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Developing Listening Teaching Materials for Business Management Students Through Deep Learning

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ABSTRACT

This study reports the development of English listening teaching materials for Grade 12 Business Management students at SMK YPK Medan within a Deep Learning framework that combines meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning principles. Using a Research and Development design and the ADDIE model, the research systematically proceeded through the analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation stages to produce context-appropriate instructional materials. Data were collected through needs analysis questionnaires, observations, semi-structured interviews, expert validation checklists, pre- and post-tests, and student feedback forms. One intact class of 30 students, two English teachers, and two external curriculum experts participated in this study. The implemented listening materials incorporated authentic business-related scenarios, reflective tasks, and engaging activities that aligned with learners' vocational interests and the Indonesian vocational curriculum. Quantitative findings showed substantial improvement in mean listening scores, mastery levels, and gain scores, while qualitative data indicated increased engagement, reduced anxiety, and positive perceptions of the materials' relevance and enjoyment. The study concludes that integrating Deep Learning principles into vocational listening instruction can enhance both linguistic competence and affective outcomes and offers a practical model for designing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) listening materials in vocational education contexts.

Keywords: Listening Material, Business Management, Deep Learning, Meaningful Learning, Mindful Learning, Joyful Learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Listening occupies a central position in second language acquisition because it provides the primary channel through which learners receive comprehensible input and construct internal representations of the target-language. Unlike reading, spoken input is ephemeral, often rapid, and characterized by reduced forms, connected speech, and a range of accents, which makes comprehension difficult, especially for learners whose exposure outside the classroom is minimal. In many educational systems, including Indonesian vocational schools, listening has historically received less systematic attention than other language skills, resulting in learners who can decode written texts but struggle to follow spoken English in authentic contexts (Omonovich & Qizi, 2025).

For students in vocational programs, such as Business Management at SMK YPK Medan, listening proficiency is not merely an academic requirement but a professional necessity (Sunarya & Atmazaki, 2024). In future workplaces, these learners are expected to participate in meetings, interpret instructions, interact with customers, and respond to spoken information related to finance, marketing, and administration, often in English language. However, preliminary observations and needs analysis at SMK YPK Medan revealed that existing instructional practices placed greater emphasis on reading and writing, offered limited listening practice, and rarely employed materials that reflected the discourse of business environments. Students reported difficulty in understanding authentic spoken English, low confidence, and low engagement in listening activities, particularly when the materials were perceived as unrelated to their vocational interests (Siti Megayati et al., 2024).

Textbook analysis further indicated that the primary resource used in English classes, a textbook issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture, provided few listening tasks and lacked accompanying audio recordings of dialogues. In several units, students were asked to read and complete written conversations and then perform them without exposure to native-like pronunciation, intonation, or authentic speech rate (Jahaya et al., 2025). Teachers attempted to compensate by reading scripts aloud and adapting materials from other sources;

however, these efforts remained unsystematic and did not fully address learners' needs for contextualized, business-oriented listening input. This situation created a gap between curricular expectations and classroom reality, especially in relation to the 2013 curriculum, which advocates for communicative and competency-based instruction (Alehegn & Al Qudah, 2025).

Theoretically, the Deep Learning framework provides a promising lens for rethinking listening instruction in this context. Meaningful learning, rooted in Ausubel's notion of anchoring new information in relevant prior knowledge, suggests that listening tasks should be closely tied to learners' vocational experiences and aspirations, such as business meetings, customer interactions, and workplace problem-solving (Hartati et al., 2025). Mindful learning emphasizes metacognitive awareness and strategic engagement, encouraging learners to plan, monitor, and evaluate their listening processes, rather than merely answering comprehension questions. Joyful learning draws on positive psychology to argue that enjoyment, interest, and low anxiety broaden learners' cognitive resources and sustain motivation, which is critical for vocational learners who may otherwise view English as a difficult and high-stakes subject (Nursidah & Ilyas, 2024).

Despite the conceptual fit between Deep Learning and vocational language education, empirical studies applying this framework to listening material development in Indonesian SMKs are rare. Existing research on listening material design often focuses on general or academic English, with limited attention to the specific lexical, discourse, and situational demands of vocational fields such as Business Management. Moreover, many materials that claim to be communicative still rely on decontextualized tasks and do not integrate cognitive, metacognitive, and affective dimensions coherently way (Roy, 2026). As a result, learners may acquire superficial test-oriented strategies without developing the deeper competencies required for authentic workplace communication (Fazira & Hadi, 2025).

In light of these conditions, the present study was conceived to develop listening teaching materials for Business Management students at SMK YPK Medan that explicitly integrate meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning principles into the learning process. The development process followed a Research and Development paradigm using the ADDIE model, ensuring systematic movement from needs analysis through design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The study addressed three core research questions: (1) How are listening teaching materials for Business Management students developed using a Deep Learning framework at SMK YPK Medan? (2) How is the validity of the developed listening material established through expert review? (3) How effective are the materials in improving students' listening skills and engagement?

The study's objectives align with these questions: to design listening materials that connect content to business contexts and students' prior knowledge, embed reflective and strategy-based activities that cultivate mindful listening, and incorporate enjoyable tasks that foster positive emotional engagement. In addition, the research sought to empirically evaluate the impact of the materials on listening comprehension, vocabulary growth, classroom participation, and learners' attitudes toward listening. The findings are expected to contribute to theory by demonstrating how Deep Learning principles can be operationalized in vocational ESP contexts and to practice by offering a model that teachers and curriculum developers can adapt in similar institutions.

The scope of this study was deliberately delimited to Grade 12 Business Management students in one private vocational school in Medan, North Sumatra. While this focus enhances contextual relevance and allows for intensive development and observation, it also implies that generalization beyond similar contexts should be approached with caution. The research was conducted over one semester and concentrated on listening skills, with ancillary attention to vocabulary and speaking; reading and writing were beyond the primary focus. Resource conditions, such as the availability of audio equipment and teacher familiarity with Deep Learning concepts, also shaped the implementation and represented practical constraints that may affect replication. Nevertheless, by documenting the design rationale, development procedures, and empirical outcomes, this study aims to provide transferable insights for broader vocational English education in Indonesia and comparable settings.

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II. METHODS

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) design using the ADDIE model Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation as the principal framework for instructional design. The R&D approach was chosen because it allows researchers to translate theoretical constructs, in this case, Deep Learning principles, into concrete teaching materials that can be iteratively tested and refined in real classrooms. The ADDIE model ensures systematic progression from diagnosing needs to producing and validating a pedagogically robust product (Creswell, 2021).

The study was conducted at SMK YPK Medan, a private vocational high school located in Medan, North Sumatra, which offers several specializations, including Business Management. The institutional environment emphasizes competency-based education and provides basic technological facilities such as projectors, audio

systems, and Internet access, which are adequate for implementing audio-based listening materials. The focus on Business Management reflects the school's effort to prepare students for employment in the administrative, marketing, and financial sectors, where English is increasingly required.

The participants were divided into three main groups. First, one intact class of Grade 12 Business Management students (30 learners, aged approximately 16–17) was selected through purposive sampling. These students had studied English for several years but had limited experience with systematically designed listening-focused lessons. Second, two English teachers from the school, both with more than five years of vocational teaching experience and involvement in curriculum implementation, contributed to the needs analysis, product trial, and reflective evaluation. Third, two external curriculum experts in English Language Teaching and vocational education served as validators of the developed materials, reviewing them for content validity, pedagogical alignment, and contextual appropriateness.

Multiple instruments were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data for the different ADDIE phases. Needs analysis questionnaires were administered to students and teachers in the analysis phase to identify perceived listening difficulties, preferred learning activities, motivational factors, and gaps in existing materials. Semi-structured interviews with teachers and curriculum experts provided richer insights into current practices, constraints, and expectations regarding the integration of Deep Learning principles. Observation checklists were used during the implementation phase to document classroom interaction, student engagement, and evidence of meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning behaviors (Lubis et al., 2025).

To evaluate learning outcomes, pre- and post-test instruments were designed to measure listening comprehension at multiple levels, including understanding main ideas, identifying specific details, making inferences, and interpreting speakers' intentions. The tests were aligned with the curriculum and cognitive levels of Bloom's taxonomy and focused on business-related listening texts. Expert validation checklists were developed for curriculum specialists and teachers to rate the materials in terms of content relevance, linguistic accuracy, integration of Deep Learning components, task variety, clarity of instructions, and feasibility of classroom use, accompanied by open comment sections for qualitative feedback. Student feedback forms, distributed after implementation, captured learners' perceptions of enjoyment, difficulty, usefulness, and suggestions for improvement of the course.

Data collection followed the logic of the ADDIE model (Nurdin et al., 2025). In the Analysis phase, questionnaire and interview data were descriptively analysed to map common listening problems—such as difficulty with fast speech, unfamiliar vocabulary, and lack of authentic materials—as well as students' preference for more engaging and relevant activities. In the Design phase, the researcher formulated learning objectives linked to the Deep Learning framework, selected conversational and business-oriented texts as listening sources, and planned tasks across the pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening stages. The design emphasized activating prior knowledge, guiding attention to key information, and encouraging reflection on the strategies and emotions associated with listening.

During the Development phase, prototype materials were produced, including lesson plans, listening worksheets, audio scripts and teacher guides. The materials incorporated authentic or adapted business scenarios, such as job instructions, phone calls, customer service interactions, and meeting excerpts, together with activities designed to foster meaningful, mindful, and joyful engagement. These prototypes were then submitted to English teachers and curriculum experts using validation checklists; their quantitative ratings and qualitative suggestions were used to revise and refine the content, instructions, and task sequencing.

The Implementation phase involved classroom trials of the revised materials with the 30 Business Management students over one semester. Teachers implemented the lessons as part of their regular English classes, while the researcher observed selected sessions using structured checklists to document student participation, collaborative interactions, and evidence of strategic and joyful learning behavior. Students took a listening pre-test before the intervention and a post-test afterward, enabling the calculation of the mean scores, mastery levels, and gain scores. Student feedback forms were completed at the end of the implementation period.

In the Evaluation phase, quantitative data from expert validation were summarized using mean scores and categorized levels (e.g., very valid, valid) to judge product quality. Pre- and post-test scores were compared using descriptive statistics to examine improvements in listening performance, and normalized gain (N-Gain) was calculated to gauge the effectiveness of the intervention. Additional analyses, such as paired-sample comparisons and gain score interpretation, helped determine whether the changes were educationally meaningful. Qualitative data from interviews, observations, and open comments were analyzed thematically to triangulate the quantitative findings, identify the strengths and weaknesses of the materials, and derive pedagogical implications. This mixed-methods approach enhanced the credibility and richness of the research outcomes.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The needs analysis confirmed that the Business Management students at SMK YPK Medan faced significant challenges in listening comprehension. Learners reported difficulty following spoken English at a natural speed, especially when speakers used connected speech, unfamiliar accents, or business-specific vocabulary. Many students indicated that they rarely practiced listening in class and that existing materials were either too general or insufficiently linked to business contexts, which reduced their motivation and perceived relevance. Teachers corroborated these perceptions, noting that textbooks lacked audio support and that they often had to improvise by reading dialogues aloud or searching for supplementary materials to provide audio support. The analysis highlighted the need for systematically designed listening tasks that are authentic, contextualized, and engaging for vocational learners.

From a Deep Learning perspective, the findings showed an absence of meaningful connections between listening tasks and students' prior knowledge and career aspirations, limited opportunities for mindful strategy use, and few activities that elicited joy or reduced anxiety. This diagnosis justified the decision to ground material development in meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning principles to address then cognitive, affective, and motivational dimensions of listening.

The developed listening materials were organized into units built around business-related themes such as job instructions, customer complaints, business phone calls, and meetings. Each unit followed a structured sequence of pre-, while, and post-listening stages designed to operationalize Deep Learning components. Pre-listening activities activated prior knowledge through brainstorming, discussion of familiar work situations, and prediction of content based on titles or visual prompts, promoting meaningful connections between learners' experiences and upcoming texts.

During the while-listening phase, tasks guided students to focus on specific information, main ideas, and inferred meanings, often through graded activities that moved from a global to a detailed understanding. Learners were encouraged to use strategies such as note-taking, checking predictions, and monitoring their comprehension, which reflects mindful engagement with input. Post-listening activities included reflection on both content and process, discussions in pairs or groups, and follow-up speaking tasks that required students to apply newly learned vocabulary and expressions in simulated workplace interactions.

Joyful learning was embedded through the selection of interesting, realistic scenarios, interactive group work, and activities that fostered a supportive atmosphere, such as role-plays and problem-solving tasks related to business situations. The materials also sought to lower anxiety by providing scaffolding, clear instructions, and opportunities to listen multiple times, enabling students to experience success and to build confidence. Expert reviewers judged that the materials aligned well with vocational objectives and integrated the three Deep Learning components in a coherent and practical way.

Curriculum experts and English teachers rated the developed materials using structured validation checklist. Overall mean scores indicated that the product met high standards of validity in terms of content relevance, linguistic accuracy, alignment with the Business Management curriculum, and integration of meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning. Qualitative comments suggested minor revisions, such as clarifying instructions, adjusting the difficulty of certain tasks, and expanding examples of business jargon to better match local workplace conditions. These suggestions were incorporated into subsequent revisions, enhancing clarity and contextual fit.

Experts particularly appreciated the explicit linkage between listening texts and authentic vocational scenarios, noting that such contextualization can increase learners' sense of purpose and facilitate the transfer of skills to real work environments. They also highlighted the value of built-in reflective activities that encourage students to think about how they listen, not only what they hear, thus fostering metacognitive awareness. The presence of enjoyable collaborative tasks was seen as an important contribution to creating a positive classroom climate conducive to risk-taking and experimentation in language use.

The implementation of the materials over one semester resulted in substantial improvement in students' listening performance as measured by pre- and post-test scores. The mean pre-test score was 54.60, whereas the mean post-test score increased to 74.53, yielding a mean gain of 19.93 points. In terms of mastery level, no student met the predetermined mastery criterion before the intervention, whereas after using the developed materials, 53.33% of the students achieved mastery. The normalized gain (N-Gain) was 0.439, which falls into the medium effectiveness category, indicating that the intervention produced meaningful, though not maximal, improvement.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of listening achievement.

Measure	Pre-test	Post-test	Interpretation
Mean listening score	54.60	74.53	Mean gain = 19.93 (notable increase)
Proportion of students achieving mastery	0%	53.33%	Large rise in mastery level
Normalized gain (N-Gain)	–	0.439	Medium effectiveness category

These findings suggest that the developed materials had a substantial positive impact on the students' listening comprehension. The 20-point increase in the mean score aligns with the notion that contextualized, strategy-rich, and engaging listening instruction facilitates deeper processing and retention of oral input. The shift from zero to more than half of the class achieving mastery indicates that the materials were particularly helpful for learners who initially struggled, supporting the claim that deep learning-based design can benefit lower-proficiency students in vocational settings.

Observation data and student feedback provided convergent evidence that the materials enhanced engagement and affective responses toward listening activities. During implementation, students were more active in pre-listening discussions, more willing to ask questions, and more involved in pair and group tasks than in previous lessons using traditional materials. Teachers reported that learners seemed less anxious and more enthusiastic, especially when listening tasks were clearly related to familiar business situations and when they could collaborate with peers (Rusmaladewi et al., 2025).

Student feedback forms indicated that learners perceived the materials to be more interesting, relevant, and enjoyable than those used previously. Many students commented that they could better understand the purpose of listening activities and felt more confident because the tasks were supported by vocabulary preparation and multiple listening opportunities. These affective changes are consistent with the joyful learning component of the framework, suggesting that positive emotions and reduced anxiety can amplify cognitive engagement and persistence (Huiling, 2025).

The quantitative and qualitative findings can be interpreted through the lens of meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning. First, meaningful learning was evident in students' improved ability to comprehend business-related spoken texts, which likely resulted from the strong connection between the listening content and their vocational interests and prior knowledge. By hearing conversations about job tasks, customer service, and workplace communication, students can anchor new language forms and structures in familiar situational schemas, facilitating comprehension and recall (Balansag, 2025).

Second, mindful learning was promoted through the inclusion of strategy-focused tasks and reflective prompts that encouraged learners to plan their listening, monitor their understanding, and evaluate their performance. Students' ability to identify main ideas, details, and implied meanings improved, reflecting a more efficient use of top-down and bottom-up processing. Teachers observed that learners became more aware of specific difficulties, such as missing key words or losing concentration, and began to adopt strategies such as note-taking and selective listening to address these issues (Arofah et al., 2025).

Third, joyful learning contributed to the observed gains by creating an emotionally supportive atmosphere that reduced students' fear of failure and encouraged experimentation. Interactive activities, realistic dialogues, and collaborative tasks made listening less intimidating and more enjoyable, which in turn appears to have increased students' participation and effort. Learners' positive evaluations of the materials' enjoyment and relevance suggest that the affective filter was lowered, enabling a more effective intake of spoken input (Angco et al., 2025).

Taken together, these results indicate that integrating Deep Learning principles into listening materials can enhance not only test scores but also motivation, confidence, and learner autonomy. While the N-Gain score indicates medium rather than high effectiveness, this level of improvement is notable given the relatively short implementation period and the students' initial difficulties. These findings support the argument that vocational English instruction should systematically incorporate contextualized content, strategy training, and affect-supportive design to prepare students for real-world communication challenges (Singh, 2025).

Limitations and Implications

Despite its positive outcomes, this study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. The research was conducted in a single vocational school with one class of Business Management students, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other institutions, programs, or regions. The duration of implementation, one semester, may not capture the long-term retention of listening gains or the durability of affective changes.

Additionally, the focus on listening means that the potential benefits for other skills, such as speaking, reading, and writing, were not systematically assessed.
Nevertheless, this study offers important implications for teachers, curriculum developers, and policy-makers. English teachers in vocational schools are encouraged to adopt Deep Learning principles by selecting or designing materials that directly reflect learners' vocational contexts, embedding strategy instruction, and creating enjoyable, low-anxiety listening experiences. Curriculum developers can use this research as a model for integrating vocally relevant listening units into ESP syllabi, ensuring alignment between language education and workplace demands. Educational institutions and policy-makers may support professional development and resource allocation that enable teachers to implement such approaches, including access to audio equipment and authentic materials.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study developed and evaluated English listening teaching materials for Grade 12 Business Management students at SMK YPK Medan, based on a Deep Learning framework that integrates meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning. Using an R&D approach and the ADDIE model, the research produced a set of vocationally contextualized materials that were validated by experts and implemented in an authentic classroom setting. The quantitative results showed substantial improvements in the mean listening scores, mastery levels, and normalized gain, while the qualitative data indicated heightened engagement, reduced anxiety, and positive learner perceptions of relevance and enjoyment. The findings demonstrate that contextualized, strategy-rich, and affect-supportive listening materials can significantly enhance vocational learners' listening competence and contribute to more human-centered and motivating English instruction. Although the study is limited by its single-site scope and focus on one skill and program, it provides a workable model for designing ESP listening materials in similar contexts and underscores the value of integrating Deep Learning principles into vocational language education. Future research may extend this work by exploring longitudinal effects, applying the framework to other skills and vocational fields, and incorporating technology-enhanced listening environments to further enrich learning experiences.

Funding Statement

"No external funding was received for this study."

Ethical Compliance

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Data Access Statement

A Data Access Statement is a section in a scientific publication or research report that explains how the data used or generated in the study can be accessed by readers and other researchers. This statement aims to promote transparency, support research reproducibility, and comply with open-access policies, where applicable.
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   - "The data supporting this study are openly available in Zenodo at [DOI:10.xxxx/zenodo.xxxx]."
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- Compliance: Adheres to the policies of funding agencies or journals that require open access to data.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

The authors declare that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with financial interests in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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