

## **An Analysis of Reading Material in the English Textbook "My Next Words" Based on Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for the Fourth Grade of Elementary School**

Ana Haqiqotul Millah<sup>1</sup>, Haryanto Haryanto<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Jl. Taman Siswa, Pekeng, Kauman, Tahunan, Kec. Tahunan, Kabupaten Jepara, Jawa Tengah  
201320000523@unisnu.ac.id

### **Abstract**

This study aims to describe whether the reading material in the English textbook "My Next Words" for Grade 4 Elementary School meets the criteria of the Free Learning Curriculum and the BSNP framework for textbook evaluation. This research is expected to provide insights to understand the quality of reading material. This research is designed as a content analysis in the form of qualitative descriptive research, with the results described in a narrative form. The checklist was developed based on the BSNP (2014) framework for textbook evaluation, focusing on the area of relevance of the reading material to the Merdeka Belajar curriculum and the content aspects, aspects of language usage, readability, and presentation aspects. Data was collected from the reading section of the English textbook. The English textbook "My Next Words" is published by the National Ministry of Education. The findings of this study show that the reading material in the English textbook "My Next Words" is relevant to the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum and the BSNP framework for textbook evaluation—results of the analysis of curriculum criteria relevance. According to the results of the reading material analysis, each aspect based on the content of the adopted textbook from the BSNP meets both the category, the content aspect, the usage and readability aspect of the language, and the presentation aspect. As a result, the 2017 revised edition of the K13-based English textbook can be used in the Free Learning curriculum. However, some things are still lacking in learning outcomes in the self-learning curriculum. So that teachers can adapt to the situation by making innovations in teaching-learning activities.

**Keywords:** Reading Material, Textbook, Merdeka Belajar Curriculum

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan apakah materi bacaan dalam buku teks bahasa Inggris "My Next Words" untuk kelas 4 Sekolah Dasar memenuhi kriteria Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) dan kerangka kerja BSNP untuk evaluasi buku teks. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan wawasan untuk memahami kualitas materi bacaan. Penelitian ini dirancang sebagai analisis isi dalam bentuk penelitian deskriptif kualitatif, dengan hasil yang dideskripsikan dalam bentuk naratif. Daftar periksa dikembangkan berdasarkan kerangka kerja BSNP (2014) untuk evaluasi buku teks pelajaran, dengan fokus pada area relevansi bahan bacaan dengan kurikulum Merdeka Belajar dan aspek isi, aspek penggunaan bahasa, aspek keterbacaan, dan aspek penyajian. Data dikumpulkan dari bagian membaca dari buku teks bahasa Inggris. Buku teks bahasa Inggris "My Next Words" diterbitkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa materi bacaan dalam buku teks bahasa Inggris "My Next Words" relevan dengan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar dan kerangka kerja BSNP untuk evaluasi buku teks—hasil analisis relevansi kriteria kurikulum. Berdasarkan hasil analisis materi bacaan, setiap aspek berdasarkan isi buku teks yang diadopsi dari BSNP memenuhi kategori, aspek isi, aspek penggunaan dan keterbacaan bahasa, dan aspek penyajian. Hasilnya, buku teks bahasa Inggris berbasis K13 edisi revisi 2017 dapat digunakan di sekolah Merdeka Belajar. Hasilnya, buku pelajaran bahasa Inggris berbasis K13 edisi revisi 2017 dapat digunakan dalam kurikulum Merdeka Belajar. Namun, beberapa hal masih menjadi kekurangan pada hasil pembelajaran di kurikulum Merdeka Belajar. Sehingga guru dapat beradaptasi dengan keadaan tersebut dengan melakukan inovasi dalam kegiatan belajar-mengajar.

**Kata kunci:** Bahan Bacaan, Buku Teks, Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar

Copyright (c) 2024 Ana Haqiqotul Millah, Haryanto Haryanto

✉ Corresponding author: Ana Haqiqotul Millah

Email Address: 201320000523@unisnu.ac.id (Jl. Taman Siswa, Pekeng, Kauman, Tahunan, Kec. Tahunan, Kabupaten Jepara, Jawa Tengah)

Received 28 December 2023, Accepted 02 January 2024, Published 04 January 2024

## **INTRODUCTION**

Textbooks are regarded as crucial components of the teaching and learning process, serving as a valuable resource for educators and learners alike, particularly when it comes to language acquisition in general or EFL classrooms specifically. It provides material that students need, therefore it can help teachers or students learn particular things. The textbook offers exercises, worksheets, and language-learning materials that can be used as a basis for productive teaching sessions. Textbooks can be used to produce effective lessons as one resource and may offer students a significant source in addition to the teacher's input (Richards, 2019) (Zubaidah & Supeno, 2022) (Novianti & Ambarwati, 2023), however, claimed that a textbook is seen as a tool for accomplishing objectives, goals, or learning goals that have been regulated for the benefit of pupils. Furthermore, (Cunningsworth, 1995) outlined the many functions of textbooks, such as serving as a source for written and spoken content, exercises and communicative exchanges, grammar, and vocabulary, as well as facilitating self-directed learning and promoting students' independence.

English for class X SMA/MA/SMK/MAK is analyzed by (Tri Astari, 2022). The analysis shows that this book satisfies several requirements for a quality EFL textbook. This is due to the Education Standards Agency's seven book standards. Textbooks are expected to have quality content that is by the applicable curriculum, both in terms of content standards, as well as in terms of whether or not the teaching materials are easily understood by teachers and students, and presented interestingly. One of the factors in students' decision-making in using textbooks is determined by the quality of the textbook. High-quality textbooks can provide optimal results in the learning process.

According to (Tri Astari, 2022), a textbook is a standard book that has been created for instructional purposes by specialists in a particular field. It provides schools and universities with easy-to-understand teaching resources to support their programs. This viewpoint holds that textbooks serve as educational tools that instructors utilize to support the teaching and learning process that takes place in the classroom.

The need for textbooks is still a top priority in teaching and learning activities. Textbooks are not only the main reference for students in learning but also a reference for teachers in the learning process. Textbooks are a short solution for obtaining teaching materials for teachers who are not yet able or ready to create teaching materials based on applicable criteria.

The book used by SD Negeri 1 Jatibarat is entitled "My Next Words". In learning English, English teachers use textbooks used by students and teachers, teacher textbooks, and exercise books for students. The book that researchers will analyze is the book "My Next Words" which is used by students and teachers. SD Negeri 1 Jatibarat is one of the schools that uses the textbook "My Next Words" in the learning process. Research on textbook analysis at SD Negeri 1 Jatibarat is quite interesting to carry out because this school uses the textbook "My Next Words" as teaching material.

The researcher wants to study the selected topic or theme in the textbook and each subheading of the reading material. Another reason, as emphasized by (Cunningsworth, 1995), is to identify

specific strengths and weaknesses in the textbooks currently in use. The researchers learned that in any reading material or textbook, the author must pay attention to the selection of each theme to build the unity of each material so that it can include a purpose in the English as a Second Language environment. Moreover, a specialized textbook that standardizes the ESL environment should already build real-world communication skills. Each topic should have a single theme that is consistent with its major theme. Each theme name must be simple so that students can understand it. Then, they can imply in real communication.

Based on the phenomenon, researchers want to focus research on reading materials. The reason is that the material can be crucial to the student's understanding of reading. Therefore, the researchers will try to analyze whether the reading material in the Class 4 English Textbook entitled "My Next Words," issued by the Ministry of National Education, is relevant to the Merdeka Curriculum or not. These textbooks have been widely used on a national scale. They have created many books that highlight the advantages and disadvantages of Indonesian students.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative, descriptive design. Based on materials from the National Board for Educational Standards (BSNP), a qualitative narrative provides an overview or description of the viability or suitability of a fourth-grade textbook for elementary schools. According to (Creswell, 2016), qualitative approaches encompass several significant activities, including questioning and conducting procedures, gathering particular data from participants, analyzing data, and interpreting the data. evaluate the significance of the information.

### ***Subject And Instruments***

A topic of study was the fourth-grade textbook "My Next Words," published by the Center for Curriculum in 2021. The Center for Curriculum, Books of the Research and Development Agency, Books of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, and Books of the Research and Development Agency published it. This study used A literature review as the data collection method. The different article books that are pertinent to this study served as the foundational data sources for this research. Additionally, a checklist of standards based on BSNP standard criteria was employed as the study's instrument. The analysis's framework is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Textbook Evaluation Criteria

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Component</b>
Curriculum criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. General information</li> <li>b. Core components</li> <li>c. Attachment</li> </ul>
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Material compatibility with basic competence</li> <li>b. The genre of reading passage that was the presence</li> <li>c. The accuracy of the material</li> <li>d. The conformity between the task and material</li> <li>e. The reading material supports life skill</li> </ul>

Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The use of acceptable, straightforward language that is suited for the age group being addressed.</li> <li>b. Illustration of the content appropriate to the reader's stage of development in terms of age.</li> <li>c. The language is informative and communicative.</li> <li>d. The book's title and its sub-chapter's title are complementary, intriguing, and capable of piquing the reader's curiosity.</li> </ul>
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The information is provided engagingly.</li> <li>b. materials and drawings that are illustrated based on a child's developmental stage.</li> <li>c. None of the photos used to explain the subject contain any references to pornography, extremism, violence, racial profiling, gender bias, or other offensive topics.</li> <li>d. Students may be hindered from thinking critically, creatively, and innovatively by how the material is presented.</li> <li>e. offers contextual information.</li> </ul>

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings are organized following the order of the textbook aspect as presented in Table 1, which comprises: curriculum criteria, content, and language presentation.

### *Curriculum Criteria*

Textbook content analysis is still deemed necessary even with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology's "My Next Words" textbook. The "My Next Words Grade 4 Student's Book for Elementary School" was selected by the researcher for this investigation. textbook and examined it using the BSNP checklist. The creation of this student book was informed by Kurikulum Merdeka, the current curriculum (KM). Considering the earlier studies research on content analysis of basic textbooks using the BSNP has been discussed. checklist has not been used much. The writing of this book was prepared based on the curriculum created by the English for Young Learner Community (EYLC) Sidoarjo, namely a working group of SD/MI Muhammadiyah English teachers throughout Sidoarjo.

The main aim of writing this book is to provide a student handbook for the entire series of English language learning activities in the classroom. Learning that focuses on listening and speaking activities will motivate and grow self-confidence in using English in everyday life. This book is also arranged based on the child's level of development, character, and environment. This curriculum provides flexibility for educational units and educators to develop their potential and provides freedom for students to learn according to their abilities and development. In 2021, this curriculum will be implemented on a limited basis at the Driving School. Likewise, textbooks are one of the teaching materials that will be implemented on a limited basis at the Driving School.

### *Content*

Based on reader analysis, the content of this textbook must be feasible in several ways, including maintaining the material's completeness and accuracy, updating concepts and facts, and

supporting the attainment of national education goals. Because it presents information or vocabulary with accompanying illustrations, this book is also appropriate for fourth graders. Additionally, because this book can help each student learn by following their abilities and growth, it may encourage the accomplishment of national goals. Example sentences using the simple present tense as found in unit 4 on pages 34, 35, 36, and 37 with example sentences: Cici cooks in the kitchen, Joshua watches TV every Saturday and Mrs. Neneng cooks in the kitchen. Therefore, because the underlying material was created and published by a reputable source, it is accurate both theoretically and empirically in this book. This book is composed of sentences that adhere to the English language standards and is based on the author's views and experiences from teaching English in different parts of Indonesia.

The material presented in this textbook has a lot to do with everyday activities that students typically engage in. As a result, it can inspire students to always do good deeds, and that can lead to a spirit of independence. Additionally, students can innovate by using new words they have learned or by using sentences that they have found. Examples of sentences that show daily activity can be found on page 60, such as Cici eats in the kitchen. She does not eat in the dining room. Worksheets for students are also included in this textbook on pages 7–12. Furthermore, it is equally important that this textbook uphold the nation's unity and integrity, nationalism, cooperative spirit, and respect for differing viewpoints, as evidenced by the illustrations of the various characters and the inclusion of images such as portraits of presidents, eagles, and students with friends as well as student differences. This is featured in picture 3, which depicts a person worshiping following their beliefs, on pages 1, 3, 4, 9, and 101.



Figure 1. The example figures student worksheets



Figure 2. The example of national unity and unity, nationalism, the nature of cooperation, and respect for various opinions

According to the analysis that has been done, there are parallels between this textbook and the analysis done by (Keban, N., Muhtar, A., & Zen, 2012), who did research using the book title “English for Kids Grade 3.” These two textbooks contain content or subjects that are relevant to everyday life. According to (Keban, N., Muhtar, A., & Zen, 2012), each unit in the book “English for Kids Grade 3” had specific goals, and the topics covered included family, occupation, daily activities, gardening, body parts, shopping, weather, beach, camping, transportation, and sports. As a result, there are parallels between this and the textbooks that I examined, including the Daily Activity on page 36 and the Transportation on page 120.

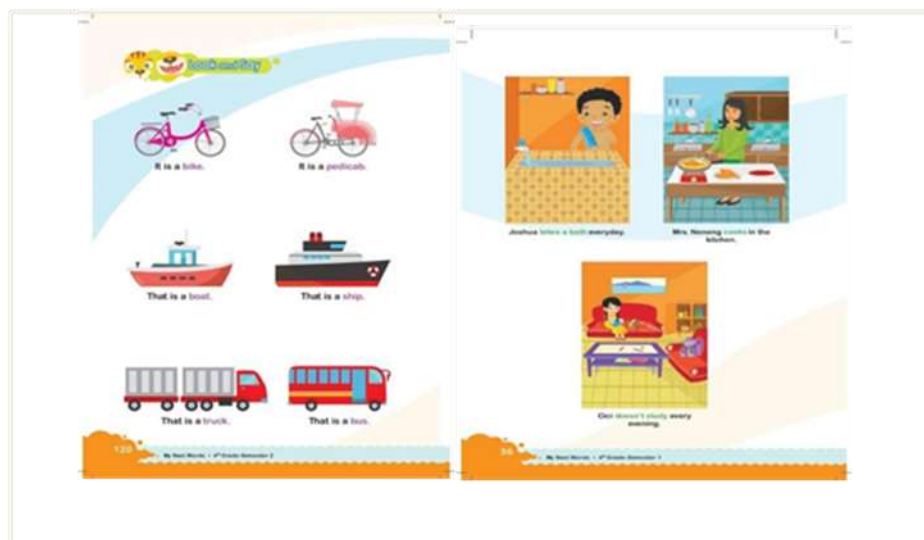


Figure 3. The examples of Daily Activities and Transportation

### **Language**

The language is used in a clear, concise, age-appropriate manner, with spelling, words, sentences, and paragraphs all used with precision and clarity. While young learners in grade 4 are taught in simple, contextual English, the language used in the My Next Words textbook is appropriate for their developmental stage. Although there is a spelling issue in the example paragraph on page 73

of unit 7, where the word "father" should read "father," other than that, the words, sentences, and paragraphs in this textbook are likewise accurate, uncomplicated, and obvious.



Figure 4. Spelling error in paragraph

### Presentation

There are a few parts that will be explained in this aspect.

1. The content is delivered engagingly. The textbook's content is delivered in an engaging, uncomplicated, understandable, and interactive way. The content is presented effectively and understandably. Next, every step needed to complete the task is laid out in great detail and with great clarity. Textbook instructions could meet two requirements, according to (Harmer, 2007). First and foremost, the directions must be precise and explicit. Secondly, the instructions must be written in a language that the student can comprehend.



Figure 5. Instructions in a Worksheet

2. Materials and drawing illustrations based on the developmental stage of the age. The material's illustrations align with the reader's developmental stage. It is anticipated that illustrations with a variety of colors and shapes will be able to pique students' interest in what they are studying. Students will then benefit immensely from the textual and visual examples that are provided to help them comprehend the purpose of the content being taught. For instance, the picture's illustration. Picture books are a significant kind of visual art that kids can access since they give them the chance to investigate their own experiences and learn about the values found in societal and familial contexts (Mantei, J. & Kervin, 2014).

3. No elements of violence, radicalism, pornography, racial profiling, gender bias, or other negative themes are used in the images used to clarify the content. Students who utilize pictures are better able to illustrate their writing and stay on task. Furthermore, youngsters who are exposed to visual images in books can comprehend conversation and interaction in addition to reading pictures. Therefore, there are no references to pornography, understanding extremism, radicalism, violence, SARA, gender bias, or other deviant values in the images in the book *My Next Words*.
4. The way the information is presented may make it more difficult to think critically, creatively, or innovatively. Elementary school pupils are typically highly imaginative, inventive, and curious. Additionally, there are several activities in the book *My Next Words* that can encourage children to think critically and creatively. Consider the activities on pages 58–59.
5. Provides contextual knowledge. Numerous portions of the book apply to daily life. It is believed that by making this connection, students will be encouraged to use these activities in their everyday lives. As an illustration, always up early and eat breakfast before heading to school.

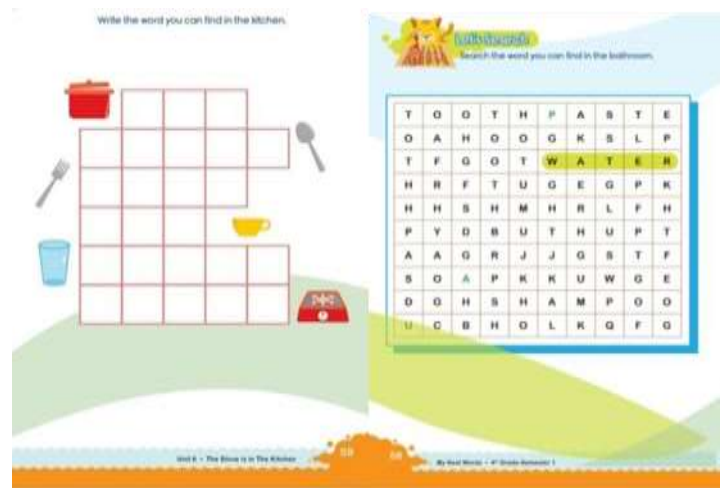


Figure 6. Let's Search Activity

6. The presentation of captivating content. The reader will find the material presented in the book interesting. There is a huge variety of colors, forms, and writings in my *Next Words* books. To pique students' interest in the explanation of the image, the content of *My Next Words* is more fully explained through an image.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and data analysis The textbook titled 'My Next Word for Grade 4' has four requirements for a good book according to the National Education Standards Agency, which is based on the findings and discussion. The book explains these four criteria. For this reason, teachers and students can utilize this textbook as a learning tool or resource during the educational process because it is deemed relevant enough. This textbook is still practical to use even though one of the



pages misspells some terms. Overall, it may offer age-appropriate learning depending on the child's developmental stage and does not contain any divergent values.

Nevertheless, a teacher's role cannot be replicated; they must continue to act as a facilitator by offering relevant and high-quality content. To close the gap, the teacher must also provide clarification, for as by pointing out the exact spelling error in the textbook. Therefore, to overcome a deficit in a used textbook, teachers need to be more analytical, creative, and imaginative. In addition, educators are urged to exercise greater caution when selecting textbooks for their students based on their developmental stage; in other words, educators need to be aware of the standards for a quality textbook that may be incorporated into the teaching process.

## REFERENCES

- Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research Design: Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif, Kuantitatif Dan Campuran* (4th Ed.). Jogjakarta: *Pustaka Pelajar*.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your Coursebook*. In *Mcmillan Publishers Limited*.
- Harmer, J. (2007). *No Title How to Teach English*. England: *Pearson Educational Limited*. e.
- Keban, N., Muhtar, A., & Zen, E. L. (2012). *A content analysis on English for kids in grade 3, a textbook used in elementary schools in Malang*.
- Mantei, J. & Kervin, L. (2014). Interpreting the images in a picture book: students make connections to themselves, their lives, and their experiences. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*. [Http://Education.Waikato.Ac.Nz/Research/Files/Etp c/Files/2014v13n2art5.Pdf](http://Education.Waikato.Ac.Nz/Research/Files/Etp%20c/Files/2014v13n2art5.Pdf), 13(2), 76–92.
- Novianti, P., & Ambarwati, E. K. (2023). A Textbook Analysis of “My Next Words” for the Fifth Grade Elementary School. *Jo-ELT (Journal of English Language Teaching) Fakultas Pendidikan Bahasa & Seni Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris IKIP*, 10(1), 12. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jo-elt.v10i1.6972>
- Richards, J. C. (2019). *Role of textbooks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tri Astari. (2022). Pengembangan Buku Teks dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka di Sekolah Dasar. *Madako Elementary School*, 1(2), 163–175. <https://doi.org/10.56630/mes.v1i2.56>
- Zubaidah, H., & Supeno. (2022). Linguistic Features and Presentation of Materials on English Textbook “When English Rings A Bell” Based on BSNP. *Deiksis*, 14(3), 320–329..