

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE MATERIAL IN THE EXISTING ENGLISH TEXTBOOK FOR NURSING ASSISTANT STUDENTS

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Abstract

The use of appropriate material is important in the English teaching and learning process. However, the existing textbooks sometimes may not fulfill the need of teachers and students. In particular, the English textbooks for SMK students are still general for all skill competencies. They do not fulfill the students' needs relating to their skill competencies. The main aim of this study is to investigate the teacher's perception of the English textbook. It focusses on the material on existing English textbook that is used by nursing assistant students, its relevance with students' need, and the English textbook for nursing assistant student should be, from the teachers' perspective. This study used a qualitative approach consisting of data collection in form of a questionnaire and interviews. 15 teachers are selected to be the participant in this study based on specific criteria. The result confirmed that the using textbook in classroom activities is very important to assist students' in gaining learning objectives. However. It should be complemented with other resources to match with student's need. Some suggestion was added to the English textbook should be.

Keywords: teachers' perception, english material, english textbook, nursing assistant students

Introduction

Vocational secondary education is the secondary level of education which prioritizes the development of students' abilities to carry out certain types of work. It prioritizes preparing students to enter the workforce and developing professional attitudes. In Indonesia, we know SMK (Vocational High School) as a form of formal education unit that provides vocational education at the secondary education level as a continuation of Junior High School. Nowadays, it has 146 skill competencies (Rahayu et al., 2021). The nursing assistant is one of those skill competencies.

Each skill competency has its own specificity in learning activities, likewise in learning English for SMK. Teaching English to SMK students is always interesting to be discussed. Unlike students from senior high schools, SMK students have particular learning needs and target needs in accordance with the skill competencies. Therefore,

English for Specific purposes (ESP) is needed in the teaching and learning process in order to put students' particular needs in enrolling the learning at SMK.

The use of appropriate material is important in the English teaching and learning process. Therefore, the textbook has significant roles in English learning for SMK by providing the appropriate materials. Textbooks are potential aids that assist students to know and learn about society and give the way for achieving educational goals (Ebrahimi & Sahragard, 2017).

The textbook should provide considerable advantages when used in the classroom for both teachers and students (Sheldon, 1988). It facilitates students in learning activities because a textbook offers advantages that constitute beneficial resources. It is one of the learning sources which is the easiest to obtain and becomes one of many aids to help the students in acquiring clear concepts of the subject point. The textbook is the most important resource employed to achieve the aims of learning which are based on the students' needs (Litz, 2005). Material and textbook can be as a source of language, as learning support, for motivation, and for reference (Dudley-Evans et al., 1998).

The teachers' perceptions towards the use of textbooks become an important reason in making textbook use effectively. Teachers' perceptions have the same point as teachers' beliefs about the subject matter teaching, teachers' responsibilities, their students, the curriculum, and their classrooms (Pajares, 1992). Teacher's perceptions are derived from sources such as experience and personality (Donaghue, 2003). Language teachers' perceptions affect what the teachers do in the classroom (Barcelos, 2003). This means that teachers' perceptions are the foundation for teachers to make decisions in their classroom activities. Therefore, teachers must be mindful of what they perceive and believe when managing their classroom activities.

Because English teachers use textbooks in their classrooms, they must be involved in the process of evaluation in order to give the appropriate textbook to their certain student groups (Tok, 2010). Teachers should select the most proper textbooks that fill the criteria, teachers' and students' certain situations, purposes, and needs, in order to gain the main objectives of learning a second/foreign language.

However, the existing textbooks sometimes may not fulfill the need of teachers and students. In particular, the English textbooks for SMK students are still general for all skill competencies. They do not fulfill the students' needs relating to their skill competencies. Moreover, textbooks for SMK students with skill competency of nursing assistants should be different from other skill competencies. The medical language is used to write medical records, medical terminology, to read, and to communicate with others, to perform nursing interventions, to take care of their patients, and others (Hurria et al., 2005)

Since ESP is designed for a typical group of people in a typical context where the materials used are concerned to the students' specialized field of study, and nursing assistant students should also have the English skills to support their future job. Teachers' perception with regard to the students and nursing assistant students' English

textbook usage is needed. Teachers should be able to select the right textbook that will be used in the teaching and learning process.

Method

This study used a qualitative approach consisting of data collection in form of a questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire was developed and offered to English teachers through Google Form™. The questionnaire was developed consisting of three sections: Section 1 consisted of questions about demographic and background items, Section 2 consisted of questions that investigate teachers' perceptions of the used English textbooks, Section 3 consisted of questions that investigate teacher expectations on how the textbook should be for nursing assistant students. Furthermore, the interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with the same parts and contents as the questionnaire. The selection of teachers for the questionnaire was based on one criteria: the teachers should be the English teachers who teach English to nursing assistant students.

In total, 15 teachers participated in the questionnaire. The teachers, 9 females (60%) and 6 males (40%) ranged in age from 28 to 40 years, with a mean age of 34.73 years. In terms of levels of study, 12 of the teachers passed a Bachelor's program (80%) and 3 passed a Master's program (20%). On average, the teachers had taught English for 5-10 years (ŞAVK et al., 2007). Among the participants, 5 teachers were randomly selected to take part in interviews. Table 1 shows the participants' characteristics.

Interactive Model was used to analyze the data in this study. This model is divided into four parts, namely data collection, data reduction, data displays, and drawing conclusion and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Table 1
Participants' characteristics

Background Items	Total	Percentage	Means
Age			34.73
Gender			
Male	6	40	
Female	9	60	
Levels of study			
Bachelor degree	12	80	
Master degree	3	20	
Years in teaching experience			8.13

Results and Discussions

This section describes the results and discussion together based on the research questions as mentioned above.

A. The teacher's perception of the English textbook used

Based on table 2, the result of questionnaire shows that all participants in this study use textbooks as teaching aids in the classroom activities. Most of the English

teachers in this study are strongly agree that the textbook assists students in gaining the objectives of learning and 5 of them are agree.

Table 2
The using of textbook

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The textbook assists students in gaining the objectives of learning	-	-	5	10
Need to evaluate the textbook before using to the classroom	-	-	-	15
Need to take material from the other sources beside the textbook	-	-	-	15

They evaluated the textbooks before choosing the textbooks they will use. They believe that textbook evaluation and selection are important to do in order to get the best one to be used by their students. “Textbook evaluation is the important first step before using the book to the classroom”

“There are many textbook are offered by the book publisher and I have to choose the best of them to be implemented in my class”

“First. I look at the curriculum, learning objectives and student’s need. The textbook must be relevant to them”

“The appearance of an attractive textbook will make students more enthusiastic in learning process. Moreover, there are many variations of activities in the book”

“I think the price is also a consideration in choosing the book. so that my students can get it easily”

The teachers select the textbook based on some reasons. The relevance of textbooks to the curriculum and objectives, the compatibility to student needs, physical appearance, variety of activities, and prices are criteria that considered by teachers in selecting textbooks.

“Of course, textbook is not the only one source as teaching aids”

“Today, it is very easy to get teaching material. Only by googling, we can get many ideas”

“yeah, internet help me to get material besides the textbook”

However, in using the textbook, the teachers do not follow all the materials and activities in the textbook. They tend to organize the materials in the textbook

based on the lesson plan they made, consider the objective of the lesson and students' needs. They argue that textbooks are not the only source of teaching material. The teachers need to search the materials from the other reliable sources that can support learning goals. The teachers also mentioned that supplementary materials could be from anything that can assist the students learn better.

Therefore, the language teachers should have the competence to adapt the existing material in the textbook and make the supplementary materials although they are relatively satisfied with their English textbook choices. Adaptations can include modifying content, adding or deleting content and reorganizing content in textbook. All teachers as the participant in this study agreed that additional materials put in the learning activities easier to gain the aims and scale up students' knowledge and motivation.

Teachers' perceptions cannot be separated from the factors that affect the perception itself. There are some factors that affect teachers' perception towards English textbook. The interview showed that personal experience, students' interest, students' ability, and references being those factors. It is propped by Richardson (1996) who points main sources of teachers' perceptions and beliefs including: teachers' different educational background and how long they have been teaching.

B. The relevance of the material in the textbook to nursing assistant student's needs.

This section shows the teachers' perception about the relevance of the material in the textbook to nursing assistant student's needs. Table 3 shows the result.

Table 3
The relevance of textbook to students' need

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The textbooks are very important to support students' abilities accordingly to the major (Nursing Assistant)			15	
The textbook used is relevant to major (Nursing Assistant)		13	2	
The textbooks used have provided real and relevant examples to the major (Nursing Assistant)				15
Students need additional English language material that is relevant to their majors (Nursing Assistant)				15

The teachers are satisfied enough with their textbook selection. In particular about supporting the textbook in developing student's English skills. All participants also agree that the textbook has provided a variety of activities and exercises supporting student's learning in the classroom.

However, in relation to the availability of materials in textbooks, all participants said that there are not any specific textbooks specifically written for nursing assistant students. They agree that the existing textbooks do not sufficiently fulfill the learners' needs. They argue that the materials of the textbooks are merely for SMK with business and administration concentration and also tourism. So, they need to find additional materials from other sources.

“Many existing English textbooks are for business and administration department. So, I should find additional materials”

“I have not found the specific textbook for nursing assistant student. I have to combine the existing textbook with other sources”

“Because it is difficult to get the textbook for nursing assistant student. The teacher must be able to modify the material according to the nursing context

“I actually found many English nursing books, but they are for university level. Then I modify them according to the level of my students”

The interviews showed that teachers affirm that the English textbooks for nursing assistant students must contain integrated language skills and types of language to prepare the students in their future workplace. Concerning the linguistic aspects, the teachers argue the language applied in the textbook should be realistic and authentic. Language level must be appropriate with the level of the students.

In shorts, all of the participants agree that they need to facilitate the students with materials and activities that appropriate to the nursing assistant students' field of study. They said that the students need practical materials that could be much useful when they do their future jobs after graduating from school. ESP materials should meet students' needs and the language taught should appropriate with the language that the students will use (Cunningsworth, 1995).

C. The English textbook for nursing assistant students should be, from the teacher's perspective

This section will provide the opinions from the teacher's perspective about how English textbooks for nursing assistant students should be. Since there is not an English textbook for nursing assistant students specifically, all teachers as the participant in this study hope that someday will available the English textbook supporting nursing assistant student in studying English. Here some of their opinions,

“English textbooks for nursing assistant students should focus on learning communication in the health care field”

"It is better if in the English textbook for nursing assistant students provide the real example of dialog in hospital or text in healthcare theme"

“The English textbook should be appropriate to the objectives of establishing communicative competence. such as, how to greet patients in hospital politely, how to explain healthcare procedure, how to handle patients' complain, etc.”

“The English textbooks should introduce English medical terms to the nursing assistant students”

Most of English teachers in this study agree that the material in the existing textbook should be adapted to the appropriate material. Widodo (2016) stated that ESP materials should include a focus on such things as authenticity, topics/themes, texts and contexts, knowledge and language, tasks or activities, representations of participants and social practices, and pedagogical prompts.

Conclusion

Vocational school a.k.a SMK in Indonesia has many skill competencies/department. Each skill competencies have it specific needs and objectives, likewise in learning English. There are some important points can be drawn from study of teacher's perspective on the Material in the existing English textbook for nursing assistant students.

The textbook is one of the main teaching aids in the classroom. But teachers should do some evaluation and selection to the textbook. They are important to do in order to get the best one to be used by their students. There are some criterias that considered by teachers in selecting textbooks. The relevance of textbooks to the curriculum and objectives, the compatibility to student needs, physical appearance, variety of activities, and prices are the criterias in selecting the textbooks.

Since providing the appropriate material can make easier to gain learning objectives, some adaptations on the textbook should be done by the teachers to meet with student's need. The existing English textbooks have not facilitated all majors in SMK, including nursing assistant majors. Teachers need to find additional materials from other sources. The materials should be realistic and authentic. They must contain integrated language skills and types of language to prepare nursing assistant students in their future workplace.

Hopefully, it will be provided the SMK English textbook specific for each skill competency, specially for nursing assistant students. This textbook should cover all English materials that is needed by the students for their future jobs.

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