DEVELOPING LISTENING COURSEWARE
AS SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS FOR EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS
AT SMP NEGERI 1 MALANG

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ABSTRACT: This study is aimed to develop an educational product in the form of
courseware for developing the students’ listening skill that is appropriate for eighth grade
students as the supplementary material. In developing the product the researcher used the
research and development model of Borg and Gall (1983). The final product of this study is
a courseware and a workbook containing materials and exercises for listening activities.

Key words: courseware, listening, supplementary material, eighth grade students

English is well-known as a global or international language. It is used and taught in
most countries around the world. In Indonesia, English is taught in secondary schools as a
compulsory subject. Teaching English in Junior High School level targets the achievement of
the students’ functional level in literacy. In this level they are prepared to be able to
communicate using English in the form of spoken and written text to solve everyday life

To achieve the target, students have to develop the four skills of language: listening,
speaking, reading, and writing. Listening is grouped with reading in receptive skills while
speaking and writing in productive skills. In this study the researcher is interested in listening
skill because it has important roles in language learning. As Rost (1994:141-142) points out
that “listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learners.
Without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin. Listening is
thus fundamental to speaking.” In line with that, Nunan (1998:1) states that in language
learning, listening is the basic skill that has to be mastered because without listening skill,
learners will never have good communication. Furthermore, according to Schwartz (1998:1)
students may receive as much as 90% of their in-school information through listening to
instructors and to one another.

Junior High School 1 Malang is one of leading schools in Malang; however, there
are still some problems in teaching and learning process especially the listening skill in its
English classes. The first problem is the amount of time for listening activities given by the
English teacher. An English class only has listening activities once or twice a month which
makes the students feel inadequate. The second problem is the textbook used there only
provides limited practice for listening. The textbook is the adapted and printed version of
BSE which is provided by the Ministry of Education & Culture, but there are no listening
materials included since the BSE website does not provide the complementary material.
Another problem is the teachers’ difficulty in finding appropriate listening materials. The
English teacher admitted that she does not have enough knowledge in using internet so that she rarely uses material from internet.

Based on the problems discussed above, the researcher believes that it is necessary to develop supplementary material to fulfill students’ need of appropriate listening activities. Supplementary material is material which does not exist in the book/s used by the learners. The main purpose in developing supplementary material is to provide proper material for teaching and learning. Besides, it is also important to make the material as
interesting as possible. By using an interesting material, students will give attention to what they learn. In listening, audio is the vital element to be used in learning activity. In addition, video or picture may help the students to understand more about the material they listen to. To include both audio and video into an instructional material, the appropriate material is in the form of multimedia.

The advance of computer technologies makes it possible for the researcher to develop a medium to deliver listening material in an interesting way. Listening courseware is educational software for computer use that enables the users or students to operate it by themselves. The ability of this courseware to play video and audio makes this an attractive medium in learning. Video has been considered as one of effective media in teaching English. The benefit of video in teaching is it can be a motivating device since action in video is alive so learners do not get bored (Cahyono, 1997:129). McKinnon (2011) agrees that video clips can represent settings, action, emotions and gestures that can provide important visual stimulus for language practices and learning. The purpose of developing the courseware is to make it as students’ self-study medium in listening. Blin (2005:33, in Gimeno, 2008:1) points out that “Independent language learning environments present language learning opportunities that do not require the constant intervention of a teacher or that can be pursued outside the framework of an educational institution.” By conducting independent study in listening, students are expected to develop better listening skill more effectively.

From the theories and findings of previous studies, in this study the researcher intends to develop a courseware and a workbook which aims to improve eight graders’ listening skill. The courseware is developed as a supplementary material to complement the material that is not available in book and can be self-operated so that the students can use it independently.

METHOD

The objective of this research is to develop a teaching or learning medium in the form of courseware to enhance eighth grade students’ listening skill. In this research, the researcher used the R&D model of Borg and Gall (1983). The procedure consists of several steps, namely: (1) need analysis, (2) product development, (3) product validation, (4) product revision based on validation, (5) product try-out, (6) product revision based on try-out, and (7) the final product.

In the need analysis, at first the researcher gave a questionnaire and interviewed the English teacher. The questionnaire and interview were about the problems faced by the teacher in teaching listening, the problem in finding and choosing appropriate material in listening activities, the availability of facilities in the school. Next, the researcher distributed
questionnaires to the students that were aimed to find out their problems in listening, the frequency of listening activity in English class, and the material they would like to use in listening activity. The researcher also did document study to find out the competence to be developed and the material to be covered concerning the listening skills for eighth grade students.

Based on the information acquired from the need analysis, the researcher started the next phase of the research called product development. In the stage of developing the draft of the product, there are some steps the researcher did, namely; (1) deciding the topics, (2) collecting materials, (3) designing the courseware, and (4) making the workbook. In deciding the topics, the researcher used the result of document study that is the standard of competence and basic competence of second semester eighth grade students. It was followed by the collecting of material based on the topics. In designing the courseware, the researcher used a program called Adobe InDesign to create the book-like layout and flip-page effect. The materials collected from the previous step were then embedded into the courseware. The last
The next step was the expert and teacher validation. The validation was aimed to know the weaknesses of the product that should be fixed. The product validators were a lecturer from State University of Malang and a teacher from SMP Negeri 1 Malang. The validators were asked to give comments and suggestion on three aspects of the product, namely, the material, the program, and the workbook. Based on the comments and suggestion from validators, the researcher revised the product to improve it.

In the try-out process the researcher randomly chose ten students of eighth grade in SMP Negeri 1 Malang to be involved in the try-out. It is only ten students because of the limited number of laptops that could be used as devices to operate the courseware of listening. In addition, the researcher gave questionnaire to the ten students in order to acquire their feedback and comments on the product. The feedbacks and comments will then be used as a basis for the second revision of the product. The product try-out was conducted only once due to the limitation of the permission from the school.

After the product undergoes several stages, like validation, revision, and try-out, the product is ready to be used in listening activity in class or independently. Additionally, the final product of this research and development is in the form of program which is also called courseware with executable format file (.exe). The courseware is supplemented with a workbook that contains listening exercises for students and also answer key for teacher. The product can be distributed in the form of CD-ROM or directly copied to any PC with .exe supported operating systems.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

Need Analysis

Based on the results of the students’ questionnaire of need analysis, the students did several activities in listening such as listening to English songs, completing the missing lyrics, watching English movies, listening to stories, and listening to conversations. From 24 students, 54.2% or 13 students stated that the listening activities they got in class were not enough to fulfill their listening needs. 87.5% or 21 of 24 students did not do any English listening activities outside the class to develop their English listening skills. From the question of what material the students want in listening activities with more than one material allowed to be chosen, the data obtained were as follows: (a) audio material: 7 students, (b) video material: 23 students, (c) song material: 24 students, (d) other material (specified by the students): vocabulary dictation: 3 students, and movie 2 students.
From the teacher’s questionnaire, it can be seen that the teaching problems faced by the teacher were technical problems such as the equipment which did not work or the power that went out. In relation to the material, the teacher stated that the book she used did not have enough listening material but sometimes the teacher searched listening material in the Internet. She also found a problem in finding material that is appropriate for the students. The teacher said that their lack of knowledge in browsing the Internet makes it difficult for her to find suitable listening material to be used in listening activity. For the teaching listening in class, the teacher uses several kinds of activities such as listening to songs, listening to stories, and watching movies. These activities were followed by some tasks and assignments such as completing lyrics, completing words in sentence, and answering questions related to the movie.

From the notes of document study on the standard of content for second semester of eighth grade, the materials to be included are: (1) narrative text, (2) asking, giving, and refusing information, and (3) starting, extending, and ending phone conversation. From the official English textbook the researcher found that the book was the printed and adapted
version of BSE (Buku Sekolah Elektronik) books. From the book, the researcher found tasks and activities for listening, but there were no material for listening such as audio recording or CD included in the book. For further information, the researcher browsed the BSE website to look for the supporting material. The result of website browsing showed that the supporting material for English electronic book was unavailable.

**Product Development**

Based on the data collected in need analysis and considering the time limit of the study, the researcher decided to choose three topics to be developed. These topics include narrative text, starting, extending and ending phone conversation, and asking, giving and denying information. The selection of topics was based on teacher’s suggestions, the usefulness of material, and the relevance to the student’s daily lives.

In material collecting the researcher then browsed the Internet for listening material. Video was the priority to be used as part of the material, so the researcher visited some video sharing websites such as youtube and vimeo. The researcher searched the videos that were appropriate with the topic by entering some key words like “narrative for listening”, “telephone conversation”, “conversation for listening”, and some others. From the searching process, the researcher downloaded the appropriate videos to the computer.

In addition to the videos shown above, another type of material for listening is in a form of audio. Several audio files were recorded from a text-to-speech website using a software called Audacity. Text-to-speech was chosen since it was pretty difficult to find audio recording that is appropriate to the topic and the students’ proficiency level. Some videos were edited in order to omit some unnecessary parts. In this step the researcher used a program named AVS Video Editor Free. In addition, the researcher browsed the internet for some pictures related to the materials as complementary illustrations.

In designing the courseware, the researcher used Adobe InDesign, a publishing software, to design the program layout. The materials were inserted and arranged according to the topic in each chapter. As illustration, some pictures were inserted according to material in each chapter. Instructions on the use of the courseware and on each activity in the material were also given, so that student can use them for independent study. After finishing the layout design, the design was then exported into a .swf file format and then exported again into .exe format so that it can be operated on computers.

The workbook contains four chapters of tasks related to the material in the courseware. There are also answer keys and materials’ transcripts included separately. In designing the workbook, the researcher made some tasks related to the materials in the courseware. The questions in the tasks were aimed to help and also to measure the students’ understanding about the material. The types of exercises included in the workbook among
others, are true or false question, comprehension questions, cloze text, vocabulary exercise, and some other types of questions related to the listening materials.

**Product Validation**

The product was validated by two validators. The first validator is an expert in teaching media, and the second validator is an English teacher. The validators gave comments and suggestion on three aspects of product namely: material, program, and workbook.

The following are the comments and suggestions from the expert related to the material: 1) The portion of standard of competence type needed to be reconsidered because the transactional portion seems more than the other standard of competence. 2) It needed some adaptations in the number of items in the exercises because some exercises have more questions than others, there also needs to be more variations in the type of questions. 3) It is suggested to add more illustrations related to the material in the
workbook to make it more attractive. 4) To consider the variation of vocabulary exercises; the researcher may use synonym or matching exercise besides the identifying exercise. 5) The conversation in video 2.1 was not really clear. 6) The video on chapter one seems to be too long compared with another video on the same chapter, “The Wise Crow”. In the last chapter the validator assumed that about 80% of materials have good speed.

The results of expert validation in program aspect are: 1) The validator commented that she was amazed by the program and ticked the checklist on “the program is very easy to operate”. 2) The validator ticked on “the program display is attractive” and gave no comment or suggestion. 3) The clarity of text in the courseware. The validator ticked on “excellent. 4) The link validity is good. 5) The validity of instruction in the courseware is excellent.

The results of validation on the workbook are as follows: 1) It is suggested to put an acknowledgement or preface related to the book contents and a table of contents to make the workbook easier to be accessed. The validator ticked on “good” in the checklist. 2) The expert suggested adding some illustration related to the material to be discussed. 3) The expert suggested the researcher add some exercises related to the structure of the text. 4) The expert stated that the exercise was varied but it needed more variation to be added in order to make the exercises more attractive. 5) About 80% of the language structures and vocabulary were accurate. The rest were misspelling and grammar mistake. 6) The layout was about 75% attractive, the rest still needs to be revised because the display of exercises looked similar. Some exercises also need to be rearranged. 7) The texts in the workbook were clear and readable.

From the teacher validation, the results in material aspect are: 1) All materials were suitable to the standard and basic competence. The validator comment was “already good”. 2) All materials already suit the students’ ability. The comment was that the materials are already appropriate, but the researcher needs to be more accurate in deciding. 3) The materials were very attractive, she commented “already good”. 4) About 80% of the language structures and vocabularies used in the material were valid. She suggested the researcher to be more careful in the use of language structure. 5) All the video and recording were very clear. 6) The speed of speech was appropriate.

In the program aspect, the results are: 1) The simplicity in operating the program. 2) The courseware attractiveness which included the impression of the layout. 3) The clarity of text in the courseware which deals with the selection of font size and type. In those three points, the teacher ticked the checklist on “excellent” and gave the same comment, “already good”. 4) The links were accessible, but a few things need to be repaired. 5) The instructions do not need any changes. In addition, the validator gave a comment that the program is good in general.
The results in the workbook aspect are: 1) The workbook suitability to the students’ needs. 2) The compatibility of the workbook to the courseware. 3) The suitability of exercises in the workbook to the students’ ability. 4) The attractiveness of exercises in the workbook. The teacher marked on excellent and commented “already good” in those four points. 5) The structure and vocabulary was accurate. 6&7) The layout was very interesting and the texts were very clear.

Revision

Based on the expert validation, the researcher did some revisions. First, the researcher removed a video in Chapter 3 to make the chapter balance to others. Second, the researcher made the “The First Well” video shorter by editing and cut some unnecessary parts of the video. Third, video 2.1 was changed into the new one with the same topic and better quality. Fourth, the researcher changed and added more variation of exercises. The last, preface and more illustrations were added to the workbook.
According to the teacher validation, the researcher only revised the use of language structure in the material.

**Try-out**

In this stage the researcher conducted the try-out outside the class by involving 10 students from class 8D chosen randomly. In the try-out process, the students chose one chapter to be studied. Next, the researcher gave the subjects 20-30 minutes to operate the courseware and answer the exercises in the workbook. After that, the researcher distributed a questionnaire to the students to know their points of view related to the courseware that was being tried out.

The results of the try-out are: 1) 2 out of 10 students stated that it was very fun to use the courseware in learning, 7 students said it was fun and 1 student commented it was not so fun. 2) From 10 students, 2 students commented the material and exercise in the courseware was very helpful in developing their listening skill, while 8 others said it was helpful. 3) Six of 10 students commented that the videos were difficult but understandable. Two students said it was not really difficult and two others said the video was not difficult at all. 4) Two students said that the questions were not difficult at all; one student said they were not difficult enough, and the rest said the questions were difficult but still could be answered. 5) Three students commented the videos were very attractive, five students stated the video was attractive, and 2 other said the videos were not attractive enough. 6) Three students really liked, five students liked, and two students did not really like the layout. 7) One student stated that the workbook layout was very attractive; six students said it was attractive, and three students considered it was not really attractive. 8) Related to the question on what they like most from the courseware, the students’ answers varied. Six students stated that they liked Chapter 4 in the courseware which contains music videos. The rest liked the pictures, courseware program and all videos.

**Final Product**

After finishing the development process, the final product was completed. The interactive courseware for listening was revised several times and also tried-out for its betterment. After the final revision, the final product was presented in a form of courseware to be used in computer and a workbook contains exercises. Those items were packed into a CD-ROM to make it easier in distribution.

**Discussions**

The findings show that the students were interested in using listening courseware. The use of computer in learning activity attracted the students to be more focused in the learning
material that lead to the successful learning itself. Schreck & Schreck (1991:472, in Takefuta & Takefuta, 1999: 60) stated that computer is a new source to promote, enhance, and facilitate learning that has high potential of more effective, more relevant, more motivating, and more innovative learning process. In this case, the use of .swf (flash movie format) as the medium helped the researcher to deliver listening materials in an interesting way. It was because flash movie could be created in wide range of layout to present any educational materials such as video, audio, picture, or animation. It is supported by Warschauer (1996:3-20), who stated that the advances in computer technology provide the opportunity to develop program which could help integrate the various aspects of the language learning process. By using computer as the medium in teaching and learning process, the basic and classical problem in teaching and learning process that is students’ boredom, hopefully can be overcome.

The video as listening material used in the courseware for listening also has significant role in attracting students’ attention. The result of product try-out indicated that most of students chose the videos especially the music videos as their favorite part in the
whole product. The video in the courseware can be a motivating device since action in video
is alive so learners do not get bored (Cahyono, 1997:129). In line with that, McKinnon
(2011) agrees that video clips can represent settings, actions, emotions and gestures that can
provide important visual stimulus for language practices and learning. As long as the
selection of video used in teaching and learning process is appropriate, the benefits will come
along. The selection of video to be included in the product was not so easy; besides the
limited availability of educational videos, there are also many videos in the internet that may
be harmful for the students. The researcher selected the materials that were related to the
topics in the curriculum and make sure they were safe for the students. In addition, pictures as
illustrations also take part in gaining students’ attention as the expert suggested in validation
stage, and the students commented in the try-out questionnaire that pictures in the courseware
and workbook were the favorite parts from the whole product.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

As mentioned in the previous section, the purpose of this research was to develop a
supplementary material in the form of courseware as learning medium to enhance the
students’ listening skill. Furthermore, this study targets the students of 8th grade of junior
high school. In developing the material in the courseware the researcher referred to the
Standard of Content and Basic Competence for second semester of eight graders of junior
high school in the 2006 Curriculum.

In the selection of materials, the researcher used the result of notes on document study
as the basis in order to make them relevant to the curriculum. While the selection of types of
materials used in the courseware was based on the result of students’ need analysis. The
students’ preference in the types of material such as audio, video, and song, were also taken
into account in the courseware development. The product which was in the form of
courseware and workbook were then validated by an expert and a teacher. From the result of
validation, some materials were edited based on the suggestions of expert and teacher. After
that, the product was considered appropriate and relevant to the curriculum for the students of
8th grade in junior high school.

The final product of this study is a listening courseware completed with a workbook
for exercises, answer key, and tape script. The courseware consists of four chapters with a
total of eight videos and one audio recording as the main listening materials. In each chapter
in the listening courseware, there are several instructions to guide the user (students) in using
the courseware and doing the tasks. The workbook also consists of four chapters and in each
chapter there are several tasks related to the material in the listening courseware. Answer key
and transcript of material are provided separately to help the users check their answers in the workbook.

The provision of workbook and video completed with clear instructions and answer key makes it possible for the use of the courseware as self-study material. This may increase the students’ exposure to listening material and fulfill their need for listening activities.

Suggestions

It is suggested that English teachers distribute this listening courseware to the students and explain how the courseware should be used by the students. They may also use it in the class for listening activities.

Further researchers are suggested to develop a courseware that has more attractive layout, more features, and more interactivity. The contents, in terms of the texts used and the exercises should also be modified. In addition, further researchers may also make the courseware available in the internet for downloading.
REFERENCES