
An Analysis of Textbook “English in Mind: Student’s Book Starter” for The 7th Year Students of Junior High School Based on *Merdeka* Curriculum

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Abstract: This study deals with analysis of textbook for the 7th year students of junior high school based on the latest curriculum, namely the Merdeka curriculum. The purpose of this study was to identify the material presented in the textbook as compatible for grade 7 junior high school. This study was a qualitative descriptive study. The method of this study was content analysis. The data source for this research is the English textbook "English in Mind: Student's Book Starter" published by Cambridge University Press written by Herbert Puchta and Jeff Strank in 2010. The textbook analysis in this study considered eight criteria, namely; (1) goals and approach divided into two, aims and objectives and the teaching and learning situations; (2) Design and organization are divided into two, the components of the textbook package and the organization of the textbook; (3) Language content is divided into two, grammar and vocabulary; (4) Skills are divided into 4 listening, reading, speaking and writing; (5) Topics are divided into two, topic and subject content, and social and cultural values; (6) Methodology; (7) Teacher's book; and (8) Practical concern. The results of the study show that the textbook fulfills all eight criteria. Based on the analysis, the textbook was classified as being of satisfactory quality and suitable for use in 7th grade junior high school.

Keywords: Curriculum, *Merdeka* Curriculum, Textbook.

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks hold a significant role in the learning process as they serve as a means to present the curriculum's teaching materials, enabling educational goals to be achieved. They provide convenience to both teachers and students during the learning process and serve as a source of knowledge and learning materials, applicable to various teaching methods. Textbooks act as crucial resources that teachers utilize to convey lessons to students, while students rely on them for their learning needs (Harmer, 2007). Textbooks are the main source and media in learning to achieve learning objectives that are developed from competency formulation in the applicable curriculum (Zamzam, A., Sribagus., Djuhaeni, E., & Khotimah, K., 2020).

The benefits of textbooks are as reference materials or references for students in learning, then as material for evaluating students in mastering the subject matter, and as one of the determinants of learning methods or techniques that will be used by teachers. Textbooks serve a

critical and beneficial function in teaching and learning (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994, p. 315-328).

In the context of English language learning in Indonesia, textbooks play a vital role, as English proficiency is crucial for individuals to pursue higher education, advance in their careers, and improve their economic prospects (Amrullah, 2015). These textbooks align with the educational level and learning objectives defined in the curriculum. Given that the curriculum in Indonesia undergoes frequent changes due to factors like scientific and technological advancements (Dewi, 2022), the Minister of National Education introduced the Merdeka Curriculum in 2021 to enhance the education system (Sistem Informasi Kurikulum Nasional Pusat Kurikulum dan Pembelajaran, 2022).

According to Nadiem (2022), the key components of the *merdeka* curriculum will be highlighted, along with the steady improvement of students' competencies in order to make them easier and more meaningful. Students choose subjects based on their interests, talents, and goals, in which both teachers and students will be

more independent. The teacher will instruct students based on their current level of achievement and development. The power to decide and administer curriculum and learning in accordance with the distinctiveness of the educational unit and the distinctiveness of the pupils then rests with the schools.

Merdeka Curriculum offers flexibility for teachers and students, emphasizes project-based learning to develop soft skills and character, focuses on essential topics to allow in-depth learning of fundamental competencies, and enables differentiated instruction based on individual needs and local contexts. These curriculum changes also involve the provision of applications that provide various references for teachers to enhance their teaching practices and share experiences (Muhammad, 2022).

Consequently, these curriculum modifications impact the learning process, including textbook selection. With the aim of analyzing the textbook "English in Mind: Student's Book Starter" by Herbert Puchta and Jeff Stranks, published by Cambridge University Press, in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, the authors conducted this research, titled "An Analysis of the Textbook "English In Mind: Student's Book Starter" for 7th Grade Junior High School Students Based on the Merdeka Curriculum."

METHODS

The purpose of this research is to identify the materials presented in the textbook "English in Mind: Student's Book Starter" in the *Merdeka* Curriculum compatible or not used for the 7th year student of junior high school. The descriptive method will be used to achieve this objective. The data were collected through documentation technique. Documentation could be written and picture by someone that could be used to obtain information (Sugiyono, 2016). The researcher utilized content analysis technique. The data source for this research is the English textbook "English in Mind: Student's Book Starter" published by Cambridge University Press written by Herbert Puchta and Jeff Strank. The textbook consists of 134 pages as a sample for this study. To collect the data, the distributed researcher criteria from Cunningsworth (1995), there are 8 criteria for a good textbook, namely goals and approach, design and organization, language content, skills, topics, methodology,

teacher's books, and practical concerns. This researcher analyzed the data by using model Interactive from Miles and Huberman (1994) which divided the analysis activities into several parts namely: data collection, data reduction, presentation of data, and drawing conclusions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained from all the book chapters were analyzed to assess whether the English textbook material aligned with the rubric assessment by Cunningsworth (1995), which included goals and approaches, design and organization, language content, skills, topics, methodology, teacher's books, and practical concerns.

1. Goals and Approach

a. Aims and Objective

The English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook fulfilled the learning objectives for grade 7 junior high school. It provided material suitable for the early stages of learning English and presented themes and topics appropriate for young students in the context of the home and school environment.

b. The Teaching and Learning Situation

The English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook offered various activities and materials in each unit, catering to different learning styles and leading to different learning and teaching situations.

2. Design and Organization

a. Components of Textbook Package

The books that make up a textbook include students' books, teachers' books, and audio CDs. The students' book is properly given the highest rating of a package in a textbook since it serves as the main point of contact with students. The teachers' book, on the other hand, plays an equally important role and is in charge of providing educators with the precise information they need to make the most out of the entire program. Most textbook bundles include exercise booklets or tapes in addition to the textbook itself, which are intended to provide students further practice with ideas that have previously been taught in class. All of the textbook's components, including the student books, instructor books, and starter books, were present and functional in English in Mind: Student's Book.

b. The Organization of Textbook

The contents included in the English in Mind: Students' Book Starter textbook are divided into numerous sections, beginning with a section on greetings and moving on to sections on the globe, the classroom, objects, alphabet, and colors, as well as questions and answers. After that, each unit will cover various themes including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and abilities related to speaking, functioning, listening, reading, and writing. With the subject of a book with a foreign cultural background, the textbook's layout is created with a range of colors and images that are highly appealing, clear with textbook font sizes, and simple to read.

Related to the content order of the textbook, the textbook content can be sorted e.g., on the basis of complexity, 'learnability', and usefulness. The complexity in this textbook is visible in each unit and each material is always accompanied by activities related to the material being studied. In addition, in each unit from unit 1 onwards, the complexity of what is learned always increases in each unit. According to Nielsen (1993), usability had several components, namely learnability, efficiency, memorability, errors, and satisfaction. Learnability is that the system created must be easy to learn so that users could quickly work with the existing system. Then, regarding learnability above, we can conclude that this textbook had high learnability, it can be seen from the skills learned in this textbook. And regarding usability, according to Gould (1985), defined usability as any system designed for people to use should be built by keeping in mind that it should be easy to learn and remember, it should be useful, it should contain functions that people really in their work and be easy and enjoyable to use. And this textbook can be categorized as a textbook that could be used properly and could be easily used. It can be seen that the contents of the textbook had been neatly arranged with clear explanations in each section. Arranged and separated in several units. And given the same portion in each unit.

3. Language Content

a. Grammar

The attribute of being appropriate or appropriate for a specific situation or occasion is what the word "appropriateness" refers to. Each chapter of this textbook uses acceptable

grammar. It is clear that each unit, starting with the first one and going up, is provided with a higher level of difficulty or complexity. The English in Mind: Student's Book Starter's grammatical depiction. The grammar covered in units 1 through 14 demonstrates that the subject matter covered there is at a fundamental level. After learning about "present simple" at the beginning of the unit, the next until the last one studied was "past simple." According to Murphy (2015), in the book "Essential Grammar in Use" that in the book learn basic grammar with levels namely "present", "past", "present perfect", "passive" and others.

b. Vocabulary

The English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook included vocabulary under the heading Vocabulary, which directed students to find new vocabulary as a resource for completing the subsequent section or assignment in each unit. Students get the chance to review vocabulary with this section's vocabulary practice. As a result, having a vocabulary is crucial as a foundation for learning a language.

The vocabulary contained in this textbook is sufficient. Within each unit is a vocabulary section with various activities to learn the vocabulary. Vocabulary in textbooks is only a vocabulary list, meaning that the vocabulary presented or studied in each unit in the textbook only provides a vocabulary list, but does not have relationships such as semantic relationships, situational relationships, collocations, antonyms, synonyms and form relationships (Cunningsworth, 1995). One example is the vocabulary in Unit 1 directed students to acquire new knowledge about the state and nationality. In Unit 2 there is vocabulary that focuses on positive and negative adjectives. In Unit 3 there is a family-focused vocabulary. In Unit 4 there is vocabulary focused on places in cities and 100+ numbers. And in Unit 5 there is vocabulary that focuses on body parts.

4. Skills

a. Listening

In terms of listening skills, the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook had been fulfilled. There is listening skill in each unit in the textbook and is accompanied by background information, questions, and activities to aid understanding. Listening skills in the textbook

are obtained on CD. In textbooks, listening skills are always accompanied by reading skills or speaking skills.

b. Speaking

In terms of speaking skills, in terms of material for spoken English (for example: dialogues, role playing, etc.) well designed to equip students in real life interactions had been fulfilled in the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook. As is the case with other skills, in each unit in the textbook there are well-designed speaking skills activities, such as dialogue, role play, etc. In addition, the available speaking material is good for equipping students in real-life interactions.

c. Reading

Regarding reading sections and activities suitable for student level, interests, etc., as well as whether there is sufficient reading material. In the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook this had been fulfilled. In each unit in the textbook there is a reading section along with various activities. Such as reading material in the form of dialogues, articles, e-mails, etc., with various activities.

d. Writing

The amount of rules for utilizing proper styles and the arrangement of longer compositions are appropriate for writing activities. The textbook always includes a section on writing abilities in each lesson. Writing exercises are deemed beneficial since they are packed for real-world usage. like composing short texts about your city and yourself. Students are given clarifications and examples to help them grasp how to write.

5. Topics

a. Topic and Subject Content

There are several interesting materials for students as stated in each unit, there is a Free Time section. The free time section was an additional activity in which students are asked to watch videos on CDs to answer or match pictures. This material or activity could attract students in terms of learning especially when the activity is asked to watch a video.

In addition, the vocabulary material in the textbook is also very interesting because it is accompanied by pictures that support this

activity. As in Unit 3, the Vocabulary section on family provided a family plan along with pictures of grandparents, fathers, etc., and students are assigned to determine who is in the plan.

The topics' breadth and depth are sufficient. The textbook contains 14 modules on various subjects, some of which discuss nations, families, localities, bodily parts, sports, etc. Students are anticipated to be more engaged and interested in the subject when given a choice of themes.

The topic would aid in enhancing their experience and enhancing their consciousness in relation to the insightful issue. This popular textbook feature includes reading and imaginative listening topics that appeal to young people, as well as additional text, graphics, and photos. 'Everyday English' sections to keep pupils connected to how young people use English and a 'culture in mind' portion to provide them a perspective on the world around them.

Related to the advanced topic, the content is quite advanced. In this case, the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook is fulfilled. It can be seen in Unit 2 regarding e-mail where currently e-mail is a sophisticated technology that is used until now in life.

b. Social and Cultural Values

Related to students could relate to the social and cultural context presented in textbooks that did not fulfill. The English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook is written by a foreign writer, of course, the content of the textbook related to foreign social and cultural contexts as well. In addition, it can be seen that in the contents of the textbook there are pictures that emphasize the social and cultural context of foreign countries. Therefore, in this case students could not connect directly with what is presented in the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook due to different cultures and social contexts.

Related to gender equality, in the textbook English in Mind: Student's Book Starter, women are described as equal to men. Seen at the beginning of the book cover there are pictures of students where 2 male students and 2 female students. Apart from that, in the contents of the textbooks it can also be identified that in the pictures or dialogues, women are depicted as equal to men.

Related to whether other groups presented, with reference to ethnic origin, occupation, disability fulfilled or not. This is shown in the

Culture in Mind section in Unit 1 there are images of Heroes and heroines who had different tribes, different occupations, and different skin colors, and different cultures or ethnicities.

6. Methodology

a. An Emphasis on Communicative Goals

The "English in Mind: Student's Book Starter" textbook's language instruction places a strong emphasis on active conversation to help students acquire foreign languages in a fun and engaging way. The authentic use of language is demonstrated through a range of interesting text formats, such as magazine and newspaper clippings, interviews, memoirs, songs, and gripping photo stories. The textbook also includes several exercises involving the four communication skills. This is due to the fact that the four language skills are both taught together and independently. For instance, it is impossible to teach hearing alone because speaking and other abilities, including comprehension, are always incorporated. Therefore, speaking or writing are engaged in listening instruction so that active language use can be achieved.

b. A Balanced Approach to Skills Development

Every chapter of the textbook "English in Mind: Student's Book Starter" includes a language skill. There is always at least one speaking activity for fluency development as well as at least one listening skills practice that involves listening to texts of different genres. Preambles, subsequent texts, and the "Culture in Mind" part all serve to teach reading comprehension. Read texts that offer grammar examples while attempting to captivate and inspire pupils with intriguing and pertinent content. Several comprehension exercises are given after the text's 'directing' job. Each text is also recorded on an audio CD, allowing the teacher to add a "read and listen" phase after the initial reading. This allows pupils to compare the written word to the spoken version, which is a highly helpful learning tool. Each unit concludes with a writing skills assignment. Students will have the chance to delve further into the language and try out writing assignments in many genres, such as letters, emails, reports, and more. Additionally, there are model texts available for students to use as a reference for their own writing, and exercises can offer direction.

c. Insight Into Some Important Cross-Cultural and Intercultural Themes

Students who read English in Mind: Student's Book Starter will gain understanding of several significant intercultural and cross-cultural concepts. Presenting key facets of English-speaking nations' cultures encourages pupils to consider the parallels and discrepancies between their own culture and other cultures.

In odd-numbered units, there is a section titled "Culture in Mind." The Culture in Mind section's reading text gives students further reading practice as well as the chance to deepen their knowledge and comprehension of the global community, particularly the English-speaking one. They cover a wide range of intriguing cultural subjects, including British families, exotic pets, TV viewing patterns, school sports, the Edinburgh Festivals, and Queen Elizabeth I.

7. Teacher's Book

Pertaining to suitable guidelines for educators using textbooks and supplementary resources. The "Teacher's Resource Book" was a teacher's book that served as a sufficient teacher's manual and supplemental reading for the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook.

Relating to whether instructional methods, linguistic elements like grammatical rules, and cultural material were included in the English in Mind teacher's book. Teacher's books serve this need. Teaching strategies, grammar rules, and cultural knowledge were all included in the teacher's manual.

8. Practical Concern

The textbook as a whole package is available online in pdf format. But if purchased directly the price is affordable for the price of a textbook. The English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook had an affordable price, which is around 60 thousand rupiah.

The English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook is quite strong and durable because the binding is pretty good. The appearance and illustrations of the activities are clear and colorful and the pictures are interesting.

English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbooks are available in printed form that are easy to access and could be purchased online at the website or could be purchased directly at bookstores. In addition, this book is also available in PDF format which could be

downloaded for free at any available online website.

In terms of specialized tools, the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbooks call for tools such as a language lab, listening area, or video player. Many of the exercises in this textbook called for unique tools to help with the learning process and to change the mood. They include exercises that call for pupils to view videos and listen, among other things.

9. The Analysis Relates to The Characteristic of The Merdeka Curriculum

Based on an examination of the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook and an evaluation rubric, the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook can be categorized as a good textbook from the 8 categories examined, according to the Merdeka curriculum. The textbook English in Mind: Student's Book Starter can be used with the Merdeka curriculum as a result. According to the features of Merdeka curriculum, in particular, Merdeka curriculum means independence that offers teachers and students flexibility.

Project-based learning for the development of soft skills and character in accordance with the profile of Pancasila pupils are the key features of the Merdeka curriculum. There are numerous project-based activities that support project-based learning and are in line with the independent curriculum in the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook. There are exercises to enhance a person's or student's communication skills in textbooks that deal with the development of soft skills, but they do not entirely address a person's or student's character in accordance with the Pancasila students' profile. There were 6 criteria: possessing a noble character, diversity from around the world, independence, reciprocal cooperation, critical thinking, and creativity. The English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook only includes the independent parts, critical reasoning, mutual cooperation or collaboration, and creativity. Observed in textbook exercises including role-playing games, project exercises, and other exercises.

The next characteristic is the focus on essential material in which the subject is learning basic competencies in depth. In addition, regarding developing students' literacy levels. In

this case, the English in Mind: Student's Book textbook is a textbook that has quite a lot of reading texts such as magazine articles, dialogues and other reading texts. This is consistent with the characteristics of the Merdeka curriculum, namely increasing students' literacy skills. In addition, in each unit in the textbook there are always 4 skills sections including Reading skills.

The final quality is the adaptability of teachers and students to carry out various forms of learning in accordance with their requirements, the capabilities of the students, and modifications to the context and local material. The textbook English in Mind: Student's Book Starter is extremely adaptable in this regard. It is evident from the various activities included in the textbook, each of which is tailored to the needs and skills of the students while also featuring a variety of situations and activities. The English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook, on the other hand, is written by a foreigner, thus of course the content in the textbook adheres to foreign culture. As a result, the context and local content are not present in this instance.

It may be determined from the study above that the English in Mind: Student's Book Starter textbook is still in use or is appropriate for use in the Merdeka curriculum.

10. Disadvantages of The Textbook “English in Mind: Student’s Book Starter”

The textbook English in Mind: Student's Book Starter is considered good based on the analysis that has been done. However, basically nothing is perfect in this world and this textbook certainly has its flaws. The weakness of the textbook is in the vocabulary section. The vocabulary material presented is only a list of vocabulary about something. Meanwhile, according to Cunningsworth (1995), the vocabulary presented in textbooks is related, as is also presented with vocabulary that has synonyms, antonyms, etc. However, related vocabulary such as synonyms, antonyms, etc. are not owned by the textbook.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the textbooks revealed that they were based on Cunningsworth criterion, as shown by the conclusions and data. Goals and methods, design and organization, content, language, skills, themes, methodology, teacher's

books, and practical issues are the eight requirements that are met. The textbook "English in Mind: Student's Book Starter" can be classified as an excellent textbook based on the findings of the study of the 8 criteria. The textbook can also be labeled as appropriate for use in junior high schools for students in the seventh grade.

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