USING IDOL MODEL TO DEVELOP WRITING FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES INSTRUCTIONAL BLOCK FOR THE FIFTH SEMESTER STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study is a development research aiming to develop a prototype of writing for academic purposes instructional block using IDOL model for the fifth semester students of English Education Department at UIN Alauddin Makassar. IDOL (Input, Development, Output, Language Acquisition) model was implemented as material development model. The study involved 101 respondents i.e. 87 students, 10 graduates, and 4 lecturers from English Education Department at UIN Alauddin Makassar. The research instruments employed were need analysis questionnaire and interview guidelines for students, graduates, and lecturers. While the quantitative data were analyzed using frequency analysis, the qualitative data were analyzed using data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The study results revealed the students' subjective and objective needs in the material of writing for academic purposes which subsequently became the basis of the writing for the syllabus design. Ultimately, a unit of prototype demonstrating the development of instructional block development using IDOL model was developed as an output of this study. This research can be a helpful guideline in developing a teaching material by using IDOL model, and the designed syllabus can be used in teaching writing for academic purposes since the syllabus had been sequenced and graded carefully by considering students' needs and lecturer's suggestions.

Keywords: Writing for academic purposes, instructional block, material development, IDOL Model

INTRODUCTION

As teacher candidates, having sufficient skill in academic writing is not only an interest but also a compulsory task for the students of English Education Department. Along with English Education's main goal which is to educate the teacher candidates to have both linguistic and teaching proficiency as the preparation for teaching their students

in the real teaching realm, the language skills, such as writing skill, are clearly needed to support the teaching in academic context. Normally, it is impossible for these teacher candidates to educate their students about writing skills before the educators themselves own that skills. As future English teachers, they must overcome their academic discourse limitations while learning to teach English reading and writing (Angel and Garcia, 2017: 52). Thus, it is necessary to have a qualified English writing proficiency and sufficient knowledge related to scientific publications such as books, research articles, and academic published journals. However, in fact, the academic members still encounter considerable difficulties in mastering English writing skills.

In higher education research, there are several contexts considering difficulties in writing process that hinder students from having outstanding writing skills which represent literacy perspective, knowledge, technical aspect of writing, characteristics of language and the difference of linguistic and cultural background (Lea and Street, 1998). For instance, in Thailand, where English serves as the foreign language like in Indonesia, according to Phothonggsunan (2016), Thai University Academics face difficulties that are categorized into three types: (1) *discursive challenges* which refers to language and context including well-structured paragraph, vocabulary, citation, making reference and so on, (2) *non-discursive challenges* covering elusive factors like plagiarism, motivation, emotional and psychological factors, and others, and (3) other challenges composed of lack of support in conducting research from college.

However, it is important to note in mind that writing is not a skill that can be mastered by merely being taught in an official writing class. Writing class only provides explanations and theories underlying writing, while what students need to be an advanced writer is not only the knowledge of writing, but also the internalized skills. In order to transform the knowledge of writing to be an active skill, a student needs to frequently practice writing. This way can be done by learning in classroom and individually. Therefore, students need to be equipped with the facilitation that can assist them in learning writing that can be utilized in either classroom learning or outside. In this case, instructional block which is a self-contained unit of lesson is one of the most important aspects in teaching and learning that must be well-developed and well-prepared to be ready assisting students in improving their academic writing skills.

Armstrong, et al. (2012) in their study entitled "*The Development of, and Response to, an Academic Writing Module for Electrical Engineers at the University of Bath*" revealed that the utilization of academic writing module in teaching the Electrical Engineers bridged

the students to both the focused skill of Engineering and also to the academic writing skill support as the medium to present the focused skill worldwide. Recognizing students' lack of writing skill, an appropriate Writing module was then made. This study indicated that a module positively supported students in making writings.

The study under the tittle "*To Design and Implement a Prescription Writing Teaching Module for Second Professional Medical Students*" done by Sharma, et al. (2015) investigated that there was ample evidence to prove that medical graduates were not prescribing rationally. In response to this problem, they design and implement a prescription writing teaching module for second professional medical students. In conclusion, this study shown that a module was an effective tool for teaching prescription writing to undergraduate students; modifications required in contents and strategy to emphasize the need of complete documentation.

Ghufron, *et al.* (2016) in their study aimed at designing a model of instructional materials for Academic Writing Course focusing on research paper writing. The model was designed based on the Curriculum at the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Art Education of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, East Java, Indonesia in order to enhance students' academic writing skill. The phases carried out in this research and development covered needs analysis, document analysis, model design, model development, and model experimentation.

Ángel and Garcia (2017) in their study that examined the effect of a multifaceted academic writing module on pre-service teachers' composition skills in an English teacher preparation program at a medium sized public university in Colombia showed that this sort of module significantly improved pre-service teachers' academic writing skills. In line with the present study, this research helped to highlight the saving graces hold by an instructional block, a module, in a course particularly academic writing that positively influence students' writing comprehension. However, the present study conducted by the present researcher was absolutely different from all of previous research.

The present study developed a model of instructional materials in a fairly different way compared to the previous study, since the model applied– IDOL Model, is a new development model equipped with quite different phases in it.

Based on those previous research findings, the researcher concludes that module is an effective medium to effectively teach materials and give exercises. In spite of the fact that module development for teaching has been widely conducted, there are still many people having no idea about how to develop an instructional material based on a clear and

appropriate process. Consequently, a number of modules may have been developed, but there are still a number of misconceptions in the process of making them that result in inappropriate and improper modules that reflect the unprofessionalism of an educator as an instructional material developer. The present research illustrated how a Writing for Academic Purposes instructional block was developed using a sequence of clear procedures of IDOL Model.

METHOD

This research applied random sampling technique in determining its populations involving the academic community of English Education Department at UIN Alauddin Makassar which was classified into: (1) *Students (target group)*, this study was participated by 87 students. They were classified into two groups i.e. 72 students from the fifth semester (They were taking writing for academic purposes course at the time of the research conducted), 15 students from the seventh semester (They had taken the course of Writing for Academic Purposes); (2) *Lecturers of Writing and other English skills courses (audience group)*; two lecturers of writing course and two lecturers of other English subjects (i.e. lecturer of grammar subjects and lecturer of vocabulary in context) were involved in this study; (3) *Graduates (resource group).* 10 graduates of English Education Department at UIN Alauddin Makassar were also taking apart in this study as respondents.

Development Research design was employed in carrying out this study. It is aimed at describing the decision-making process during the development of a product/program in order to improve the product/program being developed and the developers' capabilities to create things of this kind in future situations (Van Den Akker, 1999).

Additionally, Reigeluth and Frick (1999) in Kaharuddin (2014) define development research as "a kind of developmental or action research that is intended to improve design theory for designing instructional practices or processes" which is supported by Rita's (1994) argument in Kaharuddin (2014) that developmental research is critically important to the evolution of the field's theory base.

There are some steps underlying a Development Research. Nunamaker et al. (1991) classified five fundamental milestones: a) construct the framework of conceptual; b) develop a system architecture; c) analyze and design the system; d) build the system; and e) observe and evaluate the system. Peffers et al. (2007) in Ellis and Levy (2010) developed a 6-phase model that composed of: a) examining the problem evoking the research; b) identifying the objectives; c) designing and developing the artifact; d) testing the artifact; e) evaluating

the testing results; and f) communicating those results. However, this research was terminated until the development process of prototype without undergoing the phase of implementation and evaluation.

The researcher employed two kinds of instruments, they are questionnaire and interview. The questionnaires help to identify the subjective and objective needs that were fundamental basis in determining the aims and objectives of the instructional blocks developed. Stemming from the interest to gain a more holistic and in- depth data, interview technique was utilized. The value of interviewing is not only because it builds a holistic snapshot, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants; but also because it enables interviewees to "speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings" (Berg, 2007: 96 in Alshenqeeti, 2014). These ways of collecting data attempt to gather information regarding the students' language skills, topics, functions, etc.

1. **Quantitative Data Analysis Technique**

The researcher used frequency to describe how often something occurs and average (mean score). To calculate frequency, the total of respondents was multiplied with its scores and subsequently divided by the total of respondents in all categories. To clarify the data presentation, some data were analyzed by using tables to see the distribution of the level of frequency and level of importance using language skills.

2. **Qualitative Data Analysis Technique**

   a. **Data Condensation**

According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), data condensation refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and/or transforming the data that appear in the full corpus (body) of written up field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials. In essence, condensing will pave the way to stronger data.

   b. **Data Display**

The second phase of qualitative data analysis activity is data display. In general, a *display* is an organized, compressed assembly of information that allows conclusion drawing and action. Looking at displays helps us understand what is happening and to do something—either analyze further or take action— based on that understanding (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014).

   c. **Drawing and Verifying Conclusion**

The third major stage of analysis activity is conclusion drawing and verification. From the start of data collection, the qualitative analyst interprets what things mean by noting patterns, explanations, causal flows, and propositions (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014).

FINDINGS ND DISCUSSION

The data obtained from the needs analysis reveal some personal details, linguistic needs, and learning needs of the participants. Personal details are composed of gender and age aspects. Linguistic needs cover the dimension of learning ability and learning priority. Finally, the learning needs encompass the spectrum of learning problems and learning attitudes.

In the distribution of respondents by gender, female respondents outnumber their male counterparts with 85 of female participants (84.15%) compared to male which is only 16 (15.84%). Total participants are 110 involving students, lecturers, and graduates.

Shifting toward the distribution of respondents by age, the respondents are overall composed of three different classifications. There are 55 respondents aged 18-20 (54.45%), 43 respondents classified in age range of 21-30 (42.57), 1 peope included in age 31-40 (0.99%), and 2 respondents aged >40 (1.98%).

a. **Linguistic Needs**

The statistical information regarding the level of importance of writing for academic purpose subject informs that 83 out of 101 total respondents discern this subject as " very important" and the rest of 18 choose "important". Therefore the total average value is 3.82 indicating that it is "very important".

There are four purposes to attain academic writing skills rated based on the importance scales (0 - 1.50= not important, 2.51 - 3.50 = important, 1.50 - 2.50 = less important, 3.51 - 4.00 = very important). Firstly, "to report on a piece of research" is opted by average of 3.54 respondents indicating that it is "very important". Secondly, average of 3.12 respondents choose "to answer a question the writer has been given or chosen" (important). Thirdly, average of 3.21 think that academic writing skill is essential "to discuss a subject of common interest and give the writer's view" (important). Lastly, average of 3.42 think that it is aimed "at synthesizing research done by others on a topic" (important).

In the proficiency level of academic writing skill, there are four constructing elements of academic writing which are used in assessing students' associated skill proficiency. The statistical data show that grammar, sylistic, judgement, and vocabulary skills of students are rated as "fair" with average value of 2.37, 2.28, 2.36, 2.61 respectively.

In contrast with the preceding data showing fair numbers, the data capturing the importance of academic writing components indicate significantly higher number. Grammar, stylictis, judgement, and vocabulary skills are perceived as "very important" with average number of 3.67, 3.57, 3.69, and 3.75 respectively.

Looking at the data of students' perceptions toward the most preferred topics to learn, it is revealed that all of the topics given are categorised into two categories of importace. Firstly, there are several topics discerned as "very important" such as education (3.77), environment (3.55), and culture (3.51). Secondly, with lesser average numbers, the remaining topics encompassing science and technologies (3.36), psychology (3.34), math (3.26), business. (2.94), politics (2.85), entertainment and sport (2.80), and medicine (2.66) are rated "important".

Respondents have differing perceptions on the importance of grammar topics for academic writing. Firstly, sentence construction and boundaries, and phrase construction are rated as "very important " with average number of 3.58 and 3.57 respectively. Secondly, verbs and the verb phrase parts are seen "important" where its components such as contextual functions and uses of verb tenses in discourse (3.50), simple present tense and simple past tense and subject-verb agreement (3.50), functions and uses of the passive voice in academic text (3.48), passive voice constructions in simple present and simple past tenses (3.47), present perfect tense for introduction sections of academic essays and papers (3.49), possibility and ability modals as hedges (3.50), and reporting verbs for paraphrasing (3.50) are included in the scale of 2.51-3.50 (important). Thirdly, noun clauses in and for restatement and paraphrase are "very important" with average value of 3.51. Furthermore, the parts of nouns, noun phrases, and pronouns engendering nominalizations, gerunds, and other abstract nouns of all types (3.44), impersonal it-constructions (3.45, and noun phrases with attributive (descriptive) adjectives (3.31) are indicated "important". Moreover, adverb clauses and adverbs topics including concession clauses (3.39), conditional clauses (3.39), and functions and uses of formal hedges in academic prose (3.41) are clearly seen "important". Finally, exemplification markers (3.38) also appear to be "important".

b. Learning Needs

This needs analysis is also trying to identify the perceptions on academic writing problems. The statistical data reveal that all the given lists of writing problems "often" occur to students. The problems are categorized in three classes. Firstly, the psychological problem such as 'lack of motivation' (2.89). Secondly, knowledge problems such as the insufficient knowledge about organization of ideas (3.06), lack of ideas (2.96), lack of writing strategies (2.81), lack knowledge of appropriate vocabulary (2.69). Thirdly, technical problems which encompass relying much on L1 structure (3.14), difficulties in grammar and syntax (2.92), lack coherence, and use of formal transitional and cohesive devices. (2.82), and problems in paraphrasing, referencing and citations (2.69).

Concerning on the perceptions on vocabulary learning methods, there are some methods prefered by the respondents. First, review and consolidation (recycling and practising) of presented lexical items is rated as "very important" with average number of 3.55. Second, presentation of meaning and form of new lexical items appears to be "important" with average number of 3.26. Additionally, student respondents attach some more vocabulary learning method such as memorizing words using games, taking note of unfamiliar words found in passage, and regularly memorizing and reviewing vocabulary in each 3 days.

In learning judgement skill, there are three learning methods. Process approach is viewed as "very important" which is valued 3.58 in average. Besides, genre and product approaches appear to be almost similarly "important" with average number of 3.25 and 3.24 respectively.

In grammar skill learning methods, both of the proposed ways namely deductive and inductive approaches are viewed as "important" indicated by the average number of 3.16 and 3.43 respectively.

Finally, the obtained data revealed the respondents' perceptions on the importance of learning styles in learning academic writing. It is clearly seen that the fourth learning styles encompassing concrete (the learners tend to like games, pictures, film, video, using cassettes, talking in pairs, and practicing English outside class), communicative (the learners were defined by the following learning strategies: they like to learn by watching, listening to native speakers, talking to friends in English, watching television in English, using English out of class, learning new words by hearing them, and learning by conversation), analytical (the learners like studying grammar, studying English books and newspapers, studying alone, finding their own mistakes, and working on problems set by the teacher), and authority-oriented (the learners prefer the teacher to explain everything, having their own textbook,

writing everything in a notebook, studying grammar, learning by reading, and learning new words by seeing them) learning are considered as "important" according to their average values which are 3.37, 3.31, 3.25, and 3.03 respectively.

This project was undertaken to develop a material prototype of writing for academic purposes using IDOL Model. This study has found that generally student's needs in Writing for Academic Purposes encompasses linguistic needs and learning needs. While linguistic needs cover the dimensions of learning ability and learning priority, the learning needs encompass the spectrum of learning problems and learning attitudes.

There are four constructing elements of academic writing which are used in assessing students' associated skill proficiency namely grammar, sylistic, judgement, and vocabulary skills. The statistical data show that the students's academic writing skills is rated as "fair". In contrast, the data capturing the importance of academic writing components indicate significantly higher number. Grammar, stylictis, judgement, and vocabulary skills are perceived as "very important".

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Additionally, learning attitude can be elucidated by identifying students' learning preferences in learning vocabulary, judgement skill, and grammar. In learning vocabulary, students prefer learning by review and consolidation (recycling and practising) of presented lexical items. Secondly, learning by presentation of meaning and form of new lexical items is perceived "important". Additionally, student respondents attach some more vocabulary learning methods such as memorizing words using games, taking note of unfamiliar words found in passage, and regularly memorizing and reviewing vocabulary in each 3 days.

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Then, the results of the need analysis were exploited as the basis for developing the syllabus of writing for academic purposes. Richard's (2001) Curriculum Development Procedures was adopted in the process of stipulating syllabus. The syllabus compounds four types of syllabus i.e. content-based syllabus, skill syllabus, structural syllabus, and competence-based syllabus.

Finally, a material prototype for unit one is designed based on the designed syllabus and needs inventory. The material displays the final result of a material developed by using IDOL Model and represents the findings in need analysis. The material primarily focuses on judgement and stylish skill and is supplemented with language focus i.e. grammar and vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

This investigation expands our understanding of needs analysis, syllabus designing, material prototype, and material development process using IDOL model.

The need analysis process demonstrates the phases of finding out students' needs based on the perspective of students, graduate, and lecturer. Moreover, the obtained need inventory

from this research specifically reveal the needs of students in the course of Writing for Academic Purposes of English Education Department at UIN Alauddin Makassar that can be exploited in stipulating materials or other teaching and learning repertoires to improve students writing proficiency.

The syllabus design, theoretically, demonstrates the steps of making it from selecting syllabus content until deciding activities. Practically, the syllabus produced in the present research can be used somewhere that is in need of syllabus of writing for academic purposes. However, it is important to note that this syllabus is designed only for use in the institutions that are in need of syllabus a.k.a institutions that still do not have their own official syllabus. Since, it is not institutionally accepted to have more than one syllabus for one course in an institution.

The material prototype illustrates how a material developed using IDOL Model. However, this material is not evaluated due to the lack of time and opportunity. Therefore, its validity, practicality, and effectiveness are still not empirically tested. It is the suggested for the next researcher to consider this research gap to be their research concern.

Therefore, the present study adds to the growing body of research that indicates the phases of how to develop course materials not only for writing for academic purposes, but also for other subjects. The model used for this research IDOL Model may be applied to other development research elsewhere in the world.

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