Supplementary English reading material for the eighth-grade students

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Abstract

The objectives of this research are to develop supplementary reading material for the eighth grade of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul and to reveal the efficacy of the developed additional materials for the eighth grade of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul. The research belongs to the educational Research and Development (R & D). The subjects of the study were the eighth-grade students of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul. The study adapted the R & D model proposed by Borg and Gall (1983). The steps of the study were conducting a needs analysis, designing a course grid, developing the materials, having expert judgment, conducting field testing, revising the elements, and writing the final product. The data were taken from document analysis, observation, and interview. The data were analyzed and described qualitatively. The result of the research showed that (1) the supplementary English reading materials developed based on the need analysis. It was used for determining the objective, indicators, and varied reading tasks and activities of the supplementary materials. The reading tasks were presented in various forms, namely true-false questions, completing sentences, multiple-choice questions, jumbled words, and jumbled sentences that developed based on Three Phase Technique steps. Each Unit consisted of three main parts: “Time to Start, Time to Learn, and Time to Check”. The varied tasks gave the students the opportunity to improve their reading comprehension. In other words, the supplementary English reading material was useful and appropriate to be implemented for the eighth-grade students of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul. (2) The efficacy of the additional English reading materials could be described as the learning process that helped students achieve their needs, to have broad experience in learning the language, to attract the students’ attention and involvement, and to improve student’s reading comprehension. It also provided additional learning sources for the students.

Keywords: reading comprehension, supplementary English reading materials, students’ attention and involvement, three phase technique, varied tasks

Introduction

Indonesian government has determined English as one of compulsory school subjects firstly taught in junior high school level. It means English becomes a new subject for the students of junior high school. However, the students have to master English and use it for spoken and written communication.

According to The Regulation of the Indonesian Ministry of National Education Number 58 Year of 2014 about The 2013 Curriculum of Junior High School/ Madrasah Tsanawiyah, 2013, Curriculum is developed based on Competency-based Curriculum which is emphasized to improve the students’ four competences, namely spiritual and social competence, knowledge, and skill. The curriculum is revised to suit with the demand of the 21st century competences which focus on life and innovation skills, information media and technology skill, and life and career skill. The ability to understand and use written texts is a prerequisite to cover all the competences. Various areas of knowledge and life can be accessed through reading.

Reading is a process of comprehending the meaning of a text by combining the information of the text with the readers’ background of knowledge. It is a process of negotiation of meaning between the text and its reader (Saryati & Yulia, 2019). Reading is the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information, but also as a mean...
of consolidating and extending one’s knowledge of the language (Rivers, 2018). Through reading skill, students can increase their understanding and knowledge of the language.

In the English teaching learning process, especially in reading, students need to get sufficient exposure to be able to understand and comprehend the meaning of the text. Students also need input texts which contain interactive and interesting tasks to support them in learning the language through the text.

The government has provided an English text book as the input for students, namely “When English Rings A Bell” or “WERB”. The availability of WERB supports the English teaching learning process. It provides major source of input for the students for learning English not only in school but also at home. Besides, it also helps the teacher in teaching the material to the students.

A text book as an input material for learning should covers some criteria. (Cunningworth, 1995) proposes four criteria for a text book. First, it should relate what students need. It also reveals the uses of the language which focus on how the students use the language effectively for their own purposes. A good text book is not only considering the students’ need but also facilitate the learning process. Moreover, a good text book should have clear role as a support for learning. In other words, a good textbook which is used as input must be appropriate with students’ need, have clear role, facilitate the students in learning and have a goal which is focused on the applying the language in the students’ life.

In practice, not all text books fulfill the criteria of a good book. The book analysis of WERB for the eighth grade identified several flaws that are needed to be improved. From seven chapters for semester one, two chapters were identified to be improved. They were Chapter V entitled “I’m so Happy for You” and Chapter VI “My Uncle is a Zookeeper”. The materials of Chapter V were less relevant to Basic Competence of 3.5. The content of the materials missed the invitation materials as one of the subject should be discussed.

In other case, some materials in Chapter VII were not relevant to the theme. The chapter was entitled “My Uncle is a Zookeeper”. In the beginning of the chapter, the materials were focused on the activities in the zoo. However, starting from the Associating part, the materials related to the home activities.

Furthermore, the document analysis revealed some problems in WERB text book for the eighth grade, Chapter V and VII as follows: (1) The textbook was relevant with Core Competence and Basic Competence. However, Chapter V did not cover the invitation material as stated in the Basic Competence of 3.5; (2) The theme of Chapter VII was not consistent with the materials designed and they needed to be revised; (3) The tasks for reading activity were so limited.

To compensate the weaknesses, the researcher decided to develop supplementary reading materials. They were designed based on 2013 Curriculum and students’ need. The researcher tried out the materials in MTs Negeri 1 Bantul, because the school has implemented 2013 Curriculum and used WERB text book as the input for learning.

Based on the background, the identification and limitation of research, the researcher formulated the problem of the research as follows: (1) How are the supplementary reading materials for the eighth-grade students of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul developed?; (2) How is the efficacy of the developed reading materials for the eighth-grade students of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul?

**Literature Review**

Reading is one of the important skills which have to be taught in learning a language. (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) defines “Reading is a complex developmental challenge that we know to be intertwined with many other developmental accomplishments: attention, memory language, and motivation, for example.
According to Urquhart & Weir (1998) as cited by Grabe (2009: 14), reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language from the medium of print. There will be an interaction between the writer, the reader and the text. The reader will use his/her background of knowledge to comprehend and construct the meaning of the text.

Meanwhile, (Smith, 2004) says that reading involved the process of interpretation of the printed text by connecting the reader’s knowledge of the world. Readers use their knowledge to bridge one idea to another to get the interpretation. It is supported by (Bailey, 2005) who defines reading as a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. It means that readers’ background knowledge of the world gives an essential contribution to the process of reading.

In summary, reading is a process of interaction between the writer, the reader, and the text in order to be able to build the comprehension and create the meaning from the written materials. It involved the readers’ knowledge of the world to interpret the meaning of a text.

Task is the implementation of the activities in the classroom. (Ellis, 2003) called task as a “work plan” in which leads the learners’ cognitive processes. Task contains communicative language use and a specific goal. (Nunan, 1991) defines task as a set of work that requires the students to comprehend, produce or interact with the target language and the focus of interaction is on the meaning not the form. It can be said that task is a set of classroom activities designed based on a certain goal which gives opportunity for the learners to understand and use the language communicatively.

Moreover, (Bailey, 2005) defines task as real-world or target task and pedagogical task. Target task refer to uses of language in the world beyond the classroom, in which the tasks have a non-linguistic outcome and may not involve language use. Pedagogical tasks refer to uses of language that occur in the classroom in which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language. In summary, task is a set of designed activity that involves the use of the target language in order to achieve a particular purpose.

**Criteria of Good Materials**

It is important to know whether materials are good or not for the teaching learning process. (Tomlinson, 2011) defines some principles of material development listed below: (1) Materials should have impact in which they can encourage the learners’ curiosity and attract the learners’ interest and attention; (2) Materials should help the learner to feel the simplicity of the materials. Materials presented must not only in the form of text but also must be completed with interested features such as pictures; (3) Materials give the learners way in getting their confidence; (4) Materials should be appropriate and useful for the learners; (5) Materials should give the learners opportunity to do self-learning; (6) Materials must be i + 1, i means the student’s prior knowledge and 1 means 1 level beyond the student’s level; (7) Materials must be in authentic use; (8) Materials must lead in the student’s awareness of linguistic features; (9) Materials should provide the student’s opportunity to use the language communicatively; (10) Materials should have appropriate the language instruction; (11) Materials should accommodate the different style of the learners learning; (12) Materials should also accommodate the learners’ different attitude in learning; (13) Materials should provide silent period at the beginning instruction; (14) Materials should facilitate the learners to stimulate the right and left brain; (15) Materials must not rely too much on controlled practice; (16) Materials should provide opportunity for effective outcome feedback.

It should be emphasized that a good material must be presented as interesting as possible to attract the students’ attention and involvement. It also must provide the opportunity for the students to use the language and encourage their language awareness of the language features. The text presented must be the authentic one.
Principles of Materials Development

In developing the materials, there are some principles needed to give a guidance. (Graves & Xu, 2000) gives principles in designing and organizing the activities in the materials: (1) the activities should draw on what students’ experience and current situation and to be relevant to them; (2) the activities should build students’ confidence in transferring what they learned outside of class; (3) the activities should allow students to problem solve, discover, analyze so that the students will be engage and use the language; (4) the activities should help the students develop specific skills and strategies so that they can transfer skills to other learning situation; (5) the activity should help the students develop specific language and skills they need for authentic communication so that they can use in real situation; (6) the activities should integrate the four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing; (7) the activities should enable the students to understand how a text is constructed so that the students can gain access to similar text; (8) the activities should enable the students to understand cultural context and cultural differences so that they have more confidence in target culture context and understand own culture context; (9) the activities should enable the students to develop social awareness so that they can navigate system in target culture; (10) the activities should be authentic so that the students see the relationship and gain experience with the real language; (11) the activities should vary the roles and groupings, so that the students get different types of practice and responsibility; (12) the activities should have various types and purposes to provide adequate practice; (13) the activities should use authentic materials or realia so that the students are familiar with/ have access to language in real situation, and (14) the activities should employ a variety of materials to engage students and meet different learning needs.

(Tomlinson, 2011) focuses on six principles in materials development. The materials should: (1) Expose the learners to language in authentic use; (2) Help learners to pay attention to features of authentic input; (3) Provide the learners the opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purpose; (4) Provide opportunities for outcome feedback; (5) Achieve impact in the sense that they arouse and sustain the learners’ curiosity and attention; and (6) Stimulate intellectual, aesthetic and emotional involvement.

Teacher needs to cover some principles that help the students understand a text. The materials and activities should give the opportunities for the students to use their experience, to get confidence, attention, and curiosity, to do problem solving and to use the target language in real communication. The materials should be in authentic use and vary in types.

Steps of Materials Development

There are some steps of materials development. (Harsono, 2015) proposes two considerations in developing the learning materials. First, teacher needs to identify the students’ needs and learn the syllabus, choose the items of the syllabus one by one and develop the materials. Second, teachers should consider the nature of the learning materials, principles, and procedures of developing the materials.

Additionally, he (2007) divides the procedures of developing learning materials into three steps of design, implementation, and evaluation. The design step is the step of formulation of the first draft of materials that considered the students’ needs, syllabus, and suitable nature of language and principles of developing the materials. The second step, implementation, is the step in which the first draft of the developed materials is implemented in the real class situation. The result of the observation during the implementation is used to evaluate the developed materials for their revision. This step is called evaluation step.

One of method used in teaching reading is Three Phase Techniques which covered into three stages, namely pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading. (Davies & Pearse, 2013) explain the stages as follows: 
Pre-reading Stage

This stage is aimed to activate the background knowledge of the readers, encourage their interest to the text and set up a purpose for them to read. Teacher can use some pictures or illustration in this stage. Teacher can give an activity such as guessing the topic, giving visual illustration, or predicting the topics by giving some keywords. The pre-reading stage is applied because that the student’s previous knowledge and experience affect their comprehension of the material.

While-reading Stage

This stage’s objective is helping the students understand the specific content and to perceive the rhetorical structure of the text. Tasks are designed to train the students’ reading skills such as scanning, skimming, reading for comprehension, and critical reading. There are many forms recommended in class: read for specific information, read for the main idea, deduce the meaning of certain words from a given context, infer the writer’s intended message, and recognize the writer’s attitude.

Post-reading Stage

After the students comprehend the text, the students are hope to be able to use the language in communication and in a real situation. They are expected to give more information and ideas about the texts. This activity involves speaking, listening, and writing. The possible activities are rewriting, role playing, discussion, report, etc.

Teachers need to follow some stages in developing the materials. The first is the process of connecting the students’ prior knowledge to the text. The second is the process of understanding the text. The third is the process of using the language in real situation communicatively.

Method

The type of the research is Research and Development (R & D). According to (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003) R & D is one of industry-based development that attempt to design new product and procedures. The new product and procedures will be tested in the field, evaluated, and refined systematically until they meet the specified criteria, quality, and similar standards. This research can be implemented in the educational field by conducting systematic evaluation and materials development.

The R & D type of research was an effective way to develop a product such a supplementary reading material. So, the researcher implemented R & D to develop English supplementary reading material for the eighth grade students of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul.

The research was conducted at MTs Negeri 1 Bantul. The school is located at Jalan Imogiri Barat Km. 4.5 Sewon Bantul Yogyakarta. The school was chosen since the reading materials used in the teaching learning process were still limited. Most of them were taken from the textbook provided by the government. The school also had been completed with other facilities, such as a library, Science laboratory, computer laboratory, internet connection, sport court, medical room, and practice room.

MTs Negeri 1 Bantul also has 38 professional teachers for all subjects included four professional English teachers. 18,7% teachers are post graduate degree in their subject. The rest of the teacher were got Sarjana degree. The school also has recruited other teachers for holding the extracurricular activities.

MTs Negeri 1 Bantul implemented Curriculum 2013 since 2015 and used “When English Rings a Bell” (WERB) as the text book. The researcher used WERB as a basic source for developing the material. The research was conducted in the first semester in the academic year...
of 2018/2019. It was followed by the second grade students (class A) as the subjects of the research.

The subject of the research was the 8A students of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul. The total number of the eighth grade students are 186. Based on the teacher’s recommendation and observation, the researcher chose class 8A which consist of 30 students as the subject of the research. Most of students of 8A had good motivation in learning, different background and better cognitive skill than other classes.

The research was adapted and modified the research model proposed by (Borg & Gall, 1983) and (Tomlinson, 2011). It was adapted to meet the condition of the research related to the time limitation. According to those models, materials development steps were modified and simplified as follows: (1) conducting need analysis, (2) designing the course grid, (3) developing the draft of the materials, (4) having the expert judgment to evaluate the material, (5) conducting field testing, (6) revising the materials, and (7) final product.

Findings and Discussion

The development of Supplementary English Reading Materials

The development of supplementary reading materials was conducted based of the seven stages that adapted from ten stages which proposed by (Borg & Gall, 1983). The designing of the content of the supplementary materials were based on the Three Phase Technique. The discussion is as follows.

Conducting Needs Analysis

Document analysis

MTsN 1 Bantul has implemented 2013 Curriculum since 2014. The students used *When English Rings a Bell* (WERB) as the main source of learning. The WERB has 13 chapters for one academic year or two semesters. The teacher decided to teach Chapter I to Chapter VII for the first semester, because the limitation of the time in the second semester.

To check whether the text book is needed to be develop or not, the researcher conducted an analysis about the relevancy and consistency among the textbook, 2013 Curriculum, and Basic Competence. The book analysis applied the criteria of book evaluation proposed by (Ur, 1996). The analysis identified some weaknesses, especially in reading competence, in Chapter V and VII. For Chapter I, II, III, IV, and VI, materials and tasks were relevant to the Basic Competence and the students’ need.

The result of analysis showed: (1) The text book was already relevant with the Core Competence and Basic Competence. However, the materials of Chapter V were lacking of invitation material. Meanwhile the texts of Chapter VII were not relevant with the theme or the topic of the chapter; (2) The text book did not provide various tasks or activities for the students in understanding the text; (3) The instructions of the tasks were unclear and uneasy to be understood; (4) Chapter V and VII missed the explanation of the text being learned and the explanation of vocabulary.

Designing Course Grid

Based on the result of needs analysis, the researcher designed a course grid that would be used to develop the reading supplementary materials. The course grid was focused on the developing of Chapter V and VII. Chapter V was developed in Unit 1 and Chapter VII was developed in Unit 2.

Unit 1 was developed based on the basic competence of 3.5. This unit was the supplementary reading material for Chapter V by adding the invitation materials. Unit 2 was developed based on the basic competence of 3.7 which provides descriptive text of daily
activities to complete the materials and the tasks for Chapter VII. All the tasks were designed based on the Three Phase Technique.

Developing Materials

The developing of the materials was based on the Three Phase Technique. The steps were structured into three. They are Pre-reading, While-reading and Post-reading. Each steps had meaningful tasks for the students to learn the language.

**Pre-reading**

The step provided the students to activate and build the cultural context or topic by learning the vocabularies which would be used in the text. The objective of this step is to build the students’ background of knowledge and experiences so it could help the students to comprehend the text. For Unit 1 the activities of Pre-reading were presented on Task 1 to Task 4 that provides the students to learn the topic of the unit and the vocabularies related to the materials. The tasks were discussing a picture of a party, labelling pictures of occasion, finding new words, and using the words for completing a text. Similar with Unit 1, Unit 2 also presented four tasks in pre-reading activities. They were discussing a picture of activities, labelling the pictures with the description of activities, observing pictures of daily activities, and matching pictures with sentences related to daily activities.

**While-reading**

In this step, the students focused on aspects of the text and how to understand it better. The goal of the activities is to help students to deal the text as if the text is written in their first language. In Unit 1 the While-reading step were started by presenting the material of invitation related to its language features, structures of the text, social function, and some information of the text. The other tasks were experiencing the students with the reading comprehension. The tasks were in the form of multiple-choice questions, jumbled words, completing, and true-false questions. For Unit 2, the steps consisted the explanation of the descriptive text on the structure of the text, language features, social function, and some information of the text. It also offered the explanation of Simple Present Tense, adverb of frequency and subject pronoun. The tasks were focused on reading comprehension.

**Post-reading**

The activities in post reading were conducted after the students experienced with the reading activities in the while-reading. The objective was to help the students more deeply understand what they have studied. The tasks of post reading were focused on the students’ reading comprehension and ended by the writing activities. The students have to write an invitation card in Unit 1 and a descriptive text of Sunday activities in Unit 2.

**Having Expert Judgment**

The reading supplementary materials had been revised based on the expert judgment. The suggestions from the expert were about some grammatical errors in some instructions in each unit of materials and the technique of writing questions. Moreover, the expert also suggested to add some High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) questions to the task in order to make the students were familiar with such questions.

**Conducting Field Testing**

This step was the activity to test whether the product that had been developed was effective to be applied in the classroom activity. The findings of the testing are: (1) The tasks of learning vocabulary in the product helped the students to improve their reading comprehension; (2) The interesting and interactive texts became a sufficient input and exposure.
for the students so they gave their fully attention and involvement in the class; (3) The instructions needed to be simplified so that the students could understand them easily; (4) The variation of the task made the students did not feel bored in doing the learning activities; (5) The result of the testing revealed that the students still got difficulties in answering the question related to the impact after reading the text.

Revising Materials

The last revision materials were conducted after the field testing revealing the suggestion of the English teacher of class 8A. The revision was related to the form of situation provided in Task 13. The teacher suggested using sentences instead of pointed information.

Final Product

After conducting many steps, the final product which had been tested, reviewed and revised, can be used as supplementary reading materials in Grade 8th of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul.

The efficacy of the reading supplementary materials

Based on the field testing and interview with the students and the English teacher, the efficacy of the supplementary reading materials is as follows: (1) The content of the materials was relevant with the basic competence and students’ need; (2) The vocabulary tasks helped the students to lead them in comprehending the text; (3) The interesting and interactive texts attracted the students’ attention and involvement. The texts provided sufficient input for the students; (4) The simple instruction would able to lead the students to understand what they should do on the tasks; (5) The activities were designed in various tasks so the students had board experiences in learning the language.

Discussion

This part is the conclusion of the description in the research findings. The development of the English reading supplementary materials should be conducted in detail and comprehensive steps. It consisted of conducting needs analysis, designing the course grid, developing the materials, having expert judgment, conducting field testing, revising materials, and final product.

The needs analysis covered three points; document analysis, students’ condition analysis, and teacher’s educational qualification analysis. The document analysis was conducted by analyzing WERB textbook and interviewing the English teacher and the students. The textbook was analyzing by using Ur’s criterion (Ur, 1996). The analysis focused on the content of each chapter. From the book analysis and interview, the researcher found weaknesses of the book. They are: (1) Chapter V was lacking of invitation material and the materials of Chapter VII were not relevant to the theme of the chapter; (2) The tasks were monotonous. They did not give opportunity for the students to experience with the language; (3) The instructions of the tasks were complicated. The students were unable to understand them easily; (4) There were limited explanation of text and vocabulary being learned in Chapter V and VII.

The next procedures were designing the course grid and developing the materials. The supplementary reading materials should be developed in accordance with the core competence and basic competence as they are the basics of designing the materials. The materials and tasks developed should also match to the theme. Besides, supplementary reading materials should provide various tasks that give the board opportunity for the students in learning the language. The level of materials presented should be not too low or too high for the students. The classroom activities were designed by applying the procedures of Three Phase Technique; Pre-reading, While-reading, and Post-reading. In other hand, WERB implemented Scientific method; observing, questioning, associating, experimenting, and networking. The researcher adapted the scientific approach into Three Phase Techniques. The observing and questionings
steps were covered in Pre-reading. The While-reading consisted of associating and experimenting activities. Meanwhile, the networking step was included in Post-reading activities.

The researcher developed two units of supplementary reading materials. Unit 1 was developed based on the core competence of 3.5 to complete the materials and tasks of Chapter V of WERB textbook. The materials and tasks of Unit 1 were the invitation card that was not included in the WERB textbook. Meanwhile, Unit 2 was developed based on the core competence of 3.7 to support Chapter VII. The material of this unit was the descriptive text related to daily activities.

After developing the material, the researcher conducted the expert judgment. The expert was an experience English teacher. The expert gave some corrections and suggestion to the supplementary reading material. The corrections were related to the grammatical errors of the materials and instruction and the technique of writing of the stems of questions. The expert also gave suggestion to add “HOTS” question on tasks to facilitate the students in understanding it. The researcher used the corrections and suggestion from the expert to revise the supplementary reading material.

The next procedure was conducting the field testing. The field testing was conducted to know whether the product was relevant to the students need and could be used as the supplementary for the teaching and learning process. It was done on April 16th, 2019 in the Class 8A of MTsN 1 Bantul. It was followed by 30 students. The field testing run 3 x 40 minutes.

The researcher acted as the teacher in the field testing and was observed by the English teacher of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul. The whole tasks were implemented and practice in the class. However, the last task was not conducted well because the limited time. The result of field testing showed some efficacies of the supplementary reading material. The content of the supplementary reading materials was relevant to the basic competence and students’ need. It also had various tasks so the students were interested in learning the language. Besides it provided the vocabulary explanation and practice to guide the students in comprehending the text. The texts presented on the materials were interesting and attractive for the students. However, there was a task related to the writing skill that needed to be revised. The revision was by changing the situation into sentences or paragraph.

The supplementary reading material has some advantages. The reading materials are contextualized. It means that the themes are around the students’ environment. The reading materials are also presented in colorful lay out in order to attract the students’ attention. The instructions of each task use simple sentences so the students were able to understand them easily. Moreover, the tasks are varied so the students did not feel bored in learning.

However, this supplementary reading material has some limitation. One of the limitation is concerning with the less of HOTS questions. The student still found difficulties in answering HOTS questions. To make the materials interesting for the students, the materials should print out in colorful. So, the costly colorful printed material rises as another limitation of this product.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, the conclusion of the research is: First, The supplementary English reading materials developed based on the need analysis. It was used for determining the objective, indicators, and varied reading tasks and activities of the supplementary materials. The reading tasks were presented in various forms namely true-false questions, completing sentences, multiple choice questions, jumbled words, and jumbled sentences that developed based on Three Phase Technique steps. Each Unit consisted three main parts: “Time to Start, Time to Learn, and Time to Check”. “Time to Start” were various activities or tasks for introducing vocabulary for learning the text. “Time to Learn” were various
activities for comprehending the text. “Time to Check: were various activities or tasks to check the students’ reading comprehension. The varied tasks give the students opportunity to improve their reading comprehension ability. In other words, the supplementary English reading material was useful and appropriate to be implemented for the grade eighth students of MTs Negeri 1 Bantul. Second, The efficacy of the supplementary English reading materials can be described from the learning process that helps the students to achieve their needs, to have board experience in learning the language, to attract the students’ attention and involvement, and to improve student’s reading comprehension. It also provides the additional learning sources for the students.

References


