

ENGLISH MATERIALS FOR SOFTWARE ENGINEERING STUDENTS: A COURSEBOOK EVALUATION

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Abstract: Evaluation of a coursebook is essential to the planning and administration of a course. Coursebook evaluation enables teachers to select the best texts for their classes, adapt them to the needs of their students, and promote natural interaction. Thus, this paper analyses five modules that are used by students majoring in Software Engineering at a vocational high school in East Java. These five modules, which are based on the K13 curriculum, cover topics including introduction, how to congratulate someone, descriptive text, announcement and the use of past tense and present perfect tense. The modules are evaluated using an evaluation checklist adopted from Azarnoosh & Ganji (2014) by looking at 5 aspects: (1) content, (2) vocabulary and grammar, (3) exercises and activities, (4) attractiveness, and (5) context. Some recommendations are then suggested based on the results of the evaluation.

Keywords: ESP (English for Specific Purposes), Coursebook Evaluation, Modules, English for Software Engineering

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

English is an international language used to communicate around the world. English has become an international language and lingua franca. English is almost now used as a means of communication in some more specific ways. Matsuda and Friedrich (2011) state that the implications of English for Specific Purposes for teaching have gotten much attention from scholars. The use of specific English in the classroom is supposed to be implied.

English for specific purposes is part of English as a second or foreign language. It usually refers to teaching English to students or people who are already working, with reference to the specific vocabulary and skills they need. Dalle et al. (2018) said that ESP is designed for a particular group or student who need to ace English in their disciplines. ESP has a different framework from general English which is comprehended in school and college curricula. What makes ESP different from general English can be seen from the goal, evaluation, design, material, and perception.

Dudley-Evan and St. John (1998) reported that the ESP material programs should be voted properly and creatively, adjusted and enhanced to meet the needs of the student. Therefore, it is very essential to do a need analysis as best as possible (yaniafari et al., 2021), based on the questions that can be asked to ESP students. The framework of ESP consists of goals, syllabus, and materials that are specifically arranged and elaborated according to students' needs in learning English (Donough, 1984, as cited in Dalle et al., 2018).

The objectives of the English curriculum for Class 10 Vocational High School include four competencies, namely (1) spiritual attitude competence, (2) social attitude, (3) knowledge, and (4) skills. These competencies are achieved through intra-curricular, co-curricular, and/or extracurricular learning processes. Basic competencies in English subjects for Vocational High Schools include applying social functions, text structures, and linguistic elements of spoken and written transactional interaction texts; congratulating and praising; giving and asking for

information; and the events that happened in the past. In addition, it is also related to how to distinguish social functions, text structure, and linguistic elements of announcement; famous tourist attractions and historical buildings; spoken and written recount text; and narrative text. The last basic competence is by interpreting the social function and linguistic elements of song lyrics related to the lives of teenagers in High School.

The problem is, sometimes not all materials and teaching materials provided by schools and universities in Indonesia can fulfil ESP learning objectives and help students in the subject area they are pursuing. Overall, the objective of this research is to examine the usage of learning materials that is used in software engineering class which is a case study that will take in software engineering major in SMK Telkom Malang.

Research Question

Based on the background, this research is intended to answer the following questions:

- (1) Is the learning material appropriate with the latest curriculum criteria?
- (2) Does the textbook used in English for Software Engineering Students need to be upgraded?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Teaching of ESP

English has been applied in two practices. The first practice is English for General Purposes (EGP) which consists of four English skills and the general language components. The second practice is English for Specific Purposes (ESP) which focuses on understanding the specific students' needs in learning English. Nevertheless, many English instructors in Indonesia are still not practising ESP in their practice. This is demonstrated by the fact that there are many vocational high schools that still use textbooks for English as General Purposes, and not the specific textbook for a particular major. Moreover, the current textbook and syllabus provided by the government are also used for both SMA and SMK. Whereas, to boost students' competence and be recruited in any job vacancy, the implication of ESP is very demanding (Khosiyono, 2008).

According to Kennedy and Bolitho (1991), ESP have additional requirements compared to general English teachers. For example, we should be able to: conduct and interpret a student group needs analysis, design a curriculum for your class, select and adapt materials for lessons and design appropriate activities, create a course outline, and develop students' working knowledge of the subject. Therefore, developing an ESP course for students has a lot more consideration than developing EGP.

Kennedy (2012) said that one of the reasons why ESP has been developed in many countries is because globalization has evoked the use of English as a universal language. Many corporations have required English as one ability that everyone must be able to master. Thus, the teaching of ESP has become a necessity in order to fulfil the demand of employment. For example, in the business field, the use of basic English can be used in everyday conversation, however, there are some terms which are not learned by the students in EGP. The business terms are only learned by the students in the ESP course for the ESP is more focused on the students' need in their particular field.

Textbook Evaluation

The role of the textbook itself has become a major issue among writers and educators due to its importance in helping teachers teach learners (Tomlinson, 2011). Meanwhile, according to Tarigan and Tarigan (1986:13), a textbook is a standard book on a particular subject of study, edited for educational purposes by subject matter experts and compiled through a harmonious

educational medium, and it is easy to understand for users in schools and universities for obtaining educational programs. Moreover, a textbook is a book that contains complete information about a subject that a student needs to pass the school year. Students use textbooks as a guide to comprehend and understand ideas. Textbook has the ability to change the way students think and proceed ideas and affects the child's knowledge and certain values (Chambliss & Calfee, 1998:23). It is used as a guide for the syllabus material they have to study in the semester. The use of EGP textbooks in vocational schools can pose problems because they cannot be adapted to the needs of students in vocational school programs (Nuhamasih & Syahrial, 2017). Therefore, the English textbook evaluation needs to be conducted in order to get knowledge whether the textbook that is used in vocational school already meets the students' needs or not.

Here will be discussed about the meaning of book evaluation. The term evaluation has been used to define various ways. One of the most widely used terms comes from Scriven (1991) and was later adapted by the American Evaluation Association. "Evaluation is a systematic process of determining merit, value, or importance." Evaluation really needs to be done in order to create something better. An evaluation is a form of research aimed at answering key questions about how well a program, process, product, system, or work organization is doing (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). This is typically done for decision-making purposes and should lead to utilization of the results by multiple stakeholders. Therefore, textbooks should be evaluated. This is because errors and weaknesses are discovered, recorded, and corrected. In this way, education progresses with the times.

According to Ansary and Babaii (2002), evaluating textbooks is the responsibility of the teachers. Many of us are not confident about what to premise our decisions on, how to qualify our decisions, and how to report our assessment results. Also, some might think that only experts can evaluate textbooks, but that's not entirely true. As a teacher, we can evaluate a textbook, in this case an ESP textbook, using a previous textbook evaluation checklist.

Accordingly, Cunningsworth (1995) had formulated the evaluation checklist for ESP which are about the materials, the objective, the credibility of the content, the structure of the material, the language elements, the English operational skills, the collaborative approach between teacher and students, the flexibility of the materials, the authenticity of the materials, and the evaluation of students' performances.

Moreover, Ellis and Johnson (1994) also formulated a checklist for evaluating published materials that have six aspects to be considered. Those six aspects include the aim of the material, the language purpose, the topics that are covered, the methodological approach that is used, the role of the material, and the attractiveness of the material.

The other expert, Mieckley (2005) also formulated a textbook evaluation checklist that can help the practitioners or educators in evaluating textbooks. There are three main aspects which are followed by some specific criteria of each aspect. The first aspect is about the textbook, teacher's manual, and the context. Those three examples of textbook evaluation instruments can be used as a guide for the teachers to conduct their own textbook evaluation.

METHOD

Instruments

The instrument that the evaluators used to evaluate the modules is evaluation checklist. In this study, the researchers adopt Cunningsworth (1995), Ellis and Johnson (1994), and Mieckley (2005) checklists' instruments. According to Cunningsworth (1995), to reach the learning objectives, a great textbook should have ideas that represent the syllabus planned so that it becomes an effective resource for independent learning to increase confidence. Based on Ellis and Johnson (1994), they concentrate on the content and general content which are the

material, the language, and the topic. In addition, referring to Mieckley (2005), the instrument used is focused on perfecting the goals of English learning and the aspects are grouped into three parts which are textbook, teacher's manual, and context. The checklist which is used as the instrument of the evaluation comprises five main components to assess the content of the modules, vocabulary and grammar, assignments and activities, the appeal of the text and physical make up, and context. Each component comprehends some problems to be answered when assessing the textbook.

Data Analysis

The current research focused on evaluating modules for English majoring on Software Engineering for tenth grade students in SMK Telkom Malang adopting Cunningsworth (1995), Ellis and Johnson (1994), and Mieckley (2005) checklists. This study used qualitative descriptive analysis. The researchers analyze and evaluate the current modules based on arrangement on the following checklist to acquire the full understanding of the content and evaluate the modules.

The following was adopted from Azarnoosh and Ganji (2014). It represents the content of the modules. The table is compiled in five parts of questions. The researchers examined the modules depending on the presence and the quality of the modules, and it was rated as 1-Totally lacking, 2-Poor, 3-Adequate, 4-Good, 5-Excellent.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Content

The results indicate that the subject matter is presented both topically and functionally in a logical way. In these modules, the units are organized logically; it is divided into 2 parts, reading section and writing section. The reading materials provided in the module are authentic. It offers a variety of target circumstance activities that aim to strike a balance between the carrier and the actual content. However, these modules are not flexible enough to meet students' needs in ESP works. Based on Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Cunningsworth (1995), English learning at Vocational High School is categorized as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and the purpose of learning English is determined by the department or students' major. One of the absolute characteristics of ESP is that it is related in content to particular disciplines, occupations, and activities (Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1991). However, the content of these modules that are used in SMK Telkom Malang do not provide materials that are specifically needed by the Software Engineering students. Thus, the modules do not really teach the way how English is used in Software Engineering Major since it lacks materials which are expected to prepare students both in business and industry work.

Vocabulary and Grammar

The second part of the evaluation checklist represents the aspect of vocabulary and grammar that is used in the book. The book already used a methodological approach to explain about the grammatical rules and it is being explained clearly in the book. The modules that are used have also given the explanation of the language function. The new vocabularies are already presented at an appropriate rate for the tenth graders students to support their understanding about the passage. The new vocabulary is also repeated in some of the passages and the example. According to Cunningsworth (1995), language content consists of grammar, vocabulary, phonology, and discourse. Even though the modules have provided an adequate amount of grammar and vocabulary, there are some sentences and words which are presented ungrammatically and need more explanation in terms of the meaning.

Language features that are used in ESP are also expected to be centred on the language appropriate to the activities of related study in syntax, lexis, discourse, and semantics (Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1991). However, the modules that are used in SMK Telkom Malang do not meet this characteristic of being ESP modules because it only gives explanations and examples of general vocabulary and phrases that is usually found in English for General Purposes (EGP).

Exercises and Activities

The modules have provided an adequate number of exercises and activities in three skills of English such as writing, reading, speaking except for listening. Almost all the activities in the modules instruct the students to read and analyze the reading to get a good comprehension. There is sufficient real-life activity that encourages the students to use grammar rules. The modules also focus on the writing activity rather than on the listening activity. According to Cunningsworth (1995), in some situations, the written language may be heavily emphasized while the spoken abilities may be completely disregarded. The statement is justified by the modules that they only focus on the written language rather than the oral skills. The listening activities are poorly supported in the module, they are only instructed to read and practice some conversation with their friends. In addition, there is no activity that is used to evaluate students' performance. According to Otilia (2015), one of the components of needs analysis that has a critical role in ESP is about the target situation analysis and objective needs analysis that includes tasks and activities learners will use English for. However, these modules do not provide tasks and activities that can help students mastering English in their field of study, which in this context is about English for Software Engineering. The tasks and activities that are provided in the modules only help students to understand English in general context.

Attractiveness of The Text and Physical Make Up

Based on Deuri (2012), the idea of simple to complex should be the foundation of any effective English textbook. It is important to present the material logically. The kids should find the style appealing. The cover and visual imagery of the module is not really appealing and has high aesthetic quality, but still comfortable to look at and can be read well by the students. However, the display of the reading texts presented is monotonous from one module to another. Lack of variety in the design and looks odd. The pages of the modules are all the same colour which are green. For the design itself is also very simple, the images used are also less varied. The writing is also too close and monotonous.

Context

These modules use *K-13* material and include all the materials and *KI KD* contained in the current curriculum. In the modules it has also been explained that every *KI KD* used in the material or topic will be discussed in detail and clearly. In the modules, the author has written down the learning objectives to be achieved by students. The objectives or outputs of the learning materials contained on the first page of this textbook. If viewed in more detail, of course the text in the book is very closely related to the goals to be achieved. The contents are in accordance with the objectives of the materials and the existing *KI KD*. The material is presented well and does not contain *SARA*. The material is also appropriate to the situation and the age of the students. As mentioned by Otilia (2015), one of the main components of ESP's needs analysis is the mean analysis which includes the information about the environment where the course will run. This statement is also supported by Stern (1992) who claimed that knowledge objectives are one of the main types of ESP teaching objectives, which discuss acquisition of linguistic and cultural information. However, there is no background information

about where and when English will be used in their field of study. There is also no information about the condition or situation of when they will use English.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The research study has conducted an evaluation of the modules that are used by SMK Telkom Malang. This evaluation provided a clear understanding of each criteria of the modules which include content, vocabulary and grammar, exercises and activities, attractiveness of the modules, and context.

In general, these modules are not flexible enough to meet students' needs in ESP works. These modules are for teaching English for general purposes, so they do not really teach the way how English is used in Software Engineering Major. The modules also lack in some of the parts in the learning materials, for example the cover and visual imagery of the module is not really appealing and has high aesthetic quality, the grammar and the vocabulary that are used in the modules are lack with new vocabulary and that are some of grammatical errors in some part of the modules. For the English skills materials, the modules do not cover the listening activities for the students. The researchers also do not find any outcomes to evaluate the students' performance in the module for the learning activities. Furthermore, these modules still need to be improved in many parts, so that the modules can be more suitable for the teaching process in vocational high school.

Last but not least, especially for other researchers who are interested in evaluating English textbooks. The future researcher needs to use more tools than just an assessment checklist, such as interviews and needs assessment surveys. There may be other signs and views as to how accurate the quality of the textbook is.

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