An analysis of language teaching learning principles in English materials development of an Islamic Senior High School in Langsa, Aceh

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to analyse teaching materials development at Islamic Senior High School Langsa. A qualitative method was used in this study which employed the instruments of classroom observations, teachers’ interviews, and documents consisting of syllabus, lesson plans, and teaching materials. The participants of this study were three (3) English language teachers and the students from three different classes. The theoretical concept used in this study is based on Tomlinson’s principles explaining about four (4) principles for effective materials development. The findings show that (a) a relation of teacher’s materials development to Tomlinson’s principles is still inappropriate; (b) English teacher’s materials are developed based on the teachers’ experience; (c) English teacher’s materials adding based on the students’ needs and purposes. Using many materials and teaching media by the teachers is encouraged to make the students to be more active in the classrooms.

Keyword: Language Teaching Learning principles, English materials development
1. INTRODUCTION

Materials for language learning include the entire thing that can be used to facilitate the learning of a language, including course books, video, graded readers, games, websites, labolatorium and mobile phone. Materials can be flexible to informing the students about the target language and the purpose of learning English. All the materials it is can be the media to make the students easy get the subjective of study. Materials itself can be defined as tools that teachers use to support teaching and learning process.

Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) argued that: “Materials development refers to all the processes made use of by practitioners who produce and/or for language learning, including materials evaluation, their adaption, design, production, exploitation and research. Ideally, all of these processes should be given consideration and should interact in the making of language-learning materials.”

All the process that does by the teachers to teach the students such as adding, adapting the materials in the textbook, seems to develop the materials. Based on the experience of researcher at Islamic Junior High School Langsa, English teachers often used various ways to teach the students. Teacher used various materials besides the textbook allowed by the school. The material goes very attractive to students in classroom but in the fact that the materials have to fill the requisite of material proper for teaching and learning English.

In a view of Tomlinson’ theory (2010, p.86-97), there are two forms of principles on English materials development. The first form is six principles of language acquisition and the other one is principles of language teaching and learning. This research focuses on the second principles is English materials development in language teaching and learning.

Tomlinson (2010) described the principles of language teaching and learning into:

1) The content and methodology of teaching should be consistent with the objectives of the course and should meet the needs and wants of the learners. 2) The teaching should be designed to help learners to achieve language development and not just language acquisition. 3) The teaching should be designed so as to provide the learners with learning opportunities that will help them to develop educationally in the sense that they become more mature, more critically astute, more creative, more constructive, more collaborative, more capable, and more confident as a result of the course. 4) The teacher needs to be able to personalize and localize the materials and to relate them in different ways to the needs, wants, and learning-style preferences of individual learners.”

That is the principles of language teaching and this research will specify the analysis of material development based on the each principle above. This research is to find out the suitability between materials development carried out by English teachers in accordance with Tomlinson’s principles mentioned above and to find how the materials can help the learners to understand the content of learning English in classroom. This research was conducted in Islamic junior high school in Langsa.

Based on the explanation above, the problem of this research can be formulated as follows:

1. How is material development in Islamic junior high school of Langsa appropriate with Tomlinson’s principles for English lessons?

2. How does English material constructed by the teachers help the students in English classrooms?

2. METHODS

This research used a qualitative descriptive (McMillan &Schumacher, 2001) because this research is about how the English materials development applied by the teachers in teaching with the students at Islamic junior high school in Langsa. The researcher used a descriptive qualitative analysis through several steps to do a deep exploration regarding English material development conducted by three teachers. The results of analysis were presented on the description based on the observation, interview and focus group discussion with some students also the data were focused about materials that teachers used. In addition, qualitative analysis was appropriate to analyze the research question number two (2) regarding the benefits of English material to the students in English classroom. Those results were described by sentences that the descriptive qualitative method is.

The instruments of this study were observation notes, documents, and interview recordings: (1) Observation notes were needed when the researcher studied the classrooms to get the information in form the data that was useful for this research especially about the steps of the teachers in doing teaching-learning processes. The notes consisted how the teachers started the class, how the teachers developed the materials, the methods that teachers used; (2) Documents in this research included the textbooks, teaching media and other adapted materials carried out by the three participant teachers. Collecting the documents was very important to do a deep study in the next process of this research; and (3) Interview recordings were obtained from the teachers and the students. The interview recordings were also beneficial in answering both of the research questions. The research subjects were three English teachers and the students at class VII, VIII, and IX in State Islamic Junior High School of Langsa, Aceh.
3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of teaching and learning for English materials development, qualitative data about syllabus, depth interviews, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The researcher findings about the appropriate teaching English materials development in relate to Tomlinson’s principles at Islamic Junior High School in Langsa and the benefits of teachers’ materials development for the students’ language learning at Islamic Junior High School in Langsa.

3.1 The Appropriateness of Teaching English Materials Development in to Tomlinson’s Principles

The teaching English materials development at Islamic Junior High School Langsa is not holistically appropriate with Tomlinson’s Principles. The teachers’ ways of developing the material were analysed from the lesson plans and the teaching media that teachers bring to the class. The findings showed that the syllabus and lesson plans that the teachers utilized in accordance with the students’ level. Also, the objectives of the study and the teaching media used in the classrooms are appropriate with each level.

The English teaching materials developed in class VII is about grammar. During the lesson delivery, the teacher used the textbook designed based on the Curriculum of 2013 for teaching about “the use of be- and pronoun”. Besides, the teacher also used the teaching media, such as a picture and a posture to explain about the topic. The teacher had prepared these such teaching media before the teaching began. The lesson plan was also prepared by the teacher which described about the teaching methods, the objectives of lesson, the instruments, and the activities of teaching and learning processes.

Based on analysis of the syllabus used by the English teacher and the teaching learning activities at this classroom, it shows that the material development is appropriate with the first Tomlinson’s principle, ”the content and methodology of the teaching should be consistent with the objective of the course and should meet the needs and wants of the learners” and the fourth principle “the teacher needs to be able to personalize and localize the materials and to relate them, in different ways to needs, wants, and learning-style preferences of individual learners as follow by the teaching media.

The English teaching material development by teacher in class VIII, is about Invitation and Expressing opinion. It can be said that it is appropriate with all four principles the teachers designed the teaching based on the student’s wants and needs. The used of various teaching materials including textbook, computers, speakers, and used teaching media so the students in grade VIII are capable to develop their ability and their language. Even though the teacher doesn’t know about the Tomlinson Principles, the teaching-learning processes carried out by the teacher are in line with the principles in Tomlinson’s theory.

Further, the lesson topic in class IX is about a procedure text. It can be said the teaching materials development for this lesson is appropriate with the principles of one, three and four, in which the teacher used textbook and module to teach the students in teaching process. The teacher was able to manage the class and the suitability of teaching method. However, the language development was not really achieved because the students were only engaged to copy a similar text for their writing and not to create a different text of a procedural text with their own language. Hence, the second principle of Tomlinson’s theory, “the teaching should be designed to help learners to achieve language development and not just language acquisition”, seems to be forgotten.

Based on the findings about the teachers’ materials development, it can be concluded that the teachers did not really know about the principles proposed Tomlinson (2010) but the teachers’ teaching-learning processes analyzed from classroom observations and teaching documents are mostly included in Tomlinson’s principles. The teachers’ reasons are that they feel interested to create and to develop the materials for a variety of their teaching media. They feel excited to find other references to design their materials and this study has opened the teachers’ ideas about the importance of teaching material development in teaching and learning processes. Therefore, it is expected that the area of teaching material development can be a focus as well for a school community at Islamic Junior High School Langsa.

3.2 The Benefits of Teachers’ Materials Development for the Students’ English Language Learning

The main objective of the teachers’ material development is to enable the students to develop their own language for English use. The benefits of three participant teachers’ material development expressed by their students through a focus group discussion (FGD) were that the students felt more enjoyable with the learning by using the teaching media such as printed tasks or pictures in spite of the text books; the media helped them in many ways to understand the difficult topics of the lesson; the teachers’ teaching media were not boring and monotonous and the text and task provided by the teachers were appropriate with students’ ability; the teachers’ focus to four English language skills allowed the students to speak, to write, and to listen in English.

The other significant benefits to the students from the teachers’ materials development were that they had more understanding about the lesson by the provided teaching materials not only from the school textbooks but also from other resources related to the students’ daily life. Consequently, when the teachers
asked them to create the other texts the students were capable of presenting their class performance by working in-group and making a dialogue with their peers. In addition, they felt enjoyable to learn English with the teachers if the teachers’ materials development was appropriate with their wants and needs.

4. CONCLUSION

The teachers’ material development design by English teachers at Islamic Junior High School in Langsa, Aceh has not been holistically in line with Tomlinson’s (2010) language teaching-learning principles. Overall, the teachers’ material design were considered positively by the students and able to make the students to be more active and engaged to English language learning activities at the classrooms. This study recommends an area of teaching materials development can be a focus element for the school community in improving the quality of teaching-learning processes at the school classrooms.

REFERENCES


