

Analysis of English Listening Materials and the Compatibility to Curriculum

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Abstract

This study aims to describe English listening materials taught by teachers in EFL class and the compatibility between available English listening materials teachers use and curriculum. It is due to teaching listening requires the use of media such as video, compact disk, and computer. The use of those media demands teachers' competence in operating them. This study uses descriptive qualitative method. The subject of the research is thirteen English teachers. Research data was collected by using documentation and interview. The data was analyzed by using qualitative procedure which includes transcription, coding, categorizing, and concluding. The findings showed that English listening materials in EFL classroom are categorized into three. They are media, content, and exercise. English listening materials are in line to English curriculum. Teachers use materials and methods that are suitable to learning outcome of English listening skills.

Keywords

Compatibility, Listening Skill, Teaching Materials

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching English listening skills in class is often neglected by teachers compared to other language skills. The teaching materials used to teach listening skills are considered expensive and complicated. Listening skills teaching materials in the form of cassettes, CDs and videos sold in bookstores are very expensive while teachers also experience difficulties in creating or developing their own teaching materials. Riswanto, et al., (2022) stated that there is no audio for students to listen to in the listening resources and obtaining audio for listening product is tough. Moreover Alrawashdeh & Al-zayed (2017) stated that problems in teaching English listening skills are teachers' proficiency and availability of resources. It shows that English listening skill teaching got problems on teaching materials preparation.

So far, research issues about teaching materials of English listening skills are testing the effectiveness of materials and media. The first is the effect of using technology on learning English listening skills (Ampa, 2015; Demir & Tavit, 2021). The second is the effectiveness of English listening skills learning materials (Tekin & Parmaksiz, 2016; Saidu, 2017). The suitability of the teaching materials used by teachers is not evaluated optimally. In fact, the suitability of teaching materials to the curriculum has an impact on measuring learning targets and developing teacher professionalism (Moore et al., 2021).

This research aims to complement the shortcomings of previous research which tends to focus on testing the effectiveness of media and materials. This research describes the English listening skills teaching materials used by teachers and the suitability of these teaching materials to the curriculum. In line with that, there are two questions that will be answered in this research: (1) What English listening materials are taught by teachers in EFL classroom? and What is the compatibility between available English listening materials and curriculum? The answer to this research question provides an understanding of the conditions for learning English listening skills in schools which can be used as a policy in teacher professionalism development activities and curriculum design.

This research is based on an argument that learning materials that are not in accordance with curriculum achievements can affect student grades and students' inability to compete in the world of work. A mismatch between teaching materials and curriculum achievements can also have an impact on teachers' indifferent attitude in developing their teaching skills. The attitude of teachers who are not enthusiastic about creating an effective and efficient listening learning atmosphere adds to teachers' laziness in teaching this skill and tends to avoid teaching English listening skills. Thus, the listening learning target will be difficult to achieve optimally.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Listening plays important role in communication in people's daily lives because listening is the medium through which people gain a large proportion of their education, information and understanding of the world and human affair, ideals, and sense of value. The total time spent on communication, listening takes up 40-50% (Yildirim and Yildirim, 2016).

The problems of listening skill teaching and learning relate to difficulties and barriers. Rajab & Nimehchisalem (2016) categorized listening problems into process problem, input problem, listener problem, task problem, affect problem, and context problem. Moreover, Tyagi (2013) finds out listening barriers: physiological barriers, physical barriers, attitudinal barriers, wrong assumption, cultural barriers, gender barriers, lack of training, and bad listening habit.

Hamouda (2013) reported that factors causing students listening comprehension problems are categorized into different sources including problems related to the listening text, listening problems related to tasks and activities, listening problems related to the listener and teacher's methodology. Moreover, Walker (2014) mentions the difficulties in learning listening skill. They are: (1) *Pronunciation*: such as the stress falls, weak forms and strong forms of words and intonation; (2) *Vocabulary and grammar*: influence comprehension of a spoken passage is the overlap between the listener's vocabulary knowledge and the vocabulary of the passage); and (3) *Speed*: Unlike reading, listening requires instantaneous processing with little or no option to access the spoken input again. Listeners must process the text at a speed determined by speakers, which is generally quite fast. The listeners can't normally control the speed at which they must process the delivered discourse.

Listening teaching practice covers types of listening exercise, strategy and methods of listening teaching. Yavuz et al., (2015) divided listening exercise into: (1) listening exercise at word level, (2) listening exercise at sentence level, and (3) listening exercise at meaning level. Asemota (2015) wrote some listening teaching methods. They are direct method, integrated approach, incidental approach, elected method, and dialogue.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative research. This research was administered to analyze the implementation of English listening teaching in term of the exploration of English listening teaching materials and the compatibility to English curriculum. Subject of the research was English teachers of Islamic junior high schools and senior high schools in West Sulawesi. The number of subjects is 8 English teachers of Islamic junior high schools and 5 English teachers of Islamic senior high schools. The total number of subject is 13 teachers. Data was collected by interview and documentation. The documents were English listening teaching materials and English curriculum. The data from documentation and interview was analyzed by qualitative procedures. The procedures include data transcription and coding. Coding is the process of categorically marking of referencing units of text (e.g., words, sentences, paragraph, and quotations) with codes and labels as a way to indicate patterns and meaning (Gay et al., 2006).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. English Listening Materials in EFL Classroom

English listening materials in EFL classroom are categorized into three. They are media, content, and exercise. Media is material used to present learning content. Content is learning themes and topics. Then, exercise is learning activity relates to content.

The interview and observation data relate to English listening materials are applied in the table below:

Table 1. The materials relate to media

Junior high school teachers	Senior high school teachers
“Video for the seventh grade”	“I usually play audio”
“The video is taken from YouTube”	“I just took a short video from YouTube so I immediately downloaded it in full”
“audio purchased by the school. The audio is in one package with the book”	“songs are also in the package book”

- a. The materials relate to media covers video, audio compact disk, and textbook.

Video

Video is a technology for capturing or recording, processing, transmitting and rearranging moving images. Usually use celluloid film, signal and electronic or digital media. Video itself is closely related to motion and sound. As in analog video and digital video.

Videos for teaching listening skill are downloaded from YouTube. Teachers adjust the video content based on the learning objectives and student characteristics. For junior high school students, teachers usually use video in form cartoon.

Some researchers conducted research to examine the effectiveness of YouTube video as learning materials for English listening skills. The use of video in teaching English listening skills is considered effective to improve students' English listening skills (Rorimpandey, 2019; Qomariyah, Permana, & Hidayatullah, 2021). Hoque & Siddiqua (2020) found that students and teachers have positive attitude toward the use of YouTube videos as a means of developing listening comprehension. Ayu (2016) explains that YouTube enables teachers to create activity attempting an improvement on students' listening ability as well as helping them identifying vocabulary, contraction, and speed. YouTube provides both audio and visual to the students which gave students an opportunity to figure out the speech or words they heard while learning the subject content as well as to improve their language ability.

b. Audio compact disc and textbook

Audio compact disc is material that teachers use in teaching English listening skills before YouTube comes with many videos. Audio compact disc replaces cassette as material to prepare English listening materials. However, Audio compact disc is still popular until now. It is not only used for preparing teaching and learning materials but also preparing English listening test. Audio compact disc is usually completed by textbook.

The use of audio compact disc and textbook is easier than YouTube video because CD and textbook are ready to use. It is different from YouTube video, teachers must select video that is suitable with English curriculum material and write learning activity based on the video. Richard (2001) mentions advantages and disadvantages of textbook as teaching materials. The advantages of textbook are: (1) They provide structure and a syllabus for a program, (2) they help standardize instruction, (3) they maintain quality, (4) they provide a variety of learning resources, (5) they are efficient, (6) they can provide effective language models and input, (7) they can train teachers, and (8) they are visually appealing. While the disadvantages of textbooks are: (1) They may contain inauthentic language, (2) they may distort content, (3) they may not reflect students' needs, (4) they can deskill teachers, and (5) they are expensive.

The use of CD and textbook is considered effective to improve students' listening skills (Dewi: 2013; Kartal & Simsek: 2017). CD and textbook also help inexperienced and untrained teachers in teaching English listening skills. Textbook supports teachers with less experience in teaching because textbook provides a syllabus, supporting materials, such as teacher's guide, CD, worksheet, and videos and gives a set of visuals, activities, readings, and other materials which save the teachers time in finding or developing teaching materials (Kodriyah, Dayu, & Hakim; 2018).

Based on data in teachers' lesson plan or syllabus, the contents of English listening materials are divided into: First, The contents of English listening material for junior high school levels are greeting, thanks, apologies, name of day, month, time in days, number, date, and year, animals, things, ask for attention, checking understanding, praising, and ask for permission, agreement, congratulation, and announcement. Second, the contents of English listening material for senior high school level are congratulation, praise, announcement, offer, suggestion, giving opinion, cause and effect, conditional, tourist place, historical event, and legend.

Those topics and themes are presented in form of monologue, dialogue, and song. The following is interview data relates to material content.

Table 2. The materials relate to content

Junior high school teachers	Senior high school teachers
"usually I give them a song for listening"	"I once gave an example of a family going to the beach"

“Listen to text examples”	“The material I have presented also depicts the comedian character Sule”
“Most often listening uses songs or conversations”	“I gave a song”
“stories like fairy tales”	

Relating to learning activity for listening practice, monologue, dialogue, and song are presented in form of repetition, cloze test, and multiple-choice. The following is interview data relates to exercise for listening skills.

Table 3. The materials relate to exercise

Junior high school teachers	Senior high school teachers
“Students are told to watch the video first and then be taught how to pronounce it”	“we present it in text form and then there are several vocabulary words that have missing words there”
“First, students watch a video with text, then students repeat the speech in the video without text orally”	“The teacher reads the text in full, then the children find the missing word, while completing it”
“For example, the questions given to the children are just instructions. The questions are still there, the answer choices are still below, like the national exam questions ma'am, the questions are on tape. Then the answer is on the paper”	“I usually play audio and then they write what they hear or I usually read it myself and they write”
	“they retell what they understand, what they hear”

The materials relate to exercise include repetition, cloze test, and multiple choice. *Repetition* is known as repeat after me. Students are instructed to listen and repeat word, sentence or dialogue read by teacher. Teachers pronounce word or read sentence and dialogue then students repeat the words, sentence, and dialogue. *Repeat after me* is common way of teachers to teach pronunciation. However, in this case, English teachers use this way to teach listening skills. In this learning activity, students not only practice their listening skills but also their pronunciation.

Cloze test is constructing completion items. Students are instructed to listen audio or teachers and complete blanks in sentences. Cloze test measures production rather than recognition (Heaton, 1988). Cloze test is considered effective to teach listening skill. El-Koumy (1997) reports that cloze instruction is effective to improve students' listening comprehension. Moreover, Riantika (2013) and Sardi et al (2017) conducted research to examine cloze dictation and the findings show that the techniques can improve students' listening skills.

Multiple-choice is an objective assessment in which respondents are asked to select only correct answers from the choices offered as a list. Multiple-choice is objective test. Multiple-choice items can provide a useful means of teaching and testing in various learning situations. It is always recognized that such items test knowledge of grammar, vocabulary rather than the ability to use language (Heaton, 1988).

2. The Compatibility between Available English Listening Materials and Curriculum

Design of English listening materials must be in accordance with English curriculum. Outcomes of English listening skills in English curriculum 2013 for junior high school level are: (1) understand the purpose, structure of the text, and linguistic elements of short and simple spoken text and (2) compose spoken texts to pronounce and respond to short and simple statements with correct linguistic elements and in context. While outcomes of English listening skills in English curriculum 2013 for senior high school level are: (1) understand the purpose, structure of the text, and linguistic elements of short spoken text and (2) compose spoken texts to pronounce and respond short statements with correct linguistic elements and in context.

The differences of English listening materials for junior high school level and senior high school level are (1) the length and simplicity of the text and (2) kinds of the text. The spoken texts for junior high school level are descriptive, recount, narrative, procedure and factual report while spoken texts for senior high school level are descriptive, recount, narrative, factual report, analytical exposition, news item, and procedure.

Based on data analysis about English listening materials, it is found that teachers use three kinds of material in teaching listening skills. They are video, audio compact disk, and textbook. Then the listening material contents include monologue, dialogue, and song. These contents are implemented in form of repetition, cloze test, and multiple-choice.

Those English listening materials in term of video, ACD, and are considered effective to improve students' English listening skill ((Dewi, 2013; Kartal & Simsek, 2017; Rorimpandey, 2019; Qomariyah, Permana, & Hidayatullah, 2021). Then, Fithriyah (2015) states that movie and news broad cast is authentic materials for English listening skills teaching. Video and audio materials are solutions for students' problems in learning listening skills (Harmer, 2012). Field (2012) states that the widespread availability of DVD and of visual internet material has raised the possibility of moving the teaching of L2 listening on from its dependence on audio input. The benefit of video is that it gives

access to the facial expressions and gestures of speakers as well as to information about general context. It indicates that English listening materials are in line to English curriculum.

Moreover, teachers use English listening materials prepared in curriculum, such as monologue, dialogue, and song. Those materials are considered suitable for English listening skills teaching. Harmer (1991) states that monologue and dialogue are variety of materials for listening skills teaching. The materials relates to listening to confirm expectation, listening to extract specific information, listening for communication tasks, listening for general understanding, and listening for detail.

CONCLUSION

English listening materials in EFL classroom are categorized into three. They are media, content, and exercise. Media is material used to present learning content. Content is learning themes and topics. Then, exercise is learning activity relates to content. The materials relate to media covers video, audio compact disk, and textbook. The contents of material are presented in form of monologue, dialogue, and song. The learning activities for listening skill teaching are repetition, cloze test, and multiple-choice. English listening materials are in line to English curriculum. Teachers use materials and methods that are suitable to English listening skills learning outcomes.

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