



## **A CHAPTER REVIEW: SELECTING LANGUAGE FOR MATERIALS WRITING** **(The Routledge Handbook of Materials Development for Language Teaching-Routledge)**

*ULASAN BAB: MEMILIH BAHASA UNTUK PENULISAN MATERI*  
*(Buku Pegangan Routledge Pengembangan Materi untuk Pengajaran Bahasa-Routledge)*

**Zulkifli Surahmat**

STAI Darud Da'wah Wal Irsyad Sidrap  
[zulkiflisurahmat9@gmail.com](mailto:zulkiflisurahmat9@gmail.com)

**Ahmed Sardi**

STKIP Darud Da'wah Wal Irsyad Pinrang  
[sardihere@gmail.com](mailto:sardihere@gmail.com)

**Muh. Firmansyah JN**

IAIN Parepare  
[muh.firman.jn@gmail.com](mailto:muh.firman.jn@gmail.com)

### **ABSTRAK**

*Tujuan dari karya ini adalah untuk meninjau Bab 6 dari "The Routledge Handbook of Materials Development for Language Teaching-Routledge," yang ditulis oleh Julie Norton dan Heather Buchanan. Pilihan tata bahasa dan pilihan kosakata untuk materi kursus Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris (ELT) adalah dua topik utama dari bab ini. Namun, anggapan ini salah karena dua alasan. Peninjau mengkategorikan fitur-fitur yang menguntungkan dari bab ini menjadi dua kelompok. Yang pertama adalah organisasi subjek dari isi dan tata letak bab. Topik bab saat ini dijelaskan dengan baik, dan beberapa kutipan berwawasan dari sumber yang dapat dipercaya digunakan dalam presentasi. Pembaca akan mendapat untung dari bab ini dalam beberapa hal, tetapi juga mengandung beberapa kekurangan yang signifikan. Percakapan tidak cukup mewakili konsep-konsep yang dibahas dalam bab ini. Pemeriksaan mendalam pengulas berfokus pada metode atau strategi yang digunakan penulis untuk menjelaskan karya mereka sambil menggunakan kosakata atau ekspresi yang tepat. Tidak ada angka yang menurut pengulas akan berguna bagi pembaca, dan sudut pandang penulis seringkali lebih mudah dipahami. Last but not least, sangat penting untuk membahas beberapa masalah yang dihadapi guru atau siswa EFL Asia. Masalah-masalah ini biasanya berkaitan dengan memilih bahasa yang tepat untuk mengajar menulis. Masuk akal bahwa memiliki lebih banyak bahasa daerah di Asia berpotensi menyebabkan kesulitan bagi instruktur ketika mengembangkan rencana pelajaran.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Ulasan Bab, Pemilihan Bahasa, Penulisan Materi*

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to review Chapter 6 of "The Routledge Handbook of Materials Development for Language Teaching-Routledge," which was written by Julie Norton and Heather Buchanan. The choice of grammar and the choice of vocabulary for English Language Teaching (ELT) course materials are the two key topics of this chapter. However, this presumption would be false for two reasons. The reviewer categorizes the favorable features of the chapter into two groups. The first is the subject organization of the chapter contents and layout. The current chapter's topics are well described, and several insightful quotations from reliable sources are used in the presentation. The reader will profit from this chapter in some ways, but it also contains several significant flaws. The conversation does not adequately represent the concepts discussed in the chapter. The reviewer's in-depth examination focuses on the methods or strategies authors use to explain their works while using the right vocabulary or expressions. There are no numbers that the reviewer believes the reader would find useful, and the author's points of view are frequently easier to comprehend. Last but not least, it is crucial to discuss some issues that Asian EFL teachers or students have faced. These issues usually have to do with picking the appropriate language to teach writing. It makes sense that having more regional languages in Asia could potentially cause difficulties for the instructor when developing lesson plans.

**Keywords:** Chapter Review, Language Selection, Materials Writing

## A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter review will discuss the current topic in chapter 6 from a book entitled "The Routledge Handbook of Materials Development for Language Teaching-Routledge" Edited by Julie Norton and Heather Buchanan. The selection of grammar and the selection of vocabulary for the creation of English Language Teaching (ELT) course books have been the two main topics of this chapter. Given the homogeneity of many published materials, it is simple to believe that the subject of "what" to teach to EFL students has long since been resolved. Instead, research should concentrate on the "how" of ELT, or pedagogy, in particular, and how this might be reflected in materials design.

This assumption, however, would be inaccurate for two reasons. First of all, especially in the case of language, we have inherited a consensus whose development has generally taken place outside of the purview of empirical study and has been somewhat "piecemeal." Second, a variety of fiercely disputed aspects of contemporary research, including initiatives like the English Profile, imply that it might be time to review and revise the "what" of ELT.

It can clearly be seen that the historical development of language choice in materials design is addressed at in this chapter's opening. Given that many of the ideas currently used in modeling techniques and ELT in general can be linked to the beginning of the 20th



century and that many present concerns have been a priority for materials authors during this time, it is worthwhile to take this historical component into mind. Understanding the historical background can explain the original justifications for what might be referred to as "standard practice" and demonstrate that some seemingly cutting-edge, contemporary methods of language choice have already been used in advanced materials in the previously.

In addition, ELT components have been released for centuries, but this chapter just focuses on the period beginning roughly in the 1920s, which Howatt and Smith (2014) refer to as "Stage II" in the development of modern teaching English in Europe. During this time, ELT became distinct from the classroom instruction of those other European languages and also gained importance outside of Europe. Asia is, in fact, the first region of activity that is pertinent to our topic.

## **B. BRIEF SUMMARY**

Early pioneer Harold Palmer claimed that ELT inherently lacked a solid theoretical foundation in terms of teaching in its infancy. In addition, there was a lack of agreement or understanding over precisely which facets of the English language should indeed be taught

to EFL learners, despite the long (and infamous) legacy of English grammar instruction in schools for English-speaking students. The British educator and scholar Harold Palmer was one of the first to raise this topic. In his book *The Principles of Applied Linguistics* from 1921, Palmer outlines the necessity for an English pedagogical grammar.

After summarizing a number of potential problematic grammar points for EFL students, such as the placement of intensity adverbs and exceptions, the use of "far" and "a long way," the zero article, and the decision between the past simple and present perfect, he concludes by saying that these points are just a small sample of the thousands of items that together make the concept of the arrangement of the English colloquial language. Most of these are not included in any English grammar books and have never been covered in class.

Summarizing several grammar points that might be challenging for EFL learners (Sardi, A & Atmowardoyo, H., 2022), including the placement of severity adverbs and exceptions, the use of "far" and "a long way," the zero article, as well as the choice between the past simple and present perfect, he draws a conclusion by noting that these issues represent just a small portion of the



thousands of components that make up the idea of the arrangement of the English colloquial language. The majority of these topics has never been discussed in class and is not addressed in any English grammar texts.

It is evident that the concept of an instructional grammar for EFL was still in its infancy because Palmer found it necessary to highlight the requirement of identifying grammar regions likely to be significant for learners rather than only those that had appeared in traditional grammars. Palmer not only listed the parts of grammar that are pertinent to ELT, but also went over possible organization and sequencing.

Palmer's meeting with West and several statistical literacy and information in the USA, as well as the arrival of some other educator, the American Laurence Faucett in Japan and his subsequent involvement in IRET, all contributed to the rise in curiosity in vocabulary shortlisting and the implementations of dictionaries in ELT in the 1930s. The issue of vocabulary choice and text simplicity intrigued Faucett as well. He had created a number of word lists that served as the framework for his Oxford English Program, which was published by Oxford University Press. Similarly

Western, Faucett organized the course into four levels and established a vocabulary "radius" of 500 words for each level (Smith 2004:441). Other course book series later adopted this strategy; for instance, C. E. Eckersley's *Essential English for Overseas Students*, which targeted adult English learners in the UK, a very smaller party of students than West as well as Palmer had initially considered, used the same system of 4 categories of 500 new words in each.

The very first half of the 20th century, then, laid the foundation for a pedagogic grammar and vocabulary for ELT (Sardi, et al., 2022); earlier, there was no widespread agreement on what grammar should be offered to EFL learners or how lexis might be chosen and regulated. Even though the initial players who contributed to the evolution are occasionally forgotten, the most of this has stayed totally applicable to modern materials design. The era that followed, up until the present, has been primarily characterized by "tweaks" to the consensus, the discovery of additional language areas that can be delivered, and the selection of language based on the particular requirements of students outside the classroom.



## 1. Critical issues and topics

### a. Level assignment of grammar

Authors of multi-level course books Jack Richards and Keith Johnson each describe five key ideas that might be used to the ordering of grammatical items and, implicitly, the leveling of those items (Johnson 2001; Richards 2001).

#### 1) Simplicity and centrality

#### 2) Frequency

#### 3) Learnability

#### 4) Linguistic distance

#### 5) Communicative needs

### b. Using corpus linguistics to inform language content

The Collins COBUILD English Dictionary, the first entirely corpus-based dictionary, was published in 1987. Other ELT publishers swiftly followed with their own corpus based publications, demonstrating the significant impact of corpus linguistics on lexicography. Studying frequent collocations is another innovation of corpus linguistics that is related to and goes beyond educational lexicography. Many course books have vocabulary sections that specifically focus on collocations in addition to appearing in learner dictionaries and even self-contained brands (Oxford University Press, Macmillan, and Longman all generate collocations dictionaries). However, it is not the extent that some might argue is necessary. Corpora can instantly offer

information on recurrence to assistance in the selection process for vocabulary.

### c. The use of learner corpora

The Trinity Lancaster Corpus, the EF-Cambridge Open Language Archive, and several learner corpora are marked by language skill level, allowing corpus searches for language created at specific levels to be performed. The ability to comprehend the types of language used among learners at various levels and possibly draw conclusions about how language evolves throughout levels is advantageous for those who create instructional materials (Sardi, A., 2022). These data can be used in a variety of ways, including: (1) ensuring that texts and other input are appropriate for the level; (2) ensuring that any language picked for clear and specific study takes into account the level at which students can typically use it; and (3) choosing the order in which teaching materials (such as grammar and vocabulary) are presented across levels.

## 2. Implications and challenges for materials development and recommendations for practice

The first issue is that EFL instructional grammar developed in many contexts, over time, under various conditions, and in various locations. Its evolution has generally been the work of lone professionals, with the only paperwork now being the grammar stuff of published

educational materials, which hardly ever cite sources or influences. At occasions, judgments affecting its progress have been based on studies and have been publicized (for instance, during the period of IRET in Japan). Then it is highly recommended to the general opinion on grammar has benefited from the decades of experience of materials authors, expertise that generally includes extensive teaching experience, but it has never been experimentally validated. Materials designers should be aware of this.

The next issue is that there are conflicts when language instruction is prescribed. The individual requirements of the intended consumers of the materials must frequently be taken into account in order to balance competing concepts like frequency, usefulness, and complexity. Then, it is definitely recommended to be aware of these opposing concepts when developing educational materials. Later on in the writing project, whenever possible, wise choices on how to prioritize one over the other should indeed be made. The numerous stakeholders engaged in the process of production may have different opinions on whether and how one concept should be prioritized over another, and materials designers should be prepared for this possibility.

The third issue is that the distinctive features of contemporary ELT practice include a focus on the individual

requirements of students. The development of corpus linguistics and genre analysis has made it simpler for materials writers to take into account specific English "realms" as opposed to a fictitious, "generic" model of the language. However, the recommendation is that the types of communicative situations that their objective users are likely to come across should be taken into account by materials designers. These situations should then be addressed in the materials through the empirical shortlisting of lexis, the classification and order of grammatical structures, and the inclusion of workable and notional language.

The last issue in this chapter is that the ELT publishing sector and the ELT profession as a whole probably have one of the biggest influences on authors. Publishers typically want their materials to represent the fact that they have no motivation to innovate and only publish to satisfy the needs of their target audiences. This indicates that it will probably be difficult to revise existing syllabus designs. The high recommendation to do is that whatever deviations from accepted practice they choose to propose, materials designers should be prepared to support their claims with actual data. They should be mindful, however, that business considerations, notably the desire to avoid offending customers or markets used to particular methods, may prevail over



empirical data. Compromises are frequently available, though, and publishers can be open to making incremental rather than radical adjustments (Littlejohn 1992:206). Authors and researchers may also need to work together more on this.

### 3. Future directions

Some of the established limitations on language choice may become less significant as a result of a recent breakthrough. Products distributed "digitally," or published in some type of electronic medium rather than on printed paper, give publishers and users far greater latitude in terms of both length and leveling. The essential consideration for this discussion is that if the classical level system and organizational structures currently used in course books are made obsolete by the adaptability offered by digital products, then there may be more room for innovation in content. Gray (2016) offers a summary of some such products. The creation and use of learner corpora that are level-tagged is one current field of research.

The English Profile project, which aimed to give English-specific assessments of the six CEFR levels (English Profile 2015), partially through analysis of the Cambridge Learner Corpus, was one of the first major outcomes of research based on such corpora (CLC). The English Vocabulary Profiling and the English

Grammar Profile are two materials created as part of the project that are particularly pertinent in this context. Both are essentially dictionaries of language, either in terms of grammatical structures or vocabulary, for each entry corresponding to a specific CEFR level based on evidence of student use in the CLC.

### C. CRITIQUES

The reviewer divides the chapter's strengths into two areas. The first is the classification of the chapter contents and the topic structures in the layout. Excellent font size and a clear layout separate the chapter's subtopics for readers. Anyone who can read it at first glance will have a positive first impression. The writing style chosen makes it easy for the reader to grasp the chapter contents. Then, if the chapter's content is examined, it is particularly excellent in addressing the questions of how to choose language for writing materials that are directed at all EFL educators (teachers, lectures, and tutors) in the application of teaching learning English as a simple and direct foreign language and comprehensives teaching stuff explanation. The author also provides insightful problems with suggested answers in language studies, particularly the requirements of today's teachers and students, which are incredibly encouraging.

The explanation of the contents of the current chapter is simple to understand and

includes some insightful quotations drawn from reliable sources. Each sub-topic shares the description of the goal. Overall, this chapter provides excellent guidance for EFL instructors, lecturers, aspiring teachers, and anybody else interested in improving curriculum design. Last but not least, the reviewer would advise everyone to study or have access to this chapter for additional research, especially researchers around the world.

However, despite offering the reader certain advantages, this chapter also has significant drawbacks. The discussion does not thoroughly illustrate the chapter topics. The reviewer's depth discussion refers to the steps or methods used by authors to describe their works while choosing the right language or diction. Additionally, there are no figures that the reviewer believes the reader would find useful, and generally, the author's views are easier to understand. At last, another meaningful thing is to provide some issues from ASIAN EFL teachers or learners where mostly problems encountered in selecting the language for teaching stuff writing (Ermawati, et al., 2021). It is due to Asian has more local languages that have no wonder could possibly interfere the teacher preparing the materials.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This chapter review from "The Routledge Handbook of Materials Development for

Language Teaching-Routledge," edited by Julie Norton and Heather Buchanan, will talk about the present subject in chapter 6. This chapter's two main subjects are the selection of grammar and the selection of vocabulary for English Language Teaching (ELT) course books. It is understandable to think that the question of what to teach EFL students has long since been settled given the homogeneity of many available materials. The manners of ELT, or pedagogy, in particular, and how this might be mirrored in the design of materials should be the focus of research instead (Sanjata, et al., 2022). This assumption would be incorrect, though, for two reasons.

The reviewer separates the chapter's positive aspects into two categories. The first is how the chapter contents and layout's topical structures are categorized. The chapter's subtopics are clearly separated for readers by excellent font size and arrangement. Anyone who can quickly and easily read it will have a favorable first impression. The reader can easily understand the contents of the chapter thanks to the chosen writing style. Secondly, the author offers incisive language study problems with proposed solutions that are highly encouraging and specifically tailored to the needs of today's teachers and students. The description of the current chapter's contents



is clear and includes several perceptive quotations taken from dependable sources.

This chapter does have some benefits for the reader, but it also has some serious problems. The ideas covered in the chapter are not fully illustrated by the conversation. The reviewer's in-depth analysis refers to the procedures or techniques authors employ to explain their works while selecting the appropriate diction or phrase. The author's viewpoints are often simpler to understand, and there are no numbers that the reviewer considers the reader would find beneficial. Last but not least, it is important to share some concerns that Asian EFL teachers or students have encountered, which typically revolve around choosing the right language to teach writing. It is understandable that having more local languages in Asia could potentially conflict with the teacher creating the lesson plans.

## E. REFERENCE

- English Profile, 2015. Reference Level Descriptions [Online]. Retrieved on 1 July 2018 from: [englishprofile.org/the-cefr/reference-level-descriptions](http://englishprofile.org/the-cefr/reference-level-descriptions).
- Ermawati, E., Nurchalis, N. F., & Sardi, A. (2021). Online EFL Teaching and Learning: Different skills, Different Challenges. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 9(1).
- Gray, J., 2002. The global coursebook in English language teaching. In Block, D. and Cameron, D. eds. *Globalization and Language Teaching*. London: Routledge.
- Gray, J., 2016. ELT materials: Claims, critiques and controversies. In Hall, G., ed. *The Routledge Handbook of English Language Teaching*. London: Routledge.
- Howatt, A. and Smith, R., 2014. The history of teaching English as a Foreign language, from a British and European perspective. *Language and History*, 57/1:75–95.
- Howatt, A. and Widdowson, H., 2004. *A History of English Language Teaching*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Johnson, K., 2001. *An Introduction to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching*. London: Routledge.
- Littlejohn, A., 1992. *Why Are ELT Coursebooks the Way They Are?* Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Lancaster University.
- Millán, C., & Bartrina, F. (2012). *Routledge Handbooks in Applied Linguistics*.
- Palmer, H., 1921. *The Principles of Language-Study*. New York: World Book Company.
- Norton, J., & Buchanan, H. (Eds.). (2022). *The Routledge Handbook of Materials Development for Language Teaching*. Routledge.
- Richards, J and Rodgers, T., 2001. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sanjata, A. R. M. P., Sardi, A., & Muchtar, J. (2022). *Peningkatan Hasil Belajar Melalui Model Pembelajaran Tutor Sebaya Setting Kooperatif*. Al-Irsyad:



Journal of Education Science, 1(2),  
 117-124.

- Sardi, A. (2022). The Building up of Students' Vocabulary Mastery through Knowing by Heart Strategy. *LETS: Journal of Linguistics and English Teaching Studies*, 4(1), 62-72.
- Sardi, A., & Atmowardoyo, H. (2022). Book Review: Language Curriculum Design (Monitoring, Assesment and Evaluation). *Celebes Journal of Language Studies*, 153-158.
- Sardi, A., JN, M. F., Walid, A., & Ahmad, A. K. (2022). An Analysis Of Difficulties In Online English Learning Experienced By The Efl Teacher. *Inspiring: English Education Journal*, 5(2), 144-154.
- Smith, R., 2004. An Investigation into the Roots of ELT, with a Particular Focus on the Career and Legacy of Harold E. Palmer. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh.