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A Content Analysis of Reading Texts in Let's Speak English Book for 6th Grade Students Published by Antara

Darojatul Aliyah[1], Ririn Pusparini[1]

Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Jawa Timur, Indonesia[1]

Email: darojatul.22043@mhs.unesa.ac.id

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Abstract
Reading texts play an important role in supporting students' English learning. However, the quality of reading texts in supplementary English textbooks for elementary school students has received limited attention based on material development principles. This study aims to analyze the quality of reading texts in the Let's Speak English Book for 6th Grade Students published by Antara based on material development principles, focusing on impact, relevance, self-investment, and ease. This study uses a qualitative approach with a document analysis method. The research data consists of all reading texts in Chapters 7 to 11 of the textbook. The data were analyzed by assessing the suitability of each text with the indicators of the material development principles. The results show that the reading texts have limitations in attracting students' attention due to the lack of supporting illustrations. Most texts relate to students' daily lives, although their connection to the local cultural context is still limited. The texts also demonstrate student engagement through sentences and words that involve students' imagination and feelings. In terms of ease, the reading texts are generally easy to understand although some texts contain dominant complex sentences. Overall, the reading texts have advantages in supporting student engagement but still need development, particularly in visual aspects and contextual relevance. The findings are expected to serve as a resource for teachers, teaching material developers, and future researchers in improving the quality of English teaching materials.

Keywords: *Content analysis; reading text; English textbook; Tomlinson's theory*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a crucial language skill in the 21st century. Reading is about understanding the text's full meaning, also known as comprehensive reading, which requires focusing on general or explicit information, drawing simple conclusions, interpreting the information obtained in real-life contexts, and evaluating and critiquing the information in the text (Bruggink et al., 2022). Reading comprehension plays a crucial role in elementary school students' academic abilities, particularly in English learning; through reading, students gain valuable information, including grammar, academic knowledge, and vocabulary, which significantly impact students' language skills such as speaking, communication, and interaction (Khasanah & Safriyani, 2021).

However, the importance of reading skills is in stark contrast to the reality on the ground. According to the latest PISA data released by the OECD (2023), Indonesian children's reading

ability declined by 28 points in 2022, from 371 to 359, ranking 70-71 out of 81 countries. Poor comprehension of information can result in a decrease in students' academic outcomes (Nanda & Azmy, 2020). This phenomenon needs a focus and evaluation for educators, since the quality of textbooks influences students' interest in reading, which in turn affects their reading ability (Pasaribu, 2022), and materials must be aligned with the design of the curriculum (Macalister & Nation, 2009). The emancipated curriculum places a strong emphasis on literacy skills, expecting that, "By the end of Phase C, students understand familiar and new vocabulary with support from visual cues or context clues. They read and respond to a wide range of short, simple, familiar texts in print or digital form…" (Kemendikdasmen, 2022).

Previous research on elementary textbook analysis has evaluated the book "My Next Word 5" using Cunningsworth's theory (Azaini & Ambarwati, 2023) and Bao's theory (Amaliawati et al., 2024), while another study analyzed a second-grade textbook using Tomlinson's theory (Maidari, 2025). Tomlinson's theory has also been used to analyze secondary-level textbooks, such as vocabulary (Narhan et al., 2021) and content suitability (Rambe et al., 2020). However, neither study specifically analyzed the reading section using Tomlinson's Theory in the elementary school level book.

Based on these issues, this study focuses on analyzing and evaluating the reading texts in the Let's Speak English book for 6th grade by Antara, chosen because the textbook used for this study is used by more than 5 elementary schools in Mojokerto and claims that the material is structured based on freedom curriculum. This study uses Tomlinson's (2011) material development theoretical framework to describe the quality of the reading texts in terms of: (1) the impact of the reading texts on students' interest and engagement, (2) the relevance of the reading texts to students' daily lives and local context, (3) the self-investment of students emotionally involved in the reading texts, and (4) the ease of understanding of the reading texts for sixth-grade students. Thus, the research is conducted with the title "A Content Analysis of Reading Texts in Let's Speak English Book for 6th Grade Students Published by Antara."

This research is expected to provide evaluation and input for textbooks in schools that have implemented the sixth-grade textbooks, provide teachers with a basis for consideration in selecting materials and improving the quality of the materials to better support and meet students' needs, assist book developers in evaluating and improving the quality of future reading texts, serve as a reference for other researchers conducting similar research, and help students acquire developed and better learning materials.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tomlinson's Theory of Materials Development

A textbook is a collection of pages containing symbols, numbers, words, phrases, and sentences that explain information or knowledge, and can be used as teaching/learning material (Tomlinson, 2011). At the elementary level, students' reading ability is influenced by the textbook as the medium (Brown, 2004). According to Cunningsworth (1995), a good textbook must be suitable for student needs, help students use language effectively according to learning objectives, facilitate student learning without imposing rigid methods, and act as a mediator between the target language and the students.

Content analysis is a research technique used with textual data that aims to conclude textual data that is textually valid (Krippendorff, 2004). In this study, content analysis aims to evaluate textual data contained in English textbooks in the form of reading texts, analyzed systematically based on several criteria.

According to Tomlinson (2011), there are 16 principles in materials development, but this study only adjusted four of them: Impact, Relevance, Self-Investment, and Ease. Impact means attracting students' curiosity, interest, and attention through novelty, variety, attractive presentation, and appealing content, which in this study can be seen in the pictures provided and the graphics presented. Relevance means that what is being taught should be perceived

by learners as relevant and useful, so the topics and contents of the texts should be near/around students' daily lives, including local setting and culture. Self-investment requires materials to encourage students' personal involvement in learning, meaning the content of the texts should involve students emotionally (sad, happy, etc). Ease refers to the degree of ease with which elementary school students process reading text, which can be seen in the text flow and organization and the suitability of the title to the main idea.

Previous studies on textbook analysis, such as those conducted by Novianti and Ambarwati (2023) using BSNP criteria and Amaliawati, Agustiningrum, and Pratolo (2024) using Bao's (2013) criteria, have evaluated elementary textbooks from various aspects, but few specifically apply Tomlinson's (2011) principles, and none has specifically analyzed reading texts. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by applying Tomlinson's principles to the evaluation of reading texts in Let's Speak English for sixth-grade students, thus providing a new perspective for textbook evaluation research.

METHODOLOGY

As the objective of this research is to analyze the reading texts of an English textbook, the appropriate research design is a qualitative method, as qualitative designs are primarily based on data in the form of text (Creswell & David Creswell, 2018). This research used the book "Let's Speak English for Grade 6, Even Semester" by Antara, which contains 64 pages and 5 chapters, as the primary object, focusing on the reading section. This book was chosen for three reasons: its use as a supplementary textbook in more than five elementary schools in Mojokerto, its compatibility with Indonesia's freedom curriculum, and a potential weakness in the reading text in this book.

The instrument used was an evaluation rubric adapted from Tomlinson's theory (2011), consisting of the chapter, the topic or title of each reading text, selected criteria (Impact, Relevance, Self-Investment, and Ease), indicators developed from the selected criteria, results (appropriate and inappropriate), the evidence column, and an overall category for each component determined using rubric descriptors.

The rubric descriptor was designed to categorize each component: for the impact component, consisting of one indicator, it was strong when appropriate and weak when inappropriate; for the relevance component, consisting of two indicators, it was strong when both indicators were appropriate, moderate when one was appropriate and the other was inappropriate, and weak when both were inappropriate; for the self-investment component, consisting of one indicator, it was strong when appropriate and weak when inappropriate; and for the ease component, consisting of three indicators, it was strong when all were appropriate, moderate when two were appropriate, and weak when one or none of the indicators was appropriate.

Document analysis was used as the primary method of data collection, focusing solely on reading texts for units 7-11 of the Even Semester "Let's Speak English" textbook. The procedure involved a preliminary study to determine the textbook's use in schools, a preliminary review of the textbook's content, instrument development and validation by the supervising lecturer, and observation and data collection. There are 5 reading sessions in this book, consisting of 15 reading texts: 3 reading texts in chapters 7, 8, and 11, 4 reading texts in chapter 9, and 2 reading texts in chapter 10.

The data were analyzed using the principles of evaluating teaching materials derived from Tomlinson's theory (2011), through several stages: unitizing, sampling, recording and coding, reducing, inferring, and narrating (Krippendorff, 2004). Purposive sampling was used to select reading texts as the unit of analysis from the textbook, excluding other sections such as texts for speaking practice, vocabulary building (besides reading). All 15 reading texts in Chapters 7–11 that met these criteria were analyzed. Each indicator in the instrument was checked one by one, and evidence quotes were recorded in the evaluation rubric. Data reduction was carried out by grouping representative quotes based on the same code, followed by

interpretation of the patterns that appear and do not appear, before the results were reported and narrated.

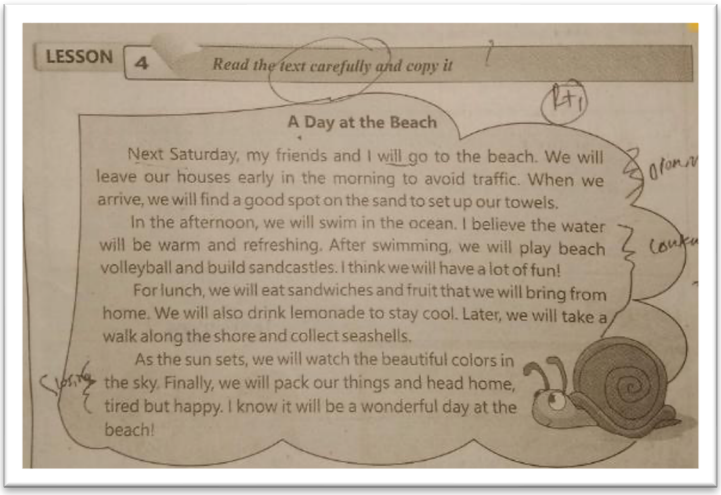
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings of the analysis of 15 reading texts in Chapters 7–11 of the Let's Speak English Book for 6th Grade Students published by Antara, based on four principles of Tomlinson's (2011) materials development theory: impact, relevance, self-investment, and ease. Table 1 shows the overall results of the analysis, which are discussed and explained in this section.

Table 1. Analysis of All Reading texts in Chapters 7-11

Reading Text	Impact	Relevance	Self-Investment	Ease
RT 1 Ch.7	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Strong
RT 2 Ch.7	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
RT 3 Ch.7	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
RT 1 Ch.8	Weak	Strong	Strong	Weak
RT 2 Ch.8	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
RT 3 Ch.8	Weak	Weak	Weak	Moderate
RT 1 Ch.9	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
RT 2 Ch.9	Weak	Weak	Strong	Strong
RT 3 Ch. 9	Weak	Strong	Strong	Weak
RT 4 Ch.9	Weak	Moderate	Weak	Strong
RT 1 Ch.10	Weak	Strong	Strong	Strong
RT 2 Ch.10	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
RT 1 Ch.11	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
RT 2 Ch.11	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
RT 3 Ch.11	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Moderate

Impact of the Reading Texts on Students' Interest and Engagement


LESSON 4 Read the text carefully and copy it

A Day at the Beach

Next Saturday, my friends and I will go to the beach. We will leave our houses early in the morning to avoid traffic. When we arrive, we will find a good spot on the sand to set up our towels.

In the afternoon, we will swim in the ocean. I believe the water will be warm and refreshing. After swimming, we will play beach volleyball and build sandcastles. I think we will have a lot of fun!

For lunch, we will eat sandwiches and fruit that we will bring from home. We will also drink lemonade to stay cool. Later, we will take a walk along the shore and collect seashells.

As the sun sets, we will watch the beautiful colors in the sky. Finally, we will pack our things and head home, tired but happy. I know it will be a wonderful day at the beach!

Figure 1. Reading Text 1 of Chapter 7

None of the reading texts in Chapters 7–11 met the criteria for visually appealing illustrations that support the text's main idea. For example, as shown in Figure 1, Reading Text 1 in

Chapter 7 only provides a black-and-white snail illustration that does not support the main idea about a holiday at the beach, while other texts use only abstract decorative text-box frames or lack illustrations altogether. These results emphasize that the reading texts in this book exhibit a low level of impact on students' interest and engagement. According to Tomlinson (2011), learning materials should capture students' attention through engaging presentations, including the use of relevant and meaningful visuals. These findings align with previous research (Novianti & Ambarwati, 2023; Amaliawati et al., 2024; Azaini & Ambarwati, 2023), which emphasized that visual elements and the quality of material presentation are crucial factors in supporting student engagement. Therefore, this book falls short of Tomlinson's "Impact" principle.

Relevance of the Reading Texts to Students' Daily Lives and Local Context

The reading texts show varying levels of relevance, with partial relevance being the most prevalent. Reading Text 1 in Chapter 7, entitled "A Day at the Beach," clearly reflects activities familiar to students, such as "Next Saturday, my friends and I will go to the beach" and "We will swim…," although there is no place, habit, activity, or food related to local culture. Most texts met the indicator of relevance to students' daily lives, such as family activities, school, aspirations, hobbies, and travel, aligning with Tomlinson's (2011) theory that the suitability of learning materials to students' lives plays an important role in increasing students' involvement in learning. However, indicators related to local context and cultural elements were not consistently met; only a few texts explicitly included local settings, while most used general contexts. This finding aligns with previous research (Novianti & Ambarwati, 2023; Pasaribu, 2022), which emphasized the importance of relating material to students' experiences and contexts. Therefore, it can be concluded that this book only partially meets the principle of relevance.

Self-Investment of Students Emotionally Involved in the Reading Texts

Most of the reading texts demonstrated a strong level of self-investment, as they contained elements of emotional engagement, such as feelings of joy, enthusiasm, and a desire to engage in activities or visit the places the author visited. For example, the first reading text in Chapter 7 presents positive feelings related to a personal experience, such as "I think we will have a lot of fun!" This finding aligns with Tomlinson's (2011) theory, which states that emotional engagement plays a crucial role in increasing student engagement in learning, and with previous research (Khasanah & Safriyani, 2021; Nanda & Azmy, 2020), which emphasized that student engagement in reading activities supports comprehension and language development. Therefore, this book met the principle of self-investment in most of the reading texts, although some texts lacked emotional involvement.

Reading Ease of Understanding of the Reading Texts for Sixth-Grade Students

This textbook shows a moderate level of reading ease in understanding the reading texts for sixth-grade students. Most texts had a clear structure and headings that matched the content, thus helping students understand the text. However, there are inconsistencies in sentence complexity; for example, one text used the long sentence "As I explore the museum, I will have the opportunity to see a wide range of ancient artifacts that showcase the beauty and complexity of Javanese culture," whose multiple dependent and independent clauses make it harder for students to understand, while another text used the short and simple sentence "My neighbor name is Mr. Smith," which is easier to comprehend. According to Tomlinson (2011), learning materials must be at the students' ability levels, a finding also supported by studies on reading instruction (Grabe & Stoller, 2020; Nation, 2008). Overall, ease is mainly affected by sentence complexity: texts that use shorter and simpler sentences achieve higher ease, while texts dominated by long and complex sentences can reduce ease for children, and the absence of titles may further reduce reading ease, as students do not get an initial overview of the text before reading. Thus, it can be concluded that this book partially fulfils the principle of ease, while consistency in the use of simple sentences and the provision of titles still needs improvement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research conducted to analyze the reading texts in Chapters 7–11 of Let's Speak English Book for 6th Grade Students, published by Antara, using the principles of material development from Tomlinson's (2011) theory, it can be concluded that, in terms of impact, all of the reading texts show weak potential in capturing students' attention due to the lack of engaging and relevant illustrations; in terms of relevance, the reading texts demonstrate a moderate level of relevance to students' daily lives, although the connection to local setting is still limited; in terms of self-investment, most texts demonstrate a strong level of student emotional engagement; and in terms of ease, most reading texts are at a moderate level of difficulty, with a generally clear structure but inconsistencies in sentence complexity and the provision of titles. Overall, this textbook has both strengths and limitations: it adequately supports student involvement, particularly self-investment, but still needs improvement, particularly in visual aspects and contextual relevance in terms of local settings.

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