# Developing A Teaching Material Prototype for Linguistics Description of English Course

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## Abstract

Linguistics Description of English is a new subject in the curriculum of English Education Study Program in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education in Jambi University. Hence, the material for this subject is not yet available. Therefore, this research aims at developing a prototype of teaching materials for *Linguistics Description of English* course. By designing the prototype of teaching materials for this course, the researchers expected that lecturers who will teach this subject would not find difficulties in teaching this course. Besides, the use of materials which have been designed based on students' need and linguistic lecturers' discussion is anticipated to be able to encourage students to be more active in teaching and learning process. Thus, the choice of the topics is suited to the characteristics of the students and drew from the result of the need analysis questionnaire and forum group discussion (FGD) with the lecturers. This research utilized research and development design, based on the theory developed by Borg and Gall (1983). The result of the research is the prototype of the teaching materials for *Linguistics Description of English* course.

## Subject Areas

Teaching Linguistics

## Keywords

design, linguistics description of English, teaching material

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The English Education Study Program in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Jambi is one of the study programs that is highly favored by high school graduates. This statement can be justified by a large number of students who wanted to enroll in this study program every year. During the last five years, there have been about one thousand senior high school graduates apply for this program. This information can be found in the Academic Information System of Universitas Jambi (www.siakad.unja.ac.id). This likely happens because English is considered to have promising prospects for the future. Therefore, the English Education Study Program always revises its curriculum within a few years to respond to the demands of the students when they graduate later.

The latest curriculum change was in 2017. Students enrolling in 2017 have used the 2017 curriculum, while the previously enrolled students have used the 2014 KKNI curriculum. The 2017 curriculum in the English Education Study Program, FKIP Universitas Jambi, has experienced a significant change because it responded to the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI) and graduate competency standards (SKL) set by the association of English Education Study Programs (APSPBI). In formulating its latest curriculum, English Education Study Program defines three profiles of the graduates. They serve as language teachers, prospective researchers, and prospective entrepreneurs (Kurikulum 2017 of English Education Study Program FKIP Universitas Jambi 2017). Accurately, in terms of preparing prospective English teachers, the profile of the graduates is described in the following: "ICT-based educators and facilitators of creative and innovative learning with good and effective English language skills in daily, professional and academic contexts by mastering theoretical linguistic concepts and learning English" (p.5).

One effort to generate graduates who can use English both oral and written form well and effectively in daily usage, professional and academic contexts, while referring to the profile of graduates as prospective beginner researchers in the field of language, curriculum team for English Education Study Program revised some courses. Some of them are Morphology, Syntax, and Phonology. These three courses not included in curriculum 2017. These three subjects are merged to a single subject since the three subjects previously were taught at the same semester and by different lecturers so that the materials seemed to be overlapping each other and the students might be confused to study the three subjects at the same time. By having these three subjects fitted into one subject with additional time allocation, it hoped that the materials could be arranged effectively and efficiently based on the process of language acquisition (Cakiroğlu, 2018). The substitute for these three courses is named Linguistic Description of English (LDoE). It is compulsory coursework that will consist of materials related to some parts of branches of linguistics in English, namely Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax. Because this is a new course, the teaching materials have not determined. Therefore, the research team considered that it was crucial to develop a prototype of teaching materials so that lecturers who will teach this course in the upcoming semester will not be confused in teaching and students will also be expected to get learning materials that suit their needs. By developing the materials through R n D research, it also expected that the materials produced will be able to facilitate the language learning of the students (Tomlinson, 2012).

Table 1 is the topics and competency mapping that the research team drew in the design process. By having these three subjects integrated each other, the students are expected to learn a well-established concept about linguistics, starting from the ability to describe elements of English sounds to the ability to describe words and words formation process, and finally, the skills needed for analyzing English sentences.

The design of materials is essential to be conducted carefully since materials are one of the factors that determine the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process (Rusdi, 2018). According to Rani (2003), good material covers the needs and interests of the teachers, and students and must be suitable to the context where the materials are going to be used. Also, Hutchinson (cited in Tomlinson, 2014) said that materials viewed as "an embodiment of the aims, values, and methods of the particular teaching-learning situation."

**Table 1.** Range of topics for Linguistics Description of English

| Competences | Topics |
|---|---|
| Phonology (able to describe English sounds adequately) | - Phonetics and Phonemes<br>- Syllables and Stress<br>- Intonation<br>- Weak forms and Assimilation, Linking, and Illusion |
| Morphology (be able to describe the concept of English words formation and to analyze English words) | - Words, sentences, and Dictionaries<br>- Identifying the phonemes of words<br>- A word and its parts: roots, affixes, and their shapes<br>- Identifying the syllables and stress<br>- A word and its forms: Inflection<br>- A word and it is relative: Derivation<br>- Compound words, blends, and Phrasal words<br>- A word and its Structure<br>- Productivity in English word formation |
| Syntax (able to identify and analyze English sentence structure in terms of words, phrases, and sentences) | - Syntax and grammar<br>- Generative grammar<br>- Identifying the syllables, stress, and phonemes of the words<br>- Identifying word categories based on its formation<br>- Constituency, Trees, and Rules |

Furthermore, Lestari (2013) states that a teaching material has to be designed and written by instructional rules. It implies that a teaching material should be able to give a chance for students to study effectively and teachers to teach efficiently in order to reach all competences expected based on what has stated in the curriculum. In line with Lestari, Tomlinson (2012: 2) states that ideal materials should be "informative (informing the learner about the target language), instructional (guiding the learner in practicing the language), experiential (providing the learner with experience of the language in use), eliciting (encouraging the learner to use the language) and exploratory (helping the learner to make discoveries about the language).

## 1.1. The rationale of the research

This research aims at developing the prototype of a teaching material prototype for *Linguistics Description of English* course (LDoE). The result of this research is expected to be beneficial for teachers and students. For teachers, it hoped that the materials developed will help them in teaching the LDoE course. They will have guidance on what to give to the students. For students, it expected that the materials given would fit their need. By developing the materials through R n D research, it is expected that the materials produced will be able to facilitate the language learning of the students (Tomlinson, 2012). To reach the purpose of this research, the researchers formulated the research questions as follows:

1. What are the needs for developing a prototype of teaching materials for *Linguistic Description of English* course to improve teaching and learning process quality?
2. What are the aspects determining the prototype of teaching materials for *Linguistic Description of English* course to improve teaching and learning process quality?
3. What is the result of validation by the expert for the prototype of teaching materials for *Linguistic Description of English* course to improve teaching and learning process quality?

## 2. METHOD

Research and Development framework, based on the theory developed by Borg and Gall (1983), was used for this research. To conduct a research with this design there are 10 steps that should be conducted, grouped into 3 stages as follows: (1) research and information collecting; (2) product development consisting of 6 activities (planning, developing preliminary form of product, preliminary field testing, primary product revision, main field testing, and operational product revision; (3) product validation, which includes activities such as operational field testing, final product revision, and dissemination and implementation. The steps can be seen in Figure 1.
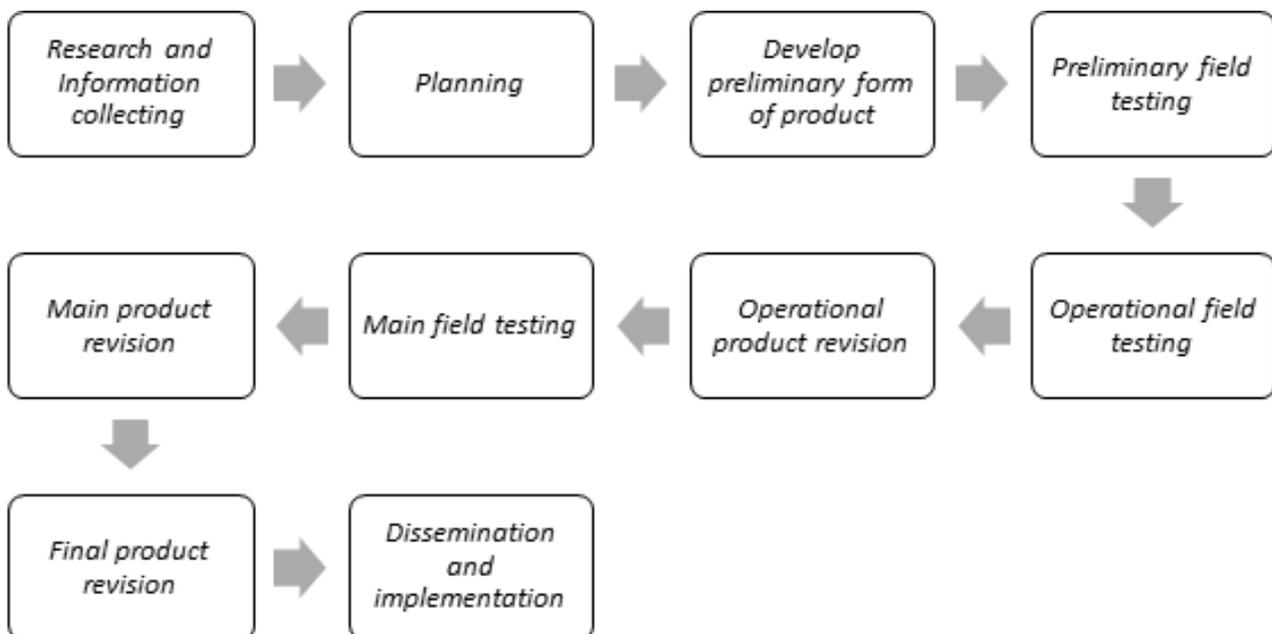


**Figure 1.** The Research and Development framework

Due to the limitation of the time allocated, the steps of conducting this research modified. After information collecting and planning, the researchers started designing the prototype of the product. Next, the researchers directly validated the product to a product validator. The researchers could not do the field testing since the class for LDoE subject is not available in the semester when the research was conducted.

In the information collection stage, the researchers did reflection and documentation study, and need analysis by using two instruments. Before the two instruments were applied, the researchers reflected the teaching and learning process in Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax subjects done by

the researchers as the teachers of those subjects to identify the strength and the weaknesses of the teaching method, materials, and media used. Besides, the researchers studied the curriculum of English Education Study Program for LDoE subject to determine the topics that should be included in the teaching materials and competences that should be achieved by the students.

The two instruments the researchers used were a questionnaire and an interview protocol. The questionnaires were adapted from some previous studies related to this research while the interview protocol was designed based on the components of a syllabus. The questionnaire distributed to students who had taken three linguistics subjects (Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax). The interview protocol was used in interviewing with English lecturers in a focus group discussion. A need analysis questionnaire distributed after the reflection and documentation study phase conducted. The questionnaire contained 28 statements consisting of 4 aspects (topics, media and instruction, face, and suggestions for improving the quality of the teaching and learning process), and given to 92 participants. The questionnaire designed in the form of close-ended and open-ended questionnaires. The open questions were used to find out the reasons for the participants' choices and suggestions for the improvement of the teaching and learning process quality.

Having collected data from the questionnaire, the researchers interviewed linguistics lecturers who have ever taught the three linguistic subjects in a forum group discussion (FGD). The head of English Education Study Program was also invited in the discussion to give a clear explanation about the changes in the curriculum. The result of the questionnaire and interview were then used to design the prototype of the material for the LDoE subject. Having finished designing the product, the researchers sent the product to an expert. The expert, in this case, was a lecturer majoring in English linguistics and having ever taught English Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax for more than five years. The researchers revised the product based on the evaluation given by the expert. The result of this research is the prototype of the teaching materials. The analysis to determine the last form of the products only based on the validation result.

## 3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The finding of this research based on data from the questionnaire, interview, and validation from the validator. Data from the questionnaire show that most students prefer to have a lecture as a teaching method for Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax. They like to listen to the explanation from the lecturers about the lesson because they think that it is easier for them to understand it. They did not like to have a group presentation because many of them state that the explanation given by their friends sometimes make them more confused. Even though "lecture' is a traditional method which is not dominant any more in this millennial era, it is still possible to use for subjects relating to many theories like Linguistic Description of English subject. 'Lecture' indeed also has some advantages.

According to http/www.cidde.pitt.edu/teaching/lecture-method, "lecture provides an economical and efficient method for delivering substantial amounts of information to large numbers of students. It affords a necessary framework or overview for subsequent learning, e.g., reading assignments, small group activities, discussion. It offers current information (more up to date than most texts) from many sources. It provides a summary or synthesis of information from different sources. It creates interest in a subject as lecturers transmit enthusiasm about their discipline" (p.1).

However, it is not clear what kind of lecture methods that the students prefer, whether didactic lectures, conventional lectures, or interactive lectures (Khalid & Ahmad, 2018) since the researchers did not specify it in the questionnaire. In addition to lecturing, they prefer to have a small group discussion to strengthen their comprehension of the lessons that have been delivered by the lecturer. Through a group discussion, the students can share information in mutual learning. The cooperation among students will allow them to achieve a better result in the teaching-learning process. Thus, in some of the activities arranged in the materials, the students will have several opportunities to do group works so they may talk each other, deliver questions to their peers and share understanding about the topics with their group members (McKimm & Morris, 2009). As for assignments, they stated that they liked doing the exercise better than doing other tasks such as writing a summary or doing a project assignment.

In the questionnaire, the researchers provided questions about topics that they think beneficial for them to study — the topics related to Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax. For Phonology, phonemes (segments of sounds), intonation, stress, and phonetics considered useful for them to study for the improvement of their English ability. For Morphology, the topics they chose were a word and its parts: roots, affixes and their shapes, words, sentences, and dictionaries, a word and its forms: inflection, a word, and its relatives: derivation, compound words, blends and phrasal words, a word, and its structure. The choice of the topics for Morphology is almost the same as that by participants in Sukirman's study (2015). In his study, the participants chose morphemes, root, inflection, and derivation, the English word, word formation, and word-formation processes, and affixes. It might be the case since those topics are the main components of Morphology (Katamba, 1993). Meanwhile, for Syntax, the topics they like were syntax and grammar, constituency, trees, and rules, and word categories.

Furthermore, the researcher also asked the participants that the layout of the teaching materials and the language used. They thought that the face/ performance of the teaching materials should be engaging, encouraging students to read, and the language should be simple so that the students are easier to understand the materials.

In addition to the data from the questionnaire, the researchers also obtained data from an interview conducted in the Focus Group Discussion form. The result of the FGD covers four aspects. Firstly, there should be a unity of the materials, and the topics of the lessons must relate to each other. Secondly, the materials relating to phonology must be taught first before Morphology and Syntax. They must be arranged according to the language acquisition process. The participants in the FGD though the case since before the new curriculum was released, the three linguistic subjects were taught at the same semester. Hence, the students learned the concept of the three branches at the same time. As a result, the students were often confused and did not understand well the theories they learned. Even just for basic things like the main concepts of Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax, many of them sometimes do not know how to differentiate them. Therefore, in learning LDoE subjects, the students need to comprehend the basic concept of language, namely analyzing sounds first before morphemes/ words, and sentences in order to enable them to analyze the language they are learning. It is in line with Yule's (2010) arguments that the acquisition process of a language starts from acquiring sounds. From those sound, infants start to combine sounds to form a word or

wordlike form to produce a meaningful unit. After that, they start to combine words to form sentences (Yule, 2010). Another aspect is about the course description and objective of the lessons. Those must include the integration of the three branches of linguistics. Last, the teaching methods can be matched with each topic of the materials.

The arrangement of topics, the content, and exercises follows the guidelines for constructivist theory (Bada, 2015). It begins with the elaboration of students' background knowledge, namely activating their existing knowledge about their language. By being more familiar with their language, the students will be able to see the application of linguistic theory as a tool to analyze languages in the world. Then, throughout the content, there will be an elaboration of topics as well as guided questions that can be discussed with the lecturer and their peers. By discussing this, both teachers and students can take benefits, such as obtaining information about students' comprehension about the material and having opportunities for students to construct knowledge together with their peers. Furthermore, the assignments in the developed material contain not only questions regarding material comprehension, but also questions for analysis about language phenomena that exist globally. With this kind of exercise, the students have chances to learn with experience by making themselves familiar with analyzing language.

Data from the questionnaire and FGD were used to design the prototype of teaching materials for LDoE. After designing the product, the researchers asked the expert to validate it. The validation questionnaire covered statements for evaluating the contents, appearance/structure/layout, and language. The score scale used was from 1 to 4 (1= very poor, 2= poor, 3=good, 4= very good). Suggestions for improvement of the product also asked in an open-ended question.

For the content aspect, there were five things assessed. They were (1) the appropriateness of the learning objectives with the competences that should be achieved for LDoE subject as stated in the curriculum, (2) the appropriateness of the contents with the competences that should be achieved for LDoE subject as stated in the curriculum, (3) the appropriateness of the materials with the level of the students, (4) the appropriateness of the materials with the present era, (5) the appropriateness of activities and exercises with the need of developing English skills for the students. The result of the validation for this aspect can be seen in table 2.

From table 2, it can be seen that the expert who validated the content gave4 for the first statement, 3 for statements 2, 3, 2, and 4 and 2 for statement 5. The average score for this part is 3. Hence, it can be concluded that the contents of the prototype of Linguistics    Description of English subject are good. However, the researchers still need to revise some aspects for this part to make them better, especially for the exercises given to the students.

**Table 2.** The result of validation for the content aspect of the prototype of teaching materials for Linguistics Description of English

| Indicators | Statements | Choices | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| A. Contents | 1. The learning objectives are fit to the competencies that should be achieved for Linguistics    Description of English subject as stated in the curriculum | 4 | | | |
| | 2. The contents are fit to the competencies that should be achieved for Linguistics    Description of English subject as stated in the curriculum | | 3 | | |
| | 3. The choice of the materials is fit to the level of the students. | | 3 | | |
| | 4. The materials are fit to the present era | 4 | | | |
| | 5. The exercises and activities are fit to the need of developing English skill for the students. | | | 2 | |

For the appearance of the teaching materials, there were three things assessed. They were (1) the materials have been an organized system so that the contents have related each other, (2) the materials have been displayed chronologically, (3) the balance of the presentation of each unit is right. The result of the validation for this aspect can be seen in table 3.

From table 3, it can be seen that the expert gave score 3 for all statements. The average score for this part is 3. Hence, it can be concluded that the appearance of the teaching materials for LDoE subject is good. The scores in the table show that the researchers also still need to improve the quality of the appearance. The product evaluated by the expert was only two units. It might cause the validator could not see the consistency of the layout. The topics in those units also did not show the integration of the whole branches of linguistics that students should learn in LDoE subject.

For the language aspect of the developed product, there were two things assessed. They were (1) the sentences used in this product are grammatically correct, and (2) the dictions are fit to the level of the students as stated in the curriculum. The result of the validation for this aspect can be seen in table 4.

**Table 3.** The result of validation for appearance aspect of the prototype of teaching materials for Linguistics Description of English subject

| Indicators | Statements | Choices | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| B. Material instructions | 1. the materials have been an organized system so that the contents have related each other | | 3 | | |
| | 2. The materials have been displayed chronologically | | 3 | | |
| | 3. The balance of the presentation of each unit is good | | 3 | | |

From table 4, it can be seen that the expert also gave 3 for all statements. The average score for this part is 3. Hence, it can be concluded that the language used in the prototype of the teaching materials for LDoE subject is right. Even though as a whole, the expert thinks that the quality of the developed product is good, he still gave some suggestions for the improvement of the developed product. The final product is hoped can be designed by really considering the relation of the materials in this

subject with those of the pre-requisite subject (Introduction to Linguistics subject) to avoid overlapping. For learning assessment, the researchers were suggested to create tasks/exercises which can measure students' understanding of the materials and encourage students to study actively and independently. As a conclusion, the expert thinks that the developed product can be used in LDoE class with a minor revision.

Table 4. The result of validation for the language aspect of the prototype of teaching materials for Linguistics Description of English

| Indicators | Statements | Choices | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| C. Language aspect | 1. the sentences used in this product are grammatically correct | | 3 | | |
| | 2. the dictions are fit to the level of the students as stated in the curriculum (intermediate level) | | 3 | | |

### 3.1. The strength and weaknesses of the developed product

The result of this research is a prototype of teaching materials for Linguistics Description of English (LDoE) designed using R and D research by Borg and Gall (1983). This research conducted by simplifying the steps of the research. The strength and weaknesses of the developed product described in the following paragraph.

The prototype of teaching materials for LDoE subject has been designed by considering the result of curriculum study, the students' need and opinion, and suggestions from both students and linguistics lecturers. Therefore, this research product has covered materials with topics and exercises needed by English students to improve their English ability. Also, the learning materials in this product is arranged based on the language acquisition process so that the contents will not overlap each other, and students will not get confused in learning this subject. These steps of arranging materials match with Tomlinson's main argument in his paper on framework for designing material (2013) where he emphasizes that when developing material for language teaching, one should bear in mind that the activities should match with learners' need and wants, should be based on principles of learning language, and provide flexibility of use to both teachers and students. As mentioned, the development starts with analyzing the needs of the learners and gaining information from linguistic lecturers, followed with designing and developing the materials, and finally obtaining feedback through validation process where the result of validation process indicates that the materials can be used in the classroom.

On the other hand, this developed product also still has some weaknesses. First, the steps for designing this product are not finished until the end of the step. Therefore the final product is not achieved yet. Second, the prototype of the teaching materials has not been tested in field testing so that the improvement of this product was only based on the expert as well as practitioner validation. Next, this product also has not been tested in main field testing so that the effectiveness of this product is still unknown. Finally, this product still needs some revisions to obtain the best form.

## 3.2. Conclusion

The materials arranged for Linguistic Description of English is undertaken to fulfill the need for the learning and teaching process for LDoE subject. This subject is a new subject offered in the curriculum of English Education Study Program at Universitas Jambi and does not have the materials available for teaching activity in the class. By doing research and development, the material prototype has arranged that suits the need of the students as well as the lecturers. The prototype consists of two chapters about discussions on Morphology and Syntax. Each chapter generally contains several components, namely the unit title, lesson's objectives, unit discussion, and comprehension exercises.    Even though the prototype of the materials has not been tested in field testing yet, the result of validation by expert validator indicates that the prototype can be used as the representative of the whole complete materials and the researcher are allowed to continue the development process until it becomes a comprehensive material for teaching LDoE later in the class.

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