



EFFECTIVE SOURCES FOR IMPROVING READING SKILL OF THE STUDENTS

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Instructional materials have been defined as “any systematic description of techniques and exercises to be used in the classroom teaching” This definition is in line with what the study tries to find out on how the teacher uses the materials and how students respond to it since the material itself consists of systematic exercises and techniques to use the exercises. Therefore, the study tries to reveal the use of materials with appropriate exercises and techniques as perceived by the teachers and students.

Instructional materials exist in different forms of materials comprising textbooks, instructional aids (novels, plays, computer software, etc), and supplementary materials (maps, magazines, study guides, realias, workbooks, etc) (Richards, 2001). These forms of materials are important for the present study as to know to a certain extend the use of different kinds of materials in the classroom and how the students make responses to it. Referring to Beckman and Klinghammer (2006), the use of different materials here is as perceived by the teachers and the students.



The use of effective materials can be seen from its relation to other elements. In practice, instructional materials are interacted with other aspects of teaching, and how it interacts with curriculum, methodology, teacher and students gives foundation to the role of the materials. The role of the instructional materials is important in language teaching as it provides basis for the content of lessons, the balance of skills taught, and the kinds of language practice students take part in (Richards, 2001, 252).

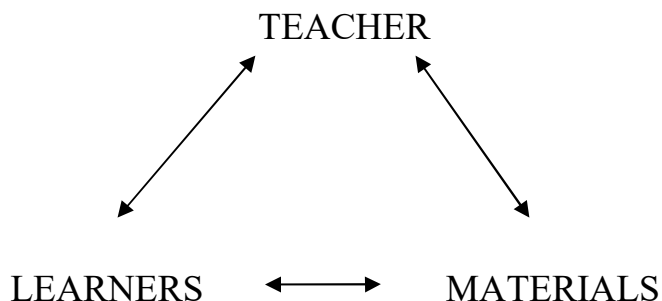
The use of effective materials can be analyzed from material preparation process to material implementation process (Byrd, 2001). These two steps from material preparation to implementation are everyday task of the teacher to use the materials. Respectively, Cameron (2003) refers the first to “task-as-plan” and the second to “task-in-action”. These two processes, therefore, will be used for the framework of the study. We consider that

The Role of Sources in Relation to Other Elements

As it is perceived, instructional materials cannot stand alone, but are interacted with the curriculum. The interaction views that materials cannot be seen in isolation; therefore, it is important to understand how instructional materials link to all those aspects of teaching and learning. In other words, how instructional materials interact will give foundation to the teachers to use instructional materials in the process of teaching and learning. In more simple way, the relationship between instructional materials and other elements is also suggested by Waters and Hutchinson (1998). They illustrate three way relationship as follows (See **Figure-1**):



Figure-1

Three-ways relationship of learning opportunities.

With two other components – teachers and students, teaching materials form three-ways process of interaction in the classroom (James, 2001; Waters and Hutchinson, 1995; Grant, 1987). Thus, in a complete form, these three factors provide learning opportunities in that the absence of one may result in the reduced quality of an effective teaching and learning. Teachers need different materials for a number of reasons. For some teachers, teaching materials serve as their primary teaching resources while for some others they regard teaching materials primarily to supplement the teacher’s instruction (Richards, 2001; 252). These different views lie on different perspectives of the teachers based on their subject matter knowledge (what teachers need to know about what they teach) (Richards, 1998; 9) and length of experiences the teachers may have. Later, both perceptions will determine whether the teachers are textbook’s driven or creative one. For learners, materials may provide the major source of contact they have with the language apart from the teacher (Richards, 2001: 252). Through completing tasks provided in the materials, the learners practice the knowledge apart of what has been given through the instruction of the teachers.

The role and uses of materials have been acknowledged significantly as Richards (2001: 252) points out that teaching materials provide basis for the content of lessons, the balance of skills taught and the kinds of language practice students take part in. Similar to Richards and Rodgers (1986) also puts forward the same



idea that instructional materials can provide detailed specifications of content, even in the absence of the syllabus. As a matter of fact, the materials themselves will produce a detailed language syllabus (Hutchinson and Waters, 1995; 93). Furthermore, they define syllabus as a document which says what will (or at least what should) be learnt (1995; 80). The interaction of instructional materials also involves the methodology. Richards (1990; 11) asserts the methodology does not only center on the choice of a “method”, but evolves out of the dynamics of the teaching process itself. In more detail, Richards characterizes methodology as the activities, tasks, and learning experiences selected by the teacher in order to achieve learning, and how these are used within the teaching/learning process. Thus, instructional materials should cover them all in units of instruction.

Language methodology also talks about current language approaches such as communicative language teaching. This approach attributes a primary role to instructional materials. Materials are seen as an essential component of instructional design and are often viewed as a way of influencing the quality of classroom interaction and language use (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Instructional materials, as mentioned above, indeed play great role in the language course program. Cunningsworth (1995) cited in Richards (2001; 251) summarizes the role of materials in language teaching as: (See to the 1th table).

1-table

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A resource for presentation materials;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A source of activities for learner practice and communicative interaction;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reference source for learners on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and so on;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A source of stimulation and ideas for classroom activities;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A support for less experienced teachers who have yet to gain in confidence.



With all the interaction above, now it is clear that instructional materials are not just things the teacher and students do in the classroom, but it embodies teaching and learning principles. They are all represented in an easy activity provided by the teacher for the most use of materials for the students. In addition to the characteristics of instructional materials mentioned above, referring to Rowntree (1997;92) cited in Richards (2001; 263), good materials should: (See to the 2th table).

2-table

Arouse the learners' interest
Tell them what they will be learning next
Explain new learning content to them
Relate these ideas to learners' previous learning
Get learners to think about new content
Help them get feedback on their learning
Encourage them to practice
Make sure they know what they are supposed to be doing
Enable them to check their progress
Help them to do better

Another view, Tomlinson (1998) suggests that good teaching materials have the following characteristics: (See to the 3th table).

3-table

What is being taught should be perceived by learners as relevant and useful.
Materials should require and facilitate learner self-investment.
Learners must be ready to acquire the points being taught.
Materials should expose the learners to language in authentic use.



The learners' attention should be drawn to linguistic features of the input.
Materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes.
Materials should take into account that the positive effects of instruction are usually delayed.
Materials should take into account that learners have different learning styles.
Materials should take into account that learners differ in affective attitudes.
Materials should permit a silent period at the beginning of instruction.
Materials should maximize learning potential by encouraging intellectual, aesthetic, and emotional involvement that stimulates both right and left brain activities.
Materials should not rely too much on controlled practice.
Materials should provide opportunities for outcome feedback (cited in Richards(2001; 263)

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