

DESIGNING APPROPRIATE ENGLISH LEARNING MATERIALS FOR GRADE VIII STUDENTS IN THE SECOND SEMESTER AT MTs ALI MAKSUM YOGYAKARTA

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Abstract: The objectives of this study are: (1) To identify the target and learning needs of grade VIII students in the second semester at MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta and (2) To design appropriate English learning materials for grade VIII students in the second semester at MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta. This research is classified into Research and Development (R&D). The subjects of the research were the English club members. This research was conducted through the following steps i.e.; (1) conducting the needs analysis, (2) writing course grid, (3) writing the first draft, (4) getting expert judgment, and (5) writing the final draft. The instruments used in this research were the needs analysis questionnaire to identify the students' target needs and learning needs, and the expert evaluation questionnaire used to assess the appropriateness of the developed materials. The data from the needs analysis were analyzed quantitatively using frequency and percentage and the data obtained from the materials evaluation were analyzed through descriptive statistics. There were three units designed for this research consisted of 17 activities. They are 'Daily Activities', 'She Is Really Tall', and 'She Is Really Tall But I Am Taller'. Each unit consisted of four parts of learning activities i.e. 'Let's Observe', 'Let's Study', 'Let's Practice' and 'Let's Review'. Based on the expert judgment result, the mean score of all aspects of the three units was 3.39 categorized as "very good". This suggests that the developed materials were appropriate to be used for MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta.

Keywords: *Task-Based Learning Materials, Religion-based Junior High School, Appropriate Learning Materials*

MERANCANG MATERI BELAJAR BAHASA INGGRIS YANG SESUAI BAGI SISWA KELAS VIII DI SEMESTER DUA DI MTs ALI MAKSUM YOGYAKARTA

Abstrak: Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah: (1) Untuk mengidentifikasi target dan kebutuhan belajar siswa kelas VIII pada semester kedua di MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta dan (2) Untuk merancang bahan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris yang tepat untuk siswa kelas VIII pada semester kedua di MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta. Penelitian ini diklasifikasikan ke dalam *Research and Development* (R & D). Subyek penelitian adalah anggota klub Inggris. Penelitian ini dilakukan melalui langkah-langkah berikut yaitu; (1) melakukan analisis kebutuhan, (2) menulis kisi- kisi lapangan, (3) menulis draf pertama, (4) mendapatkan penilaian ahli, dan (5) menulis draf akhir. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kuesioner analisis kebutuhan untuk mengidentifikasi kebutuhan target dan kebutuhan belajar siswa, dan kuesioner evaluasi ahli digunakan untuk menilai kelayakan materi yang dikembangkan. Data dari analisis kebutuhan dianalisis secara kuantitatif menggunakan frekuensi dan persentase dan data yang diperoleh dari evaluasi bahan dianalisis melalui statistik deskriptif. Ada tiga unit yang dirancang untuk penelitian ini terdiri dari 17 kegiatan. Mereka adalah 'Daily Activities', 'She Is Really Tall', dan 'She Is Really Tall But I Am Taller'. Setiap unit terdiri dari empat bagian kegiatan belajar yaitu: 'Let's Observe', 'Let's Study', 'Let's Practice' dan 'Let's Review'. Berdasarkan hasil penilaian ahli, skor rata-rata semua aspek dari tiga unit adalah 3,39 dikategorikan sebagai "sangat baik". Ini menunjukkan bahwa materi yang dikembangkan layak digunakan untuk MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta.

Kata kunci: Materi belajar berbasis penugasan, Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Rancangan Materi

INTRODUCTION

Compared to regular Junior High School, Islamic Religion-based Junior High School which is also known as Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) has more subjects related Islam and has more Islamic atmosphere. However, MTs is equal to Regular Junior High School since MTs uses exactly the same curriculum, syllabus, test system, and other things supporting the teaching learning process as Regular Junior High School. Since the learning context is certainly different, the teaching learning process and its supportive issues should not be done and conducted in an exactly same way.

Language learning materials are an important element in English teaching and learning process. According to UU No. 22:2006, teaching and learning process should be taught based on standard of the content which includes standard of competence and basic competence. In Madrasah Tsanawiyah, the teachers use the same standard competence and basic competence for English subject as the Regular Junior High School. Moreover, the books used by MTs students are exactly the same as

the Regular Junior High School students. Since it is stated at the very beginning of this chapter, these two different high schools have different learning context, considering appropriate learning materials is what should most concerns are about. The materials should be based on the current curriculum and also should be appropriate with the learning context. The subjects taught in MTs are more than those in Regular Junior High School and the situation of the school is tremendously different from Regular Junior High School. In MTs, the context is more religious in which some religious aspects are implicitly or explicitly given in the subjects. Thus, the students should be given appropriate materials to help them cope with English more smoothly.

Based on the school teacher, the students in MTs use the book which is designed for General Junior High School (*Learning in Focus*). The use of this same book is against the reality that both schools have different learning context. The lack of relevant English course books makes teachers have to adapt and adopt materials. Teachers' lack of time and ability, therefore, makes

students needs' and context based materials are away from reality. Teachers could not develop the materials because they are busy with the teaching stuffs and administration problems. Furthermore, not so many appropriate materials are available to be adapted by the teacher. These phenomena clearly show that finding relevant learning materials is an issue for teachers in MTs.

Those above reasons lead and motivate the researcher to conduct a study dealing with developing appropriate English materials for Religion-based School (MTs), which promotes students' intrinsic motivation and is based on the students' needs and school curriculum and support the learning context particularly for grade VIII students in the second semester at MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a Research and Development (R&D) since the aim and final result of the research is to develop a product (i.e. a set of materials) that can be used in an educational program.

The steps of the process in research and development (R&D)

refer to the R&D cycle. Tomlinson (1998: 247) also offers five steps of course design, those are: 1) Needs analysis 2) Goals and objectives 3) Syllabus design 4) Methodology or materials 5) Testing and evaluation

The study was conducted at MTs Ali Maksum which is located at Jalan dongkelan No. 325, Panggunharjo, Sewon, Bantul. The subjects of this research were the VIII grade students in the second semester at MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta, English teacher(s) of MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta, and The Expert Judgement in English Education Department of State University of Yogyakarta.

This research applied three instruments: questionnaires, interview guidelines, and field notes. Two types of questionnaire were used to collect the data. The first questionnaire was distributed to the students for obtaining the data for needs analysis and the second questionnaire was distributed to the expert judgment and respondents for evaluating the appropriateness of the book. The interview guidelines were applied to ask the English teacher about English teaching and learning process while the field notes were

used to take notes during the English teaching and learning process. The data of the questionnaire of the appropriateness of the book were analyzed quantitatively through descriptive analysis while the result of interview and class observation was analyzed qualitatively.

In this research, the procedure was adapted from the steps of course design proposed by Masuhara (in Tomlinson, 1998: 247). They are conducting needs analysis, stating goals and objectives, designing syllabus, developing materials, testing and evaluation. Since the procedure was modified, the step of testing the materials was omitted. As the result, the procedure of the research ended at the evaluation from the expert without involving the testing step.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. The results of the Needs Analysis

The needs analysis was done by observing the classroom activity, holding interview, and distributing a set of questionnaire. Generally, students have basic requirements

elaborated by the regulation. Yet, they also have their own standards of the materials they want to learn. Therefore, the researcher analysed both the curriculum and the students needs. The school apparently uses one curriculum called Kurikulum 13 or K-13. And it is generated as one of the bases used by the researcher in developing materials.

The first part of the questionnaire was generated to obtain the students profile. Most students use *Bahasa Jawa* as their first language and *Bahasa Indonesia* as their second language meaning that they use English as their foreign language which also means that they are not familiar with English.

1) The Students' Target Needs

The following description shows the target needs of the students. There were 9 questions used to obtain the information including question about their lacks, goals, wants, and necessities.

The first 5 questions ask about the students' lacks. The sixth question, however, asks about the students' goals, the seventh and eighth are about the students' wants,

the ninth is about the students' necessities.

Again, the questions were made to know the students' target needs. It resulted several things; 65.6 % students thought their English proficiency is beginner and only 34.4 % of the students thought their proficiency is intermediate. Then, their number one difficulty is vocabulary. It is followed by instruction, grammar, topic knowledge, and pronunciation. The students' difficulties are ranked from writing, reading, speaking, to listening. There were 7 students assuming that their English learning is not suitable with their learning context, 15 students thought that their English teaching learning is interesting but 9 students did not. Moreover 5 students regarded their lesson as a very boring lesson. Then, their main goals was to be able to communicate in English and pass the national examination. Even so, most students put English as an important subject. In rank, their wants were master vocabularies related to everyday's life, understand meaning and functions of words, sentences and expression in English, pronounce English words correctly, use formal

and informal language in everyday life well, master English grammar, answer questions given in examination, and differentiate formal and informal language in everyday life. Their necessity is mostly to continue their study to the higher level.

2) Students' Learning Needs

Here are the information related to students' learning needs including the input of the materials covering listening, speaking, reading and writing inputs, the procedures of the learning, the setting, and the students' and teacher's roles. There are twenty four questions used in order to gain the learning needs.

The top three listening learning inputs chosen by the students are texts spoken by non-native, text completed with pictures, and authentic texts. Then, 81.2 % of the students preferred to have 50 words-100 words in their listening input. While the topics they wanted are topics related to social and culture.

For the speaking, they picked texts, monologues, and dialogues completed with related vocabularies that introduced before as their favorite input. For the length, most of them chose 50-100 words which is same as the listening input. Same as

before, topics chosen are related to social and culture had the most voters.

Topics related to holiday and social and culture, authentic texts and text with pictures, and 50-100 words texts are what the students want to have in studying reading.

While for writing, they want to have topics related to school life and social and culture. Then, texts with glossary and 50-100 words are their preferences.

For the learning activities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), the students like to discuss and translate the transcript of the recording, identify the expressions used in the recording, act out dialog in pairs, do roleplay, read the text and answer the questions based on the texts, translate texts into Indonesian, write texts based on videos or pictures, and complete sentences into good and correct ones. In addition, they want to do word matching and memorize and act vocabularies out for vocabulary activity. Then, they want to write sentences based on the learned sentence patterns for grammar activity and be given phonetic transcription on pronunciation activity.

In carrying out the task, the students want to work in pair or group consisting of 2 until 4 people. Most of the students like to have the teaching learning process at school's neighbourhood like park, field, etc. They also expect that the teacher gives examples first before the task. Lastly, they want to be actively involved to the teaching learning process.

Those are the learners' target and learning needs which are also the base of the developed materials combined to the result of interview and the curriculum used.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

The final developed materials have 3 units. The development itself is based on the needs analysis which involved the target needs analysis, learning needs analysis, interview, and syllabus analysis. The materials was developed based on Task-based language teaching principle and following the spoken and also written cycle. By the end of the learning, the materials allows the students to make production. The activities carried out by doing some activities such as filling the

blank, word matching, pictures matching, answering questions, acting out dialogues, and etc.

B. Suggestions

The product of this research is designed for Islamic junior high school which is called by Madrasah Tsanawiyah for the eighth grade of MTs Ali Maksum Yogyakarta. Based on the research findings, there are some suggestions for the English teachers and for other materials developers.

1. To English Teachers in Junior High School

According to the research findings, there are suggestions proposed by the researcher for the English teachers in junior high school especially Islamic junior high school. First suggestion is about the topics of the materials. The topics should be related to the daily activities so that students are interested in what they are learning, and also are not confused. Exploring the social life of the students is suggested to be done by English teacher. The title and the content should be related.

The second suggestion is about the input. Related to the needs analysis, most of the students prefer having

discussion activity. This activity can make students more confident to learn. The materials should be interesting which can put some pictures that can make students more interesting to learn.

The last suggestion is about the design of the materials. Students are easily attracted by interesting materials. Some pictures, more colorful materials and some illustrations may take the students' attention to the materials. However, the design of the materials especially for the illustration, should be relevant, proportional, because it can distract the students' attention in learning English.

2. To The Other Researchers / Material Developers

There are two suggestions proposed by the researcher for other researchers and/or other material developers. The first suggestion is about the importance of conducting need analysis. Conducting needs analysis is important because it helps the materials that should be developed. The last suggestion is that since the materials are evaluated only by the expert, it will be better if the materials are also evaluated by conducting a try-out. It can give a

better evaluation for the developed materials.

Clevedon, Avon: Multilingual Matters.

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