

## DESIGNING A MODEL OF ENGLISH LEARNING MATERIALS FOR ELEVENTH GRADE VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN DEPARTMENT BASED-ON SCHOOL BASED CURRICULUM

Evi Puspitasari  
PPB UMY

**Abstract:** This study is aimed to develop effective English learning materials in accordance with the school-based curriculum of vocational secondary school (SMK), especially for Visual Communication Design department. The result of this study is expected to overcome the problems related to English learning materials which are less available for SMK. This study is Research and Development (R & D) and the purpose is to develop a finished product which can be effectively used in the teaching and learning process (Borg & Gall, 2007). For steps of the research, needs analysis was the first thing to do. Second, the data are used as a source to design the materials. Third, the materials were implemented. Fourth, after implementation, evaluation and revision of developed materials were done. Data were collected using questionnaire, observation, and interview. The observation and interview were analyzed qualitatively and the questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively. Based on the research finding, the effective English learning materials consist of three sections. They are warming-up tasks (Let's get started), while-teaching tasks, and closing. In while-teaching tasks, there are two sections namely *Let's Read and Write* (written cycle) and *Let's Listen and Speak* (oral cycle). The materials provide grammar lessons in the written cycle, language function lessons in the oral cycle, and vocabulary lessons in the both cycles. The effective materials are also supported by the effectiveness of the task components, namely goal, input, activity, setting, learner role, and teacher role ((Nunan, 2004). The goal of the first section, *Let's Get Started* is to introduce the students to the topic of the unit. *Let's Read and Write* is to help the students able to use and comprehend written texts in daily life context. Then, *Let's Listen and Speak* is to help the students able to express and comprehend oral language in daily life context. Otherwise, the goal of the designed materials is helping the students learn English related to their department and their future job. Pictures, simplified texts, short dialogues, phonetic transcription, and situations given for role playing are the effective input. The effective activities of the materials are answering questions, studying explanation texts, doing word puzzle, matching, completing, imitating, and role playing. Working in pairs and in small groups became the most frequent setting. The materials also give opportunity for the students to be active participants. The teacher as a controller, organizer, helper and feedback giver plays the roles well and supports the students in learning English.

### Introduction

One of the fields for vocational high schools or SMK (*Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan*) in the curriculum is Information Technology and Communication which is also well recognized as Visual Communication Design. The field studies about how to deliver information through written and oral communication interestingly. The graduate of this department is projected to be a professional in advertisement companies (Curriculum of SMK N 3 Kasihan for Visual Communication Design Department, 2008).

Because English is important in communication world, teaching and learning English in this department play a crucial role. That is why it should be supported with a relevant English material. It is in line with Brown (2001) who says that material is one of important supports to make the teaching and learning English successful. The special material should be appropriate with their needs and interests. Therefore, to solve the problem, research about designing a model of English materials for visual communication design department in a vocational high school needs to be conducted.

### Methods

This study belongs to research and development focuses on the product. The model for the development is the combination between model X of Masuhara in Tomlinson (1998: 247) and Ellis' model of task evaluation in Tomlinson (1998: 228). First, need analysis is conducted in order to know what the students want and need as a base to design a relevant material. Second, the goals and objectives are defined. Third, based on the goals and objectives, syllabus for the material is designed. Fourth, the material starts to be developed. However, before being implemented, expert judgment is needed to get feedback. Then, after that, the material is revised based on the feedback from the experts. Fifth, the material is implemented. Sixth, valuable information about the students' responses is collected in order to make a good revision for the material by administering questionnaire and interviewing some students. Seventh, the second draft of the material designed is written.

Technically, there are two classes of eleventh graders in the department. Because of that, the implementation is done twice. Therefore, information is also obtained from all students in the both class. It makes the feedback rich and helpful to write the final draft.

For the setting, this research is done at SMK N 3 Kasihan, Bantul, Yogyakarta in eleventh graders of Visual Communication Design department. The participants are all eleventh graders in that department. The reason of choosing the school is that the researcher did her teaching practice there. Meanwhile, the idea of selecting the eleventh graders is that they have more knowledge about the department compared to the tenth students and more available than the twelfth graders.

In this research, there were two types of data collected. They are quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were obtained from questionnaires administered to the students which were given twice. The first one was for need analysis and the second one was to identify their responses toward the materials after the implementation. Meanwhile, the qualitative data was taken from the interview and class observation which also aimed to support data in the questionnaire.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### ***English learning needs and learner needs of the eleventh graders of Visual Communication Design***

The questionnaire which was in a multiple choice form was designed based on task components by Nunan (2004) such as goal, input, activity, setting, teacher role, and learner role.

For the goal, the results showed that the students required English materials which introduced Visual Communication Design terms and helped them use English communicatively in their work place later on. In addition, because they still face national examination to graduate from the school, the goal has to be related to the national curriculum. Moreover, the material has to follow the basic competences of the syllabus used.

In relation to the input, they need texts that the content is related to their department. For the length of the text, they prefer a short one inserted with some terms used in their department about 200 words. To help them understand the text, related pictures and relevant illustrations are required in the text. They also state that they need language functions so that dialogues and monologues are also necessary to help them improve their oral skill.

The students like challenging and interesting activities. They said that they would feel motivated by doing challenging activities like doing crossword puzzle, completing a passage and arranging jumbled words to be a good sentence. Additionally, to make them not bored, the activities should be various.

For the setting, they like doing exercises in a small group. It is because they can ask their friends when they are stuck and do not understand the material. So, they prefer in group to individual works. In doing the activities, sometimes the students find the difficulties. When it happens, they like asking the teacher to help them. In addition, they are also open for the feedback given by the teacher.

### ***The Characteristics of the Suitable Materials for the Second Grade Students***

Each unit consists of four parts. They are the title of the unit, warming-up tasks, whilst-teaching tasks, and closing tasks. The result is in line with Brown (2001) who states that the materials should be started from activity that aims to engage the students to the topic and it is provided in warming up activities. The next part is whilst-teaching tasks which consist of a whole-class work, a small-group and pair work, teacher talk, and students talk (discussion). The result is in line with Brown's procedure of teaching (2001: 151).

From the need analysis, it can be known that the students like learning English from the written cycle (reading and writing) and then the oral cycle (listening and speaking). The need analysis result also shows that the students feel learning the oral cycle is more difficult than the written one so that they want to start learning the material from the written cycle. It is in line with Brown (2001: 253) who says that for second language learners, an oral language is more difficult than the written one. So, it is better for basic learners who have difficulty in listening to start learning English from the written cycle first.

In the written cycle, the students learn grammar focus and in the oral cycle the students focus on language expressions. Vocabulary exercises are provided in both of oral and written cycle. It is supported by Harmer (2001) who argues that the students need to learn language in three parts; grammar, vocabulary, and language in use (language function).

After whilst-teaching, the last part of the unit is closing. In this section, the students will summary and review what they have learned. It aims to check whether the students understand the material or not. This objective is also supported by Brown (2001).

Each unit has goals that should be achieved. The goals of the materials are divided into two parts, a written cycle goal and an oral cycle goal. Based on the first questionnaire result, the written cycle goal is that the students are able to understand and use sentences in vocabulary and grammatically correct in written forms used in a daily life context. Meanwhile, the oral cycle goal is that the students are able to comprehend and use oral expressions related to the workplace where they are going to work later on. It is confirmed by Nunan (2004: 46)

who states that the basic learners learn English to comprehend and use oral expressions related to the areas of most immediate relevance. In other words, the goal concerns with students' communication skill at the workplace. It suits the purpose of English learning for SMK which states that students are prepared to be middle class workers after they graduate from the school. It is in line with by Depdiknas (2006).

Based on the students' needs that were gathered previously, the inputs should be related to Visual Communication Design world. For getting started tasks, they chose pictures. It is also supported by Harmer (2001). For written cycle tasks, they chose simplified texts related to Visual Communication Design and advertisement world which are less than 200 words and some pictures which can help the students in understanding the text. It is supported by Tomlinson (1998). For the oral cycle, they chose short dialogs and phonetic transcriptions to train them pronouncing the words and sentences correctly. It is by Brown (2001) who argues the students need to learn pronunciation in learning oral cycle.

For the activities, most of the students proffered answering comprehension questions for written cycle activities. It is in line with Brown (2001) who states that it is important in productive skills (reading and listening) to check the students' understanding of the texts. How to check it is giving comprehension questions then.

The oral cycle provides integrated activities of listening and speaking. The students chose imitating the teacher and group discussion for the activities in that cycle. It is supported by the second language acquisition (SLA) theory by Lightbown & Spada in Brown (2000). They state that second language learners learn target language mainly through imitation. Discussing can also be called sharing. The processes involved are narrating, describing, exploring, and explaining opinions and reactions. The use of discussion activity is supported by Willis (1996) who claims that this kind of activity can train their comprehensive ability of reasoning, logical, and analyzing.

The last activity is for production. The students should use grammar and language function that have been learned in the daily life context without guidance from teacher. The activity of the production part is role playing. It is confirmed by Nunan (2004) who considers that role playing is one of interesting activities. In conclusion, effective inputs should have topics of interests to the learners and cover the standard of content as well, as Tomlinson states in theories of SLA (1998: 2-8).

In terms of setting, working in pairs becomes the most frequent setting which is used in the tasks. It is supported by Harmer (2001) who says that a pair work permits learners to interact with others and promotes learners to be independent. Besides doing the tasks in pairs, they are usually doing the tasks in a group, individual work, or even in a whole class. Group work is a suitable idea because it gives the learners opportunities to interact with others. The statement is supported by Nunan (2004: 72). That is also supported by Harmer (2001). Meanwhile, individual work is also one of settings provided in the materials. It is in line with Harmer (2001). Otherwise, the use of a whole class work provides opportunities for the students to change in-class role relationship between the teachers and the learners. It is supported by Nunan (2004).

The last component is teacher and learner role. Most of the students voted a feedback giver and a helper for the teacher role. To help the students improve their English, the teacher should give feedback to their work. So, they will know which part they should revise. It is confirmed by the SLA theory stated by Lightbown & Spada in Brown (2000)

## **Conclusions and Suggestions**

### ***Learner needs and Learning needs***

Based on the need analysis results, it is found that the students learn English to be able to comprehend and use both oral and written cycles in their daily life (their department and their future job). Additionally, they need English to support their background study and prepare their future job as a practitioner in advertisement industry.

Inputs used should be suitable with what the students want and what they actually need. In the written cycle which integrates reading and writing activities, they chose simplified texts which are less than 200 words related to their major and their future job. To help them understand the text, relevant pictures and illustrations are required. In the oral cycle which the skills are listening and speaking, the inputs are dialogues between two or three people, pictures, and phonetic transcriptions to help them practice correct pronunciation of some words.

The tasks developed in the material are arranged in three sections, warming-up, whilst teaching, and closing. The warming up section aims to attract the students' attention toward the topic. Next, it is whilst teaching which consists of presentation, practice, and production. The last one is closing where the students and the teacher summarize and review the materials learned.

Speaking of the activities, in the warming up, they are matching name tags and pictures, describing the pictures, and answering some questions that engage them to the topic. Then, in whilst teaching, the written cycle activities are reading and answering the comprehension questions related to the text, doing crossword puzzle to enrich their vocabulary, completing texts, matching pictures and descriptions of steps, and arranging jumbled

sentences. Meanwhile, in the oral cycle, the activities are arranging, completing, practicing dialogues, information gap, and group discussion. In this cycle, the students are also asked to imitate the teacher pronouncing some words. Activities in production which the tasks are free guided are role playing.

Related to the teacher and learner role, in the first section the teacher helps the students comprehend the material. Then, the teacher controls the students when they practice what they have learned. She helps them but not as much as in the first section. After the students can practice by themselves, they do non-guided tasks called a production part. They should use the grammar and language focus they have learned contextually. It demands the students to interact with others and be active participants and the teacher give some feedback for their performance.

### ***The characteristics of the effective English learning materials***

One of the characteristics of the effective English learning materials are the material is well constructed. Each unit consists of the interesting title, warming up activities, whilst teaching activities, and closing. Then, the whilst-teaching is constructed using three parts such as presentation, practice production. Moreover, the tasks should be developed from the easiest to the hardest. In addition, the tasks are divided into two cycles, oral and written.

Second, the terms and language functions used in the materials should be related to the department. All words and functions are learned through material given. This special characteristic will help the students achieve the goal of education.

This research aims at developing effective English materials for eleventh grade students of Visual Communication Design department. In addition, there are some suggestions for the next implementation of English materials that can be addressed to the materials developers, English teachers, and the students of Visual Communication Design department.

#### **a. Material developers**

Based on the results of the research, the materials with a specific topic is effective in teaching and learning process. It meets the student needs and interests. For other material developers, it is suggested to develop similar materials in other specific topics based on the student needs and the present curriculum.

#### **b. English teachers**

Based on the results of the research, this kind of materials is more suitable for the students. Realizing this fact, English teachers should compile their own materials that are similar to this research product adjusted with the present curriculum so that they can give appropriate language input for the students.

#### **c. The students of Visual Communication Design department**

Based on the results of the research that the students can improve English skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and features (vocabulary, grammar, and language expression) using appropriate materials, they should be more active in finding the materials that are suitable with their needs and actually available in their surrounding area.

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