

# The use of authentic material in English classroom teaching: Indonesian New Curriculum

Alfan Hariri, alfanhariri@gmail.com, STKIP Al-hikmah Surabaya, Indonesia  
Lina Aris Fica Yuma, linaaris.ficayuma90@gmail.com, STKIP Al-hikmah Surabaya, Indonesia

*Abstract.* The current Indonesian curriculum is an operational curriculum for school initiators (KOSP). In language learning, the KOSP focuses on the competencies to use the language with six basic skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing, in addition to Watching and presenting. "watching and presenting" skills to accommodate the receptive skill from the video and productive skill through media content such as YouTube, Instagram, Tik Tok and other media contents. The KOSP uses a genre-based approach in language teaching that emphasizes the contextual applicable use of the language, with four main activities: Building knowledge of the text, Modelling of the text, Joint construction of the text and Independent construction of the text. In addition, this paper explores the use of authentic material and its advantages in language learning classrooms. Furthermore, the paper presented some examples of using authentic material in implementing KOSP specifically for basic English in Junior and senior high school. The first authentic material is students' photographs to teach recount text where the students tell about the photograph in writing or orally. The second authentic material is students' realia to teach the descriptive text.

Keywords: Authentic material, Independent curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka), Genre-based Approach

## 1. Introduction

Soon after the inauguration of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Nadhim Makarim conducted a meeting with some experts and stakeholders in education about the policy and implementation of the curriculum in Indonesia. Eventually, he launched a new curriculum that is an Independent curriculum (curriculum Merdeka). At the school level, the curriculum is derived as an operational curriculum for school initiators ( KOSP ). One of the main innovations from the curriculum is the use of school and teacher autonomy to decide the goals of the school and the methodology to achieve the goals (Cahya, 2019).

In language learning, the KOSP focuses on the competencies to use the language with six basic skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing, in addition to Watching and presenting. "watching and presenting" skills to accommodate the receptive skill from the video and productive skill through media content such as YouTube, Instagram, Tik Tok and other media contents. Those skills are expected to help students maximize and use their competence in English daily. In addition, one of the goals of the language learning the new curriculum is to equip students with intercultural communicative competence, where the students should be able to understand the contextual use of the language. We might wonder where "watching and presenting" skills come from and why.

Furthermore, language learning in KOSP is encouraged to use multi-modal text with various skills included in learning materials. The materials do not merely rely on the textbook, which may be far from the student's needs and context (Noreillie, Grisez, & Desmet, 2012) because the teaching-learning process must accommodate the contextual use of the language. For this reason, the material should be closely bound to students' real life where they interact and use the material. In this case, authentic material is a must to achieve the goal of contextual learning. As a result, authentic material language learning will be more meaningful due to their familiarity and familiarity with the material used in the classroom.

Besides, the KOSP uses a genre-based approach in language teaching that emphasizes the contextual applicable use of the language (Hyland, 2003). For example, when the teacher teaches about recounting text, the teacher teaches about not only the generic structure of the text but also the language feature that is past tense (Sari, Zuraida, & Fiftinova, 2015). Of course, the teaching tenses and their contextual use will be more powerful, understandable, and applicable than solely teaching them. In addition, the research has shown that language teaching by using the genre-based approach has positive impact toward the students literacy (Chaisiri, 2010; Education & Program, 2016; Harahap & Rambe, 2019; Haryanti & Sari, 2019; Irawansyah, 2016; Lo & Jeong, 2018; Maisitoh, 2015; Mastura, Arsyad, & Koto, 2020; Syafitri, 2018; Van Dijk & Hajer, 2012). In short, using authentic material and a genre-based approach in language teaching will help students master the language as well as intercultural competence.

## **2. Literature review**

### **a. Operational Curriculum For School Initiators ( KOSP )**

In KOSP, the language skills are: listening, reading, speaking and writing, and Watching and presenting. For the assessment, the curriculum specifically states that the students should be in B1 of the standard Common European framework of reference for language: Learning, teaching and Assessment (CEFR) ("English B1 level - CEFR definition and tests | EF SET," n.d.). The B1 competence reads as follows:

1. Able to understand the familiar topic in school, working place and environment.
2. Able to respond to the expected situation while traveling
3. Able to make simple text about a familiar topic
4. Able to tell about experience, phenomena, ambition and able to give reasons and explanations about the opinion and plan

Besides the ability to use the language applicably, KOSP emphasizes the knowledge and awareness of intercultural by the fact that students will be part of global citizens with various cultural backgrounds. Thus, in language learning, the goals of KOSP are that the students not only

can use the language but also can understand the culture and context of the conversation so that the communication will be effective and mutual. The language learning goals of KOSP are the following:

1. Improve the English communication skill with various multi-modal text (oral, written, visual and audio-visual)
2. Develop intercultural communicative competence to understand and appreciate the perspective, practice, and products of Indonesian culture and other countries.
3. Develop the confidence to express their thought as independent and responsible individuals.
4. Develop critical and creative thinking skills.

To achieve those above goals, specific strategies have been proposed in the KOSP curriculum that may not be found in the previous curriculum. The use of multi-modal text, either authentic or module, the teacher's autonomy to choose the kind of text, and the use of a student-centered approach in English teaching-learning.

#### **b. Genre Based Approach**

To facilitate the students to achieve the level of B1 CEFR, KOSP uses the genre-based approach in English language learning. At least, the genre has two meanings: 1) genre is seen as a social process that focuses on the text classification and its structure (systemic functional dimension). 2) genre is seen as a social process that focuses on the contextual background of the text use (social dimension). In this case, the genre refers to meanings covering systemic functional and social dimensions. In short, the genre is viewed as the social process of communicating by considering the communication's context, purpose, structure, and language features (Knapp & Watkins, 2005).

In the genre-based approach, there is some specific syntax that has been used in the teaching-learning process (Agustien, 2020):

- 1) Building knowledge of the text,  
The teacher introduces the text from the students' environment that uses the text. The teacher can discuss the related experience that many students have about the context of the text. In addition, the teacher can introduce new vocabulary in the text, which the students may confuse about the vocabulary.
- 2) Modeling of the text,  
The teacher models or gives examples to the student about the text. In this step, the teacher should use their teaching skill so that the classroom interaction is student-centered during the process.
- 3) Joint construction of the text,

The teacher gives a chance to students to make the text that has been introduced in the group. In this step, the teacher can help the students make the text before making it in groups. In other words, the teacher can provide the student to create text by the teacher or their friends jointly.

4) Independent construction of the text

After the dependent text-making from the previous steps, with the help of both teacher and pairs, the teacher asks the students to make the text individually.

5) Linking related text,

After teaching-learning and the student's mastery of the text, the teacher can hint about the net text taught while connecting the latest text with the next text. (Agustien, 2020)

The genre-based approach is expected to train the student to understand, respond, and make various texts they have found in their familiar surroundings, either written or oral.

### **c. Authentic material**

When we think about text, we will refer to writing, either fiction or non-fiction, virtual or actual text. However, many experts propose that the term text must be seen in a wider spectrum. Pahl & Rosswell (2005) assume that the text must be seen as a social construct with various stories and experiences attached to it. For example, we do not see a book as merely a book; rather, we can explore the story behind the book, physically or physiologically, such as the price, the store to buy or the feeling when getting the book. Thus, text must be seen not only in its physical but also in the context surrounding it (Beresova, 2015; Karimi & Dowlatabadi, 2014).

In addition, (Ekşi & Yakışık, 2015) assumes that text is all products of communication, such as audio, visual, aural and text. Even the text is seen as the process and product to respond to social circumstances (Agustien, 2020). Similarly, in KOSP, the text is not limited to written text. Rather it covers all of the processes and products of communication. In short, the term text has a wider meaning that covers both physical and social aspect that underlies the text (Djonov, Tseng, & Lim, 2021).

Furthermore, Pahl & Rosswell (2005) propose the term "multimodality" of a text where the text used is switched from one purpose to another. For example, we use the recipe as guidance to cook, and when we bring it to the classroom, the texts have switched to the function to become language classroom media.

From this fact, there is an urge to use authentic material in the classroom because there is a vast distance between the learning material and the students' real life (Strømman, 2021). There are some advantages of using authentic material in the classroom, such as more meaningful learning, adequate background knowledge, and confidence in teaching practice (AbdulHussein, 2014; Ekşi & Yakışık, 2015; Kozhevnikova, 2014; Shariman, Razak, & Noor, 2014).

In authentic material, the material used is that the students are familiar with and find in their daily life, such as in the house, playground, or market. The learning process will be more meaningful with the material that has a strong bond with the students (Naderi, 2005; Street, B. & Lefstein, 2007).

In addition, when we use materials closely connected to students, the students have sufficient background knowledge about the material. From that point, the teacher can invite the students to reflect, think and even criticize the event that surrounds the material (Strickland et al., 2005). As a result, the student will be easier to understand and instill new insight into phenomena dealing with the teaching-learning material.

Last but not least is student motivation during the teaching-learning process. When the learning uses books, the students feel that they are in the rigid atmosphere of the classroom (Vincent, 1989). However, when the classroom uses authentic material, the students unconsciously think they are outside the class because they see their real-life exposure in the classroom. As a result, students feel more enthusiastic and motivated to participate in the teaching-learning process.

### **3. Discussion**

#### **a. Using authentic material in English teaching learning in KOSP**

From the above description, in a genre-based approach used in KOSP, the first step is to build knowledge about the text from "scratch." They usually find in their life that is "building knowledge of the text". In this step, the teacher introduces the text from the context that the students have been familiar with. It makes the introduction easier, and students feel connected with the teaching and learning material (Kozhevnikova, 2014). Thus, using authentic material to introduce the text is very powerful for the students and easier for the teacher to correlate between the lesson and the real world. Eventually, by using authentic material, the student can use the language daily.

KOSP divides the receptive and productive skills based on the phase of the student. For example, in the early phase (Phase A to C for elementary school), the focus is the speaking skill, specifically vocabulary and pronunciation, since English pronunciation and writing are different. In addition, vocabulary and pronunciation is the core speaking skill that will decide the student's fluency.

Phase D focuses on receptive and productive skills, where the starting point is genre text. From the genre text, the teachers are expected to teach various skills such as reading, writing and listening, speaking, and structure or grammar. Similarly, phases E and F focus on the fluency of receptive and productive skills with more sophisticated skills such as inferring, understanding the context, and critical thinking.

Since all phases of teaching English in KOSP use a genre-based approach, the teacher must use contextual learning by using the students' experience and texts, specifically authentic material in the classroom.

### **b. What authentic material and how to use it?**

The teaching-learning process aims to equip the student with various skills to face their real life. Thus, the classroom should emulate the real-life context to make the teaching-learning process meaningful (Beresova, 2015). The textbook is far from the student's reality because they are made for a public purpose that may be difficult to find in the student's real context (Greenstein, 2012). As a matter of fact, for rural students where universal studio, as an example in the textbook, is far from their reach or even imagination is impossible to teach them about descriptive text using universal video. The teacher should be able to exploit the students surrounding and context so they can absorb and use their own experiences to share in the classroom. The following are examples of implementing the basic English phase, usually from junior to senior high school, in KOSP using authentic material.

#### **1. Teaching Recount text by using a personal photo**

In the previous curriculum, when we teach about the genre of the text, it will be focused on reading and writing skills. For example, if we teach recount text, we will think about text and writing. However, in KOSP, all skills are covered from one genre text. When we teach recount text, the goals are: speaking, writing, listening, reading as well as structure. In addition, genre text encourages the teacher to explore the student's background knowledge that can use authentic material to make it easier and contextual for the student.

In this case, the teacher can use the students' vacation photographs to teach recount text using the genre-based approach. The teacher can explore students' experiences with their photos in building knowledge of the text and instill some features of recounting text during the process. For example, the teacher can ask about students' feelings, activities, or members/participants. This exploration makes the student feel more confident and flawless in telling the story.

In the next step, the teacher can show a recount text about telling a vacation and explain the text's generic structure and language features. Similarly, the teacher can use a video about telling a vacation as a receptive reinforcement by listening and watching at once. With written and oral examples of recount text, the teacher can share how to use the recount genre in written and oral expression.

Furthermore, for joint construction of the text, the teacher can ask students to recount the text orally or in groups. In this case, the students can share their photographs and make a raw structure

about what to tell. The other members suggested each member's scenario to write or tell in the recount text.

Afterward, the student can formulate the recount text individually with enough material from the previous steps. The teacher can ask students to present their recount text, either written or oral text, in front of the classroom. Use one of the members' photographs to be used in the group.

## **2. Teaching descriptive text by using realia from students' artifact**

Similar to teaching recounting using photographs, in this case, students' artifact is used to teach the descriptive text. Pahl & Rosswell (2005) suggest that using toys in the classroom can be very helpful in creating a joyful atmosphere in the classroom. In addition, the students feel more confident and comfortable talking about their artifacts. As a result, the students can tell more fluently and broadly since they tell about their artifacts.

In this case, the teacher can use the Youtube video about reviewing a toy or something to build knowledge. While watching the video, the teacher asks the students to take note of what aspects the You tuber review about the thing described.

Afterward, the teacher shares the example and material about descriptive text, both written and oral. In addition, the teacher explains the text's generic structure and language features. In this case, the teacher describes simple present tense and singular and plural nouns as a part of language features in descriptive text.

In the joint construction step, the teacher invites one of the students to analyze the descriptive text provided by the teacher. With assistance from the teacher, the student explains the generic structure part as well as the language feature in front of the class. Furthermore, in this step, the teacher divides the class into groups where the students make the descriptive text.

After the assistance of the teacher and group members, the students make descriptive text individually in the independent construction step. In this step, the students present their work in front of the classroom, either written or oral.

## **4. Conclusion**

Authentic material in the classroom is vital, for there is a vast distance between the learning material and the students' real life. The authentic material creates more meaningful learning, adequate background knowledge, and confidence and comfort in practice. Moreover, using a genre-based approach in the current Indonesian curriculum, KOSP, where the first step is building background knowledge, will be more flawlessly done as the material used is familiar to the students. In this paper, the examples are using photographs to teach recount text and students'

realia to teach descriptive text. While implementing the steps in the genre-based approach, the teacher explores both written and oral skills and productive and receptive skills.

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