

DEVELOPING LEVELED-READING LEARNING MATERIALS FOR ACCELERATING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to develop graded or leveled reading learning materials for accelerating English proficiency of junior secondary school students. It is believed that reading inputs enriched by reading tasks that are leveled according to students' proficiency will improve comprehension and thus accelerate students' proficiency. This research is research and development which has the following steps: surveying learning needs and evaluating reading texts found in selected English textbooks, designing the materials, doing expert validation on the materials, conducting empirical validation, and finalizing the materials. This research is planned to have completed in two years. In the first year (March – September 2016), the first draft was completed. Validation and finalization will commence in the second year (2017). The subjects of this research were students of grade eight of 8 junior secondary schools in Yogyakarta: SMPN 1 Yogyakarta, SMPN 2 Depok, SMPN 3 Sewon, SMPN 3 Sentolo, SMPN 5 Sleman, involving 305 students and 9 English teachers. Two selected textbooks were examined using a table of observation comprising 4 major criteria while the students' and teachers' needs were surveyed using a questionnaire. The data were then analyzed descriptively qualitatively. The research findings showed the result of texts evaluation and of needs survey. Based on the evaluation, descriptive, recount, narrative texts found in the two selected textbooks were found accurate in terms of coherence, cohesion and grammar and presented in accordance with the reading competences required by the curriculum. The texts however presented little if no local or target cultures. In addition, the reading task provided focused merely on lower reading skills without promoting extensive reading and higher reading skills. Illustration was also rare in the texts. Meanwhile, the needs analysis results depicted that the reading inputs, reading activities/tasks, and reading macro- and micro-skills the students preferred, based on which, course grid was written. A book of 6 units were drafted, each of which has several sections namely get ready, let's read, grammar zone, evaluation, review, summary dan vocabulary list and has 20 – 25 reading tasks. This research is expected to provide reading learning materials that present reading tasks or activities which allow students to choose which task they want to start with and keep working on, based on their ability to complete one task after another. This way, students are led to work on tasks that go with their level of proficiency. In the end, the more proficient learners can work faster as they can finish tasks earlier and thus can move up to more difficult tasks. Meanwhile, the less proficient students can choose a task that is of moderate difficulty and work on their own pace as they complete tasks that are designed to meet medium level of difficulty.

Kata Kunci: *reading learning materials, graded/leveled, accelerating proficinecy, junior secondary school*