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Textbook Evaluation: A Framework for Evaluating the English Subject in Kurikulum Merdeka for the Tenth Grade

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Abstract. This research is aimed at finding out the significance or not the significance of English textbooks under Kurikulum Merdeka be implemented at schools. It is widely accepted that a textbook is an essential component of the English as a Foreign Language classroom. Evaluation of a textbook, therefore, is of utmost importance so that its pedagogical contribution to the teaching and learning process can be assured. In the context of Kurikulum Merdeka in Indonesia, textbook evaluation is an even more important issue given the recent implementation of Senior High School students. Can the newly written curriculum textbook help teachers deliver the new curriculum objectives?. There is a lack of empirical studies showing how curriculum fitness can be evaluated. In addition, despite the repeated emphasis on the benefits of a post-use textbook evaluation by a number of researchers, relevant empirical studies, however, seem to lack much of the available literature is biased towards pre-use evaluation. By conducting this research, the researcher hopes the results can reveal the actual situation of English textbooks at Senior High Schools and whether or not, the textbook is implemented totally as it is or should be added or lessened of some materials in the textbook.

Keywords: Kurikulum Merdeka, framework, textbook evaluation, post-use textbook

INTRODUCTION

The main textbook is one of the main learning resources for use in academic units. The reference for the preparation of the main textbooks is the Guidelines for Implementing the Curriculum in the context of Learning Recovery which was stipulated through the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 56/M/2022 dated 10 February 2022, as well as Learning Outcomes in Early Childhood Education, Basic Education Levels, and the Secondary Education Level in the Independent Curriculum which was stipulated through the Decree of the Head of the Education Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Agency Number 008/H/KR/2022 dated 15 February 2022. The book presentation is designed in the form of various learning activities to achieve competence in these Learning Outcomes. The English textbooks for SMA/SMK/MA that are currently in use are an implementation of the Independent Curriculum that has been proclaimed by the Central Government (Kemenristekdikti, 2022).

Referring to Kepmendikbudristek Number 50 of 2022 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Curriculum in the Framework of Learning Recovery (Independence Curriculum) that every level of education in Indonesia is given flexibility in adapting learning both inside and outside the classroom. However, the material for the development of the Independent Curriculum must be based on the basic framework of the independent curriculum set by the central government which is divided into 4 (four) main themes, namely Profile of Pancasila students, Curriculum Structure, Learning Outcomes, and Learning Principles and Assessment. Every education unit that wishes to organize operational teaching modules, project modules, and teaching materials or textbooks must refer to these four main themes. Likewise for the development of English Subject textbooks, especially for Class X High School students who are currently using a textbook entitled "Bahasa Inggris Work in Progress" (Publisher Center for Standards, Curriculum, and Education Assessment Body of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology; https://buku.kemdikbud.go.id).

Sheldon (1988) stated that course books are perceived by many to be the route map of any English Language Teaching program as what English textbook tries to be implemented under Merdeka Kurikulum in Indonesia. Based on Kepmendikbudristek Number 50 of 2022 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Curriculum in the Framework of Learning Recovery (Independence Curriculum), there are five projects of strengthening Pancasila student profile (5P) as guidelines to operate the curriculum, it is named as follow: a)

Dimensions of faith, piety to God Almighty, and noble character and religious character, b) Global Diversity, c) Collaboration, d) Independent, e) Reasoning, and f) Creative.

The implementation of the project to strengthen the Pancasila students' profile is allocated around 30% of the total time allocation per year. The system is carried out flexibly, both in terms of load and execution time. Load. The project must refer to the 3JP achievements in accordance with the student's phase, and does not have to be related to the learning achievements in the subject. Time. Projects can be carried out by adding up the allocated lesson hours for the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students from all subjects and the total time spent on each project does not have to be the same. In the structure of mentioning the 10th grade curriculum there are similarities with the structure of junior high school so that it is designated as phase E which is separate from Phase F (grades 11 and 12). Especially for the 10th grade student, time located for English subject as follow:

Table 1
Time Allocation for English Subject Class X

No.	Subject	Intracurricular Time Located per week	5 P	Total Time per Year
1	English	54 (2)	28	72
2	PJOK	72 (2)	36	108

Source: processed data

Evaluation of English subject textbooks for Class X was formulated based on research questions formulated by researchers, namely; "Does the Independent Curriculum implemented by the Government for Class X English Subjects provide the right target for the Indonesian context of learning and learning?" The purpose of this study is to get an idea of whether the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is right on target or not, and if it turns out to be right on target, progressive support will be provided for the realization of the Independent Curriculum in society. However, if it is not or has not been on target, the researcher will make a constructive contribution to the development of the Independent Curriculum so that it is more targeted, especially for the Indonesian reality which has a variety of customs and habits.

A textbook can be referred as to a published book specially designed to help language learners to improve their linguistic and communicative abilities (Sheldon, 1987). In addition to being a learning instrument, textbooks are also used as a supporting learning instrument. The students' book usually comes with other materials such as a workbook, a teacher's book, or even additional multimodal texts for reference as a textbook package (Masuhura & Tomlinson, 2008). They are "designed to give cohesion to the language teaching and learning process by providing direction, support, and specific language-based activities aimed at offering classroom practice for students" and foster effective and quick learning of the language (Cunningsworth, 1995).

The widespread use of textbooks in different English Language Teaching contexts requires little further explanation. It continues to play an essential role in ELT classrooms all over the world (Dendrinos, 1992). The importance of textbooks in ELT classrooms is so extensive that it is almost a universal element in ELT teaching (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994) and it is crucial to any ELT program (Sheldon, 1988). Research has suggested that it is extremely common to see ELT professionals incorporating the use of textbooks for daily teaching purposes and very few of them would not use published ELT materials at some stage of their career (Byrd, 2001; Cunningsworth, 1984; McDonough & Shaw, 1993). Even though the importance of the use of textbooks in ELT has been justified by many different researchers, opinions on whether textbooks can actually help or hinder the teaching and learning process seem to polarize. In view of this, I would like to provide also a literature review on both pros and cons of using textbooks in EFL teaching.

METHOD

In order to answer the research question, it is important to ensure the pedagogical validity and the practical applicability of the evaluation framework. The checklist is, therefore, first piloted with two senior English teachers. Such trialing of the self-constructed checklist is very important so as to ensure that the criteria are sufficient, answerable, reliable, and useful (Tomlinson, 2003). Empirical data are then collected by using the self-constructed localized

checklist as the evaluation instrument to conduct a post-use evaluation on a Merdeka Kurikulum textbook used by the two teachers. Two separate structured interviews are going to be conducted with the teachers to collect qualitative data to 1) obtain verbal explanation and further elaboration of the evaluation results to answer research question number one, and 2) to invite teacher's comments regarding the construction of the self-constructed checklist so as to answer the second research question.

The Target Textbook under Evaluation is "Bahasa Inggris Work in Progress" published by Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesment Pendidikan Pusat Perbukuan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Tahun 2022. The target textbook is separated into two themes, first theme is "Sports" to be used in the first semester with four chapters as the sub-themes. Each sub-theme has the same step of displaying the materials as follows: instructional objectives, questions to think about, chapter review, reflection, assessment, and enrichment,

The second theme is "Art" to be used in the second semester with two chapters as the sub-themes, they are "Graffiti and Fractured Stories" with the same step of displaying the materials as the first theme. A textbook is typically thought of as a teaching tool. It is only one of many educational resources that are available because it aids in learning for both teachers and pupils. In the field of teaching English as a second language, the terms coursebook and textbook are frequently used interchangeably. A textbook is a piece of reading material for English classes. While textbooks are prepared for a general target audience for use in English-speaking or non-English-speaking nations, Nunan (1996) claims that textbooks refer to materials used in teaching English as a subject matter in a specific educational setting, not for a specific group of individuals. Ni'mah & Muniroh (2016) cites Chambliss and Calfee as saying that textbooks form the foundation of instructional activities since they expose students to a wide range of novel and possibly fascinating experiences.

According to the majority of educators, textbooks are the sole available educational resource. Thus, textbooks have an impact on both what and how teachers teach as well as what and how students learn. In line with this research, the textbook has an impact on how children learn to read. How pupils learn and advance their reading abilities can be influenced by the caliber of the reading activities as measured by the six pedagogical reading standards. The first, known as the deficiency view, contends that the purpose of textbooks or other published materials is to make up for the shortcomings of teachers and guarantee that the curriculum is covered through carefully thought-out exercises. This viewpoint is predicated on the idea that effective teachers always have access to the materials they need or the ability to generate them. Therefore, they don't require or want publicized content. On the other hand, the alternative viewpoint considers the materials to be the carriers of judgments that are better made by someone other than the teacher due to gaps in knowledge.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994), referenced by Richards and Renandya (2002), consider the textbook to be a potential change agent. When a number of requirements are satisfied, this is possible. Cunningsworth (1995) lists the functions of materials, especially course books, in language teaching as follows: a. a source for presentation materials b. a source of activities for learner practice and communicative interaction c. a source of information for learners on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and other topics d. a source of stimulation and ideas for classroom activities e. a syllabus where it reflects already-determined learning objectives.

FINDINGS

This chapter includes the data presentation, research findings, and discussion. The analysis of the student English textbook "BAHASA INGGRIS Work in Progress" published by the Center for Standards, Curriculum, and Education Assessment Body of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology is the subject of the data findings discussion in this section. The "BAHASA INGGRIS Work in Progress" textbook, which was used in the tenth grade at SMA N 2 Kota Jambi, is presented as data in this part. This textbook was created to be compatible with the 2013 English Standard Competence and to enhance the teaching and learning process. There are 200 pages in total printed on this textbook, "BAHASA INGGRIS Work in Progress". This textbook contains eleven chapters in total. Because this book is structured into five sections, each chapter includes sections for watching and asking

questions, gathering data, reflecting, associating, and communicating.

This section seeks to provide an in-depth analysis of the findings in order to show how the information gathered can assist in addressing the study's research question. The comments from the subjects in the two interviews, as well as the evaluation results from the checklist's piloting, serve as a key source of information for addressing the study issue. For clarity, data pertinent to the study topic are categorized and presented using the two-level analysis indicated above. Two pieces comprise the results presentation. The first section provides a summary of the evaluation findings from using the self-made checklist in conjunction with the evaluation inputs obtained from the interviews. The second section includes the pertinent interview information to give a thorough explanation of how the instructors' suggestions for the self-made checklist can be implemented.

Following the approach of two levels analysis data are summarizes and interpreted under two subsections of; 1) strength and weaknesses and 2) areas of improvement. On the one hand, results having demonstrated a pattern of consensus agreement and disagreement can be interpreted as the strength and weaknesses of the textbook. On the other hand, results having demonstrated a general agreed or disagreed pattern can therefore be recognized as indicators of different areas within the textbook that are subject to further improvement.

Textbook Evaluation Results

1. Strengths
   a. User Friendly and Well Resourced
      1) The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology's Center for Standards, Curriculum, and Education Assessment Body published the user-friendly, well-resourced textbook "BAHASA INGGRIS Work in Progress"; it is available in the market and given to the schools for the students to borrow free of charge. The textbook is well developed in terms of general practical usefulness, in that it is adaptable and simple to use, according to the teachers.
      2) Promoting the Use of Task-Based Learning and Teaching. The teachers asserted that the textbook is very successful in implementing the task-based teaching and learning strategy called for by the Merdeka Curriculum. The C&A guide has identified the five features below in regard to the question "what is a task?" in reference to what a task should consist of: the assignments have a goal; the context of the activities is where the goal of language use is shown; the exercises may require students to engage in both thinking and doing; the tasks are intentional behaviors, and completing them should result in a product; and the exercises should allow the students to build upon or broaden their existing framework of knowledge and skills while also requiring them to do so (CDC, 2007). Both subjects concur that the objectives and activities in the textbook can typically satisfy the first three requirements. However, the participants' responses to the remaining two criterions varied, and they were unable to come to an agreement. In terms of task design, teachers concur that tasks can typically satisfy the requirements of what a task should be, as stated by the Merdeka curriculum. The exercises are logically divided into many themes and generally correspond to the teaching text's setting. Pre, during, and post learning assignments are often well balanced, and they work well to get students involved in active class participation. For instance, writing exercises are created utilizing the Merdeka Curriculum's recommended process method. The tasks and exercises can assist students in eliciting various linguistic characteristics of various text kinds. Students are given clear guidance to help them master the various writing processes' skills. The wording makes apparent the work's objectives as well as its intended audience.
   b. Promotion of Independent and Creative Language Learning

      By including self-assessment exercises at the end of each chapter, the textbook is also successful in meeting the curricular requirement of assisting learners in becoming independent. These sections include suggested answers, skills tests, and progress checklists so that students

can keep track of their own learning development. By giving students plenty of chances to express their own views and by containing a significant number of open-ended questions, the tasks activities can also promote the use of creative language and can successfully pique their interest in the subject matter. Since there are no predetermined solutions, the teachers contend that the exercises and tasks might aid to inspire learners' creativity.The teachers claimed that the writing assignments are particularly good at encouraging independent and innovative language use. The textbook offers "mind maps" and self-evaluation checklists for students to construct writing ideas and also to assess their learning progress in order to aid in the development of independent learning skills. Additionally, students are able to express themselves creatively through language. When asked to write a letter of reply to a complaint letter, for instance, they can decide how they will answer to the complaint. The subjects all concurred that it was a good thing that the textbook allowed students to develop a variety of "model answers" and encouraged original thought.

c. Good Selection of Authentic Texts of Different Topics and Genre

Another key quality of the textbook is its extensive library of actual reading materials. Learners can be effectively exposed to acceptable language use and style in many circumstances from real life through the use of authentic texts. A good way to introduce language usage patterns in sports is in Unit 2's "Sports Events" unit. Since students were enthralled by the images and embedded video clips, the electronic textbook (the E-book), which is only available to teachers, can aid teachers in particular to stimulate learning interest. They believe that the books are generally helpful in assisting students in learning real-world English because they do contain colloquial "informal" language. The texts can also describe a subject from a variety of perspectives to encourage learners' critical thinking. The teachers also stated that it is highly improbable that students will enjoy the book because it is a textbook. However, based on their observations, the teachers claimed that pupils do, in general, find the themes and texts engaging. The subjects believe that the listening texts are also very authentic because they feature a wide range of situations from real life that they are highly relevant to. For instance, students thought one of the listening texts on interviewing fashion school students to be quite fascinating. Students can hear how spoken texts are used in real life by listening to the supplemental video and voice documentaries that the companion e-book provided for the topics covered in the textbook.

d. A Good Balance between Language Arts and Non-Language Arts Materials

The teachers recommended that the textbook include reading passages that are carefully balanced between language arts and non-language arts topics. Teachers are urged to employ various inventive texts to teach Language Arts in accordance with the C&A standard. Throughout the C&A guide, the phrase "Imaginative Text" has been frequently utilized. Although the term "imaginative text" lacks a precise definition, the book stated that works including poems, novels, short tales, plays, films, and advertising are examples of imaginative texts. According to one subject, by providing a lot of open-ended questions in the task activities, the imaginative texts can aid in the development of students' critical thinking abilities as well as their creativity. The language's density and tempo are suitable for the learners.

e. Well Designed Integrated Skills and Reading Tasks

The accessibility of a wide range of real texts is one of this textbook's key advantages. Utilizing this strength, the publisher was able to produce integrated skills practices of the same caliber. The practices for integrated skills are well-designed. Students must listen, read, and then discuss many real-world topics. The surroundings and events are sufficiently real, and the tasks—which include conducting interviews, listening to concerns, and drafting memoranda or letters of complaint—are realistic enough. The reading assignments in the textbook, according to the teachers, are its strongest feature. A solid combination of activities

may be found in the tasks for the pre-, during-, and post-reading phases. Pre-reading exercises, according to Subject B, are particularly helpful since they can teach students how to skim effectively. Additionally, the textbook generally does a good job of accommodating a variety of reading activities. For example, in reading comprehension questions, Subject A has praised the publishers because different sets of questions divided into different levels are provided in the teacher's manual to cater to the needs of the stronger and weaker students.

f. Use of Technology Facilitating Language Learning

Many of the pupils find the various embedded videos and sound tracks to be fascinating. The teachers claimed that the embedded films are particularly helpful in assisting students in increasing their comprehension of and comfort with a reading content.

2. Weaknesses

But the textbook has its limitations as well. The research findings indicated that the textbook has three significant flaws. Teachers claim that the textbook is unlikely to help teachers deliver the C&A guide's recommended approach if it is not used in conjunction with supplemental materials because it 1) failed to provide enough "language input"; 2) lacked an orientation with public examination requirements; and 3) only covered pedagogical topics "on the surface level." The educators have emphasized numerous times that textbook publishing is essentially a business venture.

The Lack of Language Input

Teachers refer to "language input" as the guidance and understanding of a language that must be given to students in order for them to meet the targeted learning goals. The students' capacity to meet the targeted learning objectives may be negatively impacted by insufficient linguistic input before, during, and after teaching and learning. The teachers claimed that despite the well-designed integrated skills assignments, there is a broad consensus that the student's book should contain more language inputs. The listening exercises, according to the teachers, are somewhat less impacted by this issue because they are intended to measure students' listening comprehension skills rather than their ability to understand or create written texts. The linguistic input to students for the reading, writing, and speaking tasks is frequently insufficient when evaluating the textbook in regard to teaching others skills. As a result, the teachers must spend a lot of money on custom resources to support their instruction.

1. Speaking Skills. One of the hardest areas to improve, according to the teachers, is oral English proficiency. One's level of English proficiency would depend on a wide range of factors. Therefore, it makes sense that the textbook will only have a relatively minor impact on a person's oral English proficiency. While students read texts that use informal language, little instruction is given to them by the teachers on how to enhance their general oral English skills, according to the experts.
2. Reading Skills. Additionally, the teachers asserted that this situation is affected by the "lack of language input" issue. More instructions and pointers should be included in the textbook to aid students in better comprehending the chapters. A glossary of unfamiliar words and expressions for the student's use would be very beneficial.
3. Writing Skills. The "lack of language input" issue, according to the professors, is the most serious one for writing assignments. In one subject, the students were instructed to compose a formal response to a complaint letter using the provided sample. Although the textbook contains sample letters, there is minimal guidance regarding the phrases and expressions that should be utilized in relation to the context of the writing exercises. The majority of students do not have the knowledge necessary to construct a basic sentence like "I am writing in regard to...." despite the fact that it may appear straightforward and could be taken for granted. To further highlight the issue, the interviewees' replies are worth quoting: How should pupils format their writing? The teacher's copy contains examples like "I am writing in regard" to your letter. Teachers search for words like "in regard to" yet pupils do not understand it. We need to contribute a lot of information. The students don't know how to write if there aren't additional instances of phrases and idioms. According to the teachers, using the process approach is wise and, in theory, can help pupils in a variety of ways. At various phases of the

writing process, however, students frequently lack the words to articulate their ideas in the EFL classroom. One teacher said, "But they (the students) do not have the language, how can they express themselves?". The teachers have emphasized numerous times that it would be extremely impossible to achieve the theoretical advantages of the process approach in writing skills training without sufficient teacher support (e.g., providing tailored materials). Consequently, the "lack of language input" issue continues to be a significant potential weakness despite the strength of having a good design of task activities, as indicated in the earlier sections. To improve the general caliber of the writing duties, the issue must be resolved.

4. Lack of Orientation with Public-Examination Requirements. The teachers believe that only the writing and reading problems for the four competencies have been developed using the format of a public examination. The orientation and public test requirements ought to have been adequately covered in all four of the skills. The speaking portion in particular, according to the teachers, has very little to do with the public exam. While the speaking exercises included in each unit's self-assessment sections are largely exam-oriented, the majority of speaking exercises do not meet the requirements for public exams. The teachers proposed two possible explanations for this issue: 1) the publisher intended to use these speaking tasks as warm-up exercises for writing tasks, or simple speaking activities, or for brainstorming purposes; or 2) the publisher intended to use these speaking tasks as part of a marketing strategy to make teachers aware of the need for the skills book. According to the subjects, speaking assignments tend to limit the possible answers from pupils. The teachers claim that the requirements for such a work are substantially different from those of the public test. Instead, they must deliver spontaneous answers that "make and justify a choice, decide on and explain a course of action, and argue for or against a position" (CDC, 2007) during the public examination. The teachers arrived at the conclusion that the listening exercises are out of alignment with the objectives of public examinations because there are no such practices provided in the textbook. The practices can seem too simple to the teachers compared to the difficulty of the public test. The breadth and depth of grammatical constructions have the same issue.
5. “Surface Level” Pedagogical Coverage. The business of publishing textbooks is essentially one of profit maximization. The teachers asserted that the publisher is omitting exercises and drills on purpose in order to advertise the "Skills Books" series, because of this, the theme book does not contain as much test practice as the skills books do. The teachers noted that the fact that the Theme Book barely "touches on the surface" a number of ELT-related topics is one of the textbook's key weaknesses as a result of this marketing strategy. Few opportunities are given to language learners to practice the language.

Areas of Improvement – Recommendations

The teachers have identified the following areas that can help to further enhance the textbook's quality. It should be emphasized that some ideas are more closely tied to elements of the curriculum because the evaluation items employed in this study were based on the official curriculum. The textbook urgently needs to include more "language input" advice and exam-focused language practices. The teachers advised that in order to enhance the students' learning efficiency, it would be necessary to first supply them with the necessary language. As was said in earlier sections, the textbook should have pertinent, acceptable terminology, phrases, and vocabularies to help students get ready to complete various jobs and activities. The teachers proposed that more complex grammar concepts, like adverbs and inversions, should have been included in order to properly prepare pupils for the public exam. Practices ought to address a variety of grammar topics in more depth. The teachers have also proposed that, given Indonesia's strong emphasis on public examinations, the textbook activities should at the very least have been created using the framework of the public examinations. One teacher suggested that while if the design of the activities is usually sound and most of the many writing processes are addressed, it would be preferable to include instructions that would help students come up with a reasonable and coherent argument. The teacher indicated that it would be very good to provide guidelines to assist students think about what is generally

doable, and what is not, when creating the case, even if what is regarded reasonable and logical might be extremely controversial. Teachers believe that additional examples and coaching should be provided for speaking assignments so that students can speak more authentic English rather than "textbook-ish" English. The teachers suggested that a table outlining the various ways discourse markers can be utilized in spoken English might be helpful. More activities and "language input" are still helpful. For students to have a rapid source of reference for the right use of language in many real-life circumstances, a list of frequently used words in everyday spoken language would be an excellent example.

1. On the Design of Tasks
   The teachers have remarked that more information about supporting teachers in dealing with the issue may have been included in the textbook to satisfy curriculum efforts that cater to individual learning peculiarities. The teachers believe that the instructions for the reading assignments are adequate. For instance, there are two sets of comprehension questions, as suggested by one subject. One is for kids who are stronger, and the other is for students who are weaker. The other three talents, however, typically receive little instruction. The subjects have also noted that while it is good that the textbook has a lot of open-ended questions to encourage the creative use of language, one subject is concerned about whether it can satisfy the curriculum initiative of encouraging the creative use of language primarily because weaker students do not possess such levels of language proficiency. The tasks, according to the teachers, tend to present new ideas and concepts far too frequently. To qualify the curriculum initiative of "task requires learners to draw upon their framework of knowledge and skills and should also enable them to strengthen or extend this," task activities should provide more reuse of prior information (CDC, 2007). In general, teachers believe they are successful at imparting planning and content development in process writing skills when it comes to writing assignments. One of the subjects made the suggestion that if activities that might develop the student's capacity to begin and close a paragraph interestingly and definitively are completed, the general quality of the writing tasks can be substantially improved. The teachers have also claimed that the textbook's broad range of reading material has assisted in acquainting students with the various linguistic nuances present in texts of various genres. Students should be given appropriate writing assignments to check their understanding of the material.
2. On Text Selection
   The length and variety of the listening texts could be expanded, according to the teachers. The teachers believe that the publisher purposefully included only a few listening activities in the theme book due to the publisher's marketing strategy. The teachers have also noted that the publisher can further improve its reading texts selection by providing more poems and songs in different styles and topics. The teachers have suggested that the publisher could have included moving images such as films as part of language materials for teaching of language arts. Popular culture items such as fashion and movies can also be used as topics of the theme to arouse the student’s interest and also can help to relate students with elective modules of the Merdeka Curriculum. In addition, it would be preferable to include texts that can expose students to various world cultures and heritage in order to fulfill the curriculum initiative of "increase students' cultural understanding and expand their knowledge and world-views" (CDD 2007:2). The current teaching materials also tend to focus on aiding in the development of students' awareness towards global issues.
3. On the Curriculum
   According to the subjects, some of the terminology used in the checklist evaluation items are unclear and challenging to comprehend. To reduce the vagueness of some of the technical phrases, it appears that policymakers should offer more guidance. For instance, the terms "aesthetic sensitivity" perplex the teachers (CDC, 2007). The technical phrases "purposeful activities" and the idea of a "task product," which are used in the curricular description of what constitutes a "task," are also challenging to understand. It should be illustrated with more examples.

A Summary of the Evaluation Results

The Merdeka Curriculum English textbook "BAHASA INGGRIS Work in

Progress" series: Theme Book was published by one of the most reputable publishers, the Publisher Center for Standards, Curriculum, and Education Assessment Body of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. The textbook is user-friendly, adaptable, and thoughtfully created in accordance with the curricular effort to adopt a task-based teaching and learning method. The task activities include detailed instructions that are simple to follow and provide clear examples of how to finish each activity. The majority of the questions in the task activities are open-ended, which can effectively pique learners' interest in the material and also inspire imagination and creativity. Pre, during, and post-learning assignments are often well-balanced, and they work well to encourage students to actively participate in class.

Another key quality of the textbook is its extensive library of actual reading materials. Learners can be effectively exposed to acceptable language use and style in many circumstances from real life through the use of authentic texts. Additionally, there is a careful balance between reading texts for language arts and non-language arts topics. The large range of texts can also aid students in comprehending the grammatical construction and writing style of texts of various genres. But the textbook has its limitations as well. The teachers argued that if the textbook is not used in conjunction with supplemental materials, it is highly unlikely to help teachers deliver the C&A guide's recommended approaches because: 1) the textbook failed to provide enough "language inputs"; 2) the textbook content design has a low alignment with public-examination requirements; and 3) it only covers "surface level" pedagogy. Teachers have emphasized numerous times that these flaws can be viewed as "manufactured weaknesses" that are the product of the publisher's marketing plan. As a result, the teachers' considered essential language skill practice and exam drills are excluded.

The teachers made the argument that Indonesia is a very tiny market for English textbook production and that there are just a few options for English textbooks for the Merdeka Curriculum, echoing Reynolds' (1974) remarks. The teachers claimed that they do not have many choices and are forced to keep using the Theme Book, not because of its overall pedagogical soundness but rather because of the large number of teaching texts of various genres that are offered in the textbook, which can meet the requirements of the school curriculum.

User Feedbacks on the Self-Constructed Checklist

As of now, we can observe that the self-made checklist can contribute to the production of relevant post-use assessment data for the intended textbook. The checklist is a helpful tool for gathering empirical data to identify the textbook's strengths and faults as well as to identify further potential areas for improvement. The evaluation items should be periodically examined and updated to meet the pedagogical requirements of the applicable teaching and learning situation, as mentioned by McGrath (2002). McGrath (2002) indicated that consulting the checklist's intended users is one efficient strategy. Therefore, in this study, teachers are also questioned on ways to enhance the checklist.

In general, teachers believe that the checklist is a practical and helpful tool for assisting teachers in becoming familiar with the requirements of the new curriculum. The presentation in point form has aided in emphasizing various components of the curriculum requirements effectively. Since the Merdeka curricular was only recently (2022) implemented, teachers may still need to become familiar with the new curricular requirements. The checklist's length and scope are adequate. The teachers recommended that this choice is very appropriate because it is crucial to assess a textbook's suitability with the curriculum's recommended instructional approaches. The recommended approaches are listed in each chapter and should be used as the primary reference when developing evaluation criteria. To effectively support the achievement of the teaching and learning goals of the Merdeka Curriculum, a textbook must be created in accordance with these many curriculum efforts. One teacher made the similar argument Johnson (1989) did, saying that it is wise to concentrate on every chapter.

The checklist should be utilized with a lot of flexibility, according to the professors, as it is not intended to be used in its whole. Even experienced teachers who frequently review textbooks on an impressionistic basis without using a checklist will find the checklist beneficial because teachers can simply delete or add new evaluation items in accordance with individual needs. Although most people are

happy, the teachers have identified a few areas for improvement. First, the checklist included several "double barreled" questions that required the teachers to assess multiple items at once. The author believes that if the terminologies are separated, the original meaning of the evaluation item will be obscured because the checklist items were strictly referenced from the C&A guide throughout the reconstruction of the checklist. Therefore, the double-barreled evaluation items have been kept.

The teachers have therefore recommended that one effective way to tackle the problem of both inherited weaknesses and "double barreled" evaluation questions is to offer detailed illustration within the checklist to help teachers visualize some of the abstract concepts that the C&A guide's philosophies. In light of this, the author would like to bring to the attention of the policy making authorities that it is highly possible that many other local teachers may share the same problem. More teachers would seem benefit from curriculum training. The addition of the option "not applicable" or "NA" to the five-point Likert scale is another enhancement the teachers would like to see. This would allow the teachers to more quickly determine the pertinent evaluation criteria during an evaluation, improving the effectiveness of the entire evaluation process.

In conclusion, it is clear that teachers have typically given the checklist very favorable reviews. The checklist is simple to use and pedagogically sound for assessing curriculum fitness, despite certain shortcomings in the form of unclear and challenging-to-understand evaluation elements. It is disappointing to learn from the teachers that they believe thorough post-use textbook assessments are not very useful due to practical limitations. The teachers agree that both the difficulty of each individual task and the overall level of difficulty should be considered when making evaluation decisions. If a textbook cannot adequately meet the two aforementioned evaluation criteria, teachers will typically not choose it. The teachers assumed that all ministry-approved textbooks were adequately written and adhered to curriculum requirements therefore there is absolutely no concern about the curriculum's fitness. The teachers' belief that post-use assessments can offer little in the way of practical value is unexpected because it is widely established in the literature that post-use evaluations can produce the most relevant evaluation data. The teachers felt that there is a weak justification for conducting post-use evaluations, arguing that they have discovered the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook as a result of extensive usage, in a manner similar to how Ellis (1997) and Harmer (2001) have discussed the real difficulties in conducting post-use evaluations. The teachers would be able to decide on their own whether or not to continue using the textbook. Only the panel chairpersons have the authority to choose the textbooks, and given their position of authority, they ought to be able to use their knowledge and experience to choose the textbook that is most appropriate.

The teachers suggested that the checklist could be a useful training tool for new teachers, helping to acquaint them with the demands of the new curriculum. The checklist can actually be used for textbook selection panel discussions, during which various options can be presented and illustrated in an organized manner, helping to create a more effective and efficient textbook selection process, as opposed to being used in a post-use evaluation stage.

Research Implication

The goal of the current study is to develop a framework for evaluating textbooks that uses a checklist technique to determine how well-suited they are to a certain curriculum. Two research questions have been developed to gather empirical data, which will further validate the framework, in order to pilot the proposed evaluation framework, determine how effectively it functions, and improve the framework. The first study question aims to determine how successfully the framework's evaluation criteria can be applied to assess a textbook's pedagogical compatibility with the curriculum. This is accomplished by evaluating current "Bahasa Inggris Work in Progress" issued by Badan Standar, Kurikulum, and Assesment Pendidikan Pusat Perbukuan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, and Teknology Republik Indonesia Tahun 2022 using a pilot assessment methodology.

So far, it is obvious from the piloting of the checklist that it has proven the evaluation framework is a helpful and effective instrument for helping to clearly elicit the strengths and shortcomings of a textbook by providing an answer to the first research question. The goal of doing textbook evaluation, as proposed by Tomlinson (2003), is to make sure that the textbook was created and chosen in a legitimate

and reliable manner. Therefore, it is crucial to talk about the potential effects of this research on how the self-developed checklist can support the textbook evaluation procedure.

1. Providing an Empirically Tested Framework for Post-Use Evaluation

   According to a number of academics, including Ellis (1997), post-use assessments can produce the most important evaluation data since they can gauge the actual impact of the materials on teachers and students. However, very few empirical studies had been conducted at the time due to numerous practical limitations, such as teachers' reluctance to conduct such evaluation (Ellis, 1997). This is likely still the case today, as Mukundan & Ahour (2010) agree with Ellis that "is lacking in most literature with regard to materials evaluation is the retrospective aspects of evaluation". By employing a self-made checklist to carry out an empirical retrospective evaluation of a textbook, our study has fallen short of filling this research gap. The reliability of the self-developed checklist, however, could be contested. According to Mukundan (2007), self-created evaluation tools like checklists are frequently not validated or verified for reliability, which has resulted in a "proliferation" of checklists.

   This study has therefore addressed the issue in the first research question by piloting the checklist with instructors in response to the concern made by Tomlinson (2003) that what is self-developed checklist should be empirically tested. This study's framework for post-use evaluation has therefore some respectable practical usefulness. Teachers might utilize task evaluations to answer Ellis' (1997) questions in order to make post-use evaluation less intimidating and to be able to match their own evaluation standards. According to Ellis (1997), empirical post-use evaluation requires a significant time commitment from teachers. We should all be reminded that, regardless of the technique teachers may feel is best, textbook evaluation is ultimately a subjective process, according to Sheldon (1998). When used empirically for textbook evaluation, the applicability of the evaluation criteria would be adequate.
2. Introducing a Framework as to how Fitness with the Prescribed Curriculum can be Evaluated

   It appears that little advice and debate about how to assess the compatibility of materials and curriculum has been offered by the literature up to this point. Regarding the theoretical components of the literature, Ellis (1997) proposed that the primary goal of textbook assessments is to increase knowledge of the factors that should be taken into account. In light of this, some academics have suggested several groupings of certain features of a textbook one should look at when undertaking materials evaluation, including Tomlinson (1998, 2003) and Ur (1996). For instance, Tomlinson (2003) proposed that four categories of precise criteria may be created: Media-specific criteria, content-specific criteria, age-specific criteria, and local factors make up the first four categories.

   Mukundan and Ahour (2010) also concurred that the literature offers little guidance on how to assess a textbook's pedagogical compatibility with the curriculum. Only one study (Byrd, 2001) out of the 48 checklists found by Mukundan et al. prioritized evaluating curricular suitability. According to Byrd (2001), "the first area included in the textbook analysis is the fit between the materials and curriculum". Byrd's reasoning was founded on the finding that the textbook's content fit with the declared curricula (Byrd, 2001). One was asked to respond to the evaluation criteria by answering "Yes" when asked if the textbook "fits curriculum/goals". Maybe, Probably Not, or Definitely Not (Byrd 2001). Therefore, it is simple to see how such broad, "one-off" evaluation criteria have oversimplified the issue and offered little information for a rigorous analysis of fitness with the curriculum. The question, "What if only some of the textbook complies with curriculum requirements but not others?" would be regarded as reasonable and rational. What if the curriculum uses a lot of nebulous and abstract terms that make understanding them challenging? These are all valid real-world concerns that merit additional research. The fact that these issues have not been well covered in the literature is somewhat disappointing.

   Therefore, this study has yet another important relevance. It has suggested an evaluation system that may analyze a textbook's fit with the curriculum in great

detail. The author suggested that one can create evaluation criteria by strictly referencing curriculum documents in order to evaluate curriculum suitability in a systematic and thorough manner. Different curriculum recommendations can be converted to statements of questions for the evaluators to express their judgments on the degree to which they believe that a certain component of the textbook agrees with a specific curriculum initiative, as was shown with the piloting of the self-constructed checklist. Such a method can be "globalized" to analyze how well textbooks are suited to the official curricula of various jurisdictions. Pursuing this point of view, it is understandable that while no one would purchase a textbook that bears zero curriculum fitness, it is however still important to examine the degree of fitness with the curriculum that a textbook does constitute, given that there is a tendency for the publishers to produce what the market wants, rather than what can truly benefit learners (Tomlinson, 2008). With the financial success being the primary motivation of commercial publishers, curriculum fitness may be overlooked if it is not a major concern of the costumers. A textbook evaluation, in a particular one on curricular fitness, is crucial so that the central authority may hear user comments and make the necessary corrections (Mukundan, 2007).

Providing a Platform for a Scientific Collaborative Textbook Evaluation

A systematic, standardized evaluation framework can be provided by the evaluation tool suggested in this study, making evaluation possible and scientific. In response to a question about how they would choose textbooks in the classroom, the teachers said in the interview that they typically favor an impressionistic "implicit" model of textbook evaluation due to time constraints that make it impossible to carry out the thorough "explicit" evaluation suggested in this study. Cunningsworth (1995) and Mukundan (2007), for instance, make the case that choosing resources using the impressionistic approach to evaluation would be a quick and efficient way if only carried out by an experienced instructor. In this regard, the teachers' remarks showed similarities to the ideas put forward in the literature. Teachers claimed that since only the panel chairs have the authority to choose a textbook, neither an evaluation checklist nor a post-use evaluation would be necessary. Mukundan (2007) went on to say that the fundamental issue with adopting impressionistic evaluation may be that it is unreliable due to critical flaws and significant omissions. In terms of providing specific evidence for how a textbook can be made to match the needs of a learning or teaching environment, it is, all things considered, relatively weak (Cunningsworth, 1995). Teachers can meet together and deliberate on the criteria that would be used to evaluate a textbook, starting at a macro level and moving down to a micro level, rather than depending on one or two people's implicit impressionistic assessment (Richard, 2001). The majority of evaluations are undoubtedly subjective, however to increase reliability and validity, it is crucial to base the evaluation on various sets of principles (Tomlinson, 2003).

Extending the Range of User and Usage of the Evaluation Framework

According to Tomlinson (2003), "Most of the literature in the area of materials development has so far focused on materials evaluation." It appears that there is a tendency toward predictive appraisal in the literature, which spans four decades, which aids teachers in choosing textbooks (Mukundan & Ahour, 2010). It appears that the key research objectives are the educators. In a few cases, like Donovan's (1998) research study, non-teachers are the target audience. It is reasonable to assume that most published works are directed at teachers as the end-user of an evaluation framework given the thoroughness of Mukundan & Ahour's (2010) study. The evaluation approach suggested in this study can serve as a link, bridging the gap between policymakers' and textbook consumers' perspectives. It is crucial because it gives government authorities a way to receive input so they can reconsider if using the textbook in a formal educational setting is appropriate (Mukundan, 2007). Tomlinson (2008) reported that a secret research he conducted examined a total of twelve unnamed nations. It was discovered that 85 percent of the surveyed nations have ELT textbooks chosen by government officials. The government's Ministry of Education, for instance, chooses books in Malaysia (Mukundan, 2007). Although it may be assumed that policymakers would choose the best textbooks possible, there are

very few research on such a selection process, which do not address how a textbook's suitability for the curriculum evaluation is carried out.

In Indonesia, teachers are not allowed to choose any textbook they like. The textbook chosen by the Ministry of Education for use in the classroom is referred to as "BAHASA INGGRIS Work in Progress" by the Merdeka Curriculum's Publisher Center for Standards, Curriculum, and Education Assessment Body. Only the elements in that textbook may be used by English teachers, with the possibility of adding some extra materials in connection with the specified theme. The textbook should be used by teachers, with certain permissible supplemental materials. It is advised that teachers consult the online resource known as "Guidelines Principles" when choosing educational resources. The aims, targets, and objectives align with those outlined in the pertinent topic guide or curriculum. Evaluators were perplexed and questioned what standard of compatibility was acceptable. How are compatibilities assessed? What happens if the resources are appropriate for the curriculum but not for the subject manual?

As the criteria are strictly constructed in accordance with the stated objectives of the pertinent curriculum documents, the evaluation framework suggested in this study would be deemed highly suitable for the "BAHASA INGGRIS Work in Progress" (Publisher Center for Standards, Curriculum, and Education Assessment Body of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, in Merdeka Curriculum). The evaluation framework can offer a clear and succinct manner to assist serious evaluators, including curriculum developers, government representatives, and panel chair-persons, to envision the extent to which a product or a particular section of a textbook fits with the pedagogical goal of the curriculum.

Provide a Link between Teacher Development and Textbook Evaluation

Commercial textbooks are still widely utilized, at least in the setting of schools, despite the availability of materials of many forms (Richard, 2001). Given the vast array of commercial products readily available on today's market, the issue appeared to be much more complicated (Green, 1926). So it is not unexpected to learn that one of the most essential things teachers demand from their training is textbook selection and evaluation. Given that textbooks are heavily utilized in language classrooms (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994) and that there isn't a single "perfect" textbook that can meet all of the demands of both teachers and students, According to Nunan and Lamb (1996), it's critical for teachers to understand how to evaluate textbooks in order to select the one that would best suit a given EFL teaching and learning setting or to change the materials as needed (Brown, 1994).

Despite numerous advantages of textbook review having been indicated in the literature, it is still widely viewed as a time-consuming and challenging undertaking. Tomlinson (2003), in particular post-use evaluation, as teachers openly find no necessity to do so since they are aware of the merits and shortcomings of the textbook "inside out" following extensive use (Ellis, 1998). Additionally, post-use evaluation of textbooks is viewed as a counterproductive evaluation strategy and there is little consensus on whether the necessary time and resources should be allocated to carrying out such rigorous evaluation procedures, despite what the literature has suggested can yield the most valuable results (Tomlinson, 2003). The teachers suggested that the evaluation framework can be a beneficial tool for teaching training although pointing out that extensive evaluation frameworks, like the model described in this study, are typically impracticable for real-life textbook evaluation purposes. Researchers like Cunningsworth (1995), Tomlinson (2003), and McGrath (2002) have emphasized the importance of teachers creating their own evaluation criteria and the need for these criteria to be explicit and specific. Teachers would then be able to learn about potential issues and the effects of how evaluation criteria are created by taking part in an evaluation process. Internalized impressionistic selection criteria can be exposed and visualized through the use of an explicit and methodical evaluation framework, such as the one suggested in this study. Additionally, a thorough post-use evaluation can help to clearly identify the areas where material adaptation is thought required and can also support new teachers in developing their teaching awareness. As an excellent illustration, the framework utilized in this study can help new teachers become acquainted with the needs of the Merdeka Curriculum because it was created

exactly in accordance with those rules. There are a few other intriguing queries, like: a) Is the usage of actual language appropriate? b) Is it appropriate to utilize a theme-based approach? c) How communicative are the communicative tasks? This question can be brought up during the evaluation process, which will assist new teachers gain professional perspective.

CONCLUSION

This research study has made an effort to offer a suggestive framework for assessing a textbook's pedagogical compatibility with the Merdeka Curriculum. In order to determine 1) how effectively the framework functions as an effective evaluation tool, two study questions were devised. And 2) how can the framework for evaluation be made even better?. The instructors argued that it was appropriate to base the evaluation criteria on the curriculum's instruction section since it provides the most relevant information about how the teaching objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum can be accomplished in regular classroom instruction. The evaluation framework, according to the teachers, is a practical creation because it can be used to acquaint new teachers with the demands of the new curriculum. The checklist should include a "not applicable" or "NA" option, the author agrees with the teachers, in order to speed up the evaluation process. For purposes of evaluating textbooks in the future, the checklist should be modified appropriately.

Post-use evaluation shouldn't be discounted as being worthless or impractical without taking into account its potential importance. Although the teachers believe the assessment framework suggested in this study is pedagogically sound, it has been found that using the checklist for post-use evaluation has a low real-world practicability due to a variety of real-world limitations. Inappropriate practice is typically thought to be an impressionistic "on the surface" judgement. Such research results corroborate the effects that post-use evaluation can have on the teaching and learning of EFL, as shown by Ellis, 1998 and Harmer, 2001, obtaining the following significance: Conduct a post-use evaluation empirical study to add to the body of literature, which is still largely unexplored.

1. By providing a framework for how pedagogical appropriateness of textbook material with specified curriculum requirements may be investigated systematically, add to the body of literature on textbook evaluation.
2. Offer a framework for evaluation that enables prompt, collaborative, and systematic elicitation of a textbook's strengths and limitations, promoting effective decision-making regarding the usage and selection of teaching materials.
3. Expand the audience for the post-use textbook evaluation framework beyond the typical target audience of instructors to include official decision-makers and curriculum designers.
4. Expand the primary objective of textbook evaluation frameworks from evaluation to one of teacher development.

But this research is not without flaws. Future research should use a larger simple size selection in order for this study to produce definitive conclusions. Similar to this, it is feasible to overlook structural flaws. Further study to assess these areas may possibly take a larger sample size into account. Additionally, it would be more likely to get a more thorough review conclusion with a bigger sample size. A greater size would make it simpler to gather many viewpoints to interpret gray areas, such as "consensus neutral opinions" and competing viewpoints ("one agree, one disagree"). Due to the study's limited sample size, all of these evaluation outcomes have not yet been thoroughly addressed. A higher sample size was essentially unachievable given the nature of this investigation. As of now, it is obvious from the evaluation framework's piloting that it is recognized as an effective evaluation tool for assisting teachers in eliciting the strengths and shortcomings of a textbook in a structured manner. The framework suggested in this study is envisioned as being able to offer a single platform for its users to successfully select and assess instructional resources. Textbooks are regarded as a necessary component of the ELT curriculum, not only for the selection of suitable teaching materials that can aid in the successful implementation of the curriculum but also to truly embody the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum for Indonesian students, particularly the bright ones.

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