

# Teaching Material Development Among Higher Education Teachers: A Qualitative Study in Indonesian Context

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**Abstract—** This study is intended to investigate the ways the teachers of higher education develop teaching material which include how to select, modify and develop their own teaching materials. This study applies the qualitative research method with in-depth interview and observation as the data collecting techniques. Three lecturers with different teaching experience backgrounds became the subjects of this study. Two of them have more than 30 years of teaching experience and one has fifteen years of teaching experience. The result of this study shows that the design of teaching material is related to the curriculum that is developed by the minister of education and culture. The design of the teaching material was based on the syllabus and the curriculum. The college through the English Department Program matches with the curriculum provided by the ministry and the English department program. English department program decides the material and chooses the lecturer to teach the subject based on their proficiency and skill. The syllabus that based on the curriculum is provided by the English department program is the guidance in designing the teaching material. The result mentions there is no obligation to follow all material that is provided by the Minister, because each campus has different needs. So, the English department can adjust the teaching material.

**Keywords—** *Investigating, Education Teacher, Teaching, Material*

## I. INTRODUCTION

English becomes the main foreign language that is used around the world. Having good English proficiency helps the speakers to communicate with people all over the world. Thus, the government through the minister of education included English in the National Compulsory Examination from the level of junior to senior high school. In Indonesia, teaching English officially started in 1968 under the law of the Minister of Education and Culture No.096/1967, in which it was suggested that English be taught in junior and senior high school. Further, English is also included in the entrance exam of higher education. In addition, it is taught at a university level based on the Government Regulation No.19/2005.

Having good commands in English has become a must, especially for undergraduate and graduate students if they want to continue their study. The competence is proven

through taking an English test, such as TOEF or IELTS. Therefore, the design of English material for students of higher education level, particularly for those learning in English Education Department, requires more attention.

The material can be in the form of a textbook which is used in the classroom. Nold states textbook serves as the source of teaching material, subject matter, teaching plan, learning approval, as well as teaching sources and references [1]. In designing the material, there are some aspects to be considered by the lecturer; among them are curriculum and syllabus.

In this study, the material that is developed by the lecturers also reflects their competence. For example, how they integrate the idea and choose appropriate materials that relevant to the most recent issues, such as the challenges for the students. EFL teachers need to understand in facing some cases such as increasing their English ability, giving knowledge in various conditions, applying classroom action research, taking chance is like joining the training for professional and enlarge the social connection, Gonzalez [2].

Eliane reported that teaching material design is an instrument in teacher of English as a foreign language in Brazil". She suggested that the design of the teaching materials produce varieties of reflections [3]. Further, her study shows that the insights of the participants, comprehension, confidence, and autonomy will vary, depending on their educational phase and experiences. However, they are resulted from the designing of the EFL teaching materials. Related to professional development, she stated that autonomy becomes an important element. She concluded that in living the teaching materials, students and teachers will not only learn from materials but also from the learning process. The same result also states by Murat and Fandiano [4][5].

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Teaching material is one of the fundamental needs in the teaching and learning process. Guyana stated that teaching materials is a generic term used to describe the resources that are used by teachers to deliver the instruction [6]. He explained that in the teaching and

learning process, there is a subject and knowledge that are being shared by the teachers and learnt by the students in the classroom activities. Pineda said that for a long time, the conceptualization of knowledge base was restricted to the attainment of the basic skills required for teaching, the competency of educators in their subject matter area, and the use of pedagogical strategies [7].

There is guidance to be followed in teaching material. They are the curriculum and the syllabus. The curriculum is designed by the government through the minister of education and culture. The curriculum consists of a common idea and theory that helps to design the teaching material. The curriculum is a very general concept which involves consideration of the whole complex of philosophical, social and administrative factors which contribute to the planning of an educational program. Nunan stated a curriculum is the set of courses, course work, and content offered at a school or university [8]. He mentions a curriculum as a focus of study, consisting of various courses all designed to reach a particular proficiency or qualification. The curriculum may also refer to a defined and prescribed course of studies, which students must fulfill in order to pass a certain level of education.

The syllabus is also provided by the government but the application depends on each school or institution, whether it is appropriate or suitable with the school condition. is it appropriate or still not suitable with the school condition. Hutchinson & Waters point out the definition of a syllabus, syllabus is a document which says what will (or at least what should) be learnt [9]. It can be known as a statement of projected routes, so that the teacher and learner not only have an idea of where they are going to go, but also know how they might get there.

Harmer reminds us that syllabus design concerns the selection of an item to be learnt and the grading of those items into an appropriate sequence [10]. Learnability, coverage, usefulness and frequency play an important role. The syllabus provides guidelines and steps on general materials for the teacher to use. Some competencies to be achieved are mentioned in the syllabus, such as main competency, basic competency, materials, learning activities and objectives, the criteria of assessment, time allocation and learning sources.

Hutchinson and Waters point out a syllabus can only constitute an approximate statement of what will be taught. There are several types of syllabus [9]. *First*, is grammar syllabus. Wilkins suggests the grammatical content of a syllabus presented two possible approaches, synthetic and analytic [11]. *Second*, is the lexical syllabus. The purpose of this type of syllabus is that students are taught how to understand and produce lexical phrases. Harmer assumes that this kind of syllabus is complicated and raises a number of questions [10]. Another problem with lexical syllabuses is related to grammar lexis. It is whether phrasal verbs should be taught as simple multi-word lexical items as they occur, or as a grammatical class. Others questions are that the stage in which the study of word formation is appropriate and when it will be useful to include fixed and semi-fixed expressions. Still, another one is when grammar should be included with new words, and how should it be

selected and graded. *The third*, is the functional syllabus. It is called as Notional-functional syllabus. Rogers stated a notional syllabus would include not only elements of grammar and lexis but also specify the topics, notions, and concepts the learner needs to communicate about [12]. This syllabus provides complete elements for the teacher as the guidance to design the teaching material for students of English education.

According to Nunan curriculum is a very general concept which involves consideration of the whole complex of philosophical, social and administrative factors which contribute to the planning of an education program [13]. The explanation indicated that curriculum carries a big concept of lesson and education program planning. Curriculum can also be defined as educational program, similar to what is stated by Richards [14], in that the educational purpose of the program (the ends) the content teaching procedures and learning experience which will be necessary to achieve this purpose (the means) some means for assessing whether or not the educational ends have been achieved.

Curriculum also consists of a component that influences the material design made by the lecturer. A curriculum contains of guidance for designing teaching material that supports the achievement of the curriculum's objectives. The curriculum in Indonesia has changed eleven times. The changes are influenced by the period in which they are used and they have been adjusted to the school condition.

Chambliss stated that curriculum and syllabus need to be developed for several reasons: to respond the development of science and technology, to respond social development outside the education system, to fulfill the students' needs, to respond advances in education, and to respond of changes in the education system [15]. National education of Indonesia mentions many principles in developing a competence-based curriculum. They are: faith, value and attitude. Other principles include the reinforcing of the national integrity, The balancing of ethics, logical, aesthetics, and kinesthetic value; the equality of getting, responsive to the development of science, knowledge, technology, and art; the skills' development; long life learning concerning on student's evaluation simultaneously, continuously, and comprehensively; and comprehensive and partnership approach.

Materials are anything which can be used to facilitate the learning of a language, including course books, videos, graded readers, flash cards, games, websites and mobile phone interactions. According to Tomlinson the materials can be *Informative*, which means to inform the learner about the target language, *Instructional*, guiding the learner in practicing the language; *Experiential*, providing the learning with the experience of the use of language; *Eliciting*, encouraging the learner to the language use, and *Exploratory*, helping the learner to make discoveries to the language [16]. Tomlinson believes that, ideally, materials should be developed for learning - rather than for teaching - and should perform all the functions mentioned above (informative, instructional, experiential, eliciting and explanatory).

Material development is a practical undertaking that involves the production, evaluation, adaptation, and exploitation of materials intended to facilitate language acquisition and development. Ideally, materials development practitioners and researchers interact and inform each other through conferences, publications and shared endeavors. Tomlinson stated every teacher is a material developer who is constantly evaluating the available materials, adapting them, replacing them, supplementing them and finding effective ways to implement the materials chosen for classroom use [16].

### III. RESEARCH DESIGN

The method of this study is qualitative research and the design of this study is descriptive qualitative study. Merriam described five types of qualitative research: generic, ethnographic, phenomenology, grounded theory and case studies [17]. Generic refers to the discovery and understanding of a phenomenon, a process, perspective and view of people. Type of this study is generic because the aim of this study is to know the design of the teaching material for education department students by giving questions to the lecturers.

There are 3 participants selected in this study, all of them are lecturers. They have lots of experiences in teaching education department students. Three of them have taught in more than fifteen years in many colleges and some universities around Indonesia at English department program in bachelor degree as well as Magister Program.

In this study, the writer serves as the main instrument because it takes a qualitative research design. According to Ary human investigator is the primary instrument for gathering and analyzing the data [18]. The writer is the main instrument of this study and the main actor in collecting and analyzing the data. Similarly, the researcher is the primary instrument for gathering and analyzing data, McMillan [19]. Meanwhile, the interviews took place in natural settings and no attempt was made to manipulate the respondents' behavior.

According to Ary Observation is collecting the data by identifying the behavior of interest and devices a systematic procedure for identifying, categorizing, and recognizing the behavior in either a natural or a stage situation [18]. Therefore, observation is an act, in which the investigator sees, looks, listens and observes the subject or situation, physically. In this study the observations were done by directly involved in the classroom during the process of teaching and learning, the writer observed lecturers in the classroom and learnt the material.

The interview form was used to collect the data from the lecturers. It is in line with the aim of this study, which is to know how the lecturers design English material for English education students. The interview is one of the main instruments to obtain the accurate data. According to Ary interview is used to gather data on subjects' options, beliefs, and feelings about the situation in their own words [18]. It means that an interview can be conducted face to face through social media (phone) following the interests

of the interviewee. The interviewee will share and tell their experiences, motives, and opinions freely. The interview provides information that can be obtained through observation or to verify the observation. In this study the writer also carried out an in-depth interview with the lecturers to know in detail how they develop the teaching material for English education students.

In this study the writer recorded the interview process to keep the originality of the data from the interviewee. The data include materials of the conversation that were recorded during the interview. The primary data were obtained from the interview with the teachers in higher education that has been selected.

The writer took some steps through some procedures. The first was deciding the participants that will be interviewed as the correspondents based on their capability and experiences in teaching in college. Besides, they were selected according to the age, which are between 40 to 70 years old, and teaching experience in college, which was more than fifteen years. After deciding the lecturers to be interviewed, the writer arranged some questions for the lecturers. During the interview, the writer recorded the conversation between the interviewers with the lecturers. The writer recorded the interview to make sure none of the information is missed.

After that, the writer analyzed the data derived from the interview through some procedures:

- Organizing the data into descriptive form;
- Narrowing the data of the interview about how lecturers design the English teaching material;
- Removing the data from interviews that are not related to the focus of the study;
- Combining the data obtained from observation and interview;
- Describing the design of the English teaching materials for English Education students in Indonesia;
- Discussing the data and information and drawing the conclusion.

### IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings present the result of the research that is found after doing an interview with the interviewees. After doing an observation to some lecturers in English Magister Program at University, finally the writer decided to interview three of them and the results show in developing English teaching materials for English teacher education of Indonesian college students.

#### A. *The Designing of English Teaching Material for English Teacher Education*

Based on the analysis of the interview, Table 1 presents the considerations of the teachers in developing the teaching materials.

TABLE I. CONSIDERATION OF MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

The material designer	Findings		
	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
The government policy	The government has the big umbrella.		
The roles of curriculum/ syllabus	The design of teaching material first is related to the curriculum that is designed by the minister of education and culture.		We design the material for teaching based on the syllabus and the curriculum.
The English department officer	The college through the English Department Program matches with the curriculum provided by the ministry and the English department program.	English department program decides the material and chooses the lecturer to teach the subject based on their proficiency and skill.	The syllabus is the guidance in designing the teaching material. The curriculum and syllabus are provided by the English department program.
The teachers' choice to the suitable topic of the lesson	There is no obligation to follow all material that is provided by the Minister, because each campus has different needs.	The lecturer arranges the lesson respectively. The method can be adjusted based on the class needs' such as PBL (Problem-Based Learning).	The lecturer just designs and chooses the material based on the syllabus provides.

<sup>a</sup>. The results of the interview and findings.

The first correspondent who was interviewed was Bob (pseudonym), the lecturer who has been teaching for more than fifteen years in some higher educations' program as well as well-known lecturer and trainer in English teaching program.

*"The design of teaching material first is related to the curriculum that is designed by the minister of education and culture in the big umbrella, so the big point provides by the ministry of education and culture as the guidance for English department program".*

As the head that is responsible for the curriculum, the minister of education and culture needs to provide a set of rules as the main guidance for all institution in Indonesia.

*"The college through the English Department Program matches with the curriculum that provided by the ministry and the English department program. In each campus can choose the material they need, because the universities and colleges around Indonesia have different needs in giving teaching material to their student teacher, so the English department program can adjust with the condition and the need".*

From the statement of the interview the writer assumes that the college can decide the teaching material for their students based on their need. The government through the Minister of Education and Culture also provides the

guideline generally for all English Department Program around Indonesia. There is no obligation to follow all materials provided by the Minister. The campus can adjust it to their necessity.

The second interviewee is David (pseudonym). He is a lecturer who has taught in the English Department Program about eighteen years. He started to teach in university since 2000<sup>th</sup>. He mentioned that the lecturer cannot choose the teaching material based on their willing. Instead, the head of the English department program that decides and chooses the lecturer to teach the subject based on their proficiency and skill.

*"The materials that are taught to the student have to fulfill the needs of the students and suitable with the subject. For instance I teach culture, as we know the culture has a close relation with the education, as a teacher who teaches the student is social relation, he has to know about the culture, the culture of the society and the culture of the students and the environment of the school."*

Teaching material is accustomed to students' needs and culture, allowing a good relationship between teachers and students during the teaching and learning process. The situation can also help teachers in investigating the success of the teaching materials.

*In designing the material, the first is the material has to contain The State of Art, what the material that is going to be taught to the students, and then the teacher makes Lesson Plan, after that divides in the level of taxonomy bloom, such as introduction, understanding of knowledge and the students will analyze and synthesize, after that making the diagram of structuralism from the first meeting till fourteen meeting. In making all of that, we have to know the Entry of Behaviorist of the students and the student understanding of the lesson.*

Preparing some criteria to arrange the material for teaching can also help the teacher to plan the lesson easily. Teachers need to think about which material to put in the first to the end of the meeting.

*To know the background knowledge of the students it can be tested from the first of the lesson by giving some of the random questions and how far students' knowledge. If the students feel difficult with the lesson, so the lecturer has to simplify its lesson and even can be cut, but if the students have understood, we can improve and start how to understand, how to explain, then how to analyze, how to make a synthesis, because the last project of the students have to capable of making a synthesis and it can be the most important thing for the last examination of the students.*

The correspondent gives questions to the students in the first meeting to know what are the background of the student's and the level of knowledge. This helps teachers to know the design of the material and then adjust it to the students.

*So the lecturer arranges the lesson respectively. The method can be adjusted based on the class needs' such as PBL (Problem-Based Learning), the students are asked to analyze the cases, and they discuss in their groups, in this part the lecturer just provides the student to think and give*



*students stimulus and the students response, monitor and help the students, so at the end of the session the students are able to synthesize.*

Besides giving the material during the teaching and learning process, the lecturer is obligated to assist the students and help them if they find difficulties. Knowing the students' characteristics and psychology is among of the skills required from the lecturer.

*The condition of the student is one of the important roles that can influence the designing of material. The lecturer has to think about how the students learn and understand the condition of the students' background, because it will help the student learn effectively in the classroom and out of the classroom. In the classroom the students come from many backgrounds and experiences, such as, they have taught and become a teacher and also not from teacher major, it be known like ethnographic way by asking directly the students about their background.*

In this part, it can be assumed that the students also one of the elements to consider in designing the teaching material, because it can influence their interests and motivation in learning and improving their skills.

The third interviewee is Andy (pseudonym). He is the lecturer who is teaching in English Magister Program. He has taught more than fifteen years in some universities. He has long experiences in teaching in university and college especially, English education.

*"We design the material for teaching based on the syllabus and the curriculum, the curriculum of the campus and magister program. The subject is provided in the syllabus and the curriculum, we as the lecturer just designs and chooses the material based on the syllabus provides. The syllabus is the guidance in designing the teaching material. The syllabus can be provided by the English department program".*

Teaching material designed by the teacher in higher education helps the students to be more skillful. After the students graduate from the higher education, they can apply knowledge and skill that they have learnt from the higher education. The curriculum is designed to prepare the students for the future generation and ready to face the condition of the twenty-first century. The material designed and developed by the teacher in higher education has to be applicable and usable, so that the aims of the study can be reached successfully.

*In designing the English material depend on the syllabus, and on the syllabus depend on stating in the curriculum, what are the curriculums of English magister program and the curriculum of UAD (campus), like state in a curriculum to create the students who have English skill and can master media. From the syllabus there is a quantitative subject, so in designing the material, it can start from the definition, consist of what, the examples, and the material we can take from the book, and the book must from the newest book, such as the book of Creswell.*

From the interview, the correspondent says quantitative subject he teaches is very important and useful. After graduating from this institution, most of the students are going to be a teacher and doing a research, like most

teachers do, making a paper of Classroom Action Research (CAR) or scientific writing. There are many kinds of quantitative research such as experiment, control group, the hypothesis to be learned by the students. The most important thing is the students can practice how to do Classroom Action Research.

## B. Discussion

The study shows that in designing and developing English teaching material, the lecturers have some steps. The first step is following the syllabus provided by the English department program. The teachers develop their teaching material based on the guideline on the campus. The campus observes the curriculum that is provided by the government and adjusts it to the needs of the campus and students. Some researchers also conduct the similar research by Eliane [16]. She investigates what kinds of reflections the teaching materials design generates in the EFL teacher education process. She wants to see the designing process of teaching materials in the teacher education program. She concludes that it is not a solution for all challenges faced but students of teacher education. Instead, it brings some inspiring contribution, as her study has shown, because it grants students and teachers opportunities to have an action role in the planning, designing, and redesigning by considering their contexts.

The first lecturer said that the first thing to consider in designing teaching material is the government policy, especially the one established by the minister of education and culture. Besides, it should be in line with the campus needs. However, it is possible that the policy may not suitable for all campus in Indonesia because they have various needs. It relates to the study conducted by Andi and Arrafah about using need analysis to develop English teaching materials to increase the speaking skills of the English education students in Indonesia [20]. They argue that teaching materials can be developed based on the need analysis.

The second lecturer also designs the English teaching materials based on the request of the department. The subject has been in line with the lecturer's specific skill, which is about culture. In designing the materials, he related to culture and English language teaching. He based the materials on the students' needs. He suggested that culture is close to the students' daily life, thereby helping him in arranging the materials.

Cunnings' worth in the role and design of instructional materials proposes four criteria for evaluating textbooks, particularly course books [21]. First, they should correspond to learners' needs. They should match the aims and objectives of the language learning program. Second, they should reflect the uses (present or future) that learners will make of the language. Textbooks should be chosen to help equip students to use language effectively for their own purposes. Third, they should take account of students' needs as learners and should facilitate their learning processes, without dogmatically imposing a rigid "method." The last, they should have a clear role in supporting the learning process. Like teachers, they mediate between the target language and the learner. Cunnings' theory about the things the teacher should consider in designing the teaching

material is similar to the results of the interview with the second correspondent, where he mentions to think about the students' needs and level of the study.

The third lecturer explains that he designs the teaching materials based on the syllabus. The objective is to let the students know the aims of the study, for example to distinguish qualitative and quantitative study. Further, it helps to arrange the materials for each meeting. It is in line with Hutchinson and Waters, stating that a syllabus can only constitute an approximate statement of what will be taught. It relates that the syllabus provides a set of guideline for the teacher or lecturer [9].

In designing the teaching material, the lecturers follow the rule that is determined by decision-makers. They are the government, the minister of culture and education, the University, the English department program and the lecturer himself. Johnson represents these different decision-making roles and products in the following table [22].

TABLE II. DECISION MAKING ROLES

Developmental suites	Decision-making roles	
	Decision-making roles	Products
1. Curriculum Planning	policy makers	policy document
2. Specification: Means	needs analyst	syllabus
	methodologists	
3. Program	materials writers	teaching materials
	teacher trainers	teacher-training program
4. Implementation	teacher	teaching acts
	teacher	learning acts

From the table, we can see some steps in designing teaching materials by considering some aspects and elements. Besides the government, the teacher also serves as decision-maker in selecting whether the materials are suitable with the students or not.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research finding, the writer concludes that in designing the teaching materials for teacher education students, there are some steps to take by the lecturer. The minister of education and culture provides the guidelines for the English Education program of higher education in Indonesia to follow. Lecturers, in this case, cannot choose the subject, because they are only required to develop the materials, in such a way that it gives meaningful learning for students.

In designing and developing the teaching material, teachers in higher education need to think about the output for the students, thus allowing them to apply the skill and knowledge that they get and learn. This way, the learning objectives can be reached successfully. Some aspects to be considered in developing teaching materials include curriculum, syllabus, needs analysis on the program and the students.

Therefore, the writer provides some suggestions. For the next researchers, they can conduct similar research but with more specific aims, such as designing reading, listening, or speaking materials. Another idea is to expand and develop the materials for teacher education student, therefore allowing them to learn specific techniques and methods for developing the materials. For better results, it is suggested that the next researchers add more participants to vary the range of information.

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