

# DEVELOPING ENGLISH COURSE BOOK FOR SECOND GRADE KINDERGARTENERS

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## ABSTRAK

**Abstract:** This study is aimed to develop English course-book for second grade of kindergarten. The method used in this study is Research and Development (R&D). The steps of this study consist of needs analysis, material development, expert validation, first revision, try out, second revision, and final product. The result of this study indicates that the developed product is applicable for young learners. Additionally, the product is attractive and fun to be used.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan mengembangkan buku pelajaran Bahasa Inggris bagi siswa tingkat dua Taman Kanak-kanak. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah *Research and Development* (R&D). Langkah-langkah yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini meliputi analisis kebutuhan, pengembangan materi, validasi ahli, revisi pertama, uji coba, revisi kedua, dan hasil produk. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa produk yang telah dikembangkan mudah digunakan oleh pembelajar usia dini. Sebagai tambahan, produk ini juga menarik dan menyenangkan.

In Indonesia, English for Young Learners is positively acceptable, although it is still an optional subject to be taught in schools. Most kindergarten teachers teach English to their students from the first grade of kindergartens. Teaching foreign language to young learners is different because they are still developing their linguistic ability. One of the factors that needs to be considered for the success of teaching English for young learners is material given to the students. However, selecting appropriate materials for teaching English for young learner is not an easy task.

Some studies related to the development of materials for young learners have been done by previous researchers. A study by Fitriany (2010) in Balikpapan exposed the teachers' confusion in formulating learning objectives, difficulty to find materials relevant to themes, as well as limited teaching sources. To solve the problems, Fitriany developed a syllabus with clearer objectives, some materials relevant with kindergarten themes, and applicable teaching media and techniques.

Another study by Maulidiyah (2014) reported that teaching English in kindergarten is difficult since there is no understandable guideline and general purpose for English instructions as well as the difficulty in finding suitable materials in line with the kindergarten themes. She also revealed that English books for kindergarten do not have fun activities and games and do not provide adequate authentic exposure to English. As a result of her study, she developed the syllabus, guideline for teachers, instructional materials which includes presentation slides, videos, game tools, and worksheets to be used with the syllabus and guideline.

Conducting research in a similar topic, Kristianti (2013) discovered that a kindergarten, *TK Alam AR Rayan Malang*, also lacked of appropriate materials for teaching English to the students. Therefore, she proposed a modified syllabus, better English instructions, and course-book development. Another research by Wahyuni, and Raja & Hasan (2014), resulted in developing supplementary vocabulary material for young learners. They conducted their research on account of the vocabulary learning material. The limited time given by government and each schools for the students that caused the students lack of the vocabulary to communicate as one of the considerations of conducting the research. Therefore, they produced supplementary vocabulary material on the basis of the assumption that the supplementary material is suitable for the students' needs and interest and, therefore, can help the students in learning vocabulary.

Similar research by Astuti (2014) reveals that young learners are mostly put into intensive reading sessions as the main menu where the focus of the session is on young learners' academic achievement. As a result, it is far from promoting reading English for pleasure. Therefore, she developed English Supplementary Reading Cards (ESRC) for young learners to promote their voluntary reading program.

In other countries, researches in materials and development have been done as well. One of them was study by Loukia (2006) in Greece discovered that the teachers use ELT syllabus for which the textbook is the main provider and very often the only resource. The textbook is provided to the students by the state. However, the teachers cannot substitute the textbook with a different course book, but are not restricted to the use of extra material. Therefore, she developed story based framework designed to show students how the language they have already learnt is used in a different context alternative to the course book. In addition, it aims to create a productive environment.

Additionally, I reviewed two books used in teaching young learners. Both of the books are thematic based and have similarities in designing the material and assignment for teaching English to young learners. The first book, *Lancar Membaca dan Menulis Bahasa Inggris*, consists of some pictures with English vocabulary and their translation in Indonesian. The topics are alphabets, number, ordinal numbers, animal, days, months, part of body, stationary, animals (divided into kinds of birds, land animals and water animals), fruit, and vegetables. This book also proposes some exercises in form of matching, filling the gap, and multiple choices.

The second book, *Bahasa Inggris untuk Taman Kanak-Kanak (Kelompok B)* is used by one kindergarten in Malang. The handbook consists of four topics: numbers, days, recreation places, and plants. However, the book is lack of pictures to attract students' interest and attention in learning English. The workbook consists of varied tasks. However, some tasks seem too difficult for the students, such as making a story based on the picture and writing the name of places in English. In addition, both books are lack of fun activities (e.g., songs and games).

From reviewing all the researches above, I point out that the results of the previous researches focused on the development of syllabi and instructional materials. The products include some pictures, songs and games. However, I found out that some of the teaching media, especially the pictures, are not colorful and less attractive for kindergarten students. Most previous studies did not provide an evaluation section for checking students' progress in their English learning. Pronunciation section which should be emphasized in early learning of English is not covered. Therefore, I am interested in conducting new research which provides better products for English teaching to kindergarten students. The results of the research will provide colorful, attractive teaching media (e.g. pictures), pronunciation, and evaluation sections.

The recent research was conducted in As Salam Kindergarten. As Salam Kindergarten offers English as a supplementary subject. English is taught twice a month for an hour for each meeting. It is also taught as extracurricular subject for once a week for an hour. The teaching English objectives in as Salam Kindergarten are introducing English as international language, introducing new vocabulary based on the topics employed, and singing simple songs in English.

Teaching English to young learners, as applied from the first grade students in as Salam Kindergarten, is in line with the concept of Critical Period Hypothesis in which, young children can learn a second language particularly effectively before puberty because their brains are still able to use mechanism that assists first language acquisition (Cameron, 2001:13). Troike (2006:84) says younger learners may be less inhibited than older learners, and have weaker feelings of identity with people (other than close family or caregivers) who speak the same native language. It assumes that children worry less in learning a target language. In addition, Dulay, et al, (1982:78) stated that children under ten who experience enough natural communication in the target language nearly always succeed in attaining native like proficiency.

The main goal of learning English in this kindergarten is focused on the development of vocabulary. In every meeting, students are given new vocabulary based on the topic discussed. The teachers do not use specific materials in teaching English. They mainly use gestures and mimes when teaching English vocabulary to the students. They also adapt nursery rhymes (from Indonesian songs translated into English) and jazz chants for making classroom more entertaining. Nonetheless, I found some problems of English teaching in As Salam Kindergarten. The teachers set different contents of English materials taught to the students. Some of the teachers teach more vocabulary than other teachers do. As a result, students in certain classes get more and varied vocabulary than students in other classes.

Another problem is related to the teachers' education background. All the teachers who teach English have no prominent background in English teaching, they did not major in English. They often mispronounce English words while teaching vocabulary to their students. They never evaluate students' progress in each meeting. The evaluation is only done in the end of the semester. They usually test students by showing 40 flash cards and asking them to mention the name of the pictures in English. The teachers then score the students based on how many words they can remember.

Since no appropriate teaching materials are available, I propose an instructional course book for teachers and a course book for students. As stated by Richards (2001:251), teaching materials are a key component in most language program. I focused my research on developing the instructional course book for second grade kindergarten students. The material themes in the second grade are varied and the level of difficulty is more complex than the teaching material in first grade.

According to Moore (1980 cited in Rea-Dickens and Germaine, 1992:29) several factors should be considered in making a course book, defining the purpose of the book and deciding the type of exercises to make sure it can effectively and economically accomplish the purpose. The second is related to the content of the material including the instruction to learners to

make sure it is clear. The other considerations are related to developing an interesting material, the authenticity, and the difficulty level for the students. In addition, Paul (2003) stated that course books for young learners should attract the children towards English and draw the children into the course. In other words, appropriate course books for young learners should be fun and colorful.

For those reasons, I considered several factors to develop a good course book. Determining the objectives is the first consideration. In doing so, I conducted the needs analysis to clarify in detail what and how the material should be developed to suit students' needs. Some steps are followed in conducting the needs analysis. I used two instruments for gathering information during the needs analysis. The first instrument is questionnaire, which is structured or close-ended in which respondents choose from a limited number of response, such as yes or no questions. The respondents are four teachers who teach second grade students.

The result of the questionnaire shows that most teachers do not use any particular materials for teaching. Two teachers indicated that the students find difficulties getting engaged in the lessons. As a result, the teachers have to repeat the same topics for several meetings. On the other hand, two teachers found that the students comprehend the materials easily. This is because they used it by using mimes and gestures.

Some information was gained through the questionnaire related to the teachers' difficulty in using the material. Two teachers stated they do not have any problem during class sessions because they have strategies to use the materials to help students to master the topic. In the opposite, two teachers indicated they have difficulty in using the materials because they lack the ability in pronunciation and therefore lack confidence. Thus far, the teaching materials the teachers use are in the form of pictures (not in form of flash cards), adapted from Indonesian songs and short stories.

For the developed product, the teachers suggested that interesting pictures in the form of flash cards can be developed and made available for use. Since all of the teachers have no background in English, they expected pronunciation guide is provided to help them pronounce correctly. Some of the teachers also advised to find English songs and additional materials such as poems and short stories.

The second instrument is interview to collect additional information from the questionnaire such as teachers' background in English, teachers' experience in teaching English, and the reasons for choosing English materials for teaching. The results of the interviews indicate that the teachers have been teaching the second grade of kindergartens for 3 to 15 years. On the early years of teaching English, the teachers stated that they used materials such as books, cards, and pictures. Nevertheless, for the following years, they do not use any materials.

When asked about what difficulties the teachers face when teaching English, all the teachers agreed that they have problems in pronouncing some words. One of the teachers stated that she was not sure to use American or British English to teach the students. It was also suggested to give short stories which have moral values as part of the product. It is aimed to develop students' character building. In addition, the teachers also advised putting Arabic in the list of vocabulary.

The second consideration in developing the course book is the curriculum employed in the kindergarten. Since As Salam Kindergarten employs integrated thematic instructional curriculum, the course book is designed based on the themes and topics used in this school. The regulation regarding the kind of materials appropriate for young learners has been stipulated in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education number 58 (2009) in which the materials to be taught is integrated with other aspects: the religion and moral, physical, cognitive, language, and social-emotional aspects.

The course book which I designed consists of some activities related to the topics in this semester. The topics are Greeting, Colors, Numbers (1—10), Family, Animals, and Vehicles. In addition, this course book consists of colorful pictures, songs, video of songs in CD, some various task activities (coloring page, counting page, filling gap). This book also provides flash cards.

This developed product provides colorful flash cards and CD for the songs. The flash cards can be used by the teachers to teach the new vocabulary as their colors are attractive to the students. The CD consists of videos of the songs. The songs chosen are some familiar English nursery rhymes. The teachers, therefore, will have more varied nursery rhymes. The CD will help the teachers to master the songs easily by listening to it. The teachers can play the video in classroom to make their teaching more entertaining.

This research is concerned with the development of English materials which are useful, colorful, and attractive to kindergarten students. The course book as a research product does not only consist of pictures, exercises, songs, poems and jazz chants, but also the pronunciation section. The use of pronunciation part is essential to avoid mispronunciation that may happen when teachers teach new vocabulary. In addition, the instructions for the English material are clear and include the use of some communication routines such as greetings, expression, and compliments.

This product is in line with As Salam Kindergarten's purpose on teaching English, which is introducing English as a simple communication tool as well as introducing some words related to the kindergarten topics. The materials to be developed, which is used for second grade students in semester one, is in line with the 2013 curriculum and the regulation of designing materials for kindergartener issued by Minister of Education, Republic of Indonesia.

## METHOD

Since the result of the research is a developed product, the appropriate research design that can be used is Research and Development. Latief (2013: 171) says Research and Development is a research design aimed at developing educational products, like curriculum, syllabus, textbooks, instructional media, modules, assessment instruments, etc. In addition, Gall, Gall and Borg (2003:569) define Research and Development as a process in which the findings of the research are used to design new products and procedures.

There are several steps in conducting Research and Development. Gall, Gall and Borg (1983:571) proposed some steps, assessing needs to identify the goals, conducting instructional analysis, analyzing learners and contexts, writing performance objectives, developing instructional instruments, developing instructional strategy, developing and selecting instructional materials, designing and conducting formative evaluation of instruction, designing and conducting summative evaluation, and revising instruction. Lee and Owens (2004:1) proposed the cycle of instructional design process; needs assessments, front-end analysis, design, development, implementation, and assessments.

Due to the limitation of time and the appropriateness of design, I propose some steps adapted from Borg and Gall (1989); needs analysis, product development, product validation and first revision, product try-out and second revision, and final product.

### Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is used for collecting the information as the basis to design appropriate material of English for As Salam Kindergarten students. The purpose of conducting needs analysis is to analyze the available materials, identify the learners' and the teachers' needs for the instruction, problems encountered during class, learners' characteristics, attitude and feeling toward English class activities, and content and activities that have been done so far in the English class.

### Product Development

The first step in developing the course book was identifying the general objectives of learning English. Identifying the objectives is the basis for determining which contents and activities are appropriate for the course. Conducting needs analysis to gain the information needed related to the development of the product is considering as identifying the objectives.

Since the existing syllabus in As Salam Kindergarten does not comprise all the detail information in developing material, I proposed a modified syllabus that will be used as the basis for developing the course book. The syllabus is developed based on integrated thematic instruction curriculum. It consists of the description of the subject, topics of every meeting, time allotment, teaching objectives of every topic, teaching method, assessment indicators, and media used in every meeting. The second step was developing the course book. In this research, I focused on the topics employed in the first semester for second grade students. The topics are Greeting, Colors, Numbers (1—10), Family, Animals, and Vehicles.

### Product Validation and First Revision

After setting up the product, the product needs to be validated to find the weakness of the product and to improve the strength of it. Besides, the product validation can minimize the ineffectiveness of the product. Three experts validated the product.

The first expert is a teacher who teaches second grade of kindergarten who is also in charge as an English extracurricular coordinator. The first expert validated the content of the course. Another expert is a lecturer teaching English for Young Learners who validated the content of the book. In addition, both of the experts examined strengths and weaknesses of the product. The third is the expert in book designer, who validated the book design.

The next step after designing the product is revising. At the first revision, all the data were compiled and analyzed qualitatively. This procedure was used based on the feedback from the expert based on the validation form as well as the comments and suggestions. The data was used to review the choices of the content, design, and to measure the level of difficulty of the product.

### Product Try-out and Second Revision

The try-out stage was aimed to measure whether the product was applicable enough for the second grade students. Besides, it was used to analyze the usefulness, effectiveness, efficiency, and attractiveness of the product.

The try-out stage was conducted after the developed product was validated by the experts and revised. The subjects of the try-out were the students from four classes of the second grade kindergarteners. In addition, the product was tried with different topics, since the purpose of this product is developing a course book to teach English.

A questionnaire was used to get the feedback from the teachers about the content of the materials, the difficulty found while using the product, the effectiveness and the attractiveness of the product as well as students' attitude toward the product.

The revision was done based on the teachers' feedback. In addition, the progress of the students in learning English was also considered as the basis for revision. To know the students' progress, the teachers do the evaluation at the end of the class session. The result obtained was also used for revising the final product.

### Final Product

After conducting several processes such as validation, revision, and try-out, the product is ready to be used for teaching English in as Salam Kindergarten. The final product of this Research & Development is teachers and students course books containing vocabulary section, exercises including coloring and counting pages, songs (including the video on CDs), poems, and flash cards.

### RESULT

The first step in developing the product was material mapping to select the suitable materials and tasks for each topic. The material mapping can be seen in table 1.

**Table 1. Material Mapping**

Meeting	Topic	Title	Language Skills
1	Greeting	Hi, How are You? 1, 2, 3	Listening and Speaking
2	Numbers	My House	Listening and Speaking
3	Colors	I love My Family	Listening and Speaking
4	Family	My Funny Little Cat Lets Row The Boat	Listening, Speaking, and Writing
5	Animals		Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing
6	Transportation		Listening and Speaking

Two course books were produced as the products of this study, teachers' book and students' book. Both have the same topics; Greeting, Colors, Numbers (1—10), Family, Animals, and Vehicles. The teachers' book provides flash cards of the pictures from each topic. It consists of songs. However, only the teachers' book has its videos in CD. The songs were selected based on some familiar English nursery rhymes. The CD will help the teachers to master the songs easily by listening to it. Furthermore, it will attract the students to learn the new song by looking at the video. In addition, the teachers' book is provided with the guideline to help teachers present the content of the book step by step. Additionally, the instructions include the use of some communication routines such as greetings, expression and compliments.

### Validation

Three experts validated the product. The first is an expert in teaching EYL. The second is an expert in teaching kindergarten. The last is an book designer. The validation sheets were in the form of checklists that consist of Yes, Partly, and No answer. It also gives some space for comments and suggestions. The revisions were based on the checklist results as well as comments and suggestions.

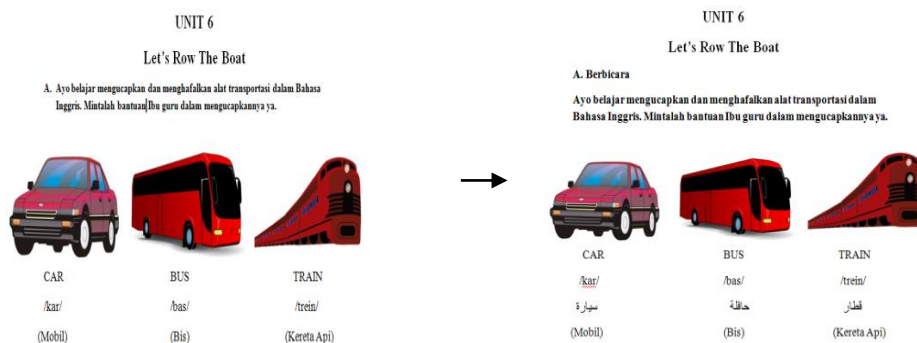
The first expert agrees that the product met the criteria of design and content. The expert validator emphasized the use of four language skills. According to the expert validator, the students should achieve the language skills through the book. In addition, the exercises employed should vary in accordance to the four language skills.

The second expert has been teaching the second grade of kindergarten for 15 years. Since no comments and suggestions related to the draft of the product were given, it is assumed that the draft of the product met the aspects and criteria related to the goals of the course, design, and contents.

The third expert validated the design of the book, the cover, the letters, typing style, layout, and appearance. He stated that the illustration of the cover was attractive yet simple. Furthermore, the use of Times New Roman as the fonts helps students and teachers read the book easier. He also mentioned that the pictures and words were placed mostly in order. In addition, he stated the appearance is attractive and colorful.

### First Revision

The first revision was done based on the feedback from the experts. Based on the comments and suggestion from the first expert, all the instructions used in students' book were changed to represent the four language skills. The example of the revision can be seen in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Revision of the Instruction**

### Product Try-out

In the try out sessions, several points were asked to the teachers to be answered with either “yes, partly, or no” to gain the information on how applicable the product is. The results of the try out were analyzed qualitatively based on teachers’ comments and suggestions. In addition, it was used as the basis for revising and developing the final products.

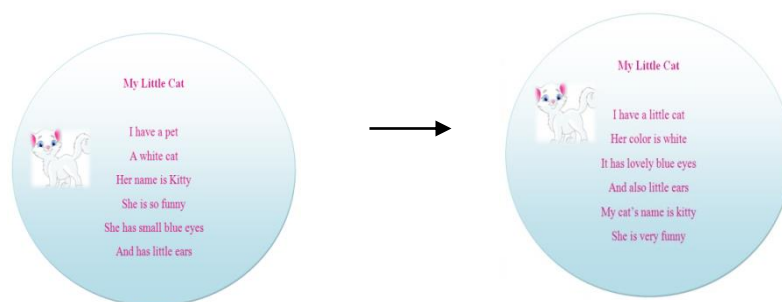
The try-out of the products was carried out twice. The first try out was conducted on 19 January 2016. The first try out was related to the instructions used in the teachers’ book. Two topics were tried out, transportation and animals. The try out form consists of five points, material application in class, available media, and materials used, procedures and teachers’ capability in mastering the material, and the time allotment used in teaching.

The result of the first try out indicated positive points. All the teachers marked the “yes” column based on each point. However, there are some comments and suggestions especially regarding the use of the flash cards. The teachers suggested making it bigger so they can stick it on the whiteboard and all the students can see the pictures while they name it in English.

The second try out related to the students’ book was conducted on January 22, 2016. Similar to the first try-out, the topics tried out were transportation and animals. The teachers chose “yes” part for most of the points. It means the students can follow the materials served in the book well. However, there are some comments and suggestions. In relation to the poems given, two teachers stated that some students found difficulty in reading and pronouncing some words. Another comment was related to the exercise. One of the teachers commented that some students needed longer time to fill the missing letters.

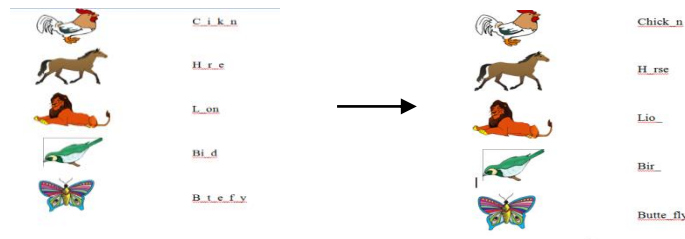
### Second Revision

The second revision was done based on the comments and suggestion obtained from the try-out. The first revision was on the flashcards size. The flashcards were resized from 8.9 cm by 12.7 cm to 15.2cm by 20.3cm. The next revision was related to the poems which were made shorter, rhymed, and used familiar vocabulary. The revision of the poem can be seen in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Poem Revision**

The last revision was related to the exercise which was made simpler and easier. The revision can be seen in Figure 3.



**Figure 3. Revision of the Exercise**

### Final Product

The final products of this research are the teachers' and students' course books containing six topics; Greeting, Numbers, Family, Colors, Animals, and Transportation. Each topic consists of vocabulary section in English and Arabic, pronunciation parts, and its meaning in Indonesian. Every topic has different exercises.

The books were designed colorfully with suitable font size and typing to make it easy and interesting for students to learn. The teachers' book consists of teachers' guide to help teachers understand how to use the course book. It presents the steps that teachers can use in teaching. Besides, it consists of supporting media to make the class more entertained. Flashcards of each vocabulary are included in the teachers' book. It also consists of jazz chants, songs (in videos and in CD for the teachers' book), poems, and short stories.

### DISCUSSION

From the expert validation and the try-out, it can be concluded that the developed product is positively applicable to teach English for the second grade of kindergarten. The activities provided in the developed product are attractive for learners. This is in accordance with the idea suggested by Paul (2003), that books for young learners should attract the children towards English and draw the children into the course. This idea is also in line with Shin's statement, that children especially have fun with movement and physical participation, and the more fun the students have the better they will remember the language learned (Shin, 2006 in Nihat 2010).

The product provides the instruction for teachers to help them in using the product. The product is also presented with colorful flash cards and CD for the songs. The flash cards can be used by the teachers to introduce the vocabulary. The CD will help teachers to master the songs easily. Besides, the teachers can play the video in class to make their teaching more entertaining.

Millington (2011), states that one advantage of using songs in the young learner classroom is their flexibility. Songs can be used for a number of purposes and there are many reasons why songs can be considered a valuable pedagogical tool. In addition, he confirms that probably the greatest benefit to using songs in the classroom is that they are enjoyable. In line with Millington's statement, Sevik (2012) claims that songs provide excellent opportunities for repetition and practice that might otherwise be tedious. Repetition of language is pleasurable-such as repeating choruses.

There are worksheets in the product which consist of various activities such as coloring page, counting page, matching and filling the gap. This is aimed to help the teachers know the students' progress in learning English. This idea is in agreement with Hughes (2003:199) perception that the purpose of giving tests and assessment is to assure that the teaching program is effective and the students benefit from the chance to learn language at early age.

A side from the positive parts of the product mentioned above, there are several limitations. The product is developed to be used only in one semester. That the product does not have game section to support the teaching and learning process is also considered as the limitation this product. This product does not provide games like the previous study by Mublasat (2012) which indicates that games affect positively on improving the achievement for the primary stage and to create an interactive environment. Similarly, Yolageldili and Arikan (2011) explain that games become crucially important for English language learners and teachers not only because they provide enjoyment and relaxation, but also as they encourage students to use their language in a creative and communicative manner.

### CONCLUSION

In relation with the appropriateness course book for young learners, it can be concluded that the product met the criteria of a good course book, since it was considered fun and attractive. This product is applicable for the second grade of kindergarteners. The teachers may be creative in varying the vocabulary as well as providing games related to the topics served.

The teachers are recommended to follow the instructions served on the course book as well as modify it to suit the learning teaching process. Due to the time limitation, the try-out of the developed product was done on limited chapters, therefore it is suggested to the teachers that the try-out be done again for all chapters of the product.

Another suggestion is addressed to the future researchers to develop syllabus and product with different various topics. It is also suggested that the future researchers develop a product which can be used more than one semester. Furthermore, the procedures presented on this research can be used as references or modified to make future research better.

The last suggestion is directed to the course book writers, especially for young learners. The developed product might be viewed as a reference. Finding different topics and new vocabulary are recommended. Course book writers are also suggested to find various materials including games.

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