

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter generally provides the rationale of why the study takes place. It is described through the research background and followed by the research statement, research objectives, significance of the research, scope and limitation of the research, and organization of paper

### 1.1. Background of the Research

The quality of English language teaching and learning process can be determined by the teaching materials chosen (Mukundan, Nimehchisalem, & Hajimohammadi, 2011). One of the most crucial teaching materials is textbook. Indeed, Cunningsworth (1995) believed that textbooks are key components in most language programs. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) further explained that the existence of textbook in the process of EFL teaching and learning is considered really important by stating

"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. " (p.315).

Other theorists such as Richards (1990) and Sheldon (1988) asserted that textbooks offer advantages for teachers and language students as they constitute a useful resource for both teachers and learners. In a classroom, they serve as the basis for many languages inputs that learners receive and language practices as well as providing the basis for the content of the lessons, the balance of skills being taught and the kinds of language practice the students take part in. For the teachers, they provide objectives for the teaching process which enable them to choose which objective that will lead the learning process (Richards, 2001). Littlejohn and Windeatt

(1989) added that textbooks contain sufficient materials to support students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills as they provide the materials and exercises, dialogues, and exercises that include movement. Not only used as a primary material in teaching and learning process, Anshar (2014) stated that textbook acts as the teaching aids for the teacher. The simplicity of various instructional resources that a textbook owns can support the learning process (Rahmani, 2009). It is also inevitable that textbooks have vital and positive roles in assisting language teachers to develop, design, as well as conduct their materials (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994). These characteristics of textbooks result in a very big usage of textbook in language teaching; almost all teaching and learning process includes the extensive use of commercial textbooks.

The widespread use of textbook in EFL learning also takes place in the context of young learners. Cameron (2001) asserted that children learn differently with adults; they are more enthusiastic and active, willing to be involved in learning activities, yet they get bored easily and it needs some efforts to build their learning autonomy. The fact that children have their own unique characteristics of learning impose the idea that young learners should be provided by EFL learning materials that suit their characteristics. Richards (1990) pointed out that textbook for young learners needs to be suitable with the learners' background.

In Indonesian context, the ministry of education has introduced the curriculum 2013. There are some changes regarding the status of some subjects in this curriculum including English. In elementary school level, the status of English is a local content subject or/and an extracurricular. As the curriculum still sustains the idea of school-based curriculum, each individual school has their own authority and responsibility for decisions about budget, personnel, and the curriculum including the textbook (Myers and Stonehill, 1993). This condition keeps going as the regulation to choose textbooks is given entirely to schools. Choosing a textbook suitable for the learners is now becoming a more challenging task English teachers in elementary

school are faced. A careful selection needs to be made that the materials selected closely reflect the needs of the learners, the aims, methods, and values of the teaching program (Cunningsworth, 1995).

Regarding the textbook chosen for EFL learning, Tsiplakides (2011) believed that a good textbook should suit the needs of the students, their unique characteristics as well as their preferences. However, not all textbooks that have been published meet the criteria of a good textbook. Some researches on textbooks evaluation have been conducted. Several studies showed that there were some textbooks which still do not suit the needs of the learners. A study conducted by Yusuf (2008) found that there were some weaknesses in senior high school textbook in terms of the instruction and the content. Komalaningsih (2009) also found that a series of English textbooks mostly used in some elementary schools in Bandung Kulon, West java were not sufficiently accommodating young learners' characteristics. In Saudi Arabia, Alamri (2008) also conducted the same research and found that the textbook was still lack of illustrations and topics that were able to engage the students.

The incapability of selecting textbook as the main source materials especially in English as Foreign Language classroom will lead to unsuitable learning. Anshar (2014) stated that the inappropriateness of a textbook may mislead the students who learn English as a foreign language. Teacher should be aware of these characteristics and has the ability to select the appropriate textbook as the source materials in the classroom. This condition keeps going as the regulation to choose textbooks is given entirely to schools. A lot of books are marketed in Indonesia, and the plethora of choices are not under the supervision of the government. This phenomenon needs to be investigated as not all textbooks, even those published by popular publishers, are relevant to the need of students.

Departing from those points, textbook evaluation is necessary to be conducted. The widespread use of EFL textbook needs to be accompanied by a careful investigation on the selection of the best suitable book for a particular context.

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***AN EVALUATION OF TWO ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS USED BY FOURTH-GRADE STUDENTS IN TWO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN BANDUNG, WEST JAVA***

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This study will focus on analyzing two textbooks used by the fourth-grade students in two elementary schools in Bandung. The analysis would yield insights as to its suitability: how the textbook meet the criteria of a good textbook in its relevancy with the context of English learning for young learners.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

The research is geared towards answering the following research question:

1. How do the textbooks fulfill or do not fulfill the criteria of a good English textbook for young learners?

## **1.3. Aims of the Research**

This research aims at:

1. Investigating how the textbooks fulfill or do not fulfill the criteria of a good English textbook for young learners.

## **1.4. Scope of the Research**

The coverage of this study is limited to the evaluation of “*Grow with English*” and “*English Chest*”, two textbooks used by the fourth-grade students in two elementary schools in Bandung. The textbooks were analyzed in terms of its presentation, content, and language use. Both textbooks are published by two famous publishers in Indonesia. The first textbook, “*Grow with English*”, is published by Erlangga publisher, while the second textbook, “*English Chest*”, is published by Asta Ilmu publisher. This study focuses on the textbooks in relation towards their suitability with the criteria of a good textbook for young learners adapted from some experts.

## **1.5. Significance of the Research**

This research is expected to provide theoretical, practical, and professional benefits.

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### 1. Theoretical benefits

The results of this research are expected to enrich the theories of English textbook development in Indonesia. The findings of this research may be used as one of the references for the next content investigation in young learner English textbooks.

### 2. Practical benefits

The results of this research will reveal what are the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook investigated in term of its appropriateness for young learners. The findings of this research furthermore are expected to help teachers to choose the appropriate textbook in term of the content. Teachers may be able to identify and evaluate what kind of written and visual contents are appropriate or inappropriate with the young learners' needs.

### 3. Professional benefits

Since this research will reveal how the textbook meets the criteria of a good textbook for young learners, it is expected that it will provide the future researchers some information about selecting the best materials for young learners. Besides, the results of this research can help the educational institution to develop English materials, especially in determining the content in a textbook that is appropriate for students' characteristics, especially for young learners.

## **1.6.Organizati on of Paper**

This paper is arranged within five chapters. The first chapter is Introduction which presents the background of the study, the scope of the study, a brief description of the research method, clarification of the terms, and paper organization. The second chapter is the theoretical foundation which presents the ground theory of the study and its related theories that become the base of how the data of the study is scrutinized. The third chapter is Research Method which reveals the techniques of

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how the data is analyzed systematically. The fourth chapter is Findings and Discussions that presents the result of data analysis and the discussion of the data analysis result. The last chapter is Conclusion and Suggestion in which the whole discussion of the study is wrapped up. It also gives suggestions for further researchers to examine educational issues related to textbook evaluation.

### **1.7. Concluding Remarks**

This chapter has presented the general points of the research including background, research questions, purpose of the study, scope of the study, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper. In the next chapter, the literature relevant to this study will be further elaborated.