

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

English language instruction has many important components and essential constituents. Too many ESL/EFL classrooms and programs are the textbooks and instruction materials that are often used by language instructors. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994:315) suggest:

"The textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in [various] countries...No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook."

Other theorists such as Sheldon (1988) agree with this observation and suggest that textbooks not only "represent the visible heart of any ELT program" but also offer considerable advantages - for both the student and the teacher - when they are being used in the ESL/EFL classroom. Another advantage identified by Cunningsworth (1995) is the potential which textbooks have for serving several additional roles in the ELT curriculum. He argues that they are an effective resource for self-directed learning, an effective resource for presentation material, a source of ideas and activities, and a reference source for students, a syllabus where they reflect pre-determined learning objectives, and support for less experienced teachers who have yet to gain in confidence.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) have pointed out that textbooks may play a pivotal role in innovation. They suggest that textbooks can support teachers through potentially disturbing and threatening change processes, demonstrate new

and/or untried methodologies, introduce change gradually, and create scaffolding upon which teachers can build a more creative methodology of their own.

Deighton (1971:214) points out that the term textbook refers to the materials which are employed by school or college students as standard works on a particular skill or subject. They are designed for classroom use with appropriate vocabulary items, illustration, students' exercises and teachers' aids. They range from pre-primer to the technical, medical, and scientific materials used in graduate education. The content of the book are intended to be essentially practical in nature. However, some underlying principles or guidelines for evaluation are necessary in order to give a rationale to the evaluation criteria that are used.

Alwasilah (2008) states that textbooks embody legitimate knowledge to be taught to students. Even, for some cases, where teacher-learner interaction is very limited, textbooks seem to become the most powerful teaching tool. It is important to remember, however, that since the 1970's there has been a movement to make learners the center of language instruction and it is probably best to view textbooks as a resource in achieving the aims and objectives that have already been set in terms of learner needs. Moreover, they should not necessarily determine the aims themselves (components of teaching and learning) or become the aims but they should always be at the service of the teachers and learners (Brown, 1995). Consequently, we must make every effort to establish and apply a wide variety of relevant and contextually appropriate criteria for the evaluation of the textbooks that we use in our language classrooms. Cunningsworth, 1995 stated that we should also ensure that careful selection is made, and that the materials

selected closely reflect [the needs of the learners and] the aims, methods, and values of the teaching program.

The evaluation of textbooks which is conducted by our National Evaluation Committee is intended to investigate the appropriateness of textbooks and the current curriculum. The development of the curriculum requires the availability of the textbooks since they cannot be separated from teaching and learning process which attempt to acquire the target curriculum. In current context, textbooks used by teachers should be in accordance with the School Based Curriculum or KTSP.

The criteria for evaluating the textbook therefore must be standardized to the achievable of the textbook, the practical considerations, also the life-skills purpose for the students' improvement. This standardization covers all the content aspects, through all *language* skills; speaking, writing, listening and reading. The materials presentation aspects, the language type aspects and also the design or layout aspects. Alwasilah stated on his article (2005) that textbook must be specific, accurate, clear, relevance to the curriculum and up to date.

*English Student Books* for Grade VII is designed to facilitate all State Junior High School in Central Java, since it is published by Directorate General Management of Primary and Secondary Education. It means that this book is the preeminent book mostly used by students and teachers in their teaching learning process. A thorough evaluation, therefore, would enable the managerial and teaching staff of a specific institution or organization to discriminate between all of the available textbooks in the market. Moreover, it would provide for a sense of

familiarity with a book's content thus assisting educators in identifying the particular strengths and weaknesses in textbooks already in use. This would go a long way in ultimately assisting teachers with making optimum use of a book's strong points and recognizing the shortcomings of certain exercises, tasks, and entire texts.

Textbook evaluation seems to involve a few numbers of teachers and no student. Neglecting the roles of teachers and students in textbook evaluation seems to be unfair since they are the main actors in teaching and learning process. The relationship between teachers and textbooks has a great influence on the success of students' learning. Good textbooks provide great deal of help to teachers in carrying out EFL classroom activities. Tyson-Bernstein and Woodward (1991) in Altbach (1991) and Cunningsworth (1995) state that the heavy use of textbooks suggests a relationship between the quality of textbooks, effective teaching and students' achievement. Textbook should correspond as closely as possible to the aims of the teachers and both seek to meet the needs of learners to the highest degree. This phenomenon has led the researcher to investigate the textbook used in SMP N 2 Pekalongan. The study also seek to find out teachers' perception toward EFL textbook and difficulties faced by then in using the textbook.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

As indicated in the background, the objectives of this study are formulated based on the problems to be investigated. Thus, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To find out the strengths and weaknesses of *English Student Book*?
2. To find out the teachers' perception toward the book in SMP N 2 Pekalongan.
3. To find out the relevancy of the materials found in the book toward School Based Curriculum (KTSP).

### **1.3 Research Problem**

In line with the objectives of the study above, the formulation of the research questions are broken down as follows:

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook presented in the book?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions toward the book in SMP N 2 Pekalongan?
3. What are the relevancies of the materials found in the book toward School Based Curriculum (KTSP)?

### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This study is limited in time spent to obtain the data and the scope of place for study. This study attempts to evaluate the textbooks used in SMP N 2 Pekalongan. Moreover, this study investigates the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook as a product. This means that the use of qualitative checklist seems to be appropriate to evaluate the textbook in use. In addition, this study only involved an English teacher of the seventh grade as the user and an English lecturer as a producer. Therefore, the findings of this research are limited in its transferability, in a sense that the result may not be representative of the general use of textbooks or of the teachers in a larger population.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

In general, the findings of this research are expected to contribute significant improvement of English language teaching and learning in SMP N 2 Pekalongan. The result of this study can be considered as critical base in selecting textbooks used in SMP N 2 Pekalongan to develop teaching learning process and to improve students' achievement. In addition, this study can help inexperienced teachers in this school in selecting and developing the materials. For the authors and book designers, this research provides feedback on the development of English textbooks. It is expected that the authors can improve the quality of their textbook by considering teachers' interests, students' needs and local resources.

## **1.6 Clarification of Terms**

On the pages which follow, you will find definitions of key terms in the context of this study. To keep the study on its track, several terms have been defined for this research:

1. Textbook is a set of learning and teaching materials bound in a form of a book, used as source and curriculum of a course. Hornby (1989:1327) defines textbook as a book giving instruction in a subject. Deighton (1971:214) points out that the term textbook refers to the materials which are employed by school or college students as the standard works on a particular skill or subject. Student English Book is one of the textbook which is used in Central Java since it is compulsory provided by the government.



2. Evaluation is primarily about decision making. It requires three components; information, interpretation, and decision making (Genesee & Upshur, 1998). In this case, the three components are used in the evaluation of textbooks.
3. Relevancy means the degree to which something is related or useful to what is happening or being talked about. It indicates the relevance between the materials on the textbook towards the standard and the basic competence based on School Based Curriculum.
4. Curriculum is defined as the group of subjects studied in a school, college, etc. School Based Curriculum is also known as KTSP. In 2006, the Indonesian government introduced School Based Curriculum (KTSP) as a new curriculum replacing Competence Based Curriculum 2004 (CBC 2004). The breakthrough is intended to enhance the quality of teaching English.

### **1.7 Thesis Organization**

This thesis is presented in five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction to this study. It illustrates the aims and research problems, scope of the study, significance of the study and the clarification of terms. Chapter two attempts to describe theoretical foundation for this study which covers discussion on the role of textbooks, justification for textbook evaluation, curriculum, school-based curriculum and practical conceptions about textbook evaluation. Chapter three elaborates the research methodology. Chapter four illustrates data presentation and discussion. Chapter five is the conclusion and suggestions of the study of the study.