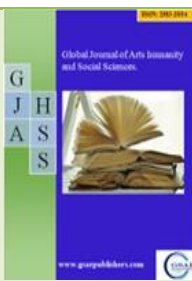
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DESIGNING ENGLISH INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS AT UPT SMP NEGERI 3 BARANTI

BY

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Abstract

This research aims to identify the learning and target needs of the eighth-grade students at UPT SMPN 3 Baranti and design appropriate English instructional materials to meet these needs. This study using a Research and Development (R&D) approach based on the framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The study began with a needs analysis conducted on June 22, 2024, to identify specific learning needs and the target of the students. Based on these findings, the materials were designed to focus on practical English skills relevant to everyday communication and academic needs. The learning materials emphasize oral communication, reading comprehension, writing practice, and grammar and vocabulary support. The design process led to the development of instructional units, each divided into key sections such as Reading, Vocabulary Focus, Speaking, Listening, Grammar Focus, Writing, and Reflection. Unit One, titled "The Panjat Pinang Winner" consists of 14 activities that guide students in using the Simple Past Tense to describe personal experiences, with particular emphasis on Independence Day celebrations. The materials were designed to be interactive and engaging, with a strong preference for pair and group work, supported by teacher-led instruction and structured activities.

Keywords: English Instructional Materials, Research and Development (R&D), Needs Analysis, English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

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INTRODUCTION

English is one of the international languages that is understood and used almost everywhere around the world. English is one of the international languages that is understood and used almost everywhere around the world. As a key instrument of globalization, English plays a crucial role in the fields of technology and commerce. This is highlighted by Hutchinson and Waters (1987:6), who emphasize that the advancements in technology and global commerce have created a significant demand for people to learn English. This demand is not merely for prestige, but for accessing essential information in the realms of technology and international economics. Therefore, the importance of English has influenced a large number of people who wish to master the language. Today, what matters most is not just knowing English, but knowing how to use it effectively in everyday life and in the professional world. In this context, the government of Indonesia has made English a compulsory subject in schools, from

junior high school to universities, and even in elementary schools. This policy aligns with the educational goals aimed at helping Indonesian society keep pace with global developments and enhance its competitiveness in the era of globalization and industrialization. To address the specific needs of learners, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has emerged as a crucial approach in language teaching. ESP focuses on equipping students with language skills that are directly relevant to their academic or professional fields. By prioritizing practical language use, such as vocabulary, terminology, and communication strategies related to specific industries or disciplines, ESP ensures that students can effectively apply English in real-life situations. This targeted approach enables learners to acquire the language proficiency required to excel in their careers or specialized academic fields, contributing to their overall success in a globalized world.

Several previous studies have addressed the design and development of English instructional materials, focusing on various contexts and



educational levels. The first study, conducted by Maria Ramasari, Agus Triyogo, and Ardayati (2019), titled "Instructional Design of Reading Materials for Eleventh-Grade Students at SMA Negeri 5 Lubuklinggau," explored the development and evaluation of English reading materials. Using an Educational Research and Development (R&D) approach, the study followed Borg and Gall's model, which included six steps: information gathering, planning, material development based on the 2013 curriculum, tryouts, expert evaluations, and producing the final product. The findings indicated that the developed materials met R&D model criteria and effectively supported students' reading activities, improving reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, and the application of knowledge. Additionally, the materials motivated students to enhance their reading proficiency.

The second study by Ainurvely Gehandiastie Maudy and Endang Fauziyati (2019), titled "Design of English Instructional Materials for Vocational Schools: Narrative Inquiry at At-Thoat Toroh Purwodadi Vocational School," examined the design of English instructional materials in a vocational school context, following the scientific approach of the 2013 Curriculum. Their research revealed that teachers diligently followed the instructional design process, including identifying Competency Standards, conducting needs analysis, and evaluating teaching methods. Despite challenges such as time constraints and limited resources, the study emphasized the importance of continual improvement in instructional material design to meet educational goals.

The difference between this researcher's study and previous studies lies in the context, subject, and curriculum used. This study focuses on designing English learning materials specifically for eighth-grade students at UPT SMPN 3 Baranti, which implements the Independence Curriculum. In contrast, previous studies have primarily focused on designing English learning materials for general education contexts and other fields, using different curricula, such as the 2013 Curriculum. Thus, this research offers a more specific and relevant contribution to the learning needs of students at SMP Negeri 3 Baranti, which has distinct characteristics and learning needs, as well as applying the more flexible and student-centered Independence Curriculum. This highlights the uniqueness of this study in providing tailored solutions for a specific educational context, including the curriculum used in the school.

The focus of this study is to address the following research questions: "What are the learning and target needs of the eighth-grade students at UPT SMP Negeri 3 Baranti?" and "What are the appropriate English learning materials for these students?" While previous studies have primarily focused on general education or vocational school contexts, this study is unique in that it tailors materials to the specific characteristics and learning needs of middle school students at this particular school. Moreover, while many studies have employed conventional methods for material development, this research takes a more contextualized approach by conducting a comprehensive needs analysis involving the students directly, and adapting the curriculum design to the local educational context. Another novel aspect of this study is the use of

a modified version of Dick and Carey's systems approach, customized by Deddy Nureffendhi to fit the specific research context. This adaptation streamlines the research process and ensures that the developed materials align closely with the students' learning objectives. As a result, this study contributes new insights into the design of English learning materials that are both contextually relevant and responsive to the specific needs of students in a particular school setting. It also contributes to the field of educational design by offering a framework for creating English learning materials tailored to the unique needs of junior high school students in specific educational contexts. Additionally, this research provides valuable insights into the application of Curriculum 2013 in developing context-specific instructional content, which can be used by other educators in similar settings to enhance English language teaching and learning outcomes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

English education in Indonesia has become increasingly important as globalization continues to deepen in various sectors, both academic and professional. English, as an international language, has become a skill required by the younger generation to compete in the global market. As a result, many schools in Indonesia, including at the junior high school level, have begun to implement curricula focused on mastering English. However, to achieve this goal, English teaching must not only follow the curriculum but also be tailored to meet the specific needs of students and be relevant to their real-life situations.

On the other hand, in the development of instructional materials, there are approaches like English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which are increasingly being applied. This approach focuses on teaching English according to the specific needs of a particular field or context, such as academic, professional, or social. For junior high school students, English instruction should be designed to align with their everyday life situations, both in academic and social contexts. This is important to help students not only master the language skills theoretically but also apply them in real-life situations.

The implementation of the Independence Curriculum in Indonesia provides flexibility in designing instructional materials that are more relevant to students' needs. In the context of junior high school, especially in the eighth-grade students, English instructional materials should be tailored to the diverse characteristics of students, as well as their needs in facing the professional and social world in the future. The Independence Curriculum emphasizes more flexible, project-based learning focused on life skills, which opens opportunities for developing more practical and contextual materials for students.

The first study by Maria Ramasari, Agus Triyogo, and Ardayati (2019) developed reading materials for high school students using a Research and Development (R&D) approach. The results of this study showed that the developed materials were effective in enhancing reading comprehension, grammar skills, and vocabulary. This finding is relevant to your research as it demonstrates that developing instructional materials

that meet the needs and characteristics of students can improve the effectiveness of English learning, which is also the primary focus of your research. Another study by Ainurvely Gehandiastie Maudy and Endang Fauziyati (2019) examined the design of instructional materials for vocational schools, emphasizing the importance of designing materials that align with the competencies and needs of students. They found that although teachers had diligently followed the design process, several challenges, such as time constraints and limited facilities, hindered the full implementation of the scientific approach in teaching. This finding provides valuable insights for your research, which also focuses on designing instructional materials tailored to the specific needs of junior high school students, especially considering the existing limitations.

The research by Nur Fadilasari, Djuwairiah Ahmad, and Sitti Nurpahmi (2020) showed how the Inquiry Learning model can be applied in developing English instructional materials based on the 2013 Curriculum. This research revealed that developing instructional materials based on an approach that matches students' characteristics can increase student engagement and improve learning effectiveness. This aligns with your research, which also develops instructional materials that cater to the needs of eighth-grade students, using a more applicable and contextual approach. A study conducted by Wulandari (2021), which developed task-based learning materials for high school, showed that using task-based methods can encourage more practical and relevant use of English. In your research, this approach could be adapted to help students use English in their daily lives, which is the primary goal of the instructional materials you are developing.

This research framework is based on the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) approach, which tailors the design of instructional materials to the specific needs of students. Considering the findings from previous studies, which highlight the importance of aligning instructional materials with students' characteristics, this research focuses on developing materials that are relevant for eighth-grade students at UPT SMP Negeri 3 Baranti. Based on previous findings, this research uses a Research and Development (R&D) approach involving needs analysis, material planning and development, and expert evaluation to ensure that the developed instructional materials are effective and suitable for the students' characteristics and needs.

By adapting insights from previous studies, especially those related to the use of task-based approaches and the integration of technology in learning, this research aims to create instructional materials that not only align with the Independence Curriculum but also enhance student engagement in contextual and applicable English learning. By considering the local context and student characteristics, it is hoped that the developed materials will contribute positively to improving the English proficiency of students at UPT SMP Negeri 3 Baranti.

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology in this study utilized a Research and Development (R&D) approach. This method was chosen because the objective of the study was to design and produce English instructional materials for the eighth-grade students that were

effective and suitable for the educational setting. The R&D approach allowed the researcher not only to develop new materials based on a structured needs analysis but also to test these materials' effectiveness in real classroom settings, ensuring their relevance and applicability for broader use (Borg, 2003; Sugiyono, 2017).

The research procedure followed a modified version of the systems approach model originally proposed by Dick & Carey (1996), with adjustments made to suit the context of this study. The stages of the research included: (a) Needs Analysis, which was conducted to gather data about the students' target and learning needs; (b) Planning, where the learning materials were designed based on the results from the needs analysis, ensuring alignment with educational objectives; (c) Developing the Materials, which involved the creation of engaging and relevant materials incorporating reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities; (d) Expert Judgment, where the materials were evaluated by English language teaching experts to ensure their appropriateness and effectiveness; and (e) Revising, where feedback from experts was used to refine the materials before finalizing them for classroom implementation.

Data analysis in this research was conducted in two stages. First, data from the needs analysis questionnaire were analyzed by calculating the percentage of each response, using descriptive statistics to summarize the trends in student preferences. The analysis formula proposed by Suharto was applied, where the percentage for each option was calculated based on the frequency of responses. Second, the expert judgment and student-teacher acceptability questionnaires were analyzed using a Likert scale to measure the relevance and effectiveness of the materials. Responses were converted into descriptive categories (e.g., "Good," "Fair," or "Poor") to assess the acceptability of the learning materials. Statistical applications were used to calculate the acceptability rate, and materials were deemed "acceptable" if they achieved a score between 3.26 and 4.00, indicating high relevance and effectiveness for classroom use. This process ensured that the developed materials met the required standards for implementation.

FINDINGS

Based on the data collected, a thorough needs analysis was conducted to understand the learning and target needs of the eighth-grade students at UPT SMPN 3 Baranti. The findings revealed critical insights into the students' language learning priorities. Notably, speaking was identified as the most important skill, with 58.3% of students expressing the need to improve their speaking ability, followed by reading (29.2%) and listening (8.3%). This suggests that speaking should be a focal point when developing learning materials. Furthermore, the analysis showed that students' main goals were to improve communication skills (41.7%), boost their exam performance (20.8%), and prepare for future education (20.8%). These findings highlight the need for materials that promote both practical communication and academic achievement.

Additionally, the analysis explored the students' learning preferences, revealing a strong inclination toward multimedia inputs, such as videos, songs, and podcasts (37.5%), suggesting the



importance of engaging and dynamic content. The majority of students favored individual exercises (41.7%) and group discussions (33.3%), indicating a desire for both independent and collaborative learning experiences. In terms of teacher involvement, 70.8% of students expressed the need for more detailed explanations and additional practice opportunities. These insights were integral in designing learning materials that align with the students' preferences and academic needs.

To address these needs, the learning materials were created using the principles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), ensuring that the content was tailored to the students' academic curriculum. The materials were organized into three units, each focusing on various skills such as speaking, reading, listening, vocabulary, grammar, writing, and reflection. Expert evaluations of the materials indicated strong alignment with the students' needs, receiving high ratings in content appropriateness (3.37), language (3.67), and presentation and layout (3.57). While the feedback was generally positive, the expert suggested refining the vocabulary focus and improving the visual consistency of the layout. These revisions will enhance the relevance and effectiveness of the materials, further supporting students' language development within their academic context.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study, which focused on designing English instructional materials for eighth-grade students at UPT SMP Negeri 3 Baranti, offer valuable insights into the learning and target needs of the students. The results of the needs analysis indicated that speaking was the most prioritized skill by the students. This aligns with the findings of previous studies, such as those by Maria Ramasari et al. (2019), who noted that speaking skills were often emphasized in the Indonesian context due to their relevance in communication. By focusing on speaking, the materials developed in this study aim to address the need for practical communication, a priority in both academic and real-life situations. Additionally, students expressed a desire to improve their exam performance and prepare for future education, suggesting that the materials should not only enhance communicative competence but also support academic achievement.

A key aspect of this study is the emphasis on multimedia in the materials, as students showed a preference for engaging content such as videos, songs, and podcasts. This finding is consistent with the work of Ainurvely Gehandiastie Maudy and Endang Fauziyati (2019), who highlighted the effectiveness of multimedia in maintaining student engagement and enhancing the learning experience. In response to this, the instructional materials in this study were designed to incorporate various multimedia elements, ensuring that students could engage with the content in a more dynamic and interactive way. By integrating multimedia, the materials were better suited to the students' preferences and provided a richer learning experience, similar to the multimedia approach used by Ramasari et al. (2019) in their research on reading materials.

The study also found that students preferred a combination of individual tasks and group discussions, which aligns with previous research by Wulandari (2021) on task-based learning. This method encourages both independent work and collaborative learning, ensuring that students develop both individual responsibility and teamwork skills. By incorporating these preferences, the materials developed in this study provide a balanced approach that caters to different learning styles, reflecting the importance of offering varied learning experiences to maximize student engagement.

One of the most notable contributions of this study is its adaptation of the systems approach to material development. While previous studies, such as those by Maria Ramasari et al. (2019), used a conventional Research and Development (R&D) model, this study modified Dick and Carey's systems approach to suit the specific educational context of UPT SMP Negeri 3 Baranti. The use of a needs analysis as the first step in the model ensured that the materials were directly aligned with the students' learning objectives, which is in line with the findings of Nur Fadilasari et al. (2020). This method also helped ensure that the materials were both relevant and effective in meeting the academic and communicative needs of the students.

In terms of expert evaluation, the feedback from the experts regarding content appropriateness, language, and presentation was positive, though they recommended some refinements, such as improving the visual layout and refining the vocabulary focus. This mirrors the findings of previous studies, where expert evaluation helped refine the instructional materials, ensuring they met the highest standards for educational effectiveness. These improvements will help enhance the usability and relevance of the materials, ensuring that they are as effective as possible for the students.

This study differs from previous research in its specific focus on eighth-grade students at UPT SMPN 3 Baranti, a school implementing the Independence Curriculum, as opposed to broader contexts or different curricula such as the 2013 Curriculum. The flexibility of the Independence Curriculum allowed for a more student-centered approach, which is reflected in the development of the materials. Unlike previous studies, which mainly focused on general educational settings, this research specifically addresses the unique characteristics and needs of junior high school students in this school, providing a more localized and context-specific solution for English language learning.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the field of English language teaching by offering a tailored approach to instructional material design that is specifically aligned with the needs and preferences of students at UPT SMP Negeri 3 Baranti. The findings underscore the importance of understanding students' learning priorities, such as speaking, and their preferences for multimedia and varied learning activities. By adapting instructional materials to meet these needs and preferences, this research provides a useful model for other educators aiming to develop English language teaching materials that are both contextually relevant and aligned with specific curricular goals.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to design English instructional materials that align with the needs and characteristics of eighth-grade students at UPT SMP Negeri 3 Baranti. Based on the needs analysis conducted, the study found that speaking was the most prioritized skill, followed by reading and listening. Additionally, students' primary goals were to improve their communication skills, prepare for exams, and prepare for further education. Therefore, the instructional materials developed in this study focus on enhancing speaking skills in a practical manner and improving students' ability to communicate effectively in daily life and academic contexts. Furthermore, multimedia integration was emphasized in the materials, as students expressed a preference for media-based content such as videos and podcasts. A task-based approach involving individual tasks and group discussions was also incorporated to foster teamwork and individual responsibility.

This study makes a significant contribution to the development of English instructional materials that are contextual and relevant to the needs of junior high school students in Indonesia, specifically at UPT SMP Negeri 3 Baranti. By adapting a modified systems approach based on Dick & Carey's model and aligning it with the Independence Curriculum implemented at the school, this study provides a more flexible, student-centered model for material design. The study also highlights the importance of conducting direct needs analysis to create more targeted materials that can effectively improve student learning outcomes. Another contribution of this study is the integration of multimedia and task-based approaches, both of which have been shown to increase student engagement and learning effectiveness.

Despite its contributions, this study has some limitations. Firstly, the developed instructional materials were tested only at one school, UPT SMP Negeri 3 Baranti, so generalizing the results to other schools with different characteristics should be done with caution. Additionally, although the materials were evaluated by experts and received positive feedback, aspects such as visual presentation and vocabulary focus still need further refinement to improve readability and appropriateness for the students' context. Therefore, future research could expand the testing of these materials in other schools with different backgrounds and conduct a more in-depth evaluation of the design elements. Furthermore, future studies could explore the use of technology and digital platforms to support more interactive and adaptive learning experiences.

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