

Teacher's Perception of Using English Textbook in Teaching English for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Munawwaroh Jambi

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
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| <p>Keywords: perception, textbook, Islamic school, adapting material</p> <p>DOI: https://doi.org/10.22437/langue.v1i2.23193</p> <p>Received: January 04, 2023</p> <p>Reviewed: April 12, 2023</p> <p>Accepted: June 20, 2023</p> | <p><i>This study aimed to investigate teachers' perceptions toward the use of English textbooks in teaching English and identify the teachers' obstacles to using the textbook. The participants of the study were two English teachers at an Islamic elementary school in Jambi. The study used a descriptive-qualitative approach and data collected through an interview. The results indicated that teachers had a positive attitude toward the textbook. Teachers employed textbook adaptation strategies by modifying tasks and adding and removing materials when using the textbook. Teachers encountered two major challenges: the level of difficulty of the material and limited instructional tools. The study's findings are likely to enhance teachers' knowledge of appropriate textbook criteria and to create meaningful and communicative purposes for future textbooks.</i></p> |

Introduction

Teaching English at the elementary level has become a difficult task for teachers in recent years. What makes it reasonable is that the students in elementary school are those who need a basic knowledge of English. Thus, teachers must find the right strategy, approach, method, media, and materials to teach English to this type of learner. In selecting the learning materials, the teacher must find the right source that will support the teaching process in the classroom. Moreover, the learning materials must be suitable for young learners, especially the students in elementary school.

A textbook was one of the learning materials used by the teacher. According to Diniyah (2013), textbooks are essential resources for both teachers and students when it comes to teaching and learning English. Textbooks provide input into classroom instruction through texts, activities, explanations, and so on. When textbooks are employed in the teaching and learning process, both teachers and students get the benefits. According to Akbar (2015), textbooks include learning resources that can be used as a guide and reference to achieve learning competencies aligned with the curriculum. So the ideal teaching material for students is flexible teaching. This means that using these teaching materials can make it easier for teachers and students to engage in learning activities. so that learning can take place effectively.

Teachers' methods of teaching are typically influenced by the advantages provided by textbooks in the classroom. They use the textbook materials from the beginning of the school year, page by page, to the end of the year. Teachers also utilize workbooks for teaching and learning, while it is common for teachers to simply sit and ask students to complete an assessment and submit it to them.

In fact, textbooks are a tool utilized in the teaching and learning process, and they are essential for both teachers and students to have. Teachers believe textbooks are so important in the teaching and learning process that they use textbooks throughout the process without selecting and customizing appropriate materials for their students. As a result, it is critical for teachers to select a textbook that is suitable for their students. This study is intended to enrich standardized English textbooks and contribute to the improvement of textbook use in English teaching, particularly in Indonesia.

The descriptive qualitative method were used in this study. This study's participants were two EFL teachers of Islamic Elementary school at Jambi. They were using a textbook that that was published by The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia). The textbook entitled "My Next Words-Grade 5 Student's Book". The data collected through interview and classroom observation. There are three major activities in data analysis are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. To minimize data bias, three methods are employed in this study to make the research more valid: triangulation, member checking, and rich data.

Literature Review

Definition of Perception

Perception has been identified as one of the primary factors influencing teacher behavior in the field of English language teaching. According to Muzakky (2021), perception is the process of responding to a stimulus that affects the human senses to become aware of something. Additionally, according to Walgito (2013), the sensing process, which is the admittance activity of an individual's input through the sense organs, also known as the processing of information, occurs before the development process of perception. It is possible to conclude that perception is a process in which the human responds to a stimulus obtained previously by the sense organs and influences the human's behavior toward something. In the context of ELT, this indicates that perception can influence teachers' awareness of the teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, according to Rakhmat (2009), functional/personal, structural, and cultural elements influence perception. First, needs, prior experience, motivation, hope, attention, emotion, and situation are all functional or personal elements. Second, structural elements include stimulus intensity, stimulus quantity, and stimulus contradiction. A cultural component is the environment in which an individual lives.

Teachers and Textbook Use

A textbook is a course book that contains knowledge of a certain lesson, from elementary school to university. Textbooks serve an important role in the educational process. The textbook is intended to be a resource book for students to use in order to develop competent students. Therefore, the textbooks used in schools must be designed to utilize the appropriate materials based on the educational structure. According to Tomlinson (2012), the purpose of the textbook is to provide a set of ideas to be learned in one book and is intended to be the primary book that is essentially applied by the learners in teaching learning. Furthermore, the researcher concluded that an English textbook is an important source of English materials that can be used by both teachers and students, as it provides guidelines on how and what to teach in order to develop language skill competencies. Textbooks play an essential part in language lessons since they are an almost standard component of English language teaching because they provide a large amount of material.

According to Richards (2001) and Ingall (1994), there are at least two phases in using a textbook. The first step is to critically understand the textbooks before starting class, understanding their pros and weaknesses. As a teacher, you must comprehend the textbook's contents, structure, and reasons for use, regardless of whether the textbook provides benefits or not. The second step is to evaluate the nature of instructional tasks in textbooks, instructional materials, and textbook adaptation by determining the present format that can be used to teach or practice various teaching items.

Moreover, while choosing and selecting textbooks, teachers must pay attention to the characteristics of proper textbooks. First, textbooks should be adapted to the students' requirements, interests, and abilities. Textbooks should be interesting for students, represent their needs and interests, and be culturally acceptable. As a result, teachers should pay attention to cultural content in textbooks, which should be accurate and not biased.

In contrast, textbook content should be authentic so that students may see how the textbooks apply in their real lives. According to Richards (2001), authentic materials improve learner motivation, are more relevant to learners' needs, and promote a more creative approach to teaching. Textbooks must be appropriate and balanced between language knowledge and language practice, between relevant language skills and how to combine them, and those textbooks should also include communicative activities.

Second, textbooks must be appropriate for teachers. Textbooks should include materials such as tapes, workbooks, and visuals for teachers. The approach and method in textbooks should be appropriate for both teachers and students. A good and clear teacher's guide with answers and advice on methods and extra activities should also be included in the textbook. Furthermore, teachers should focus on the language in the textbook. The textbooks should also include information to aid students in understanding the lesson. As a result, English textbooks should contain correct, natural, current, and standard English.

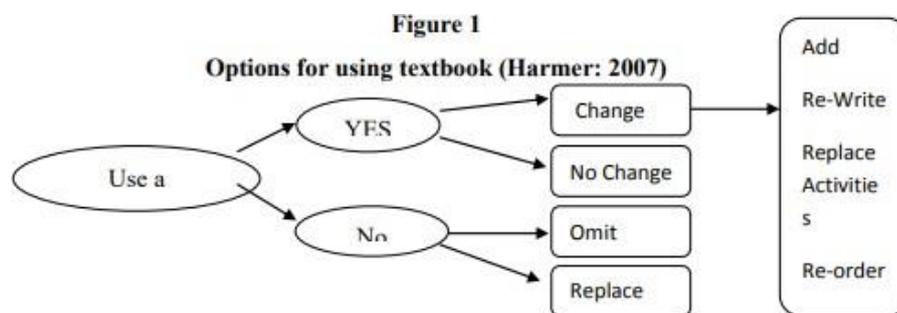
Third, textbooks must fulfill the requirements of the official public school curriculum or examination. Furthermore, in terms of the syllabus and examination, textbooks should be recommended or approved by the government and should closely match the official syllabus.

Textbooks with a high grade level provide well-structured and methodical coverage of the language. Activities, themes, and procedures in textbooks should be thoroughly organized, and materials should be specifically prepared for the test. As a result, textbooks should include helpful tips on exam technique. Furthermore, teachers may take note of the language level of difficulty on textbooks. Materials should be slightly more complex than the students' present level of English proficiency in order for the students to learn new grammatical structures and vocabulary.

In accordance with the interactions and strategies that have been designed and are being implemented (Rohani: 2004) In addition, a teaching material must have legibility criteria, so that the developed teaching materials can understood by elementary school students. According to Krause in Toharuddin (2011), a teaching material should have the following readability criteria:

- a. A sentence should avoid the use of many ideas.
- b. The complexity of the sentence is not accustomed to high or not using high language. The language used must be in accordance with the character of elementary school students.
- c. Don't use difficult words.
- d. Each picture or graphic must be given a description and explanation.
- e. The text should contain a clear table of contents and index.
- f. The table of contents shows the development of logic and teaching materials.
- g. The text refers to the images, tables and diagrams on the page, there must be an explanation.
- h. Image Illustration must be attractive.
- i. Difficult words, bolded, italicized, or underlined.
- j. The main thoughts are shown in the main section.
- k. There is a glossary.
- l. Use passive voice only as necessary. (Toharuddin: 2011)

As a result, Irujo (2006) believes that in order to teach and learn effectively in the classroom, teachers must be able to select the best material for teaching, create supplemental materials for the class, and adapt or update the materials in textbooks. As a result, understanding that not all textbooks are perfect, many teachers decide whether or not to utilize a specific textbook lesson. Richards (2001), Harmer (2007), and Spratt et al. (2005) categorize such decision-making into two options, which will be discussed more in the following section.



According to the figure above, teachers have two alternatives when it comes to using a textbook. If teachers choose to use a textbook, they must decide whether or not to update the materials. If teachers want to improve the content of a textbook, they must know how to do it. The ability to modify or adapt contents in Figure 1 involves adding materials, re-writing materials, substituting activities, re-ordering, and lowering items in textbooks. According to Richards (2001), the ability to modify textbooks is an essential ability for teachers to have. Meanwhile, teachers who do not want to use textbooks have the option of removing or replacing them.

Methods

Research Design

The design of this research was descriptive-qualitative. The researcher chose this design to obtain detailed information about the current case. Muzakky et al. (2021) stated that the descriptive method is defined as a method that is intentionally done to collect information about a phenomenon, as in the pure condition. This research explored detailed information about the teachers' perceptions toward the use of an English textbook used by teachers at MI Munawwaroh Jambi City.

Research Site

This research was conducted at MI Munawwaroh Jambi located in Perumnas Aur Duri Indah Blok D RT 20 Kelurahan Penyengat Rendah Kecamatan, Telanaipura, Penyengat

Rendah, Kec. Telanaipura, Jambi City. It was conducted during the odd semester of the academic year 2021/2022.

Research Participants

Two English teachers from MI Munawwaroh Jambi City took part in this study. They were selected using purposive sampling. According to Creswell (2012), purposive sampling was used to select a particular group, object, or person that could best help the researcher gather the information needed for the research. These two teachers were selected as they were the senior teachers in MI Munawwaroh who have taught English for years. Thus, their experience in ELT was considered a worthy reason for the researcher to choose them as participants.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data was conducted through semi-structured interview and observation. The data collection was conducted during the classroom observation and semi-structured interview session with the participant. The data collection was done during the odd semester of academic year 2021/2022 at MI Munawwaroh Jambi city. This process involved the researcher and also two senior English teachers at MI Munawwaroh Jambi city.

Findings and Discussion

Teachers' Perceptions on Using the Textbook

In general, teachers had a positive attitude regarding the textbooks that were being used. However, they do examine the textbooks' weaknesses in terms of language level difficulty. The texts lacked supplemental elements like cassettes and graphics, as well as teacher advice, answer keys, and teaching aids for explaining and applying methodologies and performing additional tasks. The findings show that there are two aspects to the teacher's perception: (1) the strengths of the textbook and (2) the weaknesses of the textbook.

(1) The strengths of the textbook

The strength points of the textbook are the content of the book, which includes the variety of skills, the level of language, and the graphics of the content. The skills in the textbook

are various. The English skills included in the book are reading, speaking, listening, and writing. In addition, the skills are presented integrated with another skill, such as writing with reading. Besides, the listening skill is presented with the speaking skill. This presentation may help the teacher carry out the lesson

in the classroom. Moreover, the level of the language suits the students' level. The language in the textbook appears to be elementary. In addition, the vocabulary in the book is also presented in context. The presentation of vocabulary in context may make it easier for students to memorize it and improve their vocabulary mastery.

In terms of graphics, the textbook used to teach English at MI Al Munawwaroh Jambi City is presented in a full-color version. Moreover, the picture in the book is presented with small details that are related to students' daily lives. The picture also helps the students understand the lesson easily and improve their skill at imagining. In addition, the colorful pictures in the textbook will attract the students' interest in learning and exploring the content of the book in detail.

(2) Three weaknesses of the textbook

The weakness point of the textbook is the presence of the passage, which is inadequately long for the students in 5th and 6th grade. Some of the passages in the book are presented in dialogue with pictures, but the dialogue is just too short for the students to explore more about the passage. According to the English teachers at MI Al Munawwaroh Jambi City, it will be better if the text is longer to give the students an experience of exploring the material, especially in the reading section.

Teacher Obstacles and strategies to overcome the obstacles

The findings show that there are two obstacles faced by the teacher during the teaching and learning process: (1) Students lack of interest, (2) limited access to the textbook resource.

- (1) Some of the obstacles faced by the teachers are the students' lack of reading interest and limited access to the textbook resources. The teachers reveal that sometimes their students look uninterested in the learning material, specifically in reading activities. The students frequently show less interest in reading activities due to the appearance of the textbook or the text that they are asked to read. The students' reading interest might

be low if the reading passage is too short or too long. Therefore, the teacher tries to overcome this obstacle by bringing a full-color textbook with some pictures inside. The teachers believe this strategy will help in some situations. In some moments, the teacher also uses learning media, such as pictures or slides, to attract and hook the students' reading interest.

- (2) The next obstacle is limited access to the textbook resource. To address this issue, English teachers at MI Al Munawaroh Jambi City make use of the school's resources, such as the

library, language lab, and IT laboratory. In the library, the teacher will help the students find various reading sources, ranging from the textbook to the encyclopedia and also magazines. In addition, another school facility that is used by the teachers is the language laboratory, or language center. In the language laboratory, the teachers are able to find so many reading resources on the internet. By utilizing internet access, the teachers not only have the chance to provide various learning resources, including textbooks, but they are also able to introduce some types of reading materials to the students.

Conclusion

Teachers had a positive perception of the textbook in use since it appeared to have more strengths than weaknesses. Teachers utilized textbook techniques such as adding, changing tasks, and removing material or textbooks. The teachers chose to use the textbook and modified the materials by adapting them. There were no teachers who merely used textbooks. They did not always follow the textbook author's instructions and materials. The teachers also did not use the textbook from one page to the next, but rather based their decisions on the needs of the students and the lesson plans that they had created.

Concerning the teachers' challenges in using textbooks, there were at least two major difficulties encountered by teachers: the level of difficulty of the texts and the limited teaching tools. The teachers made every effort to resolve any issues or challenges encountered while utilizing the material.

According to the findings of the study, teachers are expected to comprehend the textbook before starting class. Teachers should be aware of the criteria for good textbooks, as this will assist them in selecting and deciding which textbook to utilize effectively for teaching and learning in classroom activities. Teachers should also improve their competence and knowledge of material adaptation in the teaching and learning process. This may support educators in determining how to fix difficulties or weaknesses encountered while utilizing textbooks. The study of teachers' perceptions toward textbook use could be utilized as a guide for future research. Furthermore, the study could create improvements in this area for improved textbook development.

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