

Developing Easy Listening Audio (ELA) as an Alternative Medium to Enhance the Eight Grade Students' Listening Learning Outcomes

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Abstract

The present study has the intention to create, validate, evaluate the effectiveness, and gain responses toward the developed product of Easy listening audio to enhance the eight-grade students' listening learning outcomes in Blitar. It was achieved by adapting Sugiyono's frameworks of developing the product into seven phases which covered; 1) problems identification and, solution identification, 2) designing and developing the product, 3) validating and revising the product, 4) conducting product trials, 5) collecting feedback from teachers and students, 6) evaluating and revising the product, and 7) finalizing it for publication. The research reported that the Easy Listening Audio comprised audio listening materials such as: describing people, things, and animals, and three guidebooks; for teachers, students, and the public. The validation process confirmed that the developed product was highly valid, with material validators rating it at 95% and media validators at 89%. The effectiveness of the product was also evident from the t-test results, which showed a value of less than 0.005, indicating a significant improvement in learning outcomes. Additionally, users responded positively to the product, with 91.6% of students rating it as "Very good" and 78.5% of teachers rating it as "Good." Therefore, it is recommended that teachers consider using the developed Easy Listening Audio as an alternative medium, particularly for teaching listening descriptive text in junior high schools

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1. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English language instruction is a crucial component of the educational system, as it is considered a tool for communication and success in various fields, including academics, employment, and social interactions. English as a foreign language was introduced and taught to students starting from elementary school until university (Maduwu, 2016). In addition, 4 integrated skills are usually taught in EFL settings like in Indonesia such as writing, speaking, reading, and listening (Wulandari & Fadhilawati, 2019). Listening is the foundation of language learning, and its importance cannot be overstated, without proper listening skills, students may struggle to develop speaking and writing abilities, hindering their language acquisition process (Rintaningrum, 2017). In this case, in a communicative classroom, students must be equipped with effective listening skills to communicate effectively. Therefore, it could be said that by mastering listening skills, students can better understand and respond to spoken language, leading to more successful language acquisition and fluency in learning English.

In line with this statement, Rost, (2011) stated that One crucial aspect of processing spoken language is listening. For those who are studying English as a foreign language mastering listening skills is essential as it provides input, which is necessary for learning. Without understanding the inputs, learning becomes challenging. Moreover, Munfangati, (2014) said that good listening comprehension allows students to follow talks and lectures in English more easily. Moreover, Research has shown that active listeners tend to be more successful than passive listeners. Active listeners are individuals who engage fully in the listening process by paying attention, processing information, and responding appropriately. They are more effective at utilizing the information they receive, which can lead to greater success in their studies, careers, and businesses. Additionally, active listening skills are associated with better personal relationships, as active listeners are more likely to understand and respond empathetically to the needs and concerns of others. By actively listening, individuals can gain a deeper understanding of the world around them, leading to increased success and fulfillment in all areas of their lives. As such, cultivating active listening skills can be an invaluable asset for personal and professional growth. Active listeners tend to be more successful than passive listeners (Munfangati, 2014)

Despite the importance of listening, many Indonesian students struggle with English language learning, particularly in listening comprehension listening (Ferdiat et al., 2021; Susini & Ndruru, 2021). Indonesian students find it challenging to comprehend spoken English due to various factors, including the lack of exposure to the language, limited access to English-language media, and insufficient teaching materials. (Mukminatun, 2009) argued that listening is a complex cognitive process that is difficult to describe or put into words., unlike speaking or writing,

listening is not something that can be easily observed or measured, as it takes place primarily in the mind of the listener. Besides, enumerates various factors contributing to this difficulty of mastering listening including the language's status, one's knowledge of it, familiarity with the language, insufficient practice, the pace of the speaker, the speaker's accent or enunciation, listening strategies, anxiety, the need for translation, the type of test, a lack of concentration, and inadequate facilities (Rintaningrum, 2017). Furthermore, Al-Alwan et al., (2013) added that the lowest ability in listening skills was associated with the students' limited ability to solve problems, plan and assess, maintain focused attention, and their existing knowledge.

The researchers conducted a preliminary study by interviewing teachers and students and analyzing their test scores in three junior high schools in Blitar Regencies. The findings revealed that students faced difficulties in listening, particularly when it came to descriptive text material. The students' test scores in listening comprehension for that topics were below the school's minimum criterion mastery of 75.00, as evidenced by the mean scores of 50.80 in SMPN 1 Selopuro, 46.70 in SMPN 1 Nglegok, and 53.00 in SMPN 2 Nglegok. These scores indicated that the students struggled to comprehend spoken English in the form of listening. The low- test scores were attributed to several factors, including the perceived difficulty of the English language, traditional teaching methods, a lack of appropriate teaching materials, limited time for learning, students' anxiety, lack of vocabulary, and limited practice. In response to these challenges, the researchers sought to develop English listening materials tailored to students' needs.

Effective teaching requires teachers to prepare appropriate media and materials that cater to the needs of their students by applying technologies (Rachmawati et al., 2020). By doing so, teachers can ensure that their students learn and comprehend the content of the language well. Today's technology could be a good support to develop listening skills and to keep pace with the rapidly evolving technological landscape (Shian & Md. Yunus, 2016). Further, to make the classroom teaching and learning experience come alive, interesting, and fun, teachers must be creative in their choice or development of media (Ratminingsih, 2016). An example of media that could be prepared in the listening instruction is audio. Audio is a type of media that provides information that can only be heard. Examples of audio media include the radio, tape recorder, language laboratory, MP3 player, and more (Ima, 2017). The use of audio media can provide an enjoyable and relaxing learning environment for students. Moreover, it allows for the incorporation of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation to help students develop their four language abilities. In addition, audio resources can be used by teachers to provide an excellent model of pronunciation and intonation of the targeted language. This is particularly important for English language learners as it helps them develop their listening and speaking skills (Ratminingsih, 2016).

Several audio technologies can be used to create listening material, such as narrator voice, text to speech, and native speaker. The narrator's voice has many advantages including it can be used by using Handphone and it has many features such as voice selection, gender selection of voice actors, speed, and voice clarity. Text-to-speech is also not much different from narrator voice, but can only be one voice actor. While the native is only one person and is recorded and it will be more difficult to set it up. So, the researcher uses the narrator's voice as a medium to make audio listening. In this research, the researchers wanted to use the narrator's voice for developing audio-listening materials.

Moreover, some experts had performed research on developing materials for teaching listening 1) Syafi'i, (2016) developed English Listening materials which consisted of six units for senior high school students especially tenth grade. The materials that were developed covered students' worksheets, and guidebooks for headteachers' CDs. Furthermore, the developed material was organized based on the procedures; stating the objective of learning, facilitating activities for brainstorming, giving pre-listening task activities, giving whilst-listening activities, providing post-listening activities, and adding expansion activities, 2) Alimin, (2019) reported that the developed listening materials for class X which covered guide book for teacher, the listening worksheets for students, and the compiled CD of listening materials were appropriate with the needs of the students and able to motivate them in learning to listen, and 3) Zaim et al., (2020) utilized adobe animate cc 2019 to develop authentic listening materials required by senior high school students, and it had been validated to experts and resulted in valid listening materials for English instruction in SMA Pembangunan Padang.

To meet the eight grade students' needs of three schools in Blitar, particularly for enhancing their listening outcomes under the topic of descriptive text, and with limited research on this topic, the researchers were inspired to develop a product that would enhance students' learning experience through the use of audio. The research project is titled "Developing Easy Listening Audio of Descriptive Text by Using Narrator Voice for Eight-Grade Students in Blitar". It was undertaken to create, validate, and evaluate the effectiveness of the developed materials, as well as gather feedback from 20 students and 6 teachers in Blitar toward the use of the product trial. This study is unique in that it focuses on creating listening materials for eighth graders using narrator voices. The researchers aimed to create an engaging and effective learning experience for students. Through rigorous validation and evaluation, the researchers ensured that the materials were of high quality and met the educational needs of the students in Blitar.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research design used in this study was Research and Development, with a focus on developing audio listening materials of descriptive text for eight grade students. To ensure a thorough and comprehensive development process, the researchers adopted the model proposed by Sugiyono, (2016) which comprised seven stages as elaborated as follows: The first stage involved the Analysis of Potential Problem and Solution, where the researchers identified the needs of the students and potential issues related to the current teaching and learning process. The second stage involved Product Design and Development, where the researchers created the initial prototype of the audio listening materials. The third stage was Product Validation and Revision, where the researchers conducted validation tests to ensure the materials were of high quality and met the educational needs of the students. The fourth stage was the Product Trial, where the materials were tested in an actual classroom setting to gather feedback from students and teachers. The fifth stage was distributing a questionnaire where feedback from students and teachers was collected to evaluate the effectiveness of the materials. The sixth stage was Evaluation and Revision, where the researchers reviewed the feedback and made necessary revisions to improve the materials. The final stage was the creation of the Final Product and Publication, where the researchers published the final version of the audio listening materials for use by other educators in the field. Furthermore, the seven stages of product development could be elaborated on in detail as follows:

Problem Identification and Solution formulation

The pursuit of excellence in education is a crucial aspect of any society's development, and the researchers' comprehensive study on the teaching and learning of listening in junior high schools is a testament to this fact. Their study's scope was vast and included an in-depth analysis of the 2013-revised curriculum and English syllabus for eighth-grade students, as well as a field study at three different junior high schools in Blitar. By delving into the strengths and weaknesses of these schools' English instruction, the researchers identified potential solutions that could cater to the needs of both the teachers and students. This policy study is a remarkable effort to improve the listening learning outcomes of eighth grade in Blitar and an invaluable contribution towards the betterment of education standards.

Designing and Developing Product

In their quest to improve the quality of English instruction in Blitar especially listening, the researchers went above and beyond by not only identifying what are the real problems faced by the schools but also creating a tailored solution to address them. The result was a specially designed product, a hypothetical model of "Easy Listening Audio (ELA) to boost the eight grade

students' listening learning outcomes under the topic of Descriptive Text," catering to the specific needs of both students and teachers. The researchers exercised due diligence by obtaining necessary permissions and consulting with advisors to ensure the product was an appropriate and effective ways to handle the issues in the fields.

Validating and Revising the Product

For ensuring product quality and efficacy, the researchers conducted validation of the product with experts in the field discussed. In this case, the material experts consisted of 2 lecturers from private Universities in Blitar, and an English teacher from SMPN 1 Selopuro. Meanwhile, the media experts included two lecturers from private universities in Blitar and a teacher from MTs Hidayatul Ulum. The validation process for material covered aspects such as the suitability of materials with core competencies and base competencies, theory, language usage, and benefits. The process took place from July 6th to July 15th, 2020, and involved direct and online questionnaires. As for media validation, the criteria included the use of media, appearance of the guidebook, benefits of the media, and packaging. The process was conducted from July 15th to July 20th, 2020, using the same direct and online questionnaire methods. The result of questionnaire would be consulted to the interpretation categories of Sugiyono, (2016) as cited in Fitriani & Fadhilawati, (2022) as follows; if the score ranks between 81-100 (Very Valid), 61-80 (Valid), 41-60 (Valid Enough), and 21-40 (Not Valid)

Conducting Product Trial

After validating the product and the product was announced as valid by validators the researchers conducted a tryout of the product. In this case, the researchers taught listening by using the developed product. The subject of this phase is 20 students from 3 schools that had a problem regarding listening learning outcomes. The steps in the product trial covered 3 pivotal phases; pre- test, treatments, and post-test.

Getting the responses toward the developed product.

In the steps the researchers gained responses from teachers and students toward the use of the developed product by distributing the questionnaire, it was intended to know what they felt and what their response was after they were using the product and learning to listen by using the developed product.

Evaluating and Revising

After conducting a product trial and gaining responses from the users in this case, teachers and students, the researchers tried to analyze the results of the questionnaire and paid attention to the things that needed improvements.

Finalizing and publishing the Product

The last step of this study is the final product and publication, in this phase, the researcher would do the last revision for the product to be ready to be used after it was finished, the researcher would make the product for only a small scale, especially for schools which became the setting area of this study.

3. RESULTS

In this part the researchers present the results of the study for answering the formulated problems the first point, the researchers would discuss four results:

1) The Result of the Model of the Developed Easy Listening Audio for Teaching and Learning Listening of Descriptive Text in Junior High School, 2) The Results of Product Validation from Experts, 3) The Results of Product Trial, and 4) The Result of Users' Responses toward the Developed Product as elaborated as follows:

3.1 The result of the Model of the Developed Easy Listening Audio (ELA) for Eight Grade Students

Easy Listening Audio (ELA) for teaching and learning listening of descriptive text has resulted in a comprehensive and impactful learning tool. This product, specifically designed for eighth-grade students, is titled "Easy Listening Audio: A Supplementary Listening Materials for Learning Descriptive Text" and consists of audio media and three guidebooks. The developed English listening materials were available in MP3 format on a Flash disk and accompanied by three guidebooks for teachers, students, and the public. The teacher's guidebook provides a detailed lesson plan, including information on core competencies, base competencies, an introduction to descriptive text, and listening materials in parts one, two, and three. Additionally, the guidebook includes exercises, a final test, and references, among other valuable resources. Similarly, the students' book offers a) preface, b) a Table of content, C) core competence d) basic competence, and a lesson plan, along with an introduction to descriptive text, instruction, and paper sheets for listening materials in parts one, two, and three, exercises, a final test, and references. The public's book, on the other hand, offers all the same features but is tailored to the public.

The Easy Listening Audio model is a well-thought-out product that consists of three parts of listening materials. Part I covers describing people and includes nine tasks that vary in difficulty levels. Tasks 1, 2, and 3 are considered low-level, while tasks 4, 5, and 6 are at a medium level. Tasks 7, 8, and 9 are advanced-level tasks, making it a comprehensive tool to improve

listening skills. Furthermore, it includes exercises with 100 questions to enhance comprehension and retention. In addition, Part II of the product covers describing animals and follows the same structure as Part I. It has nine tasks, with tasks 1, 2, and 3 being low level, tasks 4, 5, and 6 being medium level, and tasks 7, 8, and 9 being advanced level. The exercises that come with it also have 100 questions to test the listener's understanding and to provide opportunities to reinforce their learning.

Furthermore, Part III focuses on describing things and consists of nine tasks that vary in difficulty levels, just like the previous parts. Tasks 1, 2, and 3 are low level, tasks 4, 5, and 6 are medium level, and tasks 7, 8, and 9 are advanced level tasks. The exercises that come with this section have 100 questions to evaluate comprehension and reinforce learning. Finally, the model concludes with 25 questions that provide a final test to assess the effectiveness of the product. The comprehensive nature of the product and its ability to cater to listeners of different levels makes it an excellent tool for improving listening skills. The model of the developed product is as follows;

3.2 The Results of Product Validation from Experts

In developing the Easy Listening Audio for enhancing the students' learning outcomes in mastering descriptive text, the researcher took a rigorous approach to ensure the validity and appropriateness of the media and materials. The product was validated by three material experts and three media experts, each with expertise in their respective fields. The material experts included Mr. AF, Mrs. HPS, and Mr. P. Meanwhile, the media experts were Mrs. ZW, Mrs. YP, and Mrs. FOL. The material validation criteria covered aspects such as suitability with core and base competency, theory, use of language, and benefits. The media validation criteria included aspects such as media use, shape and appearance of the guidebook, benefits, and packaging.

The validation process took place over a period of several days, from July 6th to July 20th, 2020. The researcher distributed questionnaires directly and online to the experts and calculated the results based on their feedback. The media experts' results showed that the material was valid, as did the material experts' results for the media validation. Based on the experts' comments and suggestions, the researcher made revisions to the product. The revisions included improving the cover of the books, as the pictures looked too dark and crowded. The audio media was also revised to improve the clarity of the voice, making it easier for students to understand. Finally, the picture source was simplified to make it more accessible to students. Overall, the material and questions were found to be valid by the experts, with an average validation score presented in Table 1 as follows:

Table1: The Result of experts' validation

Validator	Percentage	Average	Criteria
Material experts	95%	92%	Very valid
Media experts	89%		

Regarding the result presented in Table 1, it can be inferred that the product was very valid to be utilized in English instruction, especially for teaching listening.

3.3 The result of the Product Trial

To assess the effectiveness of Easy Listening Audio as a medium to enhance eighth-grade students' listening learning outcomes, the next phase that must be done was to conduct a product trial. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the product trial was carried out on a small scale with 20 eighth-grade junior high school students from 3 random schools involved in this study. The product trial consisted of 3 important phases, first was a pre-test, it was done on August 12th, 2020, second was treatments that were done on August 13th-14th, 2020, and the last was a post-test, that was done on August 15th, 2020 from 02.00-04.30. After the researchers implemented the product for teaching and learning descriptive text, the researcher did a post-test that was analyzed by using apps 22 as described as follows:

Table 2: Mean Analysis

	Score	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Listening learning	Pre-test	20	26.5000	7.00000	1.56525
	Post-test	20	83.4000	9.27021	2.07288

Table 3 T-test Analysis

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Listening learning	Equal variances assumed	.644	.427	-21.906	38	.000	-56.90000	2.59747	-62.15830	-51.64170
	Equal variances not assumed			-21.906	35.351	.000	-56.90000	2.59747	-62.17127	-51.62873

According to the results presented in the table, it was found that the use of Easy Listening Audio materials had a significant positive impact on the listening skills of eighth-grade students when learning descriptive text. The mean pre-test score of 26.5 improved substantially to a mean post-test score of 83.4, indicating a marked improvement in listening achievement after the treatment. The t-test analysis showed a Sig. (2-tailed) value of .000, which is less than the threshold value of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H0) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H1). This indicates that the use of Easy Listening Audio was effective in enhancing the students' listening learning outcomes. These findings have important implications for educators and practitioners seeking to enhance listening skills, as the use of Easy Listening Audio materials can be a viable and effective tool in achieving this goal.

3.4 The Results of Users' Responses Toward the Developed Product

After the product trials, the researchers gave questionnaires to the teachers and students to know their responses toward the product. The following is the result of the teachers' and students' responses toward the developed product as summarized in Table 4 as follows:

Table 4: The Summary of Users' Responses Toward the Developed Product

Respondents	Percentage	Average	
Teachers	78.5% (Positive)		
Students	91.6% (Very Positive)	85.05%	(Very Positive)

Based on the data presented in Table 4, it was found that the use of "Easy Listening Audio" achieved positive responses from both teachers and students. The teachers' responses had a total score of 944, with a mean percentage of 78.5%. and it involved in the range of 61 to 80% (Positive), that result, indicates that the teachers' responded positively to the use of the product. Additionally, the students' responses showed a total score of 1100, with a mean percentage of 91.6%, it includes in the range of 81% to 100% (very positive), that results indicate that the students found the usage of "Easy Listening Audio" to be excellent for learning listening of descriptive text in Junior High School.

4. DISCUSSION

Easy listening Audio was effective in enhancing the students' learning outcomes might cause by some factors such as the clarity of the narrator's voice, the guidebooks that help the students to understand better the materials as well instruction, and also the various exercises provided by the researchers might become exposure for the students to learn more and more the

materials than before. As we discussed in the introduction most Indonesian students struggle with listening comprehension because of the lack of exposure to the language, limited access to English-language media, and insufficient teaching materials (Mukminatun, 2009). Therefore, the researchers tried to design a model that facilitated the students with all those needed. Moreover, insufficient practice, the pace of the speaker, the speaker's accent or enunciation, listening strategies, anxiety, the need for translation, the type of test, a lack of concentration, and inadequate facilities might become factors that made the students difficult to learn listening (Rintaningrum, 2017). That's the way the model of easy listening audio could be one alternative solution in teaching descriptive text for students because various test types will be found by the students, there is a lot of practice in every part of materials that will provide students more experience to hear the voices of native speakers, to push them to be concentrated to the variety of the test starting from low, medium until the up level, because without having enough practice it will difficult for them to solve the problem and train their focus span to the material which has language that is very different with their mother tongue. As Al-Alwan et al., (2013) said that the lowest of ability in listening skills were associated with the students' limited ability to solve problems, plan and assess, maintain focused attention, and their existing knowledge.

Moreover, the developed product of ELA also has been validated and tried out before it is used in the real field, this has become the strength of the product. Because it already stated that it is appropriate and valid as an alternative source for the teacher to teach descriptive text to eighth-grade students. So, the users will not doubt using it in the future. In addition, the positive responses from both the students and the teachers, along with the expert validation results, support the use of this material in enhancing students' listening to descriptive text. The results of the study are in line with Alimin, (2019) who reported that the developed listening materials for class X which covered a guiding book for the teacher, the listening worksheets for students, and the compiled CD of listening materials were appropriate with the needs of the students and able to motivate them in learning to listen. Talking about the motivation here, the product might become a magnet for students to study because it is completed with guidebooks, many exercises, many test types, pictures, a QR code, and also an answer key. If they study at home and do not know the answer, they may take a look at the key answer provided.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the development of Easy Listening Audio (ELA) for eight grade students in Blitar has proven to be an effective tool to enhance students' learning outcomes of listening. The ELA has provided an alternative approach to learning that is engaging, interactive, and fun,

making it easier for students to comprehend and remember the descriptive texts they are studying. The research findings indicated that the ELA has improved the learning outcomes of students in comprehending spoken language as well as their motivation to learn. The feedback from teachers and students has been overwhelmingly positive, with most participants expressing their preference for using the ELA as a learning tool. It is worth noting that the developed product consists of not only the Easy Listening Audio (ELA) materials but also guidebooks to provide comprehensive instructions and tips on how to use the ELA effectively to support learning.

Moreover, the developed product underwent rigorous validation procedures and received positive feedback from the validators, indicating its validity as a learning tool. The product has also been tested and proven effective in enhancing students' learning experiences, as evidenced by the positive responses from both teachers and students who have used the ELA in their classrooms. Overall, the developed product, which includes the ELA and guidebooks, has the potential to revolutionize the way descriptive text is taught in junior high schools in Blitar, and potentially beyond. Its effectiveness and positive feedback from users suggest that it can enhance students' learning experiences, improve their listening and comprehension skills, and boost their motivation to learn.

6. SUGGESTION .

The development of the ELA is a promising innovation in the field of English Teaching and learning especially listening., as it addresses the challenges of listening instruction of descriptive text more engagingly and effectively. It is recommended that further research be conducted to explore the potential of ELA in other levels of education, as well as to identify ways to improve its implementation and effectiveness.

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