

FLIPPED CLASSROOM: CAN IT ENHANCE ENGLISH LISTENING COMPREHENSION FOR PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN CAMBODIA?

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Abstract

This research study focused on the effects of flipped classroom (FC) to EFL learners' listening comprehension. It aimed to explore the effectiveness of the flipped classroom in enhancing Cambodian pre-university students' English listening skills and investigate the students' opinions on the flipped classroom to enhance English listening comprehension. There are 30 Cambodian pre-university participants. In the present study, both quantitative and qualitative methods are applied. The results indicated that the flipped classroom enhances Cambodian pre-university students' English listening skills. The average scores of post-test ($M = 83.31$) was higher than the average scores of pre-test ($M = 72.88$). Base on the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, the learners had positive views on learning English via flipped classroom. They would like to study the other courses with flipped classroom. The results of this study could be a great help in guiding teaching of English listening to EFL teachers and improving English listening comprehension of EFL learners.

1 Introduction

In Cambodia, English is regarded as a key factor structuring both individual and institutional language choices for current and future employment perspectives. English is not only a language, but it is also a tool, a weapon, and a vehicle for employment criterion (Igawa, 2008). Cambodian learners have learned both in private and state schools, communication skills, especially, listening skills need to be improved (Clayton, 2008; Song, 2015). Listening, a primary skill people learn before learning how to read, write, and speak, is very significant for oral communication and education process. In modern educational system, listening can be taught by using the Internet technology (Kuo et al., 2014; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). With the rapid of technological innovation, along with the global fascination with the Internet, the use of videos as computer-orientated communication becomes popular among language learners and instructors, for example, FC which was created by Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams in 2006 (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). FC refers to a new teaching method which videos lectures are uploaded or given to the students, and they are able to preview them before class. Some researchers who conducted research studies on the effects of FC to EFL learning stated that flipped classroom improved language learning (Ahmed, 2016; Chen Hsieh, Wu, & Marek, 2016; Sung, 2015). Even though there are many research studies on the FC in developed countries, it seems that there is no research study precisely emphasize on FC

enhances Cambodian learners' listening comprehension. In order to achieve the objectives, the present study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How effective is the flipped classroom in enhancing Cambodian pre-university students' English listening skills?
2. What are the students' opinions on the flipped classroom to enhance English listening comprehension?

2 Literature review

2.1 Listening

Listening is the ability to understand a message which a speaker desires to deliver. Brown (1994) defines listening as the psychomotor process of receiving sound waves through the ears and transmitting the sound through nerve impulses to the brain. Gulec and Durmus (2015) indicate that listening means making choices from among what is heard, organizing them, integrating what is transferred them with background knowledge by the speaker, and structuring them mentally. Steil (1997) explains that listening is the complex of human's process of sensing, interpreting, evaluating, storing, and responding to oral messages. In the present study, listening comprehension refers to the listening ability to understand the overall and main ideas of what is talked or expressed in videos online related to the lessons in the classroom in order to infer situations or events by using real-world knowledge, guess the meanings of words from context, use the main concepts to summarize and reflect on the videos.

2.2 Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL)

With the power of the Internet technology, learners interconnect to multilingual communities around the world from home (Hubbard, 2008; Yang & Chen, 2007). Technology which can provide both ESL/EFL teachers and learners with virtually boundless uses promotes both online learning and face-to-face learning. There are plenty of advantages of using technology in EFL classrooms. Technology provides easy, practical, and authentic activities as well as creative tasks to the learners in EFL classroom. Recently, social media technologies: Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter, have been invented. These new technologies allow users to connect, communicate and interact with each other by posting, sharing, or coproducing information (Correa, Hinsley & Gil de Zúñiga, 2010). Based on the research studies, Facebook has been brought into educational system, and it has positive impacts on the lives of college students in many countries. Hew (2011) stated that over 90% of Facebook active users are undergraduate students in USA. Bosch (2009) found in his study that students used Facebook for academic purpose to share ideas about projects and lecture notes. Some scholars are turning to Facebook because it is more convenient for making new connections with peers and collaboration.

2.3 Flipped classroom

With the rapid changes of technology, teaching-learning can be access in both online and offline contexts, and a classroom can be flipped by assigned tasks and video lectures before class. Typically, in FC, students have already had overall concepts of the matter of subjects before discussing face-to-face with teacher or peers (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). During the class, students mainly solve practical tasks, make projects, and discuss various important

issues on the topic. After classroom activities, students continue working with electronic sources. They can study at their own pace due to availability and accessibility of all necessary online resources. Numerous research studies on language learning have been conducted by many scholars to improve language learning. Ahmed (2016) investigated the effects of a FC on writing skilling in English as a Foreign Language and Students' attitude towards flipping classroom. The results of the study showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in post-test of EFL writing. Chen Hsieh, Wu, and Marek, (2016) evaluated using FC to enhance EFL learning. They found that the theory-based flipped instruction using online written and oral interaction not only enhanced the participants' motivation, making them more active in class, and the flipped learning was successful in achieving instructional goals of the class. Sung (2015) conducted a research study on a flipped classroom in an EFL content course. He indicated that flipped teaching can be a good momentum for change in current ELT. Even though there were many research projects related to FC and learning, most of research studies paid attention on using FC to improve language learning in developed countries. There is almost no research study conducted in Cambodia on FC in enhancing pre-university students' English comprehension.

3 Methods

3.1 Data collection

In the present study, 30 Cambodian students were selected. Their age-range was between 17 to 20 years old (More detail, see the Table 3.1). Scoring rubric was adopted from Person Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) (Pae, 2012). In the present study, the researcher designed listening test with summary writing from videos. Scoring system focuses on *content, form, structure and coherence, grammar, general linguistic range, vocabulary range, and spelling*. The maximum scores were 15 while minimum score was 0.

Table 1. Participants' Profile

| Number of students | Sex | | Age (17-21) | Purposes of Study | | Year of Study |
|--------------------|-----|----|-------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | M | F | | Bachelor Degree | Communication | |
| 30 | 16 | 14 | 19.67 | 20 | 10 | 2.93 |

3.2 Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. The data obtained from the questionnaire and scores of pre-test and post-test were analyzed quantitatively (SSPS 19.0). To investigate students' opinions toward FC to enhance English listening comprehension, descriptive statistics were used to analyze on the questionnaire. Data from semi-structure interviews students' opinions toward FC to enhance English listening comprehension was analyzed qualitatively.

4 Results

4.1 Result from the Pre-Test and Post-Test

Based on the data analysis in the table 4.1, the average score of pre-test were 9.17 (SD = 4.786), whereas the average score of post-test were 11.07 (SD = 3.648). The findings showed the average score of post-test slightly higher than pre-test after learning with FC. The learners' English proficiency was improved after learning via FC.

Table 2. Paired Samples Statistics

| | | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|--------|-----------|-------|----|----------------|-----------------|
| Pair 1 | Pre-Test | 9.17 | 30 | 4.786 | .874 |
| | Post-Test | 11.07 | 30 | 3.648 | .666 |

In order to investigate whether there was a significant difference between pre-test scores and post-test scores, both the scores of tests were compared by using a paired-samples T-test. The results show that both pre-test and post-test had significant different ($P = 0.009$, $P \leq 0.05$) (More detail, see the table 4.2). Therefore, the learners' English listening proficiency was improved by learning via FC.

Table 3. Paired Samples Test

| | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|---|-------|--------|----|-----------------|
| | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | | | |
| | | | | Lower | Upper | | | |
| Pair 1 Pre-Test - Post-Test | -1.900 | 3.699 | .675 | -3.281 | -.519 | -2.814 | 29 | .009 |

Note: $P \leq 0.05$

4.2 Results from the Questionnaire

The results of the questionnaire showed that learners had positive views on FC. The highest mean score was $X = 3.93$, whereas the lowest mean scores was $X = 3.40$ (more detail, see the table 4.3)

Table 4. Results of Questionnaire

| No | Statement | N | X | SD |
|----|--|----|------|-------|
| 1 | Learning English via the Flipped Classroom (FC), I am able to learn outside the classroom and solve the problems myself. | 30 | 3.50 | 0.731 |
| 2 | Learning English via FC, I have opportunities to control my own learning. | 30 | 3.60 | 0.621 |
| 3 | Learning English via FC, I am more self-directed. | 30 | 3.50 | 0.509 |
| 4 | Learning English via FC, I can study at my own pace due to availability and accessibility of all necessary online resources. | 30 | 3.53 | 0.629 |
| 5 | Learning English via FC encourages me to work with my classmates due to mutual projects and group work. | 30 | 3.73 | 0.521 |

| | | | | |
|-------|---|----|------|-------|
| 6 | Learning English FC, I contact with my teacher more often even outside the classroom. | 30 | 3.50 | 0.630 |
| 7 | Learning English via FC helps group learning or group discussion both online and offline. | 30 | 3.47 | 0.571 |
| 8 | Learning English via FC, I receive academic information from teacher faster. | 30 | 3.67 | 0.547 |
| 9 | Learning English via FC, I can distribute knowledge to classmates more quickly and effectively. | 30 | 3.57 | 0.504 |
| 10 | FC provides plenty online learning materials. | 30 | 3.50 | 0.731 |
| 11 | FC is suitable for student-centered learning. | 30 | 3.60 | 0.563 |
| 12 | FC is suitable for learning English for pre-university level. | 30 | 3.47 | 0.681 |
| 13 | Learning via FC helps me to infer the situation and events by using the real world knowledge. | 30 | 3.50 | 0.572 |
| 14 | Learning via FC helps me to summarize of some events. | 30 | 3.67 | 0.479 |
| 15 | Learning via FC helps me to reflect of some events. | 30 | 3.43 | 0.679 |
| 16 | Learning via FC, I am able to guess the meaning of the words from the contexts. | 30 | 3.40 | 0.621 |
| 17 | Learning via FC, I am able to understand the meanings of the target language. | 30 | 3.73 | 0.450 |
| 18 | Frequently watching English video via FC, I am able to develop my listening skills. | 30 | 3.90 | 0.403 |
| 19 | Visual aids (pictures in the video) via FC help me to understand more what the spoken text in video is. | 30 | 3.93 | 0.365 |
| 20 | I prefer learning English via FC to improve my listening comprehension. | 30 | 3.93 | 0.254 |
| Total | | 30 | 3.61 | 0.550 |

4.3 Results of Semi-structured Interviews

The results of the semi-structured interviews showed that learners had positive views on FC (more de. Many studies came to the same conclusion (Ahmed, 2016; Chen Hsieh, Wu, & Marek, 2016). Some of them also would like to study other courses with FC such as: English study, teaching methodology, mathematics, and marketing.

Table 5. Results of Semi-Structured Interview

| Questions | Participants' Responses |
|--|--|
| 1. How does flipped classroom make you to contact you teacher more often and you help you to work or discuss in group both online and offline? | 1) Ten contacted their peers more often by using Messenger and comments, or posting in Facebook. 2) Three students they contacted their friends more often, but they rarely contacted their teacher through Facebook. 3) Two Students did not contact any friend or teacher outside the class, but they ask their friends and my teacher in the class. |
| 2. How does learning English via FC help you to summarize and reflect the spoken text in the video? | 1) Thirteen students said the videos helped them to summarize and reflect what they had watched. 2) Two students slightly agree that FC helped them to write a summary or reflection. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 3. How does FC help you to guess the meanings of the words based on the context? | 1) Fourteen students think that learning via FC by watching English videos helped me to guess the meanings of some words. 2) One student think that watching video did not help him to understand individual word, yet it helped him to understand the meanings of the video |
| 4. Do you agree learning English via the flipped classroom improves listening skills? Why or Why not? Please give me some examples. | 1) Eleven students said FC improved their listening skills. 2) Four students said they think FC improved either listening skills or other skills. |
| 5. How does FC improve your listening comprehension? | 1) Eleven students responded that FC improved their listening comprehension. 2) Four students answered that FC did not improve their listening comprehension, but it helped them improve their overall language learning. |
| 6. Do you think that learning English via FC is suitable for pre-university level and social conditions? Why? | 1) Thirteen students think FC can be applied in any level even pre-university level. 2) Two students said that FC should be applied for university students who are more independent. |
| 7. What do you like about FC? | 1) Eight students said they like learning via FC. 2) Four students said they partially like and don't like. |
| 8. What don't you like about FC? | 1) Three students said that they don't like learning with FC. |
| 9. Would you like to learn via flipped classroom in other courses? If yes, what courses? | 1) Three students would like to study mathematic course with FC. 2) Six students prefer to learn English with FC. 3) Five students want to study computer course with FC. 4) One student would like to take marketing course with FC. |

5 Discussion

The results of the present study the above indicated that the flipped classroom which used English video and Facebook as medium was an effective method for teaching English to improve listening skills.

5.1 Discussion on Pre-Test and Post-Test

The findings of the present study were similar to Hung (2015) who had investigated the possible impacts of the flipping the classroom on English language. The results revealed that the average scores of post-test ($M = 83.31$) was higher than the average scores of pre-test ($M = 72.88$). The results of the present study also paralleled to Ahmed (2016) who investigated the effects of a flipped classroom on writing skilling in English as a Foreign Language and Students' attitude towards flipping. He found that experimental group who studied English with FC the average score ($M = 20$) was higher than the control group's average score ($M = 9.47$). FC improved listening skills might have been that it was more focused on learner-centered than teacher-learner. With technology, the learners were able to search plenty learning resources online, watch English videos on YouTube, and practice some quizzes posted on Facebook page. The students learned by doing tasks and activities independently. Learning via FC, the students were more encouraged to ask any question either face-to-face or online. Second, the tasks were designed with the authentic American Spoken English videos.

According to Ur (1984), authentic listening tasks and activities played very important roles of listening improvement. Third, FC offered many useful and interactive and cooperative learning through Facebook and face-to-face. It was cooperative learning which referred processes of learning which helped learners interact together in order to accomplish a specific goal or develop an end product which was usually in the specific contents (Panitz, 1999). When students worked cooperatively, they could improve their listening comprehension by sharing their knowledge with others to find the ways to resolve their problems.

5.2 Discussion on the Findings of the Questionnaire

Most of learners had positive thoughts on FC ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.550$). The results of the present study were similar to Ahmed's (2016), Farah's (2014), Hung's (2015), and Sung's (2015) results which stated that most of the students agreed that FC improve language learning. First, the students strongly agreed that learning with FC helped them to understand the meanings of spoken texts in video ($X = 3.93$, $SD = 0.365$). This might have been due to the fact that watching the videos with the pictures, body languages, and facial expressions clearly revealed the meanings of speaking in the contexts. For example, some students were confusing with a word "Sleepover" and "Oversleep", but with visual aids in the video, they were able to guess the meanings of "Sleepover". This concept was similar to the principles which were enunciated by Chinese philosopher and reformer Confucius (551 BC to 479 BC), who stated "*I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.*" In fact, within the learning process in the flipped classroom, the students watched videos and wrote a summary by using their own words. Second, majority of the students preferred to learn English via FC to improve their listening skills ($X=3.93$, $SD= 0.254$). There were many possible reasons which the students preferred to learning English with flipped classroom. 1) They were able to learn outside the classroom and control learning with the videos and learning materials post on Facebook. 2) They were able to review or rewind the materials even though they were absent from the class. 3) They students increased self-responsibility, self-learning, self-directing, & self-time managing in order to complete their tasks which the teacher uploaded on Facebook. Third, students strongly agreed that frequently watching English videos, their listening skills were improved ($X = 3.90$, $SD = 0.403$). The improvement might have been that that many activities were designed in the FC includes discussion pre-questions and videos post in Facebook group, class sharing, role plays, journal writing, videos reflective writing, summary of the videos, pre-test, post-test, questionnaire, and interview. However, some learners thought although learning by watching English video improved their listening comprehension ($M= 3.90$, $SD = 0.403$), it did not help them to write a summary or a reflection paper ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 0.679$) since for writing a summary or a reflection, sentences structures and fancy words usage were more important.

5.3 Discussion on the Findings of the Semi-structured Interviews

The results of the interview indicated that the students were very satisfied with FC. According to the results of the interview, the students felt positive toward FC. Many studies came to the same conclusion. Ahmed (2016) Chen Hsieh, Wu, and Marek, (2016), Olitsky and Cosgrove (2016) found in their studies that the learners had positive opinions towards technology in term of learning. In present study, the students liked FC because when they met some difficulties, they could discuss and solve the problems by chatting directly to the teacher and classmates via Facebook. They could also use Facebook page to communicate and share with

others. They were able to search authentic learning materials online which helped them not only improve their listening skills, but also their accents and different cultures awareness by watching American Spoken English videos. They were able to contact their classmates and teaching immediately when they did not understand the lesson. They could learn by themselves by doing quizzes or tests and watching the videos the teacher posted on Facebook. Another thing the students liked to study via FC was they had concepts of search learning materials which were the useful way to learn when they did not understand about the lessons or homework. They also would like to study other courses with FC such as English study, teaching methodology, mathematics, or marketing. They thought it would be more convenient to watch video lectures related to their lessons, so when they went to the class, they would be more confident and active.

6 Conclusion

The findings indicated that Flipped classroom helped EFL learners to improve English listening skills. Based on the questionnaire, learners had positive thought on FC to improve English listening comprehension. They thought FC could help them to improve their listening comprehension. Most of them would like to study via FC in other courses such as: mathematic, English study, and marketing. The results of the present study provided concepts of teaching-learning with technology to Cambodian teachers and learners. FC generally helped learners to be independent learners, highly responsible for their own learning, yet it improved relationship between teacher-student and student-student. The results of the present study could be useful as an English teaching technique to improve English listening comprehension for EFL learners.

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