

BLENDED LEARNING MULTIMEDIA DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT ENGLISH TRAINING AT BINA NUSANTARA UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

In 2011, Bina Nusantara University put developing its people as the first priority, including developing English language proficiency. This development programs had been carried out since then. Some types of English trainings were given for the lecturers and staffs for some certain of times. Since the time provided for the trainings was limited, it was needed to support their language development by providing an autonomous learning through a website multimedia. This article aims to first describe the steps and result of the multimedia and second to find out whether the designed multimedia was useful for learners to develop their English. The multimedia focused on learning tenses which were needed in their field of work. The process was started by designing the objectives and the level of the target learners' English proficiency. The process was continued by designing pre-test, the material, and the post test of each tense. To find out whether the designed multimedia was useful to develop the learners English the multimedia on simple present tense was tested to random respondents. By the end of applying this multimedia, a questionnaire was given to the respondents. The result was then analyzed qualitatively. The result shows that the multimedia on simple present tense is easy to follow and useful to develop their knowledge and skills in English.

Keywords: English training, autonomous learning, multimedia, tenses

ABSTRAK

Sejak 2011 Universitas Bina Nusantara memutuskan pengembangan pendidik dan tenaga kependidikan menjadi prioritas utama, termasuk penguasaan bahasa Inggris. Karena keterbatasan waktu, maka disiapkan pembelajaran mandiri (autonomous learning) melalui multimedia di Internet. Artikel bertujuan untuk menggambarkan langkah dan hasil multimedia, serta manfaat multimedia bagi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Multimedia berfokus pada pembelajaran tenses yang sangat bermanfaat bagi pembelajar. Proses dimulai dari perancangan tujuan dan tingkat penguasaan bahasa Inggris pembelajar. Kemudian, dilanjutkan dengan tes awal, materi ajar, dan tes lanjutan untuk setiap tenses. Uji coba dilakukan dengan multimedia berisikan materi simple present tense pada responden yang dipilih secara random. Kuesioner juga dibagikan pada saat akhir uji coba. Data dianalisis secara kualitatif. Hasil uji coba menunjukkan bahwa konten multimedia yang berisi simple present tense mudah diikuti dan bermanfaat bagi pengembangan pengetahuan dan keterampilan berbahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci: pelatihan bahasa Inggris, pembelajaran mandiri, multimedia, tenses

INTRODUCTION

Bina Nusantara University through its development activities is eager to fulfill the vision to become a world-class university in 2020. Since 2011, Bina Nusantara University has put developing its people as the first priority, including developing English language proficiency. These development programs have been carried out since then.

Some types of English trainings are given for the lecturers and staffs for some certain of times. The trainings are classified in one area for staffs and four areas for lecturers. The training for staffs, in the areas of ESP (English for specific Purposes), consists of four types of training: English Written Business Communication, English for Secretary, English for Presentation and General English. The four main areas for lecturers consist of General English, English Mastery, English for Teaching Purposes, and English for Academic Purposes. Since the time provided for the trainings is limited, it is needed to support their language development by providing an autonomous learning through a website multimedia.

This multimedia is hoped to support them to develop their language outside of the classroom. The idea to develop this multimedia is also based on need that one or two sessions in each English training discusses grammar. Grammar is very important to learn the language better, which involves structure, parts of speech, tenses etc (Kirankumar & Patil, 2011). Since there is any similarity topic i.e. tenses, it is necessary to develop a multimedia which can be used for all participants joining the trainings. Besides, the way to support their learning should be interesting and easy to make them attract to learn by themselves (Brown, 2001). Therefore, the aims of this paper are first to describe the steps in designing multimedia and its result. Second is to find out whether the designed multimedia is useful for learners to develop their English by learning it online. The multimedia focuses on learning tenses which are needed in their field of work.

Actually the topic of multimedia in language learning is not the new topic in research since there are many researchers have carried out this topic for their researches as Ferry and Brown (1995), Chang and Lehman (2002), Kabata and Wiebe (2010), and Mahajan (2012). They focused on the use of multimedia in language learning. However these researches mainly focused on how to apply the multimedia in language learning for students in the classroom while this paper focus of the designing of the multimedia for staffs and lecturers outside the classroom.

There are various definitions of multimedia. Some ideas come up that multimedia is the type of power point presentation only, other said that it is the audio only. Mishra and Sharma (2012) stated that multimedia is defined as an integration of multiple media elements including audio, video, graphics, text, animation, etc. into one synergetic and symbiotic whole that results in more benefits for the end users. According to Mahajan (2011) there two types of multimedia Linear and non linier Multimedia. Linear Multimedia tools generally progress from one screen to the next and are commonly used by instructors as a supplementary teaching aid while Non-linear Multimedia offer viewers interactivity, control of progress, and choice in their construction of knowledge. Since it is an integration

of many media elements, it is necessary to design in what elements used to design the multimedia.

There are many phases in designing a multi media; planning, designing, producing, testing and revising. Each phase has a number of activities associated with it and has its own characteristics. As the first phase, designing multimedia is not as simple it needs planning. Planning for multimedia is a much broader consideration than the design and development issues. Planning contain the consideration of the purpose and the implementation afterwards. It is not only talking about what type of multimedia but more about the objectives for the users after the multimedia has been used (Frey, 2010). The success of the users in using the multimedia is put on the consideration in the planning period.

In the phase of designing, functional specifications and content script are necessarily used (Bailey, Konstan, & Carlis, 2012). Details such as the design of each screen, the type of navigation to be used, and the interactive characteristics of the interface are worked out. Flowcharts and storyboards are created to reflect these specifications. Detailed timelines are created and major milestones are established for the critical phases of the project.

The next phase is producing. In this phase, it is time to develop scripts, artwork, animation, video, audio, and interface. Once the scripts are developed, it is needed to have a language check to the language experts to avoid mistakes. The following step is testing. When a multimedia is completed, it is needed to test it to other party to find out the strength and the weaknesses of the result. From the comment of the users, then the phase come to the end called revising. In this phase, some comments then are used to fix the multimedia.

METHODS

Descriptive qualitative was used as the method of this paper. It was done in two steps. The first step was preparing the multimedia; and the second step was handling a try-out to have participants' ideas about the multimedia through questionnaire.

There were some steps carried out in producing the multimedia. The first step was planning. In this step, Corporate Learning Directorate (CLD) and Language Center (LC) discussed the type of multimedia for tenses, designing the objectives and the level of target learners' proficiency. The content of the multimedia was placed as the priority as well. The content consisted of pretest, the content: the pattern, the use and the function, and the post test. Then, it was continued to type the script and asked the expert to check the script. After finishing the script, the storyboard was designed by an expert from Instructional Design Center (IDC). Upon the completion of the storyboard, it came to the next step by checking and revising. Once it was revised then the audio recording was done. The last step was compiling the audio and the text multimedia.

To gain the feedback of the multimedia designed, some steps were taken to action. The first one was the tryout of the multimedia to some participants chosen. The participants were university students and staffs who accessed Self Access Learning Center (SALLC).

They were asked to apply this multimedia and given a questionnaire to fill out. This questionnaire was aimed to seek some developing comments from the participants which were finally used for fixing the multimedia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Parts of Multimedia

This multimedia in simple present tense is divided into some parts: the opening credit, the pretest, the content and the post test. Below are the screenshot of the multimedia

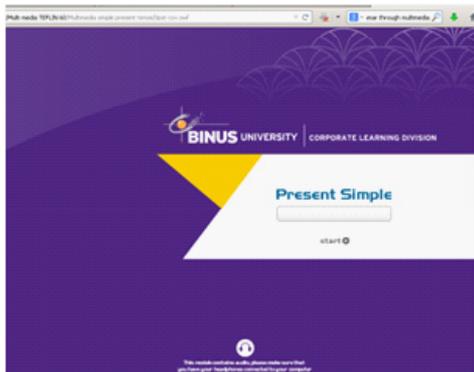


Figure 1 The opening credit

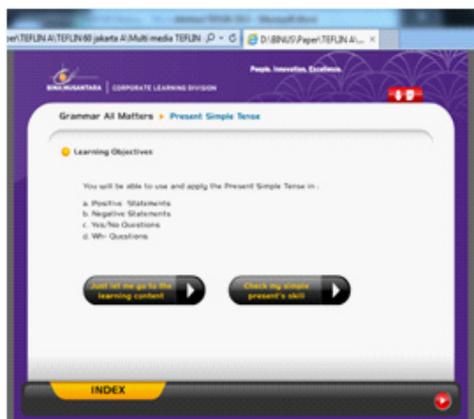


Figure 2 The pretest



Figure 3 The content

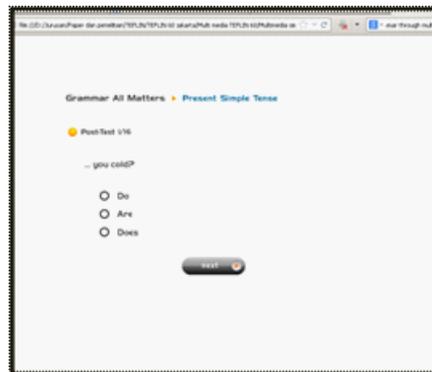


Figure 4 The post-test

The opening credit contains the warmest welcome and the clear instruction on how to use the multimedia. There are two options offered whether the participants are going to do the pretest or directly go to the content. Pretest consist of 16 question to choose and will be randomly appeared on the screen. The content itself is divided into three parts; the use, the form and the pattern. The last is the post test. After the users do the post test, the score will be appeared on the screen. When the users get lower score that the expected score, there will be an offer to be back to the content or exit the multimedia.

Result of the try out

In this try out session, random participants were invited to do try out of the multimedia. Fifty participants were asked to fill the questionnaire. There were two types of questionnaire, first the closed questions about the multimedia, the content, the audio, and the general ideas.

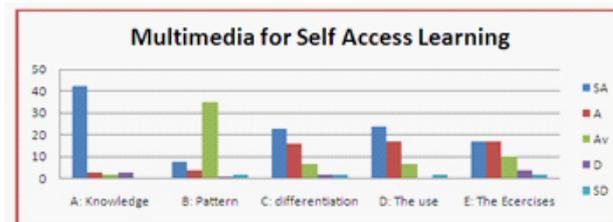


Figure 5 Multimedia for Self Access Learning

From Figure 5, it can be seen that from the usage for self access learning, generally more than 80% participants agreed that this multimedia can be used for self access learning. Especially, part A which asked whether this multimedia can develop their knowledge about simple present tense, more than 80% agreed. However, in part B, less than 20% agreed that the pattern is easy to understand. Part C was about how to differentiate the patterns in simple present tense easily. About 80% agreed that it was easy to differentiate it. Part D was about whether they could learn the use of simple present tense easily, about 80% agreed about it. More than 60% agreed whether they could do the exercises in simple present tense correctly.

The second section of the questionnaire was about the content of the multimedia. Here is the result (Figure 6).

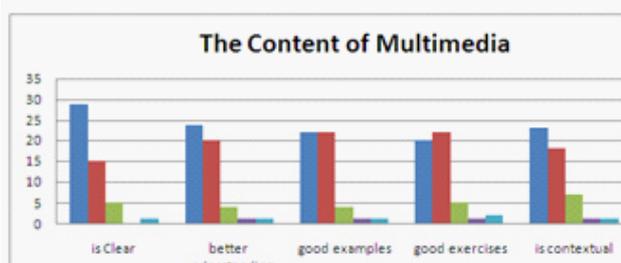


Figure 6 The Content of the Multimedia

This section consists of five questions. Generally the result shows the good result. In part A, almost 90% agreed that the content was clear and gave better understanding. Moreover, they agreed that it gave good exercises and was contextual.

Section three is the questionnaire about the audio in the multimedia (Figure 7). There were five questions given. The result is as follow.

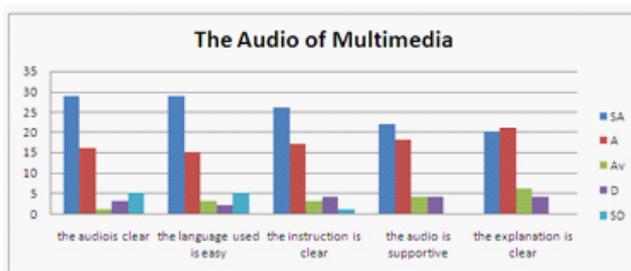


Figure 7 The Audio of the Multimedia

Figure 7 shows that overall the audio was good. In the five parts, each shows the high percentage of agreement. Moreover, none were strongly disagree whether the audio is supportive the multimedia and whether the explanation was clear.

The last section of the questionnaire was the general idea of the multimedia (Figure 8). Here is the result.

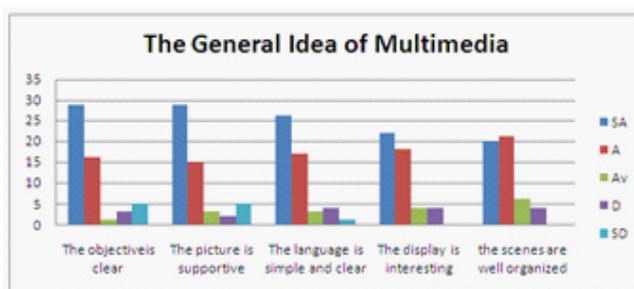


Figure 8 The general idea of multimedia

As the others, this section asked five general questions. When they were asked whether the objectives were clear and whether the picture was supportive, almost 90% agreed about it. Almost 90% also agreed that the language used was simple and clear. On the contrary, less than 10% disagreed that the display was interesting and the scenes were well organized.

The participants were also asked to give free comments and ideas about the multimedia. There were three questions asked. The first was about their general ideas about the multimedia. Some answered that this multimedia could help them to understand simple present tense better and very useful, especially for the beginners since it gave the chance for the users to practice it repeatedly in different types of exercises.

Second, when they were asked about the strengths and the weaknesses of the multimedia there were many ideas about it. Participants said that it gave them clear understanding about simple present tense. However, some parts of the audio were not clear. Some participants aid that the picture were not interesting although the content were great. This multi media provided some good exercises and the score or the users but it did not give any discussion about the mistakes. Furthermore, there was no information about the level of difficulties of each question.

The last question given was about the users' ideas to develop this multimedia better. Some various suggestions were given. Most participants suggested that the audio should be developed clearer especially the spelling. The pretest and exercises should be completed with the discussion to make the users understand the mistakes. The exercises should also contain the use of this tense in real life so later the user could practice it in real life. The picture should be more alive and interesting or even use interesting animation Moreover, some suggested to use the real video of real life not only audio and picture. They suggested that the voice should be all English native speakers.

CONCLUSION

The developing multimedia as a supportive self access learning material for English training for lecturers and staffs in Binus University was developed. It was developed by following the steps of designing the multimedia. The result of the tryout shows that it was very helpful for the learners and easy to follow. Although generally participants were happy with the result, there are still some weaknesses to fix.

Some suggestions were given to make the multimedia better in the future, especially the appearance, the exercises and the audio in some part which were not very clear. The explanation should use the real video to give better understanding of real life.

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