A REVIEW OF AN ENGLISH E-BOOK ENTITLED
ENGLISH IN FOCUS FOR GRADE IX JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT: This study is conducted to analyze an English e-book entitled English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School in terms of objectives in the textbook, language skills, language components, contents in the textbook, learning activities, and practical considerations based on the criteria taken from BSNP (2006), Garinger (2002), and Litz (2001). This study used a descriptive evaluative method which concerns the content analysis design and a checklist as the main instrument to collect and analyze the data. The result of this study is that the textbook was categorized as good of overall criteria with the score 74.21. The textbook gained the score of 90 in terms of objectives in the textbook. The textbook obtained the score of 76.6 in terms of language skills, gained the score of 80 in terms of language components, got the score of 72.5 in terms of contents in the textbook, obtained the score of 70 in terms of learning activities. In the last aspect, that is practical considerations, the textbook gained the score of 65.

Keywords: content analysis, English e-book, criteria of good EFL textbook

Textbook is a handbook intended for students at a particular level of education with a particular field of study. It is a standard book written by experts in their respective field. Textbooks are equipped with facilities to support teaching specific programs and specific instructional objectives. Textbooks’ function is for supporting teaching and learning in a particular subject. In Indonesia, there are various kinds of English textbooks that are published by different publishers. They have varied contents for each book. The textbook’s writers are competing to write more complete and suitable book for each level in order to attract the users to use their book. Not only attractive, a textbook should fulfill the standards that are set by the government.

English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School is an English e-book which is selected in this study. The English textbook is published by Pusat Perbukuan National Education Department. The researcher is selecting that textbook to be analyzed in order to give description of the textbook for further use. BSNP evaluates the textbook according to the Standards of Content. On the other hand, this study does not based on the previous curriculum, so this textbook review does not refer to the Standards of Contents. Furthermore, this textbook is analyzed since it is suggested by the government to use this English textbook in teaching and learning process in many public junior high schools in Indonesia. In addition, Junior High School 14 Malang is one of the schools that used English e-book entitled English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School as a compulsory book.
Furthermore, students in grade IX will face the National Examination (Ujian Nasional) that English was one of the subjects that they must pass. Therefore, the materials that are given to them should be appropriate with the government’s provision. Accordingly, the researcher is interested in conducting the contents analysis on an English e-book, especially the e-book which is published by National Education Department entitled *English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School*.

In this study, the researcher relies on some theories that focus on the content analysis of English textbook. The researcher combines three theories which are from the Board of National Standards of Education (BSNP, 2006) set by Indonesian government and textbook evaluation theories from two experts, namely Garinger (2002) and Litz (2001).

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This study was conducted for about a month in analyzing the English textbook. This study used descriptive evaluative design concerned on the content analysis to describe the condition happened in the English textbook entitled *English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School*. This study described whether the contents, the materials and the exercises in the textbook entitled *English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School* have been constructed relevant with good EFL textbook criteria or not.

The researcher collected the data by using the textbook evaluation checklist and it came to the form of description of document. The researcher looked forward to the contents in every chapter in the textbook for several times and matched them to the criteria that the researcher used in order to get the best result in evaluating textbook. Then, the researcher gave the score based on the rational scale. Next, the researcher gave comments for each aspect. To get the whole score of the textbook, the researcher counted the average of all the score that textbook gets.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This section discussed the finding and the discussion of the textbook entitles *English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School*.

**Objectives in the Textbook**

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Objectives in the Textbook</th>
<th>Score</th>
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</table>
1. The textbook contains statement of learning objectives. 90
2. The contents of the textbook are appropriate with objectives statements. 90

Total score : 180
Average : 90

In terms of objectives in the textbook, the textbook was classified as “excellent” with the average of 90. The textbook got 90 as the score for this point because the textbook provided learning objectives of each skill in every chapter. It was easy to know what learners were going to learn in every chapter. Yet, some of the learning objectives in the textbook were not served in detail. The learning objectives which should be mentioned in some chapters were not presented in the textbook.

The score for the second point was 90 because the materials served were matching with the learning objectives in every chapter. Similar to the first point, there were some materials that should be the learning objectives in the textbook were not mentioned in the learning objectives statements.

**Language Skills**

**Table 2 Language Skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) covered in the textbook. 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) balanced and integrated in every Chapter. 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The textbook provides students with clear instructions acquiring those skills 80</td>
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</table>

Total score : 230
Average: 76.6

The textbook categorize as “good” with the average of 76.6 in terms of language skills which were provided in the textbook. Point one got 100 because the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) were covered well in the textbook. Moreover, the four skills were well arranged from listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The four language skills in the textbook were balanced in every chapter. It was known in every chapter which served the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in the same proportion. Nevertheless, the four language skills were presented separately one from the other. The writers of the textbook did not incorporate the language skills into integrated way. According to Brown (2001), integration of the
four language skills is the only plausible approach within a communicative and interactive framework. In other words, integrated language skills in the textbook supported the learners to be communicative and interactive in teaching and learning process. So, the textbook got 50 as the score.

This textbook already provided clear instructions for both students and the teachers who were using it. The guidance or instructions in every activity was stated clear enough in the textbook. However, some instructions were not appropriate to the activities. For instance, in the listening section, in the textbook mentioned that the learners should listen to the tape but there was no audio-tape for listening. As Williams (1983) states that the textbook should provide appropriate guidance for the teacher who was not native speakers of English. Guidance was necessary to be included in the textbook in order to minimize misunderstanding, especially for EFL textbook. So that, the textbook gained 80 as the score.

**Language Components**

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Grammar items are presented with brief and easy examples and descriptions.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Adequate vocabulary lists or glossary are included in the textbook.</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The textbook provides phonological items for new 70 vocabulary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score :</td>
<td></td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average :</td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the findings in terms of language components which were included in the textbook, the textbook obtained score 80 from the requirements of a good EFL textbook. The first point showed that the grammar items were presented in every chapter complete with the examples, sometimes the descriptions was too long. So it was difficult to understand the explanation of the grammar itself. Thus, the researcher gives 90 as the score for the grammar items in this textbook.

Hamigloglue and Karliova (2009) argues that the new vocabulary should be presented in variety of ways. In this case, the textbook only provided vocabulary lists in the form of glossary at the end of the textbook. While actually, it was easier for the learners to study if the new vocabulary lists were after the reading passage and these helped the learners in preparing the exam because they can memorize them as new vocabulary. That was why the textbook got 80 as the score for adequate vocabulary lists.
which are included.

The third point was phonological items which was more focus on the vocabulary difficult to pronounce and not focus on new vocabulary that appears in every chapter. Moreover, the textbook provided only small number of phonological items, but we could see that the phonetic transcriptions of the new vocabulary in the glossary. So that, the textbook got 70 in terms of phonological items.

**Contents in the Textbook**

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
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<td>A</td>
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<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The textbook provides authentic materials.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The materials in the textbook are varied (i.e. interpersonal, transactional, short functional, and monologue texts)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The textbook presents exercises in every Chapter</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The textbook presents summary in every Chapter</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Total score : 290  
Average : 72.5

Authenticity of the materials in the textbook gained 100. The researcher found that the materials which were presented in the textbook mostly adopted from the other sources, such as internet, magazines, books. It is authentic because the textbook served the materials that appropriate with the learners’ need. For instance, the learners need to read a procedure text and the textbook provided a procedure text for the learners. Nunan (1988) states that the materials should be authentic in terms of authentic data which refer to authenticity of samples of spoken and written language that have not been specifically written for the purpose of language teaching. It means that the authenticity of the materials are crucial in the textbook. The authentic materials can challenge the learners to study because it gives something new to the learners. The materials in this textbook were varied, for example, interpersonal, transactional, shorts functional, and monologue/essays. Those materials were presented in each chapter in different form. So, the textbook got 100 as the score in terms of variation presented in the textbook.

There were many kinds of exercises, such as act out the dialogue, role play, discussion. Every language skill has different exercises that challenge the learners. Sometimes, the exercises are monotonous, like too many reading passages and too many reading comprehensions. The textbook does not provide games or enjoyment for the
learners. Based on the Table 4, the textbook got 80 as the score in terms of the exercises presented in the textbook.

On the other hand, the textbook got 10 because there were no summary at the end of the chapter. The chapter was ended by giving the learners questions about difficulties of studying the certain chapter. Therefore, the score of the textbook was 72.5 (See Table 4).

**Learning Activities**

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The exercises and activities in the textbook consist individual, pair, and group work.</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The learning activities are cyclical.</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The exercises and activities in the textbook reinforce what students have already learned.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total score:</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average :</td>
<td>70</td>
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In terms of learning activities, the textbook got average of 70. The exercises and the activities that were presented in the textbook consist of individual, pair, and group works. Nunan (1999) says that one way to stimulate interaction is by designing tasks that require group or pair work. In addition, the textbook designs some activities in pair and group work. For instance, act out the dialogue with the classmates, work in pairs to arrange the jumbled letters, group discussion. Moreover, the textbook should encourage students to work in groups and pairs (Grant, 1992). Nevertheless, the exercises and activities in the textbook mainly about individual work and the textbook obtained 80.

The learning activities was not cyclical so that it only got 40. The learning activities were linear because there were no connections amongst the chapters of the book. New chapter is new material and no connection with each other. However, the textbook provides final evaluation that contains exercises from chapter one to five and at the end of all chapters.

The exercises and activities in the textbook has already reinforced the students because every chapter had provided some parts called enrich your knowledge, new horizon, log on, and also note. They connect the materials of each chapter. Yet, not all of them were related to the materials discussed in that chapter. So that the textbook got 90.

**Practical Consideration**

| Table 6 Practical Considerations |
In terms of practical considerations, the textbook got the average of 65. This practical considerations deal with the size of the textbook which is 17.6 x 25 cm or similar to A4 size paper. And it is comfortable enough for students and teachers to carry the book since it was not too thick for a textbook, it was only 152 pages. The textbook obtained 100.

The font type of the textbook are *Times New Roman* and *Calibri*. The font size is between 12pt – 14pt and this is the common font type and font size type. Jahangard (2001) states that the printing of the textbook should be easy to read. The textbook is printed clear enough so that both learners and teachers can read the textbook easily. The textbook got 100 for font type and font size.

This textbook presents not colorful pictures and illustrations. The illustrations which were served in the textbook were relevant to the materials but not the pictures which were not colorful. That made the learners not attracted to study using that textbook. A good EFL textbook should be attractive enough to get the learners’ interested in studying English. So that it got 30.

Completeness of the textbook consists of teacher’s book and audio-tapes. Media can help teachers extend the materials so that they will be clearer and easier to be understood by students (Suyanto, 2010:101). It means that media is very important to accompany the textbook in teaching learning process. Grant (1991:23) says that a textbook should be accompanied by cassettes for listening as cassettes provide models for students to imitate the pronunciation of the sounds, words, phrases or sentences. Yet, this textbook was not accompanied with the teacher’s book and audio-tapes. In the listening section, the textbook provides listening script which was placed in the back part of the textbook. So, the textbook got 30 also.

**CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

There are some conclusions and suggestions can be drawn from this study. First
we will discuss the conclusion and then the suggestions.

Conclusions

According to the findings and the discussion, the result of the study was that the English e-book entitled *English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School* meets the requirements of a good EFL textbook with score 74.21. The textbook was categorized as “good” in terms of objectives in the textbook, language skills, language components, contents in the textbook, learning activities, and practical considerations.

In conclusion, the textbook can be used as teaching and learning materials in the teaching and learning process of English subject. Still, the English e-book entitled *English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School* needs some improvements to make it better. Especially in learning activities, method, illustrations and pictures, and also audio-tapes.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, there are some suggestions in this study which are delivered for English teachers, textbook authors, and further researchers.

The first suggestion is for the English teachers, especially the English teachers for ninth graders who are using *English in Focus for Grade IX Junior High School* as the English textbook in the teaching and learning process. This English textbook has strengths and weaknesses, so the English teachers should be careful to choose the materials in the textbook. The English teachers should not rely much on the textbook that they used. The teachers can use the textbook as the teaching and learning materials in their teaching and learning process by selecting which materials are suitable for the learners. The English teachers may add some materials from different sources which are not included in the textbook or the English teachers may delete the materials that are not appropriate for the learners. The English teachers’ may also change the activities in order to build the learners’ creativity.

Next, the suggestion is for textbook authors because they write good EFL textbook for learners. If this textbook will be improved by the authors, they may improve some parts in the textbook. For instance, arranging the language skills into integrated language skills, combining the listening and speaking or reading and writing. Then, the textbook authors may add some enjoyments in the textbook, like games, puzzles, listening to the music.

In addition, the textbook authors can add listening exercises in the final evaluation
in order to give the learners ideas of listening section in the final examination (Ujian Nasional). Moreover, the textbook authors may change the learning activities to cyclical learning activities. Furthermore, in terms of illustrations and pictures in the textbook should be printed colorfully. Attractive English textbook can make the learners’ interest to study by using that textbook. The last is the textbook should be accompanied by a teacher’s book and audio-tapes to support the listening activities.

The last, the suggestion is for further researchers who want to conduct textbook analysis as their research. This study can be used as a reference for the further researcher who will conduct similar research. Moreover, further researchers should be more careful and selective in creating or adapting criteria for textbook analysis. The criteria should be appropriate on what they are going to analyze.

REFERENCES


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