

Designing Culture-Based English Extensive Reading Materials for Grade VIII Students at SMPN 2 Susukan

Nurdiana Kusumawicitra
Suharso
nkcitra@gmail.com

Abstract: The objectives of this study were: (1) to find the target needs and reading needs of Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan, and (2) to design a culture-based English extensive reading material book for Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan. This study was classified as Research and Development (R&D) study. The subjects of the study were Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan Classes VIII-A and VIII-H each of which consisted of 30 students. The research procedure was adapted from the ADDIE concept proposed by Branch (2009). The steps included analysing students' needs, designing a course grid, developing the first draft of culture-based English extensive reading materials, evaluating the first draft by an expert, and revising it based on the feedback obtained from the evaluation. The data collection instruments were a needs analysis questionnaire and an expert judgment questionnaire. The data obtained from the needs analysis were analysed quantitatively using frequencies and percentages and the data obtained from the expert judgments were analysed through descriptive analysis. Based on the results of the needs analysis, it was found out that the students needed additional reading materials based on L2 culture since they thought learning L2 culture is important. The students expected to enhance their fluency in reading and enrichment for vocabulary. The students preferred daily life in L2 culture as the topic presented in additional reading materials and they preferred texts which contained a lot of new words to learn. This study intended to design extensive reading materials based on culture for Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan in order to provide additional reading materials that meet their reading needs. The research findings showed that the developed culture-based extensive reading materials were appropriate. The mean score for the developed materials was 3.03, which was good.

Key words: R&D, culture, extensive reading

Abstrak: Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui *target needs* dan *reading needs* siswa kelas VIII SMPN 2 Susukan dan untuk mengembangkan materi *extensive reading* berdasarkan budaya bahasa target untuk siswa kelas VIII SMPN 2 Susukan. Penelitian ini dikategorikan sebagai Penelitian & Pengembangan atau R&D (*Research & Development*). Subjek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas VIII SMPN 2 Susukan kelas VIII-A dan kelas VIII-H yang berjumlah 60 siswa. langkah penelitian dilakukan dengan mengadaptasi konsep ADDIE yang dikembangkan oleh Branch. Langkah-langkah penelitian meliputi menganalisis kebutuhan siswa, penulisan *course grid*, mengembangkan materi *extensive reading* berdasarkan budaya bahasa target, mengevaluais materi yang dikembangkan oleh *evaluator (expert judgment)*, dan memperbaiki materi yang

telah dikembangkan berdasarkan data dari *expert judgment*. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam mengumpulkan data adalah kuesioner; untuk siswa dan untuk *expert judgment*. Data yang diperoleh dari analisis kebutuhan siswa dihitung menggunakan frekuensi dan persentasi, lalu data yang diperoleh dari *expert judgment* dianalisis menggunakan deskriptif analisis. Berdasarkan hasil analisis kebutuhan siswa, diketahui bahwa siswa kelas VIII SMPN 2 Susukan membutuhkan tambahan materi *reading* yang berbasis budaya bahasa target karena pentingnya belajar budaya bahasa target. Siswa berharap bahwa mereka dapat meningkatkan kemampuan membaca mereka secara lancar dan penambahan kosakata. Topik yang dipilih siswa untuk disertakan dalam materi *reading* adalah kegiatan sehari-hari masyarakat Inggris dan mereka menginginkan materi yang memuat banyak kata-kata baru untuk dipelajari. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan materi *extensive reading* berbasis budaya sebagai materi tambahan yang dapat memenuhi kebutuhan belajar membaca bahasa Inggris siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa materi yang dikembangkan cocok untuk siswa kelas SMPN 2 Susukan dengan hasil rata-rata 3.03 yang dikategorikan "Baik".

Kata kunci: R&D, budaya, *extensive reading*

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Introduction

Language is a means of communication. People convey their ideas through language. If speaking about language, culture tags along with it. Culture and language are intertwined. As people of different languages communicate, they also share cultures of their own. English language is one of the international languages and it is used as a lingua franca for persons who do not share a mother tongue. As English is now a global language, it has impact on educational system in Indonesia. Educational system expects the students to learn English to some extent. Since language and culture are entwined, teaching English language cannot be apart from culture.

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language and is taught as a compulsory subject in Junior High School. In School-Based Curriculum, the purposes of English teaching presented in Ministerial Regulation No.22/2006 are: 1) to develop competences in spoken and written communication to achieve functional literary, 2) to grow awareness of the importance of English in order to increase competitiveness in global society, and 3) to develop students' understanding of the relationship between language and culture. The last purpose convinces that teaching English should be integrated with culture. In English teaching and learning in Indonesia, it is feasible for a teacher to teach L2 culture in a class inasmuch as many theories support teaching L2 in a foreign language classroom.

Nevertheless, teaching L2 culture appears to be still less common. Not many educators in Indonesia teach L2 culture in a class. There are no many media, teaching kits, reading materials available for the teacher related to L2 culture. This may result to the teaching in class. In accordance with English teaching and learning, there are four macroskills that should be taught in any level such as

listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, in some cases, the emphasis is mainly on reading. For instance, SMPN 2 Susukan, the school demands more on teaching reading. The reason is that the students must take National Examination in Grade IX and the examination questions will be in the form of a multiple choice test. It is of utmost importance that the students improve their reading comprehension. Therefore, the school prioritizes reading skills to be taught to the students.

The teacher demands that the students read a lot, anytime and anywhere. On the contrary, the reading materials, books, and media are insufficient. The school only provides an *LKS (Lembar Kerja Siswa)* or worksheet. The problem is that most LKS do not contain abundant information needed by the students. Then, some students do not like to read, they only read if they are asked to read by the teacher. The researcher, as a student teacher, obviously had experienced a classroom that only focused on reading; reading an *LKS*. This personal experience has inspired the researcher to design appropriate reading materials which interest students. Reading materials based on culture may be the answer. The researcher is interested and motivated in designing appropriate reading materials which are worth reading for Grade VIII students and can arouse students' curiosity by implementing a culture-based approach. The researcher is conducting a study entitled "Designing Culture-Based English Extensive Reading Materials for Grade VIII Students at SMPN 2 Susukan".

Research Method

This research is categorized as Research and Development since this research aims to design extensive materials for the Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan. The subjects of the research were Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan. The research subjects were limited to two classes; Class A and Class H. The research procedure was adapted from the ADDIE concept in Branch (2009). The steps included analysing students' needs, designing a course grid, developing the first draft of culture-based extensive reading materials, evaluating the first draft by an expert, and revising it based on the feedback obtained from the evaluation. The data collection instruments were a needs analysis questionnaire and an expert judgment questionnaire. The data obtained from the needs analysis were analysed quantitatively using frequencies and percentages and the data obtained from the expert judgments were analysed through descriptive analysis.

Research Findings and Discussion

The first step in this research was conducting needs analysis in order to find the information regarding the target needs and the reading needs of Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan. The needs analysis was conducted on 21 May 2016. The instrument to collect the data was a needs analysis questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of eleven questions concerning the students' goals, wants, lacks, necessities, input, and the involvement of culture in learning English. Based on the needs analysis questionnaire, the researcher took the highest answers as the considerations in designing the extensive reading materials. From the eleven questions distributed to the students, it was found out

that the students needed additional reading materials. The students also thought that the reading materials based on L2 culture were very important and helpful. It was also found out that the students were all beginners in English language.

Regarding the theme they wanted to read in additional reading materials, they preferred British culture. The topic they preferred to read was daily life in the United Kingdom. The table also showed that the additional materials should contain a lot of new words to learn since their subject learning preference was learning vocabulary. It was also found out that the students' expectation of enhancement of reading class was to be able to read text fluently. Then the students' goal in learning English was to get good marks in English class. The results underpin the extensive reading materials alongside the theories proposed in chapter II.

After conducting the needs analysis, the researcher wrote the course grid based on the results of the needs analysis and the Standard of Competency and Basic Competences of reading for Junior High School Students Grade VIII in the first semester stated in the School-Based Curriculum. The materials were developed into six units. The first three chapters focused on descriptive text and the other three units focused on recount text. The materials developed consisted of six units dealing with different topic for each unit. The materials developed covered topics such as UK geography, daily life, sport and leisure, UK government, British events happened in the past, and literature. There were five main activities in the materials developed for each unit; before-you-read activity, vocabulary activity, reading activity, grammar activity, and discussion.

The before-you-read activity aims at activating students' background knowledge. The vocabulary activity contains vocabulary which is directly related to the topic of the text so it can be used to activate schema. The language used is natural and appropriate for Grade VIII students. The vocabulary varies from unit 1 to unit 6 depending on each text of the unit. The reading activity aims at checking students' comprehension of the texts they have read. It also aims at improving students' reading comprehension. Grammar activity aims to refresh students' memories of grammar they have learnt in class. Each unit emphasizes different grammatical aspect related to language features of descriptive and recount texts. The discussion leads the students to speak up their minds and allows the students to relate what they have got from reading to their experience and surroundings.

After the first draft of the culture-based English extensive reading materials were developed, the expert judgment was conducted to evaluate the materials in terms of content, language, presentation, and graphic design appropriateness. The instrument to collect the data was an expert judgment questionnaire. The results of the expert judgment showed that the materials developed are appropriate to be implemented in the English teaching and learning process for Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan. The book was considered "Good".

Conclusions

Based on the research findings, the materials developed are appropriate to be implemented as additional reading materials for Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan. The materials developed also meet the students' target needs and reading needs. The teachers should encourage the students to engage in extensive reading since extensive reading benefits students in many aspects. The implementation of culture in the book could help the teachers to introduce English culture to students. Grade VIII students at SMPN 2 Susukan could use this book as a way to enrich their knowledge and to improve their reading skills since this book provide many texts with tasks related to the texts. It is also expected that there will be further researches that develop additional materials that cover four-skills teaching materials.

References

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