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AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' STRATEGY IN TEACHING LISTENING

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**Abstract:** Listening is the ways of picking up the information delivered by others in daily life, and also is the most important elements in studying foreign language. Several people have, however, problem in listening because they think that listening is the hardest skill to be mastered. To solve this barrier, teachers carry a big responsibility in their classroom. Teachers need to encourage students' participation through preparing an interesting strategy during listening instruction in order to attract students' attention to take part actively in listening. This study attempted to investigate the strategy used by teacher in teaching listening. Richard's theory of listening strategy to include bottom-up and topdown was applied. Through utilizing qualitative descriptive analysis, this study involved three listening lecturers of English Department of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo where they were observed and interviewed. The analysis of data revealed that teachers used mostly top-down process activities in listening class.

**Key words:** Listening Strategy, Teachers' Strategy

INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged that there are four major basic skill of English which need to be learn and mastered by learner when it comes to learning the language. Listening is a component of language consist of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Just as the other three skills of English, listening skill also plays a very significant role in the process of language learning indeed and has, therefore, to be mastered by its learners. In favor of this notion, Harmer (2001, p. 98) stated that listening assists students in obtaining some pieces of information about not only grammar and vocabulary, but also pronunciation, intonation, pitch and stress from the speaker, which in turn will facilitate them to be a better listener. Moreover, Vandergrift (1999) stated that listening lies in the heart of language learning, but it is least understood and least researched. Because, the very first stage which commonly dealt with by learners throughout the process of both acquiring and learning a language is listening. However, based on the researcher's personal experience, a considerable number of students are not yet able to grasp and understand what the speakers are saying indeed. Several researches have already investigated the problem of students in listening. One of researchers S. Sumibatul Ummab SM in her thesis revealed that unclear pronunciation, vocabulary, native speaker, students' concentration during listening, and the problem of laziness as well as uninteresting are among the most impediment factors for learners in learning listening. According to Ur (1984) as cited in Erawati (2013) there are several problems found by the students during listening comprehension. First, students sometimes do not understand the certain English sounds. Second, do not know how to cope



Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May-2025



with redundancy and “noise”. Third, cannot predict the language meaning because they are not familiar with the pattern of words. Fourth, do not understand the colloquial vocabulary. Fifth, cannot set their own listening pace. Sixth, have difficulties in understanding another accent and the last is having lack ability of how to use environment clues to get the meaning. Therefore, to overcome some problem in listening teachers carry a big responsibility in their classrooms. They have a big impact on their students either positive or negative and it is the teacher’s responsibility to create friendly and supportive atmosphere in learning process. If teachers are aware the importance of learning strategies, they can provide a good map for their students. Based on J. Richard (2008) theory, the strategy that can develop students’ ability in listening skill that is bottom-up and top-down strategy. And this theory will be use by the researcher as the main theory to analyze teachers’ strategy in teaching and learning process of listening. Therefore, the researcher formulated in problem statement which is what are the teachers’ strategy in teaching listening. Regarding the problem statement of this research, the aims of this research is to investigate the strategy used by teachers’ in teaching listening. The scope of the study is teachers’ strategies in teaching listening specifically listening for general communication in English Department. This researcher focus on the strategies according to J. Richard (2008) theory, those are bottom-up and top-down strategies. The significance of this research are this research can be used by teachers as a reference in order to develop the appropriate strategies in teaching listening and the result of this research is expected to be an additional reference to the other researcher who wants to investigate teachers’ strategy in teaching listening.

### **The Definition of Listening**

Listening is the ways of people to communicate in order to understand on what speaker deliver to others in daily life, and also is the most important elements in studying of foreign language. It emphasizes that listening requires active participation from the listeners. In the same way, Harmer (2001, p.181) expresses that listening is a “receptive skill” where people get the idea according to what they heard. Basically, listening has different meaning with hearing. Listening involves an active process which requires an analysis of sounds. In contrast, hearing only perceives sounds in a passive way.

Kinds of Listening According to Harmer (1991, p.204) there are two kinds of listening namely extensive and intensive listening. Extensive Listening

This type is where a teacher encourages students to choose for them what they listen to and do it, for pleasure and general language improvement, it is can also have a dramatic effect on a students’ language learning. Extensive listening also has a greater easy than other types as it is concerned to promote overall comprehension of a text and never requires learners to follow every word and understand them. Intensive Listening Intensive listening or 'Hearing clearly' is also a prime aspect of listening as it includes accurate perception without which the second phase of processing meaning becomes very difficult. Listening intensively is quite important to understand the language form of the text, as we have to understand both the lexical and grammatical units that lead to form meaning.

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May-2025

The Strategy Used in Teaching Listening Listening strategy is a technique or activities that can help students in develop their listening ability. So, these are some strategy that can developing students' ability in listening skill according to J. Richard (2008) theory:

### **Top-down Processing**

Top-down process as Richard (2008) stated that refers to the use of background in understanding the meaning of a message. It also supported by Gebhard (2000) in Mandarani (2016, p.192) stated that top-down process refers to the prior knowledge to understand the information received. In the other word top-down processing focus on "big" pictures, big pictures here mean the general meaning of a listening text. Topdown strategies rely on students knowing something about the topic and either knowing how particular exchanges in certain social situation. Whereas bottom-up processing goes from language to meaning, while top-down processing goes from meaning to language. Here are some exercises that require top-down processing develop the learner's ability in listening according to Richard (2008):

1. Use key words to construct the schema of a discourse
2. Infer the setting for a text
3. Infer the role of the participants and their goals
4. Infer causes or effects
5. Infer unstated details of a situation
6. Anticipate questions related to the topic or situation

The Implementation of Bottom-up and Top-down Strategy in Listening Process Mandarani (2016, p.192) learning activities divided into three sections, namely prelistening, while listening and post-listening.

#### **1. Pre-listening**

Pre-listening session serve as a preparation of listening. Bottom-up strategy in prelistening session, teachers help students to identify the vocabulary, grammar which is the key of the conversation that are played in audio of listening. While top-down strategy in pre-listening session, students use their knowledge as a context and situation.

#### **2. While listening**

While listening is directly related to the text engagement. Bottom-up strategy in while listening process, teachers' direct students through the listening process, monitor the difficulties of listening. While top-down strategy in while listening process, teachers help students in prediction and understand what they have heard.

#### **3. Post-listening**

Post listening in bottom-up and top-down strategy is an activity in which the teachers gives some questions or evaluates students related to the topic that has been discussed earlier.

### **Advantage and Disadvantage the Implementation of Bottom-up and Top-down Strategy in Listening**



Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May-2025

According to Tarigan in Mandarani (2016, p.194) argue that from the implementation of bottom-up and top-down strategy in listening, there are some advantages of this strategy, i.e. this strategy can help students who difficulties in listening by building knowledge in context presented from the audio of listening, facilitate students to understand the meaning conveyed from what they have heard. As for the disadvantages of both these strategies, students will find it difficult if they cannot understand the context of what they have heard, such as identifying vocabulary, grammar and the meaning of word.

### **Method of Research**

The type of research that used in this research is descriptive qualitative. This research aims to investigate the strategy used by teachers' in teaching listening.

### **Participant**

The participant of this research are three teachers who are teaching listening particularly listening for general communication in English Department. To selection the participants the researcher uses purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2016, p.219) purposive sampling could be a sample taken previously sampling could be a sample taken previously supported sure thought created by the researcher worker itself, based on the features or population characteristic. On the other hand, there are only three teachers who are available and agreed to participate in this research.

### **Technique of Collecting Data**

Data collection of this research are an observation and interview.

#### **Observation**

In this case the researcher is a passive participant because the researcher only wants to know teachers' activity in the class when they applied the strategy based on Richard, J.C (2008) theory: bottom-up and top-down.

#### **Interview**

The researcher used semi structured interview to urge a lot of deeply the data. In process of interview, the researcher asked about what activities they do in pre-listening session and also the activities they used in teaching listening based on Richard's (2008) bottom-up and top-down.

### **Technique of Analysis Data**

The researcher analyzed the data, the researcher observes three teachers when they teaching in listening class. The researcher used observation instrument during observation process. The observation list is arranged by activity that the researcher explain in chapter two according to Richard, J.C (2008) theory: bottom-up and topdown and also the researcher description the data into three meetings for each participant then analyzed the observation result. Then, each indicator will summarize to see the activity that teacher used in teaching listening, in order to know whether the participants do the activity of bottom-up and top-down strategy or not. After analyzing the data from observation, the researcher analyzed the result of interview teacher's opinion about bottom-up and top-down strategy.





Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May-2025

The result of interview are summarized in one paragraph to cover the final result of this research.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Research finding based on observation**

In this research, there are three participants chosen as the subject which were then divided in is A: 1st teacher, B: 2nd teacher, C: 3rd teacher. The researcher observed the teachers based on the activities that included in bottom-up and top-down strategy. In observation list, there are two strategies with thirteen activities covered within (bottomup: 7 and top-down: 6). However, as stated previously the researcher undertook the observation during three meetings for each participant. Hence, in this chapter the researcher describes the teachers' strategies that the researcher found during observation. From the finding of observation, it was revealed that most teachers tend to use top-down activities. However, in certain occasions teachers used top-down listening activity while they were teaching listening, such as use keyword to construct the schema of a discourse, infer the setting for a text, infer unstated details of a situation etc. the aim of using this activity was to increase the students understanding or comprehension toward a certain topic of listening.

### **Research finding based on interview**

After collecting the data from observation, the researcher interviewed the participants with respect to their strategy in teaching listening. It had been justified that interview in this research was conducted in the form of semi-structured interview. Based on the result of interview that has been done by the researcher it can be concluded that each participant has their own way how to teach listening. It depends on the topic of the lesson. Over all, bottom-up and top-down strategies cannot stand alone, sometimes it will changes depend on learning material and students' condition.

## **DISCUSSION**

The data was taken from three teachers who are teaching listening specifically listening for general communication in English Department. In this research, the data of this research was obtained by observation list that has been checked by researcher according to teachers' strategy used in teaching listening based on Richard, J.C (2008) theory. In addition, the interview as a supporter of observation list as a main data.

The researcher collected the data based on observation first; it is to know whether teacher use one of these two strategies (bottom-up and top-down) or on the other hand applying both strategies or not. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the result of observation based on data collected. During the observation almost all the activities that include in these strategies (bottom-up and top-down) applied by the participants. Only some of them did not applied by the participants. Actually, the participants should apply all the activities that include in bottom-up strategy in order to help students in develop their listening skill, as Richard, J.C (2008) stated that and has been explained in chapter 2. But, in fact there are several activities are not implemented by the participants. The researcher did not find the use of those activities during the observation process. While in top-down



Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May-2025



strategy, the participants applied all the activities in learning process of listening. So, it can be concluded that after the researcher done the observation research, the participant more significant applied the activities that include in top-down strategy rather than the activities in bottom-up strategy. In teaching listening teacher must provide a good way or strategies so that the listener or students can understand and get the point of listening, because teachers have a major responsibility in their classes. Mandarani (2016, p.192) stated that learning activities divided into three sections, those are pre-listening, while listening and postlistening. In pre-listening session serve as a preparation of listening. Bottom-up strategy in pre-listening session, teachers help students to identify the vocabulary, grammar which is the key of the conversation that are played in audio of listening. While top-down strategy in pre-listening session, students use their knowledge as a context and situation. Teachers help students in connecting the overall meaning of what they have heard. While listening is directly related to the text engagement. Bottom-up strategy in while listening process, teachers' direct students through the listening process, monitor the difficulties of listening. Such as identify vocabulary, sound and the meaning of word. While top-down strategy in while listening process, teachers help students in prediction and understand what they have heard. Post listening in bottomup and top-down strategy is an activity in which the teachers gives some questions or evaluates students related to the topic that has been discussed earlier. Moreover, based on research finding the teaching strategies employed by teacher in teaching listening were so various in every meeting. The researcher did the observation in three meetings for each participant.

There were data obtained by interview the participants about the strategy they used in teaching listening. The result of interview that has been done by the researcher it can be concluded that each participant has their own way how to teach listening. It depends on the topic of the lesson. Over all, bottom-up and top-down strategies cannot stand alone, sometimes it will changes depend on learning material and students' condition.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study is conducted to answer these research question which are about teachers' strategy in teaching listening. The aim of this research is to investigate the strategy used by teachers' in listening skill based on Richard, J.C (2008) theory: bottom-up and topdown. The present study reveals in English Department, especially the teacher who are teaching listening subject specifically listening for general communication.

The overall result from observation almost all the activities that include in these strategies (bottom-up and top-down) applied by the participants. Only in bottom-up strategy, there are several activities are not implemented by each participant, teachers more significant used the activities in top-down process. Resulting from the finding and discussion, it showed that there are some strategies that teacher used to make the students be easier in understanding the meaning of listening. First, the teacher help students to identify vocabulary, grammar which is the key of conversation, teachers' direct students through listening process, monitor the difficulties faced by students during listening process and also evaluate students in the end of learning process. It was about "bottom -

**Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May-2025**

up” strategy. Second, the teacher always used background knowledge of the students. Such as, guessing the content of the conversation, identify the setting, characters, gave some pictures etc. It was “top - down” strategy.

From the result of interview, it can be concluded that each participant has their own way how to teach listening. It means that they create their own way in every activity that they applied in teaching and learning process. Over all, bottom-up and top-down strategies cannot stand alone, sometimes it will changes depend on learning material and students’ condition.

### **SUGGESTION**

For the result of this research, researcher have some suggestions to the teacher and future researcher. For the teachers, this research delivered strategy that used in teaching listening. So, the researcher hopes this research can be used by teachers’ as a reference in order to develop the appropriate strategies in teaching listening. For the future research, the result of this research is expected to be an additional reference to the next researcher who wants to investigate teachers’ strategy in teaching listening.

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