

## MATERIALS FOR FACILITATING EFL LEARNERS IN MAINSTREAM AND CONTENT AREAS

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### **Abstrak**

*Perubahan kurikulum di Indonesia membawa banyak implikasi terhadap perkembangan Pendidikan. Karena materi menjadi kebutuhan dasar bagi siswa yang berurusan, hal ini harus dipertimbangkan secara serius untuk dikaji ulang oleh para penyusun materi. Terkait dengan kurikulum terkini, serta kearifan lokal Indonesia, materi tersebut seharusnya dapat meningkatkan kesadaran siswa akan identitas budaya mereka secara umum. Selain itu, sebagai hasil dari kebijakan baru, bahasa Inggris secara resmi diajarkan di sekolah menengah pertama, sehingga materinya harus mampu memperkenalkan bahasa Inggris dalam banyak cara yang mudah dipahami. Dengan kata lain, materinya harus mudah dipahami dan kontekstual untuk pembelajar pemula bahasa Inggris. Dengan kata lain, materi tersebut diharapkan dapat mendorong siswa untuk berlatih Bahasa Inggris baik dalam bentuk lisan maupun tertulis. Penelitian ini merupakan Research and Development (R&D). Langkah-langkah penelitian ini meliputi survei kebutuhan, pengembangan materi, evaluasi draf materi pertama, revisi draf materi pertama, implementasi draf kedua, dan penyusunan draf akhir. Instrumen pengumpulan data yaitu angket, panduan interview, dan panduan observasi. Jenis data yang diperoleh yaitu kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Data-data tersebut dianalisis secara kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Materi dievaluasi dan direvisi berdasarkan pada data yang diperoleh. Untuk menjawab hal tersebut, oleh karena itu, artikel ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki materi yang efektif dan tepat untuk meningkatkan kompetensi bahasa Inggris pembelajar EFL.*

**Kata kunci:** materi, siswa EFL, area konten dan arus utama, kurikulum.

### **Abstract**

*The change of Indonesian curriculum brings a lot of implications toward educational development. As materials become the basic needs for students to deal with, it must be seriously considered to re-examine by the material writers. To respect much on the recent curriculum, as well as Indonesian local wisdom, the materials must be able to enhance students' awareness on their cultural identity in general. Moreover, as a result of the new policy, English officially was taught firstly in junior high school, so the materials must be able to introduce English comprehensible ways. In other words, the materials must be understandable and contextual for new beginner of English learners. Furthermore, the materials are expected to engage the learners to practice English actively and communicatively both in spoken and written form. This research is Research and Development (R&D). The steps of this research consisted of the need survey, developing the materials, evaluating the first draft of the materials, revising the first draft, implementing the second draft, and writing the final draft. The instruments of the data collection were questionnaires, an interview guide, and observation guide. The types of the data were quantitative and qualitative. They were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The materials were evaluated and revised based on the data obtained. To respond to that case, therefore, this paper was aimed to investigate the effective and appropriate materials for enhancing EFL learners' English competency.*

**Keywords:** materials, EFL learners, mainstream and content areas, curriculum.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

In the globalization era, English has increasingly become the medium of the communication in all aspects of life. In Indonesia, English is considered as Foreign Language (EFL). Thus, people use it for communication purpose in the governmental, academic, or economic fields. However, English is becoming increasingly important in all aspects. Instead of being used in the official purposes, it is also used in the tourism, entertainment, etc. Moreover, it is also used for global purposes which make the speakers to use English as a means of communication. The communication is not only with English native speakers, but also it can be with foreign people coming from ASEAN countries.

To deal with AEC (ASEAN Economic Community), people in ASEAN countries prepare for this in many sectors, particularly in the education sector. Thus, both countries do a lot of efforts in improving students' English ability. The efforts are from many parties, such as government, teachers, parents, and students. The government may develop new policy to rule English teaching and learning in Indonesia. It may be by designing certain curriculum depends on the learners' need. For the teachers, they can do many things such as creating fun atmosphere in the class, providing good materials, using learning kits and media in teaching, offering help when they find difficulties, etc. From the parents, they may provide facilities for their children to learn English, assist them in learning English, courage their motivation, etc. To make it succeeds; those factors should work together in balance.

Regarding to the quality of education of a country, the curriculum designed by the government may take an important role. Curriculum significantly contributes to the students' English proficiency (Document of Curriculum 2013, Ministry of Education and Culture).

Thus, it cannot be denied that curriculum is an instrument provided to support students to be: 1) qualified people who enable and proactive to answer changeable global challenge, 2) educated people who are religious, well-behave, healthy, knowledgeable, creative, and independent, and 3) democratic and responsible citizen. To reach those goals, the development and implementation of the curriculum is one strategy to improve students' knowledge and skill toward English.

Briefly, there were many changes of curriculum in Indonesian education. The 1975 curriculum changed into 1984 curriculum. The 1975 curriculum focused on the objective that must be achieved in every learning activity. The teachers are expected to set up the target to reach the objective, so they spend more time in determining it then teaching. The 1984 curriculum had different focus that is emphasizing on the skills. Though both curricula have different focus, but both of them apply the same teaching methodology which was known as Grammar Translation Method (Widyaningrum, 2013). During the implementation of 1984 curriculum, some weaknesses were found, so this curriculum was changed into 1994 curriculum. The implementation of 1984 curriculum up to 1994 curriculum employed communicative language teaching. The 1994 curriculum is based on the process and objective which means that this curriculum focuses on both elements. Practically, this curriculum has some weaknesses and one of them is that the students have to work harder just to do one subject. As a result, the content of the curriculum becomes uneven and varied therefore it was replaced with 2004 curriculum eventually.

The 2004 curriculum is called Competence Based Curriculum (CBC). It focuses on students' competency. This curriculum was expected to change the 1994 curriculum through national

program proposed by the government. Two years later after the 2004 curriculum is implemented, in 2006 government through its ministry of education published a new curriculum known as *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP)* or School Based Curriculum (SBC). Finally, at the moment, the government changes the curriculum into the 2013 curriculum which was just implemented step by step by the schools in Indonesia.

To support the implementation of the curriculum, the teaching and learning materials become one factor determining students' success in learning English. This influences on the students' understanding toward English. The better materials the students receive the better understanding they have. For instances, good materials should fulfil the students' need, so they can be used based on the students' developmental level of English proficiency. Moreover, it should be completed with teacher's manual to help the teachers in using the materials (Andayani, W, 2012). Therefore, good materials should be able to facilitate learners with different needs and interests in order to improve their English ability.

As mentioned earlier, before implementing the 2013 curriculum, the School Based Curriculum (SBC) was the curriculum implemented in Indonesia. The SBC gives school the authority to conduct the education at local context. The schools are expected to be creative in adopting local values, content and accommodating students' needs and interests (Widyaningrum, 2013). In fact, there were some matters related to the implementation of the SBC curriculum. Regarding to the materials, for instance, some English teachers coming from rural areas admitted that it was difficult to adapt the recent curriculum (Andayani, 2012). They had used to employ the old curriculum, so the SBC curriculum seemed to be complicated curriculum to use. As the SBC curriculum forced the

teachers to adopt local values and accommodate students' needs and interests, they had to provide students suitable materials to learn. This way, there were only limited materials provided by the schools but it is difficult to use them. As a result, the teachers only used student worksheets or *Lembar Kerja Siswa (LKS)* in the teaching and learning process. In fact, it was not interesting and made the students bored. The schools eventually provided them good materials, but they got difficulty in using them. Moreover, it made the students' needs and interests toward the English materials were not completed. Therefore, it was difficult to reach the teaching and learning goal in that way.

In respect to the 2013 curriculum which brings a lot of implications toward educational development, the materials should also be re-examined. As materials become the basic needs for students to deal with, it must be seriously considered to re-examine by the material writers. To respect much on the 2013 Curriculum, as well as Indonesian local wisdom, the materials must be able to enhance students' awareness on their cultural identity in general. Moreover, as a result of the new policy, English will be taught firstly in junior high school, so the materials must be able to introduce English comprehensible ways. In other words, the materials must be understandable and contextual for new beginner of English learners. Furthermore, the materials are expected to engage the learners to practice English actively and communicatively both in spoken and written form. To respond to that case, therefore, this paper was aimed to investigate the effective and appropriate materials for enhancing EFL learners' English competency.

## **1.2 Problems of the Study**

Based on what is stated in the background, the problem of the study is formulated as follows:

- a. How is the effective and appropriate material for enhancing EFL learners' English competency?

**1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Regarding to the statement of the problem, this study aims to:

- a. Elaborating how the effective and appropriate material for enhancing EFL learners' English competency is developed.

**2. METHOD**

This research is Research and Development (R&D). The steps of this research consisted of the need survey, developing the materials, evaluating the first draft of the materials, revising the first draft, implementing the second draft, and writing the final draft. The instruments of the data collection were questionnaires, an interview guide, and observation guide. The types of the data were quantitative and qualitative. They were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The materials were evaluated and revised based on the data obtained.

In developing materials, the ADDIE design model proposed by Taylor (2004, 3-5) was used. The ADDIE instructional design model is the generic process traditionally used by instructional designers and training developers. This model consists of five phases. They are Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. Those phases represent a dynamic and flexible guideline for building effective training and performance support tools.

- a. Analysis

There are some activities that must be done in the analysis phase. First, the instructional problem should be clarified. Second, the instructional goals and objectives are established. Finally, the learning environment and learner's existing knowledge and skills are identified.

- b. Design

The design phase deals with the learning objectives, assessment instruments, exercises, content, subject matter analysis, lesson planning and media selection. This phase should be systematic and specific in order to show a brief view of the goal.

- c. Development

The development phase is where instructional designers and developers create and assemble the content assets that were blueprinted in the design phase.

- d. Implementation

During the implementation phase, a procedure for training the facilitators and the learners is developed. The training should cover many things, i.e. the course curriculum, learning outcomes, method of delivery, and testing procedures.

- e. Evaluation

The evaluation phase consists of two parts: formative and summative. The formative evaluation is present in each stage of the ADDIE process. Meanwhile, the summative evaluation consists of tests which are designed for domain specific criterion-related referenced items. It provides opportunities for feedback from the identified users.

Finally, based on the explanation above, this research adapted the ADDIE as the instructional design model. The ADDIE model is easier and less complicated than the other instructional design models. Moreover, the ADDIE model is as the basic model which is used as a source in developing other instructional design models. Figure 1 below illustrates the ADDIE instructional design model:

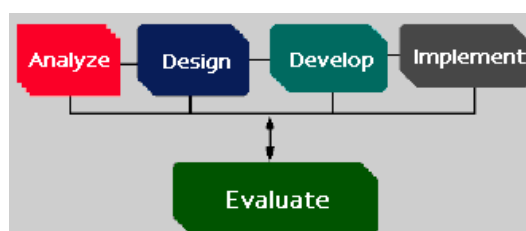


Figure 1: ADDIE instructional design model

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In designing the materials for enhancing EFL students' English ability, some steps should be done. As what Taylor (2004) mentioned before, those are conducting needs analysis, developing the course grids, designing the materials, implementing the materials, and evaluating. As it is a preliminary study, this study only tries to elaborate from the need analysis to the material design.

#### a. The Needs Analysis

In this step, the observation and needs analysis should be conducted. This is aimed at finding the information about the students' views, interests, and needs toward the English lessons at their school by using the questionnaire or by conducting an interview. Moreover, this is also conducted to the English teachers. The purpose is to obtain the teacher's opinions and experiences in teaching English. Finally, the result of the needs analysis is used as guidelines in designing the materials for enhancing EFL students' English proficiency.

#### b. The Course Grids

After the needs analysis was conducted, the next two steps done were determining both the topics and objectives of the materials and writing the course grid based on the 2013 Curriculum. The course grid was used as the guideline in designing the materials. In addition, it consisted of topic, basic of competency, indicators, learning materials, learning activities, teacher's instruction, input text, media, and time allocation. The design of course grids is also based on the students' needs and interest in order to reach the goal of study.

#### c. The Material Design

Referring to the descriptions of good materials mentioned before, Nunan (1989: 48) states that there are six components of a

good task. Those are goal, input, activities, teacher roles, learner roles, and setting.

#### 1) Goal

Goal is the main purpose to be obtained of conducted tasks, and is dealing with the output in which communicative, affective, and cognitive (Nunan, 1989: 48).

#### 2) Input

Input is anything used in the tasks in which can be taken from drawings, family trees, shopping lists, magazine quizzes (Nunan, 1989: 53). Meanwhile, Hutchinson and Waters (1986: 108) say that the input may be a text, dialogue, video recording, diagram or any pieces of communication data, depending on the needs that have defined in the analysis.

In the 2013 curriculum, character building is derived from the local wisdom into the materials. The input consists of any written or spoken text contained of good characters. Therefore, the Indonesian government (cited in Zuchdi, 2011) already proposed grand design of character education included four basic values: (1) honest and responsible (as a reflection of heart), (2) smart (as a reflection of thought), (3) healthy and clean (as a reflection of body/ physic), and (4) care and creative (as a reflection of feeling).

Furthermore, Lickona (2004) as cited in Zuchdi (2011) states ten main values which can be integrated in the materials as follows.

- i. Wisdom (i.e. good judgment, ability to set priorities),
- ii. Justice (i.e. fairness, respect, responsibility, honesty, politeness, tolerance,
- iii. Fortitude (i.e. courage, resilience, patience, perseverance, endurance, self-confidence),
- iv. Self-control (i.e. self-discipline, to delay gratification, to resist temptation, moderation, sexual self-control),
- v. Love (i.e. empathy, compassion, kindness, generosity, service, loyalty, patriotism, forgiveness),
- vi. Positive attitude (i.e. hope, enthusiasm, flexibility, sense of humor),
- vii. Hard works (i.e. initiative, diligence,

- good-setting, resourcefulness),
- viii. Integrity (i.e. adhering to moral principle, faithfulness to a correctly formed conscience, keeping one's word, ethical consistency, being honest with oneself),
  - ix. Gratitude (i.e. the habit of being thankful, acknowledging one's debts to others, not complaining),
  - x. Humility (i.e. self-awareness, willingness to mistakes and responsibility to them, the desire to become a better person).

Those good characters can be integrated in the materials of the 2013 curriculum. Therefore, while learning the materials, the students are expected to have those characters in their understanding and to apply them in their daily life as the ultimate goal.

### 3) Activities

Brown (2001: 129) states that an activity refers to anything the learners do in the classroom. In addition, Nunan (1989: 59) states that an activity is anything the learners do with the input. To integrate local wisdom, there are many activities for students can be implemented, such as using pictures (Faizah, 2009 cited in Zuchdi, 2011), playing role-play (Zidniyati, 2009 cited in Zuchdi, 2011), etc. The implementation of English teaching is by integrating four skills, as language learning is integrated from all the skills (Brown, 2001). Therefore, in the practice, the skills are integrated into the theme which includes character education. For instance, a text about a biography of Thomas Alva Edison can be used in the English teaching as it may contain good characters such as hard working, patience, self-confidence, etc. The activity may depend on the learning activity. For instance, when using the PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production), the activity may be started by presenting the text by modeling, asking the students to answer some questions to checking students' understanding toward the text, and then asking them to retell the story of

their role model. Finally, there are many other activities created by the teacher. One thing that should be remembered is that the activities should contain local wisdom purposed for character education.

### 4) Teacher roles

Role is described as the action of the teacher and students are wished to play in the language learning (Nunan, 1989: 79). Brown (2001: 167 – 168) describes the teacher's role as controller, director, manager, facilitator, and resource. In addition, Breen and Candlin cited in Nunan (1989: 87) suggest that the teacher has the roles as a facilitator, a participant, and an observer and learner.

### 5) Learner roles

Richards and Rodgers cited in Nunan (2004: 64) mention the learners' roles as the objects of conducted tasks in the materials which perform the activities in the tasks under the instruction given by the teacher.

### 6) Setting

According to Wright cited in Nunan (2004: 71), setting is the arrangement of the task in which can be done individually, in pairs, in groups, and in whole class mode. This is related to the teaching method in which is about how the teacher arranges the focus of the students' learning. Here, teaching method also takes an important part in the teaching and learning process since it related to the focus of the learning. For instance, learning process may be more effective if its emphasis is on students (student centered active learning).

For instance, the materials are completed with the teacher's manuals and media. The manuals include what the teacher should do and use in her teaching and learning process. In other words, the manuals should consist of the steps used by the teacher in teaching English in the classroom.

The materials are related to the topics and objectives. They are about *Greeting*, *Introducing*, and *Celebrating Traditional Ritual*, etc. There are many expressions and pictures of the situations which are

used to help students understand the materials. Moreover, the use of games and songs makes the materials more interesting and enjoyable for the students who are young learners.

In addition, the media are also provided to support the materials. There are hand puppets, pictures, cards, and realia which are used in the teaching and learning process. In fact, the teacher is not to be worried about how to use them because the teacher's manuals include instructions on how to use them. Finally, after the teacher's manuals, materials, and media were designed, all of them are ready to be implemented. For example, the design of the teacher's manuals is in the following figure.

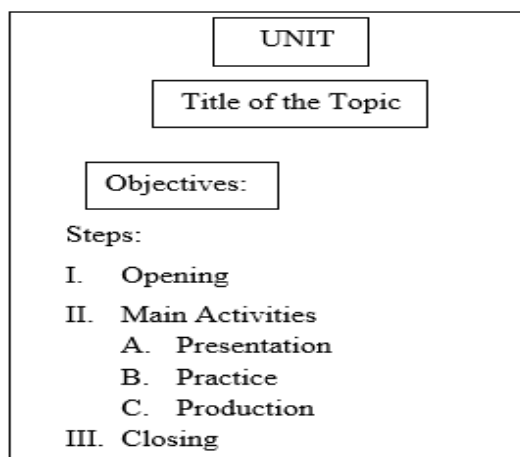


Figure 2: The Design of the Task

There are some other characteristics of good materials, as follows:

1. Material Aspect
  - a. The content of the materials should match standard competencies, basic competencies, and indicators.
  - b. The title of each topic should be interesting.
  - c. The materials and activities should be various and interesting.
  - d. The materials and activities should be able to motivate the students to learn English.
  - e. The materials and activities should suit the students' ability.
  - f. The materials and activities should be organized according to the

- difficulty level from easy to difficult one.
    - g. The materials and activities should be able to make the students communicate in English.
    - h. The materials and activities should be able to make the students interact with other friends.
    - i. The materials and activities should be able to make the students more active.
    - j. The materials and activities should consist of individual, pair, and group works.
    - k. The materials and activities should include the integrated skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing).
    - l. The songs and games should be appropriate with the topics.
    - m. The songs and games should be easily mastered by the teacher.
    - n. The songs and games should be various and interesting.
    - o. The songs and games should be able to motivate the students.
    - p. The rule of the game should be clearly explained
  2. Manual Aspect
    - a. The teacher's guidelines should be easy to use.
    - b. The teacher's guidelines should suit with the teacher's needs.
    - c. The instructions of the teacher's guidelines should be clear.
  3. Media Aspect
    - a. The media should be interesting.
    - b. The media should be easy to use.
    - c. The media should be able to motivate the students to learn English.

(Andayani, 2012)

Criteria for evaluating English language teaching materials and course books frequently include reference to the look and feel of the product. Some aspects of these criteria which are particularly relevant to materials designers can be seen from: 1) physical appearance: initial

impressions can be as important in the language classroom. In other words, factors to consider include the density of the text to the page, the type size, and the cohesiveness and consistency of the layout. 2) User-friendliness: materials should also be attractive in terms of their usability.

In other perspective, English language teaching materials should also link to each other to develop a progression of skills, understandings and language items. Some teachers can actually have potential to design materials which relate to the organization within and between individual tasks. Clearly stated objectives at the outset of the design process will help ensure that the resultant materials have coherence, and that they clearly progress specific learning objectives while also providing chances for repetition and reinforcement of earlier learning.

In addition to providing chances for repetition and reinforcement of language learning, it is also better to look at the instructions which are appropriate to use in the content and mainstream area. The guidelines apply as much to the instructions which are available for other teachers who may use the same materials to their learners. The effective instructions, then, should be written in language that is appropriate for the target learners, and the use of the correct metalanguage can easily help the teacher if she or he makes instructions more concise and efficient.

In summary, the final guideline of good materials is directed primarily at longer parts of materials rather than at one-off tasks. It is because, much of a learner's language learning is mediated by the materials and course book the teacher uses in terms of both language content and teaching technique to meet the flexibility of the material taught to the learners.

#### **d. Implementation of the Materials**

In designing their own materials teachers can also make decisions about the most appropriate organizing principle or

focus for the materials and activities. This can be changed over the course of the program if necessary. By taking more control over materials production, teachers can choose from the range of possibilities, including topics, situations, notions, functions, skills, or a combination of their principles, as starting points to develop a variety of materials that focus on the developing needs of their particular learners.

After the materials are developed, the implementation should be conducted in order to know the effectiveness of its use. In the implementation step, the try out and data collection are done. In the try out, the materials are implemented by the teacher and students in the real teaching and learning process. Here, the suggestion and feedback are also needed to revise the quality of the materials. Moreover, the suggestion and feedback from the students are also needed to find out students' comments toward the designed materials.

In reality, most teachers undertake materials design to modify, adapt or supplement course books, rather than starting from scratch and this can be the most realistic option for the most teachers who want to facilitate the learners with comprehensible materials.

As noted above, many of these strategies support learning for all learners, particularly learners who face challenge with the materials that can be easily comprehended.

#### **e. Evaluation**

Finally, in the last step, all the data of the teacher and students' comments are collected. Having these data, the materials can be better developed to fulfill students' needs and interests. In addition, it is also useful for the teacher to determine the next teaching materials and method.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the explanation above, there are some conclusions drawn, as follows.



- a. As the 2013 curriculum is the development of School Based Curriculum (KTSP), the materials should also be re-examined in order to totally support the change of the curriculum. Moreover, the suitable materials are also needed to guarantee the quality of the curriculum change.
- b. Developing the materials suitable with the 2013 curriculum involve local wisdom of Indonesia. In other words, it related to the character building.
- c. Integrating local wisdom to the materials development produces several characteristics of good materials which are aimed to enhance EFL students' English proficiency.

In the end, some teachers or materials developers, especially those who work in the field of 2013 Curriculum must weigh up the potentials and benefits of designing their own teaching materials and make their own decisions as to whether it is worth the time, effort, energy, and learners' need. Inevitably, there will be still various constraints on any materials designer and compromises will be necessary. Materials that satisfy the guidelines proposed, though, could make the difference between a class of diverse learners in an excited state of what will happen at the present of time.

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