

EFL Instructional Process and 2018 Examination Writing for Junior High School in Yogyakarta

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Abstract

This case study aims to reveal the English teaching and learning process especially to prepare the students to face the Indonesian final examination, and how examination designer develop the tests. The research were carried out in some schools in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta. According to Nation and McCalister (2010), in developing a curriculum there is an inner and outer circle. In the outer circle, there are needs, environment and principles as factors to develop the goals containing the content, format and presentation and monitoring and assessing. In 2018, the schools applied different curriculum; Kurikulum 2006 and 2013. As discovered, there is absence of language forms coverage in the content of curriculum of 2013. Such a content will probably create different mastery of language forms among learners. In this way, the national or regional examination of English will possibly contain texts the language forms of which are beyond the learners' mastery. The data were collected by interviewing the subjects and then analyzed using thematic analysis. Seven themes were emerged from the data as follows (a) Multiple choice test practice (b) Recognising test format (c) Teachers' Challenge in selecting texts (d) Unfamiliar words (e) Sentence pattern challenge (f) Curriculum mixture (g) Test Designers' Challenge in selecting texts.

Keywords: *EFL, exam, junior high school, process*

Background

The 2013 curriculum has been implemented in 2013. The content of the 2013 curriculum consists of core competencies and basic competencies. From the Core Competencies (KI) and the Basic Competencies (KD) of English lessons, language forms are a concern for learning. What is written on KI and KD is the character of students that must be built, the theme, the type of text that must be studied and also the function of language.

In regard to the content standards and assessment, many studies show that the 2013 curriculum creates various difficulties for teachers and students. The research conducted by Muniroh (2016) shows (a) the teachers determine their own teaching

material (b) in finding learning media / material it is difficult (c) the teacher is difficult to arrange assessment rubrics according to what is intended in the syllabus because there are no indicators standard assessment guidelines.

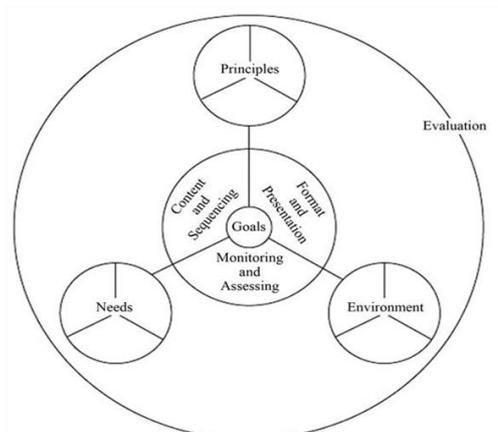
In addition, Supriani's (2016) study of 3 teachers regarding the implementation of the 2013 curriculum showed that there were difficulties in implementing the 2013 curriculum in developing English teaching materials, especially in choosing topics, vocabulary and grammar in forming a text. The results of the study indicate that teachers experience difficulties when they have to develop learning material. The difficulty is due to the absence of topic restrictions and vocabulary that must be taught. They realize that students feel uncomfortable, anxious, and worried to face regional and national examinations. This makes students unmotivated in learning. This makes them lazy, helpless, and unmotivated to learn. (2) Teacher W chose to teach vocabulary as much as possible on the broadest topic, but this afflicted the learner. Students felt that the vocabulary they were studying might not be tested in national examinations. Teacher T, had difficulty in predicting and choosing vocabulary that might be tested in national examinations. He experienced confusion in his efforts to choose and provide the right text for his students.

Thus this study intends to evaluate the school process of preparation and the examination writing based on 2013 curriculum English subjects in English so that the content and assessment standards become more ideal. The ideal curriculum, according to what was delivered by Wiles and Bondi (in Wiles 2006) is what brings students to good learning. For English subjects, good learning is where students get clear and detailed info about which components of English must be studied and at the same time which will be tested. Thus students will learn and the teacher teaches steadily and calmly because there is already certainty about what components of the English language will be tested. Because after all the exam as a benchmark for learning is one of the students' motivation in learning.

Literature Review

1. English Language Curriculum

The curriculum development model according to Nation and Macalister (2010) consists of three outer circles and one inner circle divided into several parts. The outer circle contains various principles, environments, and needs that contain practical and theoretical thoughts that will have a major influence in directing the learning process (Nation and Macalister, 2010). At the center of the circle there is a destination. After the goal, the circle has a) the content and order of the material (b) the form and presentation (c) monitoring and evaluation. The following is a model of the design process section.



Bagan 1 Model dari rancangan kurikulum Nation dan Mcalister (2010)

2. Students' Needs

Student needs or students' needs are one factor that exists in the inner circle of the Nation and McCalister models (2001). Student needs must be taken into account in designing the curriculum, because education must align itself with the needs of students for their future lives. Students will have to have a career later, trying to suit their dreams for students so students want to use English.

3. Environment

The environment referred to in the curriculum model is a factor of teachers, students and existing infrastructure. The curriculum in question must pay attention to the ability of teachers, students and the state of educational facilities and infrastructure. The curriculum designer must pay attention to the state of the student whether they are able to undergo the learning material proclaimed in the curriculum. Also, teachers need to take into account their ability to teach learning material that is hinted at by the curriculum.

4. Content Standard of the Curriculum

In the Nation and Mc Calister model (2010) content standards are referred to as goals and content (curriculum content). The contents of the curriculum as part of the goals must have a number of components such as:

- a. Skills / skills and sub-skills

Skills / abilities that must be mastered by students are like listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

- b. Topics

In the curriculum model above, curriculum content also contains topics that need to be studied.

- c. Type of texts

Text types also need to be included in the curriculum as guidelines such as descriptive, narrative, recount etc.

d. Language forms

The form of language consists of vocabulary, grammar, language functions.

5. 2013 curriculum for English lessons

Standard English curriculum contents comprises core competencies (KI) and basic competencies (KD). The components in KI contain the character of students that must be built, and general themes. KD contains text types and speech acts.

In the 2013 curriculum, there was no vocabulary list and grammar in the curriculum contents, namely KI and KD. In these conditions teachers are assumed to be making material that is different from each other in terms of topic, as well as vocabulary and grammar content even though the text type and language functions or speech acts will be in accordance with the curriculum content.

Because the content standard does not include elements of English, the author of the test questions will not have sufficient knowledge about vocabulary and grammar that must be covered and taught. It is assumed that because of this the author of the exam will make exam questions with reading texts containing words and sentence patterns beyond the reach of students. Another possibility is that the exam is very easy and not in accordance with the level of students. Both will not provide good benefits to students in terms of improving English language skills.

Methodology

This evaluation research applies CIPP model as suggested by Olasheshinde (2015) in Nigeria. In addition, Akpur, Alci and Karatas (2016) also evaluated the English language preparatory class curriculum with the CIPP model. This CIPP model consists of context, input, process and product. The use of CIPP is the curriculum evaluation research flow from Context, Input, Process, and Product (Stufflebeam in Oliva, 1992). This paper focuses the evaluation on the Process which describes the stage of curriculum implementation and the examination development.

Process evaluation is carried out by observation and interviews with teachers and students and also makers of regional and national exam questions. Observations and interviews are conducted to see how the learning process starts from designing lessons, implementing lessons to the process of scoping exam questions, regionally and nationally. This process is carried out to obtain data on how teachers design English lessons. Also, this evaluation phase is to obtain data on how teachers teach and prepare students to face national examinations with interviews, including the difficulties they face. Interviews were conducted with students as well as how they faced the exam. Are they steady with the material given by the teacher that the material is sufficient to face the exam.

Research subjects for this study consisted of teachers, students, experts regarding the curriculum and a developer of English exam questions. Teachers and students are taken from a junior high school and junior high school in the city of Yogyakarta. Experts regarding the English language curriculum were chosen from Yogyakarta State University. The compiler of the exam questions that will be involved is a teacher from Yogyakarta.

Qualitative data will be analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) and quantitative data will be analyzed by descriptive statistics. The data will be triangulated to answer the problem of this research.

Thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006, 425) in this study consisted of six steps as follows:

1. Introduction to data: researchers must know and understand data.
2. Coding: labeling the data which becomes an important issue related to research problems.
3. Searching for themes: look at the code and arrange the codes in a coherent and meaningful pattern related to the research problem.
4. Reviewing themes: checking the sustainability of the themes in the data and their relevance to other themes. This can be done by combining themes or dividing the theme into two.
5. Defining and naming the theme: identify the basic ideas of each theme and make a concise name for each theme. Writing: join themes in context related to library resources.

Findings and Discussion

Process Description

Process evaluation is carried out by interviewing teachers and students and also makers of regional and national exam questions. The data collected is related to the preparation of teachers, students, and examination developers in facing regional and national examinations.

From the interviews, the themes and subthemes emerged as follows.

Themes

- a) Multiple choice test practice
- b) Recognising test format
- c) Teachers' Challenge in selecting texts
- d) Unfamiliar words
- e) Sentence pattern challenge

- f) Curriculum mix
- g) Test Designers' Challenge

1) Multiple choice test practice

English classes ran in the mode of practicing to complete tasks items which are normally in multiple choice.

2) Recognising test format

English teachers discuss the format of questions and what to answer. The students were introduced to reading texts based on the genres and varied questions.

3) Teachers' Challenge in selecting texts

The teachers find difficulties to determine the level of text difficulties. They did not apply effective way to select suitable/ graded reading texts for their students.

4) Unfamiliar words

Students stated that they came across unfamiliar words so that it was hard for them to understand some texts in the exam and answering synonym of words were considered the most difficult.

5) Sentence pattern challenge

Students learned some sentence patterns but they found that different unfamiliar sentence patterns appeared in the exam such as complex sentence

6) Curriculum mixture

Test developers made the test items based on the blue prints which in fact is the mixture (irisan) of Curriculum 2006 and 2013. The blue prints generally determine the text types in genre and functional texts only.

7) Test Designers' Challenge in selecting texts

Test developer also found difficulties in selecting texts in determining the content and the difficulty level of the reading text. Consistent with the teachers, they did not recognize an effective way to estimate the level of the texts.

Process Evaluation

The process of developing teaching materials is based on the competence standard, which includes text types, generic structures, speech acts, forms of questions, forms of questions that have now arrived at the level of higher order thinking skills. This

is also in accordance with what is conveyed by the test developers where the focus is the form of the text that will be presented from general to specific and also the question forms.

None of the teachers and developers of national examinations convey how the level of difficulty of reading is presented to students. The level of reading difficulties and choice of answers to multiple choices, depends on the students' mastery of vocabulary and grammar. In addition, the students also conveyed that they met long sentence sentences with patterns of sentence patterns that were not taught at school. Thus it can be conveyed here that the curriculum does not provide guidance on the level of difficulty of reading, vocabulary and grammar.

This is because indeed in the 2013 curriculum, the forms of language namely vocabulary and grammar are not listed which should be a guide for teachers and developers of USBN exam questions. This once again results in students having difficulties in facing exams. What they learn at school does not appear in the national exam and those who appear in the exam are not taught. Even students say that they do not understand 50% of the words in USBN. It can be said that USBN is invalid and is an improper measuring device.

Teachers and test developers have difficulties due to the lack of language forms in the curriculum. Besides, to determine the teaching material and choose the reading text, the teacher bases on their assumptions. they only emphasize on the choice of genres suggested in competence standard. Test developers, did not have guidance either in determining the reading text, they tried to see what was on the previous exam, with difficulty. This means that the curriculum does not have a good mechanism in making exam questions.

Conclusion

The English final test 2017 inclined to adopt curriculum 2006 and 2013 since schools applied either one curriculum. Thus, teachers practically prepared the students with the test orientation of both curriculums too. Unavailability of targeted vocabulary and language forms created confusion for teachers, students, and test developers. The biggest challenge according to the participants of teachers, students, and test developers was vocabulary mastery. They conveyed that they recognized the types of text, but they did not recognize the vocabulary much. Consequently, they still had difficulties in comprehending the texts.

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