

## AN EVALUATION ANALYSIS ON A TEXTBOOK ENTITLED “CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH IDIOM IN USE ADVANCED”

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### *Abstract*

*This study discussed an evaluation analysis on a textbook entitled “Cambridge English Idiom in Used Advanced” written by Felicity O’Dell and Michael McCarthy. In this study, the textbook was analyzed using a textbook evaluation rubric in term of layout and design, activities, language type, and materials including subject and content. From the discussion, it can be concluded that the text book is considered appropriate for the advanced learners in terms of composition, given examples, exercises and context.*

**Keywords:** *textbook, evaluation, analysis*

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### **Introduction**

The complete package of English skills and components that helps teachers and learners as their source of materials and exercises in EFL learning called textbook. Based on Yulianti (2011), textbook gives a great contribution in the teaching learning process and consists of content and material of the subject that is well organized in written form. It is also a part of teaching learning process to assist the success of students learning goals and teachers. Textbook must have appropriate content in order to give good impact for the readers especially EFL learners. Harmer (2007) states that trying to engage students with the content they are going to be dealing with is the most

important aspect of textbook use is for teachers.

Recently, there are many kinds of ELT textbooks widely used in teaching learning process of EFL learners at university. Those textbooks are published by various publishers. One of the textbooks that can be used by either teacher or students is entitled “Cambridge English Idiom in Use”. The book was written by Felicity O’Dell and Michael McCarthy. It was first published by Cambridge University Press in 2010. This idiom textbook is targeted to advanced idiom learners, either for classroom use or self study. This 189 paged book provides more than 1000 idiomatic expressions in its seven main chapters. Each chapter consists of

units about idiomatic expressions examples related to particular context. There are three books in the series, which is targeted to the three levels of learners; elementary, intermediate, and advanced. In this case, the researchers would like to give analytical review of Cambridge English Idiom in Use Advanced.

According to Sheldon (1988: 237), the basically a straightforward, analytical 'matching process: matching needs to available solution called textbook evaluation. One of the goal of textbook evaluation is to help the teacher development and help teachers in order to gain good and useful insights into the nature of material (Cunningsworth, 1995). In short, the purpose of textbook analysis and evaluation is to support teachers some information and can be the framework of teachers' teaching instrument and equipments.

There are many criteria proposed by several experts that can be used for evaluating textbooks. According to Cunningsworth (1995), a textbook evaluator can identify her or his own priorities and draw up her or his own checklist by using some criteria mentioned in one book and adding others based on his/her own priorities. Concerning the statement of Cunningsworth, the researcher prefers to adapt the EFL textbook criteria and checklist from some experts, that is, Sheldon (1988) and Harmer (2007). In addition, based on Hidayet Tok (2010) from the original version of Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale (TTES)

there is a rubric of criteria of good EFL textbooks that consider several factors, namely; layout and design, activities, language type, materials, subject and content. Those criteria had been used on the analysis of Cambridge English Idiom in Use Advanced book.

This research was expected to give contribution for the following study and may contribute ideas to people involved in the education field. This study was intended to help the English teachers, lecturers, or EFL learners to be more selective in choosing textbooks. In addition, some other researchers can be used this research result on their further researches.

### **Method**

This research used documentary analysis research. It was categorized as a qualitative research design. This study was also classified as Descriptive Qualitative Research Design. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003), the qualitative research data is taken from documents, audio-video recordings transcripts, words, pictures, etc which called descriptive analysis. It means that the aim of this study is to analyze and check the quality and the content of the textbook. In line with it, Anderson (2007) stated that content analysis can be described on qualitative data. In short, the textbook evaluation analysis of certain matter used classification, tabulation, and evaluation (Pamungkas, 2010). In conclusion, this study used analysis on the

research design which used a textbook entitled “Cambridge English Idiom In Use Advanced”.

In this analysis, the researchers would like to descriptively analyze the book in some steps as listed below:

#### 1. Textbook review

In this stage, the researchers applied some procedures in reviewing the textbook. The first step was choosing the book, and start looking for its target, category, and general topic of the book. The second step was looking at its structure and readability. It included examining the number of pages, chapters, size of paragraph, and how the book dialogs with the readers. The next step was reading the book with full of attention, to consider something attractive or boring about the book. After that, the researchers took notes to underline the most important event as the foundation in reviewing the book. Before passing the judgment, the researchers summed up the content of the book to get everything covered. The last step was passing the judgment. In passing the judgment, we would check the aim and reasonably explain the judgment.

#### 2. Textbook analysis and evaluation

In analyzing and evaluating the textbook, we were assisted by a set of rubric. The rubric enclosed a checklist of textbook evaluation. It was very helpful, since the rubric provides the indicators that can be used by the researchers in analyzing the text to the whole aspect conclusion. The rubric which was

used for the analysis was the developed rubric by Hidayet Tok (2010) from the original version of Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale (TTES).

### Findings

Cambridge English Idioms in Use Advanced consists of seven chapters with total 60 units. If we talk about the strength, this book not only list out the idioms like dictionary, but also classifies the idioms into some actual context. It enables the readers to easily look up the idiom they need to study in the available chapters.

The first chapter is about what idiom is. There are eight units which tell us about what idiom is, how to use and play with them, and the introduction of some new idioms. When other books mainly discuss about the classic idiom over and over again, this book gives us the fresh context to study. For example, “*Finding out what is really happened is like nailing jelly to a wall*”. This is one of the examples which contain a keyword to indicate that it is a new idiom. The keyword is jelly. We know that jelly is not a thing that can be found long ago in the past. Therefore, not only the classic idioms, this book also presents the new idioms.

The second chapter tells us about the types of idioms in its six units. This chapter helps us a lot in classifying idiom based on its type. However, the first two chapters about *what is idiom?* And *the types of idiom* are the most important chapters for the readers. It is better for the readers to read those

chapters first before going on the other chapter because they provide the basic knowledge of idioms. Since the book contains mostly examples and exercises about idiom, the big sized paragraph nearly can't be found in this book except in the first and second paragraph. Each paragraph stands for no more than 10 lines. We can also find some pictures related to the idiom that being discussed in each unit. Regarding the size of paragraph, the layout, and the font size, this book is well readable.

In the third chapter, we can find that some aspects of life may be represented by idiomatic expressions. *Idioms from the topic area of ...* provides us the example of idioms in many aspects such as sailing, war and conflict, transport, animals, parts of the body, literature, and etc. There are 10 units in total.

The fourth chapter, *Idiom to talk about ...* consists of 14 units deal with the topic area of where idioms most likely to be used such as films, plays and book, work, friends and family, and so on. This chapter covers the most vary aspect. Therefore, there are more examples and comprehensive questions in this chapter.

The next chapter, *Idiom used in ...* focuses on the use of idiom in written context such as journalism, advertising, and formal writing. From this fifth chapter, we know that idiom is not only used in literature and informal conversation, but also in formal writing. Idiomatic expressions in

this chapter are the idioms that rarely used in the ether context.

Chapter six, *Idiom used in conversation* focuses on the use of idioms inn spoken language. Therefore, this chapter provides example of idioms related to common expressions used in spoken language such as advising, agreement, telling stories, expressing success and fails, and many more. There are total six chapters discuss about six different expressions.

In the last chapter, *Idioms using keywords* enables us to search idiomatic expressions based on the specific keywords. There are 13 keywords provided in 13 chapters such as play and game, life, heart, dead and death, live and life, fall, and so on. Compared to the other books such as *Idioms Organiser* by John Wright which only gives a list of idioms by the keywords, this book is more compact in term of book composition, and organization.

### **Layout and Design**

In term of layout and design, *Cambridge English Idiom in Use Advanced* includes a detailed overview of the idioms in chapters and units that will be discussed. The topics or theme of the idioms are also showed on the overview. Therefore the readers are able to figure what the book is all about just by simply look at the overview. The layout and design is appropriate and clear. It is proved by the effective organization of the book's components such as paragraphs, illustrations, and the graphic components. It is designed in

monochromatic color, yet the comical pictures make the book to be more playful. However, the pictures do not merely fulfill the decoration needs. The pictures give the readers clear illustration about some idiomatic expressions. To say the least, an adequate vocabulary list or glossary is not included in this book. There is only an index of the words used in the book. Ideally in any textbook, there will be summary and exercise in the end of each unit. However, this book doesn't attach any summary, but some exercises in the end of every unit.

For anyone who first uses this book, there is guidance about how to use this book. It is very helpful for the reader, especially for those who have not really familiar with idioms. The guidance itself can be used by teacher or lecturer who teaches English idioms. Nevertheless, there is no answer key provided in this book. Thus, the readers should be assisted by an idiom dictionary when they cannot find the meaning of an idiom or the answer of an exercise. In term of objective clarity, the objective of the material is apparent by both students and teacher. It can be seen from the title of each chapter which is able to give overview about the objective of the chapter.

### **Activities**

Besides materials, there will be any other component in a textbook such as activities, exercises, and task. In this idiom textbook, there is no activity and task attached. However, the

exercises are clear and balance with the material. The exercises, along with the material and example give a meaningful practice about English idioms to the readers. This kind of exercise is very useful, since the readers can check their understanding about idiom right after they finished reading a particular unit. The exercises are also varied in a term of form. There are fill in the blanks, matching the idiom, guessing the picture, and many more. Since most of the exercises are due signed for individual work, they don't give an incorporate pair and group work. The types of exercises are varied, and all of them are able to check the reader comprehension about the idiomatic expressions discussed in each unit. The examples provided in each unit are given in simple and realistic context, so that the readers are able to well understand and apply the idiom in the proper context. For classroom use, the exercises can also be modified or supplemented easily.

### **Materials**

The materials include and focus on the idioms that the readers want to study, so that the learners can simply choose which chapter and unit they want to study. It also provides various familiar themes. On the other hand, the textbook pays attention to the practice of natural pronunciation (that is, how to pronounce vocal and consonant sounds). However, it can be said that this book does not pay attention to sub skills such as,

listening for gist, note-taking, skimming for information and etc.

### **Language type**

The language used in the textbook is authentic language, like real life English, since it is originated from England, especially the prestigious Cambridge University. The language used is at the right level for students, since the book is supposed to be used by advanced learners of English idiom. The meaning of the idiomatic expressions explained in brief and easy explanation and examples. Besides, the vocabulary used in this book is also simply readable, even for the foreign language learners.

### **Subject and Content**

The subject and content of the textbook is relevant to the needs of idiomatic expressions learners. It is realistic, and somehow interesting, challenging and also inspiring. There is variety in the subject and content of the text book, especially for the topic of idiom. Although idiom sometimes carries cultural issues, the material in this book is not culturally biased. In addition, they do not portray any negative stereotypes.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the analysis above, it can be concluded that this book is very good at giving example of idiomatic expressions along with the suitable situation. The idioms are also plotted into some chapters and units. It is thematic, so the readers are able to easily look up the idiom they need.

For the conclusion, the textbook is appropriate for the advance learner of idiomatic expression. However, it is not appropriate for learners in the researchers' institution, since most of them are beginner in learning idiomatic expressions. By looking at the idiomatic expressions provided in the book, it raises the researchers' interest in further English idiom study. Yet, the researchers prefer to study the first two series before use this advanced series, for a better understanding.

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