INDONESIAN ADAPTATIONS OF PIMSLEUR LANGUAGE AUDIO AS A MEDIUM TO LEARN ENGLISH

Khomsatullayli Hidayati

English Department, Faculty of Language and Art, State University of Surabaya

khomsatul.1015@gmail.com

Prof. Dr. Hj. Lies Amin Lestari, M.A., M.Pd

English Department, Faculty of Language and Art, State University of Surabaya

lies.aminlestari@yahoo.com

Abstrak

Penguasaan keterampilan berbicara dalam mempelajari bahasa asing menjadi sebuah prioritas. Oleh sebab itu, para pelajar bahasa asing sering mengevaluasi keberhasilan belajar mereka berdasarkan atas seberapa banyak kemajuan tingkat kecakapan berbicaranya. Observasi awal menunjukkan bahwa keterampilan berbicara bukanlah yang menjadi tujuan fokus pada beberapa kelas bahasa Inggris. Selain itu, para siswa juga lebih cenderung untuk diam dan pasif. Menggunakan Research and Development (R & D) design, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan audio bahasa Pimsleur dalam versi Bahasa Indonesia 'bertanya dan memberi tahu arah di bandar udara' sebagai media untuk mempelajari bahasa inggris dan menguji respons siswa terhadap audio yang dikembangkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa audio ini adalah media yang layak digunakan untuk mempelajari bahasa Inggris. Ahli materi dan ahli media sepakat bahwa konten audio sesuai dengan tujuan pembelajaran; kurikulum; relevan terhadap kebutuhan siswa; dan memenuhi prinsip-prinsip materi mendengarkan oleh Brown dan Yule (1983). Selain itu, data juga menunjukkan bahwa semua siswa atau 100% menyatakan senang dengan penggunaan adaptasi audio bahasa Pimsleur dalam versi bahasa indonesia ini.

Kata kunci: Berbicara, bertanya dan member tahu arah di Bandar udara, adaptasi audio bahasa Pimsleur dalam versi Bahasa Indonesia.

Abstract

The mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners. Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. Preliminary observation done showed that oral or speaking skill was not become a focus objectives in some English classes. It was also found that the students tended to silent and passive. Using Research and Development (R & D) design, this study aimed to develop Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur Language Audio 'Asking and Giving Directions in an Airport' as a medium to learn English and to investigate the students' response toward the adapted audio. The result showed that the Indonesian Adaptations of Pimsleur Language Audio was an appropriate audio medium to learn English. The material and media experts agreed that the audio material was suitable with the objectives of the study; curriculum; relevant to the students' need; and fulfilling the principles of listening materials proposed by Brown and Yule (1983). Furthermore, data showed that all students or 100% said that they like the using of the Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur Language Audio.

Key terms: Speaking, asking and giving direction in an airport, Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur language audio.

INTRODUCTION

The students' real need of English is the ability to communicate satisfactorily for basic needs such as giving direction or other language functions needed for everyday survival. As Harlow and Myskens (1994) pointed out the ultimate goal of most language learners is to be able to converse or communicate the target language when they are traveling or trying to gain access to information through interactive technologies such as movies and television. Because of that, the highlight for language teaching learning topic should concern to the demand and the necessity for English used in the real communication. The skills used most at these level are listening and speaking. Teacher can build on listening tasks to provide speaking practice. At the same time, speaking tasks give students practice in listening to each other (Brown, 2006).

Language proficiency grows from oral competence to written competence (Bromley, 2007). Typically the words and concepts students absorb and use as they listen and talk are the foundation for what they

will read and write later. Therefore, the two skills, listening and speaking are the two fundamental aspects that students should master before they learn the skills of reading and writing. The real example is the children who acquire their first language or mother tongue which started from oral competence. It always starts from imitating the sound or words they listen from people around them. After that, they go to the next stages until the written competence. Thus, the researcher believes that listening is the basic skill in language learning. Without having effective listening skill, learners will never learn to communicate effectively (Nunan, 1997).

Hadley (2001) suggested that teaching listening and speaking skills helps follow natural sequences in acquiring a language. However, teaching less able learners requires special settings since their aptitude for language learning is minimal. They are poor language learners, but if more suitable language classes are provided, they may improve. Also, low level language learners should not be expected to reach the same successive level as good language learners (Noom-ura, 2008). One of the reasons is that poor language learners do not have many strategies in language learning. According to Takuechi (2003) poor language learners used only 3 strategies while successful learners used 31 strategies.

Gan, Humbpreys, & Hamp-Lyons (2004) compared 9 successful language learners (SLLs) with 9 unsuccessful language learners (ULLs). One of the result showed that ULLs believed that teachers paid interest only to SLLs and did not give them enough help. They felt that they were forgotten. These studies implies that it is possible to help slow learners by training them to use more language learning strategies or showing them that they are not forgotten by preparing lessons that are more suitable to their learning styles.

In preparing classroom activities for acquiring language for less able students, the teachers should know about words and vocabulary instruction of English. As Bromley wrote (2007), English has a huge and unique collection of words. English is three times larger in total number of words than German and six times larger than French. However, that challenging fact can be overcome through the other characteristic of English itself. The rules of English are simple and consistent compared to other languages (Lederer, 1991). Hence, practicing simple materials but meaningful based on real-life need and a 'here and now' context is a suitable class design to teach speaking to the students, especially the ones who are less able students or learners with low English ability.

From time to time studying teaching learning activities of foreign language, particularly English, gratefully the researcher becomes familiar with a good effective system of foreign language learning that can be implemented to achieve the objective of the lesson: enable the learners with low English ability to communicate with others in English. The system is called Pimsleur Language Learning System (PLLS) and the name of Pimsleur was taken from the name of a psychologist who was the creator of the system itself, Dr. Paul Pimsleur. PLLS is in a form of listening activity which is only for ears or audio-only approach. The language learning system tries to make the students pronounce the words just like the native speaker does. Looking at the human second language acquisition, the system is based on the way how children learn their mother tongue, results in an incredible second language capacity after a short learning time.

Beringer (2004) summarized that PLLS was based on four main principles: (1) anticipation, this tries to getting and keeping attention, (2) graduated interval recall, this is presenting information at the right time makes it easier to retrain, (3) organic learning, the learning process are vocabulary, pronunciation, and listening comprehension are presented all at once; (4) learning like a child, reproducing what we hear from others say by imitating the sound hear. These principles make the brain naturally stores language in long term memory. The mental mechanism converts unintelligible human sound into language. This language learning system draw on applied psychology to aid the acquisition of the foreign language, and the memory techniques used require an audio-only presentation. Written material would interfere with the process and are therefore omitted from this course.

Pimsleur devised the Pimsleur 'Speak and Read' series of language lessons. Speaking has been defined as "decoding graphic material to the phonemic patterns of spoken language which have already mastered when reading is begun." To put it another way, reading consists of coming back to speech through the graphic symbols. In short, meanings reside in the sounds of the spoken language. Speaking a language is the necessary first step to acquire the ability to read a language with meaning.

Several people perhaps worry about where to start in learning a new foreign language. Pimsleur suggested to starting by learning a few things that will be immediately useful, rather than with lengthy and complex grammatical theory. He added that if the learners struggle with concentration, they should break up their study into short bursts of around twenty minutes. The concept of

acquiring few things which will be immediately useful are in a line to Bromley's view that teaching fewer words well is more effective than teaching several words in a cursory way.

The language people speak and write varies considerably, and in a number of different ways, from one context to another. The ideas married up naturally with the development of English courses for specific groups of learners. The idea was simple: if the language varies from one situation of use to another, it should be possible to determine the features of specific situations and then make these features the basis of the learners' course. Those ideas are closely related to 'here and now' concepts which used in PLLS.

From those reasons, the researcher is very interested in adapting Pimsleur Language Learning System (PLLS) and using the adapted audio as a medium to learn English for the learners with low English ability. It is hoped through using this adaptation of PLLS, the students be willingly practice the language since the ultimate goal of learning a language is using that language to communicate. Also it is hoped that the audio medium is able to encourage and enhance students' participation to be the active speaker learners as the adapted audio uses mother tongue as the instructional language to learn English. Therefore, the researcher conducts a research entitled "Indonesian Adaptations of Pimsleur Language Audio as a medium to learn English".

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research and Development (R & D) design by Borg and Gall (1983) was used in this study. The R & D cycle consists of 10 steps used to develop an educational product. They are (1) research and information collecting (2) planning (3) developing preliminary form of product (4) preliminary field testing (5) main product revision (6) main field testing (7) operational product revision (8) operational field testing (9) final product revision (10) dissemination and implementation.

This study was aimed to develop Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur language audio as a medium to learn English and to investigate students' response toward the adapted audio. Because of that, those 10 steps were not fully taken. The last step of dissemination and implementation were also omitted since it was a professional work with publisher who assumes commercial distribution of the product.

The modified research design cycle used by the researcher are: (1) Research and information collecting (2) Planning (3) Develop preliminary form of product (4) Material and media expert validation (5) Preliminary field testing (6) Main product revision (7) Main field testing (8)Final product revision.

This study was conducted in SMA Negeri 2 Sidoarjo. The researcher used non-probability sampling procedure. It was purposive sampling since the subjects needed are only the students with low English ability.

This study used three instruments: field note, questionnaire, and rating scale. The researcher used field note in conducting direct observation. This is held to find out students' response: attitude and behaviors toward the using of the adapted audio.

A questionnaire was used to determine the students who could be the subjects as this audio. The questionnaire was in a form of self-appraisal or language background. It consisted of 20 questions related to the using of English for daily life. This sort of questionnaire was adapted from questionnaire of Foreign Service Institute (FSI) in which students had to answer by choosing 'yes' or 'no'.

In this study, there were three different rating scales. One was created for students to figure out students' opinion about the adapted audio. The other two were created for material and media experts to validate the adapted audio. All three rating scales had four options based on Likert scale: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree.

Data analysis used in this study is both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative technique was used to figure out how are the Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur language audio based on the experts' answer, comment, and suggestion. While, quantitative technique was used to investigate students' response toward the using of the adapted audio.

RESULTS

The material expert strongly agreed that the Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur language audio was an appropriate audio medium to learn English for the learners with low English ability because of several reason. The audio is suitable with the objective of the study; relevant to the students' need; curriculum; and fulfill the principles of listening material of Brown and Yule.

The media expert also agreed that the adapted audio was a good medium since the speakers' voices were clear. Their pronunciation, articulation, and intonation were good too. The voices which were recorded were also in an appropriate speed. The last, the instrumental music added in the beginning, middle, and ending part of the audio made the students feel relax.

The researcher used rating scale for the students' to investigate students' response toward the using of the Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur language audio. Table I below showed the descriptive statistics of students' response toward the using of adapted audio.

Table I The Result of Main Field Testing

Principles of listening	SD (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	SA (%)
Interesting (Q1, Q2)	0	0	57.1	42.9
The audio content (Q3)	0	7.2	57.1	35.7
Speakers' voice (Q4)	0	35.7	50	14.3
English promoting (Q5, Q7)	0	14.3	57.1	28.6
The task easiness (Q6)	0	50	42.9	7.1
Listeners' role (Q8)	0	0	71.4	28.6

The result of the rating scale showed that 42.9% students strongly agreed and 57.1% agreed that the adapted audio was interesting and engaging. There were 35.7% students strongly agreed and 57.1% agreed that the audio content is simple but concrete and meaningful. The rest of 7.2% disagreed. The students who strongly agreed that the speakers' voices are clear were 14.3%. A half of students or 50% agreed, and the rest of 35.7% disagreed.

Most of the students agreed that the audio was English promoting. They gave positive response since the audio helped them to actively speak the language. There were 28.6% strongly agreed, 57.1 agreed, and 14.3% disagreed that the audio was English promoting.

The task that should be done by the listeners was answering all questions and repeating the word, phrase, or sentence said by the speakers and instructor. Unfortunately, there were 50% of the students disagreed that the task was easy. The students who agreed were 42.9% and 7.1% strongly agreed. The last number was intended to know students' favorableness or un-favorableness. The students who liked the adapted audio were 71.4% and 28.9% strongly agreed.

In conclusion, the results above showed that the majority of the students convinced that the audio fulfill the three principles factors affecting the difficulty of the listening material suggested by Brown and Yule. Three factors are: speakers' voice, listener's role, and audio content got 64.3%, 100%, and 92.8% for the students who agreed and strongly agreed.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study above proved and supported that the Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur language audio is an appropriate audio medium to learn English, especially for the students with low English ability. The material and media experts strongly agreed that the adapted audio is a good audio. The students also gave positive response toward the using of this audio.

The content of the listening materials is suitable with the principle of 'here and now' and the students' needs, i.e. specific and simple materials without a complex grammatical theory. This idea changed the thought from explaining the formal features of language usage into using the language in the real communication (Widdowson, 1978). Furthermore, the music inserted in the audio is relaxing which lowers the students' anxiety and stress. As Hadley (2001, p.94) suggested that the learners should be provided a classroom context where they enjoy learning with low anxiety, practicing simple materials but meaningful for the real life.

Moreover, the audio uses the listening principle of listeners' role as an active participant which requires them to take part in the interaction, gives chances of answering back, understand, or checking that they have comprehended correctly. The audio also facilitates second language acquisition because it gives attention to the role of consciousness in language learning, and in particular to the role of 'noticing' in learning. As Schmidt stated in Brown (2006) that the language learners will not learn anything from input they hear and understand unless they notice something about the input. The part of the input that the learner notices is an intake that they later use in oral production by incorporating the new linguistic items they noticed.

The use of mother tongue in this audio also has an important role: it can lower the students' stress and enhance students' self confidence. The idea of abandoning the native tongue is too stressful to many learners, who need a sense of security in the experience of learning a foreign language (Kavaliauskiene, 2009). Translation is a natural thing and code-switching between languages and develops three qualities essential to all language learning: accuracy, clarity, and flexibility. Also it held a special important stage which is recognized as the fifth skill and the most important social skill since it promotes communication and understanding between strangers (Ross, 2000). Thus, the use of mother tongue and translation could serve as a tool for improving language skills.

However, this audio does not always result in active participation from the students. It can be seen that

there were several students who disagree that the task on the audio was easy. They still find difficulties in recalling the words they listened and noticed. During the experiment, they said that the voices of two native speakers were not clear enough. Then, the task of answering the narrator's questions made them think it became a worse situation. This case was supporting the recommendation from Noom-Ura (2008) that low level learners should not be expected to reach the same successive level as good language learners. The use of Bahasa Indonesia as a transactional language also gives them a sense of security in learning English.

In this case, teaching speaking skill to the learners with low English ability needs special treatment, because of that the teachers need to make more efforts in teaching those low level learners. In class they are apparently less motivated to learn because they know their English ability is low. When they are less motivated, their ability can never improve (Litlejohn, 2001). One of the results from the study of Humbpreys and Hamp-Lyons (2004) in Noom-Ura (2008) showed that Unsuccessful Language Learners (ULLs) believes that teachers paid interest only to Successful Language Learners (SLLs) and did not give them enough help. They felt they were forgotten. Thus, teachers' role in developing better motivation and classroom design is an essential factor to courage their willingness to communicate for a successful teaching learning. Creating an affection class design which lowers their anxiety, increase their confidence is a better option to make them successful in learning English.

Simply, the Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur Language audio is an appropriate audio medium to learn speaking of transactional conversation 'asking and giving direction in an airport' to the learners with low English ability. This audio helps the students to acquire the language well that make their brain naturally stored the language in long term memory. This audio also provides the students with engaging materials, meaningful and concrete communication, and a lot of chances to practice and speak the language.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusions

Based on the results and discussions above, it can be concluded that the Indonesian Adaptation of Pimsleur Language audio is an appropriate medium to learn speaking to the learners with low English ability, specifically teaching speaking of transactional conversation 'asking and giving directions in an airport'. The results show that the audio content is suitable to the objectives of the study, curriculum, and the students' need. The grammar and the materials are specific and simple but meaningful and useful for real-life communication and everyday survival. The principles used also ease the students to acquire, store, recall, practice, and communicate the target language correctly.

The data obtained from the rating scales distributed to a group of students who were taught by using the Indonesian Adaptation of Pimsleur Language audio proves that the students give positive response to the materials. They love and enjoy the using of the audio.
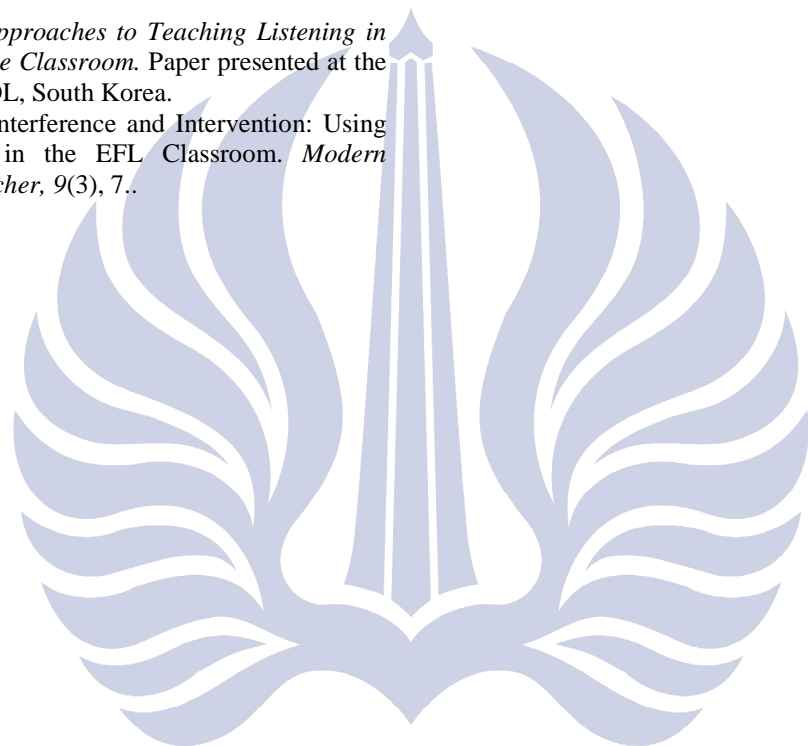
Suggestions

Considering the suitability and the positive response of the students' toward the using of Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur Language audio to learn speaking in English for the learners with low English ability, it is suggested that this audio can be used as an independent study materials for the students at home. The activity of listening to the Indonesian adaptations of Pimsleur Language audio should be done at home before they attend English class. Then, the teacher chooses several students randomly to check their progress.

As stated in the previous chapter, the researcher suggested that the other researchers can continue this research to hold the last step of original R&D cycle which was omitted in this study: implementation and dissemination. The last step is giving report on the product developed at professional meetings and in journal. Next, working with publisher who assumes commercial distribution, monitor distribution to provide quality control.

REFERENCES
Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Sorensen, C., & Rzavieh, A. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education* (8th ed.). California: Wardsworht, Cengage Learning.

Beringer, N. (2004). *Human Language Acquisition Methods in A Machine Learning Task*. Manno: Dale Molle Institute for Artificial Intelligence.

Borg, W. R., & Gall, M. D. (1983). *Educational Research An Introduction*. New York: Longman Inc.

Bromley, K. (2007). Nine Things Every Teacher Should Know about Words and Vocabulary Instruction. 9.

Dozer, C. V. (1997). Improving ESL Learners' Listening Skills: At Workplace and Beyond. 6.

Ellis, R. (1984). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*: Oxford University Press.

Gan, Z., Humbpreys, G., & Hamp-Lyons. (2004). Understanding Successful and Unseccesful EFL

in Chinese Universities. *The Modrn Language Journal*, 88.

Hadley, A. O. (2001). *Teaching language in context* (Third ed.). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Harlow, L. L., & Muyskens, J. A. (1994). Priorities for intermediate level language instruction. *The Modern Language Journal, 78*(2), 13.

Kavaliauskiene, G. (2009). Role of mother tongue in learning english for specific purposes. *8*(1 (22)), 7.

Lederer, R. (1991). *The miracle of language*. New York: Pocket Books.

Noom-ura, S. (2008). Teaching Listening-Speaking to Thai Students with Low English Proficiency. *10*(4), 20.

Nunan, D. (1997). *Approaches to Teaching Listening in the Language Classroom.* Paper presented at the Korea TESOL, South Korea.

Ross, N. J. (2000). Interference and Intervention: Using Translation in the EFL Classroom. *Modern English Teacher, 9*(3), 7..