

## DEVELOPING READING MATERIAL BASED ON ISLAMIC VALUES FOR ENGLISH TEACHING DEPARTMENT OF STAIN MANDAILING NATAL

Oleh :

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### Abstract

Reading material that is contextually and academically appropriate for students' needs is an important component of teaching English. In reality, some of the reading material used by the lecturer is inadequate for the needs of the students. This research developed reading material that contextually applies to Islamic colleges and is appropriately suitable for students' knowledge. To achieve the aims, the research design was a research and development (R and D). The respondents of the research were 52 students of the English Teaching Department STAIN Mandailing Natal. They were chosen to use a technique called purposive random sampling. As part of the research procedures, it carried out five phases: (1) conducting a need analysis with the student, (2) designing reading material based on Islamic values, (3) developing reading material based on Islamic values. (4) obtaining expert opinions on the validity of reading material (5) determining the feasibility of reading material. The research findings show students need reading material that covers: Islamic context in their reading materials since they study in Islamic-based campuses and stay in most Islamic-society regions. Then, students need reading material that is suitable for students' knowledge level for text, illustration, pictures, even the example of reading material. The students also need an Islamic vocabulary in reading material, which may use them to apply in daily life. Expert validated this model of reading material and it yielded as valid and practical to be applied in reading subject specifically for English Teaching Department students of STAIN Mandailing Natal. After conducting dissemination to students for the practicality, this reading material is practical and applicable to be used for reading subjects. We can state that this reading material applies to lecturers and matches students' needs appropriately.

**Keywords:** *Developing, Islamic Values, Reading Materials*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The existence of reading material, also known as a coursebook or textbook in the academic domain, is undeniable. Textbooks are an important teaching-learning aid in the education field (McGrath, 2006). It assists teachers/instructors in thoroughly substantiating the message or information for learners and arousing students' curiosity to learn something new. Most teachers or lecturers use it as a medium for advancing and developing learning objectives that have already been specified in the syllabus during the classroom instructional process (Nunan, 1991:208). As the sources of information textbooks provided an abundance of information that learners can exploit. In advance stances, the classroom material is an absolutely crucial component for EFL, predominantly English language learners. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) advocated textbook is a universal element in language teaching. It is a catalyst that supports the instructional process in order to reach the learning objective and generates teachers' expertise and insight. Almost in a similar tone, Ur (1996) claimed that a textbook is a basis for a language course. It obviously shows that textbook is a demand for learning any field of subject, especially language

learning. The role of the textbook for a classroom is equally important as teacher and learner do (Rea-Dikins and Germaini, 1992; McDonough and Shaw, 2003).

In further explanation, many books predominantly English Learning books are written in native English, likewise the context and content associated with English culture. This condition may emerge mildly difficulties for foreign or second language learners catching the cognizance and messages. Contextualization is a major consideration in selecting coursebooks for EFL students (Block, 1991). Contextualization compensates for the diversity between native language culture and target language culture; it is the best way of internalizing local wisdom to the EFL students. The above statement then is corroborated Halim and Halim (2016) course books ideally should be adjusted with learners' dynamic environment in the classroom. Not all content matches with students' cultural background and language exposure, for instance, difficulty in comprehending grammatical matter, understanding cultural distinguish, and many other difficulties. These discrepancies apparently may impart a gap between learning objectives and

students' needs. In order to match with students' needs, the instructor/teacher usually adds, selects, lengthens, shortening, and modifies the material (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2004).

In broaden concepts, there are three ways of turning course design fit into actual teaching material. One of them is by modifying existing material or called material adaptation (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). The books that written in English native language is adapted and developed in order to match students' needs for EFL Learners. Developing is intended for selecting or distilling the appropriate material for the students whether the materials are effective and fix for students' needs.

That the native English author which contextually and academically provides disparity of students' needs, that raised some issues have produced the current reading textbook as to what are the needs of English Teaching Departments students of STAIN Mandailing Natal on reading material? (2) how the validity and practicality of the developed-product of reading material for English Teaching Departments students of STAIN Mandailing Natal?

## 2. METHOD

### Type of Research

This research was employed as a research and development (R and D). According to Sukmadinata (2006:164), developmental research is a study that focuses on the process or step of designing a new product or developing an existing one. The step or process began with a needs analysis, followed by an investigation of the problem and stating the solution. Developmental research could be defined as the systematic study of designing, developing, and evaluating instructional programs, processes, and products in order to achieve consistency and effectiveness. The purpose of this study was to develop reading materials based on Islamic values for STAIN Mandailing Natal English Teaching Department students. Branch (2009: 17) developed the ADDIE model, which provides five steps to be completed: analyze, design, develop, implement, and evaluate. These five steps were elaborated succinctly: analyzing the need analysis both present and target condition, designing the appropriate product, developing the new product by consulting experts, implementing the new product, and obtaining the feasibility or practicability of the new product from experts and students.

### Subjects of the Research

The current study employed 42 students from English Teaching Department of STAIN Mandailing Natal as the subject of research. The subjects were the third and fifth grade students who had taken Reading Subject class. The researcher has chosen 42 students as respondents using a total sampling technique in which the researcher completely covered all subjects. Total population sampling is a type of purposive sampling technique in which the entire

population with a specific set of characteristics is examined. Theoretically, if the population is less than 100 people, the entire population is chosen as the research sample.

### Research Procedure

This research was carried out in five stages. It began with an analysis of the need for reading material based on Islamic values and ended with an evaluation of the new model based on user perception. Those phases were presented in their entirety as follows:

#### *Analyzing*

In this phase, the researcher examined various types of needs for Reading material subject based on Islamic values for STAIN Mandailing Natal's English Teaching Department. Before distributing the questionnaire, researcher consulted to the expert for validation. The questionnaire was discussed by the researcher with an expert from IAIN Batusangkar at the time, Dr. SirajulMunir, M.Pd. After revising the questionnaire, the researcher distributed a needs analysis questionnaire to students. The questionnaire contained 20 questions that addressed three critical aspects of need analysis: necessity, want, and lack. The students were interviewed by the researcher in order to gather detailed information. The goal is to supplement the data obtained from the questionnaire as well as to gain in-depth information uncovered by the questionnaire.

#### *Designing*

After obtaining clear information from the need analysis, the researcher constructed appropriate reading material for the students. The researcher designed what types of appropriate reading material met and matched with the needs analysis. During this phase, the researcher also investigated current reading materials used by lecturers. The researcher focused more on cultural issues, particularly Islamic values; the text, photograph, and illustration

#### *Developing*

During this stage, the researcher introduced a framework for reading material. The prototype in designing phase was modified by researcher by investigating the previous lack. In particular, the researcher developed a model of reading material that matched and met the needs of the students. Experts validated the Reading material model to ensure its validity and practicability. In this case, the researcher required the opinion of a validator who was a professor and an expert on reading material and teaching English from Padang State University (Universitas Negeri Padang). Following expert feedback, the researcher revised the model in order to achieve a better result of reading material based on Islamic values for STAIN Mandailing Natal English Teaching Department students.

#### *Implementing*

The researcher distributed reading materials to STAIN Mandailing Natal third and fifth grade students during this stage. By putting the product into

use, the authors were able to learn about students' responses to it. Product testing exposes the target audience to a variety of options and asks them for feedback on each one. Through product dissemination, researchers can compare the practicality and feasibility of products (reading material).

### 3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire results were tabulated into four categories: analyzing the need, designing the model, developing the model, and implementing the product.

#### Analysis students' Needs of Reading Material based on Islamic Values

The researcher conducted a needs analysis using a questionnaire. The researcher analyzed the students' responses after distributing the questionnaire. The following are the results of the questionnaire responses from students (in order of highest percentage rank):

No Item	Statement	Response (%)
3	Reading material for Reading subject should contains Islamic values	86
4	Reading Material for Reading subject should understandable and succinct	81
6	Reading Material for Reading subject should contains Islamic vocabulary	80
16	Reading Material for Reading subject provides task and assignment	78
9	Previous Reading Material for Reading subject employs much general knowledge than Islamic	73
13	Vocabulary is important and needed in Reading Subject	71
7	Reading Material for Reading subject able to stimulate higher order thinking	70

Based on the table above, it is clear that students require reading material that has Islamic value, includes assignments, promotes higher order thinking, and is understandable and succinct. The results of these questionnaires support the researcher's decision to create a prototype of the reading material. Needs analysis, which includes lack, want, and necessity, is a critical component in the design of reading material. Overall, needs analysis is beneficial in that it provides a variety of information that can be used as a guide for course design, syllabus design, or curriculum development. By incorporating them into a questionnaire, researchers gain concise insight for organizing the material and determining the practicality of the developed product.

#### Designing the model Reading material based Islamic values

Based on the previous data of the questionnaire result, researcher designs the appropriate model for reading material. The model of Reading material consisted of several supported parts as follows:

##### 1. Heading:

It's used to highlight each chapter in a book. In that reading material, there are heading signals from one topic to the next. It informs the reader about the material's main idea or topic. The headings in this

reading material are designed to be consistent in terms of font, size, color, and indentation at each level. The researcher uses bolder and larger headings for the second and subsequent levels. Its goal is to draw attention to a particular idea or concept in the chapter that will be discussed further on in the following pages.

##### 2. Title

It denotes that language is approached through a specific area of content. It may become a general understanding or idea of what the author will deliver.

##### 3. Input (content)

Input serves many purposes, including the following:(a) It creates a context of knowledge for readers (in this case, students) to understand the information. (b) It activates learner thought and allows them to think independently by recognizing the content being learned.(c) It provides meaningful context that is useful for vocabulary and grammar.(d) It broadens and expands the readers' understanding or experience, allowing them to recall prior knowledge.

##### 4. Example or more explanation

Giving an example is an activity used to sharpen and enhance the students' understanding of a subject. In other words, it is a method for the author to provide a thorough explanation to the students.

##### 5. Task/assignment

The final goal of language learning is the task or assignment. It establishes clear objectives for students and assesses their progress through the lesson or chapter of the subject.

##### 6. Vocabulary

Each session's vocabulary was included by the author. It is intended to compensate for students' lack of language exposure and to assist readers (students) in expanding their understanding. Vocabulary allows students to express their thoughts when reading a text. The more vocabulary they learn, the better they will understand the text.

#### Developing Product of Reading Material based on Islamic value

Experts validated previously developed models during this phase. The researcher sought the assistance of experts to yield an opinion on the developed product. The term "judgment" referred to expert suggestions, corrections, and contributions to developed products in order to make them valid and practical. Those developed products could be used for college students after expert evaluation.

The Reading material models were validated by two experts, they are as follows: Prof. Dr. M. Zaim, M. Hum was the first validator a senior lecturer who specialized in language assessment. He was also well-known as a Research and Development expert. Dr. SirajulMunir, M. Pd, a lecturer at IAIN Batusangkar, was the second validator. His qualification was English language teaching, specifically reading; his qualification was a perfect match for this study. There are several product validation indicators, including relevance of the

content to the teaching objective, language used on the reading material, mechanical and structural writing, and graphic design/layout. Following the expert's judgment, the reading material product sounded valid and practical to be used in teaching reading.

### **Implementing Product of Reading Material based on Islamic value**

In this phase researchers implement the product to the user of reading material Islamic values-based, the user on this occasion was English Teaching Department Students of STAIN Mandailing Natal. Field usability testing (on this case researcher applied limited product testing) combines hypothesis, theory and practice in the context of a product reading material. Respondents in field testing use a product in their own environments in the classroom, that is totally when compare to the theory as stated on the books. This activity was designed to address students' perceptions of the developed product. The following is the reason for the limited product testing: (a) Identifying issues that users encounter while following their own work processes in everyday situations during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. (b) Gathering qualitative data about the target audience that was unavailable while conducting the research, as well as the theoretical foundation that supported this study, particularly in classroom settings, where students are the primary users of this reading material.

In this limited testing product, the researcher distributed questionnaires about the product's usability and practicality (Reading Material based Islamic values). The questionnaire includes several criteria, such as the modesty of the book, language and structure suitability, the product's communicative message, and the use of sign/symbol on that reading material. There are 24 students who will be asked to share their thoughts on this product as a representative of the sample. The findings revealed that this reading material is suitable to be used in a reading classroom.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

It is obvious that textbooks or reading material are an important part of classroom teaching and learning. According to Bell and Gower, as cited by Tomlinson (2014:39), reading material or course book fulfills a wide range of practical needs for students and teachers, provides teachers with a sense of self-confidence, and acts as an agent of change by introducing innovative ideas into classroom activities. The advent of reading material yields myriad advantages for students, as well as supports to obtain learning objective. Taking this stance into account, every lecturer should ideally design an appropriate course book for their students. Material should be appropriate for the context in which it will be used and should arouse the interest of the students who will use it in the teaching process (Tomlinson,

2014:37). It implies that context and co-text are inherent in the design of reading material and occur concurrently. Cultural dimension is a component of teaching; it is an inseparable item that is disseminated by the author within the textbook or reading material.

Based on the findings of this study, students require reading material that is academically and contextually appropriate for their needs. According to the results of the survey, 81% of respondents agreed that reading material contains Islamic values. Deswila et al. (2021:236) pointed out that text, dialogue, and images in textbooks have cultural values that students consume explicitly and implicitly in the classroom. The previous reading book that students used was a ready-made book written by a native speaker. It considers the fact that the book contains western culture, some of which are inappropriate for the local context.. The text written inside the book, the images inserted within the text, for example, mostly discussed ideas about living in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and other foreign countries. There is a cultural disparity in the local context, which primarily consists of STAIN Mandailing Natal students.

This condition is in contrast to local wisdom, in which local people pass down norms, traditions, and beliefs from generation to generation. Students can learn English but not completely change their beliefs and traditions. It is much more acceptable for students to learn English within their culture rather than learning English and gradually forgetting their tradition. They gain insight and horizons, as well as language exposure, from their native language, and on the other hand, they can promote their native local culture. According to McKay (2003), information on native culture in textbooks enables locals to expose their own culture in new ways. It has been observed that learning a foreign language, such as English, does not completely change the way local people act, behave, and think, but it does provide them with new experiences in practicing their own culture. The information contained in ready-made material enriched students' knowledge or experience of foreigner culture and allowed learners to criticize or filter their culture and tradition stringently. They may think globally in order to gain knowledge and language exposure, but they are also asked to act locally in order to keep the tradition alive.

Furthermore, the design of reading material is based on the needs of the students as well as the academic reasons for material development. Students' needs imply that the text, image, assignment, example, and vocabulary provided in the book are appropriate for the user (students). Academic reasoning implies that the process of designing the book should purposefully invoke the lesson objective, steps or methodology, syllabus goal, and language exposure. Hutchinson and Waters (1987:107) identified the following fundamental



elements of designing reading material: (a) materials provide stimulus for learning, (b) materials help to organize the teaching and learning process in the classroom, (c) materials embody or reflect the nature of language and learning, (d) materials reflect the nature of learning task, (e) materials have useful function for elaborating technique, and (f) materials facilitate models for correct and appropriate learning.

Simply put, there are four core components of material design: input, language, content, and task (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987:109). Input is a method of providing readers with information, knowledge, experience, and insight (on this case is students). A variety of items were used as input: a stimulus, a new language item, a topic, an information process, and opportunities to use existing language. Input can't stand on its own; it needs to be backed up by content focus. Content focus is a sub-elaboration of input that organizes and focuses information on a specific topic. It means that the information or knowledge will be divided into different categories. On this occasion, *language* is used to allow students to use language within the materials. Students have the opportunity to practice the language and examine how it works through the use of various pieces of information. Reading a text, for example, is a collection of language exposure; phonemics are the smallest part of language, words are a combination of phonemics, and sentences are made up of words and phrases. Students are exposed to a variety of language in a text or passage, which can help them develop their skill and comprehension, and eventually lead to them becoming independent learners. This reading material is intended to broaden students' language exposure and facilitate the transfer of language experience. *Task or assignment* is a way for them to practice and sharpen their knowledge input. A task or assignment is commonly given at the end of a lesson session to help students remember or practice their understanding of a subject. Its purpose is to serve as a clear indicator of a student's progress in the subject.

Each element is glued together and has a mutual symbolism and interrelation. The language and content for the students' task are chosen from the input. Those four components cover a wide range of topics in this current reading material, from the book's beginning (heading) to its ending (vocabulary building). Detail information is presented as follows.



Figure 1. Parts of Reading Materials

Researchers, in their capacity as reading material designers, have laid out a step-by-step process for creating reading material. The sequence of important elements that made up the textbook is depicted in the diagrams above. Input, content focus, language, and task or assignments are all tangible formations. Number (1) is a heading; it is used to denote the beginning of a chapter of reading material. The headings in this reading material are intended to be consistent in terms of font, size, color, and indentation at each level. The researcher uses bolder, larger headings for the second and subsequent levels. Following that, picture (2) is used as a previewing activity for readers, allowing them to guess, analyze, and even connect their experiences to the material. To gain a better understanding, picture number (3) may assist the learner in drawing an analogy or illustration. Readers can quickly grasp the meaning by focusing on that image. The number (4) denotes a path for readers to follow through the content. It could develop into a general understanding or idea of what the author will deliver. The title also assists readers in expanding their intellectual guesses as to what is being told in the following content. The number (5) is entered as the central point of the reading materials. It enables readers to broaden their knowledge and language exposure. It provides meaningful context, which is beneficial for vocabulary and grammar. Finally, it broadens and expands the readers' understanding or experience, making it possible for them to recall prior knowledge.

It is an example of content that is being taught as number (6). Giving examples not only helps to strengthen the information provided in the input,

but it also helps to clarify the material to the readers in a concise manner. Furthermore, number (7) denotes the direction in which the exercise or task should be completed. It directs what students will do and how they will do it. Direction is important because it describes the steps and methodological activity involved in comprehending the information. The final number, (8), stands for assignment or task. Assignments give the tutor the opportunity to receive individual feedback from students. The feedback will help learners assess their progress throughout the course, as well as motivate and support them as they continue their studies. Another goal of tasks and assignments is to help lecturers determine which aspects of your course are working well and which need to be improved.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, developing reading material based on Islamic values is beneficial to students. As stated in the preceding explanation, needs analysis is a critical component in the design of a textbook or reading material. This activity allows the developer to precisely design the prototype. According to the results of the questionnaire, the majority of students agreed that reading material should be relevant to the local context and religious values. It implies that reading material for STAIN Mandailing Natal students contains Islamic value in the form of images, text, and illustration. By preventing and preserving their own culture, students are able to learn a foreign language as well as culture.

Researchers emphasized various components in developing reading material that may provide significant support for the product's outcome. They are as follows: input (the methods of acquiring language skills and extending information), content (the methods of delivering the supported information within the textbook), language (the methods of using language through reading material), and final task or assignment (the ways of experiencing and practicing information, knowledge and language exposure). All of these components, which have been broken down into several chunks, are fundamental elements of designing reading material, and they are as follows: heading, title, input/content, model or example, assignment, and vocabulary session.

Based on the findings of the research, the developed reading material is both valid and practical for use in the classroom. That reading material has been rigorously validated by experts and provided with feedback and suggestions from them. To determine the product's usability for students, researchers solicited feedback and suggestions from users (college students). It should be noted that the reading material is strongly advised to be developed by a lecturer for a variety of academic and cultural fashions. More research on reading material is also recommended, not only for the Reading subject but also for the *Writing, Speaking, and Listening*

subjects. Because this study only looks into reading material based on Islamic values, more research into developing reading material based on local wisdom, students' level of knowledge, and social intercultural aspects is needed. The next researcher may continue this research in a different fashion and with a broader scope of study.

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