

IMPLICATIONS IN DESIGNING READING MATERIALS FOR EFL LEARNERS

Oralbaeva Ayzada

4th-year student of English faculty 2, UzSWLU

ayzadaoralbaeva@gmail.com

Scientific advisor

Qodirova Maftuna Davronovna

EFL teacher of English faculty 2, UzSWLU

ABSTRACT

This research aims at developing the Intensive Reading material for the second-semester students of English Language Education Program. It is a Research and Development study that was done by using Reeves' (2000) Design-Based Research model. The analysis showed that the intensive reading skills are still considered difficult for some students. Additionally, the content of the product is based on the syllabus and the Outcome Based Education (OBE) curriculum. The researcher developed 11 units of Intensive Reading material based on the previous needs analysis data. It covers materials related to the intensive reading skills such as scanning, skimming, previewing, predicting, building a powerful vocabulary, context clues, and understanding topic, main idea, and paragraph are also included in the final product.

Keywords: Intensive Reading Material, EFL Students, teaching, task, scanning, scammng, vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental skill in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, crucial for academic success and language proficiency. Research by Alderson (2000), Day & Bamford (1998), Krashen (1999), and Anderson (1999) highlights its role in enhancing cognitive and social development, beyond linguistic competence. However, mismatches between existing materials and Outcome-Based Education (OBE) curriculum in EFL programs often hinder effective reading instruction (Hirano, 2014). This study aims to develop intensive reading materials aligned with the OBE framework to improve students' comprehension and language skills. The Intensive Reading material were validated by two experts. In addition, it will be tried out to the second-semester students and to the three English lecturers in the English Language Education Program of Universitas Brawijaya Malang.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading involves complex cognitive processes (Alvermann & Montero, 2003), including phonemic awareness, vocabulary acquisition, fluency, and comprehension

(Armbruster et al., 2001). Lems et al. (2010) emphasize reading as a process of word cognition and decoding, essential for understanding written texts. Intensive reading, as defined by Palmer (1921) and supported by Nation (2009), requires meticulous analysis of texts to grasp explicit and implicit meanings. However, current materials often fail to meet students' needs (Brown, 1989), necessitating tailored approaches to enhance comprehension and engagement.

Previous studies on ESP (Sari & Atmanegara, 2018), needs-based materials (Kusrini et al., 2018), and teacher experiences (Aziz et al., 2020) offer insights into effective material development strategies. Developing intensive reading materials aligned with the OBE curriculum is crucial for effective EFL instruction. This research aims to bridge existing gaps and enhance reading comprehension and language proficiency among EFL learners.

METHODS

The Intensive Reading materials consists of 11 units with different topics according to the four types of text, namely: recount, narrative, descriptive, and procedure text. The selection of the type of text is based on the needs of the analysis that has been carried out. Meanwhile, reading strategy material is taught in the first three units in this teaching material. The description is as follows:

Table 4. Topics in the Intensive Reading Materials

| Unit | Topic |
|------|--|
| 1 | Scanning, skimming, previewing, predicting |
| 2 | Building a powerful vocabulary, context clues |
| 3 | Understanding topic, main idea, paragraph |
| 4 | Descriptive Text I – Education (Online learning) |
| 5 | Descriptive Text II – Work and Jobs (Dream job) |
| 6 | Narrative Text I – Shopping (Online shopping from abroad) |
| 7 | Narrative Text II – Leisure Activities (Improving your English by joining webinars) |
| 8 | Recount Text I – Books and Literature (Book review) |
| 9 | Recount Text II – Film (Film review) |
| 10 | Procedure Text I – Lifestyle (How to recycle plastic waste) |
| 11 | Procedure Text II – News and Media (How to filter hoaxes from online news platforms) |

RESULTS

Based on the need analysis, the student's needs in the Intensive Reading class are related to the narrative text materials, the diversity of reading passages in the material, and the integration of the material with technology. One of the texts used in the Intensive Reading material is narrative text. Narrative is a piece of text that tells a story and entertains or informs the reader or listener (Anderson, 1997). Meyers (2005) supports this by stating that narrative is one of the most powerful ways to communicate with others. Based on these statements, narrative text materials need to be included in the developed Intensive Reading material. This is also in line with the students' need analysis that has been done before. Intensive reading is an activity that requires great mental effort and focuses. Because of this, students who do not follow specific guidelines when engaging in intensive reading will experience boredom and burnout (Lampariello, 2017). Thus, it is important to bring up various types of reading passages in the Intensive Reading material so that students do not feel bored during the learning process. Lastly, the developed Intensive Reading materials also needs to be integrated with technology. Suryadi (2007) reveals that the use of technology has advantages in the learning process, namely helping and facilitating students, also making students feel the benefits of technology because students can capture various colors, choices of images, sounds, videos, and other aspects of the media. Therefore, technology integration is necessary so that the Intensive Reading material is able to be used optimally.

DISCUSSION

The topics chosen in the developed materials are tailored to the needs of students. Topics are adapted to the previously designed syllabus. The developed materials have 11 units which are suitable for learning for one semester, one unit for each meeting. The first unit contains an explanation of scanning, skimming, previewing, and predicting. The second unit contains an explanation of building a powerful vocabulary and context clues. The third unit contains an explanation of the understanding topic, main idea, and paragraph. The fourth and fifth units discuss descriptive text. The sixth and seventh units discuss the narrative text. The eighth and ninth units discuss recount text. Meanwhile, the tenth and eleventh units discuss the procedure text.

Materials can take many forms, ranging from traditional resources to high- tech items like the internet, both of which contribute to the requirements and needs of both students and learning. Tomlinson (1998) defines learning materials as anything which is used by teachers or students to facilitate language learning. Based on the definition, the developed material is designed according to the students' needs to facilitate intensive reading learning. Additionally, Hutchinson & Waters, 1987 state that it is necessary to determine the needs of the students before beginning to design material, so that the produced material will later meet those needs. In attempts to do it, the course developers have to figure out what the students required to do with the target situation

(target needs) and what the students required to do in order to learn (learning needs). The developed material is in accordance with the OBE curriculum and CEFR. The material is also adjusted to the results of need analysis that have been done so that it can be used optimally. Moreover, expert validation results show that the developed Intensive Reading material is valid and appropriate so that it is ready to be tried out to the students.

CONCLUSION

The developed Intensive Reading materials has gone through the stages of planning, drafting, and expert validation assessment. Based on the expert validation assessment, this teaching material has obtained an excellent predicate and suitable for teaching and learning process. The developed materials have 11 topics which are presented in 11 units. There are four types of text contained in the developed materials, namely recount text, narrative, descriptive, and procedure text. The developed materials are also equipped with practice questions that adapt to the text. The final product of this materials can be used in the Intensive Reading class for second-semester students.

The limitation of this research lies in the development of intensive reading materials based on the OBE curriculum. Further research can be carried out by developing intensive reading materials by using other curricula that suit the needs of students. The stages of material development in this study can be used as a reference for further research. Further research can be done by developing reading materials in the classroom that study other types of reading skills (such as the Extensive Reading class). In addition, development can also be done in the classroom with integrated skills (such as a combination of reading and speaking skills).

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