past experience and in the Reflection sections where the speaker wants to review what they have or have not learned and to ask help from the teacher. However, some materials, such as the material in the Speaking section in Chapter 5, stop at describing function and do not have any meaningful intention for communication for the students.

The second criterion of the third group is about the communicative features. The coursebooks have many materials that apply this criterion. Unfortunately, among many of them, only a few of the materials that has all three of the communicative features. The others have only one or two of those three features that should be available in a communicative material. An example of the material that applies this criterion is the material in the Speaking section in Chapter 1. In that material information gap is available since the students who have to guess the word do not know the answer, and choice can be taken by the students in what way they ask the questions. Also, they need continuous feedback to know whether their guessing is right or not. Another example that applies this criterion is material where the students do not know what the pair thinks about what he/she want to do. Besides, they can choose what to answer depends on their thought. Also, they have to give feedback to each other to compare their ideas.

On the other hand, in some materials such as the material in the Reading section in Chapter 1, only information gap is available, while choice is limited since the answers of the questions are closed answer got from the passages, and feedback to check the understanding of the listeners is not needed because the questions can be answered in one way communication. One more example is the material in the Dialog section in Chapter 2, in which choice and feedback are still available though limited because the students have to congratulate and respond based on the situation given. However, information gap is not available because each of the students knows the situation given.

CONCLUSION

In this study, the application of communicative criteria of the 10th Year Public Senior High School English Coursebooks was analyzed. Communicative criteria was chosen by the writer because of the growing trend of using Communicative Language Teaching in English pedagogical field nowadays, and the increasing awareness of the importance of students' ability in communicating using the language over the ability in comprehending complete grammar knowledge of the language.

The communicative criteria were constructed based on Larsen-Freeman and Anderson's CLT principles. The two studies that were used to help conduct this study were *An Evaluation of the Third Grade Intermediate English Coursebook in Saudi Arabia* (Al-Yousef, 2007) and *Palestinian EFL Teachers'' Attitudes Towards English Textbooks Used at the First Three Grades of Elementary School* (Hammad, 2014).

This study was a qualitative research using a constructed checklist containing communicative criteria. The materials were matched with each criterion to check which communicative criteria are applied. Then, the result was put in a table. After that, the explanation in the paragraphs was presented to give a wider overview on the coursebook materials' communicativeness.

After analyzing the application of the communicative criteria in the coursebook materials, the writer concluded that the materials are fairly communicative. It was because in general the coursebooks applied one or more criteria from the three criteria groups, although most materials in the Vocabulary and Pronunciation sections are not presented in communicative way at all. Another problem related to communicative criteria application of the materials was that there was that very few authentic materials were presented. The major revision recommended including adding more authentic materials to work with, and changing the organization of the materials into more function-based to be able to teach the language communicatively.

This study can still be developed in further research. Also, many aspects of the coursebooks can be explored in the coursebook evaluation. Some suggested topic that be done for further studies are the suitability of the coursebook materials with students' needs by using Harmer's (2001) theory about learners, the teaching of language skills and components in the coursebooks by using Cahyono's (2010) theory and communicative competence taught in the coursebooks by using Brown's (2007) about communicative competence.

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