

THE DEVELOPMENT OF KARUTA CARD AS A MEDIA IN IMPROVING STUDENT'S LISTENING SKILLS

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Abstract— This research aims to develop Karuta Card as an instructional media to improve students' listening skills for eighth-grade students of SMP N 2 Maospati. The study is based on the need to provide engaging and effective learning media that support vocabulary recognition and listening comprehension in EFL classrooms. The objectives of this study are: (1) to develop Karuta Card media that is valid and feasible for teaching listening, and (2) to examine the effectiveness of the developed media in improving students' listening skills. This study employed the Research and Development (R&D) approach adapted from Borg and Gall, which includes the following steps: needs analysis, product design, development, expert validation, revision, implementation, and evaluation. The research instruments consisted of expert validation sheets, observation checklists, student response questionnaires, and listening pre-test and post-test. The data were analyzed descriptively to determine the media's validity, practicality, and effectiveness. The results of expert validation show that the Karuta Card media is valid and feasible to use after minor revisions, as indicated by high scores in content accuracy, visual design, and practicality. The implementation results reveal that students responded positively to the media, showing high engagement and active participation during listening activities. Furthermore, the comparison between pre-test and post-test results demonstrates a significant improvement in students' listening skills, especially in vocabulary recognition, identifying specific information, and responding accurately to spoken instructions. In conclusion, the developed Karuta Card media is valid, practical, and effective for improving students' listening skills. The media provides an interactive and enjoyable learning experience that supports students' comprehension of spoken English. It is recommended that English teachers utilize this media in listening activities and that future researchers explore further development of game-based media for other language skills.

Keywords— Speaking skill, Snake and Ladder Game, Development, Media.

I. INTRODUCTION

Listening is a fundamental skill in English language proficiency and serves as the primary channel through which learners receive spoken input, develop vocabulary knowledge, and construct meaning in communicative contexts. In the junior-high-school (SMP) setting, successful listening instruction contributes directly to students' abilities to follow classroom discourse, engage in oral interaction, and comprehend authentic spoken texts required by school curricula (Utomo, 2019). However, empirical studies in Indonesian EFL contexts repeatedly report that listening remains the most problematic skill for many learners: common obstacles include rapid speech, unfamiliar accents and vocabulary, limited opportunities for meaningful aural exposure, and inadequate instructional media that fail to engage students or scaffold comprehension effectively. These factors combine to depress students' listening performance and motivation in the classroom.

Traditional listening instruction in many Indonesian secondary schools tends to be teacher-centred and heavily reliant on isolated audio drills or worksheets, which may not address affective barriers (anxiety, boredom) or provide repeated, contextualized practice (Erzad, 2020). Research into classroom

practices has shown that when listening lessons lack interaction, variety, and stimulating materials, students often adopt passive learning behaviours and display low retention of aural input. Consequently, teachers and curriculum designers are encouraged to integrate varied media and student-centred activities that increase exposure, repetition, and active processing of spoken language.

In response to these challenges, game-based learning and card-mediated activities have gained attention as pedagogical alternatives that can increase motivation, create meaningful repetition, and transform receptive tasks into interactive experiences conducive to language intake. Studies on the use of games in EFL classrooms indicate positive effects on students' engagement and on specific language outcomes when games are carefully designed to target learning objectives (Al-Bulushi, 2017; Sinaga, 2017). In particular, communicative and chain-type games have been empirically associated with improvements in listening comprehension because they require attentive aural processing under low-stakes, playful conditions.

Karuta a traditional Japanese card game adapted for language teaching is one form of card-based game that has been employed in English classrooms to teach lexical items and to stimulate rapid aural recognition and retrieval. Studies conducted in Indonesian school contexts have applied Karuta principally to vocabulary instruction and reported that Karuta-based activities can increase students' attention, accelerate word recognition, and provide immediate formative feedback via gameplay (Fachriyani & Syafe'i, 2018). Although much of the published Indonesian research has concentrated on elementary levels and on vocabulary outcomes, the intrinsic features of Karuta — listening to a prompt and rapidly selecting the matching card among alternatives — suggest clear affordances for training quick auditory recognition, improving phonological processing, and fostering automaticity in comprehension, all of which are central to listening fluency.

Despite these promising features, there remains a practical and empirical gap at the secondary-school level in Indonesia: (1) relatively few intervention studies have adapted and systematically evaluated Karuta as a media specifically targeted at secondary students' **listening** skills, and (2) location-specific investigations (school, grade, teacher practice) are limited, which constrains teachers' ability to adopt evidence-based variations of the game that fit local curricular demands. In the context of SMP N 2 Maospati, preliminary classroom observations and informal teacher reports indicate persistent low scores on listening sections of formative assessments and a lack of varied, interactive media suited to Junior Secondary English classes. These school-level conditions motivate the present study's focus on designing, developing, and empirically evaluating a Karuta-card media tailored to SMP N 2 Maospati's eighth-grade syllabus and learners' proficiency profile.

Accordingly, this research responds to both pedagogical and empirical needs: pedagogically by producing a locally-adapted Karuta card media that aligns with the school's listening syllabus and classroom constraints; and empirically by examining whether and to what extent the implemented Karuta media can improve students' listening performance, reduce affective barriers (e.g., boredom/anxiety), and be practically integrated into regular lesson cycles. Filling this gap will provide SMP N 2 Maospati's English teachers with an evidence-based, replicable instructional resource and contribute to the broader literature on game-based interventions for listening in Indonesian junior-secondary settings.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a Research and Development (R&D) design to develop and evaluate Karuta Card as instructional media for improving students' listening skills. R&D aims to produce educational products that are valid, practical, and effective for classroom use. The research was conducted at SMP N 2 Maospati, located in Magetan Regency, East Java. The school was chosen because English teachers reported challenges in motivating students and improving their listening comprehension. The participants of this study were eighth-grade students in the academic year of the research. Eighth graders were selected because they possess intermediate listening abilities and are familiar with basic vocabulary needed for Karuta-based activities. A total of 32 students participated in the limited try-out stage. Their involvement helped determine the practicality and responsiveness toward the Karuta Card media. As Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2019) argue, selecting participants from the target user group is essential in development research to ensure that the product fits learners' characteristics and needs.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data for this study were collected through several instruments: (1) expert validation sheets for both media and material, (2) observation checklist during implementation, (3) student response questionnaire, and (4) pre-test and post-test of listening comprehension. Each dataset reflects the product development process and the effectiveness of the Karuta Card as described in the Research Method chapter.

1. Expert Validation Results

The Karuta Card media underwent validation by two experts. The material expert assessed the content suitability, clarity of listening texts, vocabulary accuracy, and alignment with the Grade VIII curriculum. The expert rated the material as *valid* and recommended refining instructions and simplifying some vocabulary items. The media expert evaluated aspects such as layout design, color composition, readability, practicality, and instructional clarity. The evaluation indicated that the product was *feasible* with minor revisions involving card size adjustment and strengthening the visual contrast.

2. Classroom Observation Findings

Observation was conducted during the implementation phase involving eighth-grade students. The observation data revealed that students were actively engaged during listening activities and demonstrated high enthusiasm for the Karuta Card game. Students cooperated in groups, listened attentively to the teacher's audio prompts, and responded quickly to the cards, indicating improved listening responsiveness. The observations also showed increased participation from low-achieving students.

3. Student Response Questionnaire

A questionnaire was distributed after the implementation to measure students' perceptions of the Karuta Card media. Most students provided positive responses, stating that:

- a. The media was interesting and enjoyable.
- b. The visuals were easy to understand.
- c. The game helped them learn vocabulary more easily.
- d. Listening activities became less monotonous and more engaging.

The questionnaire results indicated the media's practicality and acceptability in the classroom.

4. Pre-test and Post-test Results

Listening tests were administered before and after the implementation of Karuta Card to measure its effectiveness. The pre-test results showed that students had difficulties identifying spoken information, recognizing vocabulary, and responding accurately to oral instructions. The average pre-test score reflected low proficiency in listening comprehension. After the implementation, the post-test results demonstrated a significant improvement in overall listening skills. Most students showed progress in vocabulary recognition, detail identification, and responding to auditory input. The increase in the mean score between pre- and post-tests indicates the effectiveness of the developed media.

The results of this study support the theoretical framework stated in Chapter II. As discussed by Rost (2018) and Gilakjani (2020), listening is a complex process requiring interactive engagement with auditory input. The findings show that Karuta Card stimulates such engagement by encouraging active responses and rapid processing of spoken language. The effectiveness of the Karuta Card also aligns with the principles of game-based learning discussed by Hulse & Owens (2019), who argue that learning media incorporating competition and play increase motivation and attention. During implementation, students were more motivated, attentive, and participatory—conditions that are essential for improving listening comprehension.

Furthermore, the study confirms that multi-sensory, interactive media enhance vocabulary recognition and listening retention, consistent with Zeng (2019). The Karuta Card provided visual cues alongside auditory stimuli, allowing students to strengthen their listening comprehension through integrated sensory pathways. Finally, the significant improvement in students' post-test scores demonstrates the effectiveness of instructional media tailored to learners' needs, which is consistent with the findings of Mahmudah (2020), stating that relevant and enjoyable media can improve language skills in EFL contexts. Overall, the findings support the rationale for developing Karuta Card as proposed in Chapter II: it is an engaging, pedagogically sound, and effective media for improving secondary-level students' listening skills.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the objectives, theoretical foundations, research procedures, and findings presented in the previous chapters, several conclusions can be drawn as follows:

1. The Development of Karuta Card Media

The development process of the Karuta Card media followed the stages of Research and Development as described in Chapter III. The product was evaluated by both material and media experts and was deemed valid and feasible to use after minor revisions. The media met the criteria of content accuracy, visual clarity, practicality, and alignment with the Grade VIII English curriculum.

2. The Implementation of Karuta Card Media

The implementation of the Karuta Card in the eighth-grade listening classroom showed that the media was practical, engaging, and well-received by the students. Observation results indicated that students were enthusiastic, active, and more focused during listening activities. The student response questionnaire further confirmed that the media was enjoyable, easy to use, and helpful in making listening activities more interactive.

3. The Effectiveness of Karuta Card in Improving Listening Skills

The comparison of pre-test and post-test scores demonstrated that the Karuta Card media was effective in improving students' listening skills. Students showed significant progress in recognizing vocabulary, identifying explicit information, and responding accurately to spoken instructions. The increase in the average post-test score proves that the Karuta Card media successfully enhanced students' listening comprehension.

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