



## Teaching listening competencies in english during distance learning

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### Abstract

Teaching listening competency in the English language is a crucial process that takes considerable time since it involves other language skills such as sequencing, inferencing and comprehension. Only a limited period to learn these specific listening competencies is set in Philippine basic education. The rise of technology influences the learning perspective of the learners and often distracts and hinders the development of the listening competency during distance learning. Therefore, there is a need to look for alternative instructional material like contextualized video segments to help achieve the targeted listening competencies. This mixed-method study using explanatory sequential design was conducted at Pit-os National High School, Division of Carcar City, Cebu, Philippines to investigate the usefulness of such materials. Participants were identified through purposive sampling and selection criteria while data was gathered through a 40-item test questionnaire and an interview guide. Quantitative data was treated using z-test to determine the performance level and t-test to determine the significant mean difference of the results. Qualitative data was deduced using the analytical framework of Braun and Clarke (1994). Pre and post-test results showed no significant difference in the identified listening competencies after exposing the participants to the intervening variable, the contextualized video materials within the required number of days to learn. However, in-depth interview responses reveal that there was progress in their listening competencies such as sequencing a series of events and making simple inferences during the exposure to the video materials. Therefore, it is recommended that further studies be conducted considering two important variables including longer time exposure and the use of more relatable and highly context specific video segments be used.

**Keywords:** Listening competency, distance learning, lived experiences, mixed-method, explanatory-sequential

### Introduction

Listening competency affects other language skills as pointed out by Renukadevi (2014) <sup>[23]</sup>, a reason why it must be taught considering the learners' background and influence using the most appropriate and available instructional materials and strategies considering the duration of its usage. However, with the shifting of the academe to online learning where technology plays a critical role, there are still teachers who have neglected to take advantage of these instructional materials aided by technology, with new strategies of which as pointed by Calub *et al.* (2018) <sup>[9]</sup>, should be used in teaching listening competency. Moreover, the outlined curriculum of the Department of Education in the Philippines is packed with several competencies to be learned in a limited period. Therefore, this study is conducted to determine what can be used as alternative instructional materials and strategies in the teaching of listening competencies in English for Distance Learning in the Philippines.

Listening competency has been a prevalent issue among academic institutions. In France for example, one of the issues in listening competency is the relationship between the listening materials and background knowledge of the learners as described by Hoti *et al.* (2011) <sup>[15]</sup> in developing the listening competency. The study described that the students with knowledge of the English language have access to varied listening materials and have good listening competency compared to those students who do not. This study further describes that the knowledge and preferences of the students affect the listening competency of the

students. Another issue in listening competency is in the context of Saudi Arabia, Al-khresheh (2020) <sup>[3]</sup> pointed out the inseparable relationship between culture and language when it comes to learning listening competency. Furthermore, the study also described that most of the listening materials used in the study were mostly influenced by Western culture which contradicts the background knowledge and interest of the students that led to the difficulty of learning listening competency. Thus, culture plays a role in teaching listening competency to students. Another concern involved in teaching listening competency is the use of audio material. In the Philippines, the listening comprehension process as described by Calub *et al.* (2018) <sup>[9]</sup> in their study in Tarlac on listening competency was critical in revealing the quality and nature of the listening material plays a vital role in teaching listening competency. In their study, the participants had difficulty in the content material because they were unfamiliar of the material, thus, they have difficulty in mastering their listening competency. Various methods for teaching listening have been used by teachers, according to Ferlazzo (2018) <sup>[12]</sup>, the onset of digital technology threatens the learning process because students are exposed to digital distractions and information overload. Information overload brought by the onset of technology can be managed through multimedia learning materials where students are engaged because it includes words and pictures served as a guide in the cognitive processing (Mayer, 2014) <sup>[21]</sup>. However, there is a caution to multimedia learning: all uses of multimedia are not equally effective for the learner, thus contextualized multimedia

such as short sketches, news programs, documentary films, interview segments, dramatic comedic material can be supported. Contextualized multimedia or contextualized video segments emphasize on other forms of communication such as listening and writing compared to audio materials, where the learners perform better and construct convincing outputs, thus having a greater impact in teaching listening competency (Huynh, 2016)<sup>[16]</sup>.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the K-12 curriculum in both elementary and high school levels of basic education starting school year 2012-2013. The change of six original six years in elementary and 4 years in high school is based on the implementation of Republic Act No. 10533 known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act where it follows the K-6-4-2 model. Hence, the inclusion of mandatory kindergarten education is the official formal education of every Filipino, with six years in elementary (Grades 1-6), then followed by another four years in junior high school (Grades 7-10), and an additional two years in the senior high school level (Grades 11-12).

Consonant to this educational scheme, several studies were conducted concerning the status of the curriculum implementation and issues faced by the teachers at the forefront of the educational system such as those found by Almerino *et al.* (2020)<sup>[2]</sup> and Bacus *et al.* (2022)<sup>[7]</sup>. One of the issues mentioned by Almerino *et al.* (2020)<sup>[2]</sup> and Bacus *et al.* (2022)<sup>[7]</sup> in the K-12 curriculum is congestion of the learning competency set in each grade level, that is why, in the span of nine years, as reported by Adonis (2021)<sup>[1]</sup>, DepEd considers in reviewing and revisiting the learning competency of the new curriculum. This means that there are too many learning competencies outlined as part of the target with very limited time allotted to learn, acquire and master each learning competency. This is a clear signal that as educational system in the Philippines shifted to adopt the K-12 curriculum, struggles in achieving the outlined learning competencies were already evident.

Consonant to this issue viewed in the K-12 curriculum, the teaching of English under the curriculum in the Philippines is equally affected. This is observed when DepEd endorsed listening learning competencies for each quarter and that these are mandatorily be implemented for meaningful learning. Two of the many targeted learning competencies include sequencing a series of events mentioned in the text and making simple inferences about thoughts and feelings expressed in the text. Unfortunately, issues in achieving competence with these listening competencies such as these two specified listening competencies were never mastered due to various issues such as the listening learning material and emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic that migrated education into distant learning.

Hence, new approaches to enhance listening competencies of learners are needed. It is in this context that the study focuses on two objectives. First is to search and test the effectiveness of contextualized video segments in enhancing the students' listening competencies and second is to determine how these instructional materials assisted their achievement of the desired listening competencies.

## Methodology

This study used explanatory sequential-mixed method since it involved the gathering of both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative process includes the pretest and posttest

which was done to determine the performance level of the participants on the identified listening competency before and after using the contextualized video segments. Moreover, qualitative data through participants' experiences with the contextualized video segments were taken to understand the reasons as to how the instructional materials for the teaching of listening competencies influenced them.

Pit-os National High School is considered as the study environment. It is a public Small School of District 1 Carcar City Division and was founded in 2010. It is located east of Calidngan, Carcar with approximately 10 kilometers and thirty (30) minutes motorcycle ride from the Poblacion. It offers both Junior and Senior High School curriculum with one section per grade level with a total of 166 enrollees for the SY 2021-2022. The school has a computer laboratory but the resources are limited, however, each grade level classroom was equipped with gadgets such as; TV, tablets and projector that aids the realization of this study.

The thirty-two (32) learners of Grade 7 in the academic year 2021-2022 were the participants. They were identified through purposive sampling. Hence, it is because of the concept that these learners have the necessary elements that are considered critical for the study which are used as selection criteria. The selection criteria include: (a) a learner in the grade 7 level, (b), English is an enrolled subject, (c) has exposure to technology for listening, and (d) learns independently at home. In addition, ethical considerations used are anchored on the study of Creswell (2014) as pointed out by Manila *et al.* (2022)<sup>[20]</sup> which include the phases of before conducting the study, beginning the study, collecting the data, analyzing the data, reporting and storing the data, and publishing the data. Thus, the participants' identity was tagged confidential using an assigned number code. The participants were also purposely classified to be part of the presentation of the quantitative data that displayed the performance level of the Grade 7 participants in the selected listening competency.

The study utilized two types of instruments which also correspond to the types of data required. Hence, a 40-item test questionnaire from online were modified, validated and adapted to be used for the pre-test and post-test. The questionnaire includes 20 items for sequencing of events and another 20 items for making simple inferences. The intervening variable used between pre-test and post-test were the contextualized video segments introduced to the learners which were incorporated in the lesson. The contextualized video segments were made specifically for the targeted listening competencies. These videos came from CNN Philippines, Rappler, ANC, OneNews, and UNTV, which displays documentary films, news, interviews and other video segments which were downloaded using a free application.

Furthermore, the videos were chosen based on the timely topics in the Philippines such as the health protocols during the pandemic, opening of face-to-face classes, fake news, dengue outbreak, opening of NAS and the opening of the SY 2022-2023 since the participants were exposed to Philippine English. Thus, the participants had familiarity on the topics and the speaker's accent. Moreover, another instrument was used to gather the lived experiences of the participants. This was through the interview guide which is a set of open-ended questions. These questions were arranged in a logical manner according to opening, content and closing question type. All open-ended questions were

carefully scrutinized by experts through the criteria set by Caffrey (1995)<sup>[8]</sup> as guiding principles. Finally, to maintain trustworthiness of the study, the criteria set by (Daniel, 2019) focusing on the TACT Framework: trustworthiness, auditability, credibility and transferability.

The study commenced after the transmittal letter was approved. Primarily, the participants, together with their parents, were oriented towards the nature and its purpose of the study along with the confidentiality of the data gathered. Thus, respondents were not forced to join the study since the researcher provided a Parental Consent Form signed by the parent/guardian allowing the participants to join the study.

The actual data gathering started with the participants taking the pretest to determine the performance level of the selected listening competencies. After the pretest, the participants were given six days of exposure to the Contextualized Video Segments focusing on the identified listening competencies utilizing the activity sheets reflected on the instructional plan. Then, the participants took the posttest to determine the performance level on the selected listening competencies after the exposure of the contextualized video segments. After which, the participants were subjected for interview.

Quantitative data analysis was made using both descriptive and inferential statistical treatments including the actual mean, hypothetical mean, standard deviation, z-test and t-test. The quantitative data was presented and analyzed through the approval and recommendation of a statistician for auditability. When the computed z-value < 1.96, the performance level is average; then if the computed z-value ≥

1.96, and the hm (hypothetical mean) > am (actual mean) the performance level is below average; and if the computed z-value ≥ and the hm < am, the performance level is above average. T-test of Mean Difference or Paired T-Test was used to determine if there was a significant mean difference of the participants' performance level in the identified listening competencies before and after using the contextualized video segments.

Moreover, the qualitative data were subjected for analysis using the framework of Miles and Huberman (1994) which encompasses the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. This was used to deduce the lived experiences of the participants in consonance to their use of the intervening variables introduced to improve their targeted listening competencies. Thematic analysis was used to display the lived experiences of the participants after the exposure of the contextualized video segments. The researcher read and translated the participants' answers from the interview guide and consolidated similar and interesting answers. Then, the consolidated answers were tallied to produce a theme. The themes were checked and studied to create clearer and more specific themes and categories. The themes and categories were thoroughly discussed using related studies.

**Results and discussion**

This part displays the computed mean difference of the learners' performance before and after using the contextualized video segments and whether or not to reject the null hypothesis.

**Table 1:** Pre and post-test difference using contextualized video segments

Test	Sequencing of Events		Making simple inferences	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
N	32	32	32	32
No. of items	20	20	20	20
Mean	9.94	11.03	9.09	10.19
Computed T-value	1.63	1.63	1.82	1.82
Critical T-value	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04
Decision	Fail to reject Ho	Fail to reject Ho	Fail to reject Ho	Fail to reject Ho
Interpretation	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant

Table 1 shows the comparison of the pretest and posttest results of the selected listening competency, which displays the (a) mean, (b) computed t-value, (c) critical t-value, (d) decision, and (e) interpretation of the results.

**Computed mean difference**

For the first listening competence called sequencing of events, the computed t-value of 1.63 is less than the critical t-value of 2.04. The statistical results lead to a decision of failing to reject the null hypothesis. Furthermore, for the second listening competence called making simple inferences, the statistical results yielded the computed t-value of 1.82 and is less than 2.04 leads to a decision of failing to reject the null hypothesis.

Meaning, there is no significant difference in the identified listening competencies before and after using the contextualized video segments as intervening variable. This is because there is no statistical evidence to show that using the contextualized video segments significantly affect the performance of the learners or the respondents.

Notably, after six days of exposure to the contextualized video materials, both competencies compared turned to be

not significantly improving as outlined by the statistical results. The logic behind the six days is anchored on the fact that in the Department of Education of the Philippines, the specified competencies are expected to be learned and hopefully mastered in six days considering that there are also other competencies outlined for learning in a specific period.

Video materials play a vital role in teaching listening competency. Hoti *et al.* (2011)<sup>[15]</sup> described that it should be relevant to the learners' background as it should be critically and thoroughly selected and planned with consideration of the learners' language readiness. This is because according to Wilson (2020)<sup>[27]</sup>, video segments contain loads of information presented in visual and aural mode, which is challenging to the learner. Meaning to say, video materials only serve its purpose when these are made carefully in relevance with the learners' background. This is because the careful creation of instructional materials will allow the total consideration of the teacher to every learner in the classroom, ultimately transforming the instructional material as a helpful asset and tool of the teacher in facilitating learning.

On the contrary, though the video segments in the study were chosen based on the learners' background, familiarity of the language and context. However, the result showed that there was no difference in the performance level of the participants in the listening competency. Thus, there were other factors to look into which affect the improvement of the listening competency of the participants during the exposure of the video segments.

Several factors were considered in teaching listening by Calub *et al.* (2018) and Muslem *et al.* (2018)<sup>[22]</sup>. The factors were the learning environment and length of the video materials with its exposure. According to Calub *et al.* (2018)<sup>[9]</sup>, learning environment is the major factor affecting the performance of the participants when teaching listening competency because it creates other problems during the exposure such as the clarity of the content provided and the actualities of language as presented in the content. This supports the setting during the study since the participants were utilizing their own classroom which has only one Smart TV and portable speaker and is not sound proof. This practically means that the participants were exposed to noise and distractions during the exposure of video segments which affects their performance.

Additionally, as illustrated by Muslem *et al.* (2018)<sup>[22]</sup> that the length and time of the exposure of the video segments also contribute to the performance of the learners. In the study, though video segments are based on the participants' background, the length of the video segment is not enough. During the exposure, the longest video segment presented was seven (7) minutes long and the shortest is one (1) minutes long. Hence, the participants were not able to fully grasp the content of the video segment as it was presented for a short period of time. Consequently, the span of time of the exposure of the video segments was only for 6 sessions, each session has two (2) hours maximum of exposure which also greatly affect the performance of the participants. Thus, when using video segments in teaching listening, it is imperative to consider the learning environment, length of the video segment and the span of time of exposure to ensure the holistic improvement of the listening competency.

Furthermore, this section illustrates the tabulated result during the conduct of individual in-depth interviews after the use of contextualized video segments focusing on the ways that contextualized video segments enhanced the learners' listening competencies.

**Table 2:** Ways on how contextualized video segments enhanced listening competencies

Themes	Categories
Provided Comprehension Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Correct sequence of events</li> <li>▪ Give simple inferences</li> </ul>
Improved Communication Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriate response to the questions</li> <li>▪ Improvement of scores during pretest and posttest.</li> </ul>

Table 2 presents the experiences of the learners during and after using contextualized video segments in enhancing their listening skills through the selected competencies. The learners revealed that the video segments (a) provided comprehension strategy, and (b) improved communication performance.

It shows the experiences described and pointed out by the learners during the interview about the use of contextualized video segments in enhancing the selected listening competency. The learners were asked about the ways on how contextualized video segments enhanced the identified listening competencies.

**Provided comprehension strategy**

Participants in the study reported that during the use of contextualized video segments, they were provided a comprehension strategy because they were exposed to more actual usage of the language since video segments have audio and video which enhances the learners' language perception (Woottipong, 2014)<sup>[28]</sup>. Also, video segments do not only inform but also entertain the viewers which help the learners practice the language while learning (Woottipong, 2014)<sup>[28]</sup>. Hence, there were students who claimed that because of the exposure of the video segments similar to daily life, they learn more on correct sequencing of events and giving simple inferences. As the following students stated:

*“Pinaagi sa pagpaminaw ug pagsunod sa nahitabo dayun isuwat ang importanteng impormasyon. Kay mao raman ang dali mabuhaat para masabtan ang video segment.” (Video segments improved my listening competency in a way that I was able to sequence the events and note the important information because these were the easy ways for me to process what I have understood.) P-5*

*“Video segments helped me improve my listening competency by hearing ideas clearly, because I believe that video segments help me improve my hearing and help me to better understand conversations. I can answer questions about the video segments (sequence and making inferences).” P-10*

*“Sa pagmaster sa akong listening skills ug paglitok ug tarung sa mga pulong sa mga pangutana sa lesson like pagsunod sa mga nahitabo ug paghatag ug mga inferences.” (Video segments enhanced my listening competency because I was able to master my listening skills like answering clearly on the questions about the lesson like sequencing events and giving inferences.) P-8*

Thus, this describes that video segments offer a chance in improving the listening competency of the learners. This is because it allows the teachers to present sequential and inferential questions, of which according to Wilson (2020)<sup>[27]</sup> targets the aural, listening and visual competency of the learners since video segments are sequential in nature.

On the other hand, teachers should choose video segments carefully that specifically reflects their background and preferences and their language level. Also, the tasks should be planned critically supporting the learning pace and the level of the learners. Furthermore, giving and allocating enough time in using long length contextualized video segments in teaching listening competency to ensure that the level of difficulty must be aligned to the language ability of the learners and their personal interest because these play a great role in learning listening competency (Tekin and Parmaksiz, 2016)<sup>[25]</sup>.

### Improved communication performance

Participants in the study also reported that during the use of contextualized video segments, they have observed improved communication performance. Video segments allow the teachers to create realistic tasks which enforces individual learning and results in improved communication achievement among the learners (Muslem, *et al.*, 2018) [22]. Further, after video segments were watched by the participants, they demonstrated that captions on videos were the most effective way to improve language learning and close the proficiency gap between reading and listening. The use of video to improve listening comprehension, learners were able to respond to questions appropriately and improved their scores from the pretest and posttest (Chung, 1999) [10]. Hence, learners claimed that they were able to respond to questions appropriately and improved their scores from the pretest and posttest. As the learners stated:

*“Nakatabang nako ang video segment kay naka-pay attention ko, maka-respond appropriately ko sa mga questions, maka-focus ko sa tone ug na-challenge ko.” (Video segments helped me in a way that I was able to pay attention, respond to questions appropriately, focus on the tone of the speaker. Also, I was challenged.) P-12*

*“Video segments help me by listening clearly to the teacher and understand faster. Also, I can answer questions about the video because I can understand them.” P-19*

*“Nakatabang nako ang video segment sa pamaagi nga mas nakasabot kos mga lesson kay kahibaw ko motubag sa mga pangutana, nidako akong mga score sa test ug daghan kog nakuha nga mga information.” (Video segments helped in a way that I can understand the lesson because I know how to answer questions, my scores improved from pretest to posttest and I get tons of information). P-14*

Based on the quoted responses, video segments are appropriate in enhancing the listening competencies of the learners because it aids in improving the listening knowledge of the learners (Sarani, *et al.*, 2014) [24]. Furthermore, learners have positive feedback in using video segments in listening lessons. They were able to understand and comprehend to the questions raised. Their response is in consonance with the idea that teaching listening using authentic video materials enhances student’s listening comprehension ability, this is because as pointed by Wottipong, 2014), the combination of visual images and sound stimulate student’s perceptions thereby enhances their listening ability. Simply, the results of the thematic analysis demonstrate the power of contextualized video segments. Hence, these still have value in teaching listening to learners. As pointed out by Karami and Bowles (2021) [18], watching text-relevant video clips can help aid understanding by allowing readers to recall their prior knowledge and experience.

Thus, the teachers should be trained in planning and selecting video segments when teaching listening competency. The selection of video segments must be appropriate to the learners’ interest and the learners’ language competence especially in their listening skills, and the content of the video segments must be anchored on the learners’ cultural background and background knowledge to ensure motivation and authentic learning (Woottipong,

2014) [28]. Furthermore, teaching listening skills to the students through audio segments such as radio programs, instructional lectures, online podcasts, and other audio messages is necessary of which according to Krivosheyeva, *et al.* (2020) [13], to deploy interactive listening programs in class with students and repeat the exercise on their own.

The K-12 curriculum prescribed different learning competencies as a guide for teachers to conduct well-organized lessons from the basic competency up to the complex one. However, these competencies are too critical depending on the ability of the learners and with many class distractions, it is impossible for the teacher to accomplish and ensure mastery. Thus, it is the teachers’ initiative to acquire the prescribed budgeted learning competency from the division, crafted based on the learners’ needs. On the other hand, pandemic brought changes to the curriculum, instead of using the budgeted learning competency, the teachers use the Most Essential Learning Competency (MELC) through Self-Learning Module (SLM) and it is the teachers’ choice to provide enhancement activities for an effective learning and mastery of the competency.

Thus, the researcher comes with the contextualized video segments to enhance and master the identified listening competency of English 7 which were conducted during class hours. The study discovers that the learners were able to enhance their listening competency because it provided them a comprehension strategy and helped them achieve an improved communication performance. Based on the result, learners are still on the same level when exposed to the material which shows no significant difference but have testified that the minimal increase on the actual mean positively shows enhanced performance on the selected listening competency and there is an achievement on the teaching of the identified listening competency through the material. Consequently, this material helps and aids the learners in mastering the listening competency in English 7.

The teaching material is centered on the use of contextualized video segments which composed of individual and group activity which helped develop the listening competency as presented in the lived experiences of the participants. Though the result has no difference, it is evident that the improvement on the lived experiences of the learners allowed the improvisation of the video segment as presented by Al-khresheh (2020) [3] that authentic materials aid in the teaching listening as long as it is in line with the learners’ background and values, hence, video segments is one of them as pointed by Ardiansyah (2018) [5]. In addition, such materials should have the appropriate linguistic content, be conceptually engaging, necessitate multiple readings for the student to completely understand the text, have a strong audio/visual association, and be condensed. The use of captioning, colorization, video enhancement and overlay, time-coding for cross-referencing to a text or other materials, use of related print materials, pre-viewing exercises, task-related viewing, and follow-up activities are also recommended as presentation techniques for utilizing video materials (Garza, 1996) [14].

The teaching material was also anchored on the lived experiences of the participants about the tasks and their impression on the material, thus, as pointed by Woottipong (2014) that the materials is based on the language ability and background of the learners which paved way on the production of contextualized video segments in the context of the school of the learners. The video segments were about

the updates and activities of the school which was shoot at the school grounds which enables the learners to be exposed on the local actualities of the English language based on the familiarity of the speaker who is the teacher, since the teacher plays a big role in teaching listening as described by Gilakjan (2011) <sup>[17]</sup>. It is the responsibility of the teacher to model a teaching listening material and create an interactive and interesting learning environment for the development of the listening competency. Thus, it is evident that with the produced video segments which is modeled by the teacher, it can help the participants to further enhance their listening competency since it provides a learner-centered environment.

### Conclusion

The study found that the students' performance in listening competencies including sequencing a series of events mentioned in the text listened to and making simple inferences about thoughts and feelings expressed in the text listened, has no significant difference during the pre-test and post-test if exposed to contextualized video segments in a matter of six days. However, the respondents' testimonies and experiences show that when exposed to the contextualized video segments, it helps in enhancing the identified listening competency as it provided comprehension strategy and improved communication performance. Hence, the qualitative data affirms the positive result of using the contextualized video segments as intervening variables in support to the theoretical proposition of Cognitive Theory on Multimedia Learning, only that these numerical results did not reach the required value to declare its significant difference. Thus, it is imperative to conduct further study with consideration of the two important variables including longer time exposure and a more relatable and highly context-specific video segments be used. This is necessary in order to validate if the targeted listening competencies set by the Department of Education in the Philippines can really be achieved in the allotted span of time through contextualized video segments during the distance learning setting.

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