NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR ENGLISH DISCOURSE TEXTBOOKS EVALUATION FOR INDONESIAN STUDENTS: GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION

Badi'atul Azmina[1], Dyah Fitri Mulati[2], Khotimah Mahmudah[3]

Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia[1]
Universitas Aisyah Pringsewu, Indonesia[2]
UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin, Indonesia[3]

cow.az19@gmail.com[1], dyah.fitrimu@gmail.com[2,] khotimah.mahmudah@uinjambi.ac.id[3]

ABSTRACT

This study aims to uncover the perceptions of graduate students on the content, examples, exercises/tasks, and presentation/format of the textbook *"Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya"* for the subject of Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching (DA and LT). This descriptive qualitative research involved students' perceptions of the selection of discourse textbooks in relation to their needs as the object of the research. Meanwhile, the subjects of the research were graduate students of the English Education Department in one of the state universities in Surakarta, Indonesia. The data collection methods utilized were the administration of questionnaires and document analysis. The findings revealed that nearly all students expressed a favorable response about the analysis of the textbook, including its content, examples, exercises/tasks, and presentation/format. Nevertheless, several comments provided valuable input to the instructor of the DA and LT Subject, prompting revisions to certain sections of the book.

Keywords: Needs analysis, textbook evaluation, discourse subject, students' perceptions

INTRODUCTION

Foreign language education generally consists of five crucial elements: students, teachers, resources, teaching techniques, and evaluation, according to Fauziati (2015, p.

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87). Litz (2001 in Rashidi & Kehtarfard, 2014) argues that textbooks are considered the primary tools for attaining predetermined goals and objectives in relation to learners' needs. In addition, Fauziati (2015) explicitly stated that textbooks serve as a manifestation of the curriculum that is employed. Therefore, the textbook in this particular situation should be grounded in culture and discourse, aligning with the learning environment in order to fulfill the learners' requirements. The process of identifying the specific requirements of learners in relation to the textbook is referred to as needs analysis. Munby introduced the use of needs analysis in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) during the 1960s and 1970s (Rashidi & Kehtarfard, 2014). Later, it extends beyond just English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to encompass the production of curriculum and materials as well (Richards, 2017).

A needs analysis in the early years that Munby (1978) proposed involved two stages: firstly, identifying the communication needs of the learners, and secondly, incorporating these needs into the design of the curriculum. Subsequently, many approaches were followed, including a systemic approach (Richterich & Chancerel, 1977), a learning-centered approach (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989), and a task-based approach (Long, 2005). In recent times, curriculum and materials development is also based on needs analysis (Richards, 2017), which aims to comprehend the learners' context. This context is demonstrated by the utilization of educational resources, particularly textbooks, inside the classroom.

The importance of textbooks has become controversial. There are three streams regarding the importance of textbooks (Ur, 1999 in Fauziati, 2015, p. 88): (1) textbook is a need, (2) textbook is not needed, and (3) textbook needs supplement materials. Each stream has its perspective. The first one argues that textbook is crucial because "(1) without textbook, leaners think their learning is not taken seriously; (2) in many situations, a textbook can serve as a syllabus; (3) it provides ready-made teaching texts and learning tasks; (4) it is a cheap way of providing learning materials; (5) without it, learners will be out of focus and teacher-dependent; and (6) for novice teachers, a textbook means security, guidance, and support." The second one who puts no importance to textbooks argues that "(1) every group or student has different needs, and no textbook can be a response to all different needs; (2) topics in a textbook may not be relevant to or interesting for all learners; (3) a textbook inhibits or confines teachers' creativity; (4) a textbook has its own

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rationale, and as such it cannot cater for a variety of levels, every type of learning styles, and strategies; and (5) teachers may find themselves as mediators to others' judgments about what is good and what is not." The last one believes that "no textbooks satisfy their needs and need supplementary materials based on their own specific needs in their own specific teaching situation."

To overcome those concerns, a needs analysis evidently plays a crucial part. It can also be used to evaluate existing materials or textbooks that are currently used in the English teaching and learning process. Several experts have proposed some points or considering textbook selection and evaluation. Skierso (1999 in Fauziati, 2015) proposes three main aspects in selecting textbooks: language, cultural information, and content. Later, Ellies (2000, in Fauziati, 2015) provides four points of internal evaluation: input, procedures, language activity, and outcomes. This study adopted Byrd's (2002) questions regarding students' needs for textbooks, including content/explanation, examples, exercises/tasks, and presentation/format.

Several studies have also been carried out related to need analysis, textbook analysis, and the relation of textbooks with culture and bias. In research about needs analysis, several experts, such as Savage and Storer (1992), put importance on involving the learners in both the needs analysis and program design. They stated that "by detailing needs identified by the learners and giving examples of how the needs were realized in learning activities, it shows that learners can provide the content of a language program" (1992, p. 187). Further, Akyel and Ozek (2010, p. 969) conducted "a need analysis to examine the university students' needs for the innovation of the ELT curriculum of the preparatory school of an English medium university in Istanbul." Meanwhile, in the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) area, Prachanant (2012, p. 117) carried out a needs analysis on English language use in the tourism industry, which revealed that "speaking is most important, then listening, reading, and writing. The three most relevant functions in using the English language are giving information, followed by providing services and offering help. English use problems include the inability to understand foreigners' accents, inappropriate words and expressions, inadequate vocabulary, and lack of grammar knowledge." Additionally, Basturkmen (2013) asserts that "the analysis of learners' needs is thus a key process in the design and ongoing revision of the Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) syllabus."

Regarding textbook analysis, Guilloteaux (2013) elucidates the "procedure for language textbook analysis from the perspective of second language acquisition (SLA) principles as a preliminary procedure to evaluation for selection." He argues that it can be used as a reference for textbook selection. Then, the importance of needs analysis in textbook evaluation has become a focus. In addition, Rashidi and Kehtarfard (2014) have used a needs analysis approach to evaluate Iranian third-grade high school English textbooks. "The results of the textbook evaluation revealed that although all language skills and components were most important for the majority of the students, the textbook could not fully support all of them together. Finally, it was suggested that the textbook be revised or at least supplemented with other instructional materials so that it could be more effective for the learners as mentioned above" (Rashidi and Kehtarfard, 2014, p. 1).

To meet learners' needs effectively, the textbook must contain not only language skills demanded by the curriculum but also fit the needs of the learners (Fauziati: 2015). While many researchers focus on the language skills that meet the needs of learners, this present study investigates some considerations on selecting textbooks that fit the learners' needs to answer the following research questions:

1. What are graduate students' perceptions toward the content of the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" for Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching Subject?

2. What are graduate students' perceptions toward the examples of the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" for Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching Subject?

3. What are graduate students' perceptions toward the exercises/tasks of the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" for Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching Subject?

4. What are graduate students' perceptions toward the presentation/format of the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" for Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching Subject?

METHOD

This study used descriptive qualitative methodology to reveal students' perceptions of the selection of the discourse textbook entitled "*Analisis Wacana dan Pengajarannya,*"

written by Diah Kristina et al. (2017). In obtaining the data, this research employed an open-ended questionnaire consisting of fifteen questions related to the consideration of selecting textbooks that fit the learners' needs, according to Byrd (2002: 417). The questions were then divided into four subtopics: content/explanation, example in the textbook, exercise/task, and presentation/format.

Participants

The participants of this study were sixteen graduate students, comprising ten females and six males. They were graduate students of the English Education Department at a state university in Surakarta, Indonesia. In analyzing the data, the researchers utilized interactive model data analysis proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), covering data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. The content of the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" for Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching Subject

Table 1. Content Analysis from Students' Perception

Code	Gender	Content/Explanation			
		1a	1b	1c	1d
R1	F	1	0	1	1
R2	F	1	1	1	1
R3	M	1	0	1	1
R4	F	1	0	1	1
R5	M	1	1	0	1
R6	F	1	1	1	1
R7	F	1	1	0	0
R8	M	1	0	1	1
R9	F	1	1	1	1
R10	M	0	0	1	0
R11	M	1	1	1	1
R12	F	1	1	1	1
R13	M	1	0	1	1
R14	M	1	0	0	1
R15	F	1	0	1	1
Positive Response		14	7	12	13
Negative Response		1	8	3	2

According to the data in Table 1, it was discovered that nearly all students expressed favorable responses regarding the content presented in the textbook titled *"Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya."* The researchers administered four questions to students to analyze the content of the textbook. The following presents the results of students' perceptions regarding the content of the textbook:

Firstly, question (1b) did not indicate significant differences, suggesting any possibility that the content of the textbook could be offensive or inappropriate to graduate students. Secondly, it was proved that from 15 respondents, only one response to the question (1a) was indicated as a negative response. It implies that 93% of students agreed that the content or explanation of that book could make them interested. This is the only one negative response from the respondent on the question (1a):

> R10 : "*Not really, because the book uses small font on the content. It is difficult to read if you have shortsight.*"

Thirdly, 12 students gave positive responses to the question (1c), which means the explanations in the textbook could be well understood by the students in the Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching (DA and LT) Subject. Lastly, for question (1d), 86% of total students agreed that the textbook could help students understand what exactly they need to learn DA and LT Subject.

b. The examples of the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" for Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching Subject

Table 2. The Examples Analysis from Students' Perception

Code	Gender	Examples in Textbook	
		2a	2b
R1	F	1	1
R2	F	1	1
R3	M	1	1

Code	Gender	2a	2b
R4	F	1	1
R5	M	1	1
R6	F	1	1
R7	F	0	0
R8	M	1	1
R9	F	1	1
R10	M	1	0
R11	M	1	1
R12	F	1	0
R13	M	0	1
R14	M	1	1
R15	F	1	1
Positive Response		13	12
Negative Response		2	3

The researchers provided two questions to obtain students' perceptions about examples in the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya.*" Most of the students' perceptions were signified as positive responses. Both questions, i.e., (2a) and (2b), got 86% and 80% of total students who answered with positive statements. Based on the question, students agreed that the examples in the textbook are suitable to the lives and interests of the students in DA and LT Subject. In addition, most students agreed that the textbook closely met the concepts of materials that were supposed to be explained. The following is the sample of negative and positive responses from students:

- Positive Response to Question (2a)

    R3   : "*Yes, because students are able to relate their daily live events with the examples provided in the book.*"

- Negative Response to Question (2b)

    R7   : "*No, they (*the examples*) do not because it is too boring.*"

c. The exercises/tasks of the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" for Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching Subject

Table 3. The Exercises/Tasks from Students' Perception

Code	Gender	Exercises/Task	
		3a	3b
R1	F	1	1

R2	F	1	1
R3	M	1	1
R4	F	0	1
R5	M	0	1
R6	F	0	1
R7	F	1	1
R8	M	1	0
R9	F	1	1
R10	M	0	0
R11	M	1	1
R12	F	0	0
R13	M	1	1
R14	M	1	1
R15	F	0	0
Positive Response		9	11
Negative Response		6	4

Table 3 displays students' perceptions about the exercises/tasks in the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya.*" The researchers provided two questions to get students' perceptions about the exercises/tasks in the textbook. The first data on the question (3a) revealed that while 9 of 15 students gave positive responses, the rest of the students gave negative responses related to whether the exercises or tasks in the textbook showed enough variety to fit the needs of different kinds of students in DA and LT Subject. In addition, the second data on the question (3b) indicated that 11 of 15 students or 73% of the total students, gave positive analysis, meaning that students agreed with the statement that most exercises in the textbook are interesting.

- Negative Response to Question (3a)

  R6   : "*No. I think the exercises or tasks are provided in general cases so that they will meet the needs of students in general, too.*" (it means that it will not meet the specific needs of students.)

- Positive Response to Question (3b)

  R5   : "*Yes, because the students tend to find the reference that is easier to read.*"

d. Presentation/format of the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" for Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching Subject

Table 4. Presentation/Format Analysis from Students' Perception

Code	Gender	Presentation/format						
		4a	4b	4c	4d	4e	4f	4g
R1	F	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
R2	F	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
R3	M	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
R4	F	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
R5	M	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
R6	F	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
R7	F	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
R8	M	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
R9	F	1	0	1	1	1	0	1
R10	M	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
R11	M	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
R12	F	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
R13	M	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
R14	M	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
R15	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Positive Response		9	10	10	12	8	6	10
Negative Response		6	5	5	3	7	9	5

Table 4 exhibits the data of students' perceptions about the presentation/format of the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya.*" The questions in this section consisted of the presentation, the illustrations, the printed texts, the space of the texts, indexes, appendices, and the systematic order of the text. First, questions (4b), (4c), and (4g) uncovered the same result that 10 of 15 students or 66% of the total students, gave positive responses related to the appropriateness of illustrations/design elements that the book provided, the appropriateness of illustrations/design elements for students' age and educational level, and lastly, the text well-constructed. The following is the sample of students' perception on the question (4b):

R1   : "*Yes, it is appropriate because the color of the cover is not provocative.*"

Second, question (4a) indicated that 9 of 15 students gave a positive response about the presentation/format. It implies that 60% of total students agreed that the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" looked good for the students in DA and LT Subject. However, 40% of students disagreed with the statements. The following is the sample of negative response from students' perception toward the question (4a):

R10 : "*No, I am too lazy to finish reading the book because the font is small, and the pictures provided are blurred with black and white appearance.*"

Third, the question (4d) obtained the most positive responses related to the presentation/format analysis. As many as 80% of total students agreed that the printed text in the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" was easy to read and appropriate for students. Nevertheless, 20% of students disagreed with the statements. The following is the sample of negative responses from students' perceptions toward the question (4d):

R6 : "*The printed text on the textbook is easy to read, even though it will be better if it is printed larger.*"

Fourth, the question (4e) indicates no significant difference between positive and negative responses. It denotes that question (4e) almost received a balanced percentage related to the statement about the mix between print and white space, which is quite equal to the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya.*" The following is the sample of negative response from students' perception toward the question (4e):

R10 : "*Not good because some parts are not balanced in terms of the proportion of written words with blank space.*"

Lastly, the data of question (4f) got the lowest positive response in all responses related to the presentation/format. As many as 6 of 15 students' perceptions agreed that the textbook: "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya*" has an index, appendices, or sections that are usable by students. In contrast, students gave a negative response because they did not know about an index, appendices, or sections in the textbook.

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This finding supports Tomlinson (2003 in Lawrence 2011), who states that "though the textbooks written by professional writers are usually of good quality in terms of organization, packaging, and design, they tend to be lacking in qualities of being creative and imaginative." The following is the sample of negative response from students' perception toward the question (4e):

R10 : "*So far, I have not found such things in the book. The book is still in process, so it needs more revision.*"

CONCLUSION

The textbook should be grounded in the cultural and discursive context of the learning environment to effectively address the needs of the learners. The process of identifying the specific needs of learners in relation to the textbook is referred to as needs analysis. In the debate about the importance of textbooks, it is believed that teachers need to select textbooks based on students' needs. The present study adopted Byrd's (2002) questions regarding students' needs for textbooks, including content/explanation, examples, exercises/tasks, and presentation/format. The result unveiled that related to the content of the textbook "*Analisa Wacana dan Pengajarannya,*" graduate students exhibited an interest in the textbook, in which the explanations in the textbook could be well-understood, helping them understand what exactly they need to learn DA and LT Subject. At the same time, there is a possibility that the content of the textbook could be offensive or inappropriate to graduate students.

Concerning the examples in the textbook, most of the students' perceptions are indicated as positive responses. Students agreed that the examples in the textbook are suitable for the lives and interests of the students in DA and LT Subject. Then, for the exercises or tasks in the textbook, 9 of 15 students provided positive responses. At the same time, the rest of the students gave negative responses related to whether the exercises or tasks in the textbook show enough variety to fit the needs of diverse kinds of students in DA and LT Subject. In addition, as many as 73% of total students gave positive analysis, indicating that they agreed with the statement that most exercises in the textbook are interesting. Lastly, the result revealed that 66% of total students gave positive responses related to the appropriateness of illustrations/design elements that the book provided, the

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appropriateness of illustrations/design elements for students' age and educational level, and the text being well-constructed. However, there exists a negative response from students, as they do not know about an index, appendices, or sections in the textbook.

This kind of analysis of perceptions toward existing textbooks, which are based on students' needs, is crucial in evaluating textbooks. The responses contribute to the teacher revising some parts of the book to meet students' needs. Still, this study was limited to only one textbook, so for further studies, it is suggested to analyze a larger-scale textbook.

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