# The Materials Suitability of the General English Textbook Used at Sekolah Umum Perikanan Menengah (SUPM) Tegal

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## Abstract

In ELT classroom, textbook is chosen to be either significantly or slightly used. As teachers begin to teach in classroom, they are in charge of deciding whether to use, adapt, replace, omit or supplement the methods and materials used in the chosen textbook. This can be done by understanding the students' needs and interests, aim and styles of learning, also their strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, this study deals with finding out the students' perception on the English textbook 'Get Along with English' for Vocational Schools Grade XII. The data were collected through distributing a survey questionnaire to elicit the perspective of 100 students of Sekolah Usaha Perikanan Menengah (SUPM) Tegal as the current users. Unstructured interview to the students were also taken to supplement the data. The questionnaire had been adapted from the checklist of evaluation criteria by Mukundan et al. (2011) in accordance with the textbook evaluation theory of Grant (1989) and Cunningsworth (1995). The findings revealed that the textbook satisfied the majority of students in most criteria. Meanwhile, the results also showed that the textbook has weak points in the case of physical durability, phonological aspects insufficiency, and the lack of its fun activities to attract students' interests. A further investigation focuses on analyzing the relation of language aspects, students' motivation, and the learning achievement is suggested .

Keywords: Textbook, Textbook Evaluation, Suitability To Students

## Introduction

At Sekolah Usaha Perikanan Menengah (SUPM) Negeri Tegal, a fisheries vocational high school under the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, textbooks are required to help teachers to teach and enrich the students learning experiences. The students learn General English once a week with three hours of learning per meeting. Teachers find it difficult to achieve competencies of the large number of students in a limited time. Student textbook is the preferred solution that helps teachers to save their time. Students are expected to learn through using them not only in the classroom with teachers' guidance but also independently in the dormitory.

Generally, published textbooks should be prepared by people who are professionally experienced in the field of teaching certain subjects by referring to a particular curriculum. They write them by adjusting the target level and the native language of students who live in a specific cultural context. Cunningsworth (1984:1) stated that the materials contained in the textbook are usually carefully tested in pilot studies in actual teaching situations before publication. Composing a textbook is not just compiling several different books, replacing the cover and some of the textbooks' parts from period to period to make them look different. The textbook 'Get Along with English' for Vocational School Grade XII had been published since 2010 based on the standard of content 2006 (School-Based Curriculum). The study of the detailed evaluation of the textbook has not been conducted, at least in the current school. Besides, there is no specific claim from the text-

book' writer who states that the textbook refers to the content standard provided by The National Education Standard Institution (BSNP). An evaluation should be carried out. According to Cunningsworth (1995:14), one of the main reasons for materials evaluation is to identify particular strengths and weaknesses in course books already in use. The optimum use can be made of the strong points, whilst the weaker ones can be optimized through adoption or by substituting materials from other books.

Moreover, in spite of the wide variety of published textbooks on the market, it is not easy to find a perfect match between the students' needs and the learning requirements on the one side, and what the textbooks contain on the other side. Most of the textbooks are written for the general market. Different students from different places may not feel and get the same benefits. Romero (1975), cited in Muslich (2010:33), stated that there is no best textbook for all situations. Every textbook might be relevant and appropriate for only particular groups or classes but still does not suit to other groups in a different area. This is due to the uniqueness of every learning and teaching situation. Choosing materials for learning very much depends on the dynamics of the classroom, the students' and teachers' personalities, the syllabuses' constraints, the availability of resources, and the students' expectations and motivation (Cunningsworth, 1995:136).

At the first stage of evaluation, teachers have the role to choose and initially evaluate the textbook through their subjective judgments. 'Get Along with English' has been chosen since it seems to be communicative, teachable, interesting, and at the right level. Since the best textbook should suit three components: curriculum, teachers, and students, textbook evaluation must be conducted from those points of view. The textbook has been used for a semester, yet it still does not attract students' interest in using or reading it. Most students use them as a matter of duty in the classroom, then left them there when the class is over. As a boarding school with male students as the majority, SUPM Negeri Tegal implements the government's program which allows poor students – whose parents work in the fishery fields – to pass the selection test with a special recommendation. This causes a significant difference in ability level between students who have passed the test, and those who have been selected by recommendation.

On the other hand, those students must be treated and tested the same way. The condition gets worse since the students have a very low interest in studying due to many reasons. They need to be attracted and motivated to read and utilize the textbook. Students' learning needs are not only limited to the consideration of the language. They also have intellectual and emotional needs too (Cunningsworth, 1984:6). The materials' suitability is related to these aspects. Suitable materials can help them to be encouraged and stimulated as they progress. Therefore, the teachers must discover their students' perspective on the textbook they use to find out whether the materials are suitable to them.

Since educational textbooks are varied, an evaluation may take different subjects regarding the grade levels or school subjects. Among the previous studies from 2006 to 2015 which I noted in Chapter II, a few of them investigate students' perspectives on textbooks' quality as if their perception is less important and can be easily overlooked. The consideration of the different language skills being taught must not be neglected since different students have differing needs. Discovering the students' needs, attitude and interests towards the English textbook they use are important. The low motivation and interests of my students, which leads to their low achievement may be caused by the lack of students' interest in the textbook they use. Therefore, it challenged me as the teachers to ensure that the textbook is appropriate regarding the students' needs, interests, and socio-cultural backgrounds. The study aims to look in-depth the students' views on the textbook 'Get Along with English' based on the criteria in question. However, a textbook evaluation checklist is required as the instrument to help the evaluators. A focus group study conducted by Jayakaran Mukundan et al. (2011) have developed a checklist evaluation for English language textbook refining the previous checklist proposed by the same researchers. The result was a valuable checklist. Despite the different focus, this research can be seen as an extension of the study and to prove the checklist practicality as has been suggested. With some adaptation to the theory of Cunningsworth (1984; 1995) and Grant (1987), the checklist was used to help me in determining the criteria in question.

As what students learn is concerned and as to fill the information gap related to language content, this study aims to look at the nature of language contained in the textbook as a part of the evaluation focus. Yet, evaluating a textbook based on merely students' perspectives are con-

sidered to be less reliable. Students are not as knowledgeable as teachers or other textbook evaluators. Therefore, the students' responses would be useful as the supplementation and complementary consideration.

**Textbook Evaluation**

Textbook are physically produced, copied, and sold in many countries every year to complement the teaching-learning process. According to Directorate General of Higher Education (2004:3), textbook or educational book is a set of systematical writings which contains a particular subject matter, prepared by authors referring to the curriculum. Muslich (2010: 24) stated that textbooks, called subject book, are a kind of books which are often used as the learning tools containing particular subject which is systematically structured and selected referring to specific objectives, learning orientation, and students development to be assimilated. In conclusion, a textbook is a systematic structured writing which is adjusted with the implemented curriculum and used as a means of learning for teachers and students of language learning. There are three significant learning components which are reflected in every textbook: curriculum, teachers, and students. If a textbook does not satisfy one of them, it can not be called textbook.

Evaluation is the term used to refer to the value judgments of the parties involved in a particular case. In textbooks evaluation, such value judgments will come not only from teachers or experts who have experiences of using the materials in question. As the prime users, students' view towards the usefulness of the textbooks are also worthy. The textbooks evaluation will be based on a number of factors, including their expectations, methodological preferences, needs, syllabus requirements, and individual preferences. Grant (1987:118) stated a three-stage process of textbook evaluation: initial evaluation, detailed evaluation, and in-use evaluation. Initial evaluation can be done by applying the criteria to decide if the textbook worth looking at more closely. This is usually done by teachers to filter out distinct unsuitable materials. The detailed evaluation can be further done after applying the initial evaluation to help us deciding how far the textbook fits the condition. Thus, the in-use evaluation – as the last stage – is done once a textbook have been adopted. The process should be continuous to find out whether or not the textbook work in the classroom.

Teachers are responsible to decide whether to use, adapt, replace, omit or supplement the methods and materials used in the chosen textbook. This is in line with statement of Grant (1989: 10) that teachers' choice of textbooks or teaching methods depend on the reasons why their students learn and their learning styles. The diagram below summarizes some options the teachers have in selecting textbook taken from Grant (1989:17).
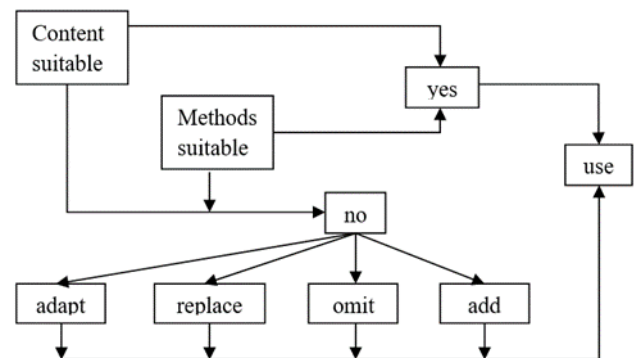


Figure 1. Options of Selecting Textbook

There are no perfect books that exist as the teaching materials, but the most appropriate and suitable one does. Therefore, selecting it becomes a challenging task. Selecting and evaluating textbooks involves adjusting the materials to the context in which it is going to be used. There are a variety of theories and opinions on the category of 'good' textbooks which meet the quality standards. Grant (1987: 121) emphasizes that a book is considered to be right and appropriate if it satisfies at least three condition: students, teachers, and syllabus. Cunningsworth (1995: 3-4) outlines the criterion points that are not much different from those described by BSNP. According to him, the detailed reference checklist for textbook evaluation and selection is based on: (1) aims and approach, (2) design and organization, (3) language content, (4) skills, (5) methodology, (6) supporting materials, and (7) practical consideration.

**Material and Methods**

This is a quantitative study which data were derived from cross-sectional survey design, which is conducted to discover the teachers' perspective of the student textbook *Get Along with English*. This involves studies which employ the use of statistical analyses to obtain findings. Survey study characteristically involves large numbers of related parties questioning

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about their behaviours, attitudes, and opinions. It merely describes what those people say, think and do (Kaufman, 2005:151). Survey includes studies using questionnaires or structured interviews for data collection intended to draw a generalization from a sample of population (Babbie, 1990) as has been cited in Cresswell (15-16). The stages stated by Campbell and Katona (1953) in Kaufman (2005: 152) are nine -general steps. *First* stage is setting the general goals and survey objectives. *Second*, developing more specificity about the types of data to be collected, and determine the hypothesis to be tested. *Third*, defining the specific population to be surveyed, to decide on the right one sample, and to determine the criteria to be used to select sample. *Fourth*, determining how the sample will be surveyed and develop specific questions to be used. *Fifth*, making decision about the survey management in the field. *Sixth*, analysing content. *Seventh*, planning the analysis. *Eighth*, tabulating – and the last stage is analising and reporting.

The research participants are 100 students of SUPM Tegal who have ever used the textbook for their classrooms. Grant (1987:118) stated that in the process of evaluating textbooks to find out how a book could be profitably used, can be done by considering their suitability to teachers. The study is limited to investigate the students to ascertain the textbook suitability to them. Tuckman (1978:196) cited from Rosdiana (2015), stated that questionnaire can be used to measure one's prior knowledge and what he or she prefers and what she or he believes. Therefore, a five-Likert scale close-ended questionnaire were used to investigate the participants to provide their agreement or disagreement on each evaluative statement. The scales labelled: *Completely Agree (CA), Agree (A), Partly Agree (PA), Disagree (D),* and *Completely Disagree (CD)*. The data collected are nominal data since they are aimed to find out how suitable the textbook to the students.

Table 1. Scoring Analysis

| Responses | Score | Mean Range | Category of Meaning |
|-----------|-------|-----------|---------------------|
| CA | 5 | 4.51 – 5.00 | Very suitable |
| A | 4 | 3.51 – 4.50 | Suitable |
| PA | 3 | 2.51 – 3.50 | Sometimes suitable |
| D | 2 | 1.51 – 2.50 | Less suitable |
| CD | 1 | 1.00 – 1.50 | Not suitable |

These scales lead us to the conclusion level of respondents agreement towards the quality of the book being evaluated, whether or not it is suitable and compatible. Finaly, to define the percentage, the Total Score (TS) of each statement was divided by the Highest Score (Y) multiplied by 100.

## Results and Discussion
### Preliminary Results

The initial stage of the research after determining the research purposes was to determine the evaluation criteria for the survey questionnaire. In the process, there were some changes and adjustments occured both in the initial modification and shortly after the the questionnaire was piloted. Some modifications were made to the checklist. I chose the tentative checklist promoted by Mukundan, *et.al.*(2011) owing to some reasons. The checklist has been made through a focus group study involved six experienced participants who were believed to be well-aware of the characteristic of an effective textbook. The checklist most categories and statements seem clear and practical enough for students. Furthermore, modifying an avaliable trusted checklist was considered more efficient than creating the new one. Since I wanted to get to know students'perception and their evaluation of the textbook, I provided statements that are considered to be relevant to the students' understanding, and in reference to research purposes and the theories (Cunningsworth, 1984, 1995; Grant, 1989; and BSNP, 2006), I simplify a number of categories and do some insertions and deletions. The Appendix 2,3, and 4 presents the checklist before and after it was modified.

The first questionnaire was piloted before it is distributed. From the results of the pilot study, supported by analysis of the students' needs by interviewing some respondent samples, I discovered that there are some criteria which statements were beyond students' capabilities to give comment. *Methodology* was removed from the list of category. '*There is a good adequate clear teachers' guide to aid the teacher*' was removed from part C, item 15. '*Cultural sensitiveness have been considered*' was paraphrased into '*It is culturally acceptable to the learner*'. '*The topics help expand students' awareness and enrich their experience*' was added as Part C, Item 10. '*It is compatible to the socio – economic context*' was added as Part C, Item 11. '*It is compatible to the needs of the learners*' was added as Part C, Item 13. '*It is*

*compatible to the interests of the learner'* was added as Part C, Item 14. '*There are enough authentic materials (poscard, advertisements, match audio reccording, etc) so that the students can see that the book is relevant to real -life'* was added as Part C, Item 15. '*It is flexible and allow the students' different learning styles'* was added as Part C, Item 16. '*It is easy to use by students to learn independently'* was added as Part C, Item 17.

From students' information, it is found that 'Methodology' is not reliable to be questioned to students. Most students thought that this category is beyond their understanding, and they left this category unfilled. Thus, I decided to omit the category from the students' questionnaire. There remain 11 variables of the research to be investigated. The details are described in the following figure.

## Questionnaire Results

The results show that, based on the 11 evaluation category, the general tendency of the students' perceptions toward the textbook was either good enough or satisfying. Five categories including the skills content: *Speaking, Reading, Writing, Vocabulary*, and *Exercises* were satisfying with more than 3.50 of the mean score. While 5 other categories were good enough. The table also shows that only one category that is not satisfying in the textbook, that is *Pronunciation*, which the mean is less than 2.50. The following chart gives a further description.

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Table 2. The Results of the Questionnaire Per-Category

| No. | Categories | N | Mean Score | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Design, Physical Attributes, and Practical Consideration | 100 | 3.430 | Good Enough |
| 2 | Supplementary materials | 100 | 3.395 | Good Enough |
| 3 | General Content | 100 | 3.487 | Good Enough |
| 4 | Listening | 100 | 3.420 | Good Enough |
| 5 | Speaking | 100 | 3.593 | Satisfying |
| 6 | Reading | 100 | 3.510 | Satisfying |
| 7 | Writing | 100 | 3.577 | Satisfying |
| 8 | Vocabulary | 100 | 3.653 | Satisfying |
| 9 | Grammar | 100 | 3.362 | Good Enough |
| 10 | Pronunciation | 100 | 2.410 | Unsatisfactory |
| 11 | Exercises | 100 | 3.607 | Satisfying |

## Design, Physical Attributes, and Practical Consideration

The textbook's design, physical attributes, and practical consideration refer to the textbook's layout, content organization and presentation, price, and durability. Even though they seem to be elementary questions, yet the students need to be given proper consideration. According to Muslich

(2010;306), the three indicators which should be considered in case of design and physical feasibility are the size of the textbook, the cover design, and the content design. A textbook's size must be adjusted with the content materials since they may influence the content layout and the number of pages. The textbook's cover and content design includes layout, typography, and letter using. These indicators become the part of textbook's communicative way. McGrath (2002) also emphasizes the clear layout and presentation as one of elements which must be considered in evaluating a textbook. A good layout and design of a textbook can quickly reflect the particular materials, minimize the possibility of multiple interpretations. The majority of the students agreed that the layout is attractive. The cover picture is designed appropriately for students at their ages. They also argued that the use of texts and visuals in the textbook are also quite efficient since the textbook does not employ too much variation of letters. There is a consistency in the selection and placement of the title, subtitle, examples, and other information in the whole pages. All the topic titles and the main skills (Speaking, Listening, and so forth) in each chapter were uppercase.

Concerning the use of texts and visuals, the textbook is regarded efficient. The texts and visuals in the whole pages were printed in proper size combination without using too much decorative letters. The excessive uses of decorative letters may reduce the readability of the text.

## Supplementary Materials

Supplementary materials often regarded as advantages that can cover the shortcomings of a textbook. According to Cunningsworth (1984:50), supporting or supplementary materials refer to visual materials, recorded material, a teacher's book, index of grammatical items, vocabulary list, etc. depending on how comprehensive the learning program is.

The results showed that as many as 55% of students agree, and 14% strongly agree that the textbook's supplementary materials are adequate for their needs. They assumed that the existing supplementary materials help them study independently in or outside the classroom, with or without teach-

ers' guidance. Almost one-third of students (31%) were also satisfied with the availability of the answer keys. Students thought that they are very useful to help them in independent learning. While 21% of students were indifferent whether the answer keys are useful or not. Based on students' information, the use of answer keys in classroom learning is prohibited. Besides, the CD contains natural-sounding recordings of listening activities such as conversations, exercises, monologs, and dictation items in the form of MP3 files. The recordings were also available in the form of soft copy materials. They are supported by the scripts at the end of the textbook as well. Index and vocabulary lists are also clearly provided in the textbook. These various supplementary materials seem to make the textbook more interesting. The anti-answer keys thought that they prefer the teachers' explanation. Unfortunately, the textbook appears without a teacher's book. Even though it should be seen as a useful guide offering teachers suggestions and steps through every unit, its absence demands the teachers to become more independent to decide how to use the material provided in the students' book.

**General Content**

The studies of literature of the research (Grant 1984 and Cunningsworth 1989 & 1995) explicitly emphasizes the topic appropriateness as one of the predominant aspects. As many as 66,6% of students agree that the textbook covers a variety of topics from a different field. Through the textbook, they learn how to make a report, application letter, resume, even how to face an interview test. Even so, the mean score (3,33) indicates that despite its variation, some students argued that they require more specific topics that are related to their major program in the fishery. Moreover, the textbook compatibility to the socio-economic and cultural context seems less satisfying for students. It has been shown with the mean score 3,37 and 3,38. It means that the students partly agreed that the textbook fits their living context. It is generally accepted if the students thought so since some of them come from Bali, Papua, and other islands. The different cultures caused them to make some adaptation in the school activities, including when they use the text-

book in the classroom. They expected a more natural situation created in either text of dialog which adapted from their social and cultural background. Therefore, they can feel more easy to study independently. Nevertheless, most of the fulfillment for the topic's appropriateness especially regarding its authenticity, flexibility, and up-to-datedness were relevant to the students' needs. These assumptions are indicated by over 3,5 of the mean score, means that the majority of students agree that the topics were authentic, flexible, and up-to-date enough.

There are 6 (six) units, each of them discusses one topic. They include vocational fields such as communication at work, how to make a reservation, how to operate or use things based on procedure, and how to present reports. Generally, the textbook also contains authentic materials. 'Authentic materials' means any material which is not designed for textbook use (Grant, 1984:123). Reading materials, for example, might include advertisements, postcards, letters, news reports, etc. Because there are 6 (six) Basic Competencies to be achieved by students (according to the syllabus of curriculum KTSP) which are listed at the beginning of the textbook, we may assume that each unit of the textbook is aimed for achieving one basic competence. The students found all these topics useful and suitable to be knowledged before going into practice in the workplace. Even so, they do not seem to attract the students since the topics look too 'serious' for students. The words and phrases used as the title represent much of what the students would do in the units. The author did not use a kind of methaporical word which may express the topic in interesting way. As for example, rather than using the phrase 'Writing Letters' as a title in Unit 5, it would be much interesting if we use 'Let's Write a Letter'. The latter expression is considered much more 'inviting'.

English Skills
The major skill of discriminating between sounds in connected speech and recognizing/understanding various stress and intonation patterns are rarely found in the textbook listening activities. The most appealing one is the activities of recognizing language signals in talks or conversations. None of these activities preceded by the activities of recog-

students would do in the units. The author did not use a kind of metaphorical word which may express the topic in interesting way. As for example, rather than using the phrase *'Writing Letters'* as a title in Unit 5, it would be much interesting if we use *'Let's Write a Letter'*. The latter expression is considered much more 'inviting'.

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*Activity 1. Look at this picture, then answer the following questions.*
*Activity 2. Listen to the dialog and fill in the hotel reservation form below.*
*Activity 3. Listen again, then decide if the following statement s are True (T) or False (T).*

In this Unit, the tasks are varied and graded based on the level of complexity. The task in Activity 2 also shows the authenticity of the materials by providing a kind of 'Hotel Reservation Form'. Some of the students, especially those who are interested in working on a cruise ship, gained benefit from this kind of material. Another example in Unit 3, students are assigned to understand instructions from a manual. At every beginning of a listening activity, the author brainstorms the students by providing related questions. Then, students are asked to listen to a dialog about the manual of operating a camera, followed by a *True* and *False* task and writing suitable title. This means the students are asked to understand the message before focusing on

linguistic elements. These activities seem easy for the twelfth graders, in fact, some students felt difficulties in understanding the new language items they first hear. The idea of presenting the tasks from general to specific as in Unit 3 also might not be suitable for all teachers or classes. Therefore, it is suggested that the activities which drill up the students' understanding of differing sounds, stress, and intonation can be enriched. Moreover, the other recommended approach available in the textbook which could be adapted is the activity of asking students at the initial listening exercises. This kind of activity is commonly found, yet it is useful to brainstorm and stimulate students in producing critical thinking.

A good textbook allows three types of speech work which are aimed at encouraging accuracy, fluency, and natural language use (Grant, 1989:34). Regarding speaking skill, the majority of students 70,4% are in agreement that the speaking activities were distributed in a balance between individual response, pair work, and group work. As many as 75,6% of them also felt motivated to speak in English, and 69,6% of students felt that sometimes they need to be encouraged to initiate meaningful communication in English.

Whilst, the result also indicates that as many as 61% of students agree that the texts provided in the textbook's reading activities are well graded. They move from the less to the more complicated ones. While, as many as 54% of students also agreed that the texts' length is appropriate for their level. However, as many as 55% of students did not promote positive perception in the texts' attractiveness. This indicates that most texts were considered less interesting in students' perception.

For writing skill, the results indicate that as many as 70% of students agree that the tasks provided in the textbook's writing activities have achievable objectives considering the students' capabilities in English proficiency. According to the responses of 58% of students, those tasks are provided for different genres. However, as many as 52% of students did not give a positive response to the reading tasks in general. This also indicates that most writing tasks were considered less interesting based on students' perception.

### Vocabulary

In the textbook, the vocabulary items appear in word lists, in association with visuals,

and in a text (reading passage or listening script). The word list can be found in the glossaries and tasks. Their meaning are presented through explanation and semantic relation (synonim or antonym). They are never translated. While in association with visuals and texts, the vocabulary meaning tends to be presented through context. According to the survey result, the majority of students agree that the vocabulary materials provided were compatible with their needs and interest. It has been proved by the mean score which reaches more than 3,51. Therefore, it is concluded that this category is suitable enough based on students' perspectives. While according to the teachers, the word list is usually difficult to learn since the words often appear in isolation. The students often memorizes in a quick way, but might forget them in the following meeting. However, in the textbook, the vocabulary items are introduced as part of a structural system since they are related.

The meaning of the words are provided by students through translation. By finding the meaning, the students can identify the relationships between words and phrases based on the topic of the discussion. Then, the students can draw the reading topic they would like to learn in the following task. This approach appears to be appropriate as the items are learned and recalled more readily if the relationships of the items are previously perceived.

### Grammar

Cunningsworth (1984:18) stated that it is important that students can both understand and use the rules of grammar. Among the other skill materials, grammar is considered to gain less positive responses from students. The table shows that the indication has been proven by the low of the mean score which ranges from 3,26 to 3,42 for five statements including the grammar spread achievability and contextuality in the whole pages of the textbook. While the only element which satisfies the students is the grammar examples. At least 52% of students assumed that the given examples are interesting. Grammar is introduced explicitly in the textbook, included in a particular space entitled *Grammar in Focus*, but not spread evenly in every chapter. In Unit 3, 4, and 5, there are no grammar materials explicitely presented. Following the observations, it seems to be beneficial for students since most of them

thought that learning grammar is a kind of difficult thing. They thought that learning grammar is rarely applicable for their future job. The materials' presentation is also variable. In Unit 2, the *Grammar in Focus* aims to teach about some expression of making/confirming/canceling reservations. The material is focused on the use of the word '*would*'. the materials are taught deductively. The learning begins with the presentation of several uses of '*would*' then followed by its examples. The material is also a good example showing how the grammar materials are not well-contextualized according to the learning objectives. See the examples below.

*When imagine a situation or action:*
*I **would** love to live by the sea.*
*Offering something:*
***Would** you like a cup of coffee?*

The first example was not contextualized with the situation regarding the expression of making or canceling reservation. While the second was better. Instead of using the sentence in example 1, it would be better if the author express another example that indicate the use of '*would*' for imagining a situation, such as *I **would** love to stay in the suit room* or *It **would** be nice if I can pay the room in cash.* Both of the examples are related to the topic.

### Pronunciation

Concerning pronunciation, the results of the survey seemed to demonstrate that this was one of the textbook's major weak points. One of the most obvious inadequacies was the fact that none of the units contained any exercises devoted to the teaching of word stress, sentence stress, intonation, and other pronunciation activities. The survey indicates that the majority of students (55-56%) responded negatively to these aspects. Seen from the overall categories, the textbook's pronunciation category becomes a weakness. Pronunciation is one of the problems the students have. Some students find it difficult to discriminate or recognize sounds. Consequently, some form of drilling is necessary. However, such elements are not theoretically provided. It tends to be ignored. Since the students expected to learn pronunciation, they rely on the teacher's assistance to teach it in an incidental moment such as in a structured drill, repetition, dictation, and other listening activities.

Pronunciation is a problem commonly found noticed in any textbook (Grant, 1989:35).

As the solution, teachers should create activities which may be spread over several different skills, such as: (1) comparing similar sounding words (in listening activities); (2) repetition drill (in reading of speaking activities); and (3) production drill (in reading activities).

## Tasks and Exercises

The indicators of this part are directed at the availability and appropriateness of the provided tasks and exercises throughout the textbook. Generally, the textbook contains more exercises that have a restrictive focus on a single language element rather than tasks. The exercises themselves were available in every chapter focusing on each skill. The exercises were also given in the National Exam formats designed to help students practicing the questions.

Accordingly, 68% of students argued that most of the tasks and exercises are well-structured. There were presented from the lesser to the most complex. The table also indicates that the majority of students put themselves in the positive responses regarding tasks' achievability (65%), adequateness (60%), and helpfulness (72%). Unfortunately, some task and exercises are considered to have clear instruction and interesting elements. Yet, it can be developed through the teachers' explanations.

## Discussion
### Needs and Interests

Following the principle of Cunningsworth (1984; 1995), needs and interests are often seen as a set of conditions that are required in evaluating a textbook. A small scale of investigation involving ten teachers and students has revealed that, despite their different proficiency, students and teachers often have the same priorities in selecting the learning materials. At their initial evaluation of a textbook, the aspect they most consider is the General Content/Topic, followed by the exercises or activities. While the other criteria such as design, skills (listening, reading, speaking, so forth), and supplementary materials are in in various order.

They reason of why they prioritized the General Content/Topic appropriateness because they believe that choosing interesting materials would stimulates their learning. While their needs for more specific and in-depth materials can be overtaken later adapted to the further conditions. By this condition, we can assume a raw generalization that interests takes precendence over needs in case of textbook evaluation.

However, we can not simply neglect the needs aspect for learning is always oriented to the determined objectives.

## The Language System Aspects

Both language form and function are taught in this textbook. Looking at the context of learning at SUPM, I initially thought that the textbook intended for SUPM students should be a textbook that contains material that teach more language function than form. However, I realized that teach both of them would be better, as no one can teach a functional learning without also teaching language form, so the teachers should teach both (Cunningsworth, 1984:16). A textbook must teach language form because meaning and function are expressed through form. Without it, verbal communication could not occur. Moreover, this textbook is used to support the learning of General English which is oriented towards preparation for the National Examination. So that the learning of language form is still required. The learning of both aspects can be seen in the following examples (found in Unit 2 'Reservation'). In the unit, teacher is supposed to teach the 'expressions of refusing someone in arranging an appointment'. The laguage forms available to express this meaning in the textbook are:

*I'm really sorry, but I've got something else to do on Saturday.*
*I'm sorry, I'll be busy tomorrow.*
*I'm afraid I can make it.*

While, the term function refers to the process of conveying meaning that 'someone feels sorry for refusing the appointment making' supported by the non-verbal sign such as, in this case, showing a facial expression of regret or shaking head. Therefore, it requires the teacher to make it clear to the students through explanation and practices. The aspects of language form taught in the textbook are phonology, grammar, vocabulary, and discourse (in several sections). These four aspects are evenly distributed and balanced throughout the unit. No concentration is too heavy on one aspect.

## Appropriacy to the Social Context

In this discussion, I refer to the analysis of how the textbook language matches the social context and function. The different socio-cultural background of the SUPM students may cause cultural gaps. There are some students who come from Bali and Papua. Even from the same coun-

try, those students have different cultures with the majority of students who are Javanese. The one interested me is, however, the textbook Get Along with English provides a universal justification of material. It covers all of students' socio-cultural background. The textbook does not have a specific cultural setting. A culture-specific textbook will only be of relevance to students who understand the cultural background in which it is set. However, the survey and observations revealed that there was no cultural gaps occur when the students use the textbook. Its relative lack of culture specificity makes the textbook readily acceptable at SUPM N Tegal. One of the features of the book, Share the Knowledge, is quite useful in this case. It provides useful information to increase student knowledge.

It seems that the textbook's author considers this possibility well. If students and teachers truly utilize the features available in this textbook, students will have relatively the same social knowledge so that cultural differences will not become obstacles in learning.

**The Language Skills**

The textbook contains various language skills. The language skills taught in the textbook are receptive, productive, and integrated skills. While translation skill is not found in the whole content. The receptive skills can be found in the reading and listening activities over the whole units. The productive includes d in the writing and speaking activities. While integration of skills appears in the activity of note-taking (involves listening and writing activity in a quick sequence), doing interview (involves listening and speaking together with writing activity), and reading aloud (involves reading and speaking at a time).

**The Language Items Presentation and Practice**

The presentation of structure (grammar) should be coherent and systematic so that the learners can readily perceive the pattern and hence the rule underlying the models given (Cunningsworth, 1984:35). The Grammar items are presented explicitly in Grammar in Focus. The feature helps students understand and use the grammar rules. The new grammar items are presented in a combination of both inductive and deductive way. In inductive learning, the students are presented with a number of examples which embody the rules. By identifying the

similarities and or differences between the examples, they hypothesis the rule and try it out for confirmation. In learning the types of sentence in Unit 6 is one of the best example showing how the material is presented inductively. There are several sentences written:

a. You have two options here.
b. Conclusions are judgments that are supported by data.
c. The options are either to jump right into presenting the results or create a transition between the procedure sections.
d. etc.....

Following the sentences, three types of sentences are presented: simple sentence, complex sentence, and compound sentence. The students are asked to compare the sentences then group them into each type based on the characteristics. The point is that from examples of language, the students induce the rules then use it. This activity is useful to train students' ability in concluding and reasoning. Besides, the example also shows how the textbook present the grammar rules meaningfully in context of which the students learn how to present and writing a report.

There are also some ways in which a new vocabulary item or lexis can be presented. In the textbook, the vocabulary items appear in word lists, in association with visuals, and in a text (reading passage or listening script). The word list can be found in the glossaries and tasks. Their meaning are presented through explanation and semantic relation (synonym or antonym). They are never translated. While in association with visuals and texts, the vocabulary meaning tends to be presented through context. According to the teachers, the word list is usually difficult to learn since the words often appear in isolation. The students often memorizes in a quick way, but might forget them in the following meeting. However, in the textbook, the vocabulary items are introduced as part of a structural system since they are related. See the following example of the material in Unit 3.

Instruction:
Before reading the text, look up the meaning of the following words...
Power button
Display
Input button
Sleep mode
Screen, etc.

The meaning of the words are provided by students through translation. By finding the meaning, the students can identify the relationships between words and phrases based on the topic of the discussion. Then, the students can draw the reading topic they would like to learn in the following task. This approach appears to be appropriate as the items are learned and recalled more readily if the relationships of the items are previously perceived.

By the statements of the students and teachers, I also expected the textbook in providing a systematic way of phonology. Unfortunately, the learning of stress pronunciation, intonation is not explicitly taught by the textbook. The lack of phonological elements spotlighted the textbook's weakness. However, these things can be taught incidentally and in random order. If we follow the steps in figure 2.1 in Chapter II, teachers can do some materials adaptation or addition by using the other supplementary materials. Therefore, it requires the teacher's creativity.

The learning of discourse appears in simple but meaningful way. According to Cunningsworth (1984:18), the term discourse refers to how sentences are linked, but not joined, to produce a complete unit of language which form a self-contained whole. What he stated by whole here might be a newspaper article, a letter, an advertisement, or others. The example of this material is found in most writing activities. The recommended types of tasks found in the textbook which train students in discourse learning are: (1) arranging sentences into a meaningful paragraph, letter, dialog or instruction, (2) creating a reservation letter based on a determined situation, and (3) writing instructions based on the presented pictures

## Conclusion

In summary, it was found that students' positive responses outweighed the negative ones. After a further investigation, the findings show that out of the 50 statements in the questionnaire, 26 items elicited a positive response from students. This means that positive responses were stated for about 52% of items in the survey. The topics and themes selected were overall appropriate to the students' needs and interests resembling topics they would encounter in real life. The teachers perspectives' convinced the textbook's advantages. The main skills were considered presented in balance. From the teaching methodological point of view, the text-book serves the materials appropriacy to the teachers' preference and school syllabus.

On the other hand, there are some weak points of the textbook which were detected seen from the students' survey. They were indicted by the low means, less than 3.30, that indicates the low level of students' satisfactory. The weaknesses are: (1) the physical condition of the textbook was considered less durable, (2) the materials teaches phonological aspects especially pronunciation, was considered insufficient, and (3) the textbook has inadequate fun and interesting materials, especially in their activities. While, according to the teachers' point of view, the textbook is deficient in the following way: (1) the textbook contains communicative activities and exercises, but they are not varied enough, (2) the textbook communicative activities or exercises often fail because they are not sufficiently related to the students interests. (3) the textbook employs a thematic approach for the organization of its units, but the examples given are sometimes not sufficiently related to the context of the topic.

A small scale of investigation involving ten teachers and students has revealed that, despite their different proficiency, students and teachers often have a relatively similar tendency in the placement of materials evaluation criteria. The General Content/Topic is the aspect they most consider at their initial evaluation. The second priority was the exercises or activities. They prioritize the General Content/Topic appropriateness because they believe that choosing interesting materials would stimulates their learning. Observations also showed that the students' perception toward the textbook usefulness are often influenced by some factors, including how creative the teacher as a manager in applying methods and modifying the materials, how often the textbook be used along the learning process, and what learning styles the students prefer.

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