

Critical Evaluation of an ELT Coursebook in a Globalisation Context

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Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk membahas apa yang menentukan Buku Bahasa Inggris dan menguraikan konsekuensi positif dan negatif dari globalisasi pada Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris (ELT). Penelitian ini mengadopsi kerangka konteks globalisasi yang dikemukakan oleh Block dan Cameron. Data penelitian ini mencakup semua isi buku ajar yang menunjukkan konsekuensi positif dan negatif, dengan tiga belas contoh dalam 116 halaman. Temuan menunjukkan beberapa manfaat dari penggunaan buku ajar ini karena berhasil mencakup budaya lokal. Studi ini menunjukkan sepuluh contoh yang mencakup konsekuensi positif dalam buku pelajaran ini. Namun, buku pelajaran ini juga memiliki beberapa konsekuensi negatif. Ini tidak memiliki integrasi dengan budaya internasional, yang hanya berisi dua contoh. Namun, sisi positifnya lebih banyak daripada kekurangannya. **Kata kunci:** Buku ajar Bahasa Inggris, konteks globalisasi, konsekuensi positif dan negatif

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to discuss what has made an English Coursebook and outline the positive and negative consequences of globalisation on English Language Teaching (ELT). This study adopts the framework of globalisation context proposed by Block and Cameron. The data in this study cover all the coursebook content that show positives and negatives consequences, with total 13 examples in 116 pages. The findings show that there are several beneficial impacts of using this coursebook as it succeeds in covering the local culture. This study shows 10 examples that cover positive consequences in this coursebook. However, this coursebook also has several negative consequences. It lacks integration with international culture, of which it contains only two examples. However, the positive outweighs the drawbacks.

Keywords: *ELT coursebook, globalisation context, positive and negative consequences*

1. Introduction

English is acknowledged as an international language and a necessity in today's globalised world. Crystal (2003) states that 85% of international organisations use English officially, and 90% of academic articles are published in English. In addition, English is the most widely taught language in the world (Burns & Coffin, 2013). In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language in schools, from primary to senior high level. The Ministry of Education and Culture has made English a curriculum subject, since mastering English is the way to connect people speaking different native languages across the globe. (*Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2013*).

The global spread of English as a lingua franca has developed the notion of intercultural communicative competence, a concept in foreign language education (Celik & Erbay, 2013). Indeed, international language use has grown widely because of the globalisation phenomenon, a phenomenon which has an impact on teaching materials. Consequently, teachers need to consider English within its position as a structural system in the world. Authors of coursebooks and educational textbook publishers need to cooperate to include appropriate language in coursebooks, to anticipate the impact of globalisation.

Coursebooks play an important role in the teaching and learning process. Nunan (2003, p. 226) notes that "coursebooks are prepackaged, published books used by students and teacher as the primary basis for a language course". In English Language Teaching (ELT), coursebooks

are the primary agents for conveying knowledge to learners (Naseem et al., 2015). Furthermore, Acklam (1994) notes that a coursebook provides a learning plan and a visible learning outline, as well as a bank of resource ideas and materials. So coursebooks serve as a guide to the teacher in conducting a lesson. Therefore, the content of coursebooks can influence what teachers teach and learners learn.

In this study, the researcher considers the relations between the English language and its global variations through a coursebook. The analysis of the effects of globalisation on this coursebook examines how its materials portray the world view of English, and how these materials reflect issues of culture and linguistic imperialism. The study also investigates the positive and negative consequences of using this coursebook.

The Globalisation of English

The term “globalisation” is popular worldwide and has been interpreted broadly by previous studies. Globalisation comprises contemporary political rhetoric and is a keyword of both academic and popular discourse on economy, society, technology, and culture (Block & Cameron, 2002). Georgieva and James (2010) state that the concept of globalisation is used to account for interdependences, interconnections and the multitude of linkages that transcend current territorial and sociocultural boundaries in the world. Furthermore, Block and Cameron (2002) identify three main ways in which globalisation and English are connected.

Firstly, the rise of transnational corporations encourages the spread of English in which the headquarters of these corporations are in Europe, North America, Japan, and geographically dispersed centres of production. Graddol (1997) assumes that when foreign companies enter cooperation agreements with local companies in non-English-speaking countries, English is usually used as a lingua franca. Therefore, this could result all legal documentation being created in English, in workers undergoing oral and written communication skills training in English, and in more English being taught in local schools.

The second area is the increase in the number of world organisations within globalised networks, so that English continues to be in demand globally. For instance, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is a requirement for registering for universities abroad. The function of English as the standard academic language is crucial and becoming a primary consideration.

The third area demonstrating these links is the internet, where English nowadays predominates, making the internet a technological tool underpinning the spread of English. In conclusion, the globalisation of English is a result of a long historical legacy of colonialism.

Issues of Culture, Linguistic Imperialism and Lingua Franca

Numerous studies have been conducted on the interdependence of culture and language in foreign language education. For instance, Buttjes (1991) suggests that the educational motivation for bringing culture into the language classroom is that it leads to enrichment of individuals through access to non-native cultural capital and through instilling wider worldviews. Similarly, Bryam (1991, p. 17) emphasises that “language should ‘unlock the door’ to the culture” – people learning a foreign language turn their attention to various endeavours of the associated culture. In other words, learning a foreign language encourages people to learn more about the culture of the language. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) define three kinds of culture that should be integrated into English language teaching: (1) local culture, related to the learners’ own culture, (2) target culture – the culture of English-speaking countries, and (3) international culture, a range of cultures other than local culture and target culture.

Phillipson (1992) states that English linguistic imperialism is the dominance of English maintained by the continuous reconstitution of structural elements, and the establishment of cultural inequalities between English and other languages. English has a dominant position in

areas such as technology, computers, and science; in research periodicals, books, and software; in businesses of transnational trade, aviation, and shipping; in organisations of international exchange and diplomacy; in mass media entertainment, journalism, and news agencies; in sport and youth culture; in education systems, as the most widely learnt foreign language. Moreover, Kachru and Nelson (2001) claim that English has three concentric circles in the global situation: (1) first circle: where English is the first language – most people speak English – for example the USA, Canada, Britain, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand; (2) second circle: where English has crucial roles and functions, for instance in Pakistan, India, Singapore and South Africa; (3) the expanding circle: the countries with various roles, such as Korea, Japan, China, Iran, Nepal and Indonesia. In language teaching, cultural imperialism includes transmission of ideas about the culture of English-speaking countries via textbooks and their content choice and requires that certain cultural stereotypes are presented as having superior and universal values, while others are inferior either by direct presentation or omission (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). Additionally, Philipson (1992) posits linguistic imperialism as directly related to techniques, methods and procedures in teaching and learning.

According to Richards, Platt and Weber (1985), a lingua franca is a language of communication which is used internationally (e.g., English). English has become a lingua franca, popular in that it is used in many countries. The use of English as a lingua franca highlights the understanding of cultural contexts and communicative practices as means of successful communication across diverse cultures (Su, 2016). In an English Language Teaching (ELT) context, Baker (2012) assumes that English as a lingua franca leads ELT to go beyond fixed language into the context of culture as a necessary element in successful communication.

Criteria of Good Coursebooks

A coursebook is a tool of learning shared by teachers and learners which can be used in systematic and flexible ways (Nunan, 2003). Cunningsworth (1995) summarises six purposes of coursebooks: (1) a resource of presentation material (written/spoken); (2) a source of activities for communicative interaction and learner practice; (3) a source of reference; (4) a syllabus; (5) a resource for self-access work or self-directed learning; and (6) support for less experienced teachers. In addition, Tomlinson (2011) notes that coursebooks provide a route map for both learners and teacher, making it conceivable to expect what will be done as well as to look back on has been done in lessons. To further elaborate our understanding of good coursebook criteria, Ur (1996) presents criteria for an English coursebook:

- a) Objectives explicitly set out in an introduction and implemented in the material
- b) Educational and social approaches acceptable to the target community
- c) Clear attractive layout; print easy to read
- d) Interesting tasks and topics
- e) Varied tasks and topics, to provide for different levels, interests and learning styles
- f) Clear instructions
- g) Systematic coverage of syllabus
- h) Content clearly organised and graded
- i) Test sections and periodic review
- j) Plenty of authentic language
- k) Explanation of appropriate pronunciation and practice
- l) Explanation of appropriate vocabulary and practice
- m) Presentation of appropriate and practice
- n) Fluency practice in all four skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing)
- o) Encouragement of learners to develop learning strategies and become independent learners
- p) Provide any audio cassettes
- q) Be available locally

Nunan (2003) summarises five principles for using a coursebook: (1) understand how the coursebook is organised; most are organised around key language features including topics and associated vocabulary (e.g. transportation or food), grammar structures (e.g. how to form questions or decline verb tenses), and social and cultural interaction skills (e.g. how to politely refuse something or how to order in a restaurant); (2) adapt the material: coursebooks are not provided for a specific group of people, but are written to be used by different or successive groups of learners within a generalised group (e.g. for adults or children, for use in English-speaking countries or in other countries; for beginning, intermediate, or advanced learners); (3) prepare the learners, bearing in mind two principles: firstly, orient them to the materials and purpose of the activity, so that they know what the activity is about and why they are doing it; secondly, ensure the learners understand the steps of the activity. However, simply telling the learners the *what*, *how*, and *why* of an activity does not prepare them; they need to demonstrate either verbally or in action that they have understood; (4) monitor and follow-up: to monitor how the learners do the activity and ensure that they are doing what they are supposed to be doing; (5) build a repertoire: acquire techniques for supplementing what is in the coursebook.

In brief, good coursebooks in an ELT context should emphasise two or more of the four skills of writing, speaking, reading, and listening, and be flexible in use, both for the teachers and the learners in terms of materials.

2. Methodology

Materials

The data in this study utilised an English textbook that currently use in senior high school in grade ten (X) in the first semester. This textbook was chosen as it has been used in accordance with the new curriculum in Indonesia, *Curriculum 2013*, compiled by the Ministry of Education. The data cover all the textbook content that showed about positives and negatives consequences of using the coursebook. The textbook has 116 pages, and merely 13 pages discuss related to the issues.

3. Result and Discussion

Positive and Negative Consequences of Using the Coursebook “Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA Kelas 1 Semester 1”

Positive Consequences

Overall, there are several beneficial impacts of using this coursebook, as it succeeds in covering the local culture. For instance, on page 70, the story tells the learners about Tanjung Puting National Park, one of Indonesia’s internationally renowned ecotourism destinations. The story also provides a picture of orang utans, great apes native to Indonesia. As another example, on page 78, the reading depicts Cuban Rondo, a natural waterfall in Batu City, East Java, Indonesia. The last example is in page 13, where a picture shows a conversation between two people introducing themselves and talking about their own workplaces in different regions of Indonesia, namely Raja Ampat and Jepara. Accordingly, learners could learn more about local ecotourism destinations in Indonesia and indirectly learn the local culture as well. Ena (2013) assumes that learners will be more engaged in the teaching and learning process when the content of the subject accommodates their culture. Furthermore, McKay (2003) suggest that the cultural content of materials should not be limited to native English-speaking countries and should include local cultural content.

Another positive consequence is that the coursebook portrays the integrated target culture in the form of text and pictures. For instance, on page 4, there is an email from a girl studying in a US school to her friend. Other examples are on pages 81, 84, and 85, where the text describes Niagara Falls, a waterfall that crosses the international border between the Canadian

province of Ontario and the US state of New York. In addition, the text provides follow-up questions by referring to the text “Visiting Niagara Falls”. The last example, on pages 95, 96 and 97, “The Secret of Stonehenge”, describes one of the best-known ancient monuments in the world, followed by questions based on the text. Hence, learners could learn about the culture of the target language.

Negative Consequences

This coursebook also, however, has several negative consequences. It lacks integration with international culture, of which it contains only two examples; on page 5, the text demonstrates an email from a Malaysian girl to her friend in Indonesia. The second example, on page 105, is an announcement about a concert cancellation in Singapore. Bryam (2008) states that for the teaching of EFL (English as a Foreign Language), a textbook need to address the materials of native and non-native English-speaking countries, including intercultural citizenship. Furthermore, Wandel (2002) believes that understanding interculturalism can help students to develop multicultural awareness and sensitivity, in terms of respect and tolerance to others. Therefore, students need to learn more about international culture to comprehend and respect other cultures, since English is used globally, not only in English-speaking countries.

4. Conclusion

English as a global language plays a fundamental role every aspect of life. In the context of ELT, English coursebooks in this globalisation era should address local culture, target culture and international culture to broaden the learners’ horizons about culture. This coursebook has positive consequences and negative consequences; however, the positive outweighs the drawbacks.

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