

Developing Lahat Local Culture-Based Instructional Narrative Reading Materials for Secondary School Students

By Nemisis Dahnisah Argasetra, Soni Mirizon, Machdalena Vianty

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Abstract. The objective of this study was to develop Lahat local culture-based instructional narrative reading materials which are valid, practical, and have potential effect for secondary school students. This study applied development research which was conducted through three phases including analysis, design, and evaluation and revision phases. There were five stages of formative evaluation used in the evaluation phase, they are self-evaluation, expert review, one-to-one evaluation, small group evaluation, and field test evaluation. The participants of this study were then ninth-grade students of a public junior high school in Lahat Regency, South Sumatera in academic year 2020/2021. The data were obtained using questionnaire and reading comprehension test. In determining the validity and practicality of the developed reading materials, the average score of questionnaires from experts' judgement (for validity) and questionnaire in one-to-one and small group evaluation (for practicality) were used. The results showed that the developed product was valid (average score 3.87) and practical (average score 4.6). The product also had potential effect since the students reached the passing grade score was 70.

Keywords: Material Development, Narrative Text, Reading Materials, Lahat-Local-Culture

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INTRODUCTION

In English language teaching and learning process, reading is a process of combining information by the readers from the text and their prior knowledge to build meaning fluently (Nunan, 2003). By reading, students can find some specific information, understand the whole stories, and can also be entertained by reading especially when read folktales, comics, novel, short story, and etc.

Some factors influence the student's reading achievement. Mohammed and Amponsah (2018) found that the students lack the confidence to practice, poor motivation from the teachers, lack of pre-reader books, lack of the library, low phonemic awareness skills, and teachers' inadequate knowledge on phonemic awareness strategy. Another thing that the teachers need to focus on had to consider the cultural aspect in teaching English. Mukundan et al. (2016) nation that the key success in reading is on the right choice and effective presentation of the materials provided. If the materials do not definitely meet the scholars' desires, there is a gap that should be crammed in. one of the efforts is developing the materials. Tomlinson (2016) explains that material improvement is completed to supply the coaching materials which can be suitable to the scholars. Bao (2016) states that the content of reading have to be applicable to the needs of the readers and mirror the language substances that they may find outdoor the study room.

There are several ways to improve students' reading comprehension such as using several kinds of text, for instance reading narative text. Reading is one of difficult skills to learn besides writing skills. Harley (2014), states that unlike speaking and listening, reading and writing are clearly not easy to learn. From all kinds of the texts, narrative text is often found in national examination

Reading materials enable students to receive a major exposure to English other than what they get from the teachers (Richards, 2001). In other words, reading materials not only assist students in learning English, but also become a resourceful input of English. In relation to this, reading materials can provide abundant input including vocabulary, technical terms, grammar, and relevant information in a particular field. Furthermore, students can learn something new both in English and their discipline through the materials.

Besides, Wulandari, Vianty, and Fiftinova (2018) discovered that the mixing of neighborhood culture in reading materials ought to enhance college students' studying comprehension. Integration of nearby lifestyle inside the curriculum will manual the improvement persona of creative learners so we can choose the cultural values, then applied into their actual lifestyles. There are three approaches to insert the local content (Hartini, 2012), such as way of life in teaching material.

Since people from different culture contact each other in the era of globalization, the nature teaching English and culture is affected. Moreover, cultural context is always attached with the region in which English is taught and used. The need of local culture in EFL learning setting is in the basis of developing students' awareness toward their own culture to socialize with global citizen. In other words, the terminal aim of local culture involvement is students are able to communicate effectively through their own culture and beliefs (Clouet, 2006).Some studies conducted exposed local culture in the developed reading materials (Pitaloka, 2015;

Monica & Vianty, 2019; Sopian, Inderawati & Petrus, 2019; Elviana, Inderawati & Mirizon, 2020; and Azizah, Inderawati & Vianty, 2021). However, those studies have different focus and context from this current study. Those studies focused on developing reading materials in senior high school and vocational high school levels and were based on context of other areas of South Sumatera Province, while this current study focused on developing reading materials in junior high school level and was based on the context of Lahat regency.

UNWTO (2017) found that Indonesia was ranked at 20th in the world tourist industry and is well-known for its tourist destinations. In South Sumatera, for example, there are many tourism sites which are located in the regions. In Lahat Regency, for instance, there are many tourism sites. Preserving the stories is very important because it can be the knowledge for the younger generation about what they culture has. One of the ways to preserve the local stories is through documented them in the form of reading materials. By documented the stories from Lahat city as local content-based texts in reading material, not only students learn English but also they learn their own culture. Learners who gain certain cultural knowledge can develop more positive attitudes towards and come to be more tolerant of other cultures (Nguyen, 2017). In relation to this, the objective of this study was to develop Lahat local culture-based instructional narrative reading materials which are valid, practical, and have potential effect for secondary school students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Material Development

Tomlinson (2013) asserts that materials development can be defined as all the process carried out by practitioners who intend to produce or employ materials for language learning in which the processes included materials evaluation, their adaptation, design, production, exploitation and research. Ideally, all of the processes should be taken into consideration and should be collaborated for the purpose of developing language-learning materials.

Reading

Reading is one of the receptive skills where the meaning is extracted from the discourse. Reading is a process of combining information by the readers from a text and their prior knowledge to build meaning fluently (Nunan, 2003). Meinado (2016) believes reading comprehension is one of the most essential skills that should be developed and nurtured in a child at home and in school, because it is fundamental to success in academic life and beyond. He further notes that it is a survival skill in the 21 century may it be for students or professionals. Theoretically, reading comprehension is an interactive process of deriving meanings from a text (Rumelhart, 1981 cited in Meinado, 2016)

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Narrative text

According to Anderson and Anderson (1997) a narrative is a piece of text which tells a story, and in doing so, entertains or informs the reader or listener". The social function of narrative text is to amuse, to entertain and to deal with actual or vicarious experience in different ways. The generic structures of narrative text are orientation, complication (sequence of events), resolution and re-orientation (Noviansari, 2012). In the orientation, the main characters, the minor characters, and the settings are described. The problems of the story start to arise in the complication part. Then, the narrator describes how the characters react to the problems. It describes the characters' feelings and how they react. The events can also be described in chronological order. Next, in resolution part, the implication may be resolved. The last part is re-orientation or it also can be said as coda, it is the ending as well as the conclusion of the story.

Local culture

Teaching a language cannot be separated from teaching its culture. It is in line with what Brown (2007) states that culture is something which is definitely an integral part of the interaction between language and thought. Thus, in terms of ELT, teachers have to teach English as the target language (L2) along with its culture. However, there is another way to teach English (L2) which is by using local culture.

In terms of learning EFL literature, in which EFL literature is one part of target culture that students have to learn simultaneously while they are learning English. Alwasilah (2006) claims that in general the success of an attempt of teaching EFL literature to certain degree is dependent on the success in teaching local literature. Narrative texts which will be included as the reading material in the material developed in this study will be Lahat tourist destinations which are originally from Lahat

RESEARSCH METHOD

This study applied development research. It was conducted in three phases consisting of: (1) analysis phase, (2) design phase, and (3) evaluation and revision phase (Akker, 1999). There were five stages of formative evaluation used in the evaluation phase, they are self-evaluation, expert review, one-to-one evaluation, small group evaluation, and field test evaluation. This study was conducted in a public senior high school in Lahat Regency. The participants of this study were the ninth-grade students of 2020/2021 academic year of the school. Table 1 specifies the number of participants in every stage of formative evaluation.

Table 1. Participants of the Study

No	Formative Evaluation Stages	Number of Students	Description of the Students
1.	One-to-one Evaluation	3	1 student for each category, i.e: frustrational, instructional, and independent
2.	Small Group	9	3 students for each category, i.e: frustrational, instructional, and independent
3.	Field Test	30	All students in real class
TOTAL		42 students	

¹⁴ The participants of this study were selected based on their reading level. The student's reading level was categorized into three levels: frustrational, instructional, and independent reading levels. The students were selected randomly in each reading level category.

To determine the validity, practicality, and potential effect of the developed product, a questionnaire and a reading comprehension test were used as the data collection instruments. The validity of the product was determined based on the experts' evaluation. The researchers administered the standardized reading competence test. Jennings informal reading assessment (Jennings, Caldwell, & Lerner, 2006), an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI), was given to the students which included reading texts at level 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Then, the questionnaire was administered. The product was classified as valid if the average score of the questionnaires was not less than 2.51. The practicality of the product was determined based on the result of the questionnaire (adapted from Tessmer, 1993) consisted of questionnaire for expert of content, expert of construct, and students were given in expert review phase while for student's responses that was given to the students in one-to-one and small groups. The product was considered practical if the average score was not less than 2.51. Finally, the potential effect of the developed reading materials was determined based on the result of the field test. The developed product was considered to have the potential effect if the students' score was not below the passing grade (70).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis Phase

Instructional analysis

In this phase, the local culture-base reading materials was analyzed in terms of the readability level of the texts, standard competence, basic competence, learning indicators, and learning objectives, and the availability of narrative text in the 2013 Curriculum book used.

Students’ need analysis

A questionnaire was administered to the ninth grade students to obtain the information about their needs, problems dealing with English reading materials, and their prior knowledge about any history from Lahat. There were some aspects that were taken into consideration to obtain information about students’ needs: (1) their perception about their reading skill; (2) their perception of the learning process; (3) their perception about the reading materials in their textbook; (4) their expectation on the content of reading materials; (5) their knowledge about local culture from Lahat; and (6) their expectation on the developed instructional reading materials.

Students’ reading level analysis

Analyzing students’ reading level before designing the material was needed in order to make the developed Lahat local culture narrative reading materials appropriate – neither too difficult nor too easy with the students’ reading level. It was also important to analyze students’ reading level to choose who were going to be in one-to-one, small group discussion, and field test. Table 2 presents the result of the students’ reading test.

Table 2. The Distribution of Students’ Reading Level

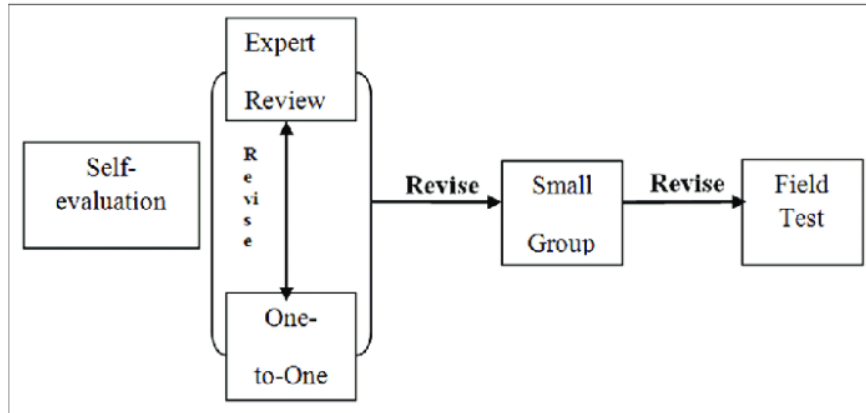
Text Level	Reading Stage					
	Frustrational (Correct number ≤4)		Instructional (Correct number 5-6)		Independent (Correct number 7-8)	
	NOS	%	NOS	%	NOS	%
Level 2	5	14,2%	20	57.1%	10	28,7%
Level 3	10	28,6%	14	40%	1	3,4%
Level 4	18	51,5%	13	37.1%	4	11,4%
Level 5	22	62,9%	10	28.6%	3	8,5%
Level 6	28	80%	7	20%	0	0,0%

Design Phase

In this phase, the first thing to be conducted was to write the learning objectives which had been identified in the previous phase as it was the first thing to be concerned. The next step was finding the history of Lahat local culture people and some other sources. After being translated and adapted, the developed narrative reading texts were checked to know the students’ readability level by using an online tool of Flesh Kincaid. Meanwhile, reading comprehension assessment was in the form of multiple choices.

Evaluation and Revision

In this evaluation phase, formative evaluation by [Tessmer \(1993\)](#) was used.



Self-evaluation

For self-evaluation phase, the quality of content was checked and constructed based on the students' reading level. For expert's review, three experts were asked to check the language (content) and instructional design (construct) of the developed product.

Expert review

The product was showed to the experts and they gave their judgments to validate the product. Their comments and suggestions were used as a basis of revision of the product in order to improve its validity.

Table 3. The Results of Validity Level of the Product

No.	Aspects	Average Score	Interpretation
1	English (Content)	3.05	High Validity
2	Instructional Design (Construct)	4.69	Very High Validity
Total Average Score		3,87	High Validity

One-To-One Evaluation

In one-to-one evaluation, three students were involved to use and review the Lahat local-culture narrative reading texts individually. Those three students were chosen as the representatives of each English proficiency level. One student was a representative of students having high English proficiency level, another one was a representative of students having medium English proficiency, and the other one was a representative of students having low English proficiency level.

Based on the results, from the total 15 items of the questionnaire, the average score from the three students' score was 4.6 which fell at very high practicality level. It can be concluded that the developed Lahat local-culture narrative reading materials was practical and at very high practicality level.

Table 4. Result of questionnaire in one-to-one evaluation

Aspects	No	Average Score	Remarks
The appropriateness between materials and students' needs	1.	4	High Practicality
	2.	5	Very High Practicality
	3.	5	Very High Practicality
Content presentation	4.	4.7	Very High Practicality
	5.	5	Very High Practicality
	6.	5	Very High Practicality
	7.	4.7	Very High Practicality
	8.	4.3	High Practicality
Exercise and evaluation aspects	9.	4.7	Very High Practicality
	10.	4	High Practicality
	11.	4.7	Very High Practicality
	12.	4.7	Very High Practicality
Attractiveness of the content	13.	5	Very High Practicality
	14.	4	High Practicality
	15.	5	Very High Practicality
AVERAGE SCORE		4.6	Very High Practicality

Small Group Evaluation

In this step the product evaluated was called prototype 2 which was the revision of the previous product. There were nine students who got involved in this phase in which each three students corresponding to frustration, instructional, and independent readers. These nine students were not the same as those who were in one-to-one phase. Based on the results, from the total 15 items of the questionnaire, the average score from the three students' score was 4.8 which fell at very high practicality level. It can be concluded that the developed Lahat local-culture narrative reading materials was practical and at very high practicality level.

Table 5. Result of Questionnaire in Small Group

Aspects	No	Average Score	Remarks
The appropriateness between materials and students' needs	1.	4.6	High Practicality
	2.	4.2	Very High Practicality
	3.	4.6	Very High Practicality
Content presentation	4.	4.8	Very High Practicality
	5.	5	Very High Practicality
	6.	4.6	Very High Practicality
	7.	5	Very High Practicality
	8.	5	High Practicality
Exercise and evaluation aspects	9.	5	Very High Practicality
	10.	5	High Practicality
	11.	4.7	Very High Practicality
	12.	4.7	Very High Practicality
Attractiveness of the content	13.	5	Very High Practicality
	14.	4.8	High Practicality
	15.	5	Very High Practicality
AVERAGE SCORE		4.8	Very High Practicality

Field Test Evaluation

In this phase, the developed product was evaluated by implementing its use in a real teaching activity to teach a narrative text to the eleventh-graders in a real class of the sample school of this study. This evaluation was meant to know the potential effect of the developed product. To sum up, the validity of reading materials was evaluated in the expert review phase, and the product was evaluated practically in the one-to-one and small group phase. Meanwhile, the effectiveness was evaluated in the field test phase.

From the results of the students' score in pretest, there were 14 students (46.67%) who reached the minimum mastery criterion which was 70 and there were 16 other students (53.3%) who obtained score below the intended outcome score. While from the results of the students' score in posttest, there were 28 students (93.3%) obtained scores exactly or above 70 and 2 other (6.7%) whose score were below 70. From these results, therefore, it can be concluded that there was an improvement in students' scores before and after using the developed Lahat local-culture narrative reading materials.

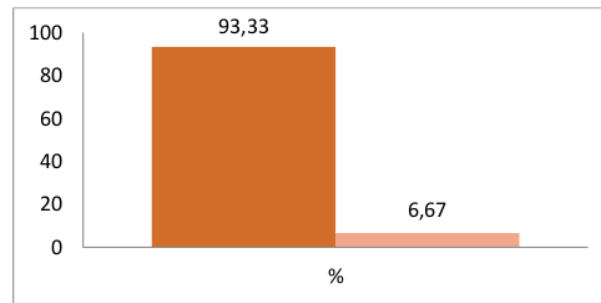


Diagram 1. Field Test Evaluation

From the reading comprehension test result, students who participated in the field test achieved the required passing grade of 70. It means that the developed product has a potential effect since 93.33% reached the passing grade.

DISCUSSION

Based on the result in the analysis phase, some points need to be elaborated. First of all, the existing reading text for the students of secondary school, which were taken from coursebook provided by government only represented the source of culture, target culture, and international culture. It was lack of students' local culture, that is the Lahat local culture. On the other hand, this developed reading materials had provided students contents related to their local culture. The integration of students' local culture in reading is essential for students. [Monica and Vianty \(2019\)](#) and [Nafiah \(2020\)](#) explain that having material of reading related to student's local culture can benefit teaching and learning process as it improves students' motivation and enhance their understanding. Further, they found that there was an improvement in students' reading comprehension achievement that the students achieved the required passing grade of the level.

Moreover, in regard to the fact that the teachers of English in this study just adopted the materials from the book provided by government without any modification, addition, or development, and sometimes considered as irrelevant to student's reading level, made the students struggling to comprehend the material, and deteriorated their interest in learning. To cope with this issue, this developed reading material has provided students with reading materials which are in line with their reading level. As explained by [Kuşdemir and Bulut \(2018\)](#), teachers have to understand that students' background knowledge and their reading level are fundamental aspects for reading material. It is in line with [Nguyen \(2020\)](#) and [Yulianto \(2019\)](#) explain that reading text should be comprehensible, readable with suitable materials which consist of appropriate lexical features upon students' grade and level.

In relation to the content and instructional design, this developed reading material had been validated by experts in their field. In term of content validity, linguistic aspect, appropriateness of contents with students, content accuracy, and the presentation were analysed. The issues needed to be highlighted were some grammatical errors, the use of local terms, and the illustration. Meanwhile, for the

instructional design analysis, the highlighted points were about the appropriateness among material and curriculum, and students' needs. After being analysed, there were no significant mistakes found.

Then, after being revised by following the experts' suggestion, this product, then, was considered as valid with high validity in content, and very high validity in instructional design. It implies that this developed reading materials were in line the standard competencies, and basic competencies of Curriculum 2013, and fulfill students' need for Lahat local culture. It was also supported with appropriate language used for the secondary students. Therefore, this product was appropriate for teacher to use in teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, based on one-to-one and small group evaluation which aims to find out if the reading materials were practical. There were several comments and suggestions from students about the reading materials. First, they stated that there were some words they did not know the meaning, but in general they understood both the passages and their instruction. They also added that some images used as illustration were not really clear. Hence, several revision had been done based on students' response by reconsidering the lexical choices, and selecting images with better quality, and more attractive. Furthermore, to find out its potential effect, field test was administered. Based on the result of reading comprehension, as the number of students achieving the intended outcome score was 93.3%, it can be concluded that the potential effect of the product was very high. [Elvina, et al. \(2020\)](#), [Sudyanto and Kurniawan \(2020\)](#), and [Sopian, et al. \(2019\)](#) were also found that their developed product had potential effect. Somehow, several aspects should be emphasised in reading reading skills. They were about finding main idea, and detailed information since some students faced difficulty answering those types of questions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that the developed Lahat local culture-based instructional reading materials was valid, practical and had potential effect as the students achieved the learning objectives. The developed reading materials can provide information to younger generation about what they culture has especially in Lahat Regency which have many tourism sites. In addition, the results also showed that students responded that the text about Lahat local-culture used simple structured sentences. Those sentences also made up of familiar words so they did not find any difficulties in comprehending the story. Pictures and the proposition of the text were well designed. They had willingness in comprehending the story since they were really happy and enjoyed the story very much. It really helps the students in improving their reading in narrative text. This current study was contributed to strengthen the previous study about validity, practicality and potential effect of the developed reading materials with local culture in narrative text for the ninth-grade students' of SMP N 5 Lahat.

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