

Development of *Leseübungen* Materials and Text Comprehension Strategies Based on Student Feedback at the B1 Level

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Abstract

This study aimed to develop *Leseübungen* materials and text comprehension strategies based on student feedback for B1-level German language learning in the German Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Medan. The study was motivated by the low student pass rate in the *Lesen* module, which was caused by limited vocabulary mastery, difficulties in understanding sentence structures, ineffective reading strategies, and low comprehension of textual contexts. The research employed the Design-Based Research method using Reeves' model, which consists of four stages: collaboration with practitioners, identification of solutions, evaluation, and revision. Based on the results of the analysis, *Leseübungen* materials grounded in Student-Centered Learning (SCL) were developed by integrating collaborative strategies. The developed materials were validated by three experts and achieved an average Aiken's V score of 0.93, categorized as highly valid. The implementation phase involved 20 students from the B1 Vorbereitung class. The findings revealed a significant improvement in students' *Lesen* abilities. The mean pre-test score increased from 46.25 to 63.90 in the post-test, with the paired sample *t*-test showing $t = 9.44$ and a significance value of $p < 0.05$. The findings indicate that the development of *Leseübungen* materials based on student feedback was effective in improving B1-level German text comprehension skills. The development of learning materials tailored to students' needs, combined with collaborative strategies and the integration of learning technologies, contributed to improved global and detailed text comprehension and supported the enhancement of German language learning quality in higher education.

Keywords: *leseübungen*, student-centered learning, student feedback, reading skills, b1-level

Introduction

A minimum German language proficiency at the B1 level is a standard established for the Undergraduate German Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Medan. This policy has been implemented since 2011 with the aim of standardizing the competencies of German Study Program graduates in Indonesia and serving as a requirement for taking the

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final examination, namely writing a thesis. However, due to the many challenges in achieving this goal, the policy gradually declined in its implementation. Eventually, the standard was lowered so that passing at least one module became sufficient to fulfill the graduation requirements of the German Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Medan. One of the contributing factors is the decreasing number of students who successfully achieve the B1 level each year. Among the four German language skills tested, *Hören* (listening) and *Lesen* (reading) are considered the most difficult for students. Based on interview results, students reported that they had practiced adequately in preparation for the *Lesen* test but were still unable to achieve optimal results. Despite frequent practice of *Hören* skills, students admitted that their efforts were still ineffective.

The declining proficiency of students has become a significant issue that needs to be addressed, particularly in the area of *Lesen* (reading comprehension). The low level of competence is influenced by several factors, including limited vocabulary mastery, a lack of effective reading strategies, and instructional materials that do not fully align with the needs and characteristics of the students. In addition, learning approaches that are not based on students' actual experiences and difficulties further contribute to their low level of text comprehension ability.

As a response to these issues, an initial effort was undertaken by distributing questionnaires to 13 students who participated in the B1 examination in August 2025. The questionnaires aimed to obtain feedback regarding the students' difficulties, needs, and preferences related to the B1 examination they had taken. The questionnaires systematically identified the main obstacles that students encountered in preparing for and succeeding in the examination, both in terms of language competence and learning strategies. Student feedback serves as an important foundation for the development and improvement of instructional practices, as it is considered a key factor in enhancing the quality of learning. In the context of instructional material development, student input assists lecturers in adjusting content and strategies to make them more effective (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Gibbs & Simpson, 2004; Brookhart, 2008).

The results of the student feedback revealed that they experienced difficulties in passing the *Lesen* module because it was considered too challenging, particularly in terms of understanding vocabulary and sentence structures. As a result, students were unable to identify the main ideas and supporting ideas within the texts. In addition, the procedures used in answering the test questions also interfered with their comprehension. Many students tended to read the questions first and then search for the answers directly in the text. Others read the entire text before attempting to answer the questions. The following are the questionnaire results in the form of student responses and feedback.

The first question revealed that *Lesen* was the module with the highest failure rate, as reported by 76.9% of the students. In addition, 92.3% of the students stated that the *Lesen* module was very difficult. Vocabulary and texts were considered highly unfamiliar by 76.9% of the students. Similarly, 76.9% stated that the texts were always contextually new, making them difficult to understand. Regarding learning strategies used in preparation for the examination, 84.6% of the students preferred preparing for the exam in groups, even though practice activities had generally been conducted independently. Furthermore, 92.3% of the students expressed the need for guidance from lecturers or tutors within group learning sessions. The same percentage of students also indicated that vocabulary mastery exercises should be provided before discussing the test questions. In addition, 100% of the students stated that they wanted a simulation test before taking the actual examination. The

questionnaire also showed that when the *Lesen* examination began, 84.6% of the students immediately read the questions first and then read the text, reasoning that this strategy was more time-efficient. Meanwhile, 15.3% of the students preferred to read the title and any accompanying images first, followed by the entire text and then the questions.

The questionnaire results indicate that *Lesen* (reading comprehension) is the most difficult German language skill for students. The main problems in students' reading competence can be categorized into three major aspects:

- 1) vocabulary and sentence structure,
- 2) a lack of effective reading strategies, and
- 3) limited student knowledge regarding texts in their contextual settings.

Based on the results of the questionnaire analysis, B1-level reading practice materials (*Leseübungen*) were developed systematically and tailored to students' needs. These materials not only include authentic texts with appropriate levels of difficulty but are also complemented by exercises emphasizing the use of reading strategies and discussions that help students understand examination question patterns. Through this approach, students are expected to improve their text comprehension skills gradually and in a more structured manner. The development of student feedback-based *Leseübungen* serves as an effective solution for improving reading competence, enabling students to be better prepared for the B1 examination and to achieve higher passing rates.

This development resulted in a *Leseübungen* practice module based on Student-Centered Learning (SCL), incorporating collaborative strategies and group discussion methods. The module was designed to ensure that students' learning needs are effectively addressed. The effectiveness of SCL in language learning has been widely recognized and can be summarized into three important aspects: (1) active learner engagement, (2) learner autonomy in improving language proficiency, and (3) communicative language use. In other words, SCL is consistently effective because it (1) positions learners as the main actors in the learning process, (2) enhances motivation and participation, and (3) supports language use in authentic contexts. These findings are in line with the views of Dörnyei (2001), van Lier (2004), Brown (2007), Richards (2006), and Nunan (1988).

Collaborative strategies were also implemented based on students' needs, as they demonstrated higher motivation when learning in groups. This is particularly important because *Lesen* materials are presented in various contexts and can be considered multidisciplinary in nature. Collaborative learning emphasizes that knowledge is constructed through interactions among learners under the guidance of tutors or instructors. Through group discussions, students are also able to deepen their understanding through the process of elaboration (Bruffee, 1999; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978; Gibbs, 1995; Oxford, 1997).

Method

The development model applied in this study was the Design-Based Research (DBR) model proposed by Reeves, which consists of four stages: (1) collaboration with the team, (2) determination of solutions, (3) evaluation, and (4) revision and refinement. These four main stages were further divided into smaller activities, including needs analysis, problem identification, theoretical review and literature study, determination of appropriate solutions to address the problems, material development, selection of learning strategies,

as well as expert validation and field testing. The following development framework was then designed. Steps in the Development of B1-Level *Leseübungen* can be seen in figure 1.



Figure 1. Steps in the Development of B1-Level *Leseübungen*

Results

Collaboration with the Team or Practitioners

This study is a developmental research project conducted by following the stages proposed by Reeves. The initial stage involved collaboration with practitioners or the teaching team, in which a needs analysis was carried out through the distribution of questionnaires to students, followed by in-depth discussions with practitioners or teaching staff regarding the problems identified in the learning process. The questionnaire results indicated that students' primary needs were related to the *Lesen* (reading comprehension) skill. Furthermore, it was identified that almost all students experienced difficulties in understanding the texts encountered in the B1 examination. The texts were considered difficult in terms of vocabulary, sentence structure, and contextual understanding. A deeper analysis further revealed that students did not particularly enjoy discussing examination questions directly, as this caused them stress. Instead, students preferred being given opportunities to discuss texts collaboratively. Through group discussions, students were able to broaden their understanding of vocabulary, sentence structures, and the contexts of the texts being discussed. In addition, students expressed the need for comparative or similar texts to help them gain a better understanding of the context. The questionnaire findings were then cross-checked with interview results obtained from practitioners and the teaching team.

Based on the results of the needs analysis, problem identification, and students' characteristics, a learning design was developed by combining several technology-based learning models, namely Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), Digital Extensive Reading using various online links, Interactive Reading through group discussions with tutors, and blended learning. The integration of these five models was designed to support the accelerated development of students' reading comprehension abilities, both at the global comprehension level (Globalverständnis) and detailed comprehension level (Detailverständnis). CALL and MALL were utilized to provide flexible access to digital texts, interactive exercises, and immediate feedback, enabling students to learn independently and continuously. Furthermore, Digital Extensive Reading encouraged students to read a variety of authentic texts according to their interests and proficiency levels in order to expand vocabulary and improve reading fluency. The

Interactive Reading model was implemented through annotation activities, discussions, and collaborative text interpretation, allowing students to actively construct meaning. Meanwhile, blended learning integrated online and face-to-face instruction to create a more flexible, communicative, and collaborative learning experience. Through the combination of these learning models, the instructional process was expected to enhance student engagement, reading strategies, and the ability to comprehend both main ideas and specific information in German texts more effectively.

Determination of Solutions

Based on the results of discussions with practitioners and the teaching team, the proposed solution was the development of B1-level *Leseübungen* materials accompanied by improvements in learning strategies. The themes were determined by referring to the B1 learning objectives outlined in *Profile Deutsch*. In addition to the 12 themes presented in the *TOP FIT B1* textbook, five additional themes were developed: (1) everyday social life with the subtheme of media technology, (2) work and educational environments with the subtheme of *Ausbildung* (vocational training), (3) health and lifestyle with the subtheme of health, (4) travel situations and living environments with the subtheme of housing, and (5) general topics and opinions with the subtheme of simple news. One of the developed texts combined two subthemes into a single text entitled *Digitale Medien und Gesundheit*. The learning process was designed through the integration of several approaches, namely technology-based learning models, Extensive Reading, Interactive Reading, and Blended Learning. At the initial stage, students independently read digital texts through smartphones or online learning platforms. Lecturers prepared several similar texts related to *digitale Medien und Gesundheit*. This activity enabled students to access texts flexibly and identify the main ideas of the texts in order to develop global comprehension (*Globalverständnis*). Subsequently, students continued the learning process through interactive reading activities supported by digital media, such as highlighting important vocabulary, reading explanations of new, key, or difficult words, and completing comprehension exercises through online platforms. This approach helped students understand detailed information (*Detailverständnis*) in a deeper and more systematic manner.

In addition to individual learning activities, these models were integrated with collaborative strategies through group discussions, joint summary writing, and problem-solving activities based on the text content. These collaborative activities represent the implementation of Interactive Reading and Student-Centered Learning, which position students at the center of the learning process and encourage them to construct understanding through social interaction. Meanwhile, the application of Blended Learning integrated online and face-to-face activities, making the learning process more flexible, communicative, and sustainable. To further strengthen reading competence, students were also assigned independent additional reading tasks through Extensive Reading in order to familiarize them with understanding various authentic texts. Through the integration of these learning models, the instructional process was expected to improve students' reading skills comprehensively, both in understanding general ideas and specific information in B1-level German texts.

Evaluation

In this phase, expert validation was conducted. Based on the results of the expert review, the B1 *Leseübungen* materials were declared highly appropriate for use in German reading instruction. The evaluation was carried out by three validators from different universities, taking into account the alignment of the materials with learning outcomes, the clarity of instructions, the depth of the content, the variety of exercises, and the characteristics of Student-Centered Learning (SCL)-based instruction. The analysis using Aiken's V indicated that, out of fifteen assessment items, nine items were categorized as highly valid and six items as valid, with an average Aiken's V score of 0.93. This value demonstrates a very high level of expert agreement regarding the quality of the developed *Leseübungen*, particularly in terms of content, language, presentation, and the implementation of Student-Centered Learning principles. In addition to expert validation, a field trial was conducted in a B1 Vorbereitung class consisting of 20 students. Specifically for the *Lesen* skill, the developed *Leseübungen* materials were implemented in the learning process, both individually and collaboratively, in online and offline settings. The instructional process followed the strategies established in the developed materials. Based on the observation results, no significant obstacles were identified; however, students became more focused on developing their *Lesen* skills. Not all materials could be tested due to time allocation constraints across all language skills. At the end of the trial, a B1 examination covering all language skills was administered. This was conducted after five offline meetings and two months of online and independent learning activities. Structured discussions were carried out regularly with the assistance of tutors, namely senior students who had successfully passed all four modules, under the supervision of junior lecturers. The trial involved 20 students who were given a B1 *Lesen* examination. The following are the examination results obtained.

Table 1. Students' B1-Level German Reading Examination Results

Nr.	Name	Modul			
		<i>Lesen</i>	<i>Hören</i>	<i>Schreiben</i>	<i>Sprechen</i>
1	DF	47	53	77	83
2	FM	33	33	60	72
3	JP	57	57	75	63
4	EWE	60	47	71	67
5	YA	50	40	51	66
6	UAP	70	37	63	78
7	IL	37	40	45	56
8	NRS	40	37	53	49
9	BN	40	32	63	57
10	MJ	40	47	28	58
11	SRZ	63	60	83	95
12	CM	47	43	16	6
13	MT	40	27	49	62
14	DCH	40	30	20	62
15	DR	37	37	60	63
16	PL	40	43	63	67
17	MS	57	47	45	63
18	JM	40	47	60	67
19	DH	37	47	60	63
20	MM	70	60	60	67

These results were compared with the results of the previous test. In this discussion, only the *Lesen* results were compared.

Tabel 2. Comparison of Students' B1-Level German Reading Scores

Nr.	Name	<i>Lesen (vor)</i>	<i>Lesen (nach)</i>
1	DF	47	60
2	FM	33	57
3	JP	57	60
4	EWE	60	70
5	YA	50	70
6	UAP	50	70
7	IL	37	57
8	NRS	40	60
9	BN	40	57
10	MJ	40	63
11	SRZ	63	70
12	CM	47	60
13	MT	40	70
14	DCH	40	70
15	DR	37	57
16	PL	40	60
17	MS	57	70
18	JM	40	70
19	DH	37	57
20	MM	70	70

Based on the results of the paired sample t-test, the mean pre-test score was 46.25, while the mean post-test score increased to 63.90. The analysis revealed a t-value of 9.44 with a significance level of $p < 0.05$. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a significant improvement in students' *Lesen* abilities after the implementation of the instructional treatment.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the development of student feedback-based B1 *Leseübungen* had a positive effect on improving the *Lesen* abilities of students in the German Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Medan. This improvement was evident from the results of the paired sample t-test, which demonstrated a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. The students' mean score increased from 46.25 to 63.90, with a significance value of $p < 0.05$. These findings suggest that the developed materials and instructional strategies were effective in helping students understand B1-level German texts more effectively.

The improvement in reading ability cannot be separated from the material development approach, which was designed based on the students' actual needs. The questionnaire analysis revealed that students experienced major difficulties in vocabulary mastery, understanding sentence structures, and comprehending the context of texts. These difficulties prevented students from identifying both the main ideas and detailed information within the texts. These findings are consistent with Nunan's view that foreign language reading skills are strongly influenced by linguistic mastery and text comprehension strategies. Therefore, the development of materials emphasizing vocabulary exercises,

sentence structure analysis, and contextual understanding proved effective in helping students gradually build their reading comprehension abilities.

In addition to linguistic factors, this study also revealed that students' reading strategies prior to the research were still ineffective. Most students tended to read the questions immediately without first developing a global understanding of the text. Although this strategy was considered time-efficient, it actually hindered students from comprehending the text as a whole. After the implementation of Interactive Reading and group discussion-based learning, students gradually became accustomed to understanding texts through the identification of themes, key vocabulary, and relationships between ideas within the text. This finding indicates that reading instruction should not merely focus on practicing test questions, but should also train students to apply systematic and reflective reading strategies.

The effectiveness of the learning process was also influenced by the implementation of Student-Centered Learning (SCL) and collaborative strategies. Based on the questionnaire results, most students were more motivated to study in groups rather than independently. Group discussions enabled students to help one another understand difficult vocabulary, sentence structures, and text contexts. This condition supports Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is constructed through social interaction and collaboration. The presence of peer tutors and supervising lecturers also provided students with scaffolding that facilitated a deeper understanding of the texts. Consequently, the learning process became more active, communicative, and less stressful compared to situations in which students focused solely on practicing examination questions.

The integration of CALL, MALL, Digital Extensive Reading, Interactive Reading, and Blended Learning also made an important contribution to improving students' *Lesen* abilities. The use of digital media enabled students to access texts flexibly and repeatedly through smartphones and online learning platforms. Digital Extensive Reading helped students expand their vocabulary and contextual knowledge through exposure to various authentic texts, while Interactive Reading encouraged students to actively construct meaning through annotation, discussion, and text elaboration activities. The combination of these learning models demonstrates that the integration of technology with collaborative activities can enhance student engagement and motivation in foreign language reading instruction.

The findings of this study also demonstrate that the previously low B1 passing rates were not solely caused by students' limited German language proficiency, but were also influenced by instructional materials and learning strategies that had not been fully aligned with students' needs. Previously, instructional practices tended to focus directly on completing examination questions without providing adequate guidance on reading strategies. Through the development of student needs-based *Leseübungen*, the learning process became more structured, contextual, and adaptive to the actual difficulties experienced by students.

This, this study confirms that the development of instructional materials based on student feedback is an effective approach to improving B1-level German reading competence. Materials that are tailored to students' needs, combined with collaborative strategies and technology-based learning, are able to enhance students' abilities to comprehend texts both globally and in detail. These findings are expected to serve as an alternative solution for improving the quality of German language instruction and supporting higher B1 examination passing rates in the German Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Medan.

Conclusion

This study concludes that *Lesen* is one of the most difficult B1-level German language competencies for students in the German Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Medan to master. The main difficulties experienced by students include limited vocabulary mastery, difficulties in understanding sentence structures, a lack of effective reading strategies, and low contextual understanding of texts. In addition, the previous instructional approach, which primarily focused on direct practice with examination questions, had not fully supported students in developing comprehensive reading comprehension skills.

Based on the results of the students' needs analysis, B1-level *Leseübungen* materials were developed using a Student-Centered Learning (SCL) approach with collaborative strategies and the integration of several learning models, namely CALL, MALL, Digital Extensive Reading, Interactive Reading, and Blended Learning. The developed materials were designed in accordance with students' needs in terms of themes, text difficulty levels, reading strategy exercises, and group discussion activities that support both global and detailed text comprehension.

The expert validation results indicated that the developed *Leseübungen* materials were categorized as highly valid, with an average Aiken's V score of 0.93. Furthermore, the results of the field trial conducted with students in the *B1 Vorbereitung* class showed a significant improvement in reading ability. Based on the paired sample t-test results, the average *Lesen* score increased from 46.25 in the pre-test to 63.90 in the post-test, with a significance value of $p < 0.05$. These findings demonstrate that the development of student needs-based *Leseübungen* is effective in improving B1-level German reading competence.

This, this study demonstrates that the development of instructional materials oriented toward students' needs, supported by collaborative strategies and the use of educational technology, can serve as an effective solution for improving students' *Lesen* competence. This development is expected to help students better prepare for the B1 examination and support the improvement of German language teaching quality in higher education institutions.

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