

AN EVALUATION OF SPEAKING MATERIALS IN “LIFE” TEXTBOOK FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF EFL STUDENTS AND LECTURERS

Eunike Aurelia (eunikeaurelia@gmail.com)¹

Y. G. Harto Pramono (harto@ukwms.ac.id)²

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ABSTRACT

“Life” B1+ English textbook published by National Geographic Learning has been used for some years as the main learning resource for the English Integrated Course (EIC) at an English Department in Surabaya. One of the language skills taught in EIC is speaking. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the appropriateness of the materials for supporting speaking skills. Moreover, so far, no study has investigated this issue. Thus, this study evaluated speaking materials from the perspectives of students and lecturers. The evaluation was performed on the basis of an evaluation checklist adapted from Bao (2013). It contains seven aspects: linguistic support, content-based learning, affective support, skills support, variety of materials, flexibility of materials, and overall expectations of students and lecturers. The results of the study revealed that the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook are appropriate according to the perspectives of students and lecturers. The students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials were relevant to students’ needs to improve their speaking skills and increase their interest in further English learning. The study concludes that the speaking materials in the “Life” B1+ English textbook are appropriate and recommended for future use.

Keywords: *evaluation, textbook, perspective, life, speaking materials*

INTRODUCTION

The in English, which is one of the most important languages in the world, the skills that follow the process of learning this language must be mastered, including in Indonesia, where English is a foreign language. Nevertheless, students are expected to use English effectively, whether in the classroom or in real-life situations. To achieve student competency in learning English, textbooks are an important tool commonly used in most schools and other institutions.

Textbooks are essential in most language programs. As stated by Zohrabi et al. (2014), "textbooks are one of the elements that may promote or discourage learners depending on their materials. They are a kind of support for both teachers and learners." More specifically, according to Richards (2001), textbooks provide learners with basic instructions, language input, and language practices that occur in the classroom. Moreover, textbooks may serve learners as the major contact they have with English, in addition to teachers’ feedback. Wen-Cheng et al., (2011) argued that a good textbook should present communicative and interactive language contents to learners to enliven the class and improve the learning quality.

Speaking itself is an ability to produce utterance-by-utterance, word-by-word, sentence-by-sentence in mostly unplanned situations with an interlocutor (Thornbury, 2005). However, speaking materials might have

¹ Undergraduate Student, Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University

² Senior Lecturer, Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University

some problems, such as the inability to reflect and focus on teaching real-life language and the inauthenticity of the materials (Abu-ghararah, 2014; Shahmohammadi, 2018). These problems caused the students to become unmotivated and gradually decrease their speaking ability. Therefore, to enhance learners' communicative competence, it is important to provide them with appropriate and sufficient practice through various types of speaking activities and materials found in the textbook.

According to Bao (2013), well-developed speaking materials will help learners maximize their performance at any given opportunity. Effective materials should allow students to actively share and process information, control their own performance and topic, use individual knowledge, become aware of spoken discourse, and move beyond one-way feedback.

Materials evaluation is commonly conducted to determine whether the materials are appropriate enough to support students' and teachers' teaching and learning processes. This study aimed to evaluate the speaking materials found in the "Life" textbook based on students' and lecturers' perspectives. More specifically, this study aimed to evaluate the extent to which the speaking materials in "Life" textbook fulfilled the evaluation indicators according to students' and lecturers' perspectives in terms of linguistic support, content-based learning, affective support, skills support, variety of materials, materials flexibility, and their overall expectations.

To date, no study has evaluated the speaking materials in the "Life" textbook, but the appropriateness of the materials should be investigated. It is categorized as a "post-use" evaluation, which refers to an evaluation at the end of a course to consider whether the book should be used again in the future or not (Cunningsworth, 1995). Evaluating the textbook and the speaking materials is necessary to determine how appropriate the presented contents are to the students in terms of achieving the goals and satisfying their needs (Wen-Cheng et al., 2011).

Advantages of Textbooks

According to Richards (2001), using a textbook in teaching English has some advantages, as follows:

- The textbook provides the structure and syllabus for the course. This serves as the central core of the course.
- The textbook helps standardize instructions. Using a textbook, students receive the same amount of content and can be examined in the same way.
- The textbook maintains the quality of the course. Students are exposed to a variety of materials that have been developed professionally, tested by experts, based on learning principles, and have an appropriate pace for them to gradually improve.
- Textbooks provide several learning resources. They are often accompanied by workbooks, CDs and cassettes, videos, CD ROMs, and comprehensive teaching guidelines, thus providing a rich and varied resource for both teachers and students.
- Textbooks are considered efficient.
- As materials providers, teachers can mainly focus on teaching rather than producing materials.
- Textbooks can provide effective language models and input. It can support teachers whose first language is not English and may not be able to generate accurate language input.
- Textbooks can train teachers. If the teachers have limited experience, the textbook should provide the teachers' guidelines.
- The textbook has appealing visuals. Commercial textbooks usually have a well-developed design and production; hence, they are appealing to students and teachers.

Speaking Materials

Speaking materials are defined as interactive communication materials, that include examples and evaluations to develop learners' speaking skills (Sihotang et al., 2021). A careful choice of materials can enliven a classroom where students enthusiastically pursue knowledge and keep the students motivated throughout the learning process (Dar, 2012). In addition, Bao (2013) claimed that materials for speaking skills should involve interactive processes between users because it would be unrealistic for learners to improve if they only listen and imagine how communication goes. As a result, speaking skills can be developed by building a range of communicative practices and acknowledging the need to provide systematic practice of the formal properties of the language.

Speaking Materials Evaluation

According to Cunningsworth (1995), there are two types of material evaluation that can be conducted:

- a. In-use evaluation: evaluating the textbook while the materials are still being used in the classroom.
- b. Post-use evaluation: a more retrospective textbook assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Post-use evaluation could help decide whether teachers should use that textbook again in the future.

Tok (2010) stated that teachers and learners have the right to be involved in the evaluation process to provide their views on the usefulness and effectiveness of a textbook or a set of materials. In this current study, as the students and lecturers had used the materials in the previous semester, the current study used post-use evaluation.

Bao (2013) recommended a set of questions to evaluate speaking materials to ensure that they provide sufficient linguistic support, engaging opportunities for students in the learning process, and space for students' cultural and affective values. The questions developed by Bao (2013, pp. 420–421) are as follows:

- a. Linguistic support: Do the materials provide appropriate and sufficient linguistic input? Do the materials help students become familiar with many characteristics of spoken language? Is sufficient vocabulary provided in the materials or should teachers and students generate vocabulary? If so, is there a suggested process for this to occur?
- b. Content-based and affective support: Do the materials satisfy learners with moments of inspiration, imagination, creativity, and cultural sensibilities? Do the materials contain visuals that inspire and support verbal learning? If so, how does that happen? Do the speaking activities enable students to utilize their cultural and individual knowledge? Do the materials provide conditions for unrestrained improvisation? Is Cultural Content Relevant to learners' Cultural Sensitivities? Are topics controversial enough to stimulate debate but not too culturally inappropriate to upset learners' feelings?
- c. Skills support: Do speaking activities give students opportunities to share and process information? Is the language presented and organized to effectively facilitate verbal discussion in chunks of speech? Do the activities enable learners to employ several communicative functions and strategies? Do speaking activities encourage various forms of interpersonal communication, such as monologues, dialogues, and group discussions? Are speaking skills promoted in isolation or integrated with other skills? If so, is the integration natural enough to reflect real-world communication?
- d. Diversity and flexibility: Are the materials flexible enough to serve more than one type of learning style, proficiency, maturity, and interest? For example, are there supplementary materials that support less able learners and satisfy more ambitious learners? Do activities cover various proficiency levels? Do the materials provide a variety of speaking activities (such as process-oriented tasks vs product oriented tasks, meaning focused tasks versus consciousness-raising exercises, involving vs engaging tasks)?

- e. Using research trends: What view on methodology is implied in the materials and how does it reflect recent SLA theories on speaking skills development? Are there conditions for meaningful input, language rehearsal activities for L2 data processing, opportunities for output production, and formative assessment for learning?”

The evaluation of speaking materials found in the “Life” textbook were based on the evaluation indicators modified from Bao’s (2013) evaluation checklist.

RESEARCH METHOD

The current research employed a textbook evaluation checklist to evaluate the appropriateness of a textbook material in the field of English as a foreign language. Over the years, the textbook evaluation checklist was employed by a large number of studies in similar fields and directions (Santos & Luis, 2020). The textbook to be evaluated was about speaking materials found in the “Life” textbook Intermediate B1+ Indonesia Edition, published by National Geographic Learning in 2014 and authored by Paul Dummett, John Hughes, and Helen Stephenson. The textbook provided materials for learning English skills: speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Materials for developing English proficiency, such as grammar and vocabulary, were also provided in the textbook. The textbook had 12 units, and each unit covered a different topic: color, performance, water, opportunities, travel, wellbeing, living space, weird news trade, no limits!, connection, and experts.

The participants of the study were 13 out of 17 (76%) students from Batch ‘22, 5 out of 7 (71%) lecturers of the English Language Education Study Program of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University who taught the EIC Course. The participants were chosen on the basis of the fact that the students and lecturers had used the book in the previous semester.

The instrument used in this study was a list of evaluation indicators with four options to choose by the participants as evaluators. The participants would choose the options on the basis of their perspectives, whether to choose 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), or 4 (strongly agree) with the indicator. The evaluation indicators were adapted from Bao’s (2013) speaking material evaluation checklist.

There were seven aspects to be evaluated: (1) linguistic support, (2) content-based learning, (3) affective support, (4) skills support, (5) variety of materials, (6) flexibility of materials, and (7) overall expectations of students and lecturers. Linguistic support covers linguistic materials such as pronunciation, stress and intonation, and vocabulary input. Content-based learning refers to the values that an individual learns and practices through speaking materials, including cultural and individual knowledge. Affective support refers to the capability of speaking materials to provide concern for others, empathy, and comfort through the topics. Skills support refers to the capability of the materials to improve speaking skills individually or with one or more interlocutors. The variety of materials refers to the capability of the materials to cover students’ different speaking proficiency. The flexibility of materials refers to the capability of the materials to provide students with various needs and interests. Finally, the overall expectations of the students and lecturers were also asked to determine the appropriateness of the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook.

Before the evaluation checklist was distributed to the students and lecturers, it was piloted and revised on the basis of the feedback received from them.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the findings section, the participants’ perspectives of each indicator in each aspect provided in the evaluation checklist are presented, and the results from the students and lecturers are compared. In the discussion section, the findings of the study are discussed.

Findings

1. Linguistic Support

For the linguistic support, five indicators were examined in the textbook. The evaluation summary is as follows:

Table 1. Students' and Lecturers' Perspectives on the Linguistic Support

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
1. The materials provide learners with appropriate pronunciation input.	-	1	9	3	3.15	-	-	4	1	3.2
2. The materials provide learners with appropriate stress and intonation input.	-	1	9	3	3.15	-	-	3	2	3.4
3. The materials help learners to get familiar with the characteristics of spoken language.	-	1	6	6	3.38	-	-	2	3	3.6
4. The vocabulary provided in the speaking materials is appropriate.	-	-	5	8	3.61	-	-	1	4	3.8
5. The speaking materials provide learners with sufficient linguistic support.	-	-	12	1	3.07	-	1	2	2	3.2
Total Average Scores	3.27					3.44				
Category	Good					Good				

The values for the linguistics support reached the good category on the basis of the perspectives of both students and lecturers (with the scores of 3.27 and 3.44 respectively). Most students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the "Life" textbook provided them with appropriate linguistic support. More specifically, the students and lecturers strongly agreed that the vocabulary provided in the speaking materials was appropriate.

2. Content-based Learning

For the content-based learning, ten indicators were examined in the textbook. The evaluation summary is as follows:

Table 2. Students' and Lecturers' Perspectives on the Content-based Learning

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
1. The speaking materials inspire learners to engage more in the speaking activities.	-	3	7	3	3	-	-	2	3	3.6
2. The speaking materials inspire learners to use learners creative thinking.	-	1	8	4	3.23	-	1	1	3	3.4

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
3. The speaking materials make learners aware of cultural sensibilities.	-	-	10	3	3.23	-	-	2	3	3.6
4. The speaking materials are not culturally biased.	-	3	9	1	2.84	-	-	3	2	3.4
5. The speaking materials do not portray any negative stereotypes.	-	1	6	6	3.38	-	-	1	4	3.8
6. The speaking materials enable learners to use learners' own cultural knowledge.	-	-	10	3	3.23	-	-	2	3	3.6
7. The speaking materials enable learners to use learners' individual knowledge.	-	-	10	3	3.23	-	-	3	2	3.4
8. The speaking materials contained pictures that inspire and support learners' study.	-	1	5	7	3.46	-	1	2	2	3.2
9. The speaking materials are equipped with appropriate audio-video contents to support learners' learning process.	-	-	7	6	3.46	-	-	2	3	3.6
10. The speaking materials provide learners with sufficient content-based learning.	-	2	7	4	3.15	-	-	2	3	3.6
Total Average Scores	3.22					3.52				
Category	Good					Very Good				

The values for the content-based learning reached the good category according to the students' perspectives and the very good category according to the lecturers' perspectives (with the scores of 3.22 and 3.52 respectively). Most students agreed and most lecturers strongly agreed that the speaking materials provided the students with sufficient content-based learning. Both students and lecturers also agreed that the speaking materials made the students aware of their cultural sensibilities and that they were able to use their own cultural and individual knowledge during their learning process. Nevertheless, for some students, the speaking materials were culturally biased.

3. Affective Support

For the affective support, four indicators were examined in the textbook. The evaluation summary is as follows:

Table 3. Students' and Lecturers' Perspectives on the Affective Support

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
1. The materials allow learners to do improvisations without any limitation.	-	1	8	4	3.23	-	1	3	1	3
2. The topics can evoke respectful debate between learners and their friends.	1	-	10	2	3	-	1	1	3	3.4
3. The materials encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.	-	1	7	5	3.3	-	-	3	2	3.4
4. The speaking materials provide learners with sufficient affective support.	-	1	10	2	3.07	-	-	3	2	3.4
Total Average Scores	3.15					3.30				
Category	Good					Good				

The values for affective support reached the good category according to both the students and lecturers (with the scores of 3.15 and 3.30 respectively). Most students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the "Life" textbook provided the students with sufficient affective support. Most students and lecturers also agreed that the speaking materials encouraged them to have sufficient communicative and meaningful speaking practice. In addition, they agreed that the speaking materials allowed the students to perform improvisations and evoked respectful debate between students.

4. Skills Support

For the skills support, ten indicators were examined in the textbook. The evaluation summary is as follows:

Table 4. Students' and Lecturers' Perspectives on the Skills Support

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
1. The materials give learners the opportunities to share and process information.	-	-	9	4	3.3	-	-	1	4	3.8
2. The materials are presented and organized to have discussions among learners effectively.	-	3	7	3	3	-	-	2	3	3.6
3. The materials allow learners to use a wide range of communicative functions.	-	1	8	4	3.23	-	-	3	2	3.4
4. The materials allow learners to use a wide range of communicative strategies.	-	1	10	2	3.07	-	-	4	1	3.2
5. The materials encourage learners to have monologues.	-	2	7	4	3.15	-	1	3	1	3

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
6. The materials encourage learners to have pair discussions.	-	2	7	4	3.15	-	-	2	3	3.6
7. The materials encourage learners to have group discussions.	-	1	7	5	3.3	-	-	1	4	3.8
8. Speaking skills are combined with other skills and are sufficient to reflect real life communication.	-	-	9	4	3.3	-	-	1	4	3.8
9. The materials show learners English that they will be likely to use in the future.	-	-	9	4	3.3	-	-	-	5	4
10. The speaking materials provide learners with sufficient skills to support their learning process.	-	-	9	4	3.3	-	-	2	3	3.6
Total Average Scores	3.21					3.58				
Category	Good					Very Good				

The values for the skills support reached the good category according to the students' perspectives and the very good category according to the lecturers' perspectives (with the scores of 3.21 and 3.58 respectively). Most students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the "Life" textbook provided the students with sufficient skills to support the learning process. More specifically, the students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials allowed the students to use a wide range of communicative functions and strategies. The students and lecturers also agreed that the speaking skills in the materials were combined with other skills, and were sufficient to reflect real-life communication. The materials showed the students the English language that they would be likely to use in the future.

5. Variety of Materials

For a variety of materials, four indicators were examined in the textbook. The evaluation summary is as follows:

Table 5. Students' and Lecturers' Perspectives on the Variety of Materials

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
1. The materials cover different proficiency levels.	-	1	9	3	3.15	-	1	3	1	3
2. The materials provide a variety of speaking activities (e.g., roleplay, interviews, etc.)	-	3	7	3	3	-	2	1	2	3

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
3. The materials represent a diverse range of accents.	-	1	9	3	3.15	-	2	3	-	2.6
4. The speaking materials sufficiently varied to support my learning process.	-	-	8	5	3.38	-	-	3	2	3.4
Total Average Scores	3.17					3.0				
Category	Good					Good				

The values for a variety of materials reached the good category according to the students' and lecturers' perspectives (with the scores of 3.17 and 3.0 respectively). The majority of the students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the "Life" textbook varied enough to support their learning process. More specifically, the speaking materials represented a diverse range of accents.

6. Flexibility of Materials

For the flexibilities of materials, four indicators were examined in the textbook. The evaluation summary is as follows:

Table 6. Students' and Lecturers' Perspectives on the Flexibility of Materials

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
1. The speaking materials are sufficiently flexible to serve more than one learning style.	-	1	9	3	3.15	-	-	3	2	3.4
2. The speaking materials are sufficiently flexible to serve more than one English skill.	-	1	8	4	3.23	-	1	1	3	3.4
3. The speaking materials are sufficiently flexible to serve more than one of learners' interests.	-	1	7	5	3.3	-	1	2	2	3.2
4. The speaking materials are sufficiently flexible to support learners' learning process.	-	-	10	3	3.23	-	-	3	2	3.4
Total Average Scores	3.23					3.35				
Category	Good					Good				

The values for the flexibility of materials reached the good category according to the students' and lecturers' perspectives (with the scores of 3.23 and 3.35 respectively). Most students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials were flexible enough to support their learning process and that the speaking materials were flexible enough to serve more than one learning style, English skills, and interests.

7. Overall Expectations

For the overall expectations, three indicators were examined in the textbook. The evaluation summary is as follows:

Table 7. Students' and Lecturers' Overall Expectations of the Speaking Materials

Indicators for evaluation	Students					Lecturers				
	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Score
1. The subject and speaking contents of the textbook are relevant to learners' needs to improve their speaking skills.	-	-	11	2	3.15	-	-	3	2	3.4
2. The speaking materials increase learners' interest in English language study.	-	-	8	5	3.38	-	-	3	2	3.4
3. Learners would choose to study these materials again.	-	3	8	2	2.92	-	-	3	2	3.4
Total Average Scores	3.15					3.4				
Category	Good					Good				

The values of the overall expectations reached the good category according to the students' and lecturers' perspectives (with the scores of 3.15 and 3.4 respectively). Most students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the "Life" textbook were relevant to the students' needs to improve their speaking skills. In addition, most students agreed that the speaking materials increased their interest in English language study and that they would choose to study these materials again if given the opportunity.

8. Students' and Lecturers' Perspectives of All the Evaluated Aspects

Table 8 summarizes and compares the students' and lecturers' perspectives on each aspect of the textbook. Based on this table, both students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the "Life" textbook provided the students with sufficient linguistic support, content-based learning materials, affective support, and skills to support their learning process. The speaking materials were also varied and flexible enough for the students. Overall, the students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials were relevant to the students' needs to improve their speaking skills.

Table 8. Summary of Students' and Lecturers' Perspectives on All the Evaluated Aspects

Aspects of Evaluation	Average Scores		Category	
	Students	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers
Linguistic Support	3.27	3.44	Good	Good
Content-based Learning	3.22	3.52	Good	Very Good
Affective Support	3.15	3.3	Good	Good
Skills Support	3.21	3.58	Good	Very Good
Variety of Materials	3.17	3	Good	Good
Flexibility of Materials	3.23	3.35	Good	Good

Aspects of Evaluation	Average Scores		Category	
	Students	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers
Overall Scores	3.15	3.4	Good	Good

In conclusion, the findings showed that both students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook were appropriate and sufficient to support students’ learning process. The students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials provided them with sufficient linguistic support, especially vocabulary. The students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials provided them with sufficient content-based learning materials and allowed them to use their own cultural knowledge. The students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials provided the students with sufficient affective support, as they evoked respectful debate between students. The students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials provided them with sufficient skills to support their learning process and allowed them to use various communicative functions and strategies. The students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials varied sufficiently to support the students’ learning process as they provided them with various speaking activities. The students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials were flexible enough to serve more than one learning skill and students’ interests. Overall, the students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials were relevant to students’ needs to improve their speaking skills and successfully raised students’ interest in further English language study. To confirm and validate the results of the study, a focus group discussion (FGD) was held on Thursday, June 15, 2023 as triangulation.

Discussion

The results of the study revealed that the students and lecturers perceived the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook as appropriate in terms of linguistic support, content-based learning, affective support, skills support, variety of materials, and flexibility of materials. Thus, the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook fulfilled the evaluation indicators suggested by Bao (2013).

Regarding the linguistic support, the speaking materials provided the students with sufficient linguistic input and helped them become familiar with the characteristics of spoken language. Sufficient vocabulary was also provided in the textbook to make students engaged in speaking activities. In addition, the textbook provided sufficient pronunciation, stress, and intonation input. Thus, the speaking materials are confirmed by Nunan (2003), as cited in Kayi (2012), that teaching speaking means using stress, intonation, and rhythm in uttering words.

The content-based learning aspect discusses how the speaking materials use students’ cultural and individual knowledge and how they portray different cultures around the world. Anjaneyu (2014) asserted, a coursebook should be appropriate for learners and based on their culture. This is also confirmed by Richards (2003) that teaching speaking must address cultural awareness. In this current study, students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials provided them with sufficient cultural content as well as other teaching media, such as audio-video and pictures, to support the teaching and learning process. Moreover, students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials made them aware of cultural sensibilities and that the materials did not portray any negativity toward different cultures. The speaking materials could also use students’ individual and background knowledge to gain new knowledge. As suggested by Bao (2013) the speaking materials in “Life” textbook were also able to utilize learners’ individual knowledge so that they could exchange different information and shared their own values.

Regarding the affective support, good speaking materials should provide students with opportunities to justify their opinions and make personal judgments, inviting them to exchange opinions (Bao, 2013). As Richards (1998) and Fraidan (2012) say, a course book which is culturally appropriate for learner will make students learn

more easily. In the current study, both students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook provided them with sufficient affective support. The speaking materials allowed the students to share and process information and perform improvisations with minimal limitations. They also allowed the students to share and express their opinions in a respectful debate.

Regarding skills support, students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook encouraged students to communicate with their peers in a monolog. This represented a different range of activities presented in the materials and reflected the current principles of teaching speaking, where oral interaction is the foundation of learning, and inserting pair and group discussion activities inside the materials (Richards, 2003). The results also showed that the speaking materials introduced students and lecturers to the English language they would use in the future and that speaking skills were combined with other skills such as reading and listening and were sufficient to reflect real-life communication.

The speaking materials also provided the students with various activities that covered intermediate students' levels. As confirmed in the FGD, the textbook was designed for intermediate students, so the speaking materials were able to accommodate students' needs in practicing speaking on the intermediate level. Bao (2013) states that effective speaking materials should involve various subtopics to enhance students' interest and abilities. Students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook provided them with a flexible and wide range of topics to serve students' different needs and interests. Overall, students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook were relevant to students' needs to improve their speaking skills and that the materials increased their interest in studying English.

Previous studies (e.g., Khodabandeh & Mombini, 2018; Lodhi et al., 2019; Rahmayani et al., 2018; Ratmanida & Suryanti, 2020; Shahmohammadi, 2018) have shown that speaking materials in some English textbooks lack cultural content, communicative practices, and pronunciation materials. Unlike the findings of these studies, based on the students' and lecturers' perspectives in this current study the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook provided students with sufficient cultural-based materials that made students aware of cultural sensibilities and enabled them to use their own cultural knowledge during the learning process. In addition, the speaking materials allowed students to use various communicative functions and strategies and equipped them with various speaking activities that were combined with other skills and sufficient to reflect real-life communication.

CONCLUSION

The students and lecturers perceived the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook to be sufficient to serve students' needs to improve their English. The materials were also in line with some of Richards' (2003) principles of teaching speaking and Bao's (2013) effective speaking materials frameworks.

Regarding linguistic support, both students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials provided them with sufficient pronunciation, stress, and intonation input. The vocabulary provided in the speaking materials was also sufficient for the students to engage in speaking activities. The students and lecturers also agreed that the speaking materials provided them with sufficient cultural insight to enrich their knowledge and use their individual and cultural background knowledge.

The speaking materials also encouraged students to engage in communicative and meaningful practices. As seen in the affective support aspect, the students and lecturers agreed that the speaking materials could evoke respectful debate without offending each other and allow students to perform improvisations within their own control without any limitations.

To reflect real-life communication, the speaking materials in the “Life” textbook equipped students with sufficient skills to improve their speaking skills. The materials were designed to encourage monologs, pair

discussions, and group discussions between students. These activities improved communication skills between individuals and how they exchanged and processed information.

The speaking materials covered different topics, interests, and learning styles to accommodate students' needs to improve their speaking skills at the intermediate level. These differences also helped students feel connected and engage more with the activities.

Overall, it is safe to conclude that the speaking materials in the "Life" B1+English textbook are appropriate with students' needs to improve their speaking skills and recommended for future use.

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