DESIGNING TASK-BASED INTERMEDIATE LISTENING MATERIALS FOR ELESP OF SANATA DHARMA UNIVERSITY

Patricia Angelina Lasut
Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Universitas Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta
E-mail: patricia@usd.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Intermediate Listening is one of the obligatory courses offered for second semester students in the English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University. It provides students with intermediate listening skill to prepare them for more advanced listening courses that they will encounter in higher semesters. This study aims to design task-based learning materials for Intermediate Listening course. Therefore, this study uses Research and Development method. The designed materials would be useful to improve the students' listening skill.

ABSTRAK

Intermediate Listening adalah salah satu mata kuliah wajib yang diberikan kepada para mahasiswa semester kedua di Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Sanata Dharma. Mata kuliah ini akan melatih keterampilan menyimak mereka untuk mempersiapkan para mahasiswa menghadapi mata kuliah menyimak lanjutan yang akan mereka ambil di semester mendatang. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membekali mahasiswa keterampilan menyimak tingkat menengah guna mempersiapkan mereka untuk mata kuliah menyimak tingkat lanjut yang akan mereka peroleh di semester yang lebih tinggi.

Penelitian ini akan mendesain materi pembelajaran berbasis tugas untuk mata kuliah *Intermediate Listening* menggunakan metode Penelitian dan Pengembangan. Materi yang didesain akan berguna untuk meningkatkan keterampilan mendengarkan mahasiswa.

Keywords: *design, listening, task-basic learning.*

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Listening is one of the four basic skills, along with speaking, reading and writing. Speaking and writing are classified as active or productive skills whereas listening and reading are considered as passive or receptive skills. English Language Education Study Program (henceforth ELESP) curriculum divides the sequences of learning to listen into four different compulsory courses. The courses are Basic Listening, Intermediate Listening, Critical Listening and Speaking I and Critical Listening and Speaking II. Throughout their semesters in ELESP, the students progress from listening to simple dialogues to listening to long videos and movies.

This study is going to focus on Intermediate Listening, one of the courses offered in ELESP. In order to improve students' skill in listening, the learning materials will be designed based on certain topics. Task-Based Learning refers to a pedagogical approach derived from the communicative language teaching approach, which utilizes the use of language tasks as the central key in learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The main point of task-based learning lies in the experiential learning in which the learner's prior experience becomes the starting point which will improve along with the task completion in the classroom. By doing the tasks, learners will be exposed to the target language. When the learners encounter problems, they will be involved in the discussion which will broaden their opportunity to use the target language. They will also have the chance to fill in the gaps in their language competence through the feedback in the discussion; which will improve their language mastery. Furthermore, tasks are also said to be motivational, as they require learners to use authentic language, vary in format and operation, often include physical activities, involve partnership and collaboration, may call on learners'

past experience and tolerate as well as encourage a variety of communication styles (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

This study is important because it aims to present appropriate materials to help the Intermediate Listening students of ELESP of Sanata Dharma University in particular to improve their listening ability. By providing the materials which are practical and arranged based on certain topics, they will be able to improve their listening skill.

This study attempts to answer the following question in order to present Task-Based Intermediate Listening Materials for ELESP of Sanata Dharma University: *How are task-based intermediate listening materials for ELESP of Sanata Dharma University designed?* The objective of this study is to answer the question stated previously on the problem formulation. Therefore, the objective of the study is to design task-based Intermediate Listening materials for ELESP of Sanata Dharma University. The designed materials are expected to be helpful for the students of Intermediate Listening course to facilitate them in improving their listening skill in a motivational and meaningful way. The designed materials are also expected to enrich the Intermediate Listening lecturers' teaching resources, so that they will have more alternatives to apply in the classroom teaching and learning activities. The results of this study can be used to carry out another study. Future researchers can implement the designed materials to see whether the materials are effective or not.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Listening

According to Nunan (2003), listening is the process of understanding speech in a first or second language. In the language teaching context, listening refers to the complex process that allow us to understand spoken language. Therefore, listening does not only require sound recognition, but the understanding of word meaning as well. The researcher needs to know the characteristics of listening in order to be able to select appropriate activities to improve the students' listening ability.

There are six principles for teaching listening as stated by Brown (2004, pp. 57-61): (a) include a focus on listening in an integrated-skills course; (b) use techniques that are intrinsically motivating; (c) use authentic language and

contexts; (d) carefully consider the form of listeners' responses; (e) encourage the development of speaking strategies; (f) include both bottom-up and top-down listening techniques. Having understood the principles for teaching listening, the writer can now design suitable activities by taking the principles for teaching listening into consideration.

Task-Based Learning

Task-based learning is an approach which uses tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Task-based learning perceives language as a mean of making meaning, so it is taught best when it is used to transmit messages, not when explicitly taught for conscious learning (Krashen & Terrel, 1983). The main characteristic of task-based learning lies in the experiential learning where the learner's past experience becomes the starting point in learning, while their personal experience when doing the tasks becomes the central point of learning (Nunan, 2004).

In task-based learning, tasks are central in immersing learners in a meaningful communication using the target language, which in consequence, promotes learning. Nunan (1989) defines tasks as activities which can stand alone as fundamental units and which require comprehending, manipulating, or interacting in authentic language, while the attention is principally paid to meanings rather than to forms. Tasks provide the necessary exposure and also opportunities of language use needed for acquiring the target language because the tasks are normally done in pairs or in groups. Exposure happens when they listen to the teacher's instruction, to their friends' speaking, and also when they have to read handouts to complete the tasks. Learners are expected to make sense of the input received in exposure either consciously or unconsciously. When learners notice the language features and internalize them in their language system, learning is promoted. Tasks will also encourage learners to learn communicative competences like giving opinion, interrupting, and presenting their results to the whole class. Learners will acquire the language faster and more efficiently when they have to communicate (Willis, 1996). The Task-Based Learning framework consists of three phases: pre-task, task

cycle and language focus. The components within each phase of the framework provide a naturally flowing sequence, each one preparing the ground for the next. The pre-task phase introduces the class to the learning topic. The task cycle is where the learners start working in small groups or in pairs to achieve the goals of the task. The language focus phase allows a closer study of some of the specific features such as unfamiliar words, structures, or pronunciation that naturally occur in the task cycle. There are many ways in which the components within the framework can be weighted differently and adapted to suit learners' needs. Willis (1996, pp. 26-28) classifies six types of tasks according to the analysis of communicative language use. They are listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experience and creative tasks.

Instructional Design

According to Kemp (1977), the instructional design plan is designed to answer three questions: (1) What must be learned? (2) What procedures and resources will work best to teach the desired learning levels? And (3) How will we know when the required learning has taken place? Kemp's eight steps in developing an instructional design are considering goals, listing topics, and stating the general purposes for each topic, identifying learners' characteristics, specifying the learning objectives in terms of measurable behavioral outcomes, listing the subject content to support each objective, developing pre-assessment, selecting teaching/learning activities and instructional resources, considering the support service necessary to implement the design plan, and evaluating the accomplishment of objectives to revise the design plan.

Intermediate Listening

Students in ELESP of Sanata Dharma University take Intermediate Listening course in their second semester. Intermediate Listening is designed to introduce the students to listening strategic skills. On completing the course, the students will be able to employ strategic skills to comprehend, take notes and summarize intermediate listening passages such as dialogues, lectures, seminars, and broadcasted programs.

Theoretical Framework

To find out the answer to the objective of this study, the writer has to understand the underlying principles of listening and task-based learning. In teaching listening, the writer should design classroom activities which are adjusted with the teaching of English as the Foreign Language. In task-based learning, tasks are considered as the core unit of planning and instruction. Tasks enable learners to discern, manipulate and interact in authentic language while their attention is principally paid to meaning rather than to form. This is a kind of situation at which the language is taught best (Krashen & Terrel, 1983). The framework of task-based learning consists of three components: pre-task, task-cycle, and language focus phase.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

The method used was Educational Research and Development (R & D). It was a process used to develop and validate educational products (Borg & Gall, 1983). According to Borg and Gall (1983), the goal of R & D is to develop the research knowledge and incorporating it into a product that combines educational research and educational practice rather than discover new knowledge or to answer specific questions about practical problems. The R & D cycle enables the writer to adapt relevant findings and translate them into tested, usable educational products. In this cycle, the writer studies the findings relevant to the product to be constructed and develops the product. There are ten major steps in the R & D cycle; they are Research and Information Colleting, Planning, Developing Preliminary Form of Product, Preliminary Field Testing, Main Product Revision, Main Field Testing, Operational Product Revision, Operational Field Testing, Final Product Revision and Dissemination and Implementation (Borg & Gall, 1983). Due to the limitation of time and capacity, the writer decided to employ only the former three steps out of the ten major steps. To summarize all of the three steps of the R&D above, the writer presented the chart of the adopted R&D model cycle collaborated with Kemp's adapted model in the following figure.

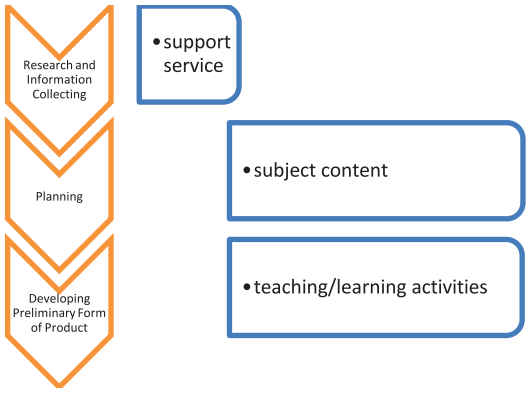


Figure 1. The Writer's R & D Adopted Cycle Collaborated with Kemp's Adapted Model

Research and Information Collecting aims to collect findings and useful information for developing the product. This phase involves Kemp's step of identifying and investigating the support services. The writer collects the underlying theories in the field of listening and task-based learning in order to support the study. The writer collects all the data from the Internet and books. Planning aims to construct the framework of the designed materials, which involves Kemp's step of listing and organizing subject contents. The next major step in the R & D cycle is to build a preliminary form of the educational product (Borg & Gall, 1983). In this phase, the Kemp's step of selecting teaching/ learning activities is conducted. Each of the organized subject contents is developed into learning materials. In developing preliminary form of product, the writer selects the subject content and makes the preliminary design.

The researcher conducted this study in Sanata Dharma University setting since the participants of this study are students of the university. The participants of this study are the students of Intermediate Listening course in ELESP, Sanata Dharma University. They are in the second semester of their study in the university.

The data gathering were conducted in the research and information collecting stage. In the research and information collecting stage, the writer gathered the data by searching relevant theories and information for the basis of the study from various books, syllabus and Internet sources.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To answer the research question, how Intermediate Listening materials using task-based learning for ELESP of Sanata Dharma University, the stages of presenting the preliminary form of the materials are elaborated in this chapter. There are three stages.

Research and Information Collecting

Research and Information Collecting aims to collect findings and useful information for developing the product. This phase involves Kemp's step of identifying and investigating the support services. Sanata Sharma University has complete facilities that enable teaching learning activities. All of the classrooms are equipped with whiteboard, LCD projector, viewer and speakers. In conclusion, the necessary support services to implement the task-based materials are available.

Planning

Planning aims to construct the framework of the designed materials, which involves Kemp's step of stating general purposes, listing and organizing subject contents. The most important aspect of planning a research-based educational product is the statement of the specific objectives to be achieved by the product. Objectives also provide the best basis for developing an instructional program. The purposes of the designed materials was to improve the Listening strategic skill of the third semester students. On completing the course, the students will be able to employ strategic skills to comprehend, take notes and summarize intermediate listening passages such as dialogues, lectures, seminars, and broadcasted programs.

The writer classified and arranged the learning topics and subject contents based on the Intermediate Listening syllabus that is used by the study program. Each topic would be developed into the materials for one meeting. The classification and arrangement of the learning topics and subject contents are presented below.

Table 1: The Organization of Subject Contents

Unit	Topics	Subject Contents
1	Music	• Filling the blanks • True or False
2	Food	• Filling the blanks • True or False
3	Travel	• Filling the blanks • True or False
4	Lecture	• Paraphrasing • Note-taking
5	Stress	• Paraphrasing • Note-taking
6	Student Money	• Summarizing
7	Mobile Phones	• Summarizing

Developing Preliminary Form of Product

The next major step in the R & D cycle is to build a preliminary form of the educational product (Borg & Gall, 1983). In this phase, the Kemp's step of selecting teaching/learning activities is conducted. In developing preliminary form of product, the writer selects the subject content and makes the preliminary design that referred to the syllabus. Adapting the concept of pre-task, task-cycle, and language focus in task based learning framework (Willis, 1996), the writer designed the materials that consist of three phases.

The first section was designed to introduce the learners with the context and to relate learners' personal experience to the topic. It also provides useful expressions and vocabulary related to the topic. This section serves as the pre-task phase in Willis' task-based learning framework whose aim was to prepare learners for the main task. The second section gave learners opportunities to learn the language and the strategic listening skill while accomplishing the tasks. Similar to the Willis' task-cycle phase, this section served as the main tasks of the lesson. The third phase provided the useful tips related to the strategic listening skill that would be necessary for the learners to know. This section resembled Willis' language focus phase.

There were various kinds of tasks used in the teaching learning activities. Since the task based learning is meant to be used with English as

the language of classroom instruction, pair works and group works would be helpful in engaging learners in meaningful communication and bridging the proficiency gap among learners. The kinds of tasks used in each phase of the designed materials are elaborated as follows.

1) Pre-task phase functioned to introduce the topic of the lesson as well as to activate learners' prior knowledge. Predicting, cooperating or personalizing tasks were the kinds of tasks used in this phase, in which learners were involved either in pairs or in a whole-class discussion to share their personal experience related to the topic.
2) The tasks in the second phase served as the main tasks of the lesson. The learners had to cooperate with their partners to solve the tasks. The main tasks were information gap, decision making, comparing, problem-solving, or creative tasks (group project), whose focus was to provide learners the opportunities to learn the strategic listening skill and experiment with the language.
3) The focus of the last phase resembling Willis' language focus phase was to make learners more aware of and understand the strategic listening skill they used.

CONCLUSIONS

This study was conducted to answer the research question: how Intermediate Listening materials using task-based learning for ELESP of Sanata Dharma University are designed. To answer the research question, the researcher adopted R & D cycle as the framework to decide the ideal order for Kemp's steps:

1) Research and Information Collecting. It comprises Kemp's step of finding out the available support services.\
2) Planning. It includes Kemp's steps of stating the general purposes for each topic and listing as well as organizing the subject contents.
3) Developing Preliminary Form of Product. It consists of Kemp's step of selecting teaching/learning activities and instructional resources. The designed materials produced as the result of this study is presented in the appendices.

Adapting Willis' framework of task-based learning, the materials of each meeting was divided into three sections. The first section was designed to introduce the learners to the context and to relate learners' personal experience to the topic. The second section gave learners opportunities to learn the strategic listening skill and the language while accomplishing the tasks. The third section provided the useful tips that would be necessary for the learners to understand.

Due to time constraint, the writer has not implemented the designed materials. Therefore, future research on the implementation of the designed materials is welcome. The research can focus on whether the materials are effective or not when they are implemented to the learners. The writer also recommends involving the advanced technology softwares such as Edmodo, Moodle and other multimedia devices as the media for the teaching and learning activities.

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