



An Analysis of Aims and Approach of a Textbook: “Look Ahead English Course For Senior High School Students Year X”

Yulizar

STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon, Aceh Tengah, Aceh.

Email: yulizarrusydi@yahoo.com

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa apakah buku teks bahasa Inggris yang berjudul “Look Ahead English Course For Senior High School Students Year X” yang dianjurkan pemerintah Sumatera Barat sesuai dengan buku teks bahasa Inggris yang baik. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan menemukan ketepatan *aims and approach* sesuai dengan syarat buku teks bahasa Inggris yang baik menurut pendapat beberapa orang ahli. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian deskriptif. Sumber data yang digunakan adalah buku Look Ahead English Course For Senior High School Students Year X dan data diperoleh dalam bentuk analisis yang diberikan oleh 2 orang siswa, 2 orang guru bahasa Inggris, 2 orang dosen bahasa Inggris dan peneliti sendiri. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah format analisis atau angket dan komentar-komentar yang diberikan oleh masing-masing penilai. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian ditemukan bahwa aspek *aims and approach* pada buku Look Ahead English Course For Senior High School Students Year X belum terpenuhi.

Kata kunci: textbook analysis, look ahead, students year X.

Introduction

Textbook has important role in teaching and learning process. It is needed for teachers and learners in order to make teaching and learning process run well. They are included teachers and learners in West Sumatera. Many teachers start from elementary school up to senior high school still use English textbook as their main sources of teaching and learning process for both students and teachers. From the textbook, teachers can prepare a lesson and media for teaching, they can design a test for learners, and they can give homework and assignment easily. All of activities done by the teachers. Meanwhile, students can prepare themselves to read the material in textbook before going to school and review their lesson, doing their homework at home after their class done. O’Neill (1991) indicates that textbook is efficient in terms of time and money either its price is not too expensive which can be reached by all students or low lesson preparation time. Haycroft (in Litz 1998) says two primary advantages of using textbook is that they are psychologically essential for students since their progress and achievement can be measured concretely when we use them.

Nowadays there have been many English textbooks published to fulfill the need of English textbooks. But, government in West Sumatera provides an English textbook for each level of students, whether they are for Junior High Schools or Senior High Schools. Because of that reason, the researcher chooses analyzing English textbook for first grade Senior High School. The researcher will analyze the first grade because in general the first textbook will have the same characteristics as the next ones at the second and the third

year. In other words, by analyzing the textbook for first year, it will contribute to see the overview towards the second and the third year Senior High School English textbook.

In West Sumatera, many English teachers use textbook that is provided by the government. The English textbook used for the first grade students of senior high school is entitled “*Look Ahead English Course for Senior High School Students Year X*” written by Sudarwati and published by Erlangga. It is designed to fulfill the requirements of the English syllabus, which is matched with the School Based Curriculum. It is particularly designed for first grade Senior High School it is called *Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA)*. The book is developed in accordance with the 2006 competency-based curriculum; the greatest part of the subject is devoted to listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well. In the 2006 competency-based Curriculum, the main purpose of learning is to achieve the criteria in the standard of competency and the basic of competency.

Considering this situation, there is a need to do analyzing of *Look Ahead English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* as primary teaching materials in *English Subject*. In the study of materials evaluation or textbook evaluation, there are many aspects or considerations to consider more details; but here are only one aspect; aims and approach. This aspect was chosen because this aspect has been stated in some books, which concern to textbook analysis. Besides, this aspect has direct relationship with the teaching and learning process.

A good textbook is a textbook which is completely cover several basic principles of second language acquisition. It is also stated by Cunningsworth (1995) who says that aims and approach as fundamental thing in a textbook. He presents several questions that need to be answered carefully by the evaluators as follows:

Aims and Approaches:

- 1) Do the aims of textbook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching program and with the needs of the learners?
- 2) Is the textbook flexible? Does it allow different teaching and learning styles?
- 3) Is the textbook suited to the learning/teaching situation?
- 4) How comprehensive of the textbook? Does it cover most or all of what is needed? Is it good resource for students and teachers?

In addition, William (2000:19) says some principles of good textbook. All of the criteria should cover in a textbook. It is in order to present good quality of material discussed in teaching and learning process later. Those criteria said are following:

- a. A textbook should give introductory guidance on the presentation of language items and skills.
- b. A textbook should suggest aids for the teaching of pronunciation: e.g; phonetic system.

- c. A textbook should offer meaningful situations and variety of techniques for teaching structural units.
- d. A textbook should distinguish the different purposes and skills involved in the teaching of vocabulary.
- e. A textbook should provide guidance on the initial presentations of passages for reading comprehension.
- f. A textbook should contain appropriate pictures, diagrams, tables, etc.

Besides, Weddel (2009:22) emphasizes good criteria of a textbook to the students as active users. He divides the criteria based on learners' need:

- a. The learners feel a need to learn.
 - 1) Does the textbook explicitly assesses learners' needs using a level appropriate format?
 - 2) Do the exercises or activities address the identified learners' need ?
 - 3) Does the textbook include clearly stated objectives for each unit or chapter so that learners are aware of outcomes?
- b. The learning environment is characterized by physical comfort, freedom of expression, and acceptance of difference.
 - 1) Is the textbook designed for adult learners using appropriate visuals, topics, exercises, and format?
 - 2) Is authentic language used in the lesson content?
 - 3) Does the textbook address cross cultural awareness?
 - 4) Does the textbook progress at a comfortable pace?
 - 5) Is there opportunity for open-ended conversation practice of language?
- c. The learners perceive the goals of a learning experience to be their goals.
 - 1) Is there opportunity in the textbook to continually revisit learner goals that were identified initially?
 - 2) Are the topics and theme in the textbook related to adult needs and interest?
 - 3) Is the learners asked to apply skills or knowledge in appropriate activities or exercises?
- d. The learners participate actively in the learning process.
 - 1) Does a textbook include the variety of activities that encourage interaction?
 - 2) Does the textbook allow to communicative practice that ask learners to negotiate for meaning?
 - 3) Does the textbook include the level appropriate activates that ask for learner opinion on the lesson design, content, or visuals?

- e. The learning process is related and makes use of the experience of the learner
- 1) Does the textbook include unit openers that elicit previous knowledge?
 - 2) Does the textbook include opportunities for learners to apply content to their own lives?
- f. The learners have sense of progress towards their goals
- 1) Does the textbook make a learning log or checklist regarding skills learned.
 - 2) Does the textbook allow for learner self-evaluation of performance of objectives.

Some principles above show us that a textbook as learning materials should involve important criteria to design it. The most important thing to underline here is learning materials should help learners getting language acquisition and materials should help learners use language in real life condition.

The last expert is Tomlinson (2003), he proposes eleven criteria in conducting textbook analysis. The first one is brainstorming a list of universal criteria. It is very important to begin an analysis from the general one into the specific one. The best form of criteria should be in phrase or questions. For instance; “Does the textbook provide complete topics?”, “Are the materials varieties?”, “Are the instructions clear enough?”, “Do the materials related to the syllabus?”, “Does the textbook has several tasks?”.

Subdividing some of criteria as the second criterion. Some of universal criteria need to be specified. It is very important in making decision or judging of a textbook. For example; the general question “Do the materials related to the syllabus?” can be divided into “Do the materials consist of speaking skills?”, “Do the materials consist of listening skills?”, “Do the materials consist of reading skills?”, “Do the materials consist of writing skills?”. The subdivision question will help point out the materials in textbook.

The third one is monitoring and revising list of general criteria. The general criteria need to be monitored and revised in order to make the questions more evaluated. The monitoring and revising based on the following criteria. “Does each question only ask one question?”, “Is each question an evaluation question?”, “Is each question answerable?”, “Is each question reliable in the sense of that other evaluators would interpret it in the same way?”. By doing this activity, it can make evaluation questions will be more reliable and efficient.

The next one is categorizing the list. It is very useful to rearrange the random list of general criteria into categories which facilitate focus and enable generalization to be made. Possible categories for general criteria would be cultural perspective, learning principles, topic contents, teaching points, texts, activities, methodology, instructions and design.

The fifth one is developing media-specific criteria. This criteria is about asking questions which is specific relevance to the medium (book, cassettes, and video) used by materials being evaluated. For instance, “Does this topic use related cassette?”, “Is the sequence of activities clearly signaled?”, Are the different voices easily distinguished?”.

Developing content-specific criteria as the sixth criteria. This criteria related to teaching points and topics of the materials that will be analyzed. For example, the topic is about English Correspondence, it would not be relevant with the analysis of general English. Thus, the content-specific criteria can be developed here.

The seventh one is developing age-specific criteria. This criteria focuses on the age of target learners because they would like to use textbook. The textbook provided should be suitable with the learners age, whether they are children or adults. This is also related to their cognitive, affective, their psychomotor, experience (background knowledge), needs, and interest. For example, “Is the content will develop learners’ cognitive?”.

The next is developing local criteria. This is related to potential environment of use. It includes the syllabus, class size, type of institution, the objective of the course, the target examinations, the number of exposure to the target language outside the classroom, and the intensity and extent of the teaching time available.

The ninth is developing other criteria. It can includes cultural-specific, administrator-specific, teacher-specific, and gender-specific. The next is trying the criteria. It must be done because it is very important to ascertain those criteria are effective, efficient, answerable, reliable, sufficient, beneficial, and useful. It can be done before actual evaluation done.

The last criteria is conducting the evaluation. In conducting the evaluation, Tomlinson suggest to use the most effective ways. First, to conduct the evaluation cannot be done by one person, make it sure there is some evaluators. Second, discuss the criteria of evaluation. Third, answer the questions independently and the answers must be isolated from other evaluators. Fourth, write comments for each criterion. Fifth, at the end of the evaluation collect each evaluator’s score for each criterion, category of criteria, and a set of criteria, and then average the score. Sixth, record the comments from the evaluators. The last one is writing a joint report.

So, the indicators to analyze the textbook modified from several experts; Thomlinson(1998), Thomlinson (2003), Cunningsworth (1995), Weddel (2009), and Williams (2000). The indicators are described as the table below:

Table 1. Indicators to analyze textbook modified from several experts

Variable / aspect	Indicator
Aims and approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The objectives of the Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X b. The textbook are flexible in which they allow different teaching and learning style. c. The contents of Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X are relevant with the students' needs

Method

The design of this research was descriptive research. Gay (2000) states that descriptive research determines and reports the ways thing are. It is told about something that occurs in the field. The data in this research were three types. The first was the score that was given for the graders on analysis format. The graders are 2 English teachers, 1 researcher, 2 lecturers, and 2 students. The second was the comments which is written by the graders on analysis format. The comments consist of strengths and weaknesses of the textbook based on indicator. The last was the answer from the informants through the questions that was given to the informant. The informants are 2 English teachers who taught English at first grade senior high school. The data were collected from informants and those were converted into number in form of average. The last thing to do that the average score was described into very good, good, poor, and very poor.

Discussion

Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X is An English textbook which is used in teaching and learning process for first grade senior high school as foreign language for teenagers. The English subject covers the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as improving pronunciation and building vocabulary (Richards, 1998). The Senior High School teachers decide to use this book because this book is suggested by Indonesian government. They think that *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* contains the integrated teaching of English skills.

However, as the time goes by, there are some problems occurred in the use of the *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* teaching materials because it doesn't analyze yet. Unfortunately, the books cannot cover all of the good English textbook consideration. To illustrate, the *Look Ahead an English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* do not present an appropriate materials for writing skills. The students are served the easier writing task. The books only demand the students to write a composition for about one until two paragraphs. This task is not balance if it is

compared with the other skills task that have taught language in a higher level. Besides, in average the proportion of writing tasks are viewer than it is compared with listening and speaking. Because of that, it should be the teachers' wises to ask the students making the longer pieces of writing. However, in fact, just some teachers do that and some of them just follow the book instructions.

Besides, based on good consideration of an English textbook which proposed by Thomlinson (1998), the textbook should be flexible in order to allow different teaching and learning style. But the result in this research showed that the *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* are sometimes flexible in which students allow different teaching and learning style. Learning style is needed in teaching and learning process. Because of that it really needed whether teachers and students. in *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X*, not all materials allow students to use different teaching and learning style. It will make teaching and learning process be monotonous because students cannot explore their ways in learning to make them enjoy and understand in learning English.

Moreover, if it is seen from the students' needs, unfortunately the *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* also can't fulfill all their needs. First, the books do not present literary works such as poem, rhyme, and other kinds of arts (aesthetic needs), whereas the literary works can attract the students to read the books. They are also more motivated in studying because the materials provided in the books are more varied with the existence of literary works. It is also proposed by Cunningsworth (1995) that it is useful to have a variety of literary forms, so that the students can learn to deal with different form. Second, the books also can not fulfilled the students' survival needs. According to Weddel (2009), survival needs include drives directed both at survival of organism and at survival of the species. He also stated that education can give contribution to the preservation or prolongation of life by teaching highway and home safety; information about tobacco, alcohol and drugs; basic skills in driving, swimming, and first aid; and sound habits in the areas of nutrition and physical fitness. However, the materials in the *Look Ahead an English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* do not too pay attention to this need.

Furthermore, the problem on the use of the *Look Ahead an English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* as English textbook teaching materials also occurs in its sources of material. Those are about the authenticity and currency of the material. The sources of material for teaching and learning needs to be authentic. It is stated by Williams (2000). It is almost no sources of material from television and radio. These are really needed in order to make students seems like in real life and they know with the up to date information. Besides, in *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* there are no original transcription from the original sources. It is also needed to make students feel in the real situation that is related with their daily life.

On the other hand, the problems in *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* also occur in presenting task. Most of the task in this textbook are not presented effectively. For example, there are no pre-listening, pre-speaking, pre-reading, and pre-writing tasks. The task in *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* goes to post task for each skills. So, students cannot explore their background knowledge before they are going to learn. Besides, it is only a little task that allows students to do self-evaluation of performance and objectives.

Beside that, if it is seen in the term of vocabulary that the *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* have, commonly the book contains vocabularies for daily communication. Whereas, vocabularies for academic and vocational purpose are only some. This because the *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* applied communicative approach. Zainil (2006) said that one of the language characteristics in the communicative language teaching is that activities should involve real communication promote learning. Therefore, most of vocabularies in the *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* are vocabularies for daily communication.

However, from the result of the analysis in *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X*, there are not only problems which is occurred, but also there are some considerations of good English textbook that is occurred in *Look Ahead An English Course for Senior High School Students Year X*. They are about design and organization, material, and topics. But, for the material consideration, not all of sub-indicators fulfill good consideration of English textbook. The problems occur in this indicator have been discussed above. For design and organization and topics, they can fulfill good consideration which are proposed by some experts.

Conclusion

The analysis of *Look Ahead an English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* is needed in order to know whether the textbook is still good or not. The *Look Ahead an English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* does not fulfill the five criteria of good English Textbook. It fulfills only three criteria.

The researcher will give suggestions related to this study. First, it is suggested to government who works in education side and institution or teachers' meeting to analyze the *Look Ahead an English Course for Senior High School Students Year X* periodically. It is suggested to do periodic analysis, the English textbook will be useful and effective. So, the purpose of teaching is possible to be achieved.

Furthermore, English teachers and government who works in education side are also expected to create an English textbook based on the syllabus made by English teachers that will be used in teaching learning process inside and outside classroom.

Besides, the material choices are related to students' social condition including their age, their environment, their psychology, and their needs in real life situation.

On the other hand, there is limited time for teaching and learning process at school, so, it is suggested to English teachers to choose properly aims that is very related with students and appropriate approach in order to get more understanding with the language.

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