

## **TEACHER AND STUDENT PERSPECTIVE ON SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEXTBOOK**

**By:**

**Cut Maya Nurul Huda<sup>1</sup>, Siti Safura<sup>2</sup>, Cut Mawar Helmanda<sup>3</sup>**

*Universitas Muhammadiyah Aceh<sup>1,2,3</sup>*

cutmaya@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>, sitisafura11@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>, bungahelmanda@yahoo.com<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:** Textbooks play an important role in the teaching and learning process. In learning English, textbooks are an essential source of knowledge and information about the language. As a result, the use of English textbooks must be closely investigated. According to this issue, this study was conducted to analyze the English textbook used at the first level of secondary school from the perspectives of both teachers and students. This study was an explanatory sequential mixed method (a qualitative and quantitative research design). Purposive sampling was employed to select two teachers and twenty students from SMP Muhammadiyah Banda Aceh. The data of this study was gathered through interviewing teachers and distributing questionnaires to students. The qualitative data was examined descriptively, while the quantitative data was analyzed using percentages. The finding revealed that both teachers and students had favorable attitudes toward the English textbook. From the interview results, teachers believed that English textbooks were proper for teaching and learning processes in the classroom. Further, the result of the questionnaire identified that most students agreed that the use of English textbooks could effectively help them in learning English. As a whole, the English textbook meets the needs of students in learning English.

**Keywords:** analysis, English textbook, perspective

### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a deliberate effort to create an environment during the teaching and learning process that will allow students to actively develop their potential as well as have

the spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, moral character, and skills they will require in their personal and social lives. One of the goals of the Republic of Indonesia's independence, as stated in

the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, can be achieved for the Indonesian people themselves by realizing a complete Indonesian man with a balanced level of intellectual, spiritual, and social intelligence through a lifetime of processing education (Wahyudi, 2022).

For increasing education, textbooks are essential and cannot be separated from the school-based learning process (Pasaribu, 2022). A textbook is a critical consideration in schooling. A textbook is a type of educational media that is used to help students learn in the classroom. This will make teaching and learning easy for both the teacher and the students. According to Harmer (2007), the textbook is a book that teachers use to assist them in conveying the lesson to students in the class. The content of the book must include a complete

explanation of the school's curriculum. It should be appropriate for the curriculum standards, meet the criteria as a good textbook, and be acceptable for use. In other words, the textbook materials must be suitable for learning (Gunawan, 2023). Indeed, a textbook must closely represent the learners' needs, learning methods, study goals, and teaching values (Cunningsworth, 1995).

According to Thomlinson (2003), influential textbooks should put students at ease and engage their interest and attention. To make them feel at ease while studying and seeing the textbooks, the presentation of the tasks, activities, text, and images should be welcoming. Textbooks have a vital role in helping students learn English, and English textbooks are often regarded as the primary source of learning materials in the

classroom (Rambe, 2020), which means that textbooks must direct students toward optimal learning. Students who find them too tricky become frustrated, while those who find them too easy do not affect their growth. Therefore, textbooks are necessary to encourage students to learn about the topic.

Several studies have been conducted about the textbook used in the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. Some studies showed that the content of textbooks is appropriate for students' needs. Syahputri et al. (2019), in their research, revealed that teachers had a positive view of the content of the textbook, which the textbook is relevant to the syllabus and students' needs. This result was also in line with Marzuki et al. (2022), who concluded that the English textbook is

relevant to the syllabus and that the material could fulfill the requirements intended by students. Alexon et al. (2024) also found that most teachers and students agreed with the content of the textbook that was feasible with the needs of students in learning. Last, Aryani et al. (2019) revealed that the tasks in the English textbook were relevant to the syllabus and appropriate to the level of students.

However, some said that the textbook needs to be more relevant to students' needs and requires revision to make it interesting, challenging, and motivating for students learning (Handayani, 2016). In addition, Herliana et al. (2020) showed that the tasks and activities in the teaching-learning process were not well organized from the easy to difficult stage and not proper with students' level in managing their learning.

Amiruddin and Syafitri (2023) revealed that teachers do not use the English textbook provided by the government. However, teachers prefer to use other English books as the leading textbooks for teaching students since government textbooks do not support students' needs. Also, Rosyida (2016) investigated teachers' unfavorable feelings regarding some aspects of the textbook, where the content was considered to need more review and checking.

Therefore, the contradictions from prior research create additional issues that cause the researchers to question if the English textbook given by the government is appropriate for the teaching and learning process. Based on this disagreement, the researchers believe that a new study of the English textbook is required. Previous studies were conducted

purely from one perspective, such as just from teachers or only from students. This research, on the other hand, was undertaken by directly researching from both the students' and teachers' perspectives to confirm whether or not the utilized English textbook (the English textbook produced by the Ministry of Education) is effective in meeting students' needs.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The design of this study was an explanatory sequential mixed method, in which the researcher wanted to find more information about both the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study. According to George (2021), mixed methods may assist the researcher in obtaining a more complete picture than a standalone quantitative or qualitative study, as it

integrates the benefits of both methods. Therefore, this design was used to obtain deep information regarding the English textbook that is used in the school and could meet the needs of students in learning English.

This study's object was SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Banda Aceh. The study participants were two teachers and twenty students. Purposive sampling was employed to obtain the data for this study, which was applied based on the specific criteria of the objects (Sugiyono, 2014). Two teachers were selected for interviews as only they had time to participate. Meanwhile, twenty students were chosen based on their grade level.

This study utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods to explore perceptions of English textbooks. For the qualitative approach, researchers conducted

semi-structured interviews with two English teachers to gather insights into textbook materials, student challenges, teaching methods, and student interest. As defined by Esterberg (2002), interviews involve an exchange of questions and answers to explore specific topics in depth. The semi-structured format allowed flexibility while addressing four key questions. For the quantitative approach, researchers distributed an online questionnaire via Google Forms to collect students' opinions about the textbook. According to Babbie (1990), a questionnaire is an instrument for obtaining appropriate data; the close-ended questions included in this study were ten adapted from other studies—with this strategy, both the teachers' and students' views were examined.

The researcher analyzed the data descriptively. For quantitative data, the percentage of students' responses was calculated to understand their perspectives (Sugiyono, 2014). For qualitative data, the analysis followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) three steps: a) reducing the data by summarizing key points, b) organizing the data into transparent displays, and c) drawing and verifying conclusions.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data were presented based on the results of an interview regarding teachers' perceptions of English textbooks and the results of the questionnaire based on the students' perceptions of the English textbook.

The results of the interviews are as follows.

The first question is the teachers' opinion about the material in the book, followed by the question, "*What do you think about the topic/material discussed?*" According to teachers, the material presented in the English textbook is already good. Teachers said that the English textbook provides many conversational practices that allow students to practice speaking with their friends in class. The material is also organized from easy to difficult. Topics, many variations of conversations, and examples of sentences are included to provide a wide variety of sentences so that students can learn communication and socialization in English well. In addition, there are also some parts of specific topics. The exercises presented are often by the students' cognitive, so the teacher often makes

other versions of the exercises to check students' understanding of the topic being studied. Besides, as a teaching material, books are exciting to be used as references in teaching materials.

The second question is about the obstacles faced by teachers in using English textbooks (*Do you need help teaching English by using the English textbook?*). Teachers said that there is no problem in teaching English by using textbooks. However, the problem is from the students themselves. The third question showed the methods used by teachers when learning the process by using a textbook. Teachers said to apply various methods to the topic or material that was taught on that day, such as TPR, CLL, GTM, Direct method, and Audio Lingua method.

The last question concerns teachers' opinions regarding students' interest in learning English using English textbooks. The question is, "*How do you know that the students are attracted to learning English by using textbooks?*" Teachers said most of the students seem to like English, which is seen from their eagerness to keep communicating and speaking with their friends during English class.

The questionnaire results provide data from the quantitative method about students' perceptions of English textbooks. The findings are as follows.

**Table 1**  
**The Result of the Questionnaire based on Students' Perceptions**

No.	Statements	Yes	No
1.	I am sure this English textbook makes it easier for me to understand the learning process	90	10
2.	I am sure studying this book could improve my English	95	05
3.	I am sure that my interaction with	85	15

	classmates become better after using this textbook		
4.	I believe that my confidence in communication has increased after using this book	85	15
5.	I am sure that the material is easier to remember	80	20
6.	I am interested in learning English when using this book	85	15
7.	I believe that my English pronunciation is much better when using this book	80	15
8.	I am sure that I will get a good score since this book has more practice than theory	95	05
9.	I believe that the content of this book is appropriate to my expectation	90	10
10.	I am sure that learning English is better by using this book	95	05

The study reveals that the majority of the students had positive attitudes towards their English textbooks. The majority of the respondents, 90%, stated that the textbook made it easier for them to understand the learning process as expected. Furthermore, 95% of the respondents supported the argument that through the use of the given textbook, their English grades

improved because it provided more practice than theory. The textbook also fostered classroom interaction, with 85% of students agreeing that it encouraged communication with peers and increased their interest in learning English. Furthermore, 80% of students reported that the textbook made it easier to remember lessons because of its well-organized material, and they observed improvements in their pronunciation as a result of using it.

The study further reveals that teachers perceive instrumental utility and attitudes towards English textbooks as positive, with a firm belief that the textbooks are appropriate to learners' learning requirements. Teachers note that textbooks contain functional exercises to enhance comprehension of the English being used by the students.

This aligns with findings by Musarokah et al. (2022), which also highlight how textbooks support teaching and help students grasp concepts effectively.

Teachers use various methods based on the material or topic to engage students, both with and without textbooks. For example, the TPR (Total Physical Response) method is used to boost enthusiasm. In contrast, GTM (Grammar Translation Method), CLL (Community Language Learning), and direct methods help improve students' speaking and communication by addressing grammar errors. For listening skills, teachers often use the audio-lingual method. These strategies correspond to the topics in the textbook and, therefore, could be referred to as curriculum-based, as Brown (1995) underlines the focus on

such materials. Overall, the findings indicate that textbooks help teachers motivate students and improve their English proficiency.

However, some students show that they need help during the teaching process while using textbooks. This problem arose during English class because students needed help understanding the meaning of words. These problems come from students rather than from textbooks. Students need to bring the dictionary as teachers ask during English class. To overcome this problem, teachers asked students to bring a dictionary to English class. Teachers then directed students to sit in groups to make students share their dictionaries or have a discussion with their friends. If a student does not know the meaning of words, he or she might ask friends. This activity will make students learn

independently and focus on their problems so that students will think about how to improve their ability to know the meaning of words.

Similarly, Greene and Petty (1975) argue that effective textbook criteria must encourage students to learn through their activities. When the English textbook encourages students to learn individually or with a partner to solve this problem, this book is appropriate for making students eager to improve their English; not only that, learning English by using a textbook could extend communication since the book includes worldwide topics such as foreign culture and photos from other countries. As Crawford (2002) argues, the material of the textbook should be authentic and contextualized. All of these can pique students' interest in

learning English, which may increase their enthusiasm.

Based on students' views, the English textbook is also very useful in learning English. All questionnaire statements reached above 80%, indicating that students agreed or yes regarding textbooks in learning English. These statements imply that textbooks meet students' needs in learning English by increasing students' enjoyment of learning English, which influences their understanding of learning English. In addition, the result reveals that students felt the English textbook might increase their willingness to learn English since they could share ideas through communication and interaction. Finally, the organized material offered in English textbooks may aid students' understanding because the material is presented from

easy to more complex topics. This result was consistent with the standard or criteria of a good textbook based on Thomlinson's theory (Thomlinson, 2003).

Indeed, the English textbook is well-received by both students and teachers. The textbook developed by the Ministry of Education has undoubtedly been evaluated to ascertain the students' learning demands, including what they need to learn and how they learn. This finding is supported by the research by Sitorus et al. (2021), which found that the published textbook material was curriculum-relevant.

## **CONCLUSION**

Both teachers and students have a good perception of English textbooks that are utilized in the teaching and learning process. Both

teachers and students perceived that the English textbook was proper for teaching and learning English. The English textbook is prepared in ordered and structured ways to facilitate teachers' teaching and help students grasp the material. It can encourage students to learn enthusiastically. Overall, the English textbook meets the needs of students learning English. Therefore, this is recommended for use by both teachers and students since the English textbook prepared by the government meets all the criteria that teachers need in teaching and students need in learning.

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