Promoting Students' Listening Comprehension through Online Peer-Correction

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Abstract: Listening practices have widely been conducted face to face in language laboratory for years in language laboratory. However, students' interaction and collaboration were not much emphasized because of teacher-centred learning. The teaching of listening in language laboratory focuses primarily on how to answer comprehension questions correctly without any interactive discussion. Students just relied on teacher's absolute role in language laboratory. Thus, the students were not independent in learning listening. Meanwhile, limited materials used in listening instruction are mostly influenced by teacher educator's textbooks whose content lacked of authenticity. Promoting online learning in listening practices and evaluating students' outcomes through peer-corrective feedback through learning platform were needed to enhance their comprehension. This article highlighted five central issues, including: (1) theoritical framework of online learning; (2) edmodo as a learning platform for online mediated listening tool; (3) the selection of authentic listening materials; (4) peer-collaborative correction in listening tasks; and (5) the development of students' autonomous listening through online corrective feedbacks. The impacts of this article findings successfully contributed to support teachers' educators face-to-face language laboratory based listening practices while promoting students' collaboration, autonomy, and comprehension.

Keywords: listening, comprehension, online learning, peer-correction

1 INTRODUCTION

The activities in language laboratory instruction have been considered as an outdated behavioristic model for language teaching and learning in general for decades. This situation is occurred for five main reasons. *First*, certain language teacher educators consider their absolute role as the center of learning activities. As Rivers (2000) pointed out that teacher-centered mode of language laboratory could not be interactive instruction. This audiolingualism basis cannot help learners with the real life situations where they intend to use the language with the meanings coming from their own needs and intentions (Arkoç, 2008: 1). *Second*, teacher educators and students are lack of information, communication, and technology (ICT) literacy as a primary tool in teaching language through theoretical explorations of electronic literacy and hands-on practical training in using those technologies.

Many student teachers report feeling inadequately trained and ill-prepared to meet the challenges of integrating computer technologies into their pedagogies (Sprague, Kopfman, & Dorsey, 1998), and additionally, teacher educators may feel isolated if the pre- or in-service technology experience is limited (Brownell, 1997; Orrill, 2001). *Third*, certain teacher educators who used the lab failed to implement appropriate activities especially designed for language lab sessions (Brenes, 2006: 2). The initial impact is weakened by the rather old-fashioned drill-based learning which it promoted. *Fourth*, many teacher educators rely on their restricted materials in teaching listening and most of them are not authentic. Consequently, the listening materials used are eventually appeared out of date.

Whereas, learners feel better with authentic materials helping them involve in the 'real' language as long as teacher educators provide them with pedagogical support (Kilickaya, 2004: 2). *Fifth*, teacher educators in higher education sometimes do not aware on adult learning characteristics which it emphasizes on students' learning autonomy and it cannot be found in teacher-centered language lab instruction. Autonomy is the characteristic of andragogy or adult learning with pedagogical concerns on 'learner-centered' aims and methods (Arkoç, 2008: 25). It enables the student to develop

effective strategies for pursuing individual learning, while being willing and able to change and improve those strategies over time, as the language learning progresses (Jones, 2011: 4).

CALL integration enables teacher educators and student teachers to reflect upon the ways the various in-class and out-of-class components fit together through blended learning. From the learners' perspective, the ability or capacity to work independently outside class is critical because it can support their autonomous learning (Levy, 2014: 237). The utilisation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in language laboratory evidently leads to changes in the roles of both teachers and learners, and paves the way to the emergence of new teaching and learning environments and methodologies (e-learning, web-based learning, open and distance learning, and blended learning).

Research over the past several years has indicated that students learn as successfully in online environments as in traditional face to face classroom settings (Donnely, 2010; Woltering, Herrler, Spitzer & Spreckelsen, 2009). However, recently, it has also been accepted that online learning with a single course delivery mode cannot provide optimum conditions for successful learning. Therefore, educators have combined face to face instruction with online learning components and online course management tools in a blended learning format, to join the best features of in-class teaching, to promote active, self-directed learning opportunities with added flexibility (Garnham & Kaleta, 2002).

1.1. Online Learning

Online learning can be the most difficult of all three to define. Some prefer to distinguish the variance by describing online learning as "wholly" online learning (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005), whereas others simply reference the technology medium or context with which it is used (Lowenthal, Wilson, & Parrish, 2009). Others display direct relationships between previously described modes and online learning by stating that one uses the technology used in the other (Rekkedal et al., 2003; Volery & Lord, 2000). Online learning is described by most authors as access to learning experiences via the use of some technology (Benson, 2002; Carliner, 2004; Conrad, 2002). Both Benson (2002) and

Conrad (2002) identify online learning as a more recent version of distance learning which improves access to educational opportunities for learners described as both nontraditional and disenfranchised. Other authors discuss not only the accessibility of online learning but also its connectivity, flexibility and ability to promote varied interactions (Ally, 2004; Hiltz & Turoff, 2005; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). Hiltz and Turoff (2005) in particular not only elude to online learnings' relationship with distance learning and traditional delivery systems but then, like Benson (2002) makes a clear statement that online learning is a newer version or, and improved version of distance learning. These authors, like many, beleive that there is a relationship between distance education or learning and online learning but appear unsure in their own descripive narratives.

1.2. Learning Platform as an Online Mediated Listening Tool

A learning platform is a software application that integrates different management tools, communication, evaluation, monitoring, etc. with the aim of providing technological support to teachers and students to optimize the various phases of the teaching-learning process, either the educational process completely remote, classroom or mixed nature and combine both modes in different proportions (Guenaneche, 2007: 2).

The writer used edmodo as a learning platform during the research to accomodate students' learning. Edmodo has been designed and developed by Jeff O'Hara and Nick Borg since 2008. This website is a free, private, and secure learning network which looks similar to Facebook (Jarc, 2010), so it may not cause students to face any difficulties. They may also find it easy for them to connect and work with their classmates and teachers online. Moreover, teachers may like Edmodo because it provides simple functions for teachers to create and manage their online classroom community. In addition, Edmodo offers privacy to both teachers and their students.

Via Edmodo, teachers can send text (SMS) alerts, messages attached with a file or a link, reply students' messages, send out quizzes and assignments, receive completed assignments, give feedback, assign grades for 'assignments',

store and share content in the form of both files and links, conduct polls, maintain a class calendar, and contact with the whole class, small groups, or even individual students. Students can also send a message attached with a file or a link, store and share content in the form of a file or a link, submit homework, assignments, and quizzes, receive their teacher's feedback, messages, alerts, and reply to the teacher, vote on polls as well as set their own calendar. Students can communicate with their teachers, the whole class, and their small group. The only limitation is that they cannot communicate with individual students via Edmodo.

1.3. Corrective Feedback

As Brown (2007: 379) states, corrective feedback includes responses to learners‟ produced utterances which "repair" or "call attention" to their errors; Brown goes further to mention that for the corrective feedback to be efficaciouss. Correction is not always applied by the teacher. In learner-centered educational settings where collaborative learning is exercised and learner autonomy is highlighted, „peer-correction‟ is required, which has been proved essential (Lin & Chien, 2009; Sultana, 2009). However, as Sultana (2009) also suggests, the specific educational context and learners‟ demands must be examined carefully before the application of any method or technique.

Moreover, if the teacher decides to practice peer correction in class, he/ she must consider both advantages and disadvantages of that. As Rollinson (2005) mentions, peer involvement provides a more supportive atmosphere as the feedback received from classmates is less threatening, and as a result of these the authoritative role of the teacher is no more reinforced. However, there are also some disadvantages; for instance, as Sultana (2009) states, learners‟ self-esteem and confidence might be dented and they may experience embarrassment and inferiority when corrected by a classmate. They might even be unwilling to correct their peers in order not to harm their relationship, or resist receiving feedback from them since they consider their classmates no better than themselves.

1.4. Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

A. What considerations do the students take into account when selecting listening authentic materials?
B. In what ways are peer-collaborative correction able to enhance students listening comprehension?
C. Are online corrective feedbacks able to cultivate students' autonomous listening?

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Method

This research adopts an action research approach within an interpretative paradigm in order to evaluate ongoing process of students' online peer-correction in a period of time. In initial research stage, the teacher provides collaborative learning which includes: (1) students' platform training; (2) collaborative learning peer-correction activity; and (3) students group-teacher discussion to clarify the peer-discussion activity.

2.2 Participants

The participants of the research were the first term of English department student-teachers of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro in academic year 2014/2015. They learn basic listening intensively in the first term. Out of 80 students, 16 students were eager to join in the project. Then, they freely chose their partner to make an online group. Thus, totally there were 8 groups (16 students) participating in online learning.

2.3 Research Instruments

The research instruments used that the writer used in this research were:

A. The Listening Log

The listening log is a form of journal and as such is not a new idea, as learner diaries have been used in teacher training and language learning for some time, and have been particularly popular in Southeast Asia (Matsumoto as cited in Kempt, 2009: 387). The learning log is a response sheet, which helps students record and keep track of what they have learned. In listening log, students can share some issues with their peers relating to their online learning and build their autonomy. They can give comments about the the issues given before and after the listening tasks.

B. The Interviews

The interview was conducted according to each students group (2 students) which reflected their online learning experiences. It was conducted in the end of the project. The issues in interview are students difficulties in online peer-correction, their responses, the problems encountered, materials selection, advantages and disadvantages, etc.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed based on posts (n=100), the interview=8), and the listening log (n=8). The interview data were transcribed, coded, and organized into thematic categories. The post and the log data were also analyzed using inductive coding techniques.

3 FINDINGS

Based on listening log, online post and interview data, there themes can be broken down such as authentic materials considerations, students listening comprehension through online peer-correction, and using corrective feedbacks to cultivate students autonomous listening.

3.1 Authentic Materials Selection Considerations

The data were obtained from students' interview in the end of the project. They were required to answer the questions about their authentic learning materials used during online peer-correction learning in listening. Mostly, the materials were dealing with their daily life such as pre-recorded announcements, telephone messages, people's physical appearance, seeking the jobs, etc. However, the teacher previously had needed to determine the learning competence that they would achieve like the students' ability in comprehending short oral discourse in different daily life situations. The learning materials selection is free according to their ability as long as they are in line with the competence stated by the teacher. Each student group materials would be different.

The following is the summary of students' authentic materials selection based on their predetermined competencies.

Table 1 Authentic Materials Topics

Competences	Materials
Listening for topic, listening for gists, and listening for details	People and physical appearance (Group 1)
Listening for gists and listening for details	People's clothes desciption (Group 2)
Listening for gists, listening for details and listening for attitudes	Jobs description (Group 3)
Listening for gists, making predictions, listening for frequencies, and listening for details	Doing physical exercises (Group 4)
Listening for details, listening for gists, and making predictions	Finding locations (Group 5)
Listening for gists and listening for details	Family (Group 6)
Listening for gists and listening for details	Entertainment (Group 7)
Listening for details and listening for gists	Shopping (Group 8)

Meanwhile, students in each group has their own considerations in selecting such materials. Student AB stated that he decided to select the learning materials based on his agreement with his group partner. However, he needed to know first the teacher guidelines about the competencies he wanted to achieve. Later, he seeked the materials in internet or online free book channels. The sources are unlimited and students could freely downloaded the free ebooks and audio files as their learning materials.

Student DN and AR were eager to look for their most interesting material according to their hobbies. They would like to select sport or physical exercise because it was suitable with their interest. Accessible and readily available online materials play important roles to support students language learning. They need to adapt a particular text or lesson withy material that he or she feels is more useful for promoting learning. Once teachers start to use authentic materials and observe the impact the real world context has on students, they may actually seek out ways to incorporate them more into lesson plans. Brinton (1991) stated that authentic materials and media can reinforce for students the direct relationship between the language classroom and the outside world. Gebhard (1996) sees authentic materials as a way to contextualize language learning.

3.2 Students listening comprehension through online peer-correction

3.2.1 Procedures

The followings are the procedures of online peer-correction listening:
1) Set the learning goals

Teacher determines listening competences that students would achieve in the end of the porject

2) Group selections

Teacher offered the ptoject to all basic listening cours students. 16 students were keen to join and asked them choose their respective partner.

3) Platform training

Teacher trainned students the learning platform (edmodo) twice. In the first meeting, it was conducted through face to face meeting and in the second meeting, it was conducted through online mode.

4) Group-selection authentic materials

The group freely chose the materials to discuss through internet resources.

5) Online peer-correction

Students had 2 times weekly-online meeting through edmodo about their own topics (with similar competences). In each online meeting, they had to discuss the topic with their partners and gave complementary feedbacks through reply posts. The teacher monitored the students' group discussion in a 60 -minutes online duration. The students gave feedback each other by posting their materials including the audio files and the teacher traced their learning progress through the comment threads.

6) Teacher's feedback

The teacher obtained the students' posts as he previously had the groups password and made corrective feedbacks. Then, he discussed the students' errors all groups in weekly face to face meeting.

7) Students' reflection

Students wrote their progress in the end of each online meeting and share their experiences.

3.2.2 Online peer-correction

The data were obtained from interview and listening logs. Peer-correction is a part of collaborative learning. This aimed to discuss, share, and solve the tasks given by the teacher. The students could also feel free when they corrected their mistakes with their peer because no tacher's direct intervention. DA reported that "I am not worried at all during this project because I should not be shy when I have to interact with my partner". Sometimes we make jokes to create lively learning atmosphere and it is fun". TB also reported that "Well, edmodo is like Facebook (FB) but it is more simple. I can post my comments, upload the materials and freely communicate with my friend. I don't know whether or not my corrections are true. I just type my comments according to what I know". This learning paradigm shift in learning which is less devoted to rote memorization of facts but more to learner-centredness is dedicated towards promoting independent and self-directed learners. The overarching principle in this new paradigm shift is to help learners 'learn how to learn'.

Learning how to learn means to build up learners' "*capabilities to learn independently (e.g. creative and critical thinking, mastering of information technology, communication), to become self-reflective on how to learn and to be able to use different ways of learning…*" (Curriculum Development Council, 2000: 3).

During the implementation of online peer-correction, the students collaboratively discussed the learning materials and gave feedbacks on their written errors when posting their comments. They used online dictionary to check the spelling and pronunciation of some unfamiliar words. Moreover, they can listen the audio many times to get the main ideas. This repetition enables students to listen to something more than once enables learners 'to become familiar with the content, vocabulary, and the structure of the spoken text" (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012: 201). They also helped each other in technical problems such as how to use some edmodo features using the Manual Guide and noted the problems in listening log. The log itself is a basis for the students' artifact that all their online learning activities were well-recorded. Using listening log, the studens could share their difficulties withe the teacher in face to face meeting to obtaine clear clarification. Goh (1997) stated that listening log can greatly enhance listening development. Goh's study reveals learners' metacognitive awareness of themselves as listeners, factors affecting listening, and strategies.

Self-and peer evaluation made the students feel confidence in learning listening. They were able to minimize the drawbacks of face-to-face listening activities in language lab. Based on the data obtained from the interview, students were able to comprehend some listening competences

such as deciding the detail of information in short situational conversation, setting, the clues, and identifying the different speakers.

3.3 Development of students' autonomous listening through online corrective feedbacks

Online peer-correction was the additional program to support students' listening comprehension using a platform as a mediated learning tool. I was proven for contributing students to raise their independency in learning. The activities involved in this project enable students' learning autonomy. This autonomy does not necessarily mean that language learners learn alone, but they still have the opportunity to learn from their peers and teacher as well as from different learning materials according to their interest. As Benson and Voller mentioned "teachers have a crucial role to play in launching learners into self-access and in lending them a regular helping hand to stay afloat" (1997: 63). Taking an active, independent attitude to learning and independently undertaking a learning task is beneficial to learning; personal involvement in decision making leads to more effective learning (Dickonson 1995).

Using edmodo as a learning platform, students could learn anytime and anywhere. They could set their learning strategies and the language training through learning platform would make autonomous students. Student GD stated that "I usually use social media to post status and chat with my friends. But I can now use my time to learn English using edmodo. This will help me increase my English especially listening". Meanwhile, student T reported that "I always check my edmodo to know what my partner have posted in the wall. Sometimes we make evaluation, analysis, and monitoring toward the tasks given". As university students, they are able to possess critical thinking which consists of planning, monitoring and evaluating their self-learning. These strategies would generally help learners to gain control over their emotions and motivations related to language learning through self monitoring, self-reinforcement, and relaxation metagocnitive strategies can be applied to many learning tasks such as (Yang, 1999: 527).

4 CONCLUSIONS

The article has reported some themes such as authentic material selection considerations, students' listening comprehension through online peer-correction, and the development of students' autonomous listening through online corrective feedbacks. Nunan (1999) defines authentic materials as spoken or written language data that has been produced in the course of genuinecommunication, and not specifically written for purposes of language teaching. In fact, in his teaching he encourages his students to bring into the classroom their own samples of authentic language data from realworld contexts outside of the classroom. They practice listening to genuine language drawn from many different sources not only it is restricted on teacher's handbook which content is not appropriate to students'. By utilizing the interne sources, the students can obtain various learning materials according to their need and interest and it enables students to easily access the information to learn.

Online peer-correction supports students collaborative learning. They can learn without teacher's direct guidance so that they can learn listening freely. Peer-correction also stimulates students' ideas and generates their comprehension. The learning platform enables them explore the information and justifies the students' learning performance using various tasks and sources. In addition, online mode support the students' listening comprehension using multiple strategies such as discussion, clarification, summarizing, predicting, and soon.

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