



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**A COMPOSITE FRAMEWORK FOR ESL TEXTBOOK EVALUATION**

**JAYAKARAN MUKUNDAN**

**FBMK 2004 6**

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**A COMPOSITE FRAMEWORK FOR ESL TEXTBOOK EVALUATION**

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Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in  
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 2004



*Dedicated to my family who were with me all through this long and eventful journey*



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of  
the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**A COMPOSITE FRAMEWORK FOR ESL TEXTBOOK EVALUATION**

**By**

**JAYAKARAN MUKUNDAN**

**April 2004**

**Chairperson: Associate Professor Shameem Rafik-Galea**

**Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication**

Textbook evaluation practices have not been critically examined to determine effectiveness and value in learning-teaching environments and this is probably the main reason why the literature suggests that textbooks selected have been more of a hindrance than a benefit to teaching. The assumption made by the researcher is that since much of the criticism in selection processes of textbooks is directed towards the checklist, which at this moment seems to be the only instrument used in textbook evaluation practices, then there would be a need to re-evaluate the usefulness of the checklist, identify weak areas and then develop a composite framework where the checklist will be supported by complementary instruments, namely the concordance software and the reflective journal.



The researcher suggests a 4-phase procedure in the development of the composite framework. Phase 1 tests the Skierso Evaluation Checklist (SEC) for reliability and item difficulty. Phase 2 tests the capabilities of the concordance software (WordSmith Tools 3.0) to provide analysis of the patterns of presentation of vocabulary and structures in textbooks, to determine the extent to which the software will help discriminate between books in a selection process and to determine to what extent the analysis would provide greater illustration to responses required of by items in Section D of the SEC. Phase 3 tests the capabilities of the reflective journal in providing greater illustration to responses to items in Section E (Exercises and Activities) of the SEC. Finally, in Phase 4 the researcher will assemble aspects of the two complementary components into a framework which has the checklist as its main instrument. This framework will then be tested for reliability and item difficulty.

In Phase 1, the findings revealed that while the overall reliability of the SEC was high, the difficulty analysis of items showed Section D and E of the checklist as having the largest number of difficult items. Phase 2 of the study found that the concordance software is capable of many useful functions in textbook evaluation and is able to provide greater illustration, through computation, to 6 items in Section D of the SEC. Phase 3 of the investigation revealed that teacher reflections contributed to input that was beneficial to evaluation, especially the items in Section E of the SEC.

The composite framework was assembled and tested in Phase 4. It was then compared to the mono-instrument procedure (Phase 1) which consisted of the checklist (SEC).

The comparison of the two procedures showed the composite framework to be more reliable at 0.9324 reliability as compared to 0.7675 reliability for the SEC as a standalone instrument. The difficulty analysis of items also showed marked improvement when comparisons were made. Only 4 items were considered difficult within the composite framework as opposed to 14 when the SEC was tested as a standalone.

This study has provided an alternative to the checklist dominated procedure by proposing a framework which works on the combined effort of 3 distinct instruments, thus providing for much needed triangulation which is actually expected in an exercise as complex as textbook evaluation. The spin-offs to this research are the added value it provides by way of increased awareness of action research in textbook evaluation, to greater emphasis and attention to retrospective evaluation and adaptation. It has also led to the creation of the first Malaysian Corpus of the Language of Textbooks which has approximately 150,000 words. This corpus will expand when it accommodates the language of more textbooks within the school system.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

## **RANGKAKERJA KOMPOSIT BAGI PENILAIAN BUKU TEKS ESL**

**Oleh**

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Amalan penilaian buku teks tidak dinilai secara kritis untuk menentukan keberkesanan dan nilai dalam situasi pembelajaran-pengajaran dan ini mungkin sebab utama mengapa bahan rujukan mengenai buku teks banyak menyebut bahawa buku teks lebih menjadi penghalang dan pembawa krisis daripada membawa faedah dalam pengajaran. Oleh kerana kebanyakan kritikan terhadap proses pemilihan buku ditujukan kepada senarairujuk (checklist) akibat daripada menjadi instrument menilai buku teks yang tunggal, maka perlulah ada usaha kearah menilai semula keberkesanan senarairujuk, mengesan bahagian lemah dan seterusnya membentuk kerangka komposit (*composite framework*) dimana senarairujuk dibantu oleh instrument sampingan ia itu perisian konkordans (*concordance software*) dan jurnal refleksi (*reflective journal*).

Penyelidik mencadangkan prosedur 4 fasa dalam pembentukan kerangka komposit. Fasa 1 akan menguji senarairujuk Penilaian Skierso (*Skierso Evaluation Checklist – SEC*) dari segi kebolehpercayaan dan kesukaran item (*item difficulty*). Fasa 2 akan menguji kebolehan perisian konkordans (*WordSmith Tools 3.0*) untuk menganalisa corak persembahan vokabulari dan struktur dalam buku teks untuk menentukan sejauh mana perisian ini boleh mendiskriminasi antara buku dalam proses penilaian dan juga untuk menentukan sejauh mana analisis dengan menggunakan perisian boleh memberi gambaran yang lebih mendalam pada respons yang diperlukan oleh item dalam Bahagian D di *SEC*.

Fasa 3 menguji kebolehan jurnal refleksi dalam keupayaan memberi gambaran lebih jelas kepada respon yang perlu dibuat oleh penilai bagi item dibahagian E ia itu Latihan dan aktiviti (*Exercises and Activities*). Akhir sekali, di Fasa 4 penyelidik akan mengumpul aspek dari dua komponen (Perisian dan Jurnal) dan membina kerangka komposit bersama-sama instrument utama, ia itu senarairujuk *SEC*. Kerangka yang dibentuk itu akan diuji dari segi kebolehpercayaan dan kesukaran item.

Di Fasa 1, dapatan menunjukkan bahawa kebolehpercayaan keseluruhan *SEC* adalah tinggi tetapi analisis kesukaran item pula menunjukkan bahawa Bahagian D dan E senarairujuk mempunyai item sukar yang terbanyak. Fasa 2 kajian mendapati bahawa perisian konkordans boleh melakukan banyak fungsi dan berupaya memberi gambaran yang lebih jelas melalui komputasi pada 6 item di Bahagian D *SEC*. Fasa 3



menunjukkan bahawa refleksi menyumbangkan input yang berguna kepada penilaian terutamanya bagi Bahagian E *SEC*.

Kerangka komposit dibina dan diuji di Fasa 4 dan perbandingan dibuat antara kerangka komposit dan prosedur instrument mono (Fasa 1) yang hanya melibatkan penggunaan *SEC*. Hasil perbandingan menunjukkan bahawa kerangka komposit lebih tinggi kebolehpercayaannya dengan 0.9324 kebolehpercayaan berbanding dengan 0.7675 kebolehpercayaan bagi *SEC* semasa bersendirian. Perbandingan analisis kesukaran item juga menunjukkan peningkatan. Hanya 4 item masih sukar dalam kerangka komposit berbanding dengan 14 item di ujian Fasa 1 di mana *SEC* bersendirian.

Hasil kajian ini menawarkan alternative bagi prosedur penilaian yang sehingga ini dikuasai oleh senarairujuk. Kerangka komposit menggabungkan 3 instrumen dan menyumbangkan kepada triangulasi.

Hasil sampingan kajian ini ialah keupayaannya memberi penekanan kepada penilaian retrospektif dan adaptasi. Kajian ini juga membentuk Korpus (Corpus) bagi Bahasa Buku Teks ESL di Malaysia yang mengandungi lebih kurang 150,000 perkataan. Korpus ini merupakan yang pertama dihasilkan di Malaysia.

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I certify that an Examination Committee met on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2004 to conduct the final examination of Jayakaran Mukundan on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled “A Composite Framework for ESL Textbook Evaluation” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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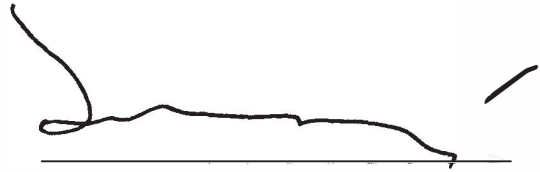
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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.



**JAYAKARAN MUKUNDAN**

Date: 28 April 2004

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| ALM    | Audio-Lingual Method                                 |
| EFL    | English as Foreign Language                          |
| ELT    | English Language Teaching                            |
| EMAS   | English of Malaysian Schools                         |
| ESL    | English as Second Language                           |
| FB     | Fajar Bakti  |
| IRPA   | Intensified Research in Priority Areas               |
| KBSM   | Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Menengah                      |
| LSAT   | Littlejohn's Style Analysis Task Sheet               |
| MATSDA | Materials Development Association                    |
| MTLC   | Malaysian Textbook Language Corpus                   |
| OUP    | Oxford University Press                              |
| PC     | Personal Computer                                    |
| QC     | Quality Control                                      |
| SEAMEO | South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation |
| SEC    | Skierso Evaluation Checklist                         |
| SITs   | Search Patterns In Text                              |
| SM     | Seri Maju  |
| TBLS   | Textbook Loan Scheme                                 |
| TEFL   | Teaching English as Foreign Language                 |
| TESL   | Teaching of English as Second Language               |
| TESOL  | Teachers of English To Speakers of Other Languages   |



|        |   |
|--------|---|
| TESP   | Teaching of English for Specific Purposes                           |
| TIF    | Tagged Image File   |
| UK     | United Kingdom  |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational and Scientific Co-operation Organisation |
| UPM    | Universiti Putra Malaysia   |
| VLDE   | Vocabulary Load Distribution and Efficiency                         |