

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the theoretical foundations that underpin the development of the Smart Migrant Book as an English learning resource for prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers (IMWs). The theories discussed in this chapter provide the conceptual basis for understanding the learners' language needs, designing appropriate instructional materials, and integrating supporting learning media into the developed product. These theoretical perspectives also serve as the foundation for the research and development process undertaken in this study.

The discussion begins with the concept of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which emphasizes the importance of designing English instruction based on learners' specific occupational and communicative needs. It is followed by a discussion of learning books and learning materials, focusing on their characteristics, roles, and principles in supporting effective language learning. Furthermore, this chapter explains the role of audio-based learning in enhancing pronunciation, listening, and speaking skills through the integration of audio support into the learning materials.

In addition, this chapter discusses the characteristics of Indonesian Migrant Workers, particularly those preparing to work in Singapore, to provide a contextual understanding of the target learners and their workplace communication needs. Finally, several previous studies related to English material development and migrant worker training are reviewed to identify the research gap addressed by this study. Collectively, these theories and previous findings establish the conceptual framework that guides the development of the Smart Migrant Book as a practical, context-based, and multimedia-supported English learning resource for prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers.

2.1.1 English for Specific Purpose (ESP)

2.1.1.1 Definition of English for Specific Purpose

ESP is an approach to English language learning that focuses on learners' specific needs based on their purposes for using the language (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Rather than teaching English in a general way, ESP emphasizes the adaptation of learning materials to particular contexts, such as occupational or field-specific needs. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) state that ESP is determined by the reasons why learners study the language, meaning that materials should be designed to match learners' real needs to ensure relevance and usefulness. In addition, Dudley-Evans (1998) explains that ESP is characterized by its focus on learners' needs, the use of appropriate methods related to specific fields, and the emphasis on language used in particular contexts. In this study, ESP is highly relevant because prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers require specific English skills for daily communication in domestic work, especially in countries such as Singapore, so the learning materials should be contextual, practical, and aligned with real workplace situations.

Furthermore, ESP materials are most beneficial when they are closely tied to learners' occupational context. Paltridge and Starfield (2013) explain that ESP learning should be connected to learners' occupational needs and real-life communication situations. Thus, designing materials around specific workplace scenarios can lead to a more relevant and useful learning experience, particularly for learners who need to use their language skills right away in job situations.

2.1.1.2 ESP for Indonesian Migrant Workers

Basturkmen (2010) argues that ESP is highly relevant for prospective Indonesian migrant workers because they require specific English skills to communicate effectively in their workplaces, as English is needed not only for daily interaction but also for understanding instructions, completing tasks, and building communication with employers. International Labour Organization (2017) explains that language skills are important for migrant workers because communication ability can improve workplace adaptation and reduce misunderstandings.

Furthermore, Paltridge and Starfield (2013) explain that ESP learning should be connected to learners' occupational needs and real-life communication situations. Therefore, English materials for migrant workers should focus on practical communication related to their work environments.

2.1.1.3 Digital Learning Media in ESP

Kukulska-Hulme (2012) states that the advancement of technology has impacted the way ESP learning is conducted by utilizing digital learning tools like e-books and multimedia resources, which boost learners' enthusiasm and expand their access to various language learning opportunities. With digital education, students can engage with materials in a more flexible and self-directed manner that suits their individual learning speeds. Hockly and Dudeney (2018) further describe how digital resources can foster an interactive and student-focused approach to language acquisition by incorporating multimedia elements such as sound, visuals, and online exercises. Consequently, the inclusion of technology in ESP education can result in a more accessible and stimulating learning environment

2.1.1.4 English Communication in Domestic Work

English communication skills are important for prospective migrant workers who work in domestic sectors because they need to communicate with employers in daily activities. According to International Labour Organization (2015), migrant domestic workers require effective communication skills to perform daily tasks, understand workplace instructions, maintain relationships with employers, and avoid misunderstandings in the working environment. Language skills such as giving responses, understanding instructions, asking questions, and using polite expressions are necessary in workplace communication. According to Nation and Macalister (2010), language learning materials should focus on useful vocabulary and expressions that learners can apply directly in real communication. In addition, Thornbury (2017) states that communication-based learning helps learners develop confidence and fluency in everyday interactions. Therefore, English learning for domestic workers should emphasize practical communication and workplace-related expressions.

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2.1.2 Learning Book

2.1.2.1 Definition of Learning Book

A learning book, broadly defined, is a structured educational resource designed to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies within a particular subject area. In general terms, learning books serve as systematic guides that organize instructional content in a logical and progressive sequence, providing learners with the information, examples, and practice activities necessary to achieve specific learning objectives. Supriadi (2006) states that well-designed learning books contribute to improving the quality of education by creating active, dynamic, and enjoyable learning situations, encouraging deeper student involvement, and supporting student-centered learning, which ultimately enhances learning outcomes. Similarly, Cunningsworth (1995) affirms that learning books provide a systematic framework for instruction and act as a valuable resource that supports both teachers and learners throughout the educational process. Beyond the classroom, learning books can also serve as independent study tools, enabling learners to review, reinforce, and extend their understanding outside formal instructional settings.

Within the more specific domain of English language learning, learning books assume a particularly significant role as they function not merely as repositories of linguistic content but as practical instruments that guide learners toward communicative competence. According to Tomlinson (2011), language learning materials serve as important resources that facilitate language acquisition by providing learners with meaningful input, practice opportunities, and guidance throughout the learning process. Richards (2001) further states that textbooks function as a central component in language programs because they help organize learning activities, provide language models, and support learners in achieving communicative competence. An effective English learning book should therefore be carefully designed to reflect learners' actual communicative needs, present language in contextually meaningful ways, and offer structured opportunities for both receptive and productive language practice. For learners with specific occupational purposes, such as prospective Indonesian migrant workers an English learning book that is grounded in real workplace communication scenarios becomes an especially critical resource, as it bridges the gap between classroom instruction and the authentic language demands of their future work environments.

2.1.2.2 The Role of Learning Materials

Learning materials play an essential role in supporting the teaching and learning process because they function as sources of information, guidance, and learning support for both teachers and learners. According to Richards (2015), learning materials should provide meaningful language input and opportunities for learners to practice communication in relevant contexts. In addition, Nunan (2013) explains that well-prepared teaching materials can increase learners' motivation, participation, and language development. Therefore, appropriate learning materials can create a more meaningful and learner-centered learning process, especially for learners with specific occupational needs.

2.1.2.3 Characteristics of Effective Learning Books

An effective learning book should provide clear, relevant, and well-organized content that meets learners' needs. Learning materials should be easy to

understand, appropriately sequenced, and supported by activities that encourage active participation. According to Nation and Macalister (2019), effective learning materials should focus on learners' goals, language needs, and learning contexts. Similarly, Tomlinson (2011) explains that materials should be meaningful, engaging, and relevant to learners' real-life situations. As a result, learning books should be designed to support practical language use and facilitate independent learning.

2.1.2.4 Learning Books for English Language Learning

Learning books play an important role in supporting English language learning because they provide learners with language input, vocabulary development, grammar explanations, and communication practice. According to Harmer (2007), well-designed learning materials can help learners develop language skills through meaningful practice and exposure to authentic language use. Furthermore, Richards (2015) states that language learning materials should provide opportunities for learners to use language in realistic communication contexts. Therefore, English learning books should include materials that reflect learners' actual communication needs and future language use.

2.1.3 Audio in Language Learning

2.1.3.1 The Concept of Audio-Based Learning

Audio-based learning refers to the use of sound recordings as a learning medium to facilitate language acquisition. Audio materials enable learners to receive language input through listening activities, allowing them to become familiar with pronunciation, intonation, stress patterns, and natural speech. According to Rost (2011), listening is a fundamental component of language learning because it provides learners with comprehensible input that supports language development. Similarly, Nation and Newton (2009) state that audio resources can expose learners to authentic language use and help them develop communication skills more effectively. Therefore, audio-based learning serves as an important tool in supporting language acquisition, especially for learners who need practical communication skills.

2.1.3.2 Audio for Pronunciation Learning

Audio-supported learning is important in helping learners improve pronunciation and listening skills. Through repeated listening practice, learners can better understand English sounds, stress, and intonation. According to Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (2010), pronunciation instruction supported by listening activities can help learners develop clearer and more understandable speech. Furthermore, Gilakjani (2012) explains that audio media provide learners with authentic pronunciation models that can improve speaking accuracy and confidence. Therefore, integrating audio into learning materials can support more effective pronunciation practice and language acquisition.

In addition, audio-based learning can provide learners with opportunities to practice independently outside the classroom. According to Godwin-Jones (2018), digital audio resources and mobile-assisted language learning allow learners to access pronunciation and listening practice more flexibly and independently beyond formal classroom activities. Learners are able to repeat pronunciation exercises multiple times according to their own learning pace, which helps strengthen memory and improve speaking fluency. According to Rost (2011), listening activities supported by audio exposure can increase learners' familiarity with spoken language and improve their ability to respond in real communication situations. This is particularly important for prospective Indonesian migrant workers because they need practical communication skills that can be applied directly in workplace environments.

2.1.3.3 Audio for Listening Skill Development

Listening is one of the essential language skills that can be developed through the use of audio materials. Audio resources expose learners to authentic spoken language and help them understand meaning through context, pronunciation, and intonation. According to Vandergrift and Goh (2012), listening comprehension develops when learners are exposed to meaningful listening activities and authentic language input. Furthermore, Rost (2011) states that listening practice helps learners process spoken language more efficiently and

improves their ability to respond appropriately in communication situations. As a result, audio materials can significantly contribute to the development of learners' listening abilities.

2.1.4 Indonesian Migrant Workers

2.1.4.1 Definiton of Indonesian Migrant Workers

According to Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, migrant workers are defined as Indonesian citizens who are planning to work, currently working, or have worked and received wages outside the territory of Indonesia. This definition includes individuals employed by legal entities, individual employers or households, as well as those working in sectors such as shipping and fisheries. In general, migrant workers seek employment abroad in order to obtain better job opportunities and improve their economic conditions. Manulun (2021) states that more than 72% of Indonesian migrant workers originate from rural areas, where limited employment opportunities encourage them to seek work overseas. This indicates that economic factors are one of the main driving forces behind labor migration.

Furthermore, according to the International Organization for Migration (2020), migration is often influenced by “push and pull factors,” where limited job availability and low income in the home country act as push factors, while higher wages and better working conditions in destination countries serve as pull factors. In line with this, the International Labour Organization (2017) emphasizes that labor migration plays an important role in improving household income and reducing unemployment, especially for workers from developing countries. However, despite its economic benefits, migrant workers often face various challenges, including language barriers, cultural differences, and limited access to training before departure. Therefore, adequate preparation, particularly in language skills such as English, becomes essential to help migrant workers adapt and communicate effectively in their working environments.

2.1.4.2 LPKS for Indonesian Migrant Workers

Lembaga Pelatihan Kerja Swasta (LPKS) play an important role in preparing prospective Indonesian migrant workers before they work abroad (BP2MI, 2023). These institutions provide various training programs aimed at improving learners' work readiness, communication abilities, and understanding of workplace situations in destination countries. According to International Labour Organization (2021), vocational training is essential in developing workers' competencies and helping them adapt to international work environments. Through structured training programs, prospective migrant workers can improve both technical and communication skills needed in their future occupations.

One of the institutions that focuses on preparing prospective migrant workers is LPKS Nur Mutiara Bangsa. Established in 2018 and based in Kebumen, Central Java, the institution has so far successfully placed more than 800 prospective migrant workers (IMWs) abroad. It provides various language and skill training programs to support readiness of learners who will work in several placement countries, including Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Malaysia, with Singapore being the most popular destination among trainees.

The training programs are designed not only to improve practical work skills but also to help learners adapt to their future working environments, daily routines, cultural differences, and interactions with employers. As many prospective migrant workers will work in domestic sectors, communication skills become one of the most important aspects of the training process.

2.1.4.3 The Destination of Singapore

Singapore is the main destination of Indonesian Migrant Workers (IMWs). Based on data from BP2MI, Singapore is included among the five most favored destination countries for Indonesian Migrant Workers (IMWs), especially for those working in the domestic sector. According to Yeoh and Huang (2010), the high demand for foreign domestic workers in Singapore is driven by the increasing participation of women in the formal labor market and the growing need for household assistance in developed countries. According to the Ministry of

Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia (2023), Singapore's strategic location, advanced infrastructure, and regulated labor system make it an attractive destination for Indonesian migrant workers seeking better economic opportunities and improved quality of life.

Ponggohong (2020), in his research entitled "*Indonesia's Cooperation with Singapore in Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers (IMWs) in Singapore*," highlights that these factors enable workers to support their families and improve their quality of life. In addition, the availability of efficient transportation systems and a secure environment further contributes to better working conditions. According to the International Labour Organization (2019), countries with stable economic conditions and strong labor regulations tend to attract more migrant workers due to better job security and welfare protection.

Linguistically, Singapore is a multilingual country that recognizes English, Malay, Mandarin, and Tamil, with English functioning as the main working language due to its historical background as a former British colony. According to Crystal (1995), English plays a key role in global communication, especially in countries with colonial influences. Compared to other Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia and Brunei, Singapore offers higher wages and a more structured work system, although with higher living cost (International Labour Organization, 2019). International Organization for Migration (2020) stated, factors such as economic opportunities, safety, and proximity influence migrant workers' destination choices, making Singapore one of the most attractive options in the region.



Figure 2. 1 Map of Singapore

2.2 Previous Studies

Several previous studies have investigated the development of English learning materials and training programs for Indonesian migrant workers. A study conducted by Nahartini et al. (2021) examined the development of English training materials for prospective Indonesian migrant workers based on their workplace communication needs. The study found that materials designed around learners' real Remphasizing contextual vocabulary and daily expressions encountered by migrant workers.

In addition, Nernere, Astuti, and Kristianto (2023) conducted a community training program in English for prospective Indonesian migrant workers at the beginner level. The study found that targeted, needs-based English training helped beginner-level participants build foundational communication skills relevant to their future work contexts, highlighting the importance of designing instructional content that matches learners' proficiency level and practical needs as migrant workers.

Furthermore, Maliki et al. (2022) conducted an English training program for Indonesian migrant workers in Brunei Darussalam. The study found that

contextualized training focused on practical workplace communication helped participants improve their English proficiency and confidence in interacting within their work environment, emphasizing the need for English materials that are tailored to the specific destination country and working conditions faced by migrant workers.

Similarly, Afriani and Maimunah (2020) examined the strengthening of English language skills among prospective Indonesian migrant workers in Cirebon. The study revealed that systematic English skill reinforcement helped participants develop more confidence and competence in basic communication, underlining the importance of structured, community-based English training in preparing migrant workers for overseas employment.

Existing research underscores the importance of English language materials and practical communication competence in preparing both general workers and migrant workers for the demands of workplace interaction. These studies further emphasize that learning resources should be closely tailored to learners' occupational contexts and the communicative situations they are likely to encounter in real-life settings. Despite this, studies specifically dedicated to developing a comprehensive English learning resource for prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers preparing for employment in Singapore remain notably scarce.

Moreover, much of the existing literature tends to address isolated aspects of language learning such as vocabulary acquisition, general communication skills, or workplace-specific English without integrating these components into a single, cohesive resource. Comparatively little research has explored the particular communicative demands faced by prospective IMWs in Singapore, a context in which English functions as a primary medium for both occupational and everyday interactions. Therefore, addresses this gap by developing the “Smart Migrant Book”, an integrated English learning resource that brings together workplace communication, interview preparation, everyday vocabulary, pronunciation practice, and structured learning exercises into a single, contextually grounded tool designed specifically for prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers.