

Evaluation Of “New Let’s Talk In English Grade 1

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Evaluation Of “New Let’s Talk In English Grade 1”

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Abstrak

Tujuan evaluasi “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” yang digunakan pada siswa SD kelas 1 adalah untuk mengetahui apakah buku ajar ini dapat diadopsi atau diadaptasi dengan mengidentifikasi kelebihan dan kekurangannya. Penulis mengevaluasi buku pelajaran berdasarkan daftar periksa evaluasi dan seleksi yang diusulkan oleh Cunningsworth. Penulis dapat menyimpulkan bahwa “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” tidak dapat langsung diadopsi untuk digunakan dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris kepada siswa kelas 1 SD. Namun masih bisa diadaptasi. Guru yang menggunakan buku ajar ini hendaknya kreatif dalam mengurutkan urutan unit-unit yang ada dalam buku ajar ini. Selain itu, guru hendaknya hanya menggunakan bahasa target dalam mengajar siswa kelas 1 SD.

Kata Kunci: evaluasi, buku ajar, bahasa Inggris.

Abstract

The purpose of evaluation of “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” which is used for elementary students of grade 1 is intended to know whether this coursebook can be adopted or adapted by identifying the strengths and weaknesses. The writer evaluates the coursebook based on the checklist for evaluation and selection proposed by Cunningsworth. The writer can conclude that “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” cannot directly be adopted to use for teaching English language to grade 1 elementary students. However, it still can be adapted. The teachers who use this coursebook should be creative in sequencing the order of the units in this coursebook. Besides that, the teachers should use the target language only in teaching the grade 1 elementary students.

Keywords: evaluation, coursebook, English.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of teaching English language for students at elementary school is usually to equip young learners with the necessary language skills and competencies to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. Through the English language curriculum at elementary school, students are supposed to achieve several objectives: first, teachers strive to foster strong foundational language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills form the cornerstone of effective communication and provide students with the tools



they need to express themselves confidently and fluently in English. Second, teachers seek to cultivate a love for language learning by creating a stimulating and supportive learning environment. By incorporating interactive and engaging activities into their lessons, teachers aim to spark students' curiosity and enthusiasm for exploring the English language. Third, teachers aim to promote cultural awareness and appreciation by exposing students to diverse aspects of English-speaking cultures around the world. Through literature, music, art, and multimedia resources, the teachers can encourage students to develop an understanding and respect for different cultural perspectives. Ultimately, teachers' goal is to empower students to become confident and competent English language users who are capable of navigating the complexities of today's globalized society with ease. By providing them with a solid foundation in English language proficiency and cultural competency, teachers aim to prepare them for success in their academic, personal, and professional endeavors.

As a consequence, many of English coursebooks for elementary students are available at the bookstores to fulfill these phenomena. Therefore, selecting a suitable coursebook to be used for teaching English language to elementary students is very crucial. Evaluation of a coursebook is necessary to examine whether the chosen coursebook can be adopted or adapted.

One of the coursebooks for teaching English language for elementary students is "New Let's Talk in English." The data of the coursebook are as follows: a) the title is "New Let's Talk in English Grade 1"; b) the writers are Drs. Bashori Alwi, M.Pd and Achmad Sudarso, ST.; c) the editor is Djoko Semedi, S.Pd.; d) the publisher is CV. Mitra Abadi; e) the ISBN is 978-602-72695-1-4; f) total pages are 128 pages. The purpose of evaluation of "New Let's Talk in English Grade 1" which is used for elementary students of grade 1 is intended to know whether this coursebook can be adopted or adapted by identifying the strengths and weaknesses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Barham, Mohammad, and Miqdadi, (2019) state that education is part of a learning process carried out by all human beings. The purpose of education is to prepare students to be able to face a rapidly changing life in the future. Septy Lesia and Petrus, (2021) argue that based on the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 20, states that learning is a process of interaction between students



and teachers and learning resources in a learning environment. Learning resources in this case are all sources which include people and goods that may be used by the learners either independently or in a combined form, usually in informal situations to provide ease of learning.

About the syllabus of English language teaching, according to Richards, (2017) competency-based syllabus is based on a specification of the competencies that students are expected to master in relation to specific situations and activities. Competencies are a description of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for effective performance of specific tasks and activities. This kind of syllabus is widely used in social survival and work-oriented language programs. While Nguyen & Terry, (2017) state that teaching strategy is one factor that influences the success of the English teaching and learning process. A skilled teacher prepares the best for the students by employing certain language strategies, particularly those that increase students' motivation to study English.

In evaluating a coursebook, Cunningsworth, (in Karsudianto, 2019) argues that the reason for evaluation is to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in a coursebook, so that optimum use can be made of its strong points, whilst its weaker parts can be strengthened through adaptation or by substituting material from other coursebooks. Cunningsworth, (in Karsudianto, 2019) also proposes four guidelines for evaluating coursebooks. They are as follows: 1) coursebooks should correspond to students' need. They should match the aims and objectives of the English language learning program, 2) coursebooks should reflect the uses (present or future) which students will make of the language. The chosen coursebooks should help to equip students to use language effectively for their own purposes, 3) coursebooks should take account of students' needs as learners and should facilitate their learning processes, without dogmatically imposing a rigid "method", 4) coursebooks should have a clear role as a support for learning. Like teachers, they mediate between the target language and the students.

After evaluating coursebooks, teachers can decide whether they want to adopt or to adapt the textbooks. However, Richards, (2017) argues that commercial textbooks can seldom be used without some form of adaptation to make them more suitable for the particular context in which they will be used. This adaptation may take a variety of forms, they are: 1) modifying content, 2) adding or deleting content, 3) reorganizing content, 4) addressing omissions, 5) modifying tasks, and 6) extending tasks.



METHODOLOGY

The contents of “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” consist of 10 units. The writer evaluates the coursebook based on the checklist for evaluation and selection proposed by Cunningsworth (in Karsudianto, 2019). The checklist for evaluation and selection consists of 1) aim and approach, 2) design and organization, 3) language content, 4) skills, 5) topic, 6) methodology, 7) teacher’s book, and 8) practical consideration.

FINDINGS and DISCUSSION

Based on the checklist for evaluation and selection proposed by Cunningsworth (in Karsudianto, 2019), the findings and discussion are elaborated as follows:

1. Aim and approach

The aim of “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” is not clearly stated in the coursebook, but the writers of the coursebook state that learning English language is not just a curriculum requirement but has become a demand in today’s era of globalization and information technology. The various learning resources around students are a sign of the demand for learning English language, both formally and informally. However, it is quality learning resources that have a strong influence on the process of achieving the main goal of learning English language, namely communication competence. “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” which is prepared based on a competency-based syllabus, is one of the sources that will contribute to the achievement of communication competency, the learning process through observation, imitation and listening, in this coursebook it is presented in the form of activities that are meaningful, fun and engaging in one theme, so that students who use this coursebook get a varied, real and fun learning experience. It seems that the aim of the coursebook is that the students have the competency to do communication in topics for everyday.

It also seems that “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” applies the behaviorist approach. The behaviorist approach is a psychological perspective that emphasizes observable as the focus of study, rather than internal mental processes. It suggests that behaviors, including language acquisition, can be understood through a stimulus, a response, and reinforcement. Repetition is seen as important to bring about habit formation and learning. The example of application of the behaviorist approach in the coursebook can be seen as follows: first, on page 7 the students are asked to listen and repeat the given greeting



phrases like: good morning, good afternoon, good evening, good night and good bye. Second, on page 8 the students are given model of some dialogues and they are asked to practice in pairs. Third, on page 9 the students are asked to complete and practice the dialogue. In this exercise, the students just imitate the given model to complete the dialogue, and then practice the dialogue.

2. Design and organization

A well-designed English language coursebook should be meticulously structured to cater to the diverse needs of students, encompassing a range of proficiency levels and learning styles. It begins with clear learning objectives at the outset of each unit, guiding students towards achievable goals. However, there is not available learning objectives at the outset of each unit in “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1”, but the basic competencies for the whole units are available. The basic competencies for the first semester are as follows:

1. Respond by taking action according to instructions in an acceptable manner in the classroom context.
2. Conversing to accompany actions in an acceptable manner that involves speech acts: introducing oneself, giving greetings, saying goodbye.
3. Have a conversation to apologize, excuse yourself and say thank you.
4. Reading aloud with proper recitation of the alphabet and speech involving very simple words, phrases and sentences.
5. Spelling very simple English words involving simple words.
6. Copy very simple English writing accurately and acceptable such as table, chair, pen.

A well-organized English coursebook is structured with a clear progression of units and lessons, ensuring a systematic and cohesive learning experience for students. Each unit typically begins with an introduction that outlines the unit’s theme and learning objectives, providing students with a clear roadmap of what to expect. Within each unit, lessons are organized logically, starting with foundational concepts and gradually building upon them to more complex language skills and topics. The sequencing of content should be intuitive, with a balance between skills development, grammar instruction, vocabulary expansion, and cultural insights. Additionally, the coursebook should incorporate varied and engaging activities throughout each unit to cater to different learning styles and maintain student interest. It seems that “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” is not really well organized,



because the topic of unit 1 is “greeting”, while the topic of unit 2 is “alphabet”. It will be better if the students learn about the alphabet first before they learn about greeting.

3. Language Content

The content should be both stimulating and relevant, drawing from real-life situations, contemporary issues, and cultural insight to sustain student engagement. A balanced integration of language skills – reading, writing, listening, and speaking – is essential, with ample opportunities for practice and reinforcement. Grammar and vocabulary instruction should be contextualized within meaningful contexts, supported by authentic materials to reinforce comprehension and application. Interactive activities and varied exercises promote active learning, while periodic assessments allow for progress monitoring and feedback. Flexibility in design enables customization to accommodate the unique needs of students and teaching contexts, ensuring adaptability and efficacy.

The example of the content from “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” on page 8 is as follows:

Ayu : Good bye, Feni.

Feni : Good bye, Ayu.

Ayu : See you later.

Feni : See you later.

It seems that real-life situation is presented in this coursebook. The students can directly apply to everyday life. Besides that, on page 13, the students are asked to sing a song. The song is as follows:

10
Good morning to you

Good morning to you

Good morning Good morning

Good morning to you

This song will help students remember “greeting” more easily, and draw students more deeply into a lesson.

4. Skills

The language skills in “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” for the first semester can be seen in the competency standards, as follows:



- a. Listening: understand very simple instructions with actions in the classroom context.
- b. Speaking: express very simple instructions and information in the classroom context.
- c. Reading: understand very simple written English in a classroom context.
- d. Writing: spelling and copying very simple English writing.

It seems that all four language skills are available in this coursebook.

5. Topic

The topics of “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” are as follows: ¹²unit 1: greeting; ¹²unit 2: alphabet; ¹²unit 3: colour; ¹²unit 4: number; ¹²unit 5: introduction; ¹²unit 6: at the school; ¹²unit 7: in the classroom; ¹²unit 8: my body; ¹²unit 9: my family; ¹²unit 10: days. It seems that the topics are related to students’ everyday life.

6. Methodology

It seems that “New Let’s Talk in English Grade 1” uses the audio-lingual method which based on the behaviorist approach. The main features of the audio-lingual method are:

- a. An emphasis on aural-oral skills.

For example: it can be seen on page 8 part C, the students are given model of some dialogues and then, they are asked to practice in pairs. On page 9 part D, the students are asked to complete and practice the dialogue, while on the same page part E, ⁵the students are asked to read the text and complete.

- b. An emphasis on repetition and drills.

For example: it can be seen on page 7 part A, ¹¹the students are asked to listen and repeat after their teachers.

- c. ¹¹The use of the target language only

For example: in unit 1, the target language is used. Unfortunately, the commands on exercises use both Indonesian language and English language. Besides that, there are also translation exercises. As a result, it will discourage comprehensible input because the students will pay no attention to the target language input.

7. Teacher’s Book

A comprehensive English coursebook should offer supplementary resources, such as audiovisual aids, online exercises, and teacher guides, to further enhance the learning



experience. Cultivating cultural awareness is also integral, with the inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives and topics to foster intercultural competence among students. By encompassing these elements, a well-crafted English coursebook serves as a versatile tool for language acquisition, empowering both students and educators in their journey towards proficiency and communicative competence. Unfortunately, there is no teacher's book. It means that no guidance for teachers. It will be a problem for inexperienced teachers, while experienced teachers can develop their creativity in teaching English language to students by using "New Let's Talk in English Grade 1". On the other hand, audiovisual aids are also not available. Therefore, the listening activities depend on the teachers' ability.

8. Practical Consideration

The coursebook of "New Let's Talk in English Grade 1" is quite strong and long-lasting. Besides that, its appearance is colorful and also attractive. However, the teacher's book and audiovisual aids are not available. The price is reasonable, and it is very easy to obtain at the bookstores in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

The writer can conclude that "New Let's Talk in English Grade 1" cannot directly be adopted to use for teaching English language to grade 1 elementary students. However, it still can be adapted. The teachers who use this coursebook should be creative in sequencing the order of the units in this coursebook. Besides that, the teachers should use the target language only in teaching the grade 1 elementary students.

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