

A TOUCH OF LOCAL WISDOM: THE STUDENTS' VOICE

Tri Mulyati¹, Dhalia Soetopo²

¹English Department, Faculty of Language and Art, Universitas PGRI Banyuwangi,
Jalan Ikan Tongkol Nomor 22, Banyuwangi, East Java, Indonesia

²History Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas PGRI Banyuwangi,
Jalan Ikan Tongkol Nomor 22, Banyuwangi, East Java, Indonesia

¹e-mail: mulyati29@gmail.com

Abstract

This research aims at designing local culture based digital comics for eighth year students of SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro, Banyuwangi, East Java, Indonesia. These are designed based on the English syllabus of reading skill and are developed in order to improve the students' reading comprehension skill, especially in comprehending narrative texts. Also, it aims at preserving local wisdoms of Banyuwangi through English language teaching. The research and development steps comprise some steps adapted from the pattern developed by Borg and Gall. The researchers administered need analysis to 35 students in class VIII.1 in order to gather information dealing with the materials and media in English language teaching and the need on local culture based digital comics. The data was taken from questionnaire, interview, and document analysis. The results of need analysis reveal that the students need to be taught narrative texts with local culture content and a suitable interesting media in the form of digital comics.

Keywords: local wisdom, need analysis, comics, reading.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengembangkan Komik digital Bahasa Inggris berbasis budaya lokal untuk siswa kelas VIII SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro, Banyuwangi, Jawa timur, Indonesia. Pengembangan model berdasarkan silabus Bahasa Inggris ketrampilan membaca di SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro. Komik digital berbasis budaya lokal didesain untuk meningkatkan kemampuan membaca pemahaman siswa, khususnya dalam memahami teks narasi dan untuk melestarikan kearifan lokal Banyuwangi melalui pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Peneliti mengadaptasi langkah-langkah penelitian pengembangan yang didesain oleh Borg dan Gall. Peneliti mengadakan analisis kebutuhan di kelas VIII.1 dengan jumlah siswa 35 orang. Need analysis ini dilaksanakan untuk mengumpulkan informasi tentang materi dan media pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris dan kebutuhan akan komik digital berbasis budaya lokal untuk pembelajaran teks narasi. Peneliti menggunakan angket, wawancara, dan analisa dokumen untuk mengumpulkan data. Hasil dari need analysis menunjukkan bahwa siswa perlu belajar tentang Narrative Texts dengan tema budaya lokal dan membutuhkan media yang menarik dalam bentuk komik digital.

Kata Kunci: kearifan lokal, analisis kebutuhan, komik, membaca.

INTRODUCTION

English language teaching in Indonesia cannot be apart from the context where the learners live. It means that the teaching of English in Indonesia should consider the learners' culture as one of important aspects in the teaching and

learning process. Mishan (2005: 47) pinpoints that language learning is attached to the theory of schema. It is knowledge of scenario, action, object acquired by someone in the past. Schemata are concepts formed in the learners' brain and influenced by a cultural background and the learners' experience. Thus, when learners learn a new language they always relate the new input with the existing knowledge which was acquired before. The absence of schemata will result on the failure of a new language input process. In the context of English language learning, where the learners live really influences the way they learn English. Hence, the selection of materials and media should be prepared in such a way that fit the learners' background knowledge

Even though English is used in all over the world as a *Lingua Franca*, it still becomes a foreign language in Indonesia. As a consequence, English language teaching brings culture acculturation from the English native speakers to the English learners in Indonesia. This causes a critical issue in the teaching of English in Indonesia context. According to Genc and Bada (2005: 73-84) in the era of tolerance on the difference of ideology, religion, and culture, language learners need to learn not only foreign culture but also their own culture. A good comprehension of the learners' own culture will enable them to process whether a foreign culture can be adopted, adapted or rejected. In relation to this issue, Royani (2012: 130-135) explains that the use of authentic material in English language teaching causes difficulty and confusion among language learners since there is a difference of contexts or environments between materials used and the language learners. So the insertion of Indonesia local wisdom into English language teaching is absolutely needed since it will facilitate the inheritance of the national culture identity from generation to generation as well as improve the learners' motivation in learning English. Local wisdom is a cultural identity that enables citizens absorb and filter a foreign culture fitted with their own nature and culture (Kaltsum, 2014: 475-482). It represents the characteristic, norms, and culture adopted in the long term from generation to generation.

The insertion of local wisdom into English materials has several advantages. Royani (2012: 130-135) states that local wisdom based materials are very

effective. For example, in the teaching of reading, language learners will easily immerse into the texts they read when the materials used are very close to their environments. Also, it has been stated that learning a language is related with the theory of schema (Mishan, 2005: 47). When language learners process language inputs, they will connect them to their schema that is appropriate with new information they acquire. They will easily comprehend reading materials if they have enough knowledge of the topics they read. Thus, local wisdom based materials provide learners a background knowledge that helps them comprehend the reading materials. Further Royani (2012:130-135) explains that the insertion of local culture into English materials protects the language learners' culture identity because cultures inserted into authentic material do not always suit to the learners' culture. In addition, Kristiawan (2012: 174-185) argued that English teachers have to integrate local culture into materials since it helps students improve their linguistic and social competence and make English language teaching meaningful.

Selecting or creating material with culture touched has been sounding by the government. The local governments have a chance to make a policy based on their local wisdom (law number 22/1999 dealing with Regional Autonomy). This involves integrating local wisdom into English instruction. Further, it is clearly stated from the school based curriculum to the revised edition of 2013 curriculum (K-13) that the teaching of English in Indonesia should be related with the students' closest environment in order that they can use English in a meaningful communication. Thus, these two policies become strong underpinning ideas to integrate local wisdom into English language teaching.

Despite the pivotal role of integrating local wisdom in English language teaching, some issues arise when it comes to the realizations. The first problem deals with the availability of English material containing Indonesia local wisdom. English material containing local wisdom is still limited on the use of local folklore. Prasetyo (2016: 60-65) encountered that there were limited Indonesia folktales that have been translated into foreign language. There were only a little well-known folklore such as Malin Kundang from West Sumatra, Legend of

Danau Toba from North Sumatra, and Tangkuban Perahu from West Java. However, it seems ironic since Indonesia has a lot of local folklore in every region. For example, in Banyuwangi region, English materials should have been developed based on the local folklore of Banyuwangi such as Legend of Banyuwangi, Tumpeng Sewu, Barong, Kebo-Keboan, etc. Another issue is that an activity to deliver a local wisdom is only limited on a story telling activity. The teachers and learners usually tell about the story of Cinderella and Snow White. The use of interesting materials and media like comics has not been found yet. If it is used, the teachers and learners usually use ready used comics of which the content may not suit to the learners' culture identity. Furthermore, in this digital era, there are huge material and media provided by internet. Even nowadays learners are involved in the global access. They are used to using computers, smartphones, and various internet features for daily need. This condition expects teachers to be a step ahead in using technology. The teaching and learning activity should not be limited in the classroom activity but it should happen wherever and whenever. The materials and media should not only focus on the textbook and worksheet but it should integrate computer and internet as a source and media for learning.

Based on this condition and needs, the researchers aimed at developing instructional material and media in the form of local culture based digital comic for eighth year students of SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro Banyuwangi. Digital comics are combination between narrative texts and digital contents. Abdel-Hack dan Helwa (2014: 8-41) explains that digital comics have some benefits such as a clear and colorful visualization, sound effects, and transition effect that enable readers comprehend the story. Further, Ravelo (2013: 1-19) states that comic strips that are used with Content language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a valid source for learners to learn history while learning English as a foreign language. Comics stimulate learners to comprehend meanings through word and pictures. They also help learners make an authentic interpretation when the teaching method used focuses on the interaction and content materials. In addition, Cimermanova (2015: 2452-2459) urges that the use of authentic comics in English language teaching

gives positive effects on the vocabulary development and reading motivation as well as reducing a gap on the grammatical difference when learners read authentic texts, that is, by using contexts and prior knowledge or schemata.

Therefore, this research focused only on the development of local culture based digital comics for eight year students of SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro. The result of the research is expected to give a contribution in the form of English instructional material and media for learning English, especially for reading narrative texts. Also, by developing the local culture based digital comic it is hoped that learners can improve their reading achievement, develop their electronic literacy, and preserve local wisdom in Banyuwangi region. Since the research needs a sequence of steps, the results presented in this paper were only the result of need analysis phase of the research.

METHOD

This research aims to develop a local culture based digital comic of the eighth year students of SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro. The design used is research and development following the pattern proposed by Borg and Gall (1983: 775). Considering the need of developing local culture based digital comics of eighth year students of SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro the researchers adapted some steps of research and development pattern proposed by Borg and Gall. Sukmadinata (2005: 174) states that the research and development plan must consider budget, people, tools and materials, and time allotment for conducting a research and development. The following are the steps:

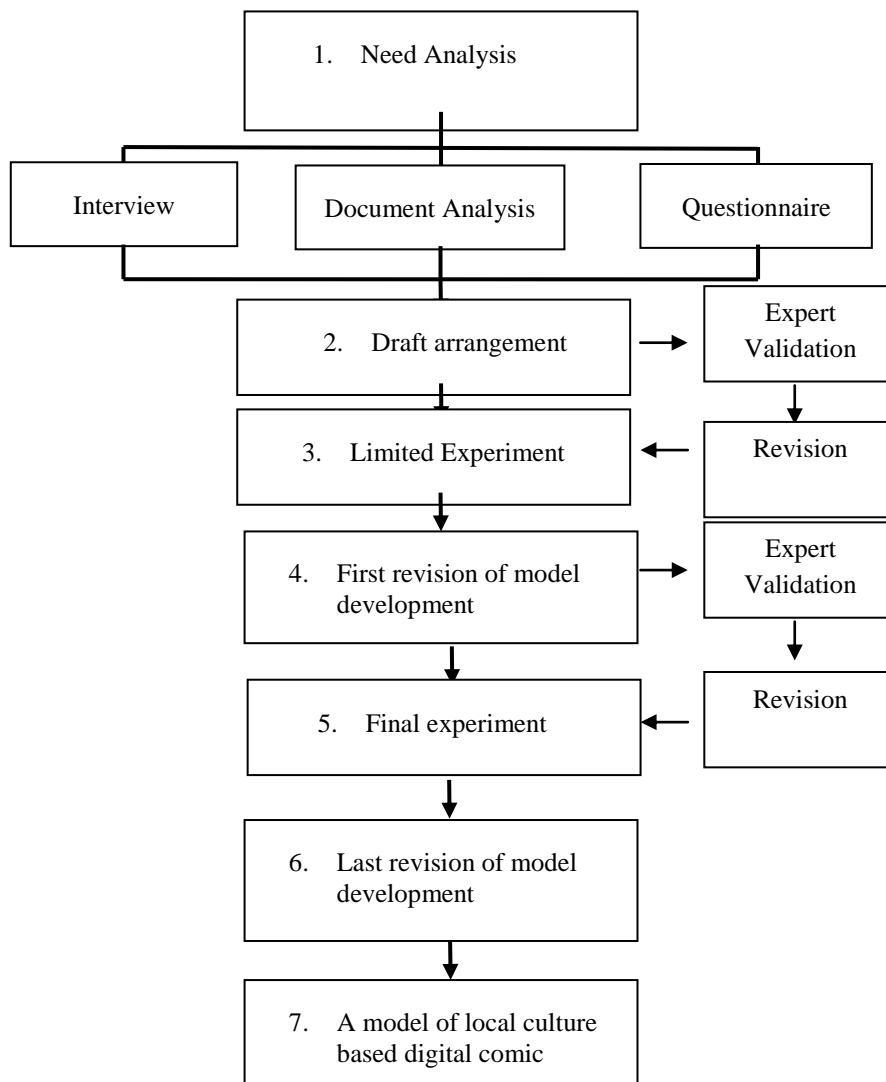


Figure 1. The Procedure of R&D (Borg and Gall, 1983:775)

Since this research is the part of the study that has not finished yet, the focus of the research is merely describing the result of need analysis. Gufron, et al. (2016: 1-12) postulate that a need analysis should be administered for identifying and evaluating needs in a community or other certain population of people. The subject of the research was eighth year students of SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro, Banyuwangi, in class VIII.1. There were 35 students in the class. The need analysis was conducted in order to find and identify the problems in the teaching

and learning process in English class of the eighth year students at SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro. The research was conducted from March-April 2016.

Research design that was used in the need analysis step was descriptive explanatory research. Descriptive explanatory research is appropriate to provide a picture of an event, condition, or situation or to answer the question of how and why (Gufron, et al., 2016: 1-12). This design was used in order to gather data on the materials and media in English language teaching of eighth year students at SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro and the need on local culture based digital comics for learning narrative texts. The data was taken from interview, questionnaire, and document analysis. Questionnaire and interview were done in order to gather information about: 1) the reading materials used in the textbooks, 2) topics of reading texts used, 3) the media used by the teacher, 4) the need of the students on the local culture based material and media for reading narrative texts, 5) the teaching and learning strategies used by the teacher and the students. The document analysis was done to gather information about basic competences of reading skill in English syllabus of eighth year students and the topics of reading texts used in the teaching and learning process. The data validation technique used in this research was triangulation and member checking (Creswell, 2012: 259).

The data was analyzed in the descriptive qualitative form covering three steps of analysis: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusion. This technique was used because the data was in the non-numeric information form. The result of need analysis was some information about the materials and media, the teaching and learning strategies, and the students' needs on local culture based digital comics. These results will be used as the underpinning for designing the model product.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result of need analysis is in the form of the students' need and the teacher's need. To gather information about those needs, the researchers distributed questionnaires and conducted an informal interview with the teacher. The questionnaire consists of 25 items asking about the learning material and

media in reading narrative texts, reading strategies used by the students, Topics and content of narrative texts, and gaining students' perspective toward the use of local culture based material and technology for reading activity. Further, the interview was addressed to the English teacher dealing with the use of media, and the topics of narrative texts. The followings are the result of need analysis gained from questionnaires.

Table 1. The Result of Need Analysis Questionnaire

NO	STATEMENTS	OPTIONS				TOTAL
1	Do you use OHP, LCD, laptop, etc. for reading English texts?	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never	35 (100%)
		0	5	25	5	
		0%	14.29%	71.43%	14.29%	
2	I use pictures for reading English texts	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never	35 (100%)
		2	3	21	9	
		5.71%	8.57%	60%	25.71%	
3	I use this media when I read narrative texts	Puppet	Film	Music/songs	others	35 (100%)
		3	16	14	2	
		8.57%	45.71%	40%	5.71%	
4	Are comics used as narrative texts resources?	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never	35 (100%)
		4	2	24	5	
		11.43%	5.71%	68.57%	14.29%	
5	I learn narrative texts in students' worksheets only.	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never	35 (100%)
		6	15	11	3	
		17.14%	42.86%	31.43%	8.57%	
6	I use electronic books for learning English.	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never	35 (100%)
		3	7	19	6	
		8.57%	20%	54.29%	17.14%	
7	I like using electronic media better than using textbooks when I read English texts.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	35 (100%)
		6	15	14	0	
		17.14%	42.86%	40%	0%	
8	I use a dictionary to comprehend narrative texts.	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never	35 (100%)
		13	17	5	0	
		37.14%	48.57%	14.29%	0%	
9	The use of media in English class helps me comprehend narrative texts.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	35 (100%)
		9	20	5	1	
		25.71%	57.14%	14.29%	2.86%	
10	Are fairytales entitled Cinderella, Snow White, Rapunzel, etc. used for narrative reading material?	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never	35 (100%)
		2	10	17	6	
		5.71%	28.57%	48.57%	17.14%	
11	Are fables used for narrative reading materials?	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never	35 (100%)
		2	12	19	2	
		5.71%	34.29%	54.29%	5.71%	
12	I read narrative texts about Banyuwangi culture in	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never	35 (100%)
		2	7	23	3	

	English class.	5.71%	20%	65.71%	8.57%	
13	The story about Banyuwangi culture is interesting to read	Strongly Agree 22 62.86%	Agree 10 28.57%	Disagree 3 8.57%	Strongly disagree 0 0%	35 (100%)
14	Narrative texts that I read in the class are very difficult.	Strongly Agree 2 5.71%	Agree 10 28.57%	Disagree 21 60%	Strongly disagree 2 5.71%	35 (100%)
15	Before reading I set a goal (ex: for finding information, for entertainment etc.)	Very often 2 8.57%	Often 16 45.71%	Seldom 16 45.71%	Never 0 0%	35 (100%)
16	I use reading strategies when reading texts	Very often 7 20%	Often 16 45.71%	Seldom 12 34.29%	Never 0 0%	35 (100%)
17	Before reading, I guess the topic of the texts.	Very often 4 11.43%	Often 11 31.43%	Seldom 17 48.57%	Never 3 8.57%	35 (100%)
18	When I am reading, I check whether my prediction before reading is correct.	Very often 8 22.86%	Often 6 17.14%	Seldom 16 45.71%	Never 5 14.29%	35 (100%)
19	I translate every sentence for comprehending the texts I read?	Very often 9 25.71%	Often 15 42.86%	Seldom 9 25.71%	Never 2 5.71%	35 (100%)
20	I know about the elements of plot in narrative texts (ex: characters, character trait, time and setting, problem, and resolution)?	Strongly Agree 3 8.57%	Agree 13 37.14%	Disagree 17 48.57%	Strongly disagree 2 5.71%	35 (100%)
21	The teacher introduces the topic of the text before the teaching and learning process starts?	Very often 11 31.43%	Often 14 40%	Seldom 6 17.14%	Never 4 11.43%	35 (100%)
22	The teacher explains narrative texts clearly.	Strongly Agree 4 11.43%	Agree 19 54.29%	Disagree 8 22.86%	Strongly disagree 4 11.43%	35 (100%)
23	The teacher guides me when I am reading narrative texts.	Very often 11 31.43%	Often 21 40%	Seldom 2 5.71%	Never 1 2.86%	35 (100%)
24	After reading narrative texts, I answer comprehension questions related to texts	Very often 4 11.43%	Often 14 40%	Seldom 14 40%	Never 2 5.71%	35 (100%)
25	The teacher give feedbacks to me, such as comments, scores, appraisal after I read narrative texts	Very often 6 17.14%	Often 16 45.71%	Seldom 7 20%	Never 6 17.14%	35 (100%)

From Table 1, it can be seen the real conditions of English language teaching in class VIII.1 of SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro. Concerning the learning material and media used in reading narrative texts, the table indicates that the

media used in the teaching and learning process were very limited. The media such as LCD, OHP, Laptop, Pictures, and comics were occasionally used in the teaching and learning process. The learning materials were taken from textbooks or worksheets. The other resources that were likely used were movie and English songs. Further, Table 1 also indicates that the students' reading activity depended on the English dictionary. To comprehend English texts, they translated sentences one by one. This happened since the students who used reading strategies when reading English texts were limited. These findings are in contrast with the ideal condition that the students should have had when reading English texts. As Cimermanova (2015: 2452-2459) proposes that EFL learners should be given an intensive support in form of suitable media and have to be introduced with different learning strategies when reading English texts. Dealing with narrative texts, they also confessed that they did not understand the elements of plot. The topics of narrative texts were about very well-known fairytales, such as, Cinderella, Snow White, and the like. The authentic material selection which is not suitable with the students' prior knowledge caused students difficult to comprehend narrative texts. The use of authentic material in English language teaching causes difficulty and confusion among language learners (Royani, 2012: 130-135). Also, the students' limited vocabulary resulted from the difference context in the authentic material can discourage them to read (Cimermanova, 2015: 2452-2459)

In response to the students' perspective toward the use of local culture based material and technology for reading activity, Table 1 indicates that most students responded positively toward the offer of inserting Banyuwangi culture into narrative reading materials. They also argued that the media is really important to help them in comprehending narrative texts. Then, they added that they like using electronic media better than using textbooks when reading narrative texts. This seems ironic when the real condition was that the teacher did not use electronic media for teaching narrative texts to the students.

Moreover, the interview addressed to the English teacher results some information about the use of media, and the topics of narrative texts. The teacher

explained that for narrative texts reading activity, she only used the material taken from the English textbooks, students' worksheets, and dictionaries. The reason of using these resources was that because all students have had these resources already. Dealing with the media, the researchers asked whether the teacher used electronic media like digital comic in teaching narrative texts to the students. Then she informed that she did not use digital comics in the teaching and learning process. Reading activity was in the form of reading comprehension discussion. The teacher usually models on how to read narrative texts and then asks students to read narrative texts. The reading aloud activity is usually followed by discussing the content of the texts and answering some comprehension questions. Further, the teacher explains that the topic of narrative texts are about popular topics usually used in commercial textbooks such as Cinderella, Snow white, and the like. The topics about local culture found in the textbooks are about Malin Kundang and the legend of Danau Toba.

The result of need analysis was also gained from document analysis. Here the researcher analyzed the basic competence of reading skill of the eighth year students of SMP Negeri 1 Kalipuro and the existing textbooks. Based on the analysis, the standard competence and basic competences of reading skill to be achieved at the end of semester 2 are as follows:

The standard competence of reading skill of the eighth year students is to comprehend meaning in short and very simple recount and narrative texts to interact (with people) in the (students') close environment. The basic competences are formulated into three competences, namely, to read aloud functional, short, and very simple recount and narrative texts that are related to the (students') close environment in a good pronunciation and in an accurate intonation; to respond meaning in written functional, short, and very simple texts related to the (students') close environment fluently and accurately; to respond meaning and generic structures in short and very simple recount and narrative texts related to the (students') close environment accurately and fluently.

The textbooks analysis was focused on the kinds of narrative texts in the textbooks. The researchers did not analyze the elements of good reading material

but they only analyzed the topic of narrative texts. Based on the analysis, it was found that the type of narrative text was fairytales. The topics were about Cinderella, Snow White and the like. The researchers found some topics related to the local culture in Indonesia such as Malin Kundang and the legend of Lake Toba. Yet, they did not find any topic related to local wisdom of Banyuwangi region.

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the teacher did not utilize various media to support the teaching and learning process. The reading materials about local culture of Banyuwangi have not been utilized yet. Thus, there was a gap between basic competences to be achieved (that the topics of reading materials must be related to the students' close environment) and the reading materials used in the teaching and learning process.

CONCLUSION

In line with the results and discussion above, it can be inferred that the implementation of narrative texts teaching and learning activity did not fit the standard competence and basic competences of reading skill. The insertion of local wisdom was not found in the narrative reading materials. The reading materials that should have been related to the students' close environment were not fulfilled by the teacher yet. Further, the lack of interesting media for reading narrative texts caused students difficult in comprehending narrative texts. In short, the results of need analysis reveal that the students need to be taught narrative texts with local culture content and a suitable interesting media in the form of digital comics. Since the results presented in this paper were only the result of need analysis phase of the research, it is recommended to develop a prototype of digital comics with local culture content.

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