



JEELS

(Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies)

P-ISSN: 2407-2575 E-ISSN: 2503-2194

<https://jurnalfaktarbiyah.iainkediri.ac.id/index.php/jeels>

DEVELOPING ENGLISH TEACHING MATERIALS USING TASK GENERATOR TO ENHANCE THE SEVENTH GRADERS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND 21st CENTURY SKILLS

*Ariatna¹; Ade Aini Nuran²; Watcharaphong Soongpankhao³

^{1,2}English Language and Literature Department, Universitas Negeri
Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia;

³English for International Communication Program, Rajamangala
University of Technology Phra Nakhon, Dusit District, Thailand

*ariatna@unimed.ac.id; adeaini@unimed.ac.id;

watcharaphong.s@rmutp.ac.th

(*) Corresponding Author

Abstract: Although extensive research has been carried out on the construction of teaching materials to increase students' English skills, few studies have investigated how English teaching materials can be developed to sharpen students' 21st century skills. This paper reports a research and development study on the enhancement of English teaching materials based on Task Generator Model to increase students' 21st century skills. The study, which was conducted at a private secondary

¹Citation in APA style:

Ariatna., Nuran, A. A., & Soongpankhao, W. (2023). Developing English teaching materials using task generator to enhance the seventh graders' English language and 21st century skills. *JEELS*, 10(2), 407-438.

DOI:10.30762/jeels.v10i2.1751

Submission: August 2023, Revision: September 2023, Publication: November 2023

school in Medan, began with a need analysis in which students' views on learning needs were surveyed. The questionnaire data revealed that the majority of students were in favor of materials which can support their English language and 21st century skills. The task-based materials were then developed and validated by experts (a lecturer and a teacher). The validation data showed that the initial product was deemed practical. There were also positive responses from both the teacher and students about the effectiveness of the task-based materials in supporting students' English abilities and 21st century skills.

Keywords: *English language skills, task generator, teaching materials, 21st century skills*

INTRODUCTION

Idrizi (2022) contends that “the language classroom of the 21st century goes beyond teaching and learning language skills and language areas” (p. 147). In order to address the challenges of the 21st century, he goes on to say that language students should be equipped with additional skills (i.e. 21st century skills) which prepare them to become skillful communicators, good collaborators, critical thinkers, and creative individuals. Although a considerable amount of literature (e.g. Bouckaert, 2019; Li and Li, 2021; Richards, 2006; Tomlinson, 2020; Yuzen & Karamete, 2016) has been published on the development of teaching materials to support students' English language abilities, very little is known about how English teaching materials development can help students improve their 21st century skills (Menggo et al., 2019). This study was conducted to fill the research gap and in particular aimed to develop the existing textbook used in an Indonesian secondary school to improve seventh graders' 21st century skills by using a learning model called 'Task Generator'.

Many researchers have attempted to describe 21st century learning and the skills it entails. Duncan (2009), for example, defines

21st century learning as learning that hones skills relating to creativity, persistence, problem solving as well as the ability to perform as part of a team. Larson and Miller (2011) summarize the list of 21st century skills as follows: 1) Communication, 2) Collaboration, 3) Critical Thinking, 3) Problem-Solving, 4) Creativity, and 5) Innovation. 21st century skills have a direct impact on the teaching and learning process so that teachers are required to be able to identify these skills and integrate them into classroom activities (Andrade, 2016). Andrade further points out that in the 21st century classroom, students are expected to be able to communicate and collaborate with their classmates in both online and offline contexts. Students' 21st century skills can be honed when they collaborate to solve problems, complete creative/innovative projects, or discuss a topic critically. 21st century skills can also be acquired through participating in virtual conversations or discussions involving social media or digital applications (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). In sum, "preparing students as 21st century learners is a key reform in education" (Heinrichs, 2016, p. 37).

In learning English, Indonesian students are required to master several language skills. According to the Educational Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Department (2022), expected English language skills at the secondary education level include basic skills such as reading, listening, speaking, writing, viewing and presenting. In 21st century learning, however, Junior High School students are expected not only to master basic skills in English but also to master 21st century skills. When the elements of the 21st century skills are absent in teachers' English language materials, students will only have the opportunity to engage in communication activities but not in collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative/innovative activities (Fandiño, 2013). As such, for English language practitioners, "a primary challenge is thinking about how we can promote and work with these skills in our own classrooms" (Halverson, 2018).

However, incorporating 21st century skills into a language classroom is not an easy task. Idrizi (2022), for example, mentioned the absence of 21st century elements in many foreign language textbooks as one significant factor that prevents language teachers from introducing 21st century skills to their students. This condition is relevant to the context of Indonesia. While language skills are generally taught in local schools, very few teachers have attempted to teach 21st century skills to their students due to unsupportive teaching materials (Menggo et al., 2019). The existing textbooks mostly focus on language forms and basic language skills but do not address the 21st century skills needed by students. A possible solution to this hindrance, as further suggested by Idrizi (2022), is to develop teaching materials that can satisfy the needs of the 21st century students (i.e. materials covering communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity skills).

The importance of developing materials in accordance with students' needs has been highlighted by a number of language experts. Masuram and Sripada (2020), for example, asserted that instructional "materials must be adapted to suit the need of learners according to their settings" (p. 65). In a similar vein, Tomlinson (2016) emphasized the significance of improving teaching materials for students because textbooks are in fact general in nature and irrelevant to students' experience and needs. If students cannot see the relevance of the teaching materials taught by the teacher to their lives, students will be reluctant to communicate and interact (Dornyei, 2001). In the local context, this condition was experienced by English teachers at a private secondary school in Medan. Preliminary data from the English teachers' Sharing Forum (MGMP), obtained three weeks prior to the commencement of the study, revealed that Grade 7 students rarely participated and collaborated in English class activities even though some of them have studied English since elementary school. It was also found that the English teachers teaching Grade 7 used the existing conventional textbook in teaching English which made the students bored and eventually reluctant to take part.

Given the facts, this study aimed to increase students' English proficiency and their 21st century skills through a learning model called 'task generator'. Task Generator is a task-based language teaching (TBLT) framework developed by two English language practitioners named Willis and Willis (2007). Task Generator signifies fundamental adjustments to conventional form-focused teaching. In Task Generator, the use of the target language is activated through a set of activities where "the user's attention is focused on meaning rather than grammatical form" (Nunan, 2004, p. 4). This learning model generates communicative and interactive meaningful activities out of a topic using seven task types (i.e. matching, listing, sorting and ordering, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative projects). *Matching* refers to a series of activities in which students are asked to match a particular item with its language features. For example, matching the alphabetical labels on a road map according to the verbal instructions given. *Listing* is a set of activities that involve students to make a list of a particular topic/idea/item. For example, students try to make a list of procedures that must be done when ordering food online. *Sorting and ordering* is related to a series of activities that require students to classify or sequence a particular topic/idea/item. For example, students are asked to rank the five best-selling educational games in 2023. In a *comparing* task, students compare differences/similarities or advantages/disadvantages of something. For example, finding differences between one favorite coffee shop and another favorite coffee shop in town. *Problem solving* is concerned with a set of activities in which students are required to find a solution to a particular problem. For example, students form a discussion group to come up with five ways to avoid the influence of drugs. *Sharing personal experiences* means students are actively involved in telling something to their friends about their life experiences. For example, students are invited to talk or write about the most memorable movie they have ever watched and the reasons for it. In *creative projects*, students are asked to create a product or design a project. For example, they try to

develop a podcast containing an interview between a famous soccer player and a news reporter.

In Task Generator activities, students are engaged in language use (both receptively and productively), think critically to solve a problem, collaborate with classmates and try to be creative in producing innovative language products. Furthermore, Task Generator involves the use of multimodal texts which support the demands of the 21st century learning (Idrizi, 2022). In short, Task Generator was chosen because it has the potential to accommodate and improve students' 21st century skills because they support the mastery of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity skills. This is what Bos and Vaughn (2005) call 'teaching in context', or involving students in interesting meaningful activities that can connect language content with practical uses that are relevant to the current context.

In line with the task-based language teaching tenets, the teaching resources created for this study incorporated the general education principles outlined by Ellis (2019, p. 20). In developing the materials, the researchers also took into account the list of principles proposed by applied linguists. These principles contain useful ideas about how materials can be well-developed to support the learning process. For example, the construction of the teaching materials in this study complied with Nunan's (1988) advice that effective instructional materials should be connected to the curriculum they serve, involve authentic activities, foster interaction among students, motivate students to enhance their learning-how-to-learn abilities, and encourage students to use their developing language abilities in real-world situations. The researchers followed Nation's (1993) suggestions that learners' needs should guide the development of materials, materials should cover everyday topics, activities in a language class should be designed to help students utilize the language both receptively and productively, students should be made enthusiastic and interested in learning the language through engaging

materials, the target language should be used as much as possible, and students should be encouraged to produce language across a variety of discourse types. Furthermore, the materials creation in this study considered Tomlinson's (2001) criteria that powerful materials should put students at ease, promote self-assurance, be pertinent and helpful, introduce students to language in context, give students the chance to utilize the target language for communication, and consider how different learning styles exist among students. Simply put, the materials design in this study adopted an analytical approach, that is a learner-centered approach which "begins, not with an analysis of language, but with a consideration of learners and the purposes for which they are learning the language in the first place" (Nunan, 2010, p. 137).

In addition to sharpening students' language skills, the development of the teaching materials in this study also aimed to promote their' 21st century skills. Speaking of the importance of incorporating 21st century elements into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, Fandiño (2013) posited that "schools in general and EFL classrooms in particular should provide students with practices and processes focused on acquiring and developing, among other things, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, self-direction, and cross-cultural skills" (p. 190). Task Generator has the ability to hone EFL students' 21st century abilities as it trains them to think critically about a particular topic and find solutions to a problem. Task Generator also supports students' creativity or innovation in that it provides opportunities for them to create products based on their language learning (Willis & Willis, 2007). Given the potential of Task Generator, it is expected that the developed textbook can be practical for teaching students in their first academic year at the Junior High School as the content supports the development of both students' language abilities and their 21st century skills.

METHOD

The study involved two experts in English teaching materials development, an English language teacher and an intact class consisting of 21 seventh grade students at a private secondary school in Medan. Prior to the commencement of the study, the researchers paid a preliminary visit to the school to obtain information about the English textbook used in the school and to explore whether the content of the textbook promoted 21st century skills. In this study, the researchers used a research and development (R & D) model proposed by Dick et al. (2008) which is comprised of four main stages in the development of materials: Analysis, Design, Development, and Evaluation. Each stage is described in Figure 1.

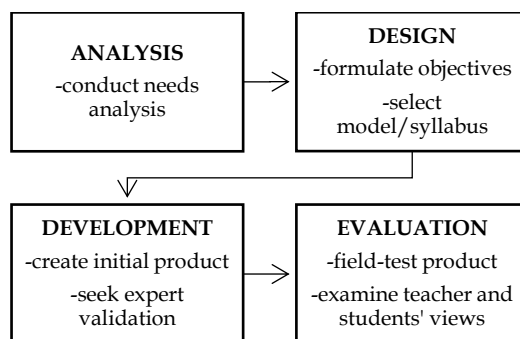


Figure 1. *Research and Development Model, adapted from Dick et al. (2008)*

The first stage of the study involved a needs analysis. The importance of assessing learners' needs in English language teaching has been highlighted by educational researchers and material developers (e.g. Darici, 2016; Long, 2005; Tzotzou, 2014). In this study, needs analysis was conducted based on Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) model. In this model, learners' needs are classified into two categories: target needs (i.e. what the students must perform in the target situation) and learning needs (what the students must do in order to learn). Target needs are further broken down into necessities (i.e. the demands that learners must meet in order to function effectively in the target situation), lacks (i.e. learners' difficulties to

deal with the target situation), and wants (i.e. learners' expectations after completing the course).

Using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire, the needs analysis was administered to investigate students' target needs and learning needs in terms of materials development in their class. The questions included the extent to which the students need to master the target skills (i.e. English language and 21st century skills), the extent to which they lack material support to achieve the target skills, the extent to which the students expect to accomplish the target skills after using the material support, and what the students need to do to learn the target skills. To avoid misunderstanding, the questionnaire was administered in Indonesian language at the beginning of the study to 21 first-year Junior High School students.

In the second part of the study, the design stage was conducted by formulating the performance objectives and selecting the syllabus type. Based on the results of the needs analysis, the performance objectives were drafted to address the students' needs (i.e. the mastery of English language and 21st century skills to be able to function effectively in the future settings). Two significant goals were addressed in the formulation of performance objectives. First, the mastery of reading, listening, speaking, writing, viewing, and presenting skills existing by Kurikulum Merdeka (Educational Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Department, 2022) as the learning outcomes of the Junior High School students. Second, the mastery of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation skills proposed by Larson and Miller (2011) as the goals of the 21st century learning. An analytical syllabus using Task Generator was then selected as the main paradigm to develop teaching materials which enables students to achieve the target skills. This task-based syllabus was chosen because of its potential to provide ample opportunities for students to practice using the target language and sharpen their 21st century skills at the same time. With this type of syllabus, a series of communicative, collaborative, critical-thinking, problem-solving, creative and

innovative activities may be generated out of a single topic (Willis & Willis, 2007).

The third stage of the study involved the development of the teaching materials. In this stage, the teaching materials were developed from the existing textbook based on Nation & Macalister's (2010) framework of language curriculum design. The existing materials were adapted in terms of content (what to teach), presentation (how to teach) and assessment (how to measure a learning outcome). In contrast to the content of the existing textbook in which there is a list of language items to be mastered throughout the semester, in the developed materials each topic is presented using seven task types where students were given opportunities to practice communicating in English in order to motivate students to use English freely without having to worry about the grammar. Also, the presentation of the seven task types allows students to sharpen their 21st century skills through a series of meaningful activities ranging from listing ideas to constructing creative projects. Another difference between the existing textbook and the developed book lies in assessment. In the existing textbook a learning outcome is determined by whether or not the students can use the language grammatically, but in the developed materials, a learning outcome is achieved when the task is completed by the students and "successful completion does not depend on using the language correctly" (Ellis, 2019, p. 6).

The development stage also involved validation from two experts in the field of materials development. In addition to their expertise in materials development, these experts were chosen for their familiarity with the existing curriculum and textbook for Junior High School students. One expert was a senior lecturer at a state university in Medan who had taught English and trained school teachers for more than 20 years. Another expert was the regular English teacher at a private school in Medan who had taught English in the school for about 8 years. The materials validation included four major areas: language, process, content, and layout. Based on the experts' judgement, the developed materials were revised for

improvements.

The last stage was related to evaluation. It was the time when the researchers field-tested the developed materials in the school where the study took place. There were 21 student participants in this try-out and they were all from Grade 7. The regular teacher was asked to choose and teach three lessons using the developed materials. Only three lessons were selected for observation due to time constraints (i.e. research period and teacher's availability). The teaching and learning process was observed and video-recorded by the researcher to investigate the teacher's implementation of task-based materials, explore student attitude to task-based lessons and investigate the extent to which the developed materials matched the intended outcomes. The three lessons chosen by the teacher (i.e. Lesson 3 on Family, lesson 7 on feelings, and Lesson 13 on Technology) were observed and the researcher used an observation checklist to write necessary comments about the interactions that occurred in the lessons. Following the observations, an audio-recorded interview was held with the teacher to explore the teacher's views regarding her experience of teaching task-based materials and the effectiveness of the developed materials in enhancing students' English language and 21st century skills. In addition, students' opinions about the usefulness, enjoyableness and engagement of the developed materials were sought through a questionnaire. They completed 10 Likert-scale questions about their dispositions towards task-based materials (e.g. whether the task-based lessons helped them to learn English and 21st century skills, whether the task-based activities were enjoyable, and whether the tasks were suitable for their level of English). As with the needs analysis questionnaire, this attitude questionnaire was also administered in Indonesian language to ensure students' full understanding of its content.

The data collected in this study was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The students' responses to the needs analysis and attitude questionnaires were computed using a statistical software (i.e. SPSS) to obtain measures of tendency (mean) and measures of

spread (standard deviation). Qualitative analysis was conducted on the transcriptions of the classroom interactions to identify key categories and field notes were used to triangulate the observational data. The full transcripts of the teacher interview were also analyzed qualitatively by turning codes into major themes and providing narrative interpretation.

FINDINGS

As noted earlier, based on preliminary data obtained from the English teachers' Sharing Forum (MGMP) and the researchers' visit in the school three weeks before the start of the study, the researchers found that the English textbook used by the seventh graders in the school focused mostly on reading items and language exercises. The researcher also found that the existing English textbook did not cover the elements of the 21st century skills and thus provided little room for them to develop their communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity/innovation skills. These facts necessitated the idea of developing English teaching materials using Task Generator to meet the students' 21st learning needs.

After obtaining preliminary data from the teachers, the researchers administered a questionnaire session at the beginning of the study to explore students' views on the need for the development of the existing textbook. Masuram and Sripada (2020) supported the idea of developing teaching materials by "keeping in mind students' needs" (p. 60). The students' responses to each item of the need analysis questionnaire (see appendix) are described in Table 1.

The results of the needs analysis suggested that the vast majority of students agreed that English language and 21st century skills were the target skills they need to master to succeed in their future job/study (mean = 4.79). There was general agreement among the students about the need to develop the existing textbook to support English language and 21st century skills (mean = 4.74) and about their

expectations to improve English language and 21st century skills after using the developed materials (mean = 4.79). In response to the questions about learning needs, most of the students expressed wide agreement about the need to learn English with materials providing opportunities to use the language receptively and productively (mean = 4.65). They also generally agreed to learn 21st century skills with materials offering opportunities to communicate, collaborate, think critically, solve problems, create product and innovate with ideas (mean = 4.70). No student demonstrated disagreement with the Likert scale statements relating to the target and learning needs. The mean scores were all above 4.0, indicating a highly positive response to the need for the development of materials to support the mastery of English language and 21st century skills.

Table 1. Student's views on the target and learning needs (n=21)

Necessities	Mean	SD
Q1	4.86	0.36
Q2	4.71	0.46
<i>Overall</i>	4.79	0.41
Lacks	Mean	SD
Q3	4.76	0.51
Q4	4.71	0.51
<i>Overall</i>	4.74	0.45
Wants	Mean	SD
Q5	4.76	0.44
Q6	4.81	0.40
<i>Overall</i>	4.79	0.42
Learning Needs for English Skills	Mean	SD
Q7	4.67	0.48
Q8	4.62	0.50
<i>Overall</i>	4.65	0.49
Learning Needs for 21st century skills	Mean	SD
Q9	4.76	0.44
Q10	4.71	0.46
Q11	4.62	0.50
<i>Overall</i>	4.70	0.47

Note. The full score was 5 for each question.

Based on the results of the needs analysis questionnaire, the researcher developed the existing textbook. The product of this materials development was a teaching book containing task-based materials intended to improve students' 21st century skills using seven task types. After the product was developed, it underwent validation from experts prior to field-testing in the school. The results of the expert judgement are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Expert validation scores*

No	Expert	Number of Criteria	Maximum Score	Obtained Score	Percentage
1	Lecturer	28	140	133	95%
2	Teacher	28	140	136	97%
Overall				134.5	96.07%

Note. The percentage range: 81-100 (very practical), 61-80 (practical), 41-60 (fairly practical), 0-40 (not practical) (*Adapted from Riduwan, 2012*).

The validation data revealed that there was a general agreement in the way the two experts perceived the developed teaching materials (i.e. the average percentage of the judgment was 96%). By and large, both experts reported that the developed materials are linguistically appropriate for Junior High School students. They also agreed that task-based materials are fun and motivate students in the process of learning. In terms of content, they showed general agreement about the relevance of the materials to students' life and the potential that task-based activities have in promoting students' 21st century skills (see Appendix B). There was also general agreement about the layout of the book (e.g. the topic visualization is well-arranged and interesting, the font selection and sizes are suitable, the page settings are optimally organized, and the pictures match the topics and are at the right level for the students).



Figure 2. *The research product*

Following the suggestions and comments of the experts, the product was then revised to make it ready-to-teach. The try-out of the materials was conducted at a private Junior High School in Medan involving the regular English teacher and an intact class. As noted earlier, the field-testing sessions covered Lesson 3 (Family), Lesson 7 (Feelings), and Lesson 13 (Technology) and lasted for three weeks. The observation data (i.e. field notes) showed that the teacher was able to implement the task-based lessons confidently. For example, in Lesson 3 (Feelings) the teacher assigned pair work during a sorting activity in order that the students could communicate and collaborate with each other. Here, the teacher set a time limit (5 minutes) to complete the task. An example of the teacher's task-management activities can be seen from an extract below:

OK, XXX, XXX (mentioning students' names) You understand? Good, so you make a list, what makes you happy and what makes you sad? Pairwork... pairwork... pairwork... pairwork... pairwork....etc. (*pointing to a pair of students*). Ok, discuss with your partner, I give you five minutes ya to do this. I will tell you when time is over.

Another important aspect of the classroom interactions that the researchers observed was the students' reactions towards the task-based lessons. In the main, the task-based materials were appropriate for the students' level of English and the students showed a positive response to the three lessons taught by the teacher. The researcher' field notes described a lesson where the task worked well with the students:

In Lesson 7 (Family), the teacher gave the students a comparing activity where they had to find the differences between the roles of father and mother. The students showed no difficulty in carrying out the task as they were familiar with the topic and the vocabulary required to complete this task was at the right level for them. Furthermore, the fact that they were asked to work in groups made it easier for them to get the task done as they had an opportunity to exchange ideas. They enjoyed the lesson perhaps because they felt that the task was relevant to their daily life and doable.

Overall, the observational data revealed that the teacher was able to implement the task-based lessons and the students displayed positive dispositions towards the task-based materials.

In order to triangulate the classroom observation results, the researcher interviewed the teacher and surveyed the students at the end of the study. The main finding from the interview data suggested that the teacher had a good understanding of Task Generator. She could mention the seven task types listed under this learning model and provided examples of each. When asked about the roles that she played in teaching the task-based materials, she stated that she managed the implementation of tasks by giving more opportunities to students to talk and work with their friends to complete the tasks. She believed that while students should be given more control of their learning and more time to talk, they should also be monitored during the performance of tasks to ensure task completion. In short, she acknowledged the importance of playing the roles of a task-manager or a task-facilitator.

In response to the question about the effectiveness of Task Generator activities in enhancing students' English language and 21st century skills, she commented:

There are interesting and challenging activities, they can work together, giving opinions, giving solutions to problems and...ehmmm for projects they use their imagination to make new products using handphones...So yeah I think Task Generator improves students' English and ehmmm...prepare their 21st century skills.

At the end of the interview, the teacher stated that she wanted to continue using Task Generator in the future for its educational benefits.

The questionnaire asked questions about students' feelings and ideas towards the task-based materials. The results of the student attitude questionnaire are summarized in Table 3.

As is shown by Table 3, there was a highly positive response from the students about the usefulness of the task-based materials in improving their English language skills (mean = 4.78). Most of the students also reported agreement that the task-based materials helped them to develop their 21st century skills (mean = 4.80). When asked about the level of enjoyableness with tasks, the vast majority of the students agreed that tasks are fun and made them feel comfortable learning English (mean = 4.86). In a similar vein, the students expressed highly favorable responses to task engagement items (i.e. they generally agreed that the task-based materials were at the right level of difficulty for them and they had opportunities to participate in task-based activities) (mean = 4.79). In the main, the students were supportive of the developed materials. The mean scores above 4.0 in all categories indicate that the students exhibited generally favorable reactions to the task-based materials.

Table 3. Student's views on task-based materials (n=21)

Note. The full score was 5 for each question.

Usefulness for English skills	Mean	SD
Q1	4.81	0.40
Q2	4.71	0.46
Q3	4.81	0.40
Q4	4.76	0.44
Q5	4.81	0.40
Q6	4.76	0.44
<i>Overall</i>	4.78	0.42
Usefulness for 21st century skills	Mean	SD
Q7	4.86	0.36
Q8	4.86	0.36
Q9	4.76	0.44
Q10	4.76	0.44
Q11	4.76	0.44
<i>Overall</i>	4.80	0.41
Enjoyableness	Mean	SD
Q12	4.86	0.36
Q13	4.86	0.36
<i>Overall</i>	4.86	0.36
Engagement	Mean	SD
Q14	4.81	0.40
Q15	4.76	0.44
<i>Overall</i>	4.79	0.42

DISCUSSION

Preliminary data

The preliminary data, obtained before the start of the study, showed that the textbook used in the school focused predominantly on language forms and did not support the mastery of 21st century skills. This finding, which served as the basis for developing the existing textbook, provided support for Fandiño's (2013) recommendation that 21st century EFL practitioners and researchers need to "develop meaningful and intellectually stimulating alternatives that allow students not just to learn English, but more importantly to understand complex perspectives, use multiple media and technologies, and work creatively with others" (p. 190). In the same vein, Rakhmawati and Priyana (2019) pointed out that because

21st century skills have not been adequately incorporated into English textbooks in Indonesia, there is a need for teachers and material developers to collaborate in the creation of such materials to help students succeed in their future job or study.

Learners' needs

The significance of considering students' needs in the construction of English teaching materials has been advocated by materials development researchers and practitioners (e.g. Harsono, 2007; Sismiati & Latief, 2012; Sukarni et al., 2015). In the last few decades, however, the call for needs analysis in the area of materials development has been directed at 21st century skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). In line with the finding obtained from preliminary data, the results of the needs analysis revealed that most of the students expressed general agreement about the need to develop the existing book so that it can be used to support both their English language and 21st century skills. These results are consistent with Menggo et al.'s (2019) research finding. In a survey involving 312 student participants from six universities in Indonesia, they found that the majority of students wanted their English materials to include the elements of 21st century skills so that they could master both communicative English abilities and 21st century skills. The finding also supported Andrade's (2016) argument that learners' success in the 21st century learning is contingent upon how they perceive learning materials (i.e. learner beliefs). If they can see that their learning materials bear relevance to the mastery of 21st century skills, there is a greater likelihood that they will be successful 21st century learners. As such, Andrade goes on to argue that teaching practitioners and material designers must be prepared to "adopt engaging curricular and pedagogical approaches that result in the achievement of learning outcomes for the 21st century global world such as critical thinking, problem-solving, written and oral communication, collaboration, information literacy, and global competencies" (p. 147).

Experts' judgement

Following the results of the needs analysis, a product was designed in accordance with the performance objectives (i.e. Kurikulum Merdeka's six English learning outcomes and five 21st century learning outcomes). Task Generator Model was chosen as the main framework for this design. To ensure the product practicality, two experts' opinions were sought through a questionnaire. The results of the expert judgement showed that the developed book reached an average score of 96%. As with other studies on instructional materials development (e.g. Kristanto et al., 2017; Santosa et al., 2020; Syafi'i, 2016; Yulianeta et al., 2022), a score above 90% indicated a high level of practicality. This means that in terms of language, process, content, and layout, the developed task-based materials were suitable for instructional use, in particular for Grade 7 students at Junior High School.

Despite the general agreement between the two experts, however, each expert provided some suggestions for improvements. In terms of language, for example, the English language lecturer recommended that some specialized words (e.g. furious, attire, elaborate, etc.) be replaced with more simple words common words (e.g. angry, dress, explain, etc.) to match the language ability of the Junior High School students. There was also a comment from the English teacher about the content, i.e. the need to provide an additional page about the concept of Task Generator at the beginning of the book in order to familiarize novice teachers with the learning model before using the book. Another suggestion from the university lecturer was related to the Kurikulum Merdeka's learning outcomes that should be added under the headings of each task type (e.g. matching → learning outcomes: writing - presenting). The English teacher also recommended that some pictures in the matching tasks, which were considered to be inappropriate for Junior high School students (e.g. foreign girl bands wearing short skirts or boy bands with tattoos), be deleted or substituted with more appropriate pictures for cultural reasons. Experts' recommendations in the area of

materials development are needed to improve the practicality of the developed materials. In a materials development study involving a significant number of university students, lecturers, and alumni in Indonesia, Sismiati and Latief (2012) documented examples of how experts' revision notes helped them to enhance the feasibility of the oral language communication materials they developed for nursing schools.

Teacher's attitude

In this study, the researchers developed a set of task-based materials that was considered appropriate for Grade 7 Junior High School students and asked the regular teacher to teach them in her own classroom based on her chosen topics. The selected lessons were observed and the teacher was interviewed to investigate the teacher's implementation of tasks and her attitude towards task-based materials. The observational data showed that the teacher was able to demonstrate the ability to act as task manager (i.e. the teacher was able to specify the type of participation a task required and set time for task completion). This finding provided support for Van den Branden's (2009) claim that an essential role that a teacher must play in teaching task-based lessons is "making sure that students know what they are expected to do and organizing temporal and spatial aspects of task performance' (p. 284). It is also consistent with Ellis's (2019) definition of a task manager, i.e. a task-based language teacher needs to plan activities that get the students ready for performing tasks and ensure that the tasks are completed within a specified time. The teacher's ability to organize task-based lessons was perhaps due to the training program she attended prior to the implementation of the study. In this half-a-day training program, the researcher introduced the teacher to the basic concepts of Task Generator and provided a model of what task-based lessons look like and how the lessons could be taught to students. In a case study involving an Indonesian novice English teacher in task-based language teaching, Ariatna and Ellis (2021) concluded that their task-based training program "helped the teacher

get started on the process of innovating with TBLT" (p. 154), a finding which was also reported by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) in Thailand and Zhu (2020) in China.

Regarding the interview session held at the end of the study, the teacher demonstrated a clear grasp of what Task Generator involves and how it could be implemented in the real classroom. Research (e.g. Erlam, 2015; Hu, 2013; Pei, 2008) has shown that a poor understanding of how tasks work may result in teachers' inability to perform tasks with their students. The teacher also cited the usefulness of the task-based activities in promoting her students' English language and 21st century abilities. In a study aimed at developing task-based materials for Indian school students, Masuram and Sripada (2020) claimed that task-based activities "can help students to enrich their communication skills" and "can help learners to think and express themselves more creatively and innovatively" (p. 65). The teacher in this study reported her desire to continue using task-based materials in her future classes. This suggests that the teacher was positively disposed towards Task Generator. Previous studies have documented ample evidence of teachers' positive reactions to task-based materials (e.g. East, 2019; Erlam, 2015; Ogilvie and Dunn, 2010).

Students' responses

The data collection for investigating students' views and feelings towards the developed product consisted of classroom observations and a questionnaire session. The observational data revealed that the Junior High School students could perform the tasks well and were enthusiastic doing the task-based activities, a finding which was also reported in other task-based studies. Fachrurrazy (2000), for example, reported Indonesian elementary school students' enthusiasm when performing task-based activities in his classroom. Bao and Kirkebak (2013), in their study of task implementation in a Danish language classroom concluded that the students enjoyed the communicative tasks taught by the teacher. Ruso (2017) also claimed that the Turkish students in his study demonstrated a high level of engagement in the

language tasks.

The analysis of the questionnaire data showed that the vast majority of students rated the task-based lessons as being useful, enjoyable, and engaging. These findings mirror the results of earlier studies on students' perception of task-based lessons. In an action research study involving TBLT introduction to a Chinese primary school, Zhu (2020) claimed that the students expressed general agreement about task usefulness, task enjoyableness, and task engagement. Kurniawan et al. (2018) documented Indonesian students' favorable dispositions towards task-based activities. Similarly, Uehara (2016) in his Japan-based study of the correlation between task-based language teaching and 21st century skills reported that the local students found the task-based activities "fun, enjoyable, and appropriate" and that the language tasks "encouraged many of the 21st century skills" (p. 6).

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to develop the existing English textbook to promote the English language and 21st century skills of Grade 7 secondary school students. Starting with a preliminary visit to the school and a needs analysis, the existing textbook was then developed using Task Generator involving seven task types. The product was assessed by experts for its practicality and then field-tested to evaluate its effectiveness based on the teacher's and students' views.

In summary, the preliminary data showed that the school's English textbook consisted primarily of grammatical exercises and did not support the achievement of 21st century skills. The needs analysis data revealed that the students reported general agreement about the need to develop the existing textbook to support their mastery of English language and 21st century skills. There was also a general agreement between the experts regarding the practicality of the developed product for Junior High School students. At the level of product implementation, the observational data showed that the teacher was able to teach the task-based materials and the students

could perform the language tasks without difficulty. These findings were corroborated by the findings of the interview and questionnaire where it was found that the teacher and students responded positively to the developed materials and acknowledged the educational benefits of the task-based activities in enhancing both the students' language performance and their 21st century abilities.

The researcher acknowledged some limitations to this study. The first limitation is that the researcher only investigated one intact class and one regular English teacher (i.e. due to workload and time constraints). The study results would have been more convincing if the researcher had included two intact classes and two regular English teachers. There was also a limitation regarding the presence of the researcher in the classroom observations which might have influenced the observation results. In the future, other researchers might want to consider using only video-recording devices to capture what happened in the classroom. Another limitation had to do with students' understanding of questionnaire content. The task-based experience questionnaire findings showed that the students reacted favorably to all aspects of the task-based materials. Despite the native language used in the questionnaire, there is possibility that the students did not fully understand the differences between each aspect. It would be a better idea if future researchers could hold a pre-questionnaire session with the students to explain each aspect of the questionnaire.

Despite the limitations mentioned above, this study provided practical guidelines for local practitioners to develop task-based teaching materials and demonstrated to local policy makers how Task Generator can promote students' English language and 21st century skills. It also provided a basis for future researchers to conduct similar studies on task-based materials development. In this regard, future researchers might want to use another task-based model (e.g. Pica et al.'s (1993) model) that allows the development of both students' English language proficiency and 21st century abilities.

REFERENCES

- Andrade, M. S. (2016). Curricular elements for learner success--21st century skills. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 4(8), 143-149.
- Ariatna, & Ellis, R. (2021). [A case study of one teacher's introduction to task-based language teaching: Insights for the development of a professional development programme.](#) *Language Teaching for Young Learners*, 3(1). 137-158.
- Bao, R., & Kirkebaek, M. J. (2013). Danish students' perceptions of task-based teaching in Chinese. In M. J. Kirkebaek, X. Du & A.A. Jensen (Eds.), *Teaching and Learning Culture* (pp. 61-78). Brill. <https://brill.com/view/book/9789462094406/BP000006.xml>
- Bos, C., & Vaughn, S. (2005). *Strategies for teaching students with learning and behaviour problems* (6th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Bouckaert, M. (2019). Current perspectives on teachers as materials developers: Why, what, and how?. *RELC Journal*, 50(3), 439-456. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688218810549>
- Darici, A. (2016). The importance of needs analysis in materials development. In M. Azarnoosh, M. Zeraatpishe, A. Paravani, & H.R. Kargozari (Eds.), *Issues in materials development* (pp. 31-41). Sense Publishers.
- Decision Letter of Head of Educational Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Department Number 08 of 2022 on Learning outcomes for early, primary and secondary education (idn) s. 5.1. https://kurikulum.kemdikbud.go.id/wpcontent/unduh/C_P_2022.pdf
- Dick, W., Carey, L., & Carey, J. O. (2008). *The systematic design of instruction* (7th ed.). Allyn and Bacon.
- Dornyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667343>

Ariatna., Nuran, A. A., & Soongpankhao, W. (2023). Developing English teaching materials using task generator to enhance the seventh graders' English language and 21st century skills. *JEELS*, 10(2), 407-438.

Duncan, A. (2009). *Statement from US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan on results of NAEP Arts 2008 assessment*. Department of Education.

<https://www2.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/06/06152009.html>

East, M. (2019). Sustaining innovation in school modern foreign language programmes: teachers' reflections on task-based language teaching three years after initial teacher education. *The Language Learning Journal*, 47(1), 105-115. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2016.1221440>

Ellis, R. (2019). *Introducing task-based language teaching*. Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Erlam, R. (2015). "New tricks" : Teachers talk about task-based language teaching. *Babel*, 50(1), 4-11. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/aeipt.215160>

Fachrurrazy. (2000). Task-based activities in TEFL. *TEFLIN Journal*, 11(1), 66-77. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v11i1/66-77>

Fandiño, Y. J. (2013). 21st century skills and the English foreign language classroom: A call for more awareness in Colombia. *Gist Education and Learning Research Journal*, 7, 190-208.

Halverson, A. (2018). *21st century skills and the "4Cs" in the English language classroom*. <https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/23598>

Harsono, Y. M. (2007). Developing learning materials for specific purposes. *TEFLIN Journal*, 18(2), 170.

Heinrichs, C. R. (2016). Exploring the influence of 21st century skills in a dual language program: A case study. *International Journal of Teacher Leadership*, 7(1), 37-57.

Hu, R. (2013). Task-based language teaching: Responses from Chinese teachers of English. *TESL-EJ*, 16(4), 1-21. <http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume16/ej64/ej64a1/>

- Ariatna., Nuran, A. A., & Soongpankhaio, W. (2023). Developing English teaching materials using task generator to enhance the seventh graders' English language and 21st century skills. *JEELS*, 10(2), 407-438.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes*. Cambridge university press.
- Idrizi, E. (2022). 21st century skills and language education. In M. Stevkosva, E. Edrizi & I. Miftari-Fetishi (Eds.), *Contemporary issues in language teaching* (pp. 147-165). Eastern Universities Press.
- Kristanto, A., & Mariono, A. (2017). The development of instructional materials: E-learning based on blended learning. *International Education Studies*, 10(7), 10-17.
- Kurniawan, Y., Fadilah, E., & Trihastutie, N. (2018). Willingness to communicate in task-based instruction: Analysis of fluctuation in dynamic system. *Edulitics (Education, Literature, and Linguistics) Journal*, 3(1), 43-55. <http://www.e-jurnal.unisda.ac.id/index.php/edulitic/article/view/907/503>
- Larson, L. C., & Miller, T. N. (2011). 21st century skills: Prepare students for the future. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 47(3), 121-123.
- Li, Z., & Li, H. (2021). Making materials use in language classrooms visible: Evidence from two university English teachers in China. *Cogent Education*, 8(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2020.1870802>
- Long, M. (2005). *Second language needs analysis*. Cambridge University Press.
- Masuram, J., & Sripada, P. N. (2020). Developing speaking skills through task-based materials. *Procedia Computer Science*, 17(2), 60-65.
- McDonough, K., & Chaikitmongkol, W. (2007). Teachers' and learners' reactions to a task-based EFL course in Thailand. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41(1), 107-132. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2007.tb00042.x>
- Menggo, S., Suastra, I., Budiarsa, M., & Padmadewi, N. N. (2019). Needs analysis of academic English speaking material in promoting 21st century skills. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(2), 739-754.

- Ariatna., Nuran, A. A., & Soongpankhaio, W. (2023). Developing English teaching materials using task generator to enhance the seventh graders' English language and 21st century skills. *JEELS*, 10(2), 407-438.
- Nation, I. S. P. (1993). Sixteen principles of language teaching. In L. Bauer & C. Franzen (Eds.), *Of pavlova, poetry and paradigms: Essays in honour of Harry Orsman* (pp. 209–224). Victoria University of Wellington.
- Nation, I. S. P., & Macalister J. (2010). *Language curriculum design*. Routledge.
- Nunan, D. (1988). Principles for designing language teaching materials. *Guidelines: A periodical for classroom language teachers*, 10(2), 1-24.
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge University Press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667336>
- Nunan, D. (2010). A task-based approach to materials development. *Advances in Language and Literary studies*, 1(2), 135-160.
- Ogilvie, G., & Dunn, W. (2010). Taking teacher education to task: Exploring the role of teacher education in promoting the utilization of task-based language teaching. *Language Teaching Research*, 14(2), 161-181. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1362168809353875>
- Partnership for 21st Century Skills. (2009). *A framework for 21st century learning*. <https://www.battelleforkids.org/networks/p21/frameworks-resources>
- Pei, C. (2008). Task-based language teaching in classrooms: A study of Chinese EFL teachers practice. *CELEA Journal*, 31(6), 102-111. <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.625.6324&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Rakhmawati, D. M., & Priyana, J. (2019). A study on 21st century skills integration in the English textbook for Senior High School. *JEES (Journal of English Educators Society)*, 4(1), 9-16.
- Richards, J. C. (2006). Materials development and research – making the connection. *RELC Journal*, 37(1), 5-26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00336882060634>
- Riduwan. (2012). *Skala pengukuran variabel-variabel penelitian*. Alfabeta.

- Ariatna., Nuran, A. A., & Soongpankhaio, W. (2023). Developing English teaching materials using task generator to enhance the seventh graders' English language and 21st century skills. *JEELS*, 10(2), 407-438.
- Ruso, N. (2007). The influence of task-based learning on EFL classrooms. *Asian EFL Journal*, 18, 1-23.
- Santosa, M. H., Pratama, I. P. S., & Putra, I. N. A. J. (2020). Developing android-based English vocabulary learning materials for primary school students. *JEELS (Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies)*, 7(1), 161-185. <https://doi.org/10.30762/jeels.v7i1.1467>
- Syafi'i, M. L. (2016). Developing listening materials for the tenth graders. *JEELS (Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies)*, 3(1), 63-84. <https://doi.org/10.30762/jeels.v3i1.174>
- Sismiati, & Latief, M. A. (2012). Developing instructional materials on English oral communication for nursing schools. *TEFLIN Journal*, 23(1), 44.
- Sukarni, E. I., Winarni, D., & Nirmayanti, Y. T. (2015). Improving teachers' professionalism through materials development, information technology and classroom action research. *TEFLIN Journal*, 20(2), 212-31.
- Tomlinson, B. (2001). Materials development. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 66–71). Cambridge University Press.
- Tomlinson, B. (2016). The importance of materials development for language learning. In M. Azarnoosh, M. Zeraatpishe, A. Paravani, & H.R. Kargozari (Eds.), *Issues in materials development* (pp. 1-9). Sense Publishers.
- Tomlinson, B. (2020). Is materials development progressing?. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 15, 1-20.
- Tzotzou, M. D. (2014). Designing and administering a needs analysis survey to primary school learners about EFL learning: A case study. *Preschool & Primary Education*, 2(1), 59–82.
- Uehara, S. (2016, June 11). Task-based English language teaching, 21st century skills, and learner perceptions through the Marshmallow Challenge [Paper presentation]. ETAK and KICE 2016. Japan,

Ariatna., Nuran, A. A., & Soongpankhao, W. (2023). Developing English teaching materials using task generator to enhance the seventh graders' English language and 21st century skills. *JEELS*, 10(2), 407-438.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289377968>

Van den Branden, K. (2009). Mediating between predetermined order and complete chaos: The role of the teacher in task-based language education. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19(3), 264-285. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2009.00241.x>

Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching*. Oxford University Press.

Yulianeta, Yaacob, A., & Lubis, A. H. (2022). The development of web-based teaching materials integrated with Indonesian folklore for Indonesian language for foreign speakers students. *International Journal of Language Education*, 6(1), 46-62.

Yuzen, A., & Karamete, A. (2016) Computer-assisted educational material preparation for fourth grade primary school students' English language class in teaching numbers. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, 15(1), 94-104.

Zhu, Y. (2020). Implementing tasks in young learners' language classrooms: A collaborative teacher education initiative through task evaluation. *Language Teaching Research*, 26(3), 530-551. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168819894706>

APPENDIX A

Need analysis questionnaire

No.	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutra 1	Agree	Strongly agree
Necessities						
1	As a student living in the 21 st century, I need to master English language skills to succeed in my future job/study	1	2	3	4	5
2	As a student living in the 21 st century, I need to master 21 st century skills to succeed in my future job/study	1	2	3	4	5

Lacks						
3	I feel that the textbook we used did not adequately support the mastery of English language skills and thus needs to be developed	1	2	3	4	5
4	I feel that the textbook we used did not adequately support the mastery of 21 st century skills and thus needs to be developed	1	2	3	4	5
Wants						
5	I hope that the developed materials will increase my English language skills	1	2	3	4	5
6	I hope that the developed materials will increase my 21 st century skills	1	2	3	4	5
Learning Needs						
7	I need to learn English with materials providing opportunities for me to use the language receptively	1	2	3	4	5
8	I need to learn English with materials providing opportunities for me to use the language receptively	1	2	3	4	5
9	I need to learn English with materials providing opportunities for me to communicate and collaborate with my friends	1	2	3	4	5
10	I need to learn English with materials providing opportunities for me to think critically and solve problems	1	2	3	4	5
11	I need to learn English with materials providing opportunities for me to be creative and innovate with ideas	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B

Sample of developed material

Family

2. What are the differences between the roles of father and mother?

Mother	Father
1) Child care 2) 3) 4)	1) Financial support 2) 3) 4)

E. Problem Solving
Capaian Pembelajaran : Menulis - Mempresentasikan

1. What should be done to wake up children in the morning?
1) Set the alarm
2)
3)
4)

2. What does your family usually do to keep the house clean?
1) Sweep it every day
2)
3)
4)

F. Personal Experience
Capaian Pembelajaran : Menulis - Mempresentasikan

Create an interesting story about your family holiday. Prepare to tell your friends about it. Discuss and decide whose story is the most interesting!

Family

G. Creative Project

1. Class newspaper
Capaian Pembelajaran : Menulis - Mempresentasikan
Create a class newspaper in group about your family. You can add pictures and captions about your family.



(facebook.com)

2. Poster
Capaian Pembelajaran : Menulis - Mempresentasikan
Make a poster in group about International Day of Families. The poster can be made using applications such as Photo Grid, PicsArt, and Canva.



(shutterstock.com)

3. Interview
Capaian Pembelajaran : Menyimak - Berbicara
Interview three of your friends. Ask them about their family habits on Idul Fitri and give a conclusion from the results of the interview!

Heyzine Flipbooks

27

28