

## **The Evaluation of English Textbook for Grade XI of Senior High School in Indonesia**

**Pemina Sembiring<sup>1\*</sup>, Ivan Simanjuntak<sup>2</sup>, Nurlela Majrul<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Universitas Sumatera Utara

[peminasembiring@gmail.com](mailto:peminasembiring@gmail.com)\*

### **ABSTRACT**

This study evaluates the quality of the English textbook for Grade XI of senior high school in Indonesia, titled Pathway to English Tingkat Lanjut, using a qualitative document analysis methodology. The research examines the textbook based on established criteria for high-quality English learning materials, including practical considerations, layout and design, activities, skills development, language types, and subject content. Data were collected through a systematic review of the textbook's structure, exercises, and content, which were then compared to pedagogical standards and best practices in English language teaching. The findings reveal that the textbook meets expectations in terms of practical considerations, layout, design, activities, and basic skills development. However, it lacks essential supporting materials such as workbooks and audio resources, which are critical for comprehensive language learning. It also provides a general overview of content rather than a detailed introduction and offers limited coverage of grammar and vocabulary, with no emphasis on natural pronunciation, authentic language usage, or diverse registers and accents. The grammar explanations are not concise or user-friendly, and the examples provided are insufficient for learners' needs. Moreover, the subject matter lacks variety, reducing its ability to engage and motivate students. These findings underscore the need for targeted revisions to address these shortcomings, aligning the textbook with modern pedagogical standards and enhancing its effectiveness in fostering real-life English communication skills. Future research should explore the integration of multimedia resources and evaluate the textbook's impact in classroom settings.

*This is an open access article under [CC-BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) license.*



### **ARTICLE INFO**

#### **Keywords:**

English textbook;  
grade XI;  
evaluation;  
pedagogical standards;  
supplementary materials

#### **Article History:**

Received: 21 November 2024

Revised: 18 December 2024

Accepted: 21 December 2024

Published: 22 December 2024

#### **How to Cite in APA Style:**

Sembiring, P., Simanjuntak, I., & Majrul, N. (2024). The Evaluation of English Textbook for Grade XI of Senior High School in Indonesia. *Lexeme : Journal of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics*, 7(1), 69–74.

<https://doi.org/10.32493/ljal.v7i1.45743>

### **INTRODUCTION**

Textbooks are indispensable in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), especially in contexts where exposure to the target language outside the classroom is limited. In Indonesian senior high schools, where English is compulsory, textbooks serve as the primary instructional resource for teachers and students alike, shaping both curriculum delivery and learning outcomes (Richards, 2021). Beyond their linguistic content, textbooks are expected to develop students' practical communication skills and foster cultural awareness, equipping them for global engagement. However, studies have found that many Indonesian EFL textbooks fail to meet

international pedagogical standards, often lacking authenticity, engaging content, and sufficient grammar explanations (Handayani et al., 2019). This shortfall can hinder the development of essential language competencies, such as real-life communication skills and cultural understanding. The absence of supporting materials, like workbooks and audio aids, further compromises their effectiveness, leaving students with limited opportunities for multimodal learning. Additionally, these textbooks often lack variety in content, which reduces their ability to motivate and engage learners over the long term. Such gaps highlight the critical need for rigorous textbook evaluation and revision processes to ensure alignment with both curriculum objectives and learners' needs. By addressing these shortcomings, textbooks can become more effective tools for fostering language acquisition and preparing students for real-world English use.

The evaluation of textbooks is crucial for identifying their strengths and weaknesses, ensuring that they meet educational objectives and effectively support student learning. Through a systematic evaluation process, materials can be refined to better align with pedagogical goals and curricular standards. Rohi and Nurhayati (2024) emphasize that effective textbooks should incorporate diverse content, authentic language use, and engaging activities to capture students' interest and foster motivation. These elements are essential for creating a dynamic learning experience that encourages critical thinking and language application in real-world contexts. Despite these ideals, many Indonesian EFL textbooks fail to meet these expectations. Studies have highlighted significant issues such as insufficient support materials, unclear grammar explanations, and limited subject variety, all of which diminish the textbooks' educational value (Harwood, 2010). The lack of authentic language usage and real-life examples further undermines their effectiveness, leaving students unprepared for practical communication. Additionally, the absence of engaging content reduces learners' interest and active participation in the learning process. Addressing these shortcomings through thorough evaluation and targeted revisions can significantly enhance the quality and utility of EFL textbooks in Indonesia.

Textbooks play a vital role in language learning by offering a structured framework that supports the teaching process. They are designed to present curriculum content in an organized manner, guiding both teachers and students through the learning material (Huang, 2019). In addition to presenting key concepts, textbooks include exercises and activities that provide opportunities for practice, helping students to apply language skills in various contexts. In EFL contexts like Indonesia, where students often have limited exposure to English outside the classroom, textbooks serve as the primary resource for language acquisition, making their quality especially important.

The textbook's design directly influences how effectively language learning occurs, as it helps contextualize learning and builds foundational skills (Farrell & Jacobs, 2020). Well-constructed textbooks incorporate a variety of learning activities, including reading, listening, and speaking exercises, which are essential for developing communicative competence. Furthermore, textbooks should offer a balance between linguistic accuracy and practical language use, helping students navigate both formal and informal language contexts. Without such considerations, textbooks may fail to provide students with the necessary tools for real-life language application, which is crucial for English proficiency in non-English-speaking countries like Indonesia. Thus, textbook quality is a central factor in shaping successful EFL programs.

However, as highlighted by Pulungan et al. (2024), many Indonesian textbooks fail to incorporate features that would engage learners effectively. One of the main shortcomings is the lack of authentic language examples that reflect real-life communication, which is essential for developing practical language skills. Authentic language, including the use of diverse accents and registers, has been shown to enhance language comprehension and cultural competence, preparing students for real-world communication. Without authentic language examples, students may struggle to understand how English is used in various contexts, limiting their ability to engage in effective communication.

Furthermore, the absence of such authentic materials in textbooks can hinder students' understanding of cultural nuances and the global diversity of English. Textbooks that lack these features may also fail to expose students to the varying linguistic registers they will encounter in different social settings, such as formal and informal speech, or regional variations (Miller, 2011). As a result, students may find themselves unprepared for the complexities of English communication beyond the classroom. In light of these gaps, it is crucial that textbooks include authentic content to better prepare students for real-life language use, fostering a more well-rounded and culturally competent understanding of the language.

Several studies have highlighted the deficiencies in Indonesian EFL textbooks, which can significantly impact language learning outcomes. For example, Sulistiyo et al. (2021) point out that many textbooks lack clear, concise grammar explanations and provide examples that are not user-friendly or accessible for students (Zhang, 2015). This gap in the presentation of grammar can make it difficult for learners to grasp essential language rules, limiting their ability to use English correctly and fluently. Additionally, there is a notable absence of essential supporting aids such as audio resources and workbooks, which are integral to a multimodal approach to language learning. The lack of these resources hinders students' ability to practice listening, speaking, and comprehension skills, which are crucial for overall language proficiency.

Moreover, the absence of these supporting aids limits the textbook's flexibility, making it less adaptable to different learning styles. Some students benefit from visual aids, while others may require additional practice through exercises outside the textbook, such as workbooks or interactive resources (Hamid et al., 2024). These shortcomings make it difficult for teachers to effectively cater to the diverse needs of their students, as they are forced to supplement the textbooks with external materials. Furthermore, textbooks without sufficient multimedia or interactive elements fail to engage students in a way that supports active learning and retention. Without these essential tools, textbooks cannot fully support the learning process, which necessitates a more integrated approach to language education.

Applying this evaluation framework to "Pathway to English *Tingkat Lanjut*" offers valuable insights into how well the textbook adheres to modern pedagogical practices. This evaluation can reveal strengths, such as its design or activities, and identify areas in need of improvement, such as the inclusion of more authentic materials or multimedia resources. By assessing its alignment with these established criteria, the textbook's effectiveness in promoting language acquisition and preparing students for practical communication can be better understood. Moreover, the evaluation process can guide future revisions to ensure that the textbook better meets the diverse needs of students and supports teachers in fostering active, engaging learning experiences.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative document analysis methodology to evaluate the Pathway to English *Tingkat Lanjut* textbook, a widely used resource in Indonesian senior high schools. Document analysis enables a detailed and systematic review of the textbook's content, structure, exercises, and activities, comparing them against established evaluation criteria such as those proposed by Fitzgerald (2012). This methodology is effective in identifying strengths and weaknesses in educational materials, highlighting areas for improvement, and offering insights into their alignment with pedagogical best practices. As Altheide et al. (2008) note, document analysis is particularly useful for examining textbooks, as it allows researchers to uncover patterns and gaps in the material that may not be immediately evident through other evaluation methods.

The use of this approach in textbook research is well-documented, its ability to pinpoint both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in textbooks. It also helps evaluate how well the textbook meets the diverse needs of learners and teachers. Moreover, this method enables a thorough examination of whether textbooks incorporate essential components such as authenticity, skill-building activities, and cultural relevance. Through document analysis, this study aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of the Pathway to English *Tingkat Lanjut*

textbook, ultimately offering recommendations for revisions to enhance its effectiveness in fostering English language acquisition in Indonesian classrooms.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In this study, the Pathway to English *Tingkat Lanjut* textbook for Grade XI senior high school students in Indonesia was evaluated through a qualitative document analysis methodology. The analysis focused on several critical aspects of the textbook, including practical considerations, layout and design, activities, skills development, language types, and subject content. By examining the textbook based on these criteria, the study aimed to assess its overall quality as a resource for English language learning. This research contributes valuable insights into how textbooks can be improved to better meet pedagogical standards and the needs of learners in a globalized world.

The findings indicate that the textbook performs well in terms of practical considerations, layout, and design. The physical structure of the book is accessible, and its design is visually appealing, which are important features for engaging students in the learning process. Well-organized content, clear headings, and a logical flow of topics make the textbook relatively easy to navigate. These aspects contribute positively to the learning experience by helping students focus on the material without distractions or confusion.

Additionally, the activities included in the textbook are diverse and aligned with the goal of developing basic language skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. By integrating various exercises, the textbook encourages students to actively engage with the content and apply what they have learned. This focus on skill development is critical, as it helps students build a foundation for communicating effectively in English, which is the ultimate goal of language learning.

Despite these strengths, the research also highlights several areas where the textbook falls short. One of the most significant deficiencies is the lack of essential supplementary materials, such as workbooks and audio resources. These materials are crucial for reinforcing learning and providing additional practice outside the classroom. Audio resources, in particular, are necessary for helping students improve their listening comprehension and pronunciation. Without these components, the textbook fails to offer a comprehensive language learning experience that addresses all four key language skills equally.

Another issue identified in the study is the general nature of the content. The textbook provides a broad overview of topics but does not delve deeply into critical areas such as grammar and vocabulary. This lack of depth can hinder students' ability to fully grasp complex language concepts. A more detailed approach, with explicit explanations and numerous examples, would help students understand the nuances of grammar and vocabulary, which are essential for effective communication in English (Handayani et al., 2019).

Moreover, the textbook does not emphasize natural pronunciation or authentic language usage, both of which are essential for real-life communication. The absence of a focus on diverse accents, registers, and authentic contexts limits students' exposure to the variety of English spoken around the world. This is a missed opportunity to prepare students for practical communication situations, where the ability to understand different accents and registers is critical for success.

The quality of the grammar explanations is also a concern. The study found that the grammar explanations are not concise or user-friendly, making them difficult for students to understand. Effective grammar instruction requires clarity, relevance, and simplicity, but the textbook's explanations fail to meet these criteria. Without clear and accessible grammar explanations, students may struggle to internalize the rules and apply them correctly in both written and spoken English (Rohi & Nurhayati, 2024).

Additionally, the examples provided in the textbook are insufficient to meet the needs of learners. In language learning, examples are crucial for helping students contextualize grammar

rules and vocabulary. The lack of adequate examples makes it more difficult for students to see how language works in practice, further hindering their learning process. A richer selection of examples would provide more opportunities for students to engage with the material in meaningful ways.

The subject matter of the textbook also lacks variety, which is another significant shortcoming. The content tends to be repetitive and does not reflect the diverse range of topics that could keep students engaged and motivated. Students benefit from exposure to a variety of subjects, including cultural contexts, current events, and different registers of language. A more varied curriculum would stimulate students' interest and encourage them to engage more deeply with the language.

Given these shortcomings, the study calls for targeted revisions to improve the textbook. To address the lack of supplementary materials, it would be beneficial to introduce workbooks, audio resources, and multimedia content that complement the main textbook. Incorporating diverse materials can provide students with more opportunities for practice, reinforce key concepts, and create a more dynamic learning experience. Additionally, a more detailed approach to grammar and vocabulary, with clear explanations and relevant examples, would help ensure that students develop a solid understanding of the language (Harwood, 2010).

Finally, the study suggests that future research should explore the impact of these revisions on classroom learning outcomes. By assessing the effectiveness of the textbook in real-world settings, educators and policymakers can better understand how to optimize teaching materials for English language learners. A deeper understanding of how textbook revisions affect student engagement, language acquisition, and overall performance will contribute to improving language education in Indonesia and beyond.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the Pathway to English Tingkat Lanjut textbook for Grade XI students in Indonesia demonstrates several strengths in its layout, design, and basic skill development activities. These features contribute to a well-structured and visually appealing learning resource that supports students in engaging with the material. However, the textbook falls short in several key areas that impact its effectiveness as a comprehensive language learning tool, such as the lack of supplementary materials, insufficient coverage of grammar and vocabulary, and the absence of an emphasis on natural pronunciation and diverse language registers.

To address these deficiencies, the textbook would benefit from revisions that include the incorporation of supplementary resources like workbooks, audio materials, and multimedia content. A more detailed and accessible approach to grammar explanations, along with a greater variety of examples, would also enhance its pedagogical value. Moreover, expanding the content to include a broader range of topics and authentic language usage would better engage students and prepare them for real-world communication in English. These improvements would bring the textbook in line with modern teaching standards and help students develop more comprehensive language skills.

Ultimately, the findings of this study underscore the need for continuous evaluation and revision of educational resources to ensure they meet the diverse needs of learners. Future research should further explore the impact of these revisions in classroom settings, assessing how changes to the textbook can enhance student engagement and language acquisition. By addressing the identified shortcomings, the Pathway to English Tingkat Lanjut textbook can better support students in their journey to mastering English and developing the communication skills necessary for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

## REFERENCES

Altheide, D., Coyle, M., DeVriese, K., & Schneider, C. (2008). *Emergent qualitative document analysis*. The Guilford Press

- Farrell, T. S., & Jacobs, G. M. (2020). *Essentials for successful English language teaching*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Fitzgerald, T. (2012). Documents and documentary analysis. *Research methods in educational leadership and management*, 3, 296-308.
- Hamid, M. F. A., Sahrir, M. S., Amiruddin, A. Z., Yahaya, M. F., & Sha'ari, S. H. (2024). Evaluating student acceptance of interactive infographics module for Arabic grammar learning using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 23(9), 121-140.
- Handayani, S., Suwarno, B., & Dharmayana, I. W. (2019). Evaluation of Indonesian English Textbook for the Ninth Graders of Junior High School "Think Globally Act Locally" From Efl Teachers' Perspectives. *JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature)*, 3(2), 11–32. <https://doi.org/10.33369/joall.v3i2.6821>
- Harwood, N. (2010). Issues in materials development and design. *English language teaching materials: Theory and practice*, 3-30.
- Huang, P. (2019). Textbook interaction: A study of the language and cultural contextualisation of English learning textbooks. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, 21, 87-99.
- Miller, D. (2011). ESL reading textbooks vs. university textbooks: Are we giving our students the input they may need?. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 10(1), 32-46.
- Pulungan, A. H., Kusmanto, J., & bin Mukmin, M. J. (2024). Representation of Culture in English Textbook: A Content Investigation. *Linguists: Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 10(2), 268-287.
- Richards, J. C. (2021). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Rohi, M. P., & Nurhayati, L. (2024). Multimodal Learning Strategies in Secondary EFL Education: Insights from Teachers. *Voices of English Language Education Society*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.29408/veles.v8i2.26546>
- Zhang, Y. (2015). The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation: An Easy-to-Use Guide With Clear Rules, Real-World Examples, and Reproducible Quizzes -Jane Straus, Lester Kaufman, and Tom Stern. *The CATESOL Journal*, 27(1).