

## THE ANALYSIS OF INDONESIAN STUDENTS' ENGLISH TEXTBOOK AND THAI STUDENTS' ENGLISH TEXTBOOK

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**Abstract:** This study is aimed to examine how *Bahasa Inggris* book compared to *English Explorer 2*, an English textbook used in Thailand. The instrument used in this study is an evaluation sheet adapted from BSNP (2014), Basic Education Core Curriculum (2008), Cunningsworth (1995), and Tomlinson (2003), which cover content feasibility, graphic feasibility, methodology, language content, language skills, and practical consideration. The study implements qualitative content analysis research design. The result of the study shows that *English Explorer 2* book is better than *Bahasa Inggris* book in five out of six variables. *English Explorer 2* was ahead *Bahasa Inggris* book in terms of content feasibility ( $\bar{x} = 3.42 > 3.07$ ), graphic feasibility ( $\bar{x} = 3.46 > 2.86$ ), language content ( $\bar{x} = 3.375 > 2.75$ ), language skills ( $\bar{x} = 3.5 > 2.4$ ), and practical consideration ( $\bar{x} = 4 > 3.5$ ). *Bahasa Inggris* is better than *English Explorer 2* in only one variable, methodology, in which *Bahasa Inggris* got 3.3 and *English Explorer 2* got 2.67 for the average score of methodology variable.

### INTRODUCTION

On May 2016, I went to Thailand for an internship teaching practice program. I was assigned to teach in a high school in Chana district, Southern Thailand. I taught English for 11<sup>th</sup> grade in Saengtham Wittaya Mulnithi School. As I tried to comprehend how Thai education system worked, I learned that most Thai teachers (and all Thai teachers I had seen) depend so much on textbooks. They follow almost every activity available on the textbook they use.

Similarly, many teachers in Indonesia also use textbook, but they have tried to integrate the materials from textbook with other activities outside the textbook. Based on Decree of Ministry of National Education Number 2 Year 2008, all teachers and students are obliged to use textbooks as the major reference qualified by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Qualification here means that the textbook presents what has been designed in the curriculum, with consideration of the appropriateness of age, level, culture, and so on. Referring to Indonesian Curriculum 2013, every content of the textbook used by all schools is regulated by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The result of this obligation is that many schools in Indonesia are using the same books published by Ministry of Education and Culture. For instance, the books used in English subject in upper secondary school are *Bahasa Inggris* for Grade X, *Bahasa Inggris* for Grade XI, and *Bahasa Inggris* for Grade XII.

Meanwhile in Thailand, no coursebook from Ministry of Education was given to me. Freedom is given to every teacher to choose what book they want to use for teaching. Thus, a week after my arrival at this school, I was given *English Explorer 2* since my responsibility is to teach Matthayom 5 or grade 11.

Before I was given *English Explorer 2* book, I tried to adapt materials from *Bahasa Inggris* for Grade XI. I stopped adapting materials from *Bahasa Inggris* long before I was given *English Explorer 2*, because students could not catch up with the material I was delivering although I used the most traditional methods, the translation method and audio-lingual method. I then started to look at the book given to me. Trying to compare *English Explorer 2* with *Bahasa Inggris*, I was quite fascinated to find out that the books appeared to be very different in many ways. Even before looking inside the book, I could say that *English Explorer 2* had a very good quality of paper and printing. Being curious, I tried to compare *English Explorer 2* and *Bahasa Inggris* for grade 11. *English Explorer 2* was also designed for grade 11. Thus the two books had the same target of audience.

When I did an evaluation of *Bahasa Inggris* for Grade XI, I figured out that further development was needed to improve the book's quality. For instance, in learning English, students also learn the culture; however, the books have too many contents containing local culture rather than introducing students to the target culture. The book is colourful with many pictures in it, but this is not that appealing since there are pictures which are irrelevant to the content or the colour is dull. There are many other reasons why this book needs to be developed.

After comparing the two books at a glance, I decided to take the two books into a further coursebook evaluation, hoping that the result of the evaluation would help to give an idea to develop a better English textbook in Indonesia.

No preliminary study on *English Explorer 2* book can be found while several studies on BSE books published by Ministry of Education and Culture have been conducted earlier (2015 and 2016). Some of them are actually studies on *Bahasa Inggris* for Grade XI. One study was conducted by Arvianto and Faridi (2016), students of State University of Semarang. The study was aimed at identifying cognitive processes and knowledge dimension of the Revised Bloom Taxonomy in the reading exercises. The result shows that only three cognitive processes are included in the book which are remembering, understanding, and evaluating. The exercises promote Lower Order Thinking Skills rather than Higher Order Thinking Skills. The reading exercises are also less compatible with Curriculum 2013.

Another study is conducted by a student of State University of Malang, Isnaini (2015), with a title "*The Quality of the Content of an English Coursebook for Senior High School.*" The result of the study shows that from scale 1-4, the book is categorized as "Good" by earning 3.20 for the overall score. The book is found to be lacking, for which Isnaini suggests some improvements: (1) the writer of the book should provide materials that include the "question" process in scientific approach, (2) the writer should give a more contextual exercises for grammar and vocabulary sections, (3) the writer should provide listening materials and also reconsider the level of difficulty for reading and writing exercises, (4) the material should enrich cultural knowledge, and (5) the book should provide learning media, scoring tools, and so on (2015).

Isnaini (2015) conducted her study mainly by evaluating the content on the book. The present study is pretty similar with what Isnaini (2015) had conducted. However, the difference is that the present study used two different books. After the content of the two books, *Bahasa Inggris* and *English Explorer 2*, was evaluated, the result of the evaluation was compared and contrasted. This study examines which coursebook is better than the other and how each coursebook can be improved.

The result of the study can be beneficial for both of the book publishers, Kemendikbud and Mac Education. They might see the weaknesses and strong points from each of the book and use the knowledge of the weaknesses and strong points for ideas for a good textbook that they might publish later on.

Furthermore, teachers can draw their own conclusion on what a good textbook might be. The result can also help teachers in considering what a good and suitable textbook for their learners' needs is, and whether the textbook used covers all the learners' need or not. The teachers might be able to find out what material can be adopted and added in the learning process based on the result of this study.

This study might also be a reference for future researchers in evaluating coursebooks. For me, the study gives a better insight in choosing the right coursebook for teaching and learning in the future.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative content analysis research design which refers to a study of the content with reference to the meaning, context, and intentions contained in the text. This study started with formulating criteria of a good coursebook, derived from theoretical background of study and research question. After that, the sample of the study was chosen along with the setting of the study. Following the criteria of a good coursebook stated previously, the content categories of the said coursebooks were developed. I then finalized the units of the analysis and prepared the research instrument used for this study. Data collection was conducted after the research instrument was tried out. The data collection is in form of evaluating the two coursebooks by using prepared evaluation sheet. The data analysis' starting point is by describing how the two coursebooks were in terms of each category, in which, in this study, refers to each variable of the book, which then moved to more complex analysis comparing the two coursebooks and contrasting them with the previous theory to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the two coursebooks. The study ended with the conclusion and suggestion developed from this study.

The study was conducted in SMA Negeri 2 Malang since the teachers there had used *Bahasa Inggris* book for more than one year. The participant of this study was chosen by using simple random sampling. In other words, any teacher who had fulfilled the qualification would have had the possibility to be chosen as the participant in this study. The teacher in this study was Mrs. Asri Pusparini, M.Pd. She took her bachelor's degree in Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang and her master's degree at the age of 40 in Universitas Islam Negeri Malang. She had been teaching in SMA Negeri 2 Malang for more than 10 years.

This research uses two books, *English Explorer 2* and *Bahasa Inggris* for grade 11. Data gathered focus on six important aspects of evaluating coursebook; these are: content feasibility, graphic feasibility, methodology, language content, language skills and practical considerations. These

aspects are considered to be the important criteria of a good coursebook evaluation by using my self-made checklist adapted from *Penilaian Buku Teks* by BSNP (2014), Basic Education Core Curriculum 2551 (2008), Tomlinson (2008a, 2010a), and Cunningsworth (1995). The variables of the evaluation sheet include the variables, sub-variables, indicators, scale, and description column. The scale used in this study ranges from very poor to excellent in 4-point Likert scale (Bertram, 2007). Each level on the scale is assigned a numeric value or coding, starting at 1 and incremented by one for each level. The scale started with 1 which refers to “poor,” 2 for “fair,” 3 for “good,” and 4 which refers to “excellent.”

The Likert scale is used because of its numeric value so that in the end of the evaluation, I would be able to calculate the final score of each variable in the evaluation sheet and 4-point in Likert scale is used to produce an ipsative (forced choice) measure where no indifferent option is available (Bertram, 2007).

A scoring guide is also made to help the teacher and the researcher in filling the evaluation sheets. The scoring guide is in the form of a table consisting of every indicator in the evaluation sheet. Each indicator has the possibility to be given one certain score. Thus, in the scoring guide, I described the meaning of each score (1 to 4) in each indicator. For the scoring guide, see Appendix 3.

After the evaluation sheet and the scoring guide were made, they were checked and validated by my two advisors. I then continued by trying out the evaluation sheet and scoring guide to the senior high school teacher. I went to SMA Negeri 2 Malang for the try-out and was assigned to see Mrs. Asri Pusparini. Based on the result of the try out, a revision of the evaluation was not needed. After the try-out, I began to collect the data.

There were two steps included in the data collection of this study. Firstly, participant was familiarized with the Thai coursebook, *English Explorer 2*. The participant was given a copy of *English Explorer 2* book. Mrs. Asri Pusparini was given time to study the book by herself. While waiting for the participant, I evaluated the two coursebooks by using the evaluation sheet provided. Secondly, the participant evaluated the two coursebooks by using the provided evaluation sheet. After filling the evaluation sheet, I met the participant to crosscheck the evaluation sheet filled by the participant to avoid misinterpretation, by checking the evaluation sheet and the explanation of why certain scale was chosen in each indicator. I asked several questions to gain better understanding of the data collected.

For the data analysis, first, the collected data were compiled from both the teacher and I. Then from the data collected, the average score of each variable was calculated to determine whether one book was better than the other.

Second, after all the data were compiled, I described the reasons why a certain score was given to a certain indicator. The reasons were based on facts found in the coursebooks.

Finally, I compared, contrasted and wrote down the implications of the findings from both coursebooks with the previous theories and studies.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In terms of content feasibility, *English Explorer 2* gets a higher score than *Bahasa Inggris*. The data analysis shows that the aims of both coursebooks corresponded closely with the aims of each teaching program. The topics of both coursebooks are also varied and related to real-life situations. However, the topics of *English Explorer 2* are slightly more interesting and engaging than topics of *Bahasa Inggris*. *English Explorer 2* has also implemented CLIL in the materials, in which the CLIL implementation is believed to be more meaningful and less stressful (Dekeyser, 2000). Both coursebooks are also different in terms of cultural aspect. *Bahasa Inggris* portrays more local culture while *English Explorer 2* portrays more of the target culture. According to the analysis, this cultural aspect issues can happen depending on the author's belief or the principles in the learning program. Therefore, *English Explorer 2* is ahead of *Bahasa Inggris* in terms of content feasibility especially in the selection of the topics.

In terms of graphic feasibility, *English Explorer 2* is much better than *Bahasa Inggris*. The reason is because *English Explorer 2* physical appearance is not only attractive but also able to support the learning process. Compared to *English Explorer 2*, *Bahasa Inggris*' paper and printing quality are lower, and the function of the graphic illustrations are only for decorative purposes.

In terms of methodology, *Bahasa Inggris* is better than *English Explorer 2* because of the implementation of scientific approach and discovery learning in *Bahasa Inggris*. *Bahasa Inggris*' approach is more inductive while *English Explorer 2*'s approach is more deductive. The selection of approach is actually a matter of needs, especially students' needs, and also it depends on the principles of the learning program. All in all, both coursebooks support students to be more independent in learning foreign language with different approaches implemented. The data analysis also shows that *Bahasa Inggris* needs to add more variety of learning activities or materials to support different learning and teaching styles, even though the approaches support independent-learning.

In terms of language content, *Bahasa Inggris* is behind *English Explorer 2* since *Bahasa Inggris* lacks of variety of materials and activities in vocabulary and pronunciation. Both coursebooks actually

need to improve their variety in pronunciation materials, but *English Explorer 2* still provides materials for students to practice their pronunciation while *Bahasa Inggris* only provides list of phonetic alphabet of new vocabulary items. *Bahasa Inggris* needs to improve the variety of vocabulary materials and activity since the new vocabulary items are only shown twice and accompanied with only one vocabulary task. Other than vocabulary and pronunciation, both coursebooks are different in the approach of grammar materials delivery. As stated before, *Bahasa Inggris* teaches materials inductively while *English Explorer 2* teaches deductively.

In terms of language skills, *English Explorer 2* is better than *Bahasa Inggris*. *Bahasa Inggris* does not provide listening material by itself but as part of general oral work along with speaking as the primary role, while *English Explorer 2* provides listening materials in form of audio recording and video. The reading materials in *Bahasa Inggris* are also too long but have good variety of genres while *English Explorer 2* has various reading materials with proper length which could maintain students' motivation. In speaking materials, *English Explorer 2* and *Bahasa Inggris* gets the same score as both books cover students' need in speaking but *English Explorer 2* needs more tasks in enhancing students' speaking skills. Meanwhile, *Bahasa Inggris'* speaking tasks are in form of repetitive kinds but the speaking materials can cover students' needs. One suggestion for *Bahasa Inggris'* speaking materials is that the coursebook should facilitate students to be more active in finding information or materials by themselves, rather than giving all gambits and expressions at once. In writing materials, both coursebooks develop the materials by considering students' proficiency, but with the implementation of scientific approach in *Bahasa Inggris* which expects students to be more critical, the coursebooks should also provide scoring rubrics on how students' writing would be assessed. To conclude, the materials and activities portrayed in both coursebooks show that both coursebooks take into consideration students' interest and capability, but the material delivery depends much on the approach used in each coursebook.

In terms of practical consideration, *English Explorer 2* is better than *Bahasa Inggris*. The only difference is the durability of the book, which shows that *English Explorer 2* with its high quality paper is more long-lasting than *Bahasa Inggris*.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

*English Explorer 2* is better than *Bahasa Inggris* based on the findings and data analysis in this study. Eventhough *English Explorer 2* is better than *Bahasa Inggris*, both coursebooks are able to cover most students' main needs in learning English. Both coursebooks' development also put students' needs, interest, and proficiency as the focal points.

Regarding the importance of improvement in *Bahasa Inggris* textbook, the national English coursebook used in Indonesia, there are some suggestions offered to English teachers, English coursebook developers and future researchers.

For material developers and textbook publishers, before a textbook is published, it will be better if a try-out of the coursebook's material is conducted. The try-out can be done by doing pilot-projects in smaller scales involving students and taking students' opinion into account, so that the materials published later on will cover most students' needs and consider the level of difficulty the students can take.

Another suggestion for material developers is that the materials should aim for more active affective and cognitive engagement. The materials should also focus more on giving students opportunities to have communicative outcome. Materials should not only be able to cover students' needs but also be able to attract students with its variety of activities and physical make-up of the material itself.

The next suggestion is for English teachers. Teachers should be flexible in choosing the materials for students. Teachers need to have back-up or other references for alternative materials that can be given to students if the materials from the coursebook do not correspond well with the aims of the program and students' needs. In addition, if there are enough time and opportunity, the teacher should choose the right coursebook for students. A little research of the current available coursebooks might be beneficial to find the best coursebook. Teachers can look for reviews about the coursebooks or evaluate the coursebooks themselves.

The next suggestion is for students learning English. Students' opinion regarding the English textbook will be very useful for the improvement of the textbooks. Thus, students should be encouraged in giving their opinion towards the coursebooks they use. Students also have to be able to use the coursebook well and independently. They also need to be flexible in choosing materials for learning. If the materials given at school are insufficient in covering their needs, students should be able to find alternative materials independently.

Last but not least, for future researchers, there are plenty of coursebooks in the market nowadays. For a better development of English coursebooks in Indonesia, especially those used in

national scale, we can try to compare English coursebooks from Indonesia with English coursebooks from other countries where people also learn English as a foreign language. We can try to select countries whose majority of students has similar level of English proficiency to see how similar problems faced in English material development are treated, or to select countries whose majority of students has higher level of English proficiency, to understand how English materials are developed. Future researchers could also not only evaluate students' textbook but also the teachers' books and students' workbook.

Moreover, a future study could be conducted by comparing two coursebooks from two different countries by evaluating the whole coursebook packages, including teacher's books and student's workbooks. The future study could also involve two or more teachers from different countries and also an expert of material development or coursebook evaluation for more objective study.

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