

The Use of Authentic Materials in Teaching English at Vocational High School

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ABSTRACT

The selection of appropriate teaching materials can be very important to make the student easier in learning English, especially in vocational high school. Teaching English at vocational school is also related to contextual teaching which must be related to the use of materials that are closer to the real world where the learners interact. Therefore, authentic materials become one of the materials that can be used in the teaching-learning process because it is made contextually or is related to real-life material. Additionally, the integration of local content-based materials also provides many benefits for the students in learning English. The goal of this study is to find out teachers' perceptions on the implementation of authentic materials in English classrooms in vocational high schools. The participants were five English teachers from five vocational high schools located in Pacet, Mojokerto, East Java, Indonesia. The data of this research were gathered using a semi-structured interview. The data analysis technique included data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion. The result reports that all teachers in vocational high schools in Pacet have positive perceptions of the use of authentic materials in teaching English. It also can be concluded that all the teachers are implemented authentic materials as well as integrating local content in their teaching.

KATA KUNCI
Materi Otentik,
Persepsi Guru, Sekolah
Menengah Kejuruan

Pemilihan bahan ajar yang tepat menjadi sesuatu yang penting untuk memudahkan siswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris khususnya di Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (SMK). Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris di SMK berkaitan dengan pengajaran kontekstual yang tentunya juga berkaitan dengan penggunaan materi yang lebih dekat dengan dunia nyata dimana peserta didik berinteraksi. Oleh karena itu, materi yang otentik menjadi salah satu materi yang dapat digunakan dalam proses belajar mengajar karena materi tersebut dibuat secara kontekstual atau berkaitan dengan kehidupan nyata. Selain itu, pengintegrasian materi berbasis konten lokal juga dapat memberikan banyak manfaat bagi siswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi guru tentang penerapan materi yang otentik di kelas bahasa Inggris di SMK.

Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah lima guru bahasa Inggris dari lima SMK yang berlokasi di Pacet, Mojokerto, Jawa Timur, Indonesia. Data pada penelitian ini dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur. Teknik analisis data terdiri dari reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa semua guru SMK di Pacet memiliki persepsi positif terhadap penggunaan materi otentik dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris. Selain itu juga dapat disimpulkan bahwa semua guru menerapkan materi yang otentik begitu juga mengintegrasikan konten lokal dalam pengajarannya.

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Introduction

Teaching material becomes one of the main problems faced in the teaching learning process at Vocational high school today. The English teacher needs to create interesting materials for students in order that they can enjoy studying, especially learning English (Ronaldo, 2016). In teaching vocational high school, teachers need to form students with both skills and knowledge to prepare them in facing the real use of language in the certain workplace. Kholik (2016) stated that in the process of teaching English in vocational high school the English materials used should be relevant with the specific purposes that have been determined in accordance with the program. In addition in the teaching and learning process in vocational school also should consider about teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Therefore, teaching English at vocational school is also related to contextual teaching which must be related to the use of materials that are closer to the real world where the learners interact.

Studies pertinent to the topic conducted in vocational school, however, seem to be limited. The purpose of this study is to find out the English teachers' perception toward the implementation of authentic materials in English classroom at vocational high school. Prior to this research conducted by Silviani (2018) and Murray (2015) which conducted in different level of students showed that the teacher gave positive perception towards the use of authentic materials in teaching English. Meanwhile, this research wanted to know deeply not only about their perception but also related to their implementation and selection of the materials especially for teaching in vocational high school. Therefore, It is expected by knowing how English teachers' perceptions and the implementation of the of authentic materials in their English class, the results of this study can be a basis for consideration for vocational teachers to be able to select authentic material with certain criteria that are suitable for their respective majors.

Authentic material is defined as a material that is made contextually or is related to real life material (Wulandari, 2018). Authentic materials are also defined as materials that are not made for the purpose of teaching language and their content shows the use of language in the actual

context. It can give the students more exposure to the real use of language. Fei and Yu Feng (2008) states that authentic materials have a positive effect on students' motivation. Learners can also have a meaningful experience with the target language and they can feel that they are learning in the target language (Berardo, 2006: 62; Kilickaya, 2004). Additionally, according to Oguz and Bahar (2008) authentic materials meet with the students' needs. Therefore, using authentic materials in the learning process can give some advantages for the students.

Meanwhile, integrating local content-based materials for the teaching can enable students to directly learn English through some related local objects around them by showing the use of English in a real context. It also related with contextual teaching where teachers are challenged to provide materials that are directly related to places where students interact or are near to the real world (Manurung, 2018). This encourages teachers to be able to compile authentic materials that integrate local content with the teaching materials itself. The application of local content in the teaching materials can directly show the students the reality, motivate students to use English, and easier to remember several words, terms and sentences in English.

The use of appropriate authentic material in vocational school is important and needs to be adjusted to certain criteria when selecting authentic materials for ESP. From that point this study will reveal teacher perception about the implementation of authentic materials in class in vocational high school. This due to the consideration that the need for authentic materials in vocational high school is different because it has to be adjusted with certain major and criteria related to teaching and learning ESP. The subjects of this study are English teachers at vocational high school in Pacet. In addition, the need of local content-based materials can be really needed to motivate learner in learning English by using local object and places in their region. Therefore, the researcher wanted to study this research that entitled "The Use of Authentic Materials in Teaching English at Vocational High School".

Method

In conducting this study, the researcher used case study as the design in collecting the main data from the participants. The results collected in this research were explained in descriptive form which was obtained from several data related to the teacher perceptions and experiences in using authentic materials in the classroom through interview process.

The participants were English teachers from five vocational schools located in Pacet, Mojokerto as participants. The population is all English teachers in Pacet. Those five schools were SMK Al-Istiqomah, SMK Bhakti, SMK Pacet, SMK Thoriqul Ulum and SMK Walisongo. There were five English teachers in each school who willingly participated in this research. The reason for choosing them was because Pacet, Mojokerto is one of the places that provide a lot of tourism

potentials which is possible for the application of local content in the use of authentic materials so that it can make students more motivated in learning English through local objects and places in their reality. In addition, teaching English in vocational high school should refer to ESP where the students' needs focus on communicating in their field study as universal.

In the process of collecting the data, the researcher used semi-structured interview as the main instrument of this research. The interview questions were adapted from Nella Silviani (2018). The interview questions consisted of 15 open-ended questions that are divided into 2 sections which can identify about the topic of this research. The question covered information from participants regarding the awareness of authentic materials and local content-based materials, types and sources of authentic materials, the criteria in selecting authentic materials, the implementation of authentic materials in class, the recommendation, and the reason and challenges on using authentic materials. The instrument then validated using expert validation. As a result the validator gave the score in the very good category with the final percentage assessment of 95%. This shows that the guidelines and interview instruments are valid and feasible for use in data collection in this study.

The data collection process was done through interview using virtual meeting by google meeting and directly by telephone via WhatsApp call. The interview was conducted twice to collect some supporting data for the main purpose of this research. The first interview was conducted during 25th until 28th of March 2021 to know the teacher perception toward authentic materials. Meanwhile, the second interview was conducted during 22nd until 25th July 2021 to explore more about how the implementation of authentic materials in their teaching.

The data analysis process in this research was done using 4 steps of data analysis by Ary et al (2010: 283). Those four steps were coding, data reduction, data display and drawing conclusion or interpretation. In the coding step, the researcher read the interview transcript and placed all units that had the same coding together. Secondly, in data reduction, the researcher reduced the data that was not needed and included the important data to reach the purpose of this research. Third, in data display, the researcher used an essay form for the data display process. It described qualitatively in words and sentences form. Lastly, the researcher combined the results of all data analysis processes that have been carried out previously then begins to draw conclusions from the data that has been obtained. All the results of this study then triangulated to check the correctness of the data from several existing sources to compare information about the same thing. The triangulation process was carried out by interviewing several teachers participated in this study. The results then compared by collecting the same information from different participants to find a conclusion.

Result and Discussion

As the focus of the research was to seek the English teachers' perception on the implementation of authentic materials in English classroom at vocational high school, therefore the data in this research will be explained in two sub chapters for each categories given there are English teacher perceptions towards the use of authentic materials in English classroom and the implementation of authentic materials in teaching English.

1. Results

1.1. English Teacher Perceptions towards Authentic Materials in Teaching English

To find out these results, this discussion will be divided into four sub chapters, namely regarding the awareness of authentic materials used in teaching English, the use of local content-based materials, the reason of using authentic materials and teachers' recommendation towards the use of authentic materials. From the results obtained, all participants shared the same perception of the use of authentic materials.

1.1.1. The Awareness of Authentic Materials Used in Teaching English

From the result, it can be seen that all participants were aware of the use of authentic materials during learning. They know very well and were familiar with authentic materials used in the teaching process. It can be seen by the result of the interview; teacher 1 said: *"I think authentic materials are original materials that can provide opportunities for students to make a direct connection between the material being studied and the real-life context"*. Meanwhile teacher 2 said: *"authentic materials are material that is made originally with the aim of entertaining and socializing for students, besides that it can also take students from bringing real materials to my delivery in class"*

1.1.2. Local Content Based Authentic Materials

The result shows that all participants understand the integration of local content in the teaching process. They explained that local content based materials are the integration of local sources or the closest object and tourism attractions in the area around the student to be used as learning materials. One of the teacher said said:

"So, local authenticity is related to learning based on the closest object or the closest tourism or maybe the culinary potential that is around our area that is close to the students. Before that, we have already provided students with contextual learning so they can explore some of the material that is around us, both tourist attractions and culinary attractions."

1.1.3. The Reasons of Using Authentic Materials in Teaching English

There are four reasons that make them choose to use authentic materials in class. (1) Authentic materials are exposed to real language. (2) Authentic materials are more interesting

for the students. (3) Authentic materials are easy to obtain. (4) Authentic materials can improve students' ability in English. As it shown on the interview results;

Teacher 1 said: *"Authentic materials are original materials so they can provide an opportunity for them to make a direct connection with the new material being studied makes it easier for students to learn and English from objects or sources directly around them"*.

In addition, Teacher 2 also said:

"I use it because it makes it easier for students, students can add knowledge and skills as well as make students interested in learning English. Students can also remember more easily because they learn directly from sources they often know".

1.1.4. Teachers' Recommendation toward the Use of Authentic Materials

All the participants are highly recommended the use of authentic materials in class. It also shows that all participants gave positive responses regarding recommendations for the use of authentic materials in class. The participants said :

"Yes, I highly recommend it because by using authentic materials students can interact directly with the material being studied. Students can learn directly through real examples. And of course, they are enthusiastic when I use other learning resources apart from textbooks."

1.2. The Implementation of Authentic Materials in English Classroom

All the participants also answered several questions about how they use authentic materials in their teaching in vocational school based on their perception of the use of authentic materials. The answers from all participants will be divided into five sub-chapters. Based on the finding, all the participants shared their experience in implementing authentic materials and integrating local content-based materials in English classroom by looking at some types, sources and criteria based on ESP in vocational school.

1.2.1. Types of Authentic materials that are used in teaching English

There are several types of authentic materials used by the teacher during English language learning. These types are printed, auditory and listening viewing authentic materials. Printed authentic materials that they usually use are photos, pictures, magazines, newspapers and job vacancies. The auditory authentic materials they use podcast and online audio. Meanwhile, the authentic listening viewing materials used are music video and TV advertisement. The teachers said :

"I often use authentic materials with the sources that are easy to obtain, for example from the library. Of course, the type of authentic materials I use are printed, such as newspapers, magazines, or anything that makes it easy for students to learn. I also adjust the materials that I will use with the materials that I will convey that day."

1.2.2. The Sources of Authentic Materials Used to Find the Materials

The sources of authentic materials used are from library, internet and social media. There are also some sources from the internet such as New York Times as online newspaper, AEE (All Ear English) as podcast for listening and Magzter as application for online newspaper and magazine. It shown by the results of the interview :

“The source usually the same with the type of materials I usually use. If I use magazines, newspapers, or posters, I can get them directly from the school library.”

1.2.3. The Implementation of Authentic Materials in English Classroom

The teacher were all implemented authentic materials in the classroom based on three steps in teaching there are pre teaching, whilst teaching, and post teaching. All learning processes are done based on teaching procedures and still pay attention to the needs of students so that students can be interested in learning English. One of the teacher said :

“I use it according to the learning steps compiled through the lesson plans, so it is in accordance with the opening, whilst and closing activities. For its use in the class, of course, I adjust it with the theme that I will teach. For example, I want to teach about procedure text; usually I invite the students to watch how to make something using videos on YouTube, such as cooking videos. Or to make it more interesting, I will adjust it according to their preferences in their major so that they can connect...”

1.2.4. The Integration of Local Content Based Materials in Teaching

The results showed that how they use it in the classroom is the same as they usually teach using procedure of teaching. The local content based that the teacher used related with tourism object, culinary potential and local potential near the students. The participant said :

“For the implementation of local content, what I know is that it integrates all existing local potentials, it could be tourism attraction, or culinary potential, as I said in the first interview. The method of use is certainly different, because if I use local content, at least students must be introduced and brought directly to the real object...”

1.2.5. The Criteria in Selecting Authentic materials

There are three main criteria used by the teachers. These criteria include specified objectives of learning, based on students' needs and stimulate student activities in the learning process. These criteria are also related with the criteria in selecting materials for ESP.

“When choosing the material, it must be in accordance with the learning objectives that have been determined. Because every meeting must have certain basic competencies that have been determined for students, so at least the need for authentic materials must be appropriate so that the learning objectives can still be achieved by the students.”

1.2.6. The challenges in Using Authentic Materials in Teaching English

All participants found there were challenges in the application of authentic materials during English learning. These challenges were found especially in students' vocabulary mastery and students' motivation.

"So, the difficulties I face are usually students who lack vocabulary. The vocabulary they know in English is still low, so it is sometimes difficult to understand some of the material I provide, and sometimes students feel less happy if they found those difficulties."

2. Discussion

Related to the results displayed before, there are several things that must be discussed. The discussion covered teachers' perceptions and the implementation of authentic materials itself in the classroom. Some of the answers that have been described in the findings show that teachers have a positive perception towards the use of authentic materials in teaching English. The finding also shows that all the participants are implemented authentic materials in their teaching.

Firstly, based on the results on the first section related to the English teacher perceptions towards the use of authentic materials in teaching English, it shows that all participants showed positive perceptions on the use of authentic materials when teaching English in the classroom. All participants had the same opinion that authentic materials were real life materials that were made for learning so that students could learn contextually. In line with Hussein (2014) authentic materials are any types of materials that are taken from the real world, and they are not specifically created for language teaching purposes. In addition, related to the reason they use authentic materials, all participants positively responded that they used authentic materials during the learning process. The reasons include authentic materials that can expose you to real language, more interesting materials that are easy to obtain and can improve students' abilities. This is the same point with the previous study that was conducted by Silviani (2018). The result of the interview and observation showed that all the participants positively responded that they had used authentic materials in their teaching with several different reasons and benefits so the teacher can consider using authentic materials in teaching English. Regarding to the teachers' recommendation towards the use of authentic materials, it can be seen if all participants gave positive responses to the recommendation statements to other teachers to use authentic materials.

Secondly, based on the results, the researcher also explored more about the implementation of authentic materials in English teaching at vocational school. Based on the interview the teacher shared their experience about how they usually use authentic materials in the classroom.

Related to types and sources of authentic materials used in the classroom, the dominant material used by the teacher in vocational school is printed materials. This result was different from the previous study conducted by Sally et al (2007) which showed that there are two main types of authentic materials used by the teacher, there are printed and auditory materials. The printed type become the most authentic materials used by the teacher because it is one of the

types that are easily obtained through the school library, easily accessible by students and easy to use in learning. These printed materials used are also adjusted with the study program that the students take in vocational school. For instance, the students who majoring Forestry, the photos or pictures used are related to natural conditions in the world, for those who majoring in TKR (*Teknik Kendaraan Ringan*), TSM (*Teknik Sepeda Motor*) and TKJ (*Teknik Komputer Jaringan*) the magazine used can be automotive magazine and computer magazine which can be accessed through library or online magazine.

Additionally, related to the source of authentic materials the finding shows that all the participants can easily get the materials directly from school library, internet, social media, websites and also application. It also adjusted with the needs of the students in their program they take in vocational school because the materials from the other source are varied and interesting for learning. Some of the sources are from New York Time, AEE podcast and Magzter application.

All the teachers used authentic materials during learning according to the types and sources they previously explained. The teacher used authentic materials in accordance with the general learning procedure, namely pre teaching, whilst teaching and post teaching. They also adjust the learning with the topic given in each day. In its application in the classroom, teachers also adjust the materials they use with the students' majors in schools such as TKJ, TKR, Forestry and Islamic Banking. This is done to create learning materials that are in accordance with students' needs and interests. The teachers were also integrating local potential near the area to make the students learn directly through local objects such as tourism objects, culinary potential, and local potential near the students. It aimed to give the students exposure to the real object it can make the students easier in learning English.

Based on the criteria in selecting authentic materials, some of these criteria used by the participants include specified objectives of learning, based on students' needs and stimulate student activities in the learning process. These criteria given were included in several criteria for the materials for teaching ESP explained by Raman (2004: 65) since they are teaching in vocational high school.

Lastly, regarding the challenges of using authentic materials in English teaching, the findings show that the main challenges encountered by the participants were because of the lack of students' vocabulary mastery and motivation. Vocabulary difficulties experienced by students in vocational schools are especially related to the use of some verbs that different from some of the terms they learn in their majors. This finding is contrary to several studies which reveal that authentic materials can increase students' learning motivation. As stated in Tamo (2009) bringing authentic materials in the classroom can increase students' motivation in learning.

Additionally, Fei and Yu Feng (2018) stated that authentic materials have a positive effect on the student motivation. Therefore, from the finding of this research related to the challenges, the lack of vocabulary mastery can effect on the students motivation in learning. Kilickaya (2004) also stated that using authentic materials for low level students frustrate and demotivate them, since the lack of skills and vocabulary that they have which do not deal successfully with the presented materials. However, on facing these challenges the teacher overcome it by choosing the right materials for the students. They give the students the materials with the same language level of the students so that the students can easier in learning English without facing any difficulties in vocabulary.

Conclusion

Based on the result of the data analysis before, the researcher comes to the following conclusion. It can be concluded that all teachers in vocational high school in Pacet have positive perceptions on the use of authentic materials in teaching English. All the teachers are also implemented the authentic materials in their teaching process in the classroom. The result shows that all teachers in each vocational school are aware of the use of authentic materials during learning. They have known and are familiar with authentic materials and are also aware of the use of authentic materials in class. During its implementation, the teacher used it based on the teaching procedure and adjusts the use of authentic materials with the topic and also the programs that students take in school. This was done to make the materials used are meet with the students need and interest. The teachers are also integrates local objects in the regions to increase enjoyable contextual learning as a form of implementing local content-based materials. They tend to use authentic materials because they can provide many benefits for both teachers and students. This positive perception is also supported by several other aspects through their experience using authentic materials. All teachers are considered using authentic materials by considering several criteria that are appropriate for students, the types and sources of authentic materials used. In conclusion, it was known that all teachers have good perceptions toward the use of authentic materials in teaching English and they also implemented the authentic materials in the classroom.

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