Designing Authentic EFL Listening and Speaking Materials Using CEFR Framework

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Abstract   This conceptual study addresses the gap by proposing an integrated model that combines receptive and productive skills within a unified CEFR-based instructional sequence. The study outlines structured stages consisting of pre-, while-, and post-listening phases accompanied by communicative speaking tasks such as role plays, collaborative problem-solving, and short oral presentations. The proposed model underscores the pedagogical importance of connecting authentic input with meaningful output while utilizing CEFR descriptors as evaluation benchmarks. Consequently, this study contributes to both pedagogical and policy perspectives [1]by offering a framework that enhances communicative competence and strengthens the international alignment of English language education in Indonesia.

Keywords: CEFR; Material Design; Listening Skills; Speaking Skills; English Language Teaching.

Abstrak   Studi konseptual ini berupaya mengisi kesenjangan dengan mengusulkan sebuah model terpadu yang menggabungkan keterampilan reseptif dan produktif dalam urutan pembelajaran berbasis CEFR. Penelitian ini merumuskan tahapan pembelajaran yang terstruktur meliputi fase pra-menyimak, saat menyimak, dan pasca-menyimak, yang dilengkapi dengan tugas berbicara komunikatif seperti bermain peran (role play), pemecahan masalah secara kolaboratif, dan presentasi lisan singkat. Model yang diusulkan ini menegaskan pentingnya menghubungkan input autentik dengan output yang bermakna, sambil memanfaatkan deskriptor CEFR sebagai tolok ukur evaluasi. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dari sisi pedagogis maupun kebijakan, dengan menawarkan kerangka kerja yang dapat meningkatkan kompetensi komunikatif sekaligus memperkuat keselarasan internasional pendidikan bahasa Inggris di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: CEFR; Perancangan Bahan Ajar; Keterampilan Menyimak; Keterampilan Berbicara; Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris.

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INTRODUCTION

Listening and speaking are fundamental components of communicative competence, playing a central role in meaningful interaction within English language learning. Yet, in many Indonesian EFL classrooms, these two skills continue to receive less instructional attention than reading and writing. This imbalance often leads to students experiencing difficulties in understanding authentic spoken texts and expressing their ideas fluently in real-life communication. Learners commonly struggle when exposed to natural speech that features different accents, fast delivery, and unfamiliar vocabulary (Mahmudah, 2025; Nurlatifah, 2024). In speaking activities, they frequently depend on memorized phrases rather than engaging in spontaneous exchanges.

A major factor contributing to these challenges is the limited availability of authentic and level-appropriate listening and speaking materials aligned with international frameworks such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Many classroom resources rely on simplified passages or scripted dialogues that do not reflect genuine communication, thereby restricting learners' exposure to natural language use. Given that the CEFR emphasizes fluency, accuracy, and interactional competence, the absence of aligned materials weakens instructional coherence and slows learners' progress.

Research on the implementation of CEFR has expanded considerably. (North & Piccardo, 2016) demonstrate that the framework offers structured guidance for curriculum development and assessment practices, while (Byram & Parmenter, 2012) highlight its adaptability across educational settings. Studies on listening underscore the importance of authentic input for enhancing comprehension skills (Liu & Yeung, 2023; Martín & González, 2025), whereas research on speaking shows that CEFR-based activities can significantly improve learners' communicative performance and confidence (Liu & Chen, 2025; Thornbury, 2005). Despite these contributions, most studies examine listening and speaking separately or focus primarily on assessment, leaving the integrated design of CEFR-based materials underexplored.

To address this gap, this conceptual paper introduces a model that integrates listening and speaking within a unified, CEFR-oriented instructional sequence. The model connects pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities with communicative speaking tasks, using CEFR descriptors as benchmarks for instructional alignment. Through this approach, the study seeks to support teachers in creating authentic, level-appropriate materials and to strengthen the quality of English language instruction in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study uses a conceptual research design that relies on an extensive review of theoretical and empirical literature. Field data are not required because the purpose of this paper is to construct a model for CEFR-based listening and speaking materials, rather than to evaluate learner outcomes or implement a classroom intervention. A conceptual approach is therefore adequate for developing a framework that is both theoretically informed and pedagogically relevant. The scope of this study centers on CEFR-aligned listening and speaking materials for Indonesian EFL learners, particularly those at A2–B1 proficiency levels, as these bands reflect the typical challenges faced by secondary school students. The proposed model is situated within the Indonesian EFL context and aims to support teachers working under the Merdeka Curriculum.

The sources reviewed in this study were collected from major academic databases, including Scopus, ERIC, and Google Scholar, covering works published between 2011 and 2025. Only peer-reviewed articles, CEFR reference documents, and scholarly books discussing CEFR descriptors, oral skill instruction, and material development were included. Publications that lacked theoretical relevance or pedagogical significance were excluded from the analysis. The analysis followed three main steps. First, key themes on CEFR implementation and oral skills pedagogy were identified through literature mapping. Second, a comparative examination was conducted to determine how previous studies addressed CEFR-based listening and speaking instruction. Third, the relevant findings were synthesized to develop an integrated conceptual model for CEFR-aligned material design.

This approach allows the study to draw together significant theoretical insights and produce a practical framework that can guide the development of listening and speaking materials for Indonesian EFL classrooms.

DISCUSSION

The development of CEFR-based listening and speaking materials requires a clear alignment between communicative goals, targeted competencies, and the types of language used in real interactions. According to CEFR principles, communicative competence involves more than grammatical accuracy. It includes the ability to interpret meaning, negotiate understanding, and interact appropriately in social situations (Council of Europe, 2020; North & Piccardo, 2016) For this reason, instructional materials need to incorporate authentic input such as everyday conversations, short monologues, or classroom discussions while still

matching the learners' proficiency levels. In this conceptual model, listening and speaking are viewed as interdependent rather than separate skills. Listening tasks help learners notice discourse patterns, functional expressions, and pragmatic cues that later support oral production. Speaking activities then require learners to reuse and expand the language they encountered during listening. This reciprocal process reflects the CEFR's emphasis on integrating receptive and productive skills as part of communicative competence (Piccardo & North, 2020).

The listening component follows the conventional stages of pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. This study strengthens these stages by embedding CEFR performance descriptors that guide what learners at different proficiency levels should be able to do. Learners at the A2 level may focus on identifying familiar expressions or basic information from short, slow-paced texts. At higher levels, such as B2, learners may be expected to understand speakers' attitudes, recognize cohesive devices, or evaluate opinions (Martín & González, 2025). Using descriptors in this way ensures that listening tasks are appropriate for learners' developmental stages and aligned with international standards.

To reinforce the connection between listening and speaking, each listening activity is followed by a communicative task that draws directly from the input. After listening to a dialogue or short spoken text, learners may participate in role plays, information-gap exchanges, problem-solving discussions, or short presentations. These tasks correspond to CEFR descriptors for spoken interaction and production (Council of Europe, 2020; Thornbury, 2005). For example, after listening to an A2-level conversation about weekend plans, students might work in pairs to negotiate their own schedule using similar expressions. At the B1 to B2 level, a short news report can be followed by a small-group discussion where learners summarize the information, express opinions, or propose solutions. These examples illustrate how receptive input supports productive language use.

Implementing this CEFR-oriented model in Indonesian EFL classrooms offers both opportunities and challenges. On the positive side, the model aligns with the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes competence-based learning and international benchmarks. Teachers gain clearer guidance for designing communicative lessons, and learners benefit from transparent learning targets that support their motivation and self-regulation. However, challenges remain. Many schools still have limited access to authentic audio materials and technological resources, and teachers vary in their familiarity with CEFR descriptors. These issues may reduce consistency in classroom implementation and highlight the need for

ongoing teacher training, curriculum support, and contextual adaptation (Rahman & Park, 2024; Tomlinson, 2011). In sum, the proposed conceptual model integrates listening and speaking within a single instructional cycle guided by CEFR descriptors. By combining authentic input with structured sequencing and communicative tasks, the model supports learners' development of both receptive and productive skills. It also demonstrates how international proficiency standards can be adapted to Indonesian classroom contexts, contributing to both theoretical discussion and practical improvement in English language teaching (Little & Figueras, 2023; Richards, 2017).

CONCLUSION

This study introduced a CEFR-based conceptual model designed to integrate listening and speaking instruction within Indonesian EFL classrooms. The framework connects receptive and productive skills through a structured sequence guided by CEFR descriptors, thereby offering clearer direction for teachers when planning objectives, classroom tasks, and assessment procedures. By emphasizing the use of authentic input and communicative tasks, the model aligns with the Merdeka Curriculum's focus on competency-based and internationally referenced teaching.

Although the framework provides valuable theoretical insights, it has not yet been examined through classroom implementation. Future research is needed to test its practicality, measure its impact on learners, and explore how it can be adapted across different educational levels. Additional studies may also investigate teacher preparation and digital resources to support CEFR-oriented material development.

Overall, this paper contributes to the ongoing discussion on CEFR-informed instruction by proposing a flexible and context-sensitive model for connecting listening and speaking skills. The framework has the potential to enhance communicative competence among Indonesian EFL learners and strengthen alignment with global proficiency standards.

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