

# **FLIPPED LEARNING TO DEVELOP STUDENTS' LISTENING PERFORMANCE AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL**

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## **Abstract**

This article describes the use of flipped learning to develop students' listening performance. Flipped learning is a pedagogical approach which switches in-class instruction with at-home practicing time using technology. It can be the most preferable alternative in teaching listening since it gives students opportunity to listen and learn new material at their own pace. Thus, this article provides information about advantages of flipped learning which will be beneficial for both teacher and students as well as parents.

**Keywords-** flipped learning, listening performance, technology

## **Introduction**

Listening activities in secondary level are typically carried out by playing audio or tape recorder into the class, answering questions provided, and discussing correct answers together. However, these kind of sequences tend to be monotonous and boring. As time allocated for listening is very limited, the students have less opportunity to get used to listening English in actual use. In Senior High School, for example, English is only twice a week and only few meetings for listening section. It is definitely what makes the students not familiar with English since classroom listening is the only source where they listen to English. Besides, in all actuality is that the students are not given much time to concentrate or focus on listening skill since schools usually give more attention on grammar, reading, and vocabulary. By looking at those truth, teachers are prosecuted to maximize limited time to help students reach high listening performance.

Fortunately, along with listening problems, the remarkable entry of technology becomes one of the most preferable alternatives in language teaching and learning. The outstanding development of technology is going to be very beneficial for listening activity. There are lots of choices which technology offers that we can use to learn English: computer, internet, audio cassette, e-book, videos, phone application,

power point, and many others. They all offer many advantages. One of them is that developing multimedia technology and its application to teaching, featuring audio, visual, animation effects comes into full play in English class teaching and sets of favorable platform for reform and exploration on English teaching model in the new era (El-Bassuony, 2016:151). Another advantage is that learning English turns to be more interesting that allows the students to choose the most convenient way to learn English. It also offers the flexibility that learning English can be anytime and anywhere with the use of mobile phone.

Following the development of technology in teaching and learning English, flipped learning (FL) is considered as one of the active learning approaches that focuses on switching in-class instruction time with at-home practicing time using technology, especially videos (El-Bassuony, 2016:150). Clark (2013 as cited in El-Bassuony, 2016:150) stated that FL is an instructional approach that intends to improve student engagement and performance by moving direct classroom instruction outside the school with the help of technology tools and moving homework and tasks with concepts inside the classroom via learning activities.

This article is directed to show that using flipped learning in listening activity, in which the in-class time is switched with at home time using technology, offers many advantages to help the students reach better listening performance. By taking advantages of virtual lectures (meaning that they still have a ‘teacher’ in their home namely technology to assist them in practicing listening), class time can be used for enrichment activities, repetition of materials which the students have learned, or having more listening materials which are not possible to be discussed in the classroom. For listening activity, the students are going to have more time to listen to the materials before and after classroom sessions. It makes them more prepared and comprehend the materials effectively because they have listened to the materials before coming to the class and do enrichment by themselves after the class.

To show further use of flipped learning to develop students’ listening performance, the following discussion covers a definition of listening competence,

types of listening, and listening comprehension. To avoid ambiguity, there is explanation of flipped learning activity. As the final part of this article, it describes the use of flipped learning to develop the secondary students' listening performance.

### **Listening Competence**

Listening traditionally was described as a passive process where ears were receivers into which information was got, and all the listeners had to do was passively register the message (Xu, 2011). However, today we recognize that listening is an active process, and that good listeners are just as active when listening as speakers are when speaking. Listening is giving attention to certain sound to get information. In English class, listening activity usually refers to an activity of paying attention to and effectively interpret what other people (teacher, other students, or recording materials) saying. Then, we can say that listening competence is basically an ability to pay attention and effectively interpret what other people are saying. Having listening competence means that the students are able to be engaged in the process as the speaker. Being a speaker is when, as the result of the listening process, they are able to understand and 'speak' or express what they have understood correctly and accordingly. In other words, the students have an ability to tell the information from the listening activity. In the end, if it is possible, there will be an activity called as 'communication' which is related to listening comprehension.

### **Listening Comprehension**

Listening comprehension refers to the process of understanding speech and it concentrates on role of linguistic units such as phonemes, words, and grammatical structures and the role of listener's anticipations, the situation and context, previous knowledge, and the subject (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). When we talk about listening comprehension, it is strongly related to an ability of students to acquire information based on what they hear or listen. This affects students' ability and quality in speaking. If learners want to speak, they should first learn to understand the spoken language they hear. As Hamouda (2013) stated that listening is essential not only as a receptive skill but also to the development of spoken language proficiency.

It is very important to teach strategies of listening to the students. Basically most researchers conclude that there are mainly three strategies in listening comprehension: cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective, which can change based on students' level. Cognitive strategy is a problem-solving technique that students try to guess the meaning from the context. It is related to comprehending and accumulating input in short term memory or long-term memory for later access. The next one is metacognitive strategy which is a technique used by students to control their learning through planning, checking, assessing, and changing. According to Abdalhamid (2012), there are two kinds of metacognitive skill: knowledge of cognition which deals with students' consciousness of what is going on and regulation of cognition which deals with what students should do to listen effectively. The last strategy is socio-affective which is technique that listeners use to cooperate with others, to check their comprehension, and to reduce their apprehension (Abdalhamid, 2012). In this strategy, students should be able to feel confident and raise their own motivation in listening activities.

There are basically two factors which influence listening comprehension process: internal and external factors. Internal factor includes students' knowledge of vocabulary that the more vocabulary they know, the easier they acquire information. Listening to conversation in a train station, for example, there may be vocabulary like railway, platform, passenger, compartment, etc. It will be easier to understand the conversation for the students who know those vocabulary. Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) stated that knowing the meaning of words, the students will be interested and motivated and can have a positive impact on the students' listening comprehension ability. It is also related to the students' background knowledge. According to Hamouda (2013), background knowledge about a topic is an important variable that can influence listening. Even if a person has mastered the skill of analyzing speech accurately and automatically, lack of basic background knowledge can cause reduced listening comprehension (Samuels, 1984; Hamouda, 2013 ). Another internal factor is the students' motivation whether they really want to acquire the information. It is

about their willingness to focus on the listening activity and for what purpose they listen to certain source.

Along with internal factors, there are also some external factors which affect listening comprehension. Facilities provided by the school, for example tape recorder, sound system, English laboratory, are some of the external factors which affect students' listening comprehension. A school that has English laboratory is way more prepared for doing listening activity, apart from whether the quality is good. Another one is time provided. Both junior and senior high school do not have much time to conduct listening session since they focus more on grammar, vocabulary, and reading which are requirements of final examination. Furthermore, there may be cultural differences. If the listening task is completely different cultural material, for instance halloween party or thanksgiving day which do not exist in Indonesia, it then becomes the responsibility of the teacher to give them background knowledge about those unfamiliar activities. In addition, length and speed of listening can be the next external factor. If the speakers speak too fast, the students may face difficulty on what they are talking about while they cannot make it slower. They will need more repetitions of the listening materials, in which unfortunately they do not have much time.

Talking more about listening comprehension, there are four components of listening comprehension (Chastain, 1988; Ahmadi, 2016). The first component is the ability to differentiate all sounds, intonation patterns, and voice qualities in the second language and to analyze the same sound between those sounds and the native language. The second one is being able to understand the whole message that the speakers are delivered. The third one is the ability to hold that message in one's auditory memory until it can be processed. The development of students' auditory memory is by the help of teachers who should make sure that the students hear as much as language possible. It means that English should be used in most of class-time. The teacher also should know the ability of the students since he/she needs to

give materials from simpler to complex sentences, which should be slow and continuous. Next, the last one is comprehension which means the speech reception at the syntactic, lexical, pragmatic, and discourse levels. This one is the highest level in listening comprehension since the students are already able to establish the context, activate related background knowledge and use it to predict the idea of the message that the speakers want to deliver.

### **Types of Listening**

There are particularly two kinds of listening: intensive and extensive listening. According to Harmer (2007), students can improve their listening skills and gain valuable input through a combination of intensive and extensive listening material and procedures. The first one, intensive listening activity, usually takes place in the classroom, where the teacher helps students focus on language components which can affect meaning. The roles of teacher are as an organiser who manages the class, machine operator who refers to the one who handle media used, feedback organiser who should always be ready to give feedback for the students, and prompter when students have listened to a recording for comprehension purposes, we can prompt them listen to it again in order to notice a variety of language and spoken features (Harmer, 2007). The second one, extensive listening, is a listening activity where the teacher encourages students to choose what they want to listen and to do so for pleasure and general language improvement. The purpose is simply to help the students improve their listening skill. It usually takes place outside the classroom and the students can choose any listening materials by themselves based on their level and interest. Choosing any materials which they like is very good for flipped learning extended exercise.

Whether intensive or extensive listening, there are always challenges which are faced by both the teacher and students. According to Harmer (2007), for intensive listening using audio material, it is sometimes difficult to make sure that all students can hear the audio well, especially in a big classroom. If it is in English laboratory in which each student has one headphone, although the recorded material is audible, the

teacher still needs to check whether all headphones can work well. Another problem with recorded material in the classroom is that everyone has to listen at the same speed. Although it replicates the real situation, the students will be less satisfied and face difficulties to take information from the recording. Some challenges are also found in extensive listening. Since extensive listening is done outside the class, not all students will do the activity without teacher's control. It is the teacher's role to motivate and encourage them to do extensive listening. Moreover, extensive listening may be difficult to apply for students in lower levels. However, since it is extensive activity where they listen the materials individually, they have an opportunity to repeat the materials several times as they wish, and, furthermore, for lower levels students, it does not matter if they cannot get the whole information since the most important thing is firstly being familiar with English words.

### **Flipped Learning Activity**

The flipped classroom is a teaching method that provides teaching material by electronic means to learners at home and utilizes class time for practical application assignments or homework (Arnold-Garza, 2014). It is often simplified as 'school work at home and home work at school'. Arnold-Garza (2014) affirms that the flipped learning comes from the experiment with the concept of hybrid, or blended learning and problem based learning (PBL) which utilizes active learning techniques and technologies. It is a pedagogical approach where a direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creativity in the subject matter. Before discussing certain material, the teacher gives students listening material which can be a podcast, video, song, conversation record, etc. The students are instructed to listen to that material at home and come to the class 'bringing' the materials already on their mind.

In flipped learning, classroom activities are used as the enrichment and reinforcement of what the students have listened at their home. The activities can be

discussion, projects, and problem solving which can help them apply what they have learned and to cultivate their critical thinking as well as judging abilities. Group work or peer interaction is emphasized in class in which the students gain knowledge at the applying and evaluating levels. The homework that is used to be brought home is moved to the class. It can be said that students' self-learning activities, such as watching video and listening to recorded material, are scheduled before the class time. Therefore, according to the research conducted by Maninun & Kittichartchaowalit (2017), when the students attend to the class, they already have some theoretical knowledge and understanding of the issue that will be discussed in the classroom.

One of examples of flipped learning activities is done by El-Bassuony (2016) who used You Tube channel as the media in his class. He created English Club site in You Tube. Before the class, he uploaded a video in that site and the students had to watch the specified You Tube video at home, answer short quiz and write questions they found. Short quiz was only to make sure that all students had watched the video. In class time, they had discussion of the short quiz followed by pair and group work activity to help students to participate in different tasks and exchanging opinions. What El-Bassuony has done is one of applications of flipped learning which uses You Tube as the media. The good point is that there are still many media which can be applied especially for listening activities, for instance podcast, offline recorded materials provided by the teacher, or online recorded materials which utilize Edmodo or other group work platforms.

### **The Advantages of Using Flipped Learning**

Flipped learning for listening activity maximizes students' competence which is different from one another. One student may have listening competence more than others, but some may face difficulties if the listening activity is only during the class session. Flipped learning gives opportunities for all students to have more time in comprehending listening materials. They learn new materials at their own pace that they can pause the video or recording to take notes and process information. When



they miss certain part of recording, they can rewind and review until they understand the meaning.

Having good interaction between teacher and students will affect how the teaching and learning process are going since it is related to whether the class is active. Flipped learning is believed as one of the ways to increase teacher-students interaction. It is because in the classroom they have majority of the time to discuss, have question-answer session, and problem-solving session. Students can get the most out of class time by spending it on practical application, not on inactive lecture. Lecture content can be provided just as well through electronic means. Class time is often used for student collaboration, skill development, presentations, problem solving – all to foster a deeper understanding of content. It creates an effective use of class time for engaged learning through collaboration and cooperation (El-Bassuony, 2016).

In addition, the flipped learning class provides the opportunity for the teacher to act as a facilitator who supports students to become independent and self regulated learners. Learning by doing is a principle that teachers have used to shape classroom experiences in many ways. Flipped learning provides more time for active learning to happen in the classroom setting, and encourages instructors to view incorporation of active learning as a core component of teaching, rather than supplemental to a lecture. Students are given responsibility to watch and hear material given without teacher being around. In short, flipped learning not only helps students to develop their listening performance, but also encourages them to have better attitude. It supports objectives of learning that both cognitive and affective should be reached.

Flipped learning allows flexible environment and a variety learning models. Teachers can create flexible spaces in which students choose when and where they learn the materials before discussion or face-to-face meeting in the classroom. Correa (2015) elaborates that since the students have learned the materials before the classroom, the class time concerns on the activities which can increase retention. As the result, the students will find the materials more meaningful since the class time

focuses on practice (problem-solving) which maximizes the opportunities for multiple output. As Sarasyifa (2018) states that the activities of flipped learning can increase students engagement with the materials.

Last but not least, flipped learning allows parents and family members to know what their children watch and listen in which they also have opportunity to learn alongside their children. It can connect them closely to their children's education. Such thing can be a medium to give an open communication and trust between teacher and parents since today teacher and parents relationship sometimes becomes an issue that parents put less trust to the school educational system. Using flipped learning, parents know how their children use technology on the right and beneficial way.

### **Flipped Learning for Secondary Level**

The term secondary education in Indonesia basically refers to junior high school (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama*) and senior high school (*Sekolah Menengah Atas*). It includes approximately 10 to 19-year-old students, which the World Health Organization (WHO) defines them as the adolescent. According to McNeely and Blanchard (2009) in their book entitled *The Teen Years Explained: A Guide to Healthy Adolescent Development*, there are some cognitive developments experienced by the adolescent including: 1) the intellectual interests expand and gain in importance, 2) the ability to do work expands, 3) the planning capability expands, and 4) work habits become more defined. However, in this kind of super modern world where technology becomes a best friend, there may be some factors which influence their characteristics.

Have you ever heard about Generation Z? The present secondary students are categorized as this generation. They were born in the 1990's and raised in the 2000s during the most profound changes in the century which dominates by the existance of internet, smart phones, laptops, networks, and digital media (Bascha, 2011; Tulgan et al., 2013; Singh & Dangmei, 2018). They are more connected with electronics and

technologically sophisticated generation. Singh and Dangmei (2018) strongly advocate that Generation Z are a Do-It-Yourself generation who has an individual and straight way of communicating and social networking has a vital role in their lives. In addition, Coombs (2013) mentions that they tend to be lack of capability to solve problem, have not shown the ability to look at a situation, and make a decision. Based on those theories, it becomes the teachers' challenges to make the students keep being engaged in the materials when they are probably more interested in their gadgets.

The question that is then appeared will be: what kind of strategy that is suitable for the secondary students listening activity? Here, based on the aforementioned characteristics, the opportunity of applying the flipped learning takes place. Asaka et al. (2018) who carry out a study on applying flipped learning which focuses on Japanese junior high school students conclude that they legitimately believe that it can provide pedagogical implications to EFL education and the result shows that both the teachers and students give positive attitudes towards using the flipped classroom strategy. It is really possible to minimize the negative impacts of gadgets or laptops by utilizing them. Songs, for example, which are usually listened for enjoyment can be one of the materials of listening in the flipped classroom. The students are assigned to listen and understand particular song to be discussed in the classroom which can be the basis of further interesting and interactive discussion.

The important point is, Asaka et al. (2018) stated, that the flipped learning is probably not always successful. However, it gives such an optimistic answer for the current generation which is massively familiar with technology utilization. Kang (2015) points out that the key to the successful flipped learning model depends on how pre-preparation tasks and in-class activities are integrated effectively to obtain the advantages of a collaboration effect from both. The integration of self-learning (both online or offline) and in-class learning is not to make an intention that the key is only pre-class or they gain relatively less knowledge in class, but to make an improvement by balancing the two.

## Conclusion

The description has led to the conclusion that flipped learning is more advantageous to develop students' listening performance than traditional teacher-centered strategy of listening activity which usually only takes place inside the classroom. The students in the secondary level in this digital era who tend to get more interested in the activity using technology are expected to gain more excitement towards listening activities by maximizing its positive impacts. It gives an opportunity for students to choose when and where to listen to the listening materials after class. For parents, they can also learn alongside their children since students mostly do listening session at home. It connects them closely to their children's education. To conclude, the Flipped Learning is highly suggested for listening activities of secondary level students since it provides many advantages.

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