



The Evaluation of English Coursebook for Young Learners *When English Rings a Bell: A Survey Research*

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to assess When English Rings a Bell, an introductory English textbook. In addition, this research seeks to examine one textbook used in seventh-grade classrooms. This research aims to determine if the goals of the English textbook When English Rings a Bell align with the principles of teaching English to young students. When English Rings a Bell, the researcher, the evaluation checklist from (Bilash, 2009), and the textbook's material served as the research instruments. Overall, the textbook seems like it would be a good fit for young learners in terms of several aspects, such as General Appearance, Layout and Design, Activities, and Language skills.). In addition, the textbook fulfills the principles of teaching for young learners.

Keywords: *Evaluation, English Coursebook, Young Learners.*

INTRODUCTION

According to (Hoesein, 2006), the young learner can be defined as students who sit in grades four to six of elementary school-aged ten to twelve years. Therefore, in introducing foreign languages to young students, one way that can be taken is a teaching system called Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL).

As a result of globalization and the establishment of English as an international language, teaching English in recent years has

become very rapid in various regions of the world. One of them is in Indonesia, where English is taught from an early age to children by building basic concepts of English and introducing and socializing with English to them. Teaching English between children and adults is very different. Children are generally more active, enthusiastic, and easy to adapt. Meanwhile, adults are stiffer and focus on learning from their experiences (Ibrahim, 2007)

If primary school is the starting place for children to be introduced to English, junior high school is the second step to deepening and understanding English. Every student has his/her own characteristics in learning (Astri, 2018; Astri & Wahab, 2019). Therefore, the activeness and creativity of the teacher in choosing the teaching methods and books used are very necessary so that the methods and books are in accordance with what the students need.

This study aims to provide information and an evaluation of the textbooks that the teachers have selected for the English language classes. The textbooks of choice have been utilized for instruction for more than four years. These coursebooks have been studied, and the students have completed several exercises and tests.

Coursebooks are among the essential learning resources for students. Textbooks provide access to additional knowledge and information. In addition, students can find almost all the required course materials in the course syllabus. Consequently, it makes learning more accessible and efficient. In addition, instructors select coursebooks that follow the course outline's materials productively, allowing students to simultaneously organize their studies and knowledge according to the coursebook (Cunningsworth, 1995)

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it provides evidence regarding how coursebooks are beneficial for both teachers and students simultaneously. However, it can be

ineffective simultaneously, depending on the instructor's choice.

Principles of teaching English to young learners

According to (Piaget, 1995), the principles of teaching English to students are the principles of cognitive interaction, cognitive principles, and social interaction approaches. (1) The principle of cognitive interaction means that learning in elementary schools is in concrete operations, children learn through things that have been experienced before, as well as through direct experience and actions carried out based on environmental objects around them. Generally, children in primary schools learn by doing. In other words, besides providing materials, they are also directly involved in the practice. The point is learning by doing. (2) Cognitive principles, namely, students create and test hypotheses about language to master it in either their first language or their second language. Mastering the language will involve the cognitive from the creative construction of the role of language. If in a classroom context, students need opportunities to use and experiment with other languages. If something goes wrong, it is part of learning that must not be avoided. (3) The social interaction approach, namely language, plays a role in human relations, so it can be concluded that the structure of human language emerges from the social-communicative function.

The Role of Coursebooks in Language Teaching and Learning

(Tomlinson, 2011) defines materials and coursebooks as the tools instructors and students use to facilitate language learning. In contrast, materials development is anything writers, teachers, and students do to provide sources of language input and exploit those sources in a way that maximizes the likelihood of intake. According to (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994), no teaching-learning situation is complete without a relevant textbook." According to (Sheldon, 1988), coursebooks are the visible heart of any ELT program.

Course-book Evaluation

Researchers write many definitions and discussions, and each of them makes a unique set of assertions regarding what coursebook evaluation is. To begin, (Grant, 1987) stated that course books create the appropriate circumstances for students to acquire and practice the target language in an academic setting as an equivalent before going on to real-world situations. This was stated in the context of students being able to do so through course books. Learners of a language will eventually benefit from this by increasing their level of adequate self-confidence because it will enable them to determine whether or not they are ready for the real world or require additional preparation to arrive at a level of satisfaction. Satisfaction here can be interpreted as how capable students are of acquiring the knowledge provided. The way students in acquiring

knowledge are unique depending on their learning styles (Astri et al., 2022; Astri & Wahab, 2018)

Then, (J. Richards & Rodgers, 2001) asserted that course books are one of the building blocks of the curriculum that are unavoidable because they lay out the content and outline the syllabus scope. Richards and Rodgers' argument was based on the fact that course books lay out the content and summarize the syllabus scope. In this way, both students and teachers have access to a hands-on system that both parties can agree on and that each can use to work toward achieving their respective goals.

Reasons for Coursebook Evaluation

When it comes to the reasons for evaluating a textbook, it is possible to assert that a significant number of factors contribute to evaluating a book. First, students and instructors can benefit from access to a reliable source when using coursebooks (J. C. Richards, 2016). During the process of evaluating a coursebook, we can determine whether or not that particular coursebook is beneficial or detrimental to the course being studied, as well as whether or not it is appropriate for the learners at that specific level. Finally, the teachers are the ones who are responsible for selecting a book. They need to pick a book that has been analyzed in the past and determined to be an excellent and productive book that can be utilized. As a result, it is essential to conduct a coursebook evaluation to simplify the decision-making

process for instructors when selecting a text appropriate for their curriculum and catering to the requirements of their students.

METHODS

This research is a descriptive study in the form of a survey because it describes the textbook and all its components based on a questionnaire (in this case, the Evaluation Checklist). The subject of this research is an English textbook for young learners, English When English Rings a Bell.

The instruments were the researchers and an Evaluation Checklist adapted from TEYL experts, namely the Bilash Criteria, which says that Communicative Activity is usually used in evaluating classroom activities where these activities encourage students to talk and listen to others. The data in this study were taken based on the results of the Bilash criteria checklist and

the evaluation checklist conducted by the researchers. The researchers evaluated the course books using Bilash's criteria checklist and the Evaluation sheet.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Finding

Criteria for communicative activities are used to evaluate textbooks *When English Rings a Bell for grade VII* that produce the following results is in accordance with the objectives of teaching English in general. In this book, each sub-theme is related to students' daily life, making it easier for them to understand the learning material.

To find out whether the British Brawlers have been prepared according to TEYL principles, based on the Evaluation Checklist adapted from (Pinter, 2006) with the following results:

Table 1. The Evaluation Checklist

Aspects/Book	Title of Book
General Appearance	The book's cover, font, and pictures are very interesting for children, especially in 1 st grade of junior high school.
Layout and Design	The layout and design are well presented, starting from the selection of unique fonts and attractive illustrations by attaching an image for each vocabulary related to the sub-a theme in each chapter.
Methodology	It is teacher and students centered because students can learn the material after the teacher explain and spell the word.
Activities	The activities in each chapter. Read, write, and responds to the questions. Each chapter has 1 to 5 activities.
Language Skills	The book covers four skills. Read, write, listen, and s, but the focus is on writing and speaking.
Language Content	The languages are simple and easily suitable for children, especially for students in 1 st grade of junior high school.

Aspects/Book	Title of Book
Topic Content	The content topic is very close to students' daily activities so that children can understand learning well. Besides that, each chapter is closely related to local culture.
Teachability and Flexibility	The book presented the material and task. The number of pages in each chapter consists of Chapters 1, 23, chapter 2, 26, chapter 3, 25, chapter 4, 26, chapter 5, 23, chapter 6 is 21, chapter 7 is 18, and chapter 8 is 24 Pages. It indicates that the material presented in the book is complete.
Assessment	The type of assessment that is made very easily aligns with the existing material in the form of fill-the-blank, make-a-sentence, and make-letter and speaking practice.
Practical Considerations	The book consists of 188 pages. The book is very cheap to buy. The price is around 40 thousand rupiahs and can be found at book characters or online shops. Besides practically anywhere because of the light weight of the book.

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the English book *When English Rings a Bell* for grade VII is summarized as follows:

Language Content

The naturalness of the language and the situation in language use are considered to be quite good, although some vocabulary must be evaluated. The dialogue used in this textbook is communication about everyday life using short sentences and exciting pictures. The cultural situation presented is only focused on Indonesian culture without any knowledge that links the cultural image of the native speakers of the language being studied. Learning about differences in gender, race, and religion is given through pictures. The reading aspect, the vocabulary aspect, and the writing aspect are good because they are shown in various forms and can improve students' abilities in these language skills. Concerning the principles of second language learning, there is an integration

of various language skills, such as the integration of listening and speaking skills, the integration of reading and writing skills, and the integration of speaking and writing skills. The use of visual aids in this book is also beneficial for students to understand learning the target language.

Topic Content

The topic in the English book *When English Rings a Bell* for grade VII contains more local culture than foreign culture, which can be seen from the pictures and dialogues in the textbook because students are still in the early-level learning stage, so that students are expected to get to know culture closer before studying foreign cultures. In addition, the material described in the textbook contains things around students so that students feel familiar with the topics given.

Teaching Ability and Flexibility

In presenting the material, which is complete with each chapter consisting of several exercises in knowing students' level of

understanding. However, the linguistic aspect shows no written pronunciation learning, and teaching aids such as tapes, recordings, and videos are not optimized. In contrast, in this modern era, learning media is very helpful. But on the other hand, it will make students more interested in the material presented in audio, images, or video.

Teacher's Book

The editions of each revised English book, *When English Rings a Bell*, for grade VII have issued a different book as a teacher's handbook and a student handbook. In the world of education, we encounter many teachers when they enter the stage of compiling lesson plans having difficulties with the things that will be done and what things will be achieved by students with the publication of teacher books will make it easier for teachers to provide the best teaching to students. In the textbook *When English Rings a Bell*, the teacher is given tips and techniques related to the steps for presenting the material, which include reading, writing, listening, speaking, and vocabulary.

Grammar Activities

Each chapter has utilized proper grammar in accordance with the established guidelines. So that students can gain an understanding of appropriate grammar through the use of these examples. This encourages the teacher to think of new ways to explain it

2. Discussion

From the findings above, it can be concluded that books suit young learners in several aspects, such as General Appearance, Layout and Design, Activities, and Language skills. Following the criteria of a good coursebook stated by (Varela et al., 200), the book is equipped with attractive book covers containing the title, level, and authors. In addition, each page is printed on sturdy paper, and the design sticks to the standard palette of red, white, blue, and green. Furthermore, the font and size are just right for young students, the number of units varies from 8-12 per level, and the book includes clear photographs to set the background for the contents of the activities.

From the point of the Activities and Language Skills, the book follows the characteristics of Young learners as stated by (Halliwell, 1995). The activities in the book stimulate the students to be creative in using their limited language. They are challenged to do interesting tasks in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. Furthermore, Language skills follow a logical progression from listening and speaking to reading and writing, which is consistent with how young children typically acquire a new language. Thus, students do not have too much difficulty following the units, supported by colored illustrations and simple instructions.

According to (Gower et al., n.d.) says, there is a well-balanced proportion of language study (Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation) and

skill development in both series (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing).

The methodology used in the textbook is teacher and students centered because students can learn the material after the teacher explain and spell the word. (Paul, 2003) argues children as active learners need to be involved in every stage of the learning process and acquire the sensation of achievement after completing tasks achievable for students if they are to develop a strong foundation in English. Seventh-grade students expected to have a firm grasp of their own culture before expanding their horizons to study other civilizations; consequently, the English textbook *When English Rings a Bell* focuses more on local than foreign culture. This is evident in the textbook's visuals and dialogues.

Another critical factor is the availability of a Teacher's Book, such as offered by the textbook *When English Rings a Bell*, containing detailed tips and techniques for teachers related to the steps on how to present the textbook's reading, writing, listening, speaking, and vocabulary sections to their students.

CONCLUSION

The material presented in the book is good because everything is related to the children's daily life and culture. Hence, it makes it easier for them to understand the learning material. The design on each page supports where the age of the children tends to vision. This book focuses on local culture so that learning does not touch international culture.

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