

# THE ANALYSIS OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF AUTHENTIC READING MATERIALS IN STUDENTS' TEXT BOOK

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**Abstrak.** Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kesesuaian materi bacaan otentik di buku siswa dengan kriteria keotentikan. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan meminta sepuluh guru dan dua ahli dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris untuk memberi penilaian terhadap text melalui instrumen *checklist*. Sumber dari data yang dinilai adalah dokumen yang dikumpulkan dari tiga teks bacaan otentik di buku *Pathway To English 2* terbitan Erlangga. Instrumen penelitian ini adalah instrumen *checklist* yang terdiri dari kriteria keotentikan yang diusulkan oleh Mc Grath (2002) dan kriteria materi bacaan yang baik usulan Aris (2007). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa materi bacaan otentik pada buku yang dipilih telah memenuhi kriteria keotentikan. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa teks otentik pada buku tersebut sesuai digunakan sebagai materi pembelajaran.

**Abstract.** The objective of this research is to examine the compatibility of the current authentic reading materials in students' textbook with the criteria of authenticity. The subjects were twelve English teachers. They were asked to fill the checklist instrument. The sources of the data were documents which were gathered from three authentic reading passages which were found in *Pathway To English 2* from Erlangga Publisher. The instrument was the checklist instrument which consists of criteria of authenticity proposed by McGrath (2002) and the criteria of good reading material by Arias (2007). The result showed that the authentic reading materials in selected textbook were compatible with the criteria of authenticity. This indicates that the contents of the texts are appropriate to be used as teaching materials.

**Keywords:** *Authentic Reading Materials, Authenticity, Students' Text book.*

## INTRODUCTION

Textbook plays an important role in the process of teaching and learning English. The teacher uses a textbook as the source to deliver a material while the students use textbook as the source of knowledge. Thus, the content of textbook must be good. As the knowledge is developing, the curriculum designer or private publisher actively updates the material of textbook in order to serve the best source for English course. A textbook should be able to support the student to achieve the goal of learning English. Since English is a language, so the material should be able to support the students to use language as a mean of communication.

It is true that text book has some beneficial either for teacher or student in language teaching. Text book makes teacher easier to make a lesson plan since it serves the ready-made material. Text book also gives the students comprehensible directions and the degree of task; students can independently feel how much they have understood and mastered a course. In addition, since course books are often written by experienced teachers, goals from the syllabus are included. Furthermore, text book also potentially helps the student to be more confidence in learning without depending on a teacher (Woodward 2001). Text book also has disadvantages. Little et al (1995) cited in Lawrence (2011) write that some textbooks consist of materials which do not match with the characters, situation, and interest of the students. In addition, text book could also be bored for the student if the material is served in the same pattern yet predictable. To cope with this issue, the curriculum designer provides the alternative material in the textbook. Alternative material is mainly referred to as 'authentic' or 'real-life material'. Mitchell (1995) in Azri et al (2014) describes authentic material as material that was originally produced for native

speakers. According to this criterion authentic teaching material can for example consist of magazines, newspapers or recordings of real-life conversations.

There are some printed authentic materials found in students' text book in Indonesia. Most of them are used to teach reading skill. Thus, the authentic text should meet the good criteria of authentic material in order to make the goal of lesson achieved. According to McGrath (2002) there are eight criteria of authenticity that need to be considered when choosing appropriate authentic texts. These are: (1) Relevance to course book and learners' need, (2) Topic interest, (3) Cultural fitness, (4) Logistical considerations, (5) Cognitive demands, (6) Linguistic demands, (7) Quality, and (8) Exploitability.

Considering prepared materials for EFL context like Indonesia, Graves (2000) believes that materials must be chosen based on their authenticity principle so that the students get familiar with and have access to language as it is used in "real" world. As Horwitz (2008) states that learners have a range of needs and purposes which play an important part in preparing materials. One of the needs and purposes in English courses is to act properly and effectively in real-world situations and out of the instructional context according to (Dudley-Evans & ST John 1998) cited in Azri et al (2014). Therefore, authentic material is considered good when it meets those authenticity criteria.

Some studies have proven the usefulness of authentic materials in teaching English as a foreign language. Thus, teacher should be able to make sure that the authentic material which is being used is appropriate for the students. Meanwhile, Laba (2014) states, few studies have been conducted to examine the authentic reading texts used in the EFL context. Laba (2014) conducted a study to examine

the authentic materials which are found in the text book of students in Kent University. He found that most of authentic material especially reading texts meet students' interest. Another research was done by Zohoorian (2014). He even examined the authentic materials which established in ESP students' text book. He found that even authentic materials, especially reading materials in ESP students' text book in Iran do not follow the criteria of good authentic materials. Alshumaimeri (2015) also conducted a study dealing with evaluation of authentic materials found in secondary students' text book in Saudi Arabia. He examined all the text book authentic materials. These materials include authentic materials which are used to teach listening, speaking, reading, and writing activity. In his finding, he mentions that the available reading comprehension materials introduce real life texts that serve real life purposes. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a study dealing with the analysis of authentic materials in student's text book in order to investigate how compatible is the current authentic material in students' textbook with the criteria of authenticity.

## **METHODS**

Descriptive qualitative method was used in this research. According to Sandelowski (2000), descriptive method not only describes a certain phenomenon but also collects, arranges and categorizes the data about this phenomenon quantitatively that leads to a better understanding of the relationships between this phenomenon and other phenomena. The participants in this study were ten English teachers who have had at least two years' experience in teaching English at Senior High School level. Two experts were also invited to be the participants of this research.

To collect the data, the researcher used document as the source of data. The documents were gathered from three authentic reading passages which were

found in *Pathway To English 2* from Erlangga Publisher. Moreover, the checklist analysis instrument was used. The checklist items are the development of authenticity evaluation proposed by McGrath (2002) and criteria of selecting reading material by Arias (2007). These theories were chosen since the theories provide the criteria of authenticity for reading material. One common way to ensure reliability of a measure is to report the Cronbach Alpha. Thus, a high Cronbach Alpha shows the close relatedness of the items in a test (VanderStoep & Deirdre, 2009). To ensure the reliability of the instrument for the present study, the data from the checklist which was administered were analysed through SPSS for obtaining the Cronbach Alpha. A Cronbach Alpha of over 0.70 is considered as acceptable (Kent, 2001; George & Mallery, 2003). Thus, the reliability of the checklist instrument is acceptable. The reliability of Text 1 and Text 2 were measured as 0.975 and the reliability of Text 3 was measured as 0.961.

## **FINDINGS**

The objective of this research is to examine whether the current authentic reading materials in students' textbook have been compatible with the criteria of authenticity or not. The research was conducted by asking 10 senior high school English teachers and two experts to fill the checklist evaluation sheet. They were asked to examine the authentic reading material which was found in *Pathway To English 2 (for Senior High School Grade XI)* written by Th. M. Sudarwati & Eudia Grace and published by Erlangga.

### **The Compatibility of Text 1 with The Criteria of Authenticity**

From the percentage, it can be seen that Text 1 has been compatible with the criteria of authenticity. There are 48.33% evaluators agree and 18.33% agree that Text 1 has been compatible with the first criteria namely suitability of content, there are 50% evaluators agree and 33.33% strongly agree that

Text 1 has been compatible with criteria number 2 namely students' interest. Moreover, there are 41.67% evaluators agree and 33.33% evaluators strongly agree that Text 1 has been compatible with criteria number three namely cultural fitness and social value.

EVALUATION CHECKLIST	TEXTBOOK PROPOSAL			
	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Agree)	4 (Strongly Agree)
<b>1.</b>				
a.		16.67%	58.33%	25%
b.		33.33%	58.33%	8.33%
c.		33.33%	50%	16.67%
d.	16.67%	8.33%	50%	25%
e.	16.67%	41.67%	25%	16.67%
Average percentage	6.67%	26.67%	48.33%	18.33%
<b>2.</b>				
f.		16.67%	41.67%	41.67%
g.		8.33%	66.67%	25%
h.		16.67%	50%	33.33%
Average Percentage		13.89%	50%	33.33%
<b>3.</b>				
i.	8.33%	41.67%	33.33%	16.67%
j.		25%	41.67%	33.33%
k.			50%	50%

### Percentage of Text 1

Source: Data Analysis

Where:

1= Suitability of Content	2= Students' Interest	3= Cultural Fitness and Social Values
a= The content of the text is relevant to the learners' need	a= The text can motivate the learners to read	a= The text matches to the learners' background knowledge
b= Apply the suitable principle of teaching and learning	b= The text can develop the learners' reading skill	b= The text is culturally acceptable for the learners
c= Match the goal of the course	c= The text can grab students' attention	c= The text provides a cultural contextual support
d= The text consists of language which matches the students' proficiency level		
e= The structure of the text is too complex for the student		

### The Compatibility of Text 2 with The Criteria of Authenticity

From the percentage, it can be seen that Text 2 has been compatible with the criteria of authenticity. There are

58.33% evaluators agree and 26.67% agree that Text 2 has been compatible with the first criteria namely suitability of content, there are 72.22% evaluators agree and 16.66% strongly agree that Text 2 has been compatible with criteria number 2 namely students' interest. Moreover, there are 61.11% evaluators agree and 25% evaluators strongly agree that Text 2 has been compatible with criteria number three namely cultural fitness and social value.

### Percentage of Text 2

EVALUATION CHECKLIST	TEXTBOOK PROPOSAL			
	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Agree)	4 (Strongly Agree)
<b>1.</b>				
a.			58.33%	41.67%
b.			66.67%	33.33%
c.			75%	25%
d.		16.67%	58.33%	25%
e.	8.33%	50%	33.33%	8.33%
Average percentage	1.67%	13.33%	58.33%	26.67%
<b>2.</b>				
f.		8.33%	83.33%	8.33%
g.		8.33%	83.33%	8.33%
h.		16.67%	50%	33.33%
Average percentage		11.11%	72.22%	16.67%
<b>3.</b>				
i.		33.33%	50%	33.33%
j.		8.33%	75%	16.67%
k.		8.33%	58.33%	33.33%
Average percentage		13.89%	61.11%	25%

Source: Data Analysis

Where:

1= Suitability of Content	2= Students' Interest	3= Cultural Fitness and Social Values
a= The content of the text is relevant to the learners' need	a= The text can motivate the learners to read	a= The text matches to the learners' background knowledge
b= Apply the suitable principle of teaching and learning	b= The text can develop the learners' reading skill	b= The text is culturally acceptable for the learners
c= Match the goal of the course	c= The text can grab students' attention	c= The text provides a cultural contextual support
d= The text consists of language which matches the students' proficiency level		
e= The structure of the text is too complex for the student		

### The Compatibility of Text 3 with The Criteria of Authenticity

From the percentage, it can be seen that Text 3 has been compatible with the criteria of authenticity. There are

48.33% evaluators agree and 38.33% agree that Text 3 has been compatible with the first criteria namely suitability of content, there are 61.11% evaluators agree and 38.89% strongly agree that Text 3 has been compatible with criteria number 2 namely students' interest. Moreover, there are 72.22% evaluators agree and 13.88% evaluators strongly agree that Text 3 has been compatible with criteria number three namely cultural fitness and social value.

#### Percentage of Text 3

EVALUATION CHECKLIST	TEXTBOOK PROPOSAL			
	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Agree)	4 (Strongly Agree)
1.				
a.			50%	50%
b.			66.67%	33.33%
c.			50%	50%
d.			66.67%	33.33%
e.	8.33%	58.33%	8.33%	25%
Average percentage	1.67%	11.67%	48.33%	38.33%
2.				
f.			58.33%	42.67%
g.			66.67%	33.33%
h.			58.33%	41.67%
Average percentage			61.11%	38.89%
3.				
i.		8.33%	75%	16.67%
j.		16.67%	75%	8.33%
k.		16.67%	66.67%	16.67%
Average percentage		13.89%	72.22%	13.88%

Source: Data Analysis

#### Where:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1= Suitability of Content  | 2= Students' Interest                               | 3= Cultural Fitness and Social Values                     |
| a= The content of the text is relevant to the learners' need                   | a= The text can motivate the learners to read       | a= The text matches to the learners' background knowledge |
| b= Apply the suitable principle of teaching and learning                       | b= The text can develop the learners' reading skill | b= The text is culturally acceptable for the learners     |
| c= Match the goal of the course  | c= The text can grab students' attention            | c= The text provides a cultural contextual support        |
| d= The text consists of language which matches the students' proficiency level |   |   |
| e= The structure of the text is too complex for the student                    |   |   |

## DISCUSSION

The finding of this research is discussed in each criteria of authenticity. To make

it clear, the finding is compared to the finding of the previous research.

The comparison of the findings and previous research

No	Checklist Evaluation	Findings of Laba (2014)	Findings of Alshumairi (2015)	Findings of Zohoorin (2014)	Findings of Text 1	Findings of Text 2	Findings of Text 3
1	Suitability of Content	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓
2	Students' Interest	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓
3	Cultural Fitness and Social Values	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓

The result of checklist analysis reveals that Text 1 which consists of an authentic article is considered as following the first criteria of authenticity namely suitability of the content. There are 48.33 % evaluators who agree and 18.33% who strongly agree that the content of Text 1 suit the learner. The content of Text 1 consists of simple sentence and simple present tense which have been familiar for the students. For example, in the first paragraph, the sentence which is used to define the garage sale is served in simple present tense. In curriculum 2013, students have learned about present tense in class X. Meanwhile, this book is used to teach XI grade, thus the text is considered easy to be understood by the students.

The evaluators also agree that Text 2 which consists of biography from Abraham Lincoln follows the first criteria of authenticity. There are 58.33% evaluators who agree and 26.67% who strongly agree that the content of Text 2 suit the learner. The content of Text 2 consists of simple sentence and simple past tense which have been familiar for the students. For example, in paragraph 1, all sentences are served in simple past tense like "Thomas was eventually able to buy the land". In curriculum 2013, students have learned about simple past tense in class X. Meanwhile, this book is used to teach XI grade, thus the text is considered easy to be understood by the students.

The evaluators also agree that Text 3 which consists of literary works in form of kid story follows the first criteria of authenticity. There are 48.33% evaluators who agree and 38.33% evaluators who strongly agree that Text 3 the content of Text 3 suit the learner. The content of Text 3 consists of simple sentence and simple past tense which have been familiar for the students. In curriculum 2013, students have learned about simple past tense and narrative text in class X. Meanwhile, this book is used to teach XI grade, thus the text is considered easy to be understood by the students.

Some evaluators also state that the content of the texts are following the criteria of authenticity since the student can develop the language use and implement it in their real life. This statement is supported by Tomlinson (2012) who stressed that most of the EFL materials that learners get involved in should be authentic to prepare learners for the future uses of the target language in the real world outside the classroom.

These findings are supported by Alshumaimeri (2015). He mentions that the authentic reading materials in the selected textbook enable Saudi learners use authentic English language that helps them to communicate effectively in the real world. However, these findings are different from the finding from Laba (2014) and Zohoorian (2014). It is because the textbook which was analyzed by Alshumaimeri (2015) was for general high school student. Thus, the material provided might be fulfilled the need and suit to the learner of general high school student. Meanwhile, Laba (2014) conducted research in university student. The text book which was analyzed was textbook which is used to teach general English. Therefore, the material in this book did not meet the need of the learners, since university student has the specific study. The same reason was addressed to the finding of

Zohoorian (2014). He conducted research in ESP course. Since ESP requires very specific material, so the book which was analyzed still need revision since it consists of material which was not suit the learner's need.

The next discussion is addressed to the second criteria of authenticity. The evaluators agree that Text 1 is following the second criteria of a good authenticity namely students' interest. There are 50% evaluators who agree and 33.33% evaluators who strongly agree that Text 1 meets students' interest. The evaluators state that Text 1 is following this criteria because the topic which is brought in Text 1 is something really new for the student. They never know what garage sale is before reading this text. Thus, students will interest to read because it introduces a new knowledge for them.

The evaluators also agree that Text 2 is following this criteria. There are 72.22% evaluators who agree and 16.67% evaluators who strongly agree that Text 2 meets students' interest. The reason is that the text introduces a famous figure in the world. Moreover, the text is also completed by using picture. The students tend to be interested in the text which is completed by picture. This statement is supported by Yu (2015). She states that pictures give positive impact towards the motivation of learners to read as long as the picture is related to the content of the text. In Text 2, the picture which is provided is the portrait of Abraham Lincoln which is strongly related to the content of the text.

The evaluators also agree that Text 3 is following this criteria. There are 61.11% evaluators who agree and 38.89% evaluators who strongly agree that Text 3 meets students' interest. The reason is that the text introduces a literary work which is famous in the world. Literary work can motivate the learner to construct meaning and finding the detail

of the text. This statement is supported by Eeds and Wells (1989). They state that literature can improve students' ability in constructing meaning.

These findings are supported by Laba (2014) and Alshumaimeri (2015). Alshumaimeri (2015) says that introducing new knowledge can motivate learners to learn language. Moreover, Laba (2014) finds that the authentic text can motivate students to learn. Students feel proud of themselves when they read what actually native speakers read. However, Zohoorian (2014) has different finding. It happens because he has found the authentic material in his chosen textbook did not suit the learners' need, so the material also cannot make the students interested. The last discussion is about the third criteria of authenticity. The evaluators agree that Text 1 also follows the third criteria of authenticity namely cultural fitness and social value. There are 41.67% evaluators who agree and 33.33% evaluators who strongly agree that Text 1 meets students' culture and social value. In Indonesia, there are so many people who sell their old stuff. The value is the same that is selling the old product. The thing that makes it different is the way the societies sell it. People in Indonesia sell their old stuff individually, there is no official event like garage sale. Thus, the evaluators mention that Text 1 fits to the cultural value of the society. This statement is also supported by Fei & Yu-feng (2008) who stressed that authentic materials must reflect the social values and attitudes of the learners' society.

The next finding shows that evaluators agree that Text 2 also follows the third criteria of authenticity namely cultural fitness and social value. There are 61.11% evaluators who agree and 25% evaluators who strongly agree that Text 2 meets students' culture and social value. In Indonesia, students have been so familiar with the biography of heroic national figure. The idea of introducing a biography of a famous figure is

matching to the students' background knowledge and culturally acceptable for the student. This finding is supported by Trabelsi (2010) who illustrated that authenticity is related to the learners' culture. Relating authentic materials to the learners' culture makes the learners feel more connected to learn language and more confident to use the target language in their real life.

In addition, another finding shows that evaluators agree that Text 3 also follows the third criteria of authenticity namely cultural fitness and social value. There are 72.22% evaluators who agree and 13.88 evaluators who strongly agree that Text 3 meets students' culture and social value. Students are often heard about a little kid who is forced to make money by irresponsible people in their environment. The idea of the literary work which used in Text 3 is the same. Thus, the students have been familiar with the idea of the story. This background knowledge can make students able to construct meaning of the text. This statement is supported by Morrow *et.al*(1990) who state that learners can construct meaning about what they read using their background or prior knowledge. These findings are supported by Laba (2014) and Alshumaimeri (2015). However, Zohoorian (2014) has different finding. It happens because he deals with ESP course, so the material do not serve cultural values.

Asking twelve different people to evaluate the text was time consuming. It occurred because the researcher should explain the idea of authenticity to each participants. Most of the participants have no idea about authenticity of authentic material before it was explained by the researcher.

## CONCLUSIONS

Referring to the discussion of the research findings on previous chapter, the researcher draws the conclusions as follow:

1. The compatibility of Text 1 to the first criteria of authenticity is 48.33%, Text 2 is 58.33%, and Text 3 is 48.33%. It means that the content of those texts are suitable for the learners. It is because the language is easy to understand and it enables student to develop the language use in the real life.
2. For the criteria number 2, the compatibility of Text 1 is 50%, Text 2 is 72.22%, and Text 3 is 61.11%. It means that the texts chosen have met students' interest. The texts chosen motivate students to learn.
3. Authentic reading materials in selected textbook represent cultural fitness and social value from the students. The compatibility of the Text 1 to this criteria is 41.67%, Text 2 is 61.11%, and Text 3 is 72.22%. Authentic materials which match the learners' culture make the learner feel more confident to use the target language in their real life.

2. Future research should gather more participants as the evaluators to make the data more reliable.

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## IMPLICATIONS

Summarizing from the research result, it is expected that:

1. Teachers can use the authentic materials in the textbook chosen for teaching.
2. Teachers can be more selective when choosing authentic materials from any sources.
3. Teachers would consider the criteria of authenticity when choosing authentic reading materials for teaching.

## SUGESTIONS

Referring to the data in the previous chapter and conclusion, some suggestions are recommended.

1. Future research can make another instrument which is addressed to the student in order to make the result of analysis more justifiable because it comes from either teachers' view or students themselves.

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