



An Evaluation of Critical Reading Materials at English Language Department of Universitas Negeri Padang

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Abstract

To develop a good material, the materials developer needs to evaluate the previous materials being used by using the criteria of good materials. The aim of this study was to do an evaluation to the critical reading materials at the English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang based on the Cunningsworth checklist. This research was a descriptive study using a quantitative approach with the instrument of data collection technique using a questionnaire. The respondents in this study were four lecturers of the English Language Department of Universitas Negeri Padang who had ever experienced in teaching critical reading courses. They were given 50 questions to evaluate the teaching materials in the critical reading course. The results showed that Aims and Approaches was categorized as "Fair" (64%), Design and Organization was categorized as "Sufficient" (59%), Language Content was categorized as "Fair" (72%), Skills was categorized as "Fair" (71%), Topics was categorized as "Fair" (63%), Methodology was categorized as "Sufficient" (58%), and Practical Considerations was categorized as "Fair" (60%). Overall, the quality of this material was categorized as "Fair" with the total was 64%. It still needs improvements in several aspects for example: The coverage of the materials based on what is needed, the usage of different teaching and learning styles, the made up components of materials package, the organization of the materials (according to the structures, functions, topics, and skills).

Keywords:

Materials Evaluation, Critical Reading, Teaching Materials.

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching materials is intended to facilitate learners to comprehend the text. It should assist students to be more analytical when participating in any reading activity. Good teaching material should expose the learners through written and

spoken texts to the real use of English to involve them effectively and cognitively. It effectively helps learners for noticing the features of the authentic language as they are showed to help at ease and quicken language acquisition (Tomlinson, 2008).

Materials are made by the materials developers and it needs an evaluation to improve its quality. Tomlinson (2003, p. 15) stated that Material assessment means a process that measures a bundle of learning material's value (or prospective worth). Assess enormous worries about the requirements of the consumers of the materials and judge the consequences personally. some questions may include in an evaluation like 'Do the reading texts sufficiently engage learners?' which elicit responses containing a necessarily subjective value judgment.

The evaluation of materials is a complex matter under Cunningsworth (1995) because there are numerous variables that affect the success or failure of coursebooks when used. According to him, the numbers of aspects used, the number of questions asked or the statement made are to be limited in a manageable proportion when assessing education materials. Therefore, only seven aspects of language content, language skills and issues are assessed by the researchers. The researchers. In the process of learning and teaching the researchers see these aspects frequently. These are the principal aspects of the teaching and learning process, in other words. The evaluation of materials would include a careful selection of materials to see siphoning off the needs of students, the objectives, methods and values of a particular teaching program (Cunningsworth, 1995). By way of material assessment, teachers will know the content, strengths and faults of the material, which will enable them to adapt it to the course goals, needs of the students and beliefs of the teachers. Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) further said that the evaluation materials help lecturers go beyond impressionistic evaluations and they get useful, precise, systematic and contextual insights into materials as a whole.

Four material evaluation criteria were referred to in Cunningsworth (1995: 15-17). These criteria are a guidance to drawing up a checklist to evaluate materials. It covers the needs of the students, reflects the present and future of the language, facilitates learning in many different ways and plays a clear role as a support for learning. The most important general criteria for evaluation and selection, which are called a basic quick-reference checklist, were also proposed by Cunningsworth (1995: 3). It deals with certain aspects. They include objectives and approaches, design and organization, content of languages, skills, topics, methodology, books of lecturers and practical considerations.

Materials in Critical Reading course in several points have met the criteria proposed by some experts. The materials for vocabulary teaching are adequate in terms of quality and range of vocabulary in this material. The language used in the material is sufficiently authentic. The materials include reading skills (scanning and skimming) into usage. Then, the whole package cost good value for money. However, this material also has several weaknesses. First, the materials are still in several pieces of paper copied from other resources of reading. Next, there are no specific materials available for this class and sometimes overlapped with advanced reading class. Then, from the interview with some reading lecturers, it is found that this material is very monotonous and boring to be learned by the learners because the

materials are not varied, authentic, and also lack interesting activities put into practice.

There have been studies on this topic. Rahmawati (2003), Karamoozian & Riazi (2008), and Latif (2015). These researchers discussed the reasons for adopting and evaluating ELT materials and the steps of doing it. They explained the quality features of several available materials evaluation checklists proposed by researchers and professionals. The factors influence students in making decisions to enter the field of work as a university profession. And also, described the method being used to evaluate materials.

In addition, studies conducted by Kirkgöz (2009), Angulo and Miranda (2014), Handayani et al. (2018) and Hanifa (2018), Uddin (2021), and Alenezi (2019). These studies evaluated materials in primary and secondary school by using the criteria proposed by experts. They tried to find the strengths and the weakness of the materials. Then, it will be easier for the materials developers to develop new materials which are appropriate to the good criteria proposed by experts.

The study survey of Alamri (2008) examined English materials that were used for a young group of Saudi learners by teachers and administrators. McDonough and Shaw's (1999) evaluation model of a course book was used by both Murdoch (2000) and Atkins (2001), respectively, for evaluating the material used in the high school contexts in Korea and Japan. To evaluate a course book used at a university in Korea, Litz (2005) used student and teacher surveys. In every case, a system based on the checklist, with some changes needed to make the assessment more appropriate for the aims and context of each researcher.

RESEARCH METHOD

This was a study of description. Arikunto (2006) defines descriptive research in the form of a result report to analyze a certain circumstance, condition or other items. The goal of a descriptive study is to identify the nature and cause of a specific phenomenon as it occurs in the period of the research. This study aimed to know whether the critical reading materials at English Language Department of Universitas Negeri Padang fulfill the criteria of good materials based on Cunningsworth checklist in terms of aims and approaches, design and organization, skills, topics, language contents, methodology, and practical consideration. The respondents in this research were population of this research was lecturers at the English Department of UNP who had experienced in teaching Critical Reading. They consisted of seven lecturers. The sample of the research was taken by using the convenience sampling technique because some lecturers were disposed to participate in this research. Of the ten, four lecturers were involved because of their availability and willingness to take part, so that the four lecturers became the sample of this research.

The instrument used in this research was a questionnaire. This questionnaire is developed by the researcher based on the theories in chapter II. The questionnaire contains 50 close-ended questions which are divided into seven parts, questions 1-7 were about Aims and Approaches, questions 8-17 were about Design and Organization, questions 18-24 were about Language Content, questions 25-31 were about Skills, questions 32-38 were about Topics, questions 39-44 were about Methodology, and 45-50 were about Practical Consideration. The questionnaire

given to teachers used a Likert scale 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), 4 (strongly agree). The questionnaire also has validity and reliability to make sure the questionnaire is reliable and valid. In this case, to test the validity of the content contained in the questionnaire, it was given to English lecturers who were experts in the topic. To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, the formula was used Cronbach's Alpha, and the criteria of the reliability were very high, high, enough, low, or very low. Based on the criteria that the researcher got from the formula of Cronbach's Alpha, it was described that the questionnaire was reliable to be used in the research because the result of the calculation was 0,52. In collecting the data, the researcher has carried out these steps: The researcher contacted the English teachers who being the participants through WhatsApp because of the pandemic situation to ask permission first. After receiving permission, the researcher shared a link of the questionnaire created in Google form through WhatsApp. After that, the researcher asked participants to fill out the questionnaire. After the participants filled out the questionnaire, the researcher collected the answers and analyzed the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings

A table would indicate the outcome of the evaluation in general in this section. The answer to the aspects is the average of each aspect. Each aspect was assessed by several statements in the questionnaire. The average thus illustrates how each aspect meets the criteria based on the reader's view.

Table 1. Table of Evaluation Summary

No	Aspect of Evaluation	(%)	Mean	Category
1	Aims and Approaches	64%	2,57	Fair
2	Design and Organization	59%	2,35	Sufficient
3	Language Content	72%	2,89	Fair
4	Skills	71%	2,86	Fair
5	Topics	63%	2,54	Fair
6	Methodology	58%	2,33	Sufficient
7	Practical Considerations	60%	2,42	Fair
Total		64%	2,56	Fair

From the table above it is found that the lecturers believed that the language content of the materials was appropriate for the students since it is 2,89. The next mean which is the second highest the skills which is 2,86. It shows that the lecturers consider the skills provided in the materials are appropriate for the students. Aims and approaches and also topics have almost the same result for each in 2,5 which

means it's still reliable for the students. Practical consideration, design, and organization, and also the methodology of this material become the lowest aspects being evaluated for the results are below 2,5. This means that these three aspects need to be improved.

In the meantime, lecturers and developers of materials need to look at every aspect further. Therefore, it might be necessary to add to the materials as a revision of existing materials in order to improve the materials. Therefore lecturers could focus on the particular component of the materials and developers of the materials can also review the materials for the specific component. In the next subchapter, the results of each item are discussed in greater depth.

Table 2. The Analysis of the Aims and Approaches

Aspect	Sub-aspects	(%)	Mean	Category
Aims and Approaches	1. The aims of the materials correspond closely to the aims of the teaching program.	75%	3,00	Fair
	2. The aims of the materials correspond closely to the aims of the needs of the learners.	75%	3,00	Fair
	3. The materials are suited to the learning/teaching situation.	63%	2,50	Fair
	4. The materials cover most or all of what is needed.	50%	2,00	Sufficient
	5. It is a good resource for learners and lecturers.	75%	3,00	Fair
	6. The materials are flexible.	63%	2,50	Fair
	7. It allows different teaching and learning styles.	50%	2,00	Sufficient
Total		64%	2,57	Fair

The first aspect analysis goes to aims and approaches. There are seven sub-aspects to measure the agreement of the aims and approaches of the materials. The first, second, and fifth sub-aspects are rated at 3. This means the lecturers mostly agree with those 3 statements. The lecturers saw that the aims of the materials correspond closely to the aims of the teaching program and the needs of the learners, and also it becomes a good resource for learners and lecturers.

However, the lecturers and the materials developers should carefully see that points number 3 and 6, materials are suited to the learning/teaching situation and flexible for the students since the results that both sub-aspects got only 2,5 of 4. This means that this material is only suited and flexible enough to the learning/teaching situation. Additionally, points 4 and 6 only got 2 of 4 from the category. This means that the material has not covered most or all of what is needed and has not allowed different teaching and learning styles.

Table 3. The Analysis of the Design and Organization

Aspect	Sub-aspects	(%)	Mean	Category
Design and	8. The materials package is made up of the	44%	1,8	Sufficient

Organization	components? (eg. Student's book, lecturers' book, workbooks, cassettes, etc.)			
	9. The organization of the materials (according to the structures, functions, topics, and skills) is right for the learners and lecturers.	56%	2,3	Sufficient
	10. The content (the basis of complexity, learnability, and usefulness) is sequenced.	63%	2,5	Fair
	11. The grading and progression are suitable for the learners.	63%	2,5	Fair
	12. It allows them to complete the work needed to meet any external syllabus requirements.	56%	2,3	Sufficient
	13. There is adequate recycling and revision.	56%	2,3	Sufficient
	14. There are reference sections.	50%	2,0	Sufficient
	15. Some of the materials are suitable for individual study.	81%	3,3	Good
	16. It is easy to find your way around the materials.	69%	2,8	Sufficient
	17. The layout is clear.	50%	2,0	Sufficient
	Total	59%	2,4	Sufficient

According to the design and organization, the critical reading materials got 2,4 of 4 or 59% of the category which was categorized "Sufficient". Several lecturers agree that some of the materials are suitable for the individual study for it gets the highest score 3,3 of 4. Then, it is easy enough to find your way around the materials for the result mean is 2,8.

However, Some of the lecturers agreed that the content (the basis of complexity, learnability, and usefulness) is sequenced enough and the grading and progression are suitable enough for the learners for the results are bot 2,5. The other six sub-aspects were categorized sufficient for the results were less than 2,5 which means these sub-aspects have not met the appropriate aspects. Those are the items number 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 17. These sub-aspects need to be considered for the lecturers and the materials developers to improve the quality of the materials in the aspects of design and organization.

Table 4. The Analysis of the Language Content

Aspect	Sub-aspects	(%)	Mean	Category
Language Content	18. The materials cover the main grammar items appropriate to each level, taking learners' needs into account.	69%	2,8	Fair
	19. The materials for vocabulary teaching are adequate in terms of quality and range of vocabulary.	81%	3,3	Good
	20. The materials emphasis placed on vocabulary development, strategies for individual learning.	63%	2,5	Fair
	21. The language style is matched to the social	63%	2,5	Fair

	situation.			
	22. The language used in the book is sufficiently authentic.	81%	3,3	Good
	23. The dictions expose the students to be more critical in reading.	75%	3,0	Fair
	24. The language used is at the right level for learners' current English ability.	75%	3,0	Fair
	Total	72%	2,9	Fair

Language content became the aspect of the critical reading materials, which got the highest total average. It was categorized as "Fair" for the total average is 2,9 of 4 or 72%. Most lecturers agreed that the materials for vocabulary teaching are adequate in terms of quality and range of vocabulary and the language used in the book is sufficiently authentic for the scores of both are 3,3. Then most of them believed that the dictions in the materials expose the students enough to be more critical in reading; Languages used are fair to the learner's present English skills; the resources are sufficient at each level to teach key grammatical elements, and take sufficient care of the student demands.

Table 5. The Analysis of the Skills

Aspect	Sub-aspects	(%)	Mean	Category
Skills	25. The reading passages and associated activities are suitable for learners' levels and interests.	69%	2,8	Fair
	26. The materials include reading skills (scanning and skimming) into usage.	88%	3,5	Good
	27. There are sufficient reading materials.	69%	2,8	Fair
	28. There is a sufficient range of engaging, level-appropriate reading material.	63%	2,5	Fair
	29. The reading passages encourage meaningful language use.	75%	3,0	Fair
	30. The materials encourage learners to work individually and in groups.	69%	2,8	Fair
	31. The reading passages promote creative, original, and independent responses.	69%	2,8	Fair
	Total	71%	2,9	Fair

Skills aspect in critical reading materials got 2,9 of 4 or 71% of total average which is categorized "Fair". The materials include reading skills (scanning and skimming) into usage becomes the sub-aspect which got the highest score. Then, the lecturers agreed that the reading passages in the materials encourage meaningful language use to the students for the mean is 3. Reading passages and related activities are adequate for the level and interests of the learners. Adequate reading materials are also available. The resources promote individual and group work for learners. The lecture portions encourage innovative, unique and autonomous answers. Last, point number 28 becomes the lowest sub-aspect in evaluation. Its mean is only 2,8 which means this is only fair enough.

Table 6. The Analysis of the Topics

Aspect	Sub-aspects	(%)	Mean	Category
Topics	32. There are sufficient materials of genuine interest to learners.	50%	2,0	Sufficient
	33. There is enough variety of range of topic.	56%	2,3	Sufficient
	34. The topics help expand learners' awareness and enrich their experience.	75%	3,0	Fair
	35. The topics are sophisticated enough in content yet within the learners' language levels.	69%	2,8	Fair
	36. The topics of the materials are realistic and likely to appeal to the learners.	63%	2,5	Fair
	37. The topics are relevant and encourage learners to express themselves.	56%	2,3	Sufficient
	38. The topics encourage critical thinking and active learning.	75%	3,0	Fair
Total		63%	2,5	Fair

The topics in the critical reading materials were categorized as "Fair" for the results is 2,5. The interviewees believed that the subjects in the materials help to raise awareness and enrich their experience, promote critical thinking and active learning, are realistic and likely to attract students and are sufficient in content, but the results of these subaspects are "fair" at the level of learners' language skills.

However, insufficient resources of genuine interest were available for learners; the diversity of subjects was not adequate; the topics were not relevant and inspire students to express themselves for the outcome, showing that these sub-aspects were "satisfactory".

Table 71. The Analysis of the Methodology

Aspect	Sub-aspects	(%)	Mean	Category
Methodology	39. The approaches in the materials are appropriate to the learning situation.	56%	2,3	Sufficient
	40. Level of active learner involvement match to learners' learning styles and expectation.	56%	2,3	Sufficient
	41. The technique used in learning is suitable for learners.	69%	2,8	Fair
	42. The materials include any advice/help to learners on study skills and learning strategy.	69%	2,8	Fair
	43. The suggested teaching methodology is based on the latest research.	38%	1,5	Poor
	44. The materials can be easily adapted to suit various approaches.	63%	2,5	Fair
Total		58%	2,3	Sufficient

Methodology becomes the aspect that got the lowest result in evaluation. The material simply includes advice/helping for students on learning abilities and strategies and the resources may easily be converted to other methods that are greater than 2.5 but less than 3 outcomes. The contents are also available for learners.

In the meanwhile, material methods are not suitable to the condition of learning, and the level of active participation has not corresponded with the styles and expectations of learners. Finally, the proposed approach of teaching is not based on the current findings. This sub-aspect becomes the lowest for the mean is only 1,5 which means it's "poor".

Table 8. The Analysis of the Practical Consideration

Aspect	Sub-aspects	(%)	Mean	Category
Practical Consideration	45. The whole package cost good value for money.	81%	3,3	Good
	46. The materials are strong and long-lasting.	69%	2,8	Fair
	47. The materials are attractive.	38%	1,5	Poor
	48. The materials are easy to obtain.	75%	3,0	Fair
	49. The materials contents and additional materials look interesting.	38%	1,5	Poor
	50. The font size and type used in the materials are appropriate for learners.	63%	2,5	Fair
Total		60%	2,4	Fair

The practical consideration of critical reading materials is categorized as "fair" for its mean is only 2,4. The interviewees considered the bundle to be costly and the components simple to get. From the results, it reveals that there are more than three sub-aspects. The materials are robust and durable enough and the text size and type utilized in the materials are enough for students. Finally, the material producers and lecturers must examine the materials are not very appealing, and the contents of the materials and other materials are not fascinating.

Discussion

This study was intended to evaluate the materials in the critical reading course at the English Department of UNP. The researcher explained the results of the material assessment from seven of the material evaluation criteria of Cunningsworth (1995).

The study attempted to determine whether the aims of this material reflect the competence, fundamental competence, curriculum teaching and students' needs. The result of the survey showed that generally, the aim of the materials was categorized as "Fair". There was no presence of the objectives in several materials but in some of them like in "Week 1 material" the objective of learning was stated but not obviously stated. As Cunningsworth (1995:7) says, the students will learn what they learn in a systematic textbook. Then, for some of the materials, the objective of learning should be stated.

In general, the design of this material was categorized as "sufficient". The material did not have any cover; the materials had no pictures, and materials for each week are separated. Two dominant colors, white and gray, have been designed for the materials. If it is more colorful and clearer, it will be better. It would be more attractive if colorful images of real people and true environment are taken in the manual (2007:139). As Jahangard stated, the textbook should be clear and attractive.

The materials are standard and readable in font size. The materials should contain the total package of courses accordingly. Only one paper a week was supplied, the books of students, teacher guides and no materials were supported. The textbook may include supporting coverage material (teacher's guide, work book, video or audio material) as described by Huang (2011).

The materials in general were good enough to demonstrate language use and suited the level of recent skills of the students. The materials for vocabulary teaching have already been adequate in terms of quality and range of vocabulary. The language used in the book is authentic enough and is the right level to the current English skills of the students. The dictions have exposed students to be more critical in reading. The resources cover the key aspects of grammar at each level and take care of students' requirements. The resources focus on the development of vocabulary and individual learning techniques. The style of language corresponds to the social environment. Simply said, the material's language content has attained the level of adequacy of goods. It is therefore in accordance with McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004), a book can simultaneously trick the readers and enhance their understanding (as cited in Molden, 2007).

In addition, like the aspect of language content, the skills aspect was categorized as "Fair". The know-how helps pupils to examine the readings and to synthesize them. Students need to be introduced and taught how to critical readers to develop these skills (Kadir et al., 2014). Critical reading materials have already been in line with that. The skills provided in the materials encourage students to be more critical in reading. The reading passages and accompanying activities are appropriate for kids' levels and interests. The materials contain the ability to read (scan and skim) in use. There are sufficient reading materials. There is enough engaging, high-level material to read. The reading passages encourage meaningful language use. The materials encourage learners to work individually and in groups. The reading passages promote creative, original, and independent responses.

Next, the topics aspect was categorized as "Fair". The topics have helped to expand learners' awareness and enrich their experience. Critical thinking and active learning are encouraged by the topics. The themes are sufficiently complex in depth but in the vernacular of students. They are realistic and attractive to the students. However, the resources of actual interest to learners were not adequate. The breadth of subjects was not enough. Then the subjects were not relevant and encouraged students to speak up.

Methodology in critical reading materials was categorized as "Sufficient". The technique used in learning has been suitable for learners. The resources provide any guidance or assistance for learners on the learning abilities and approach. The resources may therefore simply be modified to other ways. However, the approaches to the subject matter were not adapted to the context of learning. The degree of active participation by learners did not meet the styles and expectations of students. Finally, the proposed approach of teaching was not based on the most recent research. However, Clarke (1989) argued that the communicative method is based on authenticity and is significant, realistic, contextual, and focused on the learner.

The last, practical considerations of this material were categorized as "Fair". The materials of the critical reading course still consisted of several pieces of paper.

The materials for each week or meeting are brought by the lecturer to the class each meeting. Usually, lecturers asked the students to copy the materials before the course began. Cunningsworth advocated the strength and durability of the material (1995). Huang (2011) further states that the practical problem has been associated with material flexibility, accessibility concept and economical consideration. The material was not durable and durable.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to evaluate the teaching materials in the Critical Reading course at the English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang. Based on those results and conversations the materials of the critical reading course may be determined that five of Cunningsworth's seven assessment criteria were met (1995). The aspects of goals and approaches were based on the relevance of materials objectives and the curriculum covered the needs of students, but had no different style of learning or teaching. The element of design and organisation, as far as the arrangement of materials, material sequence, individually studied pupils and the readability of the material as the program requirement are concerned, did not completely meet the standards. Third, the resources related to the criterion of language content included the necessary grammar items and the discourse ability of the learners. The resources satisfied the requirements for covering qualifications as in the curriculum, following in respect of skills, having reading skills. The contents contained abilities for reading (scanning and skimming).

In addition, the topics have helped to expand learners' awareness and enrich their experience. Critical thinking and active learning are encouraged by the topics. The themes are sufficiently complex in depth but in the vernacular of students. The resources then provide any guidance or assistance for students on learning abilities and learning strategies. The resources may therefore simply be modified to other ways. However, the approaches to the subject matter were not adapted to the context of learning. The degree of active participation by learners did not meet the styles and expectations of students. The final point is a practical one. It fulfilled all the criteria in the pricing package for the entire package and was straightforward to get. Meanwhile, the materials of the critical reading course still consisted of several pieces of paper.

So that the materials can be used as a reference to teach the students at the English Department of UNP in Critical Reading Class, Yet numerous improvements were necessary to offset the shortcomings.

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