

EFL Teachers' Perception toward the Use of "Beyond" International Textbook

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the teacher's perception on using the "beyond" textbook that is from an international publisher. The study used descriptive qualitative design. The open-ended questionnaire was used to explore the teachers' perception. The participants of the study were three English teachers, two of them are from SMPIT Al Muqorrobin-Depok and one is from SMPI Al Ikhlas-South Jakarta. The finding revealed that the teacher has a positive perception of the textbook. It has accordance with the requirements of the good book. The content is aligned with the Indonesia curriculum. It also involved four basic language skills as well as its language knowledge. However, the textbook has very minimal local cultural understanding and doesn't facilitate all learners' cognitive level. For further research, it is suggested to have the study in Bilingual or senior school in order to find the maximum result toward the implementation of the textbook.

Keywords: Teacher Perception, Textbook, International

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks are an important source in teaching and learning English. It is stated by Brown (1995) points out (Johar & Aziz, 2019) that textbooks are learning support, source of language, stimulation, and reference. It is used by teachers and students as the media that is mandated by the government (Afersa, 2020). Several benefits are performed in using textbooks; students can look back on previous learning easier, the price is affordable, and teachers can adjust the textbook to the learners' needs by modifying it (O'Neill, 1982 as cited in Susiati & Mufidati, 2020)

Based on the benefits offered in textbooks, some schools tend to have the best book for their students. Like the fact that English is an international language, most schools used the book that was published by international education. In one case in SMPIT Al-Muqorrobin, the school stockholder said that the international book used to provoke students to be able to speak bilingual (English-Indonesia), successful in learning English, and ready to face the latest challenges requiring

good performance in English. Then, this study will focus on "beyond the book". It is one of the international textbooks used at school.

In light of the perception, it is a process of response after the stimulus given that affects our sense to be aware of a thing. Ramadhani et al., (2017) concluded that perception is the ability to make a response and being aware of something after seeing and understanding something. In other words, perception is a human sense or sensor in the form of response and awareness after experiencing something. Some factors affecting human perception are stated by (Rakhmat, 2009). He argues personal factors as the first factor, it refers to human experience, needs, hope, motivation, situation, and emotion. The next is structural factors; it consists of intensity, quantity, and contradiction stimulus. The last factor is the cultural aspect which refers to individual lives.

Perception can be formed through the human sensory organ, by seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, or experiencing. As stated by Walgito (2013) the formation process of perception is preceded by the

sensing process which is the admission process of the stimulus by an individual through the sensory organs or also called sensory processes. There are positive and negative perceptions. The positive perception refers to the good side of stimuli, whereas the negative indicates the weak side of stimuli.

Regarding this topic, some previous related studies to teachers' perception toward the implementation of English textbooks, as mentioned by Okitasari and Palupi (2020) conducted a study regarding teacher's perception toward EFL Textbook "English OK" in 2019. Then, it found that teachers said that the book was helpful and important since it is considered a good textbook. Despite this, the weaknesses of the textbook were the unavailability of the audiocassette, answer sheet, and exercise preparation for the national examination.

In the other study, Ramadhani et al., (2017) conducted a study to describe the perception of English teachers of SMPN 2 Banda Aceh regarding the English textbook's content in "When English Rings a Bell" book. The finding revealed that the content of the textbook is already complete and relevant with the 2013 curriculum, syllabus, and standard and basic competence. However, the material provided in general with fewer examples.

Lastly (2013) conducted the study which purposed to investigate the teachers' perceptions towards the textbooks usage, their strategies, and difficulties in using the textbook in the classroom. The result shows that the teachers perceived positively towards the textbook. The book suited the students' needs, and the syllabus. Teachers are usually using the textbook by adding, modifying, and omitting the material as their strategies. However, teachers often face difficulties with the limited aids for teaching.

Beyond book is published by Macmillan Education in London which strives to provide the highest quality books, content, and tools. The content of the book includes language skills and competence section with two different video displays (moving picture videos and speaking video) in which makes the page come to life. Besides, it has been operated in over 120 countries. However, In

the Indonesian context, the complete data is not found. Based on limited observation, there are eight schools including SMPIT Al-Muqorrobin, SMP Islam Al Ikhlas, Natherdam School, My school, Mardiyuana school, Salib Suci Bandung school, Karang Turi Semarang school, Maria Bintang Laut Bandung, School. Also, the Indonesian distributor said that the book is already in line with CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) international language standard. In sum, the textbook may probably be a good book for students to facilitate their needs.

Since the textbook is only as English teaching media, the key point is how to operate it optimally by the teachers. As a result, the teacher's perspectives need to be explored to know the effectiveness of the book. Therefore, teachers' perception plays an important role to know the valuable information of material being used, curriculum, and the teachers' consideration on choosing the material (Afersa, 2020; Starkey, 2010; Borg, 2001)

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted with a descriptive study that is a qualitative approach to provide detailed information of cases.

The descriptive method is defined as a method that is intentionally done to collect information about a phenomenon as in the pure condition (Yin, 2003). It is to explore detailed information about the teacher's perception, and the documents of the textbook. Nine open-ended questionnaires are used to find out the teacher's perception of the textbook.

The participants of the study are three English teachers who teach with Macmillan beyond the book in multi-levels. The participants were selected by purposive sampling, it was used to a selection of particularly informative and can best help to understand the central phenomenon (Cresswell, 2012). Teacher 1 is from SMPIT Al-Muqorrobin, Depok that has used beyond in two years, Teacher 2 is also from the same school who use beyond in ten months, and the last teacher 3 is from SMPI Al-

Iklhas-South Jakarta who has used beyond in two years.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Teachers' Perceptions on Textbook

To answer the research question, the study shows that there are eight items as mentioned by BSNP on feasibility aspects of the textbook: namely, completeness, deepness, social functions, elements and structure of meaning, linguistic features, up to date, life skills development, and cultural diversity development. Those would be the consideration aspects of textbook perception. The interview result and the question are displayed. T1, T2, and T3 are labeled as the respondents or teachers.

Completeness

The first question of the interview is to know the teachers' perception of the suitability of beyond books with curriculum and syllabus in Indonesia. The question is "What do you think about the suitability of Beyond's book with the 13th curriculum and the Indonesian education syllabus?"

The respondents said that beyond book has already suited with the curriculum 2013 and teaching syllabus in Indonesia. As the T2 stated that the publisher has mapped the material into the current Indonesia curriculum as well as its syllabus teaching. It was supported by Okitasari and Palupi, (2020) who stated that a good textbook should provide an outline of the syllabus for the teacher. It is useful to assist the teacher in applying curriculum in the process of teaching and learning (Ayu & Indrawati, 2019). However, as T3 refers that the book has widely material than K-13. As it is an International book, the teacher also found that the content was expanded.

Deepness

The second question, related to the material presented in beyond book "how detailed is the presentation of the materials presented in the Beyond book?" It is to explore how the material packaging in the textbook is.

In general, the book has good material presented. It includes four basic English skills and also in-depth discussion. It was supported by Brown (2001) who said that a good textbook has involved four language skills and collaborates them in an integrated skill. As He stated that a textbook should be accompanied by audio to practice students' listening skills. The other language knowledge is also presented to help students understand the material easily, such as a vocabulary box, a grammar section, and pronunciation (Cunningsworth, 1995).

Social Function

Then, question number 3 is to know the concept and definition presented in beyond book. It is as mentioned in the question "What is your opinion about the presentation of concepts and definitions in the Beyond book?"

The teachers' perception indicates the agreement that the concept and definition contained in beyond book is presented appropriate with the language concept, also it indicates ease to understand and many activities. However, the students with middle-low cognitive competence will face difficulty to understand the book. They need to be assisted by the teacher clearly (Susiati & Mufidati, 2020). It was found also in Septiana et al., (2020) who show that teachers should put students in the first consideration while implementing teaching-learning activity. What is more, a textbook also found not adequate to suit every learner (Masruroh et al., 2019)

Element and Structure of Meaning

Question 4 is related to the structure of the textbook in which should involve interpersonal, transactional, and functional text. The question is as formulated "What do the texts presented in the Beyond book cover the structure of each text? (both interpersonal, transactional, and functional text)".

From the data, beyond the book has involved the structure of each text. The structure of the text is shown in the dialogue and conversation of the book.

Linguistic Feature

The next question is to find the language feature of the book. The question derived to consider the students' needs. It is as formulated

“What is your opinion about the use of language in Beyond? Is it following the student's education level?”. The respondents answer such as follow:

According to T1 view, the language feature in beyond book was suited to students' level. However, different perception delivered by T2 and T3 who states that the language feature used is quite difficult for JHS level as students have a variety of cognitive level. Moreover, T3 adds for those who have motivated to be able to speak English, the language feature of the book will help them a lot.

Up to Date Situation

Question 6 is given to examine the newest aspect of the book and the current culture adaptation in Indonesia. It is formulated as “How are the teaching materials (text, pictures, tables, examples, cases, etc.) in the Beyond book appropriate to the situation and conditions in Indonesia?”. Below is the answer:

From the data, we can conclude that T1 and T2 agree of the book has the same condition in Indonesia due to its focuses on globalization topic which may every country has the same situation. On the other hand, T3 has a different perception. He stated that this book has not been in accordance yet with the Indonesia situation. Most of the material is global which talked to outside Indonesia situation. It is appropriate with the current situation in the globalization era. It has been said by (Richards, 2010) that add textbooks are generally developed based on textbook writers for worldwide markets.

Life skill Development

The next question is derived to know the life skill development in the book. The question is “There are four types of development of life skills, namely personal, social, academic, and vocational skills. Do the texts or communicative acts presented in Beyond link these four aspects?”. Then, the answers are as follow:

As the data presented, all respondents tend to have an agreement related to life skill development. They said that the text presented in conversation and dialogue has provoked students to develop their life skills. For example, T1 said the daily

conversation in the book can be practiced knowing the international understanding. T2 also found that the dialogue contains life skills such as how to ask somebody, and how to reply to the request. Then, T3 found that there is a text to encourage students to be able to speak up in a forum, how to have a friend, and so on.

The teachers agree that the dialogues have important aspects that can engage learners to have good life skills (Harmer, 2007). The teacher said the daily conversation in the book can be practiced knowing the international understanding. The other teacher found that the dialogue contains life skills such as how to ask somebody, and how to reply to the request. The last teacher stated that there is a text to encourage students to be able to speak up in a forum, how to have a friend, and so on. It was supported by Tomlinson (2008) who stated textbooks help the students to make full use of the language experience outside the classroom.

Cultural Diversity Development

The last aspect asked is aimed to know the local value as well as its nationalist of the textbook. The question is “How is your opinion regarding the reading texts or the material provided, are there nationalist values or the development of an attitude of diversity?”. The answers are as follows:

At this point, the respondents have a similar perception that the book shows diversity, it can be found in the text or video provided. Due to the book is from an international publisher, the nationalist aspect was not found. However, it is not according to Indonesia's situation and culture. Johar and Aziz (2019) support this argument that International publishers contain very minimal cultural local content. For example, many dialogues consist of white and black people interaction. It tends to respect for cultures of indigenous people (Setyono & Widodo, 2019).

The Teachers' Difficulties on Using the Book

To explore the use of textbooks and teachers, the question regarding teachers' difficulty is asked. As it formulated “Are there any trouble that you encountered when teaching using the Beyond book?” Then, the answers are as follows.

From the data, we can conclude that teachers have some difficulties in using the textbook. As T2 mentioned, he sometimes has to look out for other sources due to the few materials in K-13 was not discussed clearly in the book. He also states that during the pandemic the audio and video provided can't be played. What is more, T3 said that the students with low cognitive aspects will face difficulties in receiving the material because the language presented is all in English.

Teachers sometimes do not found a necessary material based on K-13 so they should employ supplementary materials (Mizbani & Chalak, 2017). It is to increase students' ability to comprehend the concept (Susiati & Mufidati, 2020). Then, the other problem is related to students' understanding, because the book is presented in English and they have different cognitive levels. It was also found in Roohani et al., (2015) that the Top Notch textbooks were to a high degree. This causes that the variety of students' needs cannot be facilitated by the textbook (Richards, 2010; Ur, 1999) For a teacher, should consider this factor so the students' outcome will have the same understanding.

CONCLUSION

Teachers have a positive perception of the use of "beyond" textbook. The book is considered as a good book as it is seen by the content, material presented, language feature, and layout design. Related to the content, the book has in line with the curriculum and syllabus used in Indonesia. By this, it helps teachers to arrange the instruction in teaching and learning activity. The book has involved integrated skills; listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills which help students to comprehend the material maximum. It is also supported by several language knowledge provided such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Furthermore, the material is presented in an authentic way. The material has included all aspects of functional structure as well as its life skill development. This skill is needed to interact with people outside the classroom. However, the material doesn't meet students' local cultural understanding

due to most material being a global issue. Furthermore, regarding to the language feature of the book, teachers found that students with middle-low ability in English will face the difficulty in understanding the instruction and material of the book. It is that this book doesn't facilitate all students' cognitive level.

For further research related to this study, it may have to add the participants so that the perception will be more in a good agreement. It also may be conducted to different levels such as in elementary, senior, or university level that used international textbook as the main source in teaching-learning activity. Then, to have the maximum result of the implementation of the textbook, it can probably be conducted to the bilingual school in which the students have already had a good English competence.

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