

## Turning Classroom Project into Textbook Design in English for Specific Purposes Subject

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### Abstract

This article discusses my experience in shaping EFL learners' project on textbook design in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) subject. This task was challenging since the learners' project designing textbook was in the sixth semester students. This article first explores the concept of ESP, principles in developing materials and classroom project. Then, it goes to focus on the pedagogical procedure for designing ESP textbook. This procedure includes (1) prior to designing a textbook; (2) designing a draft of the textbook; (3) finalization of designing textbook; and (4) demonstrating peer teaching on one of the units of the textbook. Finally, it elaborates students' responses to these practices. The findings show that classroom project can enhance learners' to good cooperation, improve learners' knowledge and creativity, and promote learners individual and social values to improve their harmony in life. For future researchers, it is suggested exploring the effect of classroom project on students' achievement, and to examine the correlation between classroom project on ESP subject and learners' social values.

**Keywords:** classroom project, textbook design, ESP

## **A. Introduction**

It is no doubt that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) becomes one of the important areas in English language teaching in the recent decade. Several countries such as China, Japan, Korean, Hongkong, Japan, Malaysia, and Indonesia have implemented this study variously. China, for instance, has started this issue since the 1970s (Yingchun, 2010). In Japan, ESP movement has shown significant growth. The Ministry of Education advocated offering English courses for a specific discipline, e.g 'English for Chemists', and 'General English' courses. Interestingly, as quoted from Anthony (2002) the ESP community in Japan has also become more defined, with the Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET) ESP SIG set up in 1996 and the Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) N-SIG to be formed shortly. In Indonesia, the issue of ESP also attracts scholars' attention. Several articles, as well as thesis, seriously discussed the related topics.

In order to implement ESP, providing appropriate materials development is needed. Richard (2001) points out that textbooks are the key component of language teaching serving as the basis for much of the language input learners receive when learning a language. The textbook is a device to help students to get not only familiar with the linguistic aspects of the language but also with social and cultural aspects embedded in language. Bouzidi (2009), further, states that an important component of an effective ESP course is a textbook that contains job-related English lessons.

Realizing this fact, the teaching of ESP subject does not only provide students with wide variety of ESP theories but also produce an ESP textbook. To respond to this idea, the researcher assigned learners to design a textbook as their classroom projects. Several experts claim the benefit of classroom project for learners. It facilitated the learner construction of knowledge (Hagstrom, McGehee, Aslin, & Baker: 2008). In addition, learners can develop their confidence (Fried-Booth, 2002). It also increases social, cooperative skills and group cohesiveness (Coleman, 2000). The researcher's major aims to ask them were firstly to train learners to carefully design a textbook. This is possible for them to promote their project to go public. Other aims are learners learn how to enhance their knowledge in a particular field, get a meaningful experience, and improve their creativity. The others are students are able to develop problem solving and higher order thinking as well to individual and social values to improve their harmony in life. Therefore, providing learners with experience by designing a textbook can be a challenging task as their project in the ESP subject. This activity is intended to provide a new paradigm in teaching ESP by assigning students to design textbook as their classroom project.

## **B. Literature Review**

### **1. The concept of English for Specific Purposes (ESP)**

Scholars and practitioners have been interested in discussing the definition of ESP for a long time. Richards & Schmidt (2010) define ESP as a language course or program of instruction in which the content and aims of the course are fixed by the specific needs of a particular group of learners. Dudley-evans, et al (1998) define ESP in terms of

absolute and variable characteristics. The Absolute Characteristics is as follows: (a) ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners; (b) ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves; (c) ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse, and genre. Meanwhile, Variable Characteristics are (a) ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines; (b) ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English; (c) ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level; (d) ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students; (e) Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems. Furthermore, Brunton (2009) identifies the following ESP characteristics (a) ESP consists of English language teaching designed to meet the needs of the learner; (b) ESP contains about particular disciplines, occupation and activities; (c) ESP is different from general English and it is not taught according to any pre-ordained method.

Need analysis serves as the basis of ESP. Saragih (2014) argues that analyzing the specific need of a particular group of learners serves as an important starting point in the ESP course. It will help select and prioritize what students' needs. Lesiak-Bielawska (2015) emphasizes that need analysis is a prerequisite to any ESP course. It not only provides the input for course design but it also the source of authentic, need specific materials that can be used during the course. To sum up, in order to achieve the goal of ESP, teachers should do need analysis carefully and deeply.

## **2. Classroom Project**

Classroom project could be defined as an approach to classroom teaching and learning that is designed to engage students in designing a particular task. Blumenfeld et al., (1991) and Patton (2012) used the term Project-based learning. It refers to students designing, planning, and carrying out an extended project that produces a publicly-exhibited output such as a product, publication, or presentation. Patton (2012) further suggests some basic steps in the classroom project as follows: (a) get an idea; (b) design the project; (c) tune the project; (d) do the project, and (e) exhibit the project. Rainer & Lewis (2005) claims the following criteria to achieve the learners' success in classroom project: (a) contribute to group discussion or planning; (b) participate in problem-solving and decision making; (c) co-operate to plan and present ideas; (d) negotiate with others in initiating, accepting and shaping ideas; and (e) adapt their approach in order to work with a range of peers.

## **3. Principles in Designing Textbook**

Masuhara (2003) points out that one of the principles in developing materials is to attempt to engage learners' interest by selecting texts which are not only suitable for teaching areas such as strategies, vocabulary, or discourse, but which also appeal to learners' interests, attitude, and emotion. She further explains that 'A much stronger

arguments come from the fact that good texts work on learner's effect which is vital for deep processing and creates reasons and motivation to read on'.

Likewise, Tomlinson in Richard (2001) also lists several basic principles in conducting materials development for the teaching of language as follows: (a) Material should achieve impacts; (b) Material should help learners to feel at ease; (c) Materials should help learners to develop confidence; (d) What is being taught should be perceived by learners as relevant and useful; (e) Materials should require and facilitate learner self-investment; (f) Learners must be ready to acquire the point being taught; (g) Materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes; Materials should take into account that the positive effects of instruction are usually delayed; (h) Materials should take into account that learners have different learning styles; (i) Materials should take into account that learners differ in affective attitudes; (j) Materials should permit a silent period at the beginning of instruction; (k) Materials should not rely too much on controlled practice; and (l) Materials should provide opportunities for outcome feedback

In addition, Crawford in Richard & Renandya (2002) states that materials obviously reflect the writers' views of language and learning, and teachers (and students) will respond according to how well these match their own beliefs and expectations. Thus, she suggests some points to be considered in providing effective materials: (a) Language is functional and must be contextualized; (b) Language development requires learner engagement in purposeful use of language; (c) The language used should be realistic and authentic; (d) Classroom materials will usually seek to include an audiovisual component; (e) Second language learners need to develop the ability to deal with written as well as spoken genres

Brown (1995) further postulates several characteristics of a textbook to be adopted: (a) material background. This includes author's credential and publisher's reputation; (b) fit to curriculum; (c) physical characteristics such as layout, organization, direction, material quality; (d) logistical characteristics; and (e) teachability.

In summary, it is important that materials developers should consider students' interest, attitude, motivation, and emotion as well as expectation. In addition to this, material developers also should accommodate different learning style and relevant to the learner's need.

### **C. Research Methodology**

This study employed qualitative research since the researcher believes that it is suitable with this study research and answer the research questions. Boyd (2007) clearly states that "Qualitative research is the systematic process of collecting information on what people say and do and create in their natural settings to discover the world as the people themselves see and experience it". Data were collected using an interview to 42 learners who took ESP subject. Data, then, were coded in the descriptive ways in order to provide deep analysis. Furthermore, data were explored and interpreted. To analyze the data, the researcher used Miles & Hubberman (2007) model. It consists of three activities; reduction of the data, data display, and conclusion and verification of the data.

## **D. Findings**

In the following part, the researcher describes stages designing textbook. The lesson starts with the presentation of designing an ESP textbook; (1) prior to designing textbook; (2) designing a draft of textbook; (3) finalization of designing a textbook; (4) demonstrating the teaching.

### **1. Prior to Designing a Textbook**

At first, the researcher asked students to choose the ESP areas based on their own interest. Some of them, for example, decide the area of Occupation such as English for Hotel Receptionist, English for drivers, and English for the travel agent. Another learner finds himself dealing with academic purposes such as English for Islamic studies, English for the chemist, and English for guidance and counseling. Others chose English for Professional Purposes such as English for nursing, English for the librarian, and English for doctors. The researcher then asked learners to do need analysis using the current concept of needs analysis as suggested by Dudley-evans et al., (1998) including professional information about the learners; professional information about the learners; English language information about the learners; the learners' lack; Language learning information; Professional communication information; What is wanted from the course; and Information about how the course will be run.

Moreover, to collect in-depth information related to learners' need. The researcher encouraged them to provide audio or video recording and then asked them to transcribe the interviews. Two weeks later, learners, in groups, bring their observational results in the classroom and present it to their peers. Lecturer and learners discuss and give feedback on their work.

### **2. Designing a Draft of Textbook**

The next activity is a textbook draft. Learners design an ESP textbook based on the result of the need analysis they got in the field. In the beginning, learners made a textbook outline. Some groups outline five units. Another group decides six units. Others, however, determine seven units. Learners in the group, in turn, present their textbook outline in the classroom. Lecturer and learners discuss and give some responses in order to improve their works. In the process of giving responses, The researcher asked learners to critique each other's work using Paton's ideas (2012) namely be kind; be specific, and be helpful. The next activity is learners design two units in the classroom. The same activity happens every week until the completed work achieved.

### **3. Finalization of Designing a Textbook**

In this stage, learners completed their ESP textbook including designing a textbook cover, back cover, writing acknowledgment, table of content and completing all units of the textbooks. This stage includes the display of their classroom project in the wider community. As a result, it becomes a stimulus for thought for other students as well as lecturers.

#### 4. Demonstrating the Teaching

The last step is students demonstrate the teaching to the peer. They were assigned to make a syllabus and choose one unit of the textbook to demonstrate in the classroom. They used their textbook that they design as well as teaching media. After having a demonstration, learners and lecturers discussed their performance.

Table 1. Detail Classroom Project of ESP Subject

Time	Task	Detail
Week 1 -3	Discussing the concept of ESP, challenges, and opportunities to ESP today, ESP textbook, and need analysis for ESP	Students discussed the ESP concept as stated in the syllabus
Week 4-6	Doing Need Analysis	The learners were asked to interview informants using a semi-structured interview format. The result of the interview was analyzed to know the need of the learners The learners bring their observational result and present it in the classroom.
Week 7	Designing Draft of Textbook	The learners first made a syllabus based on need analysis. They then designed a draft of the textbook. The number of the unit consists of 7 units. Each unit includes learning outcome, topics, language skills, vocabularies, and grammatical features.
Week 8 -9	Designing Textbook (cover, back cover, Unit 1 & 2)	The learners designed a cover, back cover, unit 1-2. The learners' works should be presented in the classroom Learners and lecturers response to their work
Week 10-11	Designing Textbook (Unit 3-5)	The learners designed unit 3-5. The learners' works should be presented in the classroom Learners and lecturers response to their work
Week 12-13	Designing Textbook (Unit 6-7)	The learners design unit 6-7. The learners' works should be presented in the classroom Learners and lecturers response to their work
Week 14	Designing the Final Textbook	The learners designed textbook cover, table of content, acknowledgment, Unit 1-7, reference, answer key, and back cover (brief explanation on the textbook and writers curriculum vitae)
Week 15-16	Demonstrating the Teaching of the Textbook	Learners chose one of the units of the textbook and teach it to the peer in front of the class. Learners and lecturers give feedback

## **5. Learners' Responses on These Practices**

In order to know learners' responses to these activities, the researcher interviewed them. Following are the result of the most important responses from the interview:

### **a. Increasing learners' knowledge on the particular field.**

"Our knowledge on the particular field gets deeper"

"Our understanding gets better on the specific field"

"We choose Islamic Education as our topic in ESP. Consequently, we know better in understanding the Islamic field".

### **b. Improving students' creativity.**

"This activity could improve our creativity in the designing textbook"

"This project makes us more creative"

"The creative ideas come up".

### **c. Giving good experience for students**

"Enhance the experience"

"Get meaningful experience"

"We get fruitful experience in designing a textbook"

### **d. Training students to design materials**

"Practicing in designing materials"

"We are trained to design materials"

"The benefit of this activity is I know better how to design a textbook"

### **e. Enhancing students' ability in group work**

"Since we work in a group, consequently it can enhance our cooperation"

"Improve our teamwork"

"The benefit is tightened group cooperation"

"This project makes us cooperating to do our best".

### **f. Improving students' skill in teaching**

"That's also an opportunity to improve the teaching skill"

"This project does not only to design materials but also to teach the materials in the classroom. As a result, it can improve our teaching ability better"

### **g. Knowing how to design a textbook**

"Since the lecturer taught us how to design a textbook, we got much knowledge on how to create a good textbook"

"To be honest, this project enlarges our horizon to know how to design a textbook"

### **h. Train to perform in front of a class**

"The ESP lecturer assigned us to present the project in the classroom. As a result, we are trained to present our ideas in the classroom"

"It enables us to perform our ideas in front of the class".

### **i. Improving students' confidence**

"Since the project presented in the classroom every week, we are brave to perform in the classroom. As a result, our confidence occurred"

"We present the work every week so that we automatically get used to speaking better in front of the class"

- j. Improving students' problem solving**
  - “We have several skills to identify the solution to the problem during textbook design”
  - “We are able to solve problems in a variety way in classroom project”
  - “We can solve problems on a team with others”
- k. Enhancing students' individual and social values**
  - “It promotes our social values”
  - “To be honest, this classroom project strengthen our individual and social values”
  - “We love this way since it can enhance positive values”
  - “This project shapes our personality better”.

However, some learners also several explained difficulties in the classroom project. Learners felt that the duration of the project was too short. Here are some comments from learners:

- “We need much more time to get the better result on our ESP project”
- “Yes, sometimes we have lost motivation due to short time”.

Another difficulty was learners were not having clear role in the group work. In other words, some of group members dominated the work, while others did little work on the project. Finally, learners had difficulty in choosing the unit to demonstrate to teach at the end of the project. The responses were explained as follows:

- “It was not easy to choose the unit we demonstrate”
- “It seems that we felt uncomfortable with the topic choice”
- “It is difficult to decide one topic to demonstrate”.

## **E. Discussion**

The result of this study clearly shows that the use of classroom project in teaching ESP can enhance learners to good cooperation. This finding supports the idea of Dunne & Bennet (1990) who claims that in modern society, cooperation in the face-to-face group is increasingly important. This study also empirically improves students' creativity. This finding supports the theory of Ismuwardani, Nuryatin, & Doyin (2019) who claim that classroom project significantly affects students' creativity.

The study also confirms that learners got knowledge as well as experiences by using classroom project. This is to highlight the idea of Fragoulis and Tsiplakides (2009). They claim that students acquire knowledge through a process of “building” it in, form groups, cooperate, use authentic, “real” information sources, process and evaluate them, take initiative, and make decisions.

It is also important to note that classroom project brings some benefits. First, the process leading to the end-product of project-work provides opportunities for students to develop opportunities for students to develop their confidence and independence (Fried-Booth, 2002). The Second advantage is students can improve their self-esteem and positive attitudes toward learning (Stoller, 2006). The third benefit is the social skills and



collaborative skills improve dramatically (Fragoulis & Tsiplakides, 2009). The fourth benefit is dealing with the development of problem-solving and higher order thinking skills (Allen, 2004). The other reported benefit is it can enhance students' language skill (Levine, 2004) and provide opportunities for the natural integration of language skills (Stoller, 2006).

However, learners also have problems in terms of duration of the project, decide the clear roles for group members, and demonstrate topics in teaching. These comments suggest that time management is one of the important factors in doing classroom project (Aldabbus, 2018). In terms of clear role in work, Fragoulis & Tsiplakides (2009) confirm that the teacher is an indispensable source of inspiration and encouragement, including in deciding students' role in the project. Similarly, Mansor et al (2015) state that group with different abilities and role are another difficult area in the classroom project. The pedagogical implication of this study is teaching conceptual theories in the teaching of ESP subject is not enough. The lecturers, thus, have to apply classroom project in the form of textbook design to improve their knowledge, promote their individual and social values, develop, problem-solving and higher order thinking skills, and enhance language skill.

## **F. Conclusion**

The results of the present study indicate that classroom project on a textbook design empirically to enhance not only students' knowledge, creativity, and teaching skills on ESP area but also it promotes students individual and social values to improve their harmony in life. In addition to this, using a classroom project to design textbook could motivate learners in ESP course. Considering this finding, it is recommended to English teachers and practitioners adopt this pedagogical procedure in the teaching of ESP in the classroom. Moreover, this study investigated the teaching of ESP in two classes on limited area qualitatively. Therefore, The researcher suggests exploring the effect of classroom project on students' achievement, and to examine the correlation between classroom project on ESP subject and learners' social values.

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