

## Analyzing English Textbook through the Lens of Tomlinson's Theory

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**Abstract.** *This study examines the English textbook "English Class X for SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Revised Edition 2017" through the lens of Tomlinson's theoretical framework to ascertain its effectiveness in facilitating language acquisition. Using a descriptive approach and document analysis, the study focused on book contents, examining elements such as impact, learner comfort, confidence building, relevance, language exposure and more. Data collection involved examining the content of the textbook, while analysis included subjective and objective ratings based on Tomlinson's sixteen criteria for effective learning materials. Results showed that the textbook was generally in line with Tomlinson's standards, meeting fifteen of the sixteen criteria, including impactful materials, learner engagement, and diverse learning opportunities. However, the textbook was lacking in facilitating learner self-investment. In addition, the study suggests improvements in physical design to enhance attractiveness. The textbook "English Class X" overall meets the criteria as a quality learning resource with diverse and engaging content, supporting effective language learning. This analysis provides important insights for informed textbook selection that fit within a pedagogical framework, aiming to improve student learning outcomes.*

**Keywords:** Brian Tomlinson, English Textbook, Tomlison's Theory.

### BACKGROUND

In the context of education, the development of teaching materials plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of student learning. One of the teaching materials is a textbook. A textbook is a fundamental resource for developing learning materials. In Indonesia, textbooks are frequently seen as primary source of learning materials in the classroom (Rambe et al., 2020). Textbooks play a crucial role as essential teaching tools in facilitating the efficient teaching and learning of English. They support educators in delivering optimized classroom instruction, fostering a conducive learning environment for students. Additionally, textbooks serve as invaluable repositories of knowledge, offering students access to a wealth of information to enhance their learning process (Fidian & Sandy, 2020).

An ELT textbook provides information and serves as an example, offering teachers valuable insights for creating learning materials. Through examination of its contents, educators gain understanding and inspiration to improve their teaching approaches and design effective resources that suit their students' needs (Firmansyah, 2020). According to Cunningsworth (1995), English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks fulfill various roles in the learning process. These include presenting learning materials, encouraging interaction, serving as resources for vocabulary and grammar, providing classroom activities, and facilitating self-directed learning.

The importance of textbooks in learning requires teachers to carefully select those that suit the needs of their students. Therefore, conducting textbook analysis is important to assess the quality of the textbook. Through research on textbooks, it is hoped that it can assist as a consideration for selecting the appropriate textbooks to be used. One theory that can be used to analyze textbooks is the theory proposed by Brian Tomlinson. According to Tomlinson (2011), developers of learning material traditionally aim to provide input based on their understanding of how language can be acquired effectively through exposure. This input may take the form of textbooks, narratives, viewpoints or illustrations of language use. In addition, Tomlinson suggests that materials developers should focus on three key questions when creating instruction: what content should be presented to language learners, how it should be presented, and how it can be used to enhance language learning.

Several studies have dealt with the analysis of books, such as, "Bahasa Inggris Kelas XII SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Edisi Revisi 2018," an English textbook used by one of the High Schools in Samuda Kota (Yuliana & Widiastuty, 2022). Then, "English textbooks for senior high school students in grades X and XI", one published by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the other by PT. Grafindo Media Pratama as the main research resource (Putri & Maisarah, 2023). And also, textbook "English for Senior High School (SMA/MA/SMK/MAK) Grade X 2017 Revision" is part of a series of English textbooks designed for tenth-grade students in Senior High School. It is published by the Curriculum and Book Development Center, Research and Development Agency, Ministry of Education and Culture, and was revised in 2017 (Firmansyah, 2020). A similar research has also conducted by (Ahidaturohmah, 2021) who analyzed the English textbook titled Bahasa Inggris Lintas Minat Sma Kelas X.

Based on the explanation above and considering the variety of English textbooks used in the classroom, this research aims to analyze a specific book entitled "Bahasa Inggris kelas X for SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Revised Edition 2017". The objective is to evaluate its compatibility with the principles of language learning theory proposed by Brian Tomlinson.

## **THEORITICAL STUDY**

### **a. Tomlinson theory**

According to Tomlinson Material developers have traditionally strived to furnish input that aligns with their understanding of effective language acquisition methods. Ideally, they craft textbooks, share narratives, articulate viewpoints, and provide language usage illustrations. Moreover, according to Tomlinson (2011), material developers should focus on three key inquiries when offering guidance: determining the content suitable for language

learners, deciding on the delivery methods, and exploring how it can be leveraged to enhance language learning outcomes.

### **b. Textbook**

Textbooks are tools meant to help students achieve their learning goals, as outlined by their specific needs (Cunningsworth, 1995). This means that the content and methods in textbooks should be tailored to match what students need to learn, ensuring that they can reach their educational objectives effectively. The textbook stands as the most commonly utilized written educational material. It serves as one of the various tools available to educators, aiding them in teaching students fundamental concepts in a subject.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The researcher utilized a descriptive approach in conducting this study. Descriptive research does not involve hypothesis testing (Annajmi, 2021). Data is collected, analyzed, and conclusions are drawn solely based on the data itself, without extrapolating to other datasets.

The research employed documentary analysis as a method for data gathering. The information is gathered from a textbook for 10th-grade English language learners, specifically focusing on book contents.

The process of data collection involves several steps: (1) The researcher chose an English textbook, (2) They thoroughly read the selected textbook, (3) They examined its contents, and (4) They compiled the relevant materials from the textbook for further analysis.

Additionally, the investigator conducts data analysis subsequent to data collection. The first step in data analysis involves identifying criteria, subsequent to subjective analysis, objective analysis, and comparison.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher's analysis of the textbook's overall description or its portrayal of identity resulted in the following findings:

Title: Bahasa Inggris Kelas X SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Edisi Revisi 2017 Authors: Utami Widiati, Zuliati Rohmah, and Furidah Reviewer: Helena I. R. Agustien, Emi Emilia, and Raden Safrina Editor: Ramon Mohandas, Ph.D Edition Third (Revision) Edition: 2017 ISBN: 978-602-427-106-0 National Library: Pusat Kurikulum dan Perbukuan, Balitbang, Kemendikbud.
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The textbook solely covers elements such as the syllabus which consists of Basic Competencies, Social Function, Text Structures, Language Features, Topics, Skill Focus, and

Learning Objectives. Following this, the researcher assessed data from two chapters of the textbook, recognizing that there are similarities across each chapter, to ascertain its alignment with Tomlinson's benchmarks for a successful English textbook. This evaluation utilized a rubric encompassing all sixteen criteria outlined by Tomlinson, starting from the necessity for materials to have an impact and concluding with the requirement for materials to provide feedback on outcomes.

No	Criteria	Example of Material	Check
1.	Materials should make a significant impression.	Impact is possible if the materials are unusual, diverse, delivered effectively, and pose concrete challenges. This book contains impact that has diversity in the elements taught and covers all focuses of English skills. For example: In Chapter 1 "Talking About Self" page 3 "READING: Task 1: Jigsaw: Read the text carefully. Your teacher will identify you as A or B. Students identified as A, read Text 1; students identified as B, read Text 2." In page 16 "SPEAKING: Task 1: Guessing Games - Who Am I?" In page 18 "READING: Responding to an email/a letter" In page 2 "WARMER: CHINESE WHISPER.	✓
2.	Materials should assist learners to feel at ease.	By providing how to make work along with its parts and examples related to the command, the learning material can help students feel comfortable. For example: In Chapter 2 "Congratulating and Complimenting Others" page 25 Task 5 "Complete the following table with the expression of congratulations and the responses you find in the proceeding dialogs. The first row is done for you", in the first row of "Congratulating Expression" and "Responses" is already filled in because it provides an example of how to do the task. This can make students feel at ease because they have been given an example of how to do it.	✓
3.	Materials should aid learners in building confidence.	If students view the content as manageable, their confidence will increase. Confidence levels among students can be boosted by engaging in tasks like completing substitution tables, forming basic sentences, filling in conversation gaps, and participating in similar straightforward activities. For example: In Chapter 1 page 9 "Vocabulary exercises: Complete the following sentences using the words in the box. Remember to use the correct forms of verb".	✓
4.	Learners should perceive the content being taught as both pertinent and practical.	Efforts are made to ensure instructional materials are directly relevant to students' interests and situations. By incorporating examples and scenarios that are relevant to their lives, engagement is increased. Materials are also tailored to individual needs, aiding deeper understanding and retention. This approach transforms learning into a meaningful experience, increasing overall effectiveness. For example: In Chapter 2 Page 33 Task 2 "Read aloud the dialog with a classmate. Pay attention to the complimenting expressions and the responses too".	✓
5.	Materials should necessitate and enable learners to invest in themselves.	One of the various strategies to encourage students' self-engagement is to interest them in written and spoken literature, then ask them to respond and provide assistance in analyzing the language aspects contained therein. In this book, there is no merging of the values of written and oral literature into a single entity. The book features a different focus in each section, so there is no attempt to unify the elements of written and oral literature. In other words, although the book	✗

		contains a variety of content, it does not integrate or unify aspects of written and oral literature as a whole.	
6.	Learners should be prepared to grasp the concepts being taught.	Offering students resources that motivate them to concentrate on linguistic elements they have not fully mastered can enhance their preparedness and focus. For example: In Chapter 2 page 21 "Vocabulary Builder: Write down the English words for the following Indonesian words. Compare your work to your classmate's."	✓
7.	Materials should present learners with language used authentically.	The textbook should promote structured communication akin to a formal lesson, partially prepared discourse resembling an interview scenario, and spontaneous interaction akin to an informal discussion. For example: In Chapter 2 page 17 "Task 2: Introduction Game - Party Time: The following is an example of a conversation between Edo and Slamet who meet for the first time in a party like in picture 1.5. They introduce themselves to each other to know their acquaintance better. Read the dialog silently first. Pay attention to how to introduce self. Discuss the expressions used with your classmate sitting next to you. Then act out pretending to be Edo and Slamet who introduce themselves to each other."	✓
8.	The focus of learners should be directed towards the linguistic characteristics of the input.	Here, students are encouraged to initially respond to the content of the text, allowing them to immerse themselves in its meaning. Through this process, they naturally make discoveries about the form and function of certain linguistic features. For example: in chapter I of the textbook on page 4, about Text 1: Jigsaw. "Read the text carefully. Your teacher will identify you as A or B. Students identified as A, read Text 1; students identified as B, read Text 2." Student can engage in experiential discovery by using email. This allows them to explore linguistic features in English related to sentence construction, which can then be applied in daily life.	✓
9.	Learning materials should offer learners chances to utilize the target language for effective communication	The assignment required students to identify absent information and fill in the blanks within their viewpoints. For example: in chapter I of the textbook on page 14 the exercise. "I. Read the emails in the reading section again. Underline all pronouns that you can find. II. Fill in the blanks with the right words." And I chapter II of the textbook on page 26, vocabulary exercise. Task 1: "Complete the blanks in the following dialogs using the words in the box. As an example see number 1. The answer for number 1 is wonderful."	✓
10.	Materials should consider that the beneficial impacts of instruction typically manifest with a delay	The learning materials should provide ample exposure to facilitate the positive outcomes of instruction. For example: in chapter I of the textbook on page 2, the sub-chapter Vocabulary Builder "Match the words with their Indonesian equivalents. Compare your work with your classmate's. The first one has been done for you."	✓
11.	Materials should consider that learners vary in their preferred styles of learning	Tomlinson's theory categorized learning preferences into five styles: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, analytical, and experiential. For example: in the chapter I on page 16, the textbook including auditory and kinesthetic from the Task 1: Guessing Game-Who Am I? "You'll play a kind of guessing game 'Who Am I?'. Your teacher will put a post-it paper with one of the words below on your back. You need to work in pairs and guess what the word on your back is by asking questions. Your partner may only answer your questions with either 'yes' or 'no'. Observe the following examples of the questions."	✓
12.	Materials should consider that learners have	The textbook presented diverse methods to enhance student engagement in language learning. It offered a range of materials and activities to select from, including additional units allowing	✓

	varying emotional attitudes	students to discuss the significance of learning English and exercises where they could express their reflections on the lesson. For the example: in the chapter I and II from the textbook provided different type of activities. There are Warmer, Vocabulary Builder, Pronunciation Practice, Reading, Vocabulary Exercises, Speaking, Writing, Dialog: Complimenting, Speaking, Reflection.	
13.	Materials should allow for a period of silent observation at the start of instruction	Tomlinson elucidated that the silent period aids in teaching students the new language. Initially, comprehension exercises are employed to initiate the learning process before progressing to production activities. For the example: In the chapter I and II the textbook provided a sub-chapter namely "Warmer", "Vocabulary Builder" and Pronunciation Practice to introduce new vocabulary.	✓
14.	Materials should optimize learning potential by fostering intellectual, aesthetic, and emotional engagement, thus stimulating both right and left-brain activities	Tomlinson concurred that children should learn by engaging both hemispheres of their brain. Typically, the left side is associated with logical tasks such as reasoning, explaining, and evaluating, while the right side is linked with creative activities like drawing, singing, and motor skills. For the example: in the chapter II from the textbook, sub-chapter speaking "Work in pairs. Play scissors, rock, and paper. The winner chooses for himself/herself a situation. The partner makes an expression of congratulations. For example, the winner chooses situation 5. He/She says, "I just bought a new bag." The partner says, "Congratulations. Your new bag is gorgeous." Then develop, a conversation based on that. After that, start all over again by doing the scissors, rock, and paper again, and so forth. Continue doing that with all the situations provided in the table below." can activate the left side of the brain functions.	✓
15.	Materials should avoid excessive reliance on controlled practice	Tomlinson suggests reducing the reliance on tightly structured practice in learning materials. Instead, materials for learners should be adaptable, providing them with opportunities to create their own scenarios when practicing language skills. For the example: in the chapter I on page 9, the sub-chapter vocabulary exercise "Complete the following sentences using the words in the box. Remember to use the correct forms of verbs." And in the chapter II on page 21, the sub-chapter Vocabulary Builder "Write down the English words for the following Indonesian words. Compare your work to your classmate's."	✓
16.	Materials should include opportunities for feedback on outcomes	Materials should provide numerous opportunities for learners to receive feedback, especially regarding their usage of the target language during communication efforts. For the example: in the chapter I on page 19, the sub-chapter Reflection "At the end of this chapter, ask yourself the following questions to identify how effective your learning process is. And in the chapter II on page 37, the sub-chapter Reflection "At the end of this chapter, ask yourself the following questions to see how well you have learned."	✓

The research examined how well textbooks adhered to Tomlinson's theory and sixteen criteria for effective textbooks. The findings indicated that the textbook fulfilled fifteen of Tomlinson's criteria, suggesting it was of exceptional quality.

The following criteria were successfully achieved: 1) Materials should make a significant impression, 2) Materials should assist learners to feel at ease, 3) Materials should aid learners in building confidence, 4) Learners should perceive the content being taught as

both pertinent and practical, 6) Learners should be prepared to grasp the concepts being taught, 7) Materials should present learners with language used authentically, 8) The focus of learners should be directed towards the linguistic characteristics of the input, 9) Learning materials should offer learners chances to utilize the target language for effective communication, 10) Materials should consider that the beneficial impacts of instruction typically manifest with a delay, 11) Materials should consider that learners vary in their preferred styles of learning, 12) Materials should consider that learners have varying emotional attitudes, 13) Materials should allow for a period of silent observation at the start of instruction, 14) Materials should optimize learning potential by fostering intellectual, aesthetic, and emotional engagement, thus stimulating both right and left-brain activities, 15) Materials should avoid excessive reliance on controlled practice, 16) Materials should include opportunities for feedback on outcomes.

However, based on Tomlinson's theory, the textbook failed to meet expectations in certain unrelated areas. Specifically, this unrelated aspect was: 5) Materials should necessitate and enable learners to invest in themselves.

While the substance of the textbook largely adhered to Tomlinson's suggested standards for a high-quality textbook, the physical layout left room for improvement. The hardcover was sturdy and met typical industry standards, ensuring longevity thanks to the materials' quality. However, enhancing the appeal of the textbook could involve adding a more vibrant cover.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

In conclusion, this study has conducted an in-depth analysis of the English textbook "English Class X SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Revised Edition 2017" using Tomlinson's theoretical framework and criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching materials. The study found that the textbook is generally in line with the standards set by Tomlinson for effective language learning resources. It successfully engages learners, boosts confidence, provides relevant content, presents authentic language use, and adapts to diverse learning styles and affective attitudes. However, one area where the textbook falls short is in encouraging learner self-investment. While the materials presented include a variety of activities and exercises, the book lacks integration of elements of written and oral literature, which can enhance students' engagement and their investment in the learning process.

As suggestions, here are some recommendations: First, incorporate activities that combine elements of written and oral literature to encourage learner self-investment. Second, improving the physical design of the textbooks by adding attractive visual elements. Third, encourage continuous feedback from teachers and students to ensure continuous improvement

in the quality and effectiveness of the textbook. By implementing these suggestions, educators and curriculum developers can improve students' learning experiences in English language learning, which will ultimately contribute to improving their learning outcomes in Indonesia.

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