



## Developing English Textbook for Pre-school Children

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### Abstract

This present research is motivated by lack of English teaching materials for pre-school children and the need for an appropriate English textbook. The aim of this research is to develop an English textbook for English for pre-school children. This research adopted Research and Development which employed three stages, namely exploration stage, design stage, and validation stage. Data were collected through document analysis and interviews. The result of need analysis pointed out that pre-school teachers need an English textbook for teaching. In the design phase, the textbook is carefully designed to meet the teachers and children's need. The textbook includes topics related to children's real life such as greeting, alphabet, numbers, colors, fruits, animals, family, day, and month. Whereas the activities are designed joyfully. For example, matching the words, drawing pictures, finding pictures that are different, cutting, and so on. The textbook also used colorful images to attract students' attention to read and to stimulate their knowledge. The textbook was deemed valid. Considering these findings, the English textbook could be used in teaching English for pre-school children.

**Keyword:** English textbook, teaching English, pre-school children

### Introduction

It is not exaggeration that teaching English to pre-school children became a new trend in last decade (Hertiki, 2018). Several kindergartens all over Indonesia provide opportunity of learning English, particularly in the established schools and big cities (Mutiah et al., 2020). Such schools are usually conducted once or twice a week in language centra.

The main reason for the Government of Indonesia to precede English is, as everybody knows, English is mostly used in every aspect one's life in the world. The use

of English is also used in ASEAN community. Furthermore, English is also used as an international communication and cooperation. Moreover, English is used as the scientific language to get knowledge and current issues. For these reasons teaching English for pre-school children are needed nowadays.

The goal of teaching English at preschool stage is to develop students' ability to communicate orally in English (Akhyak, & Indramawan, 2013; Saleha et al., 2022). Students are also motivated to know the importance of English in global community. Setiyanti (2021), clearly explains that the objective of introducing English to preschool children are (1) to make children be creative, imaginative, and broad-minded (2) to develop language skills (3) to make children become critical thinkers (4) to make them to become problem solvers (5) to make children improve their concern on environment, society, and government.

Teaching English for pre-school students will be impressed since they are easy to remember. Scott & Ytreberg (2001) claimed pre-school students as young learners. Their ages 5-10 years old. Meanwhile, Michael et al., (2016), clustered young learners into four bases in their age: pre-school students, ages 11-14); primary students, ages 5-7 years; intermediate students, ages 8-10 years; early adolescent students, ages 11-14 years.

To make the teaching of English for pre-school children, several things are needed. They include teachers, activities, and textbooks. It is no doubt that teacher plays a pivotal role to help children learn joyfully and successfully. Teachers must be able to understand curriculum, method, strategy, materials and able to provide joyful learning activities (Cahyono & Perdhani, 2022; Pransiska, 2016; Wulandani et al., 2022). Some researchers and practitioners believe that a successful pre-school language teachers should possess some characteristics as follows; energetic, encourage, patient, love children, pay attention to individual differences, know techniques of teaching, and respect children as human (Dumais, 2014).

Furthermore, finding various and challenging activities in teaching English for pre-school children is also needed. The success of teaching English depends much on the quality of activities in the classroom (Eliwatis et al., 2022; D. E. Putri et al., 2020). The

activities ideally involved physical, mental, social, and emotional activities (Astris et al., 2016; Setiyanti, 2021). Moreover, the availability of a textbook cannot be ignored. Sovič & Hus (2015) claimed that textbook is important source for children in learning English. Furthermore, they observe three persuasive strategies: make it fun, make it active, and put passives on your studies.

Textbook ideally should fulfil visual image (Febriyani et al., 2020). Sovič & Hus (2015) postulate that children learn from illustrations to formulate meaning. Even though images are considered as decoration, it can influence children to provide leaning cultural and culture literacy. Konomi, (2013) further, asserts that visual images help children to motivate them to speak and to create a context. Moreover, Porter & Margaret (1992), argue that visual images make it more interesting as well. Verner (2015), further explains that teaching English for pre-school children should make it fun, make it active, and don't put pressure on your students. consider length of time and joyful activities.

Based on previous need analysis, English textbooks for pre-school children are limited. If there is available, it is not representative yet. The activities in the textbook are not designed holistically such as involving physical, mental, social, and emotional activities. In short, it does not cover students' need. To address the research gaps, we designed English teaching materials for pre-school children that combined holistic activities, close to their daily life and joyful activities. In addition to this, this textbook used colorful images to attract students to learn. Moreover, this research is also intended to provide the availability of teaching materials for pre-school students. This research will respond the three research questions: What is the need analysis of the English textbook for pre-school children?; What is the design of English textbook for pre-school children?; and What is the validity of the English textbook for pre-school children?

## **Research Methodology**

### Research Design

This research used research and development. The step adopted Sukmadinata's theory (Sukmadinata, 2008). It consists of exploration phase, prototype development, and validation stage. In the exploration stage, the researchers did need analysis for designing English materials for Pre-school Children. Data were collected through interviews with teachers and parents on their opinion about the need of English textbook for pre-school children. In the prototype stage, the researchers designed the model. Finally, in the validation stage, the researchers involved three validators to assess the quality of the textbook. It includes content, presentation, and language.

#### Data and Source of data

There were two kinds of data gathered in the exploration stage. Firstly, the present textbooks were taught in teaching English for pre-school children. Secondly, the opinion of teachers on the need for developing English textbook for pre-school children. The source of the first data was the present textbooks used in teaching English for pre-school children. Meanwhile, the second data were obtained from nine English teachers at pre-school.

#### Technique of Data collection

Data were collected using the following techniques, namely document analysis and interviews. Document analysis includes the existing book on English for pre-school children. Meanwhile, interviews were done to nine English teachers at preschool children in Dharmasraya dan Lima Kaum Batusangkar, West Sumatera.

#### Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using interactive analysis as quoted from (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Four steps were employed: (1) collecting data; (2) reducing data; (3) displaying data; and (4) drawing conclusions and verification.

Then, to see whether the textbook valid or not, the researchers used Aiken's V formula as follows:

$$\sum s/[n(c - 1)]$$

$S = r - lo$

$r$  = The value given by expert

$lo$  = lowest validity score

$c$  = highest validity score

$n$  = number of experts who gave the score

## **Findings and Discussion**

### Need Analysis

In the early stage, the researchers conducted need analysis on curriculum analysis, children's need, and learning activities. In terms of curriculum analysis, the researchers used the regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia No 146/214 on Implementation of the 2013 PAUD Standard. Furthermore, the existing English textbooks for pre-school children is not representative. Generally, it doesn't reflect teacher' need.

Then, to investigate children's need, the researchers interviewed teachers. The questions include determining the topics of English learning, creating joyful activating, using learning media, and determining time length. Moreover, to design learning activities, the researchers adopted and modified the previous textbooks.

The research shows that teachers at pre-school children agreed to develop the English textbooks. Some states that the previous textbooks are not representative. Another teacher claimed the previous books did not match with children's needs. In other words, the books did not provide fun activities, challenging exercises for each topic, and attractive and colorful books. Others stated that the previous books did not fulfill children's need such as interesting activities and good sequence materials.

### Design of The Textbook

The textbook includes three main parts: initial parts, core parts and final parts. The Initial parts consist of cover of the textbook, table of contents, preface, acknowledgement, and introduction.

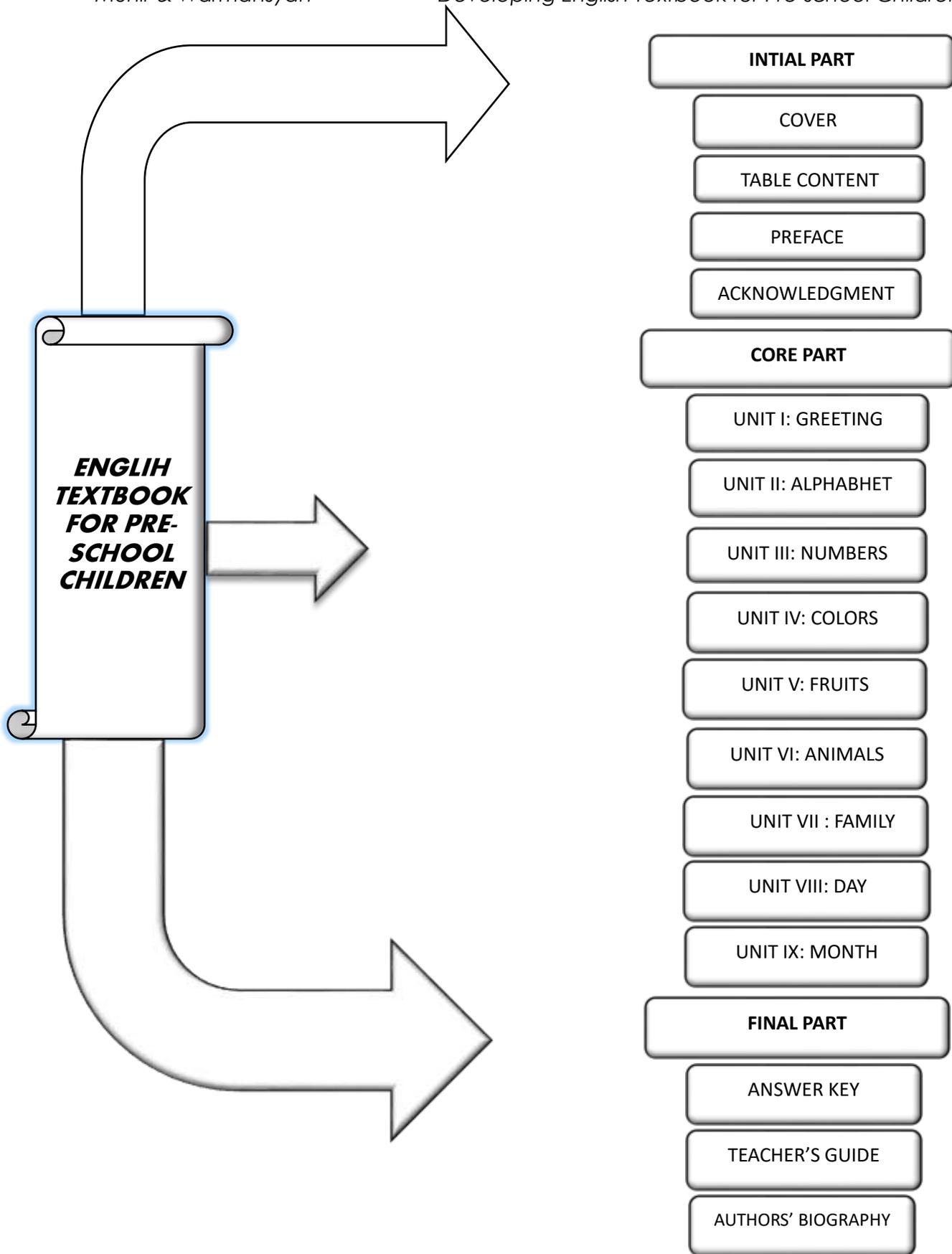
The core parts contain 9 (nine) units: Unit 1 *Greeting*. Specifically, this section is intended to teach the learners how to greet people around properly. Students perform to greet friends in the classroom. Several expressions such as hi, hello, good morning, how are you, nice to meet you are taught in this section. This unit also provides several exercises in the form of matching pictures and coloring the pictures. Unit II focusses on *Alphabet*. This unit brings the learners the idea that they can practice the alphabet in English. This unit provides exercises in the form of voicing alphabet and putting the sticker in the right place. Unit III then moves another lesson, namely *numbers*. This section specifically discusses how to understand and practice number in English. Exercises here include matching pictures. Unit IV discusses things often seen in every life, namely *colors*. This section, learners can mention names of colors fluently. Unit V talks about *Fruits*. This unit brings the learners the idea that they can mention the names of fruits bravely in the classroom. This section also gives opportunities to learners to do exercise on fruit flash cards. Unit VI offers *Animals*. Here, the learners' study to quickly mention several animals accurately. This section also provides exercises in the form of finding the same picture. Unit VII focusses on *Family*. This section brings the learners to the idea that they can mention family in English. Unit VIII highlights *Day*. Learners are expected to be able to mention family member in English. Last, but not least, Unit IX offers the lesson on *Month*. Learners perform names of the month confidently in the classroom. At the end of this unit, there is a song that matches to the topic of the unit.

Each unit begins with the learning outcome. It then followed with expression. Next, it has a variety of exercises that ask children to answer the questions easily. For example, matching the words, drawing pictures, finding pictures that are different, cutting, and other joyful activities. To avoid boredom to learn, fun activities were provided. For example: coloring the picture, singing a song, cutting and pasting, and language games. Topics are chosen based on children's daily life. In terms of time length, the researchers limit a maximum of 30 minutes per meeting. The textbook also provides illustration such as lively pictures and images. In the final parts of the textbook, the researchers provide answer key and teacher's guide. Moreover, a brief biography of the authors is also included. The following are the sample parts of the textbooks.



Picture 1: Samples of The English Textbook

To get the complete picture of the textbook, the following chart could be diagrammed as follows:



Picture 2: The Organization of the Textbook

### Validation of the Textbook

To do this, the researchers involved three validators to assess the quality of the textbook.

The results of validity could be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Results of Validation

No	Evaluation Aspects	Evaluation	
		Average	Category
1	Content	0.861	Very valid
2	Presentation	0.841	Very valid
3	Language	0.838	Very valid
		<b>0.846</b>	<b>Very valid</b>

Table 1 clearly shows that the validity of this textbook was 0,848 and was deemed very valid. Data processing using the Aiken V index with a range of categorization of validation results based on Kuntoro's theory, where the value < 0,200 (very low), 0,2-0,0399 (low), 0,4-0,599 (average), 0,6-0,799 (valid), and 0,8-1,00 (very valid).

### Discussion

The results of research indicate that the English textbook for pre-school children is needed by English teachers due to no previous textbooks match to teachers' needs. This is to support the idea of Mubar (2015), who suggests that any learning materials should suit children's need in learning. He further states that it would be better if the teachers conduct need assessment before designing a textbook. Mandaria et al., (2021), add that need analysis was the main factor of developing a textbook. Furthermore, Putri et al., (2019), postulate that textbook becomes the need for students. They further state that textbook and teaching learning process are two things that cannot be separated.

This textbook also used colorful pictures. As Mubar (2015), suggests that pictures stimulate learners' knowledge and make them interested and curious. Likewise, Pantaleo (2017), states English teachers could use picture books to develop children communication competencies by encouraging them to interpret and to make sense of what they see and read into the books. Damayanti et al., (2021), point out that picture

book help readers to become aware of the semiotics function in a text. They also explain that the use of picture books can help children construct meaning as well as develop visual thinking strategies. Hertiki (2018) asserts that English teachers at pre-school children must be able to provide an attractive and appropriate textbook to help children learn English effectively. She, further, explains that teachers ideally provide joyful atmosphere in the classroom.

Teaching English, especially to pre-school children, provides topics of daily activities such as greeting, fruits, colors, numbers, animals, family, day, and month. To respond this idea, Setiawan et al., (2022), assert that teachers promote topics of daily activities that familiar with the children. In terms of teaching vocabulary, required a contextual meaning. Munir (2019) also suggests that English teaching materials should close with learners' life. This is to help learners contextualize the meaning they read and listen in the classroom.

Activities in the textbook should develop life skills holistically. Setiyanti (2021) explains that children's activities in learning should involve physical, mental, social, and emotional activities in the classroom. The activities include singing, short dialogue, and listening to the story. Parallel to this, Damayanti et al., (2021) point out the working on various activities provides readers with big opportunities to foster meaning-making. Verner (2015), believes that activities in teaching English for children ideally should be fun, active, creative, and do not put pressure for children.

## **Conclusion**

This research concludes that pre-school teachers need an English textbook due to several reasons. The reasons include no previous textbooks match with students' need and the existing textbook is not attractive. The textbook uses colorful image to stimulate students' knowledge. Furthermore, this textbook provides joyful activities to help children learn English effectively. The use of various and challenging activities is also needed to gain the maximum result in learning English. To better teach English for pre-school students, it is imperative to state that the English textbook for pre-school children is included as an alternative material in today's classroom. This research has a

limited area on developing English textbook for pre-school children. For further research, it is recommended that other researchers investigate an evaluation of English textbook used at the pre-school children.

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