

# The Eligibility of the "Panduan Materi Agama" Book as an English Textbook in Early Childhood Education

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## Abstract

Textbook is one of the effective teaching materials used in early childhood education. It is the best component that contains the material for achieving the purpose of learning. This study dealt with the eligibility of "Panduan Materi Agama" English textbook because it was not yet known its quality. The purpose of the research was to know the eligibility of "Panduan Materi Agama" English textbook. The good criteria of the good textbook according to the guide of National Educational Ministry covered the presentation, the content, the character, and the illustration. This English textbook was used in Amanah Ummah Kindergarten, Surakarta. This research design used descriptive qualitative and the method of collecting the data was by documentation. The researchers did the coding and then proceed by calculating the percentage of the eligibility. The member checks and reference materials were used to validate the data of the research. The data analysis technique used content analysis. The results of the analysis were described as follows. The quality of material was eligible, 62,5%; the quality of the content was eligible, 62,5%; the quality of the character was less eligible, 50%; and the quality of illustration was eligible, 65%. Based on the percentage of presentation and material, the book had met the eligibility. On the conclusion of the research, it is hoped that the book should a little bit revise to make the textbook more eligible and valuable. Hopefully the book can be used optimally for teaching learning process in ECE.

**Keywords:** English textbook, early childhood education, eligibility.

## Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is one of the first formal education for children at an early age. According to a policy of National Education Ministry, Permendikbudno.137, 2014 ECE is an institution that is a coaching for children from 0 months to 6 years. The education is carried out by providing stimuli in the form of education to grow their development both physically and spiritually so that they have ability to continue their higher education [11]. The age of 0 - 6 years is a golden period for children. At that time, an important period that should grow the, personality, intelligence, and other developments. Various developments must be stimulated as optimal as possible [27]. ECE is an effort that strives for stimulation, guidance, maintenance, and the learning process to encourage the abilities and skills of children [6]. Basically, ECE is the education that is carried out with the hope to stimulate the full development of the child. One of the stimuli given to children is regarding the language development. Language is a communication tool that consists of written, oral and sign based on a symbol system [8]. Children's language is the language used to express their requests, hopes, thoughts, and requests to meet their own needs [20]. Through language, they can grow and develop in accordance with their identity that can exist in their social environment. Through language, children can grow by themselves into accepted human beings in their community [20].

Minister of Education and Culture Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia number 137 of the year of 2014 declared for Early Childhood Education regarding the language skill. The level of language development achievement, in the range of 4-5 years, children are expected to be able to master language such as "Listening to the words of others both using mother tongue and other languages. Indirectly, the government has provided an opportunity for PAUD organizers to introduce children to not only mother tongue but can be added with other languages. The introduction of language is intended to connect the communication between children and the surrounding environment. This is an anticipation of complex and unique children's

language development as a result from the formation between the child's self and the environment in which the children grow and develop [13]. In fact, many ECE providers in various regions use their native language or local language and use Indonesian as a second language. But however, in some schools the teachers have also introduced English as an additional language. English is a foreign language in Indonesia. It is because this language is not used as a daily communication [6]. Although the assumption of English as a foreign language, in fact the language has been used in almost all areas of life. On the other hand, it turns out that English is the second language that dominates science in the world. This fact makes people inclined to send their children to study English. Parents want their children to develop English skills as early as possible. They have confidence that children aged 2-7 years can be taught English. At this period, it was a golden period to develop language skills [6]. The more often English is taught, the better the results [17]. A study suggests that the more English users in Korea, the stronger the country and its people will be successful in every level of life [10]. English in early childhood needs to use appropriate methods in the learning process. The teaching process will be given according to their age [3]. To stimulate effective English learning to children teachers should use a variety of strategies [18]. Teaching English to children should be understood, repeated, interesting and fun [12]. It is also a goal for many instructors that the learner's ability in studying English is to use the kinds of authentic situations [26].

Textbook is a good teaching material that children use in ECE. The textbook is an important component in teaching learning in kindergarten because it can be used for exercises on children's fine motor. These exercises can be drawing, writing, coloring etc. According to Hutchinson and Torres a textbook is an importance part of English teaching [28]. Richards also describes that the teaching learning is not reflected if it does not use the textbook, because the material of the textbook covers syllabus and rules [29]. The book is designed using materials that are suitable for achieving the goals [21]. As teaching material, the book by includes scientific curriculum analysis in written form [2]. The quality of the textbooks will provide an achievement for better students. On the other hand, the low-quality textbook will have an impact on children's poor

achievement. The textbook should develop as the situation and condition of the student should be. The development of the textbook is an effort which is conducted to facilitate the teaching [22], [23], [24]. Furthermore, according to Chomsky, the textbook is a set of facility or learning tool that contain the teaching material, method, roles, and the way to evaluate which designs systematically and attractive to get the goal [25]. Based on field surveys, researchers learned that learning English was given at AmanahUmmah Kindergarten Surakarta. The learning was an introduction and language enrichment material that is taught to children. One of the teaching materials used by teachers was the textbook called "PanduanMateri Agama" or the guidance of religious material. The book was a source book recommended from the foundation to be a textbook. In learning English, the teacher introduced the vocabularies according to the material in the book. However, the quality of the textbook has not yet been identified. Therefore, researchers need to analyze the book.

Based on this phenomenon, the researchers formulated the problems. The first problem is that how the eligibility of presenting the textbook "PanduanMateri Agama" as the textbook at AmanahUmmah Kindergarten? The second problem is that how the eligibility of the textbook "PanduanMateri Agama" as a textbook in AmanahUmmah Kindergarten? From these two problems, the researcher aimed to find out the eligibility of the presentation and material of the book. Both eligibilities were analyzed according to guidelines from the Ministry of National Education in 2003. The eligibility of the first related to the presentation, and the second eligibility related to the material. The feasibility of the material consisted of 3 components, namely the contents of the book, the characters / story characters, and illustrations.

## Research Method

This research was a qualitative descriptive study. This type of qualitative research was used to examine objects naturally [19]. Meanwhile descriptive method was a method used to examine objects, a set of conditions or systems of thought, and the status of human groups [1].

For data collection, researchers used document analysis. The data obtained from English textbooks used at a kindergarten. The title of the book was "PanduanMateri Agama". Furthermore, to analyze data, researchers used content analysis [7]. To analyze the contents, the researcher used the reference of a good textbook guideline from the Ministry of National Education in 2003, these are 1) The book should use safe materials and packaging; 2) the book should have interesting themes and reflects real life experience for children; 3) the book should use characters that motivate them to build good characters; 4) The book should use clear, non ambiguous, colourful illustrations and avoid using illustrations that discriminate against certain Ethnic, Religion, Race and intergroup.

. Based on the guideline, the researcher made the instrument according to the observed items. Furthermore, researchers put the observation items into the table for the value. The study assessed the observation items using a range of scores from 1 to 4. After assigning score to the observed items, the next task of the researcher was to give a percentage of each observation. The percentage of eligibility is as follows:

$$\text{The Percentage of eligibility} = \frac{\text{total score} \times 100\%}{\text{maximum score}}$$

To find out how eligible textbooks are used, researchers construct 4 levels of criteria. The four levels are as follows. 1) A score of  $\leq 40\%$  means not eligible; 2) A score of  $40\% - 59.9\%$  means not eligible; 3) A score of  $60\% - 79.9\%$  means eligible; and 4) A score of  $\geq 80\%$  means very eligible. To check the validity of the data, some

researchers used a guideline from the Ministry of National Education in 2003 and some reference books of ECE. Researchers used the content analysis to analyze the data. The analysis was carried out by giving the score the researchers interpreted it.

## Result and Discussion

The textbook used by AmanahUmmah Kindergarten was entitled "PanduanMateri Agama". This book was written by the composing team of AmanahUmmah Kindergarten and it was the first publication and consists of 80 pages. This book is a book used by English teachers at AmanahUmmah Kindergarten for the introduction of English to children aged 4-6 years. The cover of the book "PanduanMateri Agama" included the title of the book which was on the top of the left side. Under the title there was a colored illustration and then the name PAUD written on the bottom of the left, listed the class and semester groups that used the book. On the page after the cover of the book there was a 'Muqodimah' or introduction. It was followed by the identity of the book starting from the author, and the drafting team. There was no publisher's name, city, and address where the book was printed. The next page contained pictures and information. It was an introduction written by the drafting team. The back cover of the book contained the school profile, vision and mission. Furthermore, underneath of the back cover, there was an inscription printed on. It was written the generation of smart and creative.

Textbook used for early childhood should be known for their suitability, therefore researchers analyzed an English textbook based on the Ministry of National Education (Depdiknas, 2003). The following described the results of the distribution of the good book criteria according to the Ministry of National Education.

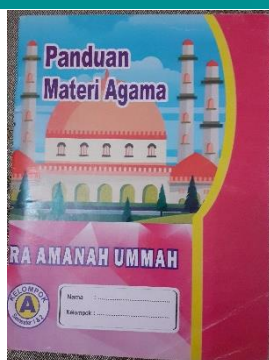
### 1. The eligibility of presentation in the textbook "PanduanMateri Agama"

Table 1 presents the eligibility of presenting books of each characteristic based on the Ministry of National Education (Depdiknas, 2003)

**Table 1.** The eligibility of the book presentation by Ministry of Education National (Depdiknas, 2003)

Component	The Criteria	The score			
		1	2	3	4
Material and Packaging	The material is safe for children			V	
	Thick paper		V		
	The paper is not slippery				V
	Colorful pages	V			
Total Score		10			
Maximum Score		16			
Percentage		62.5%			
Description		Eligible			

Table 1 explained that there were 3 criteria of the material and packaging components. The first criterion was to use materials that were safe for children. The textbook can be seen in picture 1.



Picture 1. The textbook of 'Panduan Materi Agama'.

Picture 1 shows that the cover of the textbook was safe and each sheet of paper on the book used materials were safe so that it did not endanger to the children's safety. The second criterion was thick and not slippery paper. It made easier for the children to flip through all pages of the book. This book used thick paper for front and back covers, while the other pages used thinner papers. It had a purpose in order not difficult for children when flipping the pages of the book. The third criterion was colorful pages. From the front page to the back, this book only used colorful pages on the cover, while the inside of the book was only black and white, so it is less interesting for children to read and see the contents of the book.

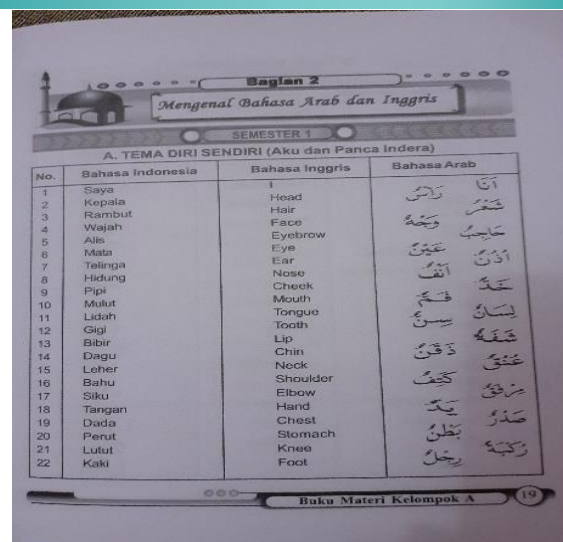
## 2. The feasibility of the material in the textbook "Panduan Materi Agama"

In this study, the researchers discussed the eligibility of the material in the book of each component and characteristics based on the guideline of the Ministry of National Education [4].

Table 2 Eligibility of the book contents based on the Ministry of National Education (Depdiknas, 2003)

Component Criteria (Depdiknas, 2003)	a. The theme is interesting, based on the stage of child development.	Score			
		1	2	3	4
	1) The images contain information, actions and In details		V		
	2) Getting to know the parts of human bodies			V	
	3) Friendship	V			
	4) Family			V	
	5) Getting to know the letters And the numbers			V	
	b. To express the real things relating to the child's experience.			V	
Total Score	15				
Maximum Score	24				
Percentage	62,5%				
Description	Eligible				

Based on table 2, there were 6 criteria of the content component of the book. The first criterion was an interesting theme based on the stage of development. This theme can be seen in picture 2.



The theme of the book can be seen on picture, number 2. Score 2 of the images reflected that the images covered enough information, actions and in details. The theme of the book was worthy. The theme reflected getting to know the parts of the human bodies. On the criteria of friendship, this book did not present the material related to the friendship, so the score just had got 1. The theme of the book was also worthy in which it discussed the family and getting to know the letters and numbers. The content of the book was also worthy on the expression of the real things relating to the child's experience. All contents of "Panduan Materi Agama" book were thematically and suitable to the stage of child development.

Table 3. The eligibility of characters based on the Department National Education (Depdiknas, 2003)

Component Criteria (Depdiknas, 2003)	Score			
	1	2	3	4
Character in the story				
a. Avoid the books that reveal evil characters in the story.		V		
b. Understand the purpose of the learning.		V		
Total Score		4		
Maximum Score		8		
Percentage		50%		
Description		Less eligible		

Table 3 described that there were 2 criteria of the character. The first criterion was to avoid the books that revealed the evil characters in the story. In this book there were only 2 figures who demonstrated ablution and who demonstrated praying. The second criterion was to understand the learning objectives. In this book there were no clear learning objectives

**Table 4.** The Eligibility of illustrations by the Ministry of National Education (Depdiknas, 2003)

Component Criteria (Depdiknas, 2003)		score			
		1	2	3	4
Illustration	Does not contain SARA				v
	Many bright colors	v			
	Unambiguous illustration			v	
	Make lots of illustrations and minimal writing	v			
	Drawings and writing			v	
Total Score		13			
Maximum Score		20			
Percentage		65%			
Description		Eligible			

Table 4 showed that there were 5 criteria for the good textbook. The first criterion was that it did not contain discrimination against elements of ethnic, race, and intergroup (Suku, Agama, Ras, dan Antargolongan). In this book there was no element of SARA so it was safe for learning process. The second criterion was lots of good bright colors. This book had no color pages except for covers. The third criterion was unambiguous illustration. The illustrations used in this book were clear so that they did not confuse for the child in understanding the meaning of a picture or illustration. Otherwise, the illustrations were only limited for a few activities. The fourth criterion was making a lot of illustrations and a few sentences. This book contained a few illustrations and had lot of sentences.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the previous analysis it could be seen that the English textbooks used at AmanahUmmah Kindergarten had several criteria. These criteria were linked to the good textbook guidelines from the Ministry of National Education in 2003. The first criterion was the book presentation. In detail, the presentation of the book was considered feasible. This was because the book used the safe materials, used thick paper and was not slippery when used by children. The second criterion was the content of the book was also appropriate. This was proved by the interesting themes, getting to know the parts of body, relating to the family, recognizing the letters and the numbers, and expressing the real things related to the children's experiences. The third criterion concerned the character of the story. In this book, there were only 2 figures. Furthermore, the learning objectives of the book were also not stated clearly. On the fourth criterion, this book's analysis dealt with the illustrations. The illustrations of this book were considered eligible. This eligibility of the illustration was shown in a lot of pictures and few sentences. The pictures and writing did not contain SARA, the illustrations were not ambiguous, and between the images and the sentences reflected the real things.

Of the four criteria, the content of the English textbook "Panduan Materi Agama" was declared suitable for the children in AmanahUmmah Kindergarten. It was hoped that the textbook could be used to achieve learning goals.

Based on the conclusion of the research, it is hoped that the book should a little bit revise to make the textbook more valuable. Hopefully the book can be used optimally for teaching learning process in ECE. For the next researchers, the analysis of the textbook can use from other point of view.

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