CONTENT ANALYSIS OF TEXTBOOK *GET ALONG WITH ENGLISH* USED IN GRADE VII AT SMP NEGERI 13 MALANG

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**Abstract:** This study was intended to analyze the content of the book *Get Along with English* that is used by seventh graders at SMP Negeri 13 Malang, the teacher’s opinion about the book *Get Along with English* and the students’ perception about the book *Get Along with English*. Having analyzed the data, the researchers found that the book *Get Along with English* has fulfilled most of the criteria of a good textbook, although it still needs some revision to make it better.

**Keywords:** content analysis, *Get Along with English*

Since 1950’s English has been the first foreign language taught at schools all over Indonesia. It is taught at schools starting from elementary to tertiary level of education and becomes the most-learned foreign language in Indonesia. By mastering English well people will be able to communicate with others at international forums.

Because of the importance of English it is important to increase the quality of English teaching and learning in Indonesia. For that purpose, we have to know about the components of language instructions. Kitao (cited in Pusporini, 2009:1) says that language instruction has five components; they are students, teachers, materials, teaching methods, and evaluation. This study focuses on the teaching materials in English teaching and learning.

The term textbook refers to both course books, which typically aim to cover all aspects of the language, and supplementary textbooks devoted to particular topics or areas (Grant, 1991:12). A textbook plays a pivotal role in language classrooms in all types of educational institutions, public schools, colleges, and language schools all over the world. In some contexts, teachers are free to choose their own textbooks. The vast majority of teachers, however, have a textbook suggested, prescribed, or assigned to them (Garinger, 2001).

A textbook is one of teaching tools which takes a great part in the instructional process. It plays an important role in the success of the teaching-learning process. In the English instruction, carefully selected textbook is needed. It can be of great value for teachers because they provide an organization or structure of the course, selection of subject matters that can be used as basis for determining course contents, a certain number of activities and
suggestions for teaching strategies, and information about other reading, sources of
information, audiovisual, and other aids, and other teaching materials and teaching tools
(Callahan, 1982: 391).

Based on the statements above, we can conclude that a textbook has an important role
in teaching and learning process in the classroom because it provides the teachers with a
structure of the course, a selection of course materials, activities and suggestions of teaching
strategies, information of teaching sources, the balance of the skills taught, and the kinds of
language tasks students actively use. For the students, a textbook serves as an opportunity of
individual learning, a sense of the purpose and progression of the teaching process, a sense
of security, and a reference of learning materials for preparing, checking, and revising the
lesson. That is why, teachers should be careful and wise in choosing a textbook which suits
their students’ level, interest, and teaching objective in order to plan and develop effective
instructional program. They also should be smart and creative in using the textbook chosen.
They should consider those functions and relate them to their own view points and
knowledge, and learn how to use the textbook properly. Since the commercial textbooks and
other kinds of instructional materials are mushrooming in the markets, it is necessary for the
teachers to make judgments on textbooks and teaching materials that are going to be used in
classroom.

The book *Get Along with English* is an English textbook that was written by the
MGMP team of Malang city and first published in 2005. The book was written in order to
fulfill the need of students and teachers in English learning sources. The researchers were
interested to analyze the book *Get Along with English* because this book is the only main book
used in the school.

As stated by Grant (1991:12-14), there are many and varied textbooks available. It
is difficult to make accurate generalizations about them. Many of us have our own way of
categorizing textbooks. However, textbooks can still be categorized in two types:
traditional textbooks and communicative textbooks (Grant, 1991:12-14).

Evaluation is a matter of judging the fitness of something for a particular purpose
(Hutchinson and Waters, 1987:97). Cunningsworth provides a checklist to evaluate the
textbook such as the course book package, the language content, selection and grading,
skills, methodology, and style and appropriacy.

Textbook evaluation criteria proposed by Brown (adapted from Robinett 1978:249-51)
consists of 12 criteria. The first is the goals of the course. What is meant by the goals of the
course here related to how the textbook will help the user to accomplish the course’s goals.
The second is the background of the students. It is related to the suitability of the book with the students’ background, including their age, native, educational background, and their motivation or purpose for learning English. The third is the approach that is reflected in the book. It consists of theory of learning and theory of language. The fourth deals with language skills. It evaluates the integration of four skills, the proportion of four skills, and which skill that the textbook emphasizes more. The fifth is about general content that deals with the authenticity of language used in the textbook, the appropriateness of topics, situations and contexts, and the proficiency for the right level. The sixth is the criteria of the quality of practice material that consist of the variety of the exercises, the clarity of directions, and the review material. The seventh deals with the sequence of the material in the textbook. It evaluates about how the materials are sequenced and the rules used in sequencing the materials. The eighth criterion deals with vocabulary. It talks about sufficient attention that is given to words in the textbook. The ninth is about general sociolinguistics factors. It deals with the existence of dialect or international varieties of sociolinguistics and the existence of cultural bias in the materials that are presented in the textbook. The tenth criterion deals with the format of the book that related to the clarity of the typesetting, the quality and clarity of the illustrations, the general layout, the size of the book, the quality of editing, including the index, table of content, and chapter heading. The eleventh criterion deals with the accompanying materials for the textbook that consist of tapes, audio and/or video, posters, flash cards, a set of tests, etc. The twelfth criterion deals with the usefulness of the teacher’s guide that consists of methodological guidance, alternative and supplementary materials, the suitability for normative speaking teacher, and the presence of answer keys. The criteria of a good textbook proposed by Brown ((adapted from Robinett 1978:249-51) is general so that the researchers formulated the criteria with the checklist of a good textbook proposed by Cunningworth (1995) to get detailed criteria of a good textbook.

The EFL good book criteria used in this textbook are formulated from the criteria proposed by Cunningworth (1995) and Brown (adapted from Robinett 1978:249-51). They are the content, the organization, the method used, the media used, and the layout of the book. The content of the book refers to the presence of four language skills, language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, and the presence of text types, such as interpersonal/transactional text, short functional text, and monologue text. The organization of the book refers to the sequence of the content and the progression of the content of the book. The method refers to the variety of the activities provided and the media refers to what kind of media used in this book. The media refers to the thing that is used to send the message of the
materials to the students that presented in the book. The last is the book layout. It refers to the appropriateness of the illustration used in this book and the clarity of the font used, the book appearance and the cover of the book.

The reason why the researchers were interested to conduct the research in this school is because the book *Get Along with English* is the main book for English teaching and learning process in the school.

**METHOD**

This research was a descriptive qualitative research since it is presented in the form of words rather than in the form of numbers. This study was conducted to describe the textbook *Get Along with English* used in English language teaching and learning for 7th graders of SMP Negeri 13 Malang.

The data source was the textbook *Get Along with English* that was analyzed by using the textbook checklist formulated from the criteria proposed by Cunningsworth (1995) and Brown (adapted from Robinett 1978:249-51). For additional information, the researchers also conducted an interview with the English teacher and gave a questionnaire to the students of VII C at SMP Negeri 13 Malang. The researchers chose 37 students of VII C that had been taught during the internship program and one teacher who had been the advisor during the internship program at SMP Negeri 13 Malang as the data source to gain information about the teacher and students’ opinion about the book *Get Along with English*.

The instruments used in this research are a checklist of the criteria of a good book that has been formulated from the criteria proposed by Cunningsworth (1995) and Brown (adapted from Robinett 1978:249-51), an interview guide to gain information about teacher’s opinion about the book *Get Along with English*, and questionnaire to gain information about students’ perception about the book *Get Along with English*. The researchers develop the interview guide for the teacher and the questionnaire for the students based on the textbook checklist to gain information about the teacher and students’ opinion about the book *Get Along with English*. One question was added in order to gain information about the teacher and the students’ suggestion for this book.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Findings**

The research findings are presented based on the criteria of a good textbook proposed by Cunningsworth (1995) and Brown (adapted from Robinett, 1975).
The Content of the Book *Get Along with English*

This book is aimed to fulfill the teachers and students’ needs of English learning sources and as reference for the teachers in order to develop English teaching and learning process. This book is developed based on 2 cycles, oral cycle (*Let’s listen and speak*) and written cycle (*Let’s read and write*). Each cycle used 4 steps of learning; they are *warming up, your activity, group/pair work, and individual work*. This textbook helps the teacher in teaching and learning activity in the classroom. Besides, this book lets the students do self-study since it fits the students’ educational background. The materials provided are suitable for junior high school students and the exercises are mostly literal.

The materials provided in the book *Get Along with English* are authentic, but not up to date since the book was published in 2005. However, the topics actually do what they set out to do. Informative text really informs the readers about an event. The materials provided in *Get Along with English* cover language skills, language components, and text types. As for language skills, this book integrates four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. They are divided into two activities: *Let’s listen and speak* and *Let’s read and write*.

Besides covering language skills, the book *Get Along with English* also covers language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Grammar items in this book include tenses, noun phrases, regular and irregular verbs, and singular and plural forms. They are presented in a certain page or table so that it will be easy to find. There is an emphasis on language form, like positive, negative, and interrogative forms so that the students will know how to form sentences.

Besides language skills and language components, the book *Get Along with English* also covers text types such as interpersonal and transactional and monologue texts. The students are taught how to communicate with each other by using interpersonal and transactional text. Interpersonal and transactional texts provided in this book are *introducing himself/herself, introducing friends to someone else, greeting and parting someone, prohibiting, asking and refusing expressions*. As for monologue texts, the book *Get Along with English* provide 4 types of text: procedure, descriptive, narrative, and recount texts. Students are taught a factual piece of writing that instructs the reader how to do something.

Since *Get Along with English* was written by *MGMP* team of Malang, it is understandable that the materials provided are culturally biased. Not only exposing East Java,
the materials also exposed some cultural aspects of Malang. Since this book was published in 2005, some materials are not up to date. A workbook used to complete the materials is needed because workbook has more up to date materials and is suitable for teaching and learning process. Furthermore, materials from internet are also needed. As mentioned before, there are no recorded materials for the students. Therefore, recorded materials from the internet can help the teacher and as well as enrich students’ knowledge.

**The Organization of the Book *Get Along with English***

The materials are quite well organized from the easy to difficult level. The materials’ sequence is recycling. For example the tenses are provided in the first unit, and then they are also provided in unit 2, unit 3, unit 5, unit 7, unit 9, and unit 10. This enables the teacher to remind the students about what they have learned in the earlier units. However, if the teacher wants to teach tenses in a day, sometimes he/she will get confused because the material is not placed together in one unit and the explanation about it is spread in several units. Furthermore, the explanation is showed in a little portion and sometimes the explanation is just the same.

**The Method Used in the Book *Get Along with English***

The book *Get Along with English* has no teacher’s guideline and uses inductive learning approach. What is meant by inductive approach is the explanation comes after the examples given. This book is essentially product-oriented as we can see from the exercises provided. Students are expected to be able to make a product based on the model given by the book. The exercises in this book are mostly controlled. What is meant by controlled here is the students are asked to do the exercises based on the model that has been shown before. It is good for the students because they will not get confused of what to do and how to do that. The directions given are clear to both teacher and students so that there will be no misunderstanding related to the activities in the book. In this book there is no review of exercises and answer key provided. Therefore, the teacher should prepare the review of the exercises and the students are expected to do self-reflection after the review is given.

**The Media Used in the Book *Get Along with English***

There are 10 units in the book *Get Along with English*. Each unit provides different materials and the media used in each unit are pictures. This is good so that the students are able to find out what comes first and what follows. There are no other media used in this
The Layout of the Book *Get Along with English*

The illustrations shown in the book *Get Along with English* are clear and related to the context. Although the illustrations are all printed in black and white, they are useful to help the students to understand more about the text. The font size is clear enough so that the reader will not find any difficulties in reading the materials. This book has 30cm length, 21cm width with 170 pages. The paper used is quite thick so that it is durable and not easily ripped.

Discussions

Based on the findings previously discussed, it can be concluded that the book *Get Along with English* is a good book, but it has to be revised in some aspects. As mentioned before, this book is aimed to fulfill the students’ need of English learning source in learning process and also as reference for the teacher in developing English teaching and learning process. Since this is the main book used in SMP Negeri 13 Malang, this book has not fulfilled the students’ and teacher’s needs yet. Some materials needed are not sufficient or even not included. Some of the materials provided in the book are not up to date so that the students might not obtain new knowledge. Also, the sequence of the materials sometimes is confusing for the teacher because it is provided in a small portion and spread in some units instead of being placed in one unit only.

As for the composition of the four skills, there is no recorded material such as cassette or video CD for listening skill provided by this book so that the teacher should find additional material from the internet or other sources. For reading skill, there is a lot of text provided for reading activity. But, as mentioned before, the information may not up to date, so that the teacher should be creative and try to find other material that can fulfill students’ need of information.

As for the text types, the book provides interpersonal and monologue texts but there is no short functional text provided in this book. In this condition, teachers are expected to be creative and try to find material of short functional text in order to fulfill students’ need of knowledge.

The organization of the book also becomes one aspect that has to be revised. The researchers found that some materials are provided only in a little portion and spread in several chapters. It is confusing for the teacher because the material is not well sequenced. In this condition, the teacher is expected to be aware and well prepared so that he/she will not get
confused and able to organize the material well.

The book *Get Along with English* that was written by MGMP team of Malang is culturally biased. Much of the materials and information provided are related to Malang. The researchers think it is good to appreciate the culture of Malang city, but it is also important to learn about other culture as well.

Based on the interview with the teacher, the researchers found that this book is not so compatible for teaching and learning process. The materials provided in the book *Get Along with English* are not varied. Besides, the materials are not up to date. The organization of the material is also confusing. At the beginning of the semester the teacher always has to make a note about the arrangement of the materials to be taught so that it will be easier for her to find out on what page the materials are available. The teacher thinks that the book *Get Along with English* should provide more fun pages for the students so that the students will be interested more in learning English if they learn it in a fun way. She hopes that the book *Get Along with English* will be revised so that it will be more complete, up to date, well sequenced, and interesting for the students.

Based on the students’ questionnaire, the researchers found that the students think the book *Get Along with English* is a good book. It can help them to develop their ability in English. The materials are easy to understand and the exercises help them in self-study activity. As mentioned before, the exercises in the book are literal so that the students are able to do self-reflection. Likewise, the students also think that the book *Get Along with English* needs to have more fun pages so that they will be more interested in learning English. Besides, the students also need glossary to help them understand the meaning of new words used in the book. The materials should be more attractive and up to date so that the students will not only increase their English but also their knowledge about the world. The last is that the book *Get Along with English* should be colored so that it will be more interesting. The book is in all black and white and students think that it is a little bit boring.

**CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

**Conclusions**

After analyzing the content of the book *Get Along with English*, interviewing the teacher about her opinion towards the book, and asking the students’ opinion about the book through questionnaire, the researchers can conclude that the book *Get Along with English* is a good book. It has fulfilled most of the good criteria of a textbook. The content of the book covers almost all the students’ need. The book is quite well organized and the activities are quite
varied. The students can do self-study outside the class since the exercises are literal. The media used in the book are pictures that can help the students understand more about the material. The book is durable since the cover and the paper used are thick. The teacher also feels that the book Get Along with English helps her in teaching process. Although there was no teacher’s guide, it is still easy to use since the choice of words is not difficult to understand and the directions given are clear to both the teacher and the students. Although the book Get Along with English lacks some aspects of good books, it still matches with the aim of the book, that is to fulfill the students’ need of English learning source in learning process and also as reference for the teacher in conducting the English teaching and learning process.

**Suggestions**

Based on the research findings, some suggestions are proposed in order to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process using the book Get Along with English. These suggestions are directed to the writers of Get Along with English and the English teachers who teach in SMP in Malang using Get Along with English.

As mentioned before, the book Get Along with English has to be revised in some aspects. The first is the organization of the book. The organization of the book Get Along with English should be revised so that the material will not spread in some units disproportionally. It will be better to put related material in a certain unit so that the teacher will not get confused to find them. The second aspect that needs to be revised is the proportion of the activities for the four skills so that the students could develop their four skills proportionally. Recorded materials are also needed for listening activities. The third is the presence of short functional texts so that the students will have more knowledge about text types. The fourth is the variety of the material so that the students will not only improve their skills but also their knowledge. The fifth is the existence of cultural bias, because Indonesia has a lot of culture to be learned. The seventh is the presence of fun pages in order to make the students not feel bored when they learn English. The book Get Along with English should add more fun pages into it. Finally, the touch of color is also needed so that it will be more interesting for the students to learn what is in the book.

The English teachers in Malang who use the book Get Along with English are expected to be aware of the students’ needs and be creative and careful in choosing supplementary materials to be used along with the book Get Along with English in teaching and learning process.
REFERENCES


