

## Evaluation of Engineering English Teaching Materials in the Civil Department at Padang State University

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### ABSTRACT

English teaching material is important in leaning process, therefore the teacher need be able to select the right book to use on teaching and learning process. One of the ways is through textbook evaluation. This study aims to evaluate the English teaching materials in the Civil Department at Padang State University. The data were taken by distributing checklist and conducting interview to the lecturer and the students. The data were analyzed by getting average and percentage. The methodology of the research is descriptive qualitative analysis. Results showed that content in the textbook are not communicative for the students. Therefore, there is the need for the teaching material to be revised based on communicative and online teaching needs.

### Keywords

Evaluation; Teaching materials; Technical English

### Introduction

All elements related to education always strive to improve the quality to be better because education is an important and very important thing for the needs of the nation. Teaching of language skills require properly organized material along with suitable method and approach. The evaluation of language material has been focused around for many centuries and description of approaches and methodologies used in specific times have been the center of the field.

Textbooks have a significant role in EFL teaching and learning by providing useful ready-made material to both lecturer and students. However, inappropriate use of course books may cause the lack of skill for the lecturer and their students (Charalambous, 2011). Sheldon (1988) suggests that textbooks do not only provide the visible heart of any ELT program, but also provide considerable advantages for both students and the lecturer when they are being used in English foreign language classroom. However, many textbooks are published by national publishers that sometimes may not fulfill the lecturer and students need. So, the lecturer should be able to select the right book that will be used in learning and teaching process. One of the ways is by evaluating the textbook. A textbook evaluation would involve the careful selection of materials examining whether they reflect the needs of the learners, the aims, methods and values of a specific teaching program (Cunningsworth, 1995).

Through the textbook evaluation, lecturer know the content of the book, its strengths and weaknesses which will facilitate them to adapt it to suit the course aims, learners 'needs and lecturer' beliefs. Moreover, Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) states that textbook evaluation helps lecturer move beyond impressionistic assessments and it helps them to acquire useful, accurate, systematic, and contextual insights into the overall nature of textbook.

In the Civil Department at Padang State University, the English textbooks and curriculum are not fulfilling the requirements of English language learners according to the standard of UNP. Moreover, the content in English Textbooks are not aligned with the objectives of leaning goals. The evaluation of English textbook on Civil Department is not interactive and do not fulfill the objectives of target language, further they suggested to revise English textbooks that are being utilized in language programs.

In details, there are four problems faced in this language material evaluation. The first problem encountered is based on preliminary interviews with lecturers. One of the reasons that causes student achievement is teaching material. There is a shortage of material as a reference for both students and lecturers who cannot use any textbooks because commercial specialized books in civil engineering are usually available in bookstores that are not suitable for student conditions. This is due to the difficulty of materials or teaching materials for the students

themselves. Likewise, only the content of the material provided does not cover the skills needed by Civil English Department (CED) students. Therefore, students and lecturers need appropriate teaching material which is not only a learning guide, but also as a reference.

The second problem is the hand-out made by the lecturer has not fully motivated and facilitated the teaching and learning process. Lecturers create teaching materials by writing their own material by adopting several sources which are then compiled and arranged according to the curriculum. The material in the form of presentation data (made in PowerPoint) is then published on the e-learning portal (LMS) and printed and distributed to students. In addition, assignments, exercises, quizzes, and tests are arranged in meetings for each LMS and are almost carried out at the LMS. The third problem in this research is that students are not given enough opportunities to actively participate in the learning process. This is because learning is only carried out completely face-to-face.

### Literature Review

Regarding the implementation of online classes, Carrillo & Flores (2020: 2) explains that the use of technology in supporting online learning depends on three pedagogical factors. The pedagogical approach which is the first factor includes student-centered learning, the teacher's role as a facilitator, and knowledge integration. The second factor is the learning design which includes the flexibility of learning, learning according to the individual needs of each student, according to the context, social, learning process, and the use of appropriate tools and technology. The third factor is facilitation which includes clear expectations, appropriate questions, understanding and sensitivity to cultural issues, providing timely feedback, constructive, and details, as well as the high attitude and commitment of the students.

Huang et al. (2020: 2) also details three main challenges in online learning during a pandemic. First, lecturer have very limited time in preparing and / or adapting offline teaching materials to online. Second, the lack of or limited opportunities for lecturer and students to interact directly and freely during online learning which results in disruption of the learning process. Third, using an effective pedagogical approach requires a

greater effort in motivating and activating students in online learning. Byun & Slavin (2020: 665) also found that although school facilities were adequate and the national curriculum very well facilitated online learning,

In the evaluation of English material, Tomlinson (2003, 2010, 2011) and Ellis (2014) has proposed a very detailed list of evaluation for the development of language teaching material that is based on second language acquisition, learning and teaching. These principles have been listed below as they are helpful in developing a checklist for English textbook evaluation.

#### 1. *Linguistic Features and Meaningful Input*

Textbook designers must focus not only on the frequency and amount of input but also variety of topics and genre be included. Input must be presented in real and authentic context.

#### 2. *Learners Needs and Communicative Purposes*

Content and instructions should be planned to provide students with meaningful conditions for communicative activities to achieve communicative competence. Tomlinson (2011) insisted that learners must be provided with the opportunities to use language for communication rather than restricting learners in a situation that is controlled by the teacher and materials. In this way, the learner can negotiate meaning and can process real world for language use rather than just focusing on controlled practice of activities.

#### 3. *Self-Investment of the Learners*

Learners must be encouraged to control their learning process by making discoveries of language use. In the constructive process of language learning, students must be provided with opportunities to process information and improve meaningful awareness through noticing, testing, analyzing, and confirming the hypothesis.

#### 4. *Content and Instructions must be Aligned with Goals and Objectives*

The content and instructions of the unit must be linked with the goals and objectives of the lesson. Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) have presented a more consistent plan of instruction that there must be correspondence among objectives, instructions, and assessment. The course must be delivered in a way that make it compatible with the objectives to

increase the learning outcomes and competency of the learners in target language.

#### 5. *The Sequence and Procedure of the Course must be According to the Learners' Readiness*

There must be a procedure of sequencing of language forms in English course books, as some forms seems to be difficult, but students learn them easily and some forms seems easy, but students take much time to get mastery over it. Pienamenn (2007) presented processability theory that production and comprehension of language take place only by handling the language features through sequential processing. Johnson (2009) takes into consideration that internal syllabus indicates the sequence of linguistic features that emerges in second language acquisition. Course designers must develop the linguistic content by taking into account the learner's built in syllabus.

#### 6. *Recycling of the Content*

The content of the course must be recycled and reintroduced. The textbook developers must keep in mind that target language takes time for its effective production. According to the U-shaped recycling patterns, at first stage, it seems that the learner can produce linguistic form, then they deviate but at the last stage they again use the correct form (Gass & Selinker, 2008). So, it should not be expected that the learners will grasp the content immediately, but the content should be recycled and reintroduced consistently.

#### 7. *Interactive Opportunities and Output*

Exposing students to interaction, leads them to negotiation of meaning and ensures opportunities to focus on grammar and discourse skills simultaneously (Ellis, 2008). Comprehensive output is significant as it helps learners in generating messages in a condition where students are stimulated to communicate clearly and fluently. There must be focus on controlled practices, linguistic forms, formulaic expressions and ruled based competence.

These principles categorize the instructional practices which are important for language lecturer and textbook designers to maximize the language learning process that helps learners in internalizing the target language. As Brown (2007) finds that lecturer can improve their teaching if their pedagogy is well organized according to the principles of language teaching

and learning. In this way, these principles are suitable for subsequent analysis of English course book.

#### 8. *Textbook Evaluation*

Useful material from relevant area is combined together in a textbook for formal study. So, the check and balance of textbooks helps in maintaining quality of instructions and knowledge. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) considers textbooks as universal component of English Language Teaching.

Ahour and Ahmadi (2012) mentioned that textbooks helps in conveying knowledge and information to the learners in an organized way. McGrath (2002) considers textbooks essential as it gives content, direction and teaching methods. Tomlinson (2001) finds interest in material development valuable as due to two reasons. First, it assists lecturer to understand and apply language learning theories. Second, lecturer have to evaluate and revise the material according to the needs of their own learners.

Tomlinson (2001) finds that textbook evaluation is an applied linguistics activity, through which material developers, lecturer and administrators judge the effectiveness of materials which they have used for the learners. Ellis (2011) focuses on micro-evaluation which is associated with the effect of classroom tasks related to the material. It goes beyond impressionistic evaluation and helps in determining the practicality of the task, how it works and how it can be improved for future use.

It also evaluates its appropriateness in relation to the goals set for the learners, in addition with constrains of a particular context. McGrath (2002) has suggested that teacher must keep records of use, noting the sections of text omitted or used, and the sections work well and so on. Such types of record help in adaptation and supplementation of textbooks. These activities help in enhancing the effectiveness of textbooks.

### Methods

This research employed descriptive method that concerned with the document analysis. This research described whether the aspects of the English material evaluation in the textbook of Civil Department at UNP.

This research is a qualitative case study type research which has the main objective of

identifying and describing the evaluation in learning English faced by lecturer and students who are just starting out with online learning methods. Challenges are identified, analyzed, and described in depth.

The research subjects included 4 class teacher assigned to teach English and 40 students in Civil Department at Padang State University. The research was conducted in the third Semester of the 2020/2021 Academic Year. The object of research is the evaluation of English teaching material.

### Results and Discussion

Evaluation refers to the process of making judgment based on the criteria or evidence. According to Hutchinson (1983), the evaluation of a textbook assists to the area of English education in two aspects. That is, one aspect is a simple contribution for the teacher in selecting a textbook and the other is that the teacher can increase his own understanding of the teaching and learning situation. According to Tomlinson (2011), just about everything which helps the learning of a language can be categorized as materials. Materials includes everything that can be used to facilitate the language learning. They may be course books, videos, graded readers, flash cards, games, websites or mobile phone interactions. It means textbook is one of materials used by lecturer in teaching and learning process. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) argue that books and materials have a crucial role in every learning situation and assist lecturer with their responsibilities. They provide four justifications for using materials and books: a) as a source of language, b) as a learning support, c) for motivation and stimulation, and d) for reference.

Cunningsworth (1995: 15-17) mentions four criteria of textbook evaluation. Those criteria as guideline for developing checklist for textbook evaluation. They include 1) corresponding to the learners' needs, 2) reflecting the present and future of language, 3) facilitating learning in various ways, and 4) having a clear role as a support for learning.

The use of a Learning Management System (LMS) or Learning Management System (SMB) needs to be introduced to lecturer and students to overcome some of the weaknesses of using the class WA group in order to create an effective,

efficient, systematic, measurable, and well documented learning process. Technically, students also face the challenge of limited access to adequate English study guidance. This is related to the availability of tutoring institutions, the location of the student's residence that is quite far from the intended facilities, the economic limitations of the family to pay for tuition, and the pandemic situation that does not allow students to travel freely. Students at home only rely on the material distributed by the teacher, the supporting books they get from school, as well as guidance from parents / guardians who are busy providing for their families and have a variety of educational backgrounds and knowledge of English. Even some students' parents / guardians do not understand English. This results in limited knowledge and ability of parents / guardians to facilitate their children learning at home. It is recorded that 25 of the 40 students have limited access to adequate English tutoring when studying at home is applied.

The English teaching material in Civil Department at UNP is based on the courses' aims to make students able to know the tools that exist in Civil and the terms in English used in the Civil field itself. It includes the introduction of terms / English for civil engineering buildings, describing formulas, describing shape angles, describing objects in the workshop, reading instruction manual, describing process of a system and experiment, describing quantity, and describing tables-graphs-diagram.

The results of observations, documentation, and interviews show that lecturer and students have challenges in relation to classroom and technical management. Lecturer have limitations in explaining teaching material related to variations in learning methods that are carried out. In the previous conventional class, lecturer had creation, flexibility, and diversity in the use of teaching methods that were adjusted to the material, task characteristics, learner characteristics, learning situations and environments, and so on. However, lecturer experience limited ability to explain because learning is done online. This also provides challenges to lecturer and students in carrying out learning activities. Activities are limited to sharing teaching materials, videos, assignments, voice messages, and related information that has limited interaction patterns, namely from teacher to student and from student



to teacher. The interaction pattern between students is quite limited. Group or pair work activities have not been seen in learning, so activities that require students to discuss and in groups are still limited. Learning that is student-centered or student-centered cannot be done because all material, activities, questions, assignments, and information are centered or sourced from the teacher.

Lecturer and students are also constrained by learning time which makes it difficult to present, explain, reinforce, enrich teaching materials, and clarify materials. Lecturer also have limited time and methods or techniques in giving explanations to students satisfactorily because it is quite difficult to give them online. The same thing happened to students. Providing feedback, reinforcement, rewards, and sanctions to students is also very limited. The teacher usually provides corrections to the assignments or student projects that are collected, giving verbal reinforcements and rewards such as the words "good, smart" and / or provide similar symbols or emoticons to motivate students to learn and participate.

As a result, other challenges arise, namely the limitations of the ability to accommodate diverse interests, learning styles, and abilities of students due to limitations in analyzing student needs and evaluating student learning processes and outcomes.

Technically, based on observations, documentation, and interviews, 4 out of 40 students do not have learning support devices in the form of smartphones that support the learning process that is being carried out. Some students have devices that do not have certain features such as videos and certain document opening features

so that students have limitations in getting material and working on given assignments and projects. An interesting case occurs that four students who do not have a smartphone are assigned tasks or work with their friends who happen to be their neighbors. They study together and take turns sending assigned assignments or projects

Bazimaziki (2020: 299) found that changing the mode of learning from face-to-face to online becomes heavier if the teaching that is delivered must include ethical values, critical thinking, analytical thinking, and communication skills. The achievement of this ability is hampered due to limited ICT capabilities and resources during a pandemic. Carrillo & Flores (2020: 2) emphasizes the pedagogical factors of online learning that utilize technology to support learning. These factors include, first, a pedagogical approach such as the learner as the center of the activity, the teacher's role as a facilitator, and knowledge integration. Second, learning design that includes learning flexibility, learning tailored to personal, contextual, social, formative needs, and using appropriate tools and technology.

From the data collection about the evaluation of English teaching material, there two different results, each from the lecturer and also from the students. The lecturers shows the tendency of not revising the material based on the evaluation. Contrary, the students shows the reverse tendency of revising the material based on the evaluation. The data are presented in the following tables:

**Table 1. Lecturers' Respondent Achievement Level**

<b>Lecturers' Respondent Achievement Level</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
1	Very Needed	2	5.00
2	Needed	2	5.00
3	Less Needed	14	35.00
4	Barely Needed	15	37.50
5	Not Needed	7	17.50
Amount		40	100.00

**Table 2. Students' Respondent Achievement Level**

<b>Students' Respondent Achievement Level</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
1	Very Needed	7	17.50
2	Needed	6	15.00
3	Less Needed	13	32.50
4	Barely Needed	13	35.00
5	Not Needed	0	0.00
Amount		40	100.00

The tables above shows the percentage of English teaching material evaluation based on the students' point of view is categorized poor. An English course is therefore developed based on an assessment of purposes and needs and the activities for which English is needed. In designing the materials for English, the lecturer should consider who will be taught in order to give appropriate materials for them. After that, the first thing must be decided is topics, provide or find the topics relating to the students' major because the topics will influence all aspects of learning English like grammar, vocabulary, and skills as the main or central part in teaching and learning process (Cunningsworth, 1995 & Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). In this case, hotel accommodation major needs the language or topics of hospitality and tourism

### Conclusion

The finding after doing research is that according to the data obtained from the analysis of their needs from the results of student and lecturer questionnaires as well as interviews and classroom observations, the material needs to be developed. There are some suggestions concerning the expected improvement of the textbook: The textbook should be accompanied with other teaching learning media (workbooks, cassettes, and CDs) so that the materials can be as authentic as possible and very useful specially in listening activity; the four skills should be organized effectively and provided according to which language skills are mostly needed. The activities for language skills should be variety and integrated work; Some writing activities should be modified and familiarized to students' levels; and the textbook should be provided the functional

grammar such as probability, imperative, polite request, and conditionals.

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