Developing *"Once upon a Box"* as a Medium for Reading Activity

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Abstract

In junior high level, students are required to master, at least three texts, which are descriptive text, personal recount text, and narrative text (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2016).Therefore, it is hard to attract students' interest on EFL reading activity as they are rarely exposed to the target language in their daily life, so they do not see the importance of EFL reading activity (Mason, 1992). Thus, variations and suitable approach in reading activity are needed. As a result, a learning medium, namely 'Once upon a Box', is developed in order to involve students in enjoyable reading activity, enrich students' vocabulary knowledge, and stimulate students to understand the main idea of the story they read. To develop the product, this study adapted ADDIE approach by Branch (2004). Based on the trials and evaluations, most of the students were giving positive feedback toward the medium. The students are also motivated to read as the illustrations are attractive. In content validation, the medium can be categorized as 'good'. Meanwhile, in medium validation, the medium can be categorized as 'excellent'. Fortunately, when the medium is implemented, the use of dictionary can be minimized and the preliminary goals can be met. In short, this paper is aimed to describe the development process of learning medium namely *'Once upon a box'* for reading activity.
Keywords: reading, once upon a box, narrative text, ADDIE

Abstrak

Di tingkat pendidikan menengah, para siswa paling tidak diharuskan menguasai tiga teks, yaitu teks deskriptif, teks personal recount, dan teks naratif (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2016). Namun, menarik minat para siswa untuk membaca teks berbahasa Inggris tidaklah mudah karena mereka tidak menyadari pentingnya aktivititas tersebut (Mason, 1992). Karena itu, variasi dan pendekatan yang sesuai untuk aktivitas membaca diperlukan. *'Once upon a Box'* adalah media pembelajaran yang dikembangkan untuk melibatkan siswa dalam kegiatan membaca teks berbahasa Inggris yang menyenangkan, memperkaya perbendaharaan kata siswa, dan mendorong siswa untuk memahami ide pokok dari cerita yang mereka baca. Penelitian ini mengadaptasi pendekatan ADDIE oleh Branch (2004) untuk mengembangkan produk. Dengan kata lain, artikel ini ditujukan untuk mendeskripsikan proses pengembangan media pembelajaran *'Once upon a Box'* untuk aktivitas membaca.
Kata Kunci: membaca, once upon a box, teks naratif, ADDIE

INTRODUCTION

The goal of English as Foreign Language (EFL) reading lesson in Indonesia is to enable students comprehends texts written in the target language. As stated by Cahyono & Widiati (2006), successful English as Foreign Language (EFL) reader is the one who comprehend authentic input from the text in target language. In junior high level, specifically, students are required to master at least three texts which are descriptive text, personal recount text, and narrative text (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2016).

However, there are several issues that often occur during EFL reading process.

In general, learners' difficulties in EFL reading lesson might result from their reading experience. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2016), Indonesian reading interest is 0, 01 %. It means, from 10.000 people in Indonesia, only 1 person likes to read.

Furthermore, reading in a foreign language is more complicated than reading in a first language. It requires every reader to have knowledge of words, knowledge of language, prior knowledge, and context knowledge of

the text (Morrow, 2005, as cited in Sunggingwati & Nguyen, 2013). Besides, it is hard to attract learners' interest on EFL reading activity as they do not see the importance of reading in the target language. According to Mason (1992), this behaviour occurs because learners are rarely exposed to the target language in their daily life. Generally, the place to develop their EFL reading ability is only through educational institutions.

Therefore, in educational institutions, the class is mainly focused on intensive reading activity (Cahyono & Widiati, 2006). Intensive reading is more achievement-oriented and demanding high concentration of the readers. In addition, it often uses relatively short text which complemented by tasks. During intensive reading, the teacher also does major intervention, so the learners have very little chance to develop their actual reading skill. However, if all of the compulsory texts are completely taught through intensive reading, the students can lose their interest in EFL reading activity. They will have stereotype that EFL reading is a stressful and boring activity (Firmanto, 2005, as cited in Cahyono & Widiati, 2006).

Concerning issues in Indonesian EFL reading classes, the first thing to do is not forcing students to have good mastery for all skills in the target language area or pushing them to meet the curriculum standard. Instead, attracting students' interest to learn the target language is more important. When the students have high interest on the subject, their ability will develop unconsciously as the time goes by. As a result, interesting and less-demanding reading materials are needed to encourage students to read foreign language text. Besides, it is important to have variety in the learning process. Aside from using textbook as the reading source, the use of additional and exciting materials can help to motivate learners in reading foreign language texts (Rao, 2014). In addition, variety of teaching media can be implemented during reading lesson.

One of the ways to use teaching media is by involving games. Games are often used in language classes because it can be combined with all language skills and language components. The use of games can keep the learning process fun and interesting (Sigurðardóttir, 2010). However, the games used for language learning should have goal to help students developing their target language ability. Not only fun, but the games chosen should be educating. For reading lesson, the reading passage used in the game should suit the learners' abilities, interests, and learning styles (Schullstrom, 2013 as cited in Yalçin, 2014).

The medium proposed in this research is *'Once upon a Box'*. *'Once upon a Box'* is a box occupied with several mini games as a variety in reading activity. The

medium consists of several games, such as scrambled paragraph, words definition, and retelling passage. Therefore, it is modified into more challenging tasks.

The texts used in this medium are literary texts, focusing on fables and folktales from local and foreign countries. Literary text is especially chosen because the text is interesting and easier to comprehend as it deals with ideas, things, sensations and events close to readers' experience or into which they can involve in the story imaginatively (Hişmanoğlu, 2005). Literary text from students' cultural background and foreign cultural background are both selected to facilitate learners with what they are already familiar and what they are still unfamiliar with. In short, this research is focusing on the development of *'Once upon a Box'* as a medium for reading activity.

METHOD

The study used ADDIE approach by Branch (2004) with qualitative approach. There are five steps taken in order to develop the product. The steps are (1) Analyzing (confirming the gap and determining the goals of the medium), (2) Designing, (3) Developing, (4) Implementing the product, and (5) Evaluating the product.

In developing the game, there were several trials and validation processes. The trials were consisting of one-to-one trial, small group trial, and field trial. Meanwhile, there were two validation processes which are content validation and medium validation. The expert who validated the content of the medium was an English teacher from one of junior high schools in Surabaya. On the other hand, the media expert who validated the layout and the design of the medium was an Educational Technology lecturer from State University of Surabaya.

There were two instruments used to collect the data. The instruments were questionnaire and observation. There were four questionnaires, including need analysis questionnaire, content validation questionnaire, medium validation questionnaire, and students' response questionnaire. The need analysis questionnaire was aimed to confirm the students' need in reading activity. Meanwhile, the aim of the content validation questionnaire and medium validation questionnaire was to validate the content of the medium and to validate the design and layout of the medium, such as the colors, the packaging, and the font size. Besides, the observations were done to evaluate the medium systematically, so it can suit learners' preference and need.

To analyze the data, a qualitative approach was employed. All of the data were analyzed based on the order of the steps taken in this study. The data collected from content expert and media expert questionnaires were

analyzed to revise the content and the design of the product. Then, the data gathered from observations were also analyzed to see the students' response toward the implementation of the medium.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
(1) Analyzing Phase: Confirming the Gap and Determining the Goals of the Medium

In order to formulate the goals of the medium, the need analysis was done. Based on the need analysis, most of the participants already have interest in reading. In their opinion, they truly like reading because reading is fun and advantageous. Besides, it can help to expand their knowledge and occupy their spare time. The participants' interest in reading can be seen through the last time they read a book. Most of them were last read a book on the day the questionnaire was distributed. They read it during literacy activity in which it is a routine before the first lesson starts. Mostly, they like light reading selection with easy to comprehend storyline, such as novel and comic book. They like novel and comic because the story is interesting, containing motivation, and containing pictures (comic book). Other participants chose textbook because it can enrich their knowledge.

Related to the difficulty level of the text, most of the students thought the narrative text distributed was difficult (89%). Meanwhile, the rest of the students thought that the text was very difficult (11%). The reasons can be grouped into two categories which are because they did not know the meaning of the vocabularies used (91%) and not fluent in reading words in English (9%). In spite of the fact that they were given one whole learning period, only 6% out of 35 students who can gave closest suitable answer for the main idea of the text. Meanwhile, 71% of the participants answered 'I don't know' and 23% of the other participants gave incorrect answers.

Concerning students' opinion toward English language learning, there were students who unhappy when they have to read (3%). Therefore, most of the students thought that learning English is enjoyable (83%). The teacher was becoming major reason why the students like English (37%). Meanwhile, for the activity in English language learning, the students activities were reading text from workbook/textbook (30%), listening to teacher's explanation (19%), doing exercise from workbook (15%), creating sentence, story, or poem (14%), doing presentation (12%), question & answer (discussion) (7%), and making project (such as realia) (3%).

Regarding the difficulty students encountered during reading English text, most of the difficulty was resulted from lack of vocabulary knowledge (51%), followed by difficulties in reading the words (22%), and difficulty in understanding text (14%). Usually, when the students were facing difficulty, they were asking their teacher or their friends (39%), using online/offline dictionary (37%), or reading the text again (24%).

The last question was asking about what kinds of variation the students want in texts used for English language learning. Mostly, the students chose text occupied with pictures and games in order to avoid boredom during the learning process. Meanwhile, 34% of the participants chose text with pictures because they felt the text was easier to comprehend if it was occupied with pictures.

Concerning the need analysis result, the medium developed should contain pictures and games with the purpose in enriching students' vocabulary knowledge and stimulating students to guess the meaning of words first before seeking for external assistance (teacher's help or dictionary). Then, the main goals of the medium were determined. The main goals of the medium are (1) Students are feeling excited and enjoy when they read target language text, (2) Students are able to understand main idea of the stories they read, and (3) Students' can enrich their vocabulary knowledge

(2) Designing Medium

After determining the instructional goals, the first set of the product was designed. One set of the preliminary product consists of box, pop-up book, mission board, and point board. Meanwhile, for the final form of the product, there is no point board included. Thus, the point board is not discussed further.

Picture 1. Outer side of the preliminary product

Picture 2. Inner side of the preliminary product

(3) Conducting One-to-One Trial

One-to one trial was done in order to remove the most obvious errors from the planned mechanism and to obtain students' impression toward the medium. There are three groups of student, consisting two students each. The trial started by calling the participants from the first group. They were curious of what was inside the box. When they saw the title in the cover of the box, they started guessing that the box was about the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Then, they opened the box. A very brief explanation of the medium was made before the participants started to use the medium, such as the explanation of the use of each card (story cards and answer cards).

From this observation, it can be known that the pictures were very helpful for guiding the students in arranging the story. For example, when they saw a picture of pudding, they will search for the word 'Pudding' in the story cards. One of them said, *"Ini lo ada pudding-pudingnya."* and then they stuck it to the page. Then, when the first group started to do the games in the mission board, they were able to conclude the other instructions not explained before. For mission 1-2.2 there were four hints to ease students in finding the right answer which are people icon as adjective, clock icon as adverb, switch icon as pronoun, and briefcase icon as verb. The students were directly sorting the same icon and matched it with the right pairs.

Meanwhile, for the participants from the second group, there were not much different from the second group. They were also enthusiast in playing the games. The different was in task 3 'Past to Present'. If the first group was able to answer several irregular verbs, the second group was able to answer regular verbs only.

On the other hand, the third group was very ambitious in doing each task correctly. They often arguing about the correct answers, so when one of them stuck the answer, another one will pull it off and change the answer. As a result, some of the Velcro were detached and some pages were torn. In the end, the times run out and they had not finished task 3 and 4 yet.

(4) Content Validation Result

The content validation process was done at the same time with one-to-one trial. Here, the content expert which was an English teacher was present in order to fill in the questionnaire. The presence of the content expert in the first trial was required because several points from the questionnaire can only be filled when the expert see the process directly.

From the first trial, the content expert agreed that the materials included in the medium were already suitable for eight graders. Based on the questionnaire, the score

given for the content of the medium can be categorized as 'good'. Besides, there was no revision from the content expert's side. As a result, the content was ready to be used for the next trials.

(5) First Product Evaluation

From one-to-one trial, there were some revisions should be made. The revisions were including the medium mechanism and the medium material.

Table 1. First Product Evaluation

No.	Problems	Explanation	Problems Solving
1.	Mechanism	The students often too enjoy playing, so they forget that they have the time limit	Eliminate the time limit. The time restriction is actually for adding challenge, but the students already enjoy playing without time restriction.
		The students forgot about the point board	Eliminate the point board.
2.	Materials	The glue was not strong enough in attaching the Velcro with the base	Trying to stick smaller Velcro and adding more glue
3.	Design	The mission board was made manually from A4 papers.	Make a template for the mission board in A3 paper

**(6) Conducting Small Group Trial**

After revising the product, small group trial was conducted. Based on the observation, with no time restriction and points system, the students were enjoying the games more. In addition, each group still worked collaboratively. While some students were arranging the story, the others were doing the mission board. Even though the answers were not always right, but the contribution from each group member was obvious

Unfortunately, the students were still found it hard to do the third and the fourth mission. On the other hand, concerning the Velcro issue, the risk of detached was decreasing as the size was made smaller. Throughout the trial, there was no Velcro detaching from its part. Also, no pages were torn out.

(7) Second Product Evaluation

The revisions for the second product were not as much as the first revision. Therefore, there was technical

mistake for the mission board. The 'final task' box should be in a landscape position, just like the other boxes. With the wrong position of the final task, it makes the instruction hard to read, so the students became unaware of the final task.
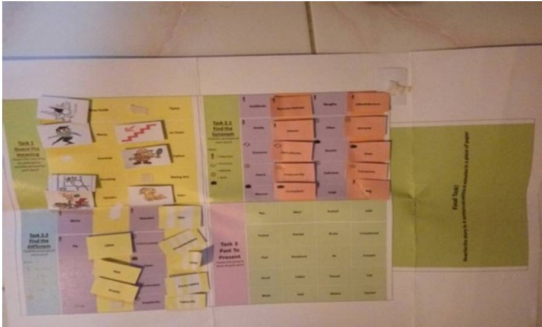
Picture 3. Mission Board Technical Mistake

(8) Conducting Field Trial

As the fourth mission was still not done properly until the second trial, the researcher wanted to know the reason why most of the students avoiding the last task and then find out the best solution for the last mission. Firstly, the medium was distributed to each group. There were three products in total. The students contributed to this trial were different from the group of students from the previous trial.

Throughout this trial, there was no problem for arranging the story until mission 2.2. Unfortunately, for the third mission 'Past to Present', there was a group who used dictionary. Although there was no rule that the use of dictionary is forbidden, but it is preferably for the students to do the mission on their own. From this trial, it was known that the students still have lack of knowledge for the present form of the irregular verbs. Meanwhile, for the final task, the students were still avoiding it. They said that they were unable to write sentences in the target language.

(9) Third Product Evaluation

From students' suggestion, attitude, and participation, the best mechanism of the game and the best material of the product were concluded. For the design, the students already liked the cover, the illustrations, and the colour. As a result, the students did not have any comment on the visual elements.

In addition, to make the third task easier, the task was occupied with three options. As a result, the students just have to choose the present form of the word among the three options. Meanwhile, for the fourth mission, it was decided to add 'supporting sentences', so the students just have to continue the previous sentence. There were three supporting sentences, so the students should rewrite the story based on these three sentences.

On the other hands, the Velcro used before was in black colour. As the colour of the base, such as the book and the board was mostly in soft colour (soft yellow, light green, etc.), black was too obvious and made the Velcro unmatched with the other parts. As a result, it was decided to change the black Velcro into white coloured Velcro.

For the mission board, the template was also changed. On the top of the board, there were some changes which were the addition of the logo and element identity. Meanwhile, for the pop-up book, the thread used to bind the book was in black colour, but it was changed into white thread in order to make the thread less visible. For the final touch, the book was made hard-covered and coated by clear cover.

Picture 4. Outer Side of the Revised Product

Picture 5. Inner Side of the Revised Product

(10) Medium Validation

After the revision was finished, the medium was validated by instructional media expert. For the validation, the medium was given to the expert to score. The medium's identity, purpose, and mechanism have already explained before the validation started.

From the validation process it was confirmed that the medium had already suitable to be used in real language learning. The score of the validation was 66 out of 80

which indicated that the medium can be categorized as excellent. There were some suggestions from the expert. First, the sticker used to cover the box should be revised because there were some parts that were not glued perfectly. Second, it was preferably to erase the flag in the cover of the box. Therefore, the researcher decided to not erase the flag as the flag was representing the origin of the story. The flag icon was aimed to inform learners of the origin of the story they read.

(11) Conducting Implementation Phase Observation

The last trial of the medium was conducted in implementation phase. The first step done was checking students' attendance in order to know the total number of the students in the classroom. There were 30 students in total. Meanwhile, there were 4 copies of the medium. As a result, the students should divide themselves into four groups.

The students were very excited to play the games. Each group divided the tasks, so everyone can play. Mostly, the boys were excited to do 'Arranging the story' task and the girls were doing the mission board. Actually, most of the tasks in the mission board can be done without finishing the story arrangement task and vice versa. The main goal of the mission board is as a follow-up activity to enrich students' vocabulary knowledge. Meanwhile, the goal of the pop-up book is to encourage students to read English text in an enjoyable atmosphere. During the implementation, student-to-student discussion was also visible. Even though they did not talk in the target language completely, they were discussing the task with several words in English. For example, there was a group who compared two story cards with the picture in the book.

(12) Students' Response toward the Implementation of the Medium

Based on the questionnaire, the final form of the medium is attractive, whether from the front cover, illustrations, or pop-up elements. It is proven to attract students 'curiosity because they want to see what inside the box is. Besides, all of the students were interested in using the medium, because there were pop-up elements in the book. Mainly, they like the pop-up elements because they rarely see 3D objects in their English learning activity. As a result, the entire respondent wants to use the medium again if a new version is produced.

From the effectiveness side, the medium is already effective in helping students comprehending target language text. Besides, the students were not disturbed by the font used as the size, the colour, and the space had already fit for group use. The medium also helped most

of the students in understanding new vocabularies, such as called, broke, made, middling, etc.

The students felt the medium was made the text easier to understand because it was easy to use and occupied with illustrations. The students' answer in implementation phase is already suitable with the story they read. Moreover, no students answered with 'I don't know'.

In addition, the instructions of the medium are easily understood by its users. According to the students, the difficulties were mostly located on arranging the story, summarizing, and followed by finding the right answer cards. Thus, the medium caused the students more motivated in learning English because it made the text easier to comprehend as it was occupied with pictures.

The last question in the questionnaire was asking about students' suggestion for the medium. Almost all of the students were giving opinion instead of suggestion. Their opinions were classified into two categories which are positive feedback (plus) and critic (minus). Only 4% of the students gave critic toward the implementation of the medium. Their reasons were because they were not given manual on how to use the medium, so it made them confused.

DISCUSSION

During implementation phase, all of the students were interested in opening the pop-up book. They were feeling attracted because the book contained 3D elements, so they were curios to open the next page. Touching images or objects in a book can create a feeling to its readers that they are involved in the story, so it makes even the unmotivated students curious to open the book (Minsker, n.d).

Besides, half of the participants admitted the pop-up illustrations were helpful as it made the story easier to understand and representing plot of the story. Equally, most of the students are categorized as visual learners (Mind Tools, 1998). Hence, illustrations provided in a picture book play an important role in making the readers understand the story well (Backes, n.d).

Unfortunately, most of the students are encountering problems during reading activity. According to Zaheer & Rahman (2016), there are two related processes involves in reading which are word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition is the process of recognizing the relation between written symbols and spoken language. Meanwhile, comprehension refers to the process of interpreting words, sentences and connected text. Based on need analysis questionnaire, 22% of the students were failing in word recognition process and 14% of the students were failing in comprehension process. In other words, the failure in

reading processes can affect students' reading comprehension (Zaheer & Rahman, 2016).

Besides, errors and mistakes were inevitable during the process. For example, in matching task (task 1 - task 2.2), some students were sticking the cards into the wrong task. For example, task 2.1 has orange background for the answer box, but the students stuck the yellow cards which were for task 2.2. On the other hand, before task 3 is revised, some students were still unable to find the right present form even though they already learned it before. For example, there were students who wrote 'want' as the present form of 'went', 'failed' as the present form of 'wailed', and 'tick' as the present form of 'tickled'. For the answer 'Tickled - Tick', the student was overgeneralizing past tense form. Overgeneralization occurs because the students want to make the task become simpler, so they overgeneralize rules that they found easier to learn (Ellis, 1997, p. 19).

In addition, there were some grammatical errors and limited language used in students' work for the final task. 'Limited' means the students were expressing their opinion through very simple language and limited grammatical knowledge. For example, rather than wrote 'Goldilocks was a naughty girl' to tell the beginning of a story, he wrote 'Gridlock the naughty kid'. The student was most likely wanted to express that there was a naughty girl named Goldilocks in which 'nakal' is naughty and 'anak' is kid. In other words, the student was arranging these two words he knew to form a sentence without too much consideration on grammatical rules. Another example is a sentence 'She upstairs and tried to lie down'. In this case, the students were showing their interlanguage in which omission is visible. Omission is part of internal processing where the learners form a linguistic system based on learners' native language, but different from the target language (Ellis, 1997, p. 33).

However, the emphasis of the medium is not on the perfection of grammar use or finishing the tasks perfectly. According to Willis (2009) task is the activity where the students can express their thought using suitable target language pattern in the learning process. Besides, task is done to create a context where certain grammatical rules should be used and encouraged students to be creative (Collins & White (2014).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

'Once upon a Box' has three main purposes which are (1) Students are feeling excited and enjoy when they read target language text, (2) Students able to understand main idea of the stories they read, and (3) Students' can enrich their vocabulary knowledge. There are several steps in developing the medium. In one-to-one trial, the point board system is eliminated. Then, the medium is validated for its content and categorized as good. Afterwards, the medium is tested in small group. In field-trial, the students are still avoiding the final task and use dictionary. As a result, it is decided to occupy task 3 with three options and add three supporting sentences to the final task. Next, the medium is validated and categorized as excellent. Fortunately, when the medium is implemented, the use of dictionary can be minimized and the students able to do the final task.

Regarding students' response toward the implementation of the medium, most of the students were giving positive feedback. They are curious to open the box as they want to see what inside the box is. The students are motivated to read as the illustrations are attractive. As a result, the students are willing to use the medium again if a new version is created.

In addition, there are some suggestions for the medium usage. First, the medium is best used for individual or a group of 3-5 students. Second, minimize external assistance, so it can optimize the learning process and train the learners to be independent. Third, do not set high demand for the learners to finish all of the tasks perfectly. Instead, let the students figure out the target language patterns independently as the emphasis of the medium is on independent learning.

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