

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter illustrates the main content of this research, including the background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, conceptual framework, and previous research. The researcher's statements are added to demonstrate that this research topic is feasible and should be pursued. English reading materials are one of the objects that will be studied further in education, as well as their relevance to the needs of students.

A. Background

English has been needed by different majors of education that influence future careers and work. The materials for English learning should be explicitly assessed based on the student's needs in their concentration majors. In this case, need assessment as a part of English For Specific Purposes (ESP) plays a crucial role in investigating the situation. Need Assessment is a systematic set of procedures undertaken to set priorities and make decisions about a program (Witkin, Altschuld, and Altschuld 1995). It indicates that Need Assessment help English teachers to select more specific materials that may fulfil the student's need.

Regarding English materials, reading text is one of the most important sources, especially in cases where students must read English material for their specialist subject but may never have to speak the language (McDonough 2013). Moreover, the reading materials must be artificial to draw students' attention to structural usage relevant to their language practice. The reading materials are suitable when the information is successfully conveyed. It can be supported by assessing

the text's context, which helps the reader understand the meaning. Furthermore, the reader's background knowledge and experience will help them understand the context, mainly when the source text contains matters related to their speciality. In this case, the Need Assessment of English reading material allows students to comprehend the text easily.

Nevertheless, need assessment has yet to be popular among English teachers in Indonesia, particularly in vocational schools (Muhrofi G 2017). It can be seen from the English reading materials in the source used that it is too general. Based on the research by (Mahbub 2020) (Khosiyono 2018) and Alkurnia & Anggraini (2016), English reading materials in some vocational schools still need to be developed, along with the importance of specific English material assessments. Khosiyono (2018) observed (Kemendikbud, 2012) that in the 2013 curriculum, English subjects for High School (SMA) and Vocational school (SMK) have equal contents in both curriculum (KI/KD) and subject. Therefore, English in vocational schools also follows the practice of senior high schools in implementing text-based or genre-based instruction (Anggraeni, 2016).

In addition, Mahbub (2018) found that English teachers in vocational schools use the same general English material in terms of the sourcebook. Furthermore, he also found that grammatical learning and reading materials are being delivered to the student in which the materials do not appropriate for their vocational area. Then, developing the Need Assessment of ESP in a vocational school in Indonesia has a slight chance.

To find the real problem, the researcher analyzed some reading materials from the 2013 curriculum and Merdeka curriculum textbooks that used by the 11th-grade Pharmacy Vocational School. It is found that reading materials used were based on English for general, such as

Recount texts that retell a story of technical which contains the history and early writing. In addition, in Recount text materials, the book provides the procedure for “How to make orange juice”. Furthermore, the text about natural disasters is used in terms of descriptive text to be read and analyzed by the students. These texts are simply out of the Pharmaceutical area. The materials should be closely related to the healthcare systems, such as the text about the composition of drugs and their formula, providing service to patients, especially foreigners, etc.

Refers to the Pharmaceutical students' need, English materials should be assessed based on careful consideration of students' necessities, lack, and wants. Regarding reading materials, the challenge for students is to learn from what they have read rather than learn to read (Sperling 2006). The text material is supposed to support students' activities to increase the fluency with which students can use their existing language knowledge receptively and productively.

Since the Assessment of materials is essential, in recent years (2017-2022), some researchers have conducted a study about Need Assessment. Salam (2017) conducted a study about developing reading materials using need assessment. The study investigates the text genre, reading strategy, and the type of text to be assessed based on students' needs. The result showed that the teaching materials still need more content, text type, genre, test topics, and evaluation of each learning unit. Moreover, the Assessment of English materials was conducted by Jaham et al., (2019), which focused on assessing materials for necessary materials in Pakistani English Textbooks. Using a checklist adapted from Nation and Macalister (2010), the author identified that the current materials used by Pakistani students had presented mechanical tasks rather than fun activities. The textbook was neither taken nor adapted from natural and real environments.

This study has a similar topic to Salam (2017) regarding Need Assessment in reading materials. Nevertheless, the context of reading assessment used in previous research based on general context that aim to give a significance for the English teachers in general school. Researcher seek to differentiate the study by focusing on reading material assessment based on student's need in vocational area which majoring Pharmacy. Furthermore, the research that conducted by Jahan, et.al (2019) has a similarity to this research regarding the material assessment. Moreover, in against to the checklist used by the previous study, this study has a gap to differentiate the assessment technique by using the need analysis question adapted from Hutchinson & waters (1987).

Thus, the result of preliminary observation and the exist English reading materials used for EFL Pharmaceutical students which is too general are motivate the researcher to raise the topic of Need Assessment as a part of English for Specific Purposes in this study. The researcher purposed to help Vocational EFL students learn English courses in terms of reading material to match their vocational area as possible. Therefore, the researcher decides to investigate "Need Assessment of EFL Reading Materials for 11th Grade in Vocational Pharmacy school (A Case Study at SMK Negeri 7 Kota Bandung)."

B. Research Questions

According to the description above, the research questions can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the pharmaceutical students' needs in learning English reading materials?
2. To what extent the existing English reading materials meet the needs of pharmaceutical students?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the research questions above, this research aimed to reveal the expected results, as follows:

1. To identify the Pharmaceutical students' needs in learning English reading materials
2. To find out the extent to which the existing reading materials meet the needs of pharmaceutical students

D. Research Significance

The results of this study could be helpful to vocational English teachers in several ways since reading in English can help students understand concepts more deeply, especially if the texts are familiar to them. This study has various implications. Practically reading, this research will likely show the assessment of current English materials toward the students' experiences with the learning process and choices to determine the appropriate English reading materials. Theoretically, the reading-learning process for English for Specific Purposes can benefit from this research, and it is anticipated that it will serve as the basis for future research. Additionally, the results of reading material assessments can assist teachers in assessing their students' need for reading specific and general English texts.

E. Research Scope

This research is limited to the vocational Pharmacy 11th-grade students' needs in part of the English for Specific purposes process regarding reading text materials. Supporting by reading materials need assessment; this study examines the reading materials utilized at Pharmacy vocational schools. Then, the students' need for English reading materials indicates the references for developing reading materials that might meet their needs.

F. Conceptual Framework

This research focuses on assessing reading materials and identifying the student's needs. In simple statements, the main goals of a language programme usually stem from an analysis of why a learner in a specific environment needs to learn English (McDonough 2013). The main things that can be investigated from the current materials used by the learners in English language lessons are to define the framework of the learner's need. Materials do not exist in a vacuum; it depends on what language is for and how people learn languages; then, the selected materials will differ.

Reading materials are important media that support English teachers in teaching English lessons well. According to McDonough (2013), Reading is an essential language skill, specifically in cases where the learner is obligated to read English material for their specialist subject but may never have to speak the language. Therefore, the current material should be assessed to what extent it is relevant to the learners' experience and background (Salam 2017).

This study conducted a need assessment to assess the English materials, particularly reading materials. Based on the U.S. Department of Education in 2016, Need Assessment conducted to improve the education process leads to improved student outcomes. Within the context of district and school improvement, this includes investigating root causes, selecting and implementing evidence-based strategies, and assessing the effectiveness of those strategies in achieving desired improvement outcomes. Because effective improvement necessitates action, assessment, and ongoing adjustment, incorporating elements of a successful need assessment throughout implementation can aid in periodic data reviews to assess progress.

Moreover, Witkin et al. (1995) state that in Need Assessment there are three phases that should be carried out sequentially as a framework below:

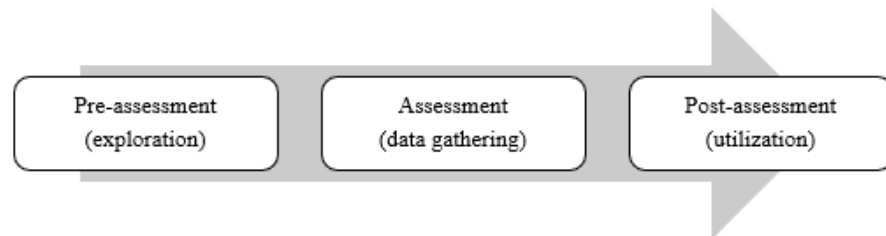


Figure 1. 1 Need Assessment Phases

By definition, Pre-assessment is the phase of exploring the context and environment of the perceived problem to identify needs before analysing them. This phase can be conducted by observation technique to comprehend the situation. Furthermore, the data-gathering process is the assessment, the main activity conducted in the second phase. Questionnaires and interview techniques can gather the data. Thus, the post-assessment phase is the moment for reflecting on the results of the need assessment and the process. In this phase, the solutions must be developed based on the identified causes related to the needs.

In ESP, the most crucial phase is the needs analysis phase. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) advocated a learning-centred approach in which learners' learning needs play a vital role. ESP is not a product but an approach to language teaching directed by specific and apparent reasons for learning. What learners should be taught are skills that will enable them to achieve their goal, as well as the process of learning and motivation, as well as the fact that different learners learn in different ways.

The researcher used the framework for identifying students' language needs from Hutchinson and Waters (1987) based on current reading materials in the 2013 curriculum used by 11th -grade vocational pharmacy in SMK Negeri 7 Kota Bandung. The framework gathering data as to why students need learning, how students learn, what materials are interesting for them, is the current materials from English teachers related to their vocational study, etc. here is the framework from Hutchinson and Waters (1987);

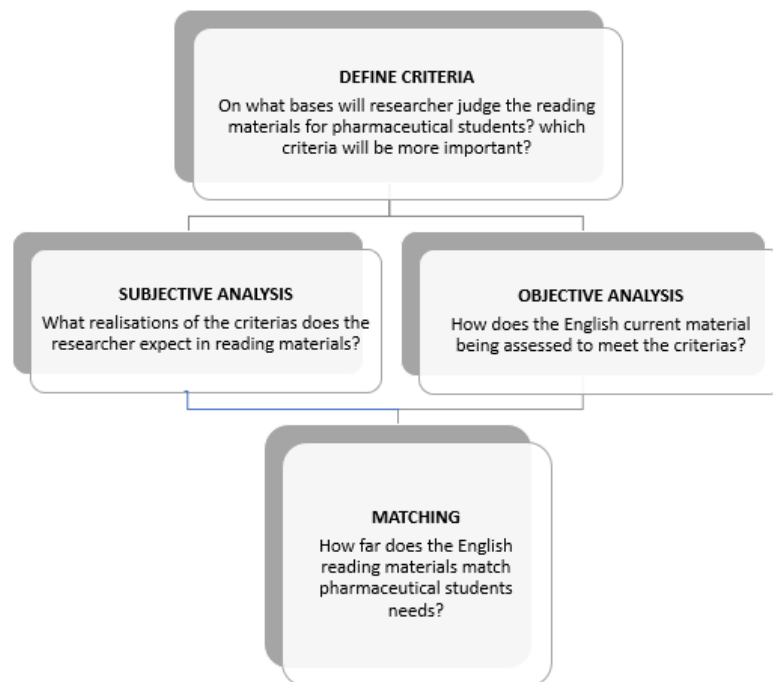


Figure 1. 2 The process of identifying materials based on student's needs

Finally, based on the conceptual theories above, here are the scheme of this research in assessing the existing materials in three steps of need assessment using the framework of identifying need by Hutchinson and Waters (1987)

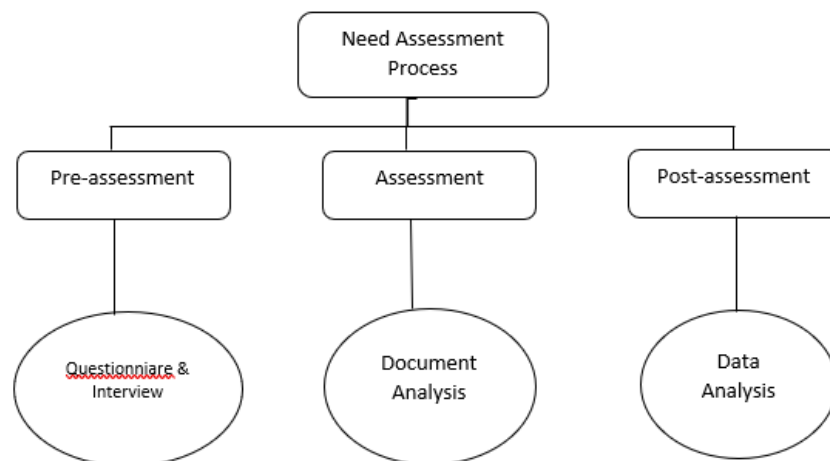


Figure 1. 3 The Scheme of the research

The research scheme above means this study will identify the materials through document analysis. The data will be collected from a questionnaire about the students' need and their opinion on the existing reading materials for 11th-grade pharmaceutical students and interviews. Afterwards, their results will be assessed to know the extent to which reading materials meet the need of pharmaceutical students.

G. Previous Study

Several researchers have studied English material assessment as a part of ESP related to this study in recent years. The study about an assessment of an English Textbook entitled “Bahasa Inggris Kurtilas” in vocational school has conducted by (Merilia and Tou 2018). The assessment focused on the quality of content, learning activity, and language choice in the textbook. Using the material assessment instrument from Hutchinson & Waters (2000), Cunningsworth (1995) and BSNP (2014), the study has collected significant data regarding the quality result of the material assessment. Based on the assessment result, it concluded that the overall content of the textbook in “Bahasa Inggris

Kurtilas” is categorized as good quality. This topic is similar to this study regarding assessing English materials for Vocational EFL students in terms of technique and the source instrument. Nevertheless, the researchers seek to find the gap by adding the result of students’ need analysis as an auxiliary instrument in assessing materials.

Furthermore, another research conducted by Oktarina et al. (2022) focused on analyzing instructional reading materials for Palembang tourism destinations for students enrolled in a Travel Agent Study Program at a vocational school. The developmental study approach is used to collect the data for determining the best reading text material that fulfils students' needs. Specifically, the study used three phases of analysis: an instructional analysis, an analysis of student needs, and an analysis of students' reading comprehension. These phases support the author to find that students' reading assessment is in low categories when comprehending the current material. In this case, the author selected the recount text materials that contain the stories and the image about "how to became a good tour guide for a native", which is adapted from the website. Finally, students' reading assessment results are increased through the new material used.

Regarding the purpose of the previous study, it was similar to this study in that it aimed to help vocational EFL students meet their needs. Although both the previous study and this study have analyzed reading materials, the previous study is more focused on developing the materials that have been assessed. It is against this study that focuses on the material assessment compared with the result of students' needs.

Additionally, in the trend of the problem that happened in vocational EFL pharmacies Syakur et al. (2020) have examined the need assessment of pharmaceutical students to find more specific materials. The author conducted the assessment through the Learning

Implementation Plans (RPPs) in students' semester program plans (RPS). The study obtained that innovative and interactive teaching materials in speaking are a higher percentage of requests. Moreover, other text materials requested by the students are journals, readings, and reports in the health and pharmaceutical fields. Finally, the previous study has a similar technique of need analysis to this research. However, the material assessment carried out in this study was not conducted in the previous study.

