Transforming the teaching of listening and reading using the SAMR Model

Flora Debora Floris & **Willy A. Renandya** offer practical ideas on how technology can be used in listening and reading using the SAMR Model.

Listening and reading play a significant role as they provide input for language development and acquisition in general. Through reading and listening, one can teach and learn vocabulary, grammar, spelling, writing, speaking and other aspects of language proficiency.

Listening provides auditory input for language learners and improves their language ability (Mannioon, 2014). Without understanding input at the right level, learning cannot really begin. This further suggests that each English classroom should pay attention to the teaching and learning of listening skills. As language teachers, we should think of how we can help our students become effective listeners and receive significant listening input both inside and outside our classroom.

Similarly, reading serves as one of the most important skills in learning a second or a foreign language. Many scholars agree that reading is a great source for promoting language development. Harmer (2007: 99), for example, writes, 'Reading is useful for language acquisition … the more they read, the better they get. Reading also has a positive effect on students'

vocabulary knowledge, on their spelling and their writing.'

Successful acquisition of reading and listening requires a significant effort, ample opportunity for authentic practice, and effective instructional support. Yet reading and listening skills are often overlooked or considered as secondary skills in language learning classrooms and research. What makes it worse is that some students are reluctant to listen and read in the first place. Nabeel (1994) as cited in Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman (2011), for example, observes that

'… *in some English classes, the announcement of a reading assignment elicits moans and groans from students as they envision the long time it will require, the laborious task of looking up words' meanings in the dictionary. What makes matters worse is that after all the time and efforts; students fail to comprehend the text.*' (p69)

The same situation, we believe, is likely to happen in listening classrooms. Some students might try to avoid the listening class because listening is viewed as burdensome, boring and unrewarding. According to Kamil (2003: 8), 'If

students are not motivated to read [and listen], research shows that they will simply not benefit from reading [and listening] instruction.'

It is our responsibility as teachers to find innovative ways to motivate our students to read and listen, to help our students become more successful readers and listeners. In this current digital era, such special responsibility might be fulfilled through the use of technology in the classroom. Technology can be used as a platform to help our students build a solid reading and listening foundation.

The ideas behind the push to use technology are well documented. Today's youth are 'born digital'. Computers and smartphones are very much part of almost every aspect of their (and our) everyday lives. It is natural to see desktop computers available in school labs or teachers and students walking around with their tablet PCs, laptops or mobile phones. In addition, most of us have seen how the internet today is entwined and plays a major role in business relations, the entertainment industry, education, and other important aspects of our lives today. A report presented by We Are Social Singapore in January 2017, for