Speaking Tasks Evaluation in Students' Book *Bahasa Inggris* for Senior High School Grade X Semester 1

Dian Mega Putri, M.Pd
Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan
(STKIP) PGRI Sumatera Barat
<*dian_mega.putri@yahoo.com*>

Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana tugas berbicara dalam buku siswa dalam hal pemilihan dan organisasi tugas dan konten tugas. Sumber data dalam penelitian ini adalah ceklis evaluasi awal (pre-evaluation) tugas berbicara dalam buku siswa untuk kelas X semester 1 dari empat evaluator; 2 orang guru Bahasa Inggris, 1 orang dosen Bahasa Inggris dan peneliti sendiri. Ceklis terdiri atas dua indikator evaluasi tugas berbicara; pemilihan dan organisasi tugas, dan konten tugas. Setelah data dikumpulkan, langkah selanjutnya adalah menganalisa data berdasarkan dua indikator tersebut. Berdasarkan analisa data, terdapat dua temuan. Pertama, tugas berbicara dalam buku siswa dalam hal pemilihan dan organisasi tugas tidak memiliki input teks otentik dan artworks yang mencukupi. Kedua, dalam hal konten tugas, tugas berbicara dalam buku siswa kelas X semester 1 tidak memiliki kegiatan individual, berpasangan dan berkelompok yang mencukupi dan seimbang.

Kata Kunci: Evaluasi, Tugas Berbicara, Buku Siswa

INTRODUCTION

Principally, learning activity relates with educational process that gives the students opportunity to develop their potential that can improve their attitude, knowledge and skill that are needed in social life and give contribution to the society. It can be said that learning activity directs students' potentials to be desired competence. As one of the teaching material in learning activity, students' book takes a role as the guidance, source of ideas and rationale for what the students and teacher do. Essentially, material functions to control and to help learning and teaching run well and the choice of teaching materials can determine the quality of learning-teaching procedure.

Textbook has always been the most preferred instructional material in English language teaching. It is best seen as a resource in achieving aims and objectives that have already been set concerning learner needs (Cunningsworth, 1995:6). Textbooks play an important role in the teaching and learning process and they are the primary agents of conveying the knowledge to the learners. Besides, one of the basic functions of textbooks is to

make the existence knowledge available and apparent to the learner in a selected, easy and organized way.

Richards (2001:254) explains that textbook take a role as a key component in most language programs. They provide students with the necessary input that the students receive and the language practice that occurs in the class. Moreover, textbook also serve as the basis for the language content and skills to be taught and other kinds of language practice that the students take part in. Based on the theories above, it can be inferred that textbook has an important role in language teaching in providing useful and meaningful resources for both teachers and students. Furthermore, the textbook has significant impact for students in order to reach their language learning objectives and to get the opportunities to learn.

Ideally, students' book consists of two indicators of the task: task selection and organization, and task content. The indicator of task selection and organization consist of five sub-indicators sequence, continuity, input, relevancy, and instruction. Task physical appearance consists of task layouts, artworks and task structure. Task content has subject matters, text types, classroom organization and cognitive load. These indicators are really essentials in supporting the learning process and facilitating students in their language skill.

Developing criteria to assess materials is one of the major steps in material evaluation. There are various ranges of guidelines and checklist of materials evaluation offered by the experts. Yet, since there is no a strict criterion that may be suitable and applicable in all teaching and learning situations when the concern is the evaluation of materials, the selection of the criteria may be quite subjective. Sheldon (1988:241) states that none is really sure what criteria and constraints are actually operatives in English language teaching context, worldwide and textbook criteria are emphatically local. Since the nature if the teaching and learning environment may vary from context to context Sheldon (1988:242) emphasizes global list of criteria that can never apply in most local environment, without considerable evaluation. Therefore, in deciding criteria for the evaluation of the material it is needed to consider the needs and interest of the students in particular teaching situations.

The term of task has been defined in variety of ways. According to Nunan (2004:4), a task can be defined as "a set of classroom work that involves the students in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form". Moreover, the task should have a sense of completeness, and able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right with a beginning, middle and an end. Furthermore, Richards (2001:223) states that a task is an activity that requires the students to reach and accomplish an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allow teachers to control and regulate that process.

Related to the task for communication, speaking task can be defined as activities which engage speakers in using language in order to achieve a particular goal in a particular speaking situation. The emphasis of speaking task

is on goal-oriented language use and meaning rather than form. There are some types of speaking task namely open-ended (giving description, narrating, instructing, comparing, explaining, making justification, making prediction and decision) and structured-task (reading aloud, sentence repetition, sentence completion, factual short-answer, reacting to phrases).

Regarding the importance of students' book for teaching and learning process, the government through Ministry of Education provided the textbook that can achieve the goals of new curriculum, Curriculum 2013, and the purpose of teaching and learning process. In order to support the implementation of Curriculum 2013, the government provided two kinds of books, teacher's book and student's book. Both of these books have been published for the first time in 2014.

The implementation of Curriculum 2013 obligates the school to have a textbook that is suitable with the students. Previously, in 2013 Ministry of Education already provided mathematic, Indonesian Language and History lesson with the textbooks and got the revision process in 2014. English lesson in Senior High School provided in the textbook published by the Department of Educational and Cultural Affair in the beginning of 2014 in form of teachers' book and students' book.

Pre-evaluation of the speaking task that is instructed to the students is needed to be done. As a new published textbook, some inaccuracy might be found in the task from the indicator of task selection and organization, physical appearance and content. So, pre-evaluation is needed to be done to evaluate the speaking task in students' book in grade X semester 1.

This article describe how is the speaking task in students' book for grade X semester 1 in terms of task selection and organization and task content.

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

Type of the research in this study was a descriptive research. This type of research determines and reports the way things are. For the purpose of this study, descriptive research was used to obtain information about the speaking task in students' book for Grade X semester 1 in terms of task selection and organization and task content. The data of this research was the speaking tasks in students' book for Curriculum 2013 in Senior High School Students Grade X Semester 1. The instrument that was used in this research was the evaluation checklist of speaking tasks in students' book filled in by four evaluators (2 English teachers (the National English master teachers for Curriculum 2013), 1 English lecturer (One of the national Instructor for Curriculum 2013) and the researcher herself. This checklist was used as the manual judgment of the material in students' book to describe the features of speaking task in students' book. The techniques of collecting the data in this research were done in several steps as follow (1) getting and distributing the document; (2) distributing the evaluation checklist to all evaluators; and (3) filling in the evaluation checklist done by evaluators by ticking the choice of Yes or No and filling in their opinions about the strengths and weaknesses of the material in the column provided.

After that, the steps of data analysis in this study can be explained as follow, (1) the data was managed first by checking the completeness of the documents; in this research were the speaking task in students' book.; (2) after that, the documents were distributed to the evaluators together with the evaluation checklist; (3) then, the evaluators filled in the form based on the instruction given; (4) after that the data were displayed in form of table and words; (5) then, it was followed by clear explanation about how the indicators/ criteria found in the speaking task in Students' Book in Grade X Semester 1; and (6) the conclusion was made.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

There are two parts of the findings. First is how the speaking task in students' book in terms of task selection and organization. Second is how the speaking task in students' book in terms of task content. The discussion of these things explained as follow:

1. Speaking Task in Students' Book in Terms of Task Selection and Organization

    The speaking task evaluation in students' book in terms of task selection and organization consisted of some aspects namely task sequence, task continuity, task input, task relevancy and task instruction. The finding of the evaluation of speaking task in students' book based on these aspects explained as follow.

    The first aspect is the task sequence. Based on the evaluators' judgment, the sequence of the task in speaking task can be found only in chapter 1 and chapter 2. The other chapters did not sequence-well since the task only had one activity. The second aspect is the task continuity. Similar with the findings of task sequence, only the speaking task in chapter 1 and 2 already had the activities that were continued and connected each other, meanwhile the others chapter did not continued well since the task only had one activity.

    In the aspect of task input, it was found that there were adequate authentic text, artificial text and artworks input in the speaking task chapter 1 but they cannot be found in chapter 2 till chapter 9. Furthermore, in the aspect of task relevancy, it was found that the speaking tasks in each chapter already had good relevancy. From the last aspect, the task instruction, four evaluators found that each chapter, except chapter 4 already had clear, succinct, sufficient, standardized and sequenced task instruction.

    Based on the finding about speaking task in terms of task selection and organization it can be understood that in general, the speaking task in students' book did not sequenced well and also not continue each other since most of the chapters contain of one activity for speaking task. The sequence and continuity are important point in learning task. Each learning experience that can be realized through the task should build

upon the preceding one and go more broadly and deeply into matters involved (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2009:110). Moreover, well-sequenced task can be helpful in building students' confidence in doing the tasks step by step and makes the students feel confident in transferring what they have learned outside of the class (Graves, 2000:153).

Next, from the side of task input, the speaking task in students' book in general, already contains of the input in authentic form. The existence of authentic text is to make students to get the access to understand the language and situation provided in real life especially in the real life of native speaker.

The input of authentic text is important in the students' task. As Graves (2000:155) states that good activities in the materials should use authentic texts or realia when possible, so that the students are familiar with/ have access to language as used in "real world" Moreover, activities should enable students to understand cultural context and cultural differences so that they can have more confidence in target culture and understand own culture better. However, the speaking task in students' book did not contained of adequate input of authentic text.

Inadequate input of artificial text was also found in the speaking task. The input of artificial text cannot be called unimportant in language classroom. The level of students and their needs also need to be considered in English foreign language classroom. However, too many artificial texts that are written specifically for classroom generally distort the language in some way (Nunan, 1989:6).

The existence of artworks in the task brings some excitements and motivation for the students to do the task well. Moreover, the use of artworks in the task can help visual learner in understanding the task better. It is similar as Graves (2000:154) who states that good activities/ task in the materials should employ a variety of materials such as visual (pictures, print, audio, video, objects and realia) to engage students and to meet different learning needs.

The fourth aspect in task selection and organization is task relevancy. Task relevancy related with the suitability of the task with students' levels, provide clear and suitable learning target and objectives and able to achieve and support the development of objectives of the curriculum 2013. In general, the speaking task in students' book already provide the suitability with the students' level, learning targets and objectives and also able to achieve and support the development of objectives in Curriculum 2103.

The fifth aspect is the task instruction. The instruction of the task should be relevant. It should neither be below the students' level nor far beyond their proficiency level and developmental stages. It should be written in language that is appropriate for the target learners. Moreover, ideal task instruction should have some criteria such as salience, simplicity, contains of examples, standardization, and sequence (Tomlinson, 2004:35)

Speaking tasks in students' book in general (except chapter 4) already have salience, succinct, sufficient, standardized and sequenced instruction, and also the task able to identify the target of the task clearly. Instruction of the task must be salience enough for the students in order to achieve the target of the task. Tomlinson (2004:29) states that the instruction of the task should be very clear for the students which words are instructions and which words are not. This can be achieved by putting the instruction in bold, in a distinctive font, in different color or in a box. Some instructions of the speaking task in students' book grade X semester 1 are printed in bold for example in chapter 5; the instructions are divided in some numbers. This makes the instructions clearer and easier to be understood.

However, some of the instructions are unclear, for example in chapter 4 of the book the instruction was written in a paragraph combined with examples and not separated from other instruction. This is the example of not ideal instruction. As stated by Tomlinson (2004:32) that the ideal instruction should be physically separated from other instruction for the same activity.

2. Speaking Task in Students' Book in Terms of Task Content
The speaking task evaluation in students' book in terms of task content consist of some aspects namely task subject matter and text types, task classroom interaction and task cognitive load. The findings of the evaluation of speaking task in students' book based on these aspects explained as follow.

Based on the judgment from the evaluators about speaking task in students' book in terms of task content, it can be found that the speaking task in all chapters already has good subject matter such as well-achieved task objectives, interesting activities, natural and real language, interesting topic, natural and real situation and able to improve the participation in speaking during the lesson.

Moreover, it is also found that the speaking task in each chapter (chapter 1 -9) contains of the type of text provided in curriculum 2013 for grade X. Related to the classroom interaction, the speaking task in chapter 1, 2, 3 and 7, in general, already showed the balance in the aspect of classroom interaction (individual, pair and group). However this balance cannot be found in chapter 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9. Moreover, in the aspect of cognitive load, it can be found that only chapter 1 that had sufficient number of speaking task, meanwhile chapter 2 until chapter 9 did not have sufficient number of the speaking task.

The next aspect in task content is the aspect of classroom interaction. The speaking in students' book for each chapter has varied adequate number of individual, pair and group works. The only chapter that is provided the balanced between individual, pair and group works is chapter 2. This chapter contains of 2 individual works, a pair work and a group work.

Furthermore, from the aspect of cognitive load, it was also found that some chapters contained of four activities and some have only one activity for speaking task. Some chapters (for example chapter 2, 5, 6, 7 and 9) had the speaking task that did not provide the activity that cannot achieved all of the spoken learning target and objectives mentioned in each chapters.

The speaking task in students' book in the aspect of subject matter, already fulfill the criteria of well-achieved learning targets and objective that can be seen clearly in the beginning of the chapter and can be predicted to be well-achieved through the task. Moreover, most of the speaking task also contains of interesting activities for example in chapter 3. This chapter contains of some interesting situation in the task such as doing the Biology project, discussing the class performance in school anniversary and having a short speech for the candidate of the president of students' body council.

Moreover, in general, the speaking task in students' book contains of language and situation that are natural and real. For example, it can be found in chapter 1. In this chapter the speaking task has real situation that make the students getting involved in a party and do conversation about introducing themselves. As Nunan (1989:59) states that the task classroom activities should parallel the "real world" as closely as possible. Since the language is a tool for communication, methods, and materials should concentrate on the message not the medium. Graves (2000:154) also states that good activities in the materials should be authentic as possible, so that the students can see the relationship with real language use and gain experience with real language use.

Moreover, the speaking task in students' book provided adequate number of individual and pair works, but not the group works. The speaking tasks will be better if they are provided with group works and not just focus of the individual or pair groups only. The variation of the roles that the students got while doing the task will make them experienced different practice and responsibilities. Graves (2000:154) states that good activities in the materials should vary the roles and groupings, because it will make the students get different types of practice and responsibilities and with respect to social context, it will let the students experience/ analyze different social roles.

The third aspect in task content is the task cognitive load. Cognitive load relates with number of activities that students need to do and availability of prior knowledge in the task (Ellis, 1998:227). In general, the number of speaking tasks in each chapter is varied. Some chapters have four activities and some have only one activity for speaking task. The number of the task in each chapter can be called adequate if the task already able to achieve the learning targets and objective in each chapter. However, most of the chapters did not have adequate number of cognitive load in the speaking task. One of the examples is in chapter 9. In this chapter, the speaking task instructed the students to do a monolog about giving an announcement. The chapter only has one activity for speaking.

This number did not sufficient since the learning target and objectives showed that the students have to give responds to the meaning of announcement text, and there is no activity that reflects this learning target and objective in chapter 9.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the findings above there are two things that can be concluded. First, the speaking task in students' book in terms of the task selection and organization in general were already well-sequence, had relation within the activities, relevant with the curriculum and students' level and also already have good and suitable instruction. However, some chapters were lack of having adequate input of authentic text and also adequate artworks. Second, the speaking task in students' book in terms of the task content already arranged based on the learning target and objective, can facilitate the use of English and already introduce the students with the text types that is fit to the curriculum 2013. However, the task did not fulfill the criteria of sufficient number of activities to reach the learning targets and objectives, and also did not contain the balance of individual, pairs and group works.

Suggestion

There are some useful suggestions that can be considered. First, it is need to be decided that the speaking task in students' book for grade X semester 1 really need some revisions and improvements especially related to the task selection and organization (add adequate input of authentic text and also helpful artworks) and task content (add more activities in the speaking task to reach the learning targets and to make students get involved in pair and group work). Second, it is suggested for the writers of the English students' book or textbook to pay attention to the indicators of suitable task especially speaking task namely task selection and organization and task content. Third, it is suggested for the Ministry of Education to be more selective to choose the students' book or textbook that orbited the speaking task well in order to make it more suitable for the students.

REFERENCES

Cunningsworth, A. 1995. *Choosing your Coursebook*. Heineman: Macmillan.

Dougill, J. 1987. Not so Obvious. In L. E. Sheldon (ed). *ELT Textbook and Materials: Problems in Evaluation and Development* (pp. 29-36). Oxford: Modern English Publications.

Ellis, R. 1997. "The Empirical Evaluation of Language Teaching Materials." *ELT Journal 51, 1:36-42*

Ellis, R. 1998. The Evaluation of Communicative Tasks. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.): *Materials Development in Language Teaching* (pp. 217-238). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Graves, K. 2000. *Designing Language Courses: A Guide for Teachers.* Boston: Heinle

Nunan, D. 1989. *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. 2004. *Task-Based Language Teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ornstein, A.C. & Hunkins, F.P. 2009. *Curriculum Foundations, Principles and Issues.* (5th ed). Boston: Pearson Education Inc.

Richard, J. C. 2001. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. 2nd Ed.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Richards. J, C. 2006. *Communicative Language Teaching Today.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sheldon, L. E. 1988. "Evaluation of ELT Textbook and Materials." *ELT Journal 42, 4: 237-246*

Tomlinson, B. 2004. *Developing Language Course Materials.* Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.