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Teachers' Perception on The Aim of Reading Material in an English Textbook

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Abstrak

Teaching material takes an important part to the success of teaching and learning. Moreover, Teachers' perception on the reading materials is essential because it gives valuable input about teaching materials used in the teaching learning process. The main source of teaching materials comes from textbook. This research analyzes reading materials in students' English textbook for grade XI semester I. The purpose of this research is to describe how are the reading materials in the aspects of aims viewed from the teachers' perception. Source of the data in this research is divided into two. First is the analysis checklist of reading materials in the students' English textbook for grade XI semester I filled by three analysts. Two of the analysts are the English teachers at different schools while the other one is the researcher herself. Second is the interview gotten from the teacher who is also one of the analysts in order get more data about the teacher's perception on the reading material especially about the strength and weakness of the aims of the material. The analyses found that the aims of the reading material fulfill the good criteria of reading aim.

Keywords: Teachers' Perception, Reading Aim, English Textbook

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I INTRODUCTION

Teaching materials are anything that is used to teach learners. English teacher's perception on the teaching material used in teaching learning process is essential in order to determine the level and degree of its usage. As Barcelos, 2000; Pedersen & Liu, 2003; Yu, 2004 state that exploring teachers' perception is important because it influences their practice, judgment, and decision making processes. In other words, knowing the teachers' perception especially on the teaching materials is important since it gives valuable information about the material being used and it influences the teachers in choosing the materials used in teaching learning process.

English teaching materials used by the teachers come from many sources. However, the main source used by the teachers is the teaching materials from textbook. The textbook provides the teaching materials that cover the four English skills that are listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as grammar and vocabulary. One of the important skills for students in learning English is reading skill. Through reading, the students are able to use information in the text, to understand the sentences, utterances, paragraph, and apply their ideas into actual situation. Understanding the purpose of reading, elicit prior knowledge, build background, and focus the

students' attention about reading text that is going to be learned is important. Therefore, Aims of the reading material in the English text is analyzed in this research through the teachers' perception. The indicators in analyzing the teachers' perception on the reading aim

are seen from the aim is clearly stated and the connection between material being taught, the reason, the reason for teaching it and gains students could make.

II RESEARCH METHODS

The type of this research was descriptive research. According to Gay (1987:189), descriptive research involves collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Descriptive research is designed to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happens. It may be used to justify current practice and make judgment also to develop theories. Furthermore, Lauer (2006:13) defines that descriptive research is used to answer questions: what is happening? How is something happening? Or why is something happening? This type of research determined and reported the way things are. For the purpose of this study, descriptive was used to obtain information about reading materials in student's English textbook grade XI semester I viewed from the teachers' perception. Moreover, this research analyzed the reading materials in terms of the aims in student's English textbook grade XI semester I.

The data of this research were the reading materials in the student's English textbook for grade XI semester I. The source of the data in this research were the analysis checklist from the teachers also the information gotten from an interview gathered from the teacher. The teachers were the English teachers. One of the teachers teaches English at SMA N 7 Padang and the other teaches English at SMA N 10 Padang. Moreover, the data of this research were classified into two types. The first data were the checklists that were given by the teachers on the analysis checklist. Furthermore, the second data was the data gotten from the interview conducted to the teacher.

Table 1. The Analysis Checklist of Reading Materials

Indicator	Sub-Indicators	Yes	No	Notes
The reading aims	a. The reading aims are clearly stated before each chapter			

	b. There is clear connection between the material being taught, the reason for teaching it and gains students could make			
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Table 2. The Indicators and Sub-Indicators of the Interview

Indicator	Sub-Indicators
The reading aims	a. The strength b. The weakness

The data from the analysis checklist filled by the analysts were presented in form of tables and words. The displayed data were arranged based on the chapters in the students' book (the book consists of five chapters) and the indicators of the reading materials analysis was the reading aims. Then, it was followed by clear explanation on the indicator.

After displaying and explaining the data, the conclusion was made. In addition, the data from the interview were used in order to get more data about the teachers' perception on the reading materials especially related to the strength and weakness of aims the reading materials. The data obtained from the interview were analyzed by several steps suggested by Miles (1994:10). The first step is data reduction.

It refers to the process where all of the qualitative data appears on the interview are reduced and organized. In this step, the irrelevant information was discarded, but still keeping them if it is needed to re-examine the previous data. The second step is data display which includes different types of graphs, charts, and tables. The main objective of data display is to make the data more organized, thus the data are comprehensible

to see the results and draw conclusion. Then the last step is conclusion drawing and verification. It is used to analyze data in order to make conclusion

until the answer of research questions are obtained.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data of the reading aims in students' English textbook of 2013 curriculum grade XI semester I were collected through analysis checklists which were filled by two analysts from teachers and from the researcher herself in order to see the teachers' perception and the researcher's perception on the reading materials. The two analysts were the English teacher at SMAN 7 Padang and SMAN 10 Padang. There were two aspects seen in aims of the reading materials. First, the reading aims are clearly stated before each chapter. Second, there is an obvious connection between material being taught, the reasons for teaching it, and gains the students could make.

Furthermore, the analyses from the three analysts were shown through tables that represent each aspect in the analysis checklist. They were arranged from chapter 1 (C1) until chapter 5 (C5). The checklist marks (√) indicate that the evaluators judged the aspects of the indicators already suitable with the criteria of good reading material and the dash mark (-) indicate the unsuitability of the aspects of the reading materials in the students' English textbook. The summary of reading aims in students' English Textbook for Senior High School grade XI semester I was shown in the following table;

Table 3. The Summary of Reading Aims in Students' English Textbook for Senior High School Grade XI Semester I Based on the Teachers' and the Researcher's Perception

Indicators	Chapter 1			Chapter 2			Chapter 3			Chapter 4			Chapter 5		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Stated Reading Aims	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Obvious connection existed between the material being taught, the reasons for teaching it, and the gains students could make	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

material being taught, the reasons for teaching it, and the gains students could make																			
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The data from table 3 above shows that the aims of reading materials are stated in each chapter. In addition, every analyst found that there is also obvious connection existed between the material being taught, the reason for teaching it, and the gains students could make in each chapter. Those two indicators are already provided in the students' book. It means that the reading aims in each chapter of the book fulfill good criteria of good reading aims.

Moreover, the data about the aims of reading materials in the students' book were also gotten from interview conducted to a teacher who was also one of the analysts. Therefore, the description of the data of reading aims in the aspect of stated reading aims were describe based on the data gotten.

Reading aims are the guidance for the students about what are going to be learned and what are the students expected to. In other words, reading aims are essential to be stated for the students. Reflecting the finding about the reading materials in terms of aims, the aims of reading materials in the textbook fulfill the good criteria of aims. The aims are clearly stated in each chapter. It is in line with the Center for Faculty Development of University of Colorado (2007) states that well-defined and articulated learning

aims are important because they: (1) provide students with a clear purpose to focus their learning efforts, (2) direct the choice of instructional activities, and (3) guide the assessment strategies. It means that having well-defined and articulated learning aims can give students' with a clear purpose about their learning, direct the choice of instructional activities, and guide the assessment strategies. The theory is supported by Moss and Brookhart (2012:11).

They argue that when students, guided by look-for, aim for learning target during today's lesson, they become engaged and empowered. They are able to: compare where they are with where they need to go, set specific goals for what they will accomplish, choose effective strategies to achieve those goals, and assess and adjust what they are doing to get there as they are doing it. It can be said that there are many gains that the students get if the learning aims are stated. One of them is engaging and providing students with clear purpose in learning and what they will accomplish.

Besides stating the aims, the reading materials in terms of aims also provides connection between the materials being taught, the reason for teaching it and gains students could make. The students' book connected the materials that are going to be given to the students in terms of personal connection.

In the personal connection, there are some questions provided for the students to be answered. The questions are related to the topic of reading texts that are going to be discussed. While, the reason for teaching it, and gains students could make are reflected through genre connection. In the genre connection, there is brief explanation about the reading material that is going to be learned. For instance, the material that is going to be learned is narrative text.

The book provided brief explanation about the definition of tales or folklores, the function of the text for the students' life, the classification of the folklores, and some famous folklore. Therefore, by giving those explanations, the students know what kind of reading materials that will be learned, why they are given such kind of materials, and what they get after earning it. It is in line with Ringler and Weber (1984), pre-reading activities enabling activities, because they provide a reader with necessary background to organize activity and to comprehend the material.

These experiences involve understanding the purpose for reading and building a knowledge base necessary for dealing with the content and the structure of the material. Therefore, the aims of learning that are stated in each chapter of the students' English textbook also the personal and genre connection in that textbook guide the students to know what kind of materials that are going to be learned, connecting the students' background knowledge with the materials, and building the students' knowledge about the materials that are going to be learned. The screenshot of the first and the second sub-indicators for the reading aims can be seen below:



Figure 1. The Screenshot of the Reading Aim

The picture above showed that the reading material in chapter 1 already provided the reading aims as can be seen in the picture above. However, the aims are not only addressed to reading skill only but also for the others skills. It can be seen from the picture, at the beginning of the chapter, it was stated that the students are inform to know what kind of material that are going to be learned in that chapter.

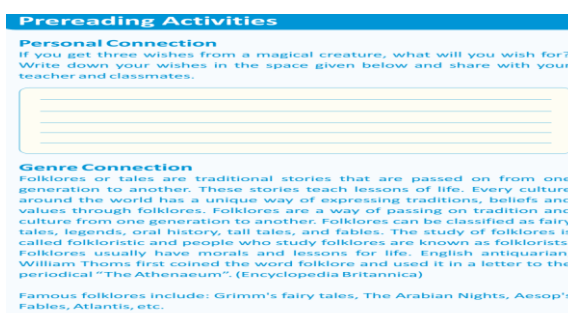


Figure 2. The Screenshot of an Obvious Connection Existed between the Material Being Taught, the Reason for Teaching It, and the Gains Students Could Make

In accordance to the picture above, it can be concluded that the obvious connection existed between the material being taught, the reason for teaching it, and gain students could make are

presented in terms of personal connection and genre connection. In the personal connection, there are some questions for students that are related to the topic of the reading text that is going to be discussed.

The questions are functioned to stimulate the students' background knowledge of the text. The questions in the personal connection are related to kind of reading text that will be given to the students and also stated in the reading aim. For instance in chapter 1, it was stated that the reading aims for chapter 1 is to read folklore. Therefore, the questions provided in the personal connection are related to text that will be learned by the students. Furthermore, there is also blank column used as a place for students to write down their answer related to the questions.

Furthermore, the data about the teachers' perception on the reading materials were also gathered from an interview conducted with the teacher who was also as one of the analyst in this research. The data from the interview in aspect of reading aim were shown in the following transcript of the interview. The questions which were asked to the teacher in the interview were about the strengths and weaknesses of in each aspects that become focus in this research that are the aims, the texts, and the tasks of the reading materials. The interview transcript that shows the teacher's perception on the reading materials especially in the aspect of reading aim was presented below.

Interview Data 1:

R: *What do you think about the strengths of the reading aims that are stated in each chapter of the book?*

T: *The book is already provided a kind of steps like building the students' knowledge in a form of brainstorming through some questions which encouraged students and built the students' background knowledge. So that, the students have known what is going to be learned. In addition, the learning objective is also stated at the beginning of each chapter. Thus, the students had already known learning objectives before the material are given. Furthermore, there is also brief material summary but in general one. There*

is only a general description about the material. Therefore, it can help students to comprehend the material later on.

Realizing the data from interview above, it can be inferred that the teacher argued that the reading aims has been stated in each chapter of the book. It gave general concept or description to the students about the material that are going to be learned since there was a kind of brief summary about the material that will be learned provided in the book. The brief summaries to guide the students or to build the students' background knowledge about the reading material that will be learned are named personal connection and genre connection.

Moreover, to see the weaknesses of the reading aims of the book, the researcher asked a question to the teacher that showed the teacher's perception of the aspect of reading aims especially about the weaknesses of the reading aims. The finding of the teacher's perception about the weaknesses of the reading aims found in the students' book of 2013 curriculum for grade XI semester 1 was explained below:

Interview Data 2:

R: *How about the weaknesses mam, what are the weaknesses of the reading aims that you found in the book?*

T: *One of the weaknesses of the reading aims is the reading aims were not explained in detail but only in general. If the reading aims were described in detail it will be more clear for the students to have background knowledge about what are the aims of learning such kind of reading material that are given to them.*

In accordance to the interview above, it can be understood that the teacher found that the reading aims in a form of personal and genre connection were not in the detail description. The teacher stated that if the reading aims were explained in more detail one, it will help students to know the material that will be learned, to connect it with their background knowledge and to know the gains of learning such kind of reading materials given to them.

IV CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion above there are three conclusions that can be drawn in this research. The reading aims in the students' English textbook have fulfilled good criteria of a good reading aims. The reading materials are already stated the reading aims and

there is also connection between material being taught, the reason for teaching it, and gains students could make. But the aims are not explained in detail one, it describes in general way.

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