

IMPLEMENTING ICT MEDIA IN DEVELOPING CHARACTER-COMPETENCE CONTENT OF ENGLISH MATERIALS

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Abstract

Referring to the national education philosophy and objective; that is, to develop students' competence and characters as good Indonesians, teaching English is intended to develop students' character-personality, as well as to improve their English proficiency (linguistic skills). This is important for Indonesia to face the golden age in 2045 indicated by having a golden generation of competitive and high quality human resources. However, several researches reported that students' English proficiency was not so satisfactory, which could skip Indonesia position in the global achievement. It is not fair to blame students' lack of English ability to become a factor. The problem may be due to teaching-learning process which might fail to stimulate their motivation and interests in learning. In this relation, therefore, there are 2 important issues to discuss; first, how teaching-learning process is managed interestingly and interactively for students to improve their English proficiency by using ICT media, and, second, how the ICT media organizes character-competence content of English teaching-learning materials. This paper will particularly discuss the implementation of ICT media in English teaching containing such character-competence content of English materials. ICT media are a new trend in English language teaching-learning today. Using ICT media are assumed to be an alternative solution to problem of students' learning interests and motivation in the teaching-learning process leading them to achieve English proficiency, although the implementation may still become problematic for teachers. Applying the ICT media in the teaching is expected to contribute to the development of students' English proficiency and their character-personality.

Key words: English Teaching materials, Character-Competence Content, ICT media, English Language Teaching-Learning Process

A. Introduction

The purpose of education in Indonesia is to prepare students to have good abilities and appropriate characters in order to establish better Indonesia, and so to uplift the national level of prosperity. Referring to the national system of education, the objective of education is to develop students' potential in having their faith observing the Oneness of God, practicing noble characters, being healthy, knowledgeable, skillful, creative, and independent, in order that they become democratic and responsible citizens for Indonesia (GOI, 2003, Decree No 20 Article 3). In this relation, character education or character building seems to become a mainstream of upcoming education system (Harian Abalisa, 2010; Harian Kompas, 2011). Therefore, this issue becomes a focus in recent 2013 curriculum system, that is, how subjects structured in the national curriculum incorporates character content along with knowledge and skill in all lesson materials (MOEC, 2013, Decree No. 54 Concerning Graduate Competence Standard).

As an international language, English is a compulsory subject in schools in Indonesia. The role of English is to develop students' English proficiency. The English proficiency is often referred to as listening, speaking, reading and writing skill respectively. Each skill has several language components that students have to master, i.e. sound system (pronunciation), vocabulary, and sentence structures.

As the role of English important in this globalization era, English language teaching is not only to achieve such English proficiency; it is also to reflect a national identity and integrity in the global context. In this circumstance, students' English proficiency includes their English skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as to reflect their character-personality as good Indonesian citizens in global and interpersonal communication (MOEC, 2013:78-82, Decree No. 64 Concerning Content Standard). In other words, there are 2 important components to integrate in students' English learning; they are achieving English competence and developing national character. Therefore, there are 2 issues to center around the topics of English language teaching and learning; first, how character-competence content is taken into account of the English teaching-learning materials, and, second, how teaching-learning process is managed interestingly and interactively for students to improve their English proficiency.

In spite of the important role of English, English language teaching often raises problems. One of the problems relates to unsatisfactory results of students' English proficiency. Several researches reported

unsatisfactory achievements of students' English proficiency (Aziez, 2011:1-4; Nitiasih et al, 2013:208). The results seem to relate to teaching and learning processes managed in the classroom that fail to stimulate students' learning interests and motivation. As a result, this situation may affect the quality of human resources unable to compete in global competition.

To anticipate, implementing ICT media in teaching is considered to be the best practice in today era of technology development. In this relation, using ICT media has become a new trend in English language teaching and learning process (Susikaran, 2013: 289-295; Sun, 2014:13-14). In spite of this, the implementation is not always easy. It is still found that teachers tend to use traditional methods which seem uninteresting for the students' learning interests and motivation (Septy, 2004; 2007; Nair et al, 2012:8-9). In particular, the teachers' ability to design the media is often problematic.

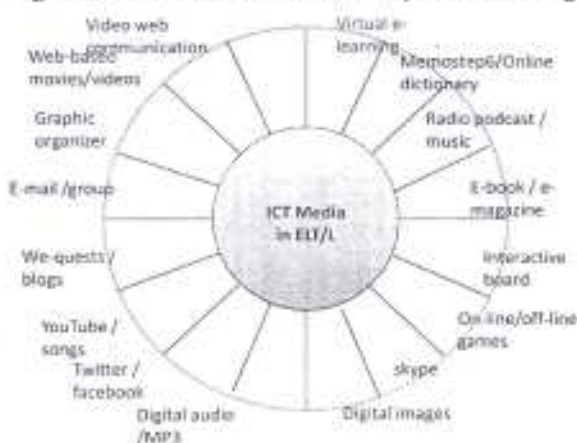
Based on the phenomena, a general problem to discuss in this paper is how and what teachers should do to implement the ICT media in organizing competence-character content of English materials. In particular, this paper will discuss procedure/process that teachers can do to design ICT media in order to develop such competence-character content of English materials. Then, what aspects that teachers may need to consider managing interesting and motivating classroom atmosphere of English language teaching and learning activities will also be discussed.

B. ICT Media in English Language Teaching: What and How

ICT media are often referred to as a computer based or computer assisted learning in which lesson materials are organized into digital presentations. Organizing lesson materials into computer will make learning attractive and advantageous (Ibrahim, 2010; Susikaran, 2013; Ebrahimi et al., 2013; Sadeghi & Dousty, 2013; Septy, 2014). Therefore, the ICT media are very important in today English language teaching-learning system in the world.

Ability to design ICT media may become an additional value to teacher professionalism. Having the ICT media of teacher's professional design in teaching-learning process may underline at least two main benefits: (a) to ease teaching and learning and (b) to organize huge lesson materials. To ease the teaching and learning means that is ICT media will ease students to understand lesson materials, as well as to ease teachers to manage their classroom activities. On the other hand, the ICT media will also help teachers organize their massive lesson materials into friendly-user formats. In this relation, teachers are advised to develop abilities to use and design ICT media for their teaching.

Figure 1. Numerous media teacher may use in teaching



There are a number of ICT media or computer-based media that can be operated in the classroom processes. They are, among others, radio podcast, electronic books, electronic email (groups), movies and online videos, web-quest, power-point presentation, digital images, and the like. Figure 1 shows numerous ICT media. To design and use these media, teachers will need to develop their special skill and knowledge about them.

Which ICT media teachers use in their teaching will depend much on their teaching-learning objectives and materials associated with the objectives. If competence-character content of English lesson materials is concerned, the teacher may develop relevant ICT media containing such competence-character content to present in the classroom following a number of criteria.

In general, there are a number of criteria to consider in designing and presenting the lesson materials into the media. The criteria include readability (font size), colors (match colors and pictures, attract interests),

clarity (zero noises), and adequacy (relevance to topic/content). As well, there are several basic principles to note in designing the media. Among the principles are esthetic, skill, knowledge, and economy. It means that in designing the media, teacher needs to take into account some sense of arts, skills and knowledge to technical applications and knowledge about contents and materials of English language, and economical consideration as well.

As the concept of active, creative, effective, and joyful learning (PAKEM) is of a central issue recently, teaching English with ICT media also relates to the PAKEM principles (Septy, 2007). In this circumstance, students and teacher may be involved in active activities. Material designed with ICT-media offer some attractive games that could develop students' language skills, for example, could promote active learning strategies and interests. Therefore, teachers' ability to artistically design learning materials with which students are interested in playing and actively participating is a challenge in the current and future English classes.

An active learning strategy includes two basic concepts: (1) learning is by nature an active endeavor and (2) that different students learn in different ways (Septy, 2007). In this regard, the ICT media stimulates active endeavor for students to find their own way to problem solving, and teachers intensively assist them to achieve objectives (Ebrahimi et al., 2013:3-19; Sadeghi & Dousti, 2013:1).

Having the ICT media, students may feel that they are experiencing the learning in a real context. The ICT media can display still or animated materials that may be impossible to have in a traditional teaching mode and classroom. This is what is called authentic learning (Septy, 2007).

There are a number of benefits of such authentic learning. Kelly et al. (2002) and Kilickaya (2004) note that the authentic learning could at least:

- affect students' positive motivation,
- provide actual cultural information,
- provide a real exposure on the target language
- relate to students' needs,
- support creative approaches to learning

Moreover, comprehensive learning and total mastery could also be reflected in students' English learning. Students can easily understand materials and access them without time constrain whenever they like. They can learn and practice English in or outside classroom, or even at home, as the materials designed by teachers could be provided online. Of course, schools should provide online access and facilities, and teachers develop their learning materials in real time.

Last but not least, the use of ICT media can lead students to develop their sense of competition. For example, the ICT resources provide games that students have to complete competitively while English is learned (Sadeghi & Dousti, 2013:23). The games students are taking part will require them to demonstrate their ability in English. The impact of this is that English is practiced. They may be pessimistic at first, because they fail and have to try again, but later after getting involved in the competitive games their optimism will gradually grow.

C. Organizing Competence-Character Content of English Materials in ICT Media Format

1) Competence-Character Content of English Materials

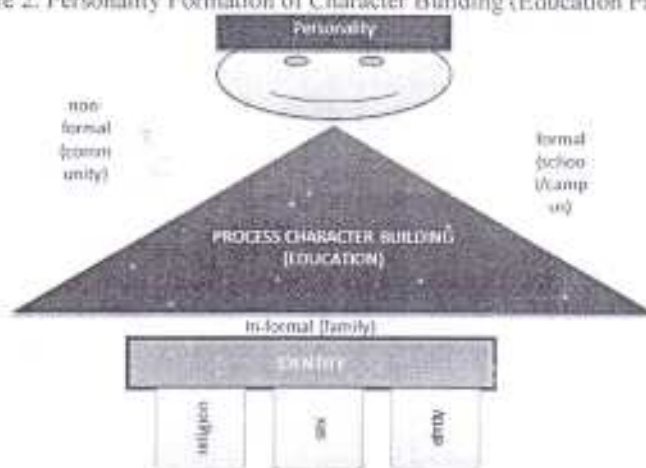
English lesson materials could be categorized into local, national, and international content. English for primary schools, for instance, as an optional lesson, could be categorized into a local content subject. The lesson material design should refer to students' local knowledge. In junior and senior secondary school, on the other hand, since English has become a compulsory subject, the lesson material design could be classified into national and international content. It means that English lesson materials do not only cover such local knowledge: it covers national and international knowledge. In relation to the authentic materials, Nowlan (2010) suggests that English authentic material and experiences in international content will help students become global citizens.

Language is generally for communication and, in particular, for social and personal interactions. In the communication and interaction, a speaker reflects his/her personality. This makes a combining competence-character content become important in English language teaching and learning to develop. Referring to the objective of national education, students' learning English also relates to such competence-character development (MOEC, 2013:78-82. Decree No. 64 Concerning Content Standard). In this relation, students are expected to have English competence indicating their national and international knowledge reflecting appropriate characters of Indonesia.

Personality is a profile of personal characteristics. How the personality is achieved could be developed through a process called character building. Education is a means of the character building. Figure 2 illustrates how a basic identity becomes personality through a process of character building.

Based on the figure, the process of character building becomes a central factor in educational process. The educational process occurs in schools, family circles, and community (called formal, in-formal, and non-formal education respectively) in which the process of character building mainly takes place. In other words, the process of personality formation will depend much on the process of character building, that is, the process of education occurring in the educational settings.

Figure 2. Personality Formation of Character Building (Education Process)



In relation to this, English language competence that includes linguistic and discourse mastery and social and strategic understanding then reflects a speaker's personality in communication. This is called English language competence (also well recognized as communicative competence). The communicative competence could not be separated from the process of students' character building leading to their appropriate attitudes to demonstrate in a communication.

In current 2013 curriculum system, attitudes to develop in students' lesson have been formulated into spiritual and social attitudes. A list of attitude and personality profiles developed from the process of character building particularly in education (English language teaching-learning in schools) could be adapted from personality values of the character education (Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC), Regulation No. 63 of 2014) as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Personality Output of the Character-Based Education
(Adopted from MOEC, Regulation No. 63 of 2014)

1. Faithful	1. Skillful	1. Scientific
2. Respecting diversity	2. Thoughtful	2. Diligent
3. Tolerant	3. Well-mannered	3. Careful
4. Collaborative	4. Critical	4. Open
5. Appreciative	5. Polite	5. Wise
6. Discipline	6. Handful	6. Simple
7. Responsible	7. Sensitive	7. Sense of pride
8. Self-confident	8. Responsive	8. Aesthetic
9. Brave	9. Communicative	9. Cooperative
10. Love country	10. Independent	10. Participative
11. Regretful	11. Efficient	11. Imaginative
12. Honest	12. Obey rules	12. Integrity
13. Heroism	13. Curiosity	13. Alert
14. Willing to give	14. Not easy to give up	14. Caring
15. Giving model	15. Logic	15. Aware
16. Aware of rights and responsibilities	16. Creative	16. Sharing
17. Democratic	17. Innovative	17. Sportive
	18. Productive	18. Love tradition
	19. Respectful	19. Humble

How the process of character building activities to be developed in English language teaching and learning is managed through designing and developing the teaching-learning materials. The English language lessons should not only contain linguistic materials such as sentence structures, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc., it should also contain character (attitude and values) to which students could develop their personality accordingly. Careful selection of relevant themes and topics need to be considered to manage character content for the English lesson materials.

Table 2 Themes

- Health
- Geography
- Sports/Hobbies
- Environment
- Education
- Technology
- Industry/economics
- Communication/international relation
- Transportation
- Culture/Arts
- Religions
- Politics/Government
- Law/Defense/Security
- Family/Family Planning
- Friendship
- Personality

There are a number of themes that could be considered in developing English lesson materials (see Table 2). Each theme could be developed into many relevant topics. Each topic then contains important information or general knowledge that teachers may write. Then, how a theme is developed to become several topics is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Developing Theme to Topics



Excerpt 1.

Theme: Communication
Topic: Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is the process by which people exchange information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages: it is face-to-face communication.

It is not just about what is actually said - the language used - but *how* it is said and the non-verbal messages sent through tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures and body language.

There are several components in doing interpersonal communication. They are *sending of message, a small group of people, the receiving of message, some effects, and immediate feedback* so that the important press is a director or immediate feedback. It is the communication that includes face to face communication or mediated communication, but it is personal.

As mentioned in Al Quran, Surah An-Nisa' (verse 86) that means " And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet [in return] with one better than it or [at least] return it [in a like

manner}. Indeed, Allah is ever, over all things, an Accountant.” In this ayat, Allah has commanded us to respect each other whenever someone is talking to us. Then, talk to human being well in order you can get good information, especially to your interlocutor. At last, use communication as good as possible.

Compared to other communications, like group communication and mass communication, interpersonal communication is expected by experts as the most effective communication in an effort to change attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions. This assumption is based on the reality; the communication is two-way reciprocal, feedback is instant, and terms of reference of communication can be known instantly.

As the character content is concerned, characteristics of current 2013 curriculum system, the information provided under the topic needs to be referred to value or attitude references. The value and attitude are related to spiritual attitude using spiritual reference(s), called basic competence 1 (KI-1) and social attitude using social phenomena as the reference, called basic competence 2 (KI-2). In doing so, there are a number of connecting words/phrases that could be used to connect the information about the topic with relevant references such as “according to ...”, “as mentioned in .../by ...”, “in relation to ...”, “in connecting with ...”, “as said in ...”, “based on ...”, “as said by ...”, “referring to ...”, etc. Excerpt 1 exemplifies how information of a topic (knowledge (KI-3)) is connected with such KI-1 and/or KI-2 references.

2) Designing Audio-Visual Media of English Materials

In designing audio-visual media of the English materials, there are at least 2 general steps that teachers need to follow. The steps are (1) selecting software and (2) using web-based resources.

a. Selecting Appropriate Software

Selecting appropriate software and install them to computer is important to do. The software is, for example, power point, movie maker, voice recorder, and/or macromedia flash. However, which software to use usually depends much on the purpose (objective) and what to teach. Several of these software programs are available free of charge, although others must be purchased. Teaching materials as cited in the curriculum become the main subject.

Using electronic colours, shapes, graphs, pictures and the like, teachers could develop creative images for their teaching materials. In doing so, a sense of arts is also needed to apply. Combinations of sense of arts and English material mastery will make media interesting, communicative, informative and motivating for students in their learning process (Septy, 2005). The English material mastery includes grammar, pronunciation, and spelling for English language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing) (Septy, 2004; Arslan, 2008).

There are two types of ICT media to be combined in designing materials for the teaching; audio and visual materials (i.e. movies and music). The design of media consists of three parts; opening (including title and teacher’s name), content of audio visual materials (related to the lesson plan), and closing (containing title, name of teacher, subject, etc). The organisation of audio visual materials for the media design is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Organizational Sequence of Competence-Character Content in Audio-Visual Media Design



b. Making use of web-based materials

In addition to using software, there are a number of web-based resources that can be combined to the designed audio visual materials. Recently the web-based materials are easy to access and download such as on-line library, story banks, and the like. However, the teachers are not expected to use ready-made materials. They are advised to adapt the materials according to topics and the objectives of the topics they are teaching.

There are many internet sites offering interactive learning resources. Some of the sites are free of charge. The sites can help the students improve their vocabulary, sentence mastery, pronunciation practice, and communication skill in general. For example, www.esl-lab.com provides a practice of various English skills. Besides, the sites may also provide some teaching resources for teachers.

Also, teachers may also develop their own sites and/or blogs to organize their online lesson materials. There are also a number of social media groups and web-blogs available for teachers to store their designed media and lesson materials. Overall, this requires teachers' ability to design and develop ICT media to organize lesson materials that will then give many benefits, not only to the teachers personally, to students, parents, and community generally.

D. Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has discussed the implementation of ICT media as a new trend in English language teaching-learning today. The ICT media are aimed at organizing character-competence content of English materials into easy, interesting, motivating, and manageable formats. The ICT media are applied to be an alternative solution to problem of students' learning interests and motivation affecting them in achieving English proficiency of communicative competence.

English teachers are expected to be ICT-literate so that they are able to manage, design, and update their English teaching materials. It is due to the fact that in today's life, students are so much influenced by ICT affecting their English proficiency negatively and positively and also stimulating their learning interests. This may be indicated in students' behavior to the English language they are learning, also their learning strategies.

Teachers' use of ICT media will effectively train students to be able to solve problems themselves and good communicators. This may be exemplified in students' behavior occurring when they manage to have a network, collaborative activities, group work, and the like facilitated by ICT media. Moreover, the use of ICT may also facilitate them to develop productive skill and thinking, as well as to grow a sense of awareness to the real world. In short, by using ICT media, teaching and learning activities will be more interesting and challenging.

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