

**TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION AT
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN KARAWANG:
A CASE STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the strategies used by an English teacher in teaching listening comprehension at a high school in Karawang. This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design. The research participant was an English teacher selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The data were analyzed using the qualitative data analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The findings indicate that the teacher employed a combination of top-down and bottom-up strategies in teaching listening comprehension. Additionally, the teacher implemented listening instruction through three stages: pre-listening, during listening, and post-listening. These strategies effectively helped students understand the material by activating prior knowledge, focusing on linguistic features, and engaging them in structured listening activities. This study concludes that the integration of various listening strategies and systematic teaching stages contributes positively to the effectiveness of oral comprehension instruction in EFL classrooms and supports the development of students' listening skills.

Keywords: listening comprehension, teachers' strategies, top-down strategy, bottom-up strategy, case study

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi yang digunakan oleh seorang guru bahasa Inggris dalam mengajarkan pemahaman mendengarkan di sebuah sekolah menengah atas di Karawang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Subjek penelitian adalah seorang guru bahasa Inggris yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi. Data dianalisis menggunakan model analisis data kualitatif yang diusulkan oleh Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña, yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa guru tersebut menerapkan kombinasi strategi top-down dan bottom-up dalam mengajarkan pemahaman mendengarkan. Selain itu, guru tersebut melaksanakan pengajaran mendengarkan melalui tiga tahap: pra-mendengarkan, selama mendengarkan, dan pasca-mendengarkan. Strategi-strategi ini secara efektif membantu siswa memahami materi dengan mengaktifkan pengetahuan sebelumnya, berfokus pada fitur-fitur linguistik, dan melibatkan mereka dalam kegiatan mendengarkan yang terstruktur. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa integrasi berbagai strategi mendengarkan dan tahap-tahap

pengajaran yang sistematis memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap efektivitas pengajaran pemahaman lisan di kelas EFL serta mendukung pengembangan keterampilan mendengarkan siswa.

Kata Kunci: pemahaman lisan, strategi guru, strategi top-down, strategi bottom-up, studi kasus

A. Introduction

Listening comprehension is a vital skill in English language learning, serving as the foundation for developing other language skills, including speaking, reading, and writing. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the ability to comprehend spoken language is paramount, as students are required to capture, interpret, and understand information conveyed orally across various communicative situations. According to Goh and Vandergrift (2021), listening comprehension is an active process involving cognitive and metacognitive abilities to construct meaning from the language heard. Therefore, listening encompasses not only the ability to perceive speech sounds but also the capacity to understand the message intended by the speaker.

Although it plays a crucial role in English language pedagogy, listening comprehension remains one of the most challenging skills for students. Many students struggle to

understand spoken material due to limited vocabulary, unfamiliar accents, the speaker's rate of speech, and a lack of listening strategies. Graham (2021) asserts that limited vocabulary and a lack of effective listening strategies are the main factors contributing to students' low proficiency in understanding spoken language. This indicates that the success of teaching listening skills is influenced not only by students' innate abilities but also by the pedagogical strategies implemented by teachers during the learning process.

In teaching listening comprehension, teachers play a crucial role as facilitators who help students process spoken language effectively. The instructional strategies employed by teachers can determine students' success in understanding the content of listening materials. According to Latupono and Nikijuluw (2022), listening instructional strategies are essential for helping students overcome various challenges, such as limited

vocabulary, fast speech rates, and differences in pronunciation. Therefore, teachers must select strategies that align with students' needs and characteristics to achieve optimal learning objectives.

In the pedagogy of listening comprehension, teachers commonly use two primary strategies: top-down and bottom-up strategies. Gushendra and Sari (2020) explain that top-down strategies help students understand meaning by drawing on prior knowledge, experiences, and contextual clues before listening to the material. Conversely, bottom-up strategies help students process information by identifying speech sounds, vocabulary, phrases, and grammatical structures in a step-by-step manner. These two strategies complement each other, enabling students to grasp both the main idea and the detailed information in the listening text. Furthermore, advancements in listening instruction show that teachers frequently combine both approaches to help students achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the audio materials.

In addition to teaching strategies, the success of teaching

listening skills depends on the implementation of systematic learning stages. Wilson (2008) states that effective teaching of listening skills consists of three main stages: pre-listening, during listening, and post-listening. The pre-listening stage aims to prepare students before they engage with the audio material; the during-listening stage focuses on the process of understanding the information heard; and the post-listening stage serves to evaluate and clarify students' understanding of the lesson. Research by Latupono and Nikijuluw (2022) and Rahayu (2024) further demonstrates that the implementation of structured listening stages significantly improves students' comprehension, making the learning process more focused and contextual.

Several previous studies have examined teachers' strategies for teaching listening comprehension. Herlina et al. (2021) found that teachers use various strategies to help students understand listening tasks. Similarly, Masruroh and Mubarak (2023) revealed that teachers apply top-down and bottom-up strategies during the pre-listening, listening, and post-listening stages by utilizing a variety of learning media. Meanwhile,

Rahayu (2024) demonstrated that the use of varied strategies can enhance students' comprehension and engagement during listening activities. Nevertheless, research examining teachers' strategies for teaching listening comprehension in the context of high schools in Karawang remains limited, highlighting the need for further research.

Based on the aforementioned context, this study aims to analyze the strategies used by teachers in teaching listening comprehension at a senior high school in Karawang. This research is specifically designed to answer the following research question: "What strategies do teachers use in teaching listening comprehension at senior high schools?" The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of listening comprehension pedagogy and serve as a valuable reference for teachers in selecting appropriate strategies to improve students' listening proficiency.

B. Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design to examine the strategies used by teachers

in teaching listening comprehension at a high school in Karawang. The participant in this study is an English teacher selected through purposive sampling due to her experience in teaching listening skills. Research data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews and documentation. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using the data analysis model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which involves data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. To ensure data validity, the researcher used triangulation by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation.

C. Research Findings and Discussion

Research findings indicate that teachers employ various approaches to teaching listening comprehension, namely top-down and bottom-up strategies, as well as the implementation of steps in listening instruction that include pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities. These approaches are used to help students understand the content of audio more effectively and to increase their participation during the learning process.

Strategy	Implementation	During the observation
Top- Down Strategy	Students Predicted the content of the audio using prior knowledge and contextual clues provides by teacher.	process, the researcher found that teachers often engaged students in brief discussions about the topic to be listened to. For example, when the material discussed the environment, the teacher first asked students about their experiences with environmental issues they had faced. In this way, students became more engaged and developed a preliminary understanding of the content to be studied.
Bottom- Up Strategy	Students focused on identifying vocabulary, pronunciation, and detailed information from the audio.	
Pre- Listening	The teacher introduced the topic and key vocabulary before playing the audio.	
While- Listening	Students listened to the audio and completed listening tasks provided by the teacher.	
Post- Listening	The teacher and students discussed the listening content and evaluated students' understanding.	

Findings from the interviews also indicate that educators intentionally employ this strategy to help students understand the audio content more easily. Teachers stated:

“Usually, before playing the audio, I ask a question or have the students guess what the material is about first. That way, they have an idea of what to expect and aren’t too confused while listening.”

This statement indicates that teachers use students’ prior knowledge and experience as a foundation for building understanding of the listening material. In addition, this strategy also helps boost students’ confidence because they already have an idea of what

1. Teachers' Strategies in Teaching

Listening Comprehension

a. Top- Down Strategy

Based on observations and interviews, the teacher employed a top-down strategy by providing an overview of the material to be studied. Before playing the audio, the teacher asked the students to predict the content based on the topic, images, or questions presented. This activity aimed to activate students’ prior knowledge so they would be better prepared to understand the information in the audio.

information they will hear. These findings suggest that the top-down strategy is one of the key strategies teachers use to help students grasp the general meaning of the listening material before focusing on more detailed information.

b. Bottom- Up Strategy

In addition to implementing a top-down strategy, teachers also use a bottom-up strategy during listening instruction. This approach involves asking students to pay attention to vocabulary, pronunciation, and details in the audio. Based on observations, teachers often ask students to write down key words and pay attention to specific information they hear.

The results of the interviews indicate that teachers view vocabulary mastery as a key factor in understanding listening material. Teachers stated:

“Many students have trouble understanding the audio because they don’t know the vocabulary. So I usually introduce a few key words first before the listening exercise begins.”

In addition, the teacher plays the audio more than once so that students can pick up on information they may have missed during the first playback. Through this strategy,

students can better understand language elements such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and specific details. The results of this study indicate that the bottom-up strategy helps students build understanding gradually, starting from individual words and progressing to the overall meaning of the text.

c. Implementation of Listening Stages

The results of the study indicate that teachers implement listening instruction through three main stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. These three stages are carried out systematically to help students understand the material step by step.

Pre-Listening Stage

During the pre-listening stage, the teacher introduces the topic and vocabulary related to the material to be studied. The teacher also asks leading questions to help students understand the context of the material before the audio is played. Based on the interview results, the teacher explains:

“I usually introduce some key vocabulary first so that students don’t have too much trouble when listening to the audio.”

This activity helps students be better prepared and gives them a preliminary understanding of the material they are about to hear.

While-Listening Stage

During the listening phase, students listen to the audio while completing tasks assigned by the teacher, such as answering questions or taking notes on important information. Based on observations, teachers typically play the audio two or three times to help students better understand the content.

This is supported by the following interview findings:

"I usually play the audio more than once because students have different learning abilities. By listening to it again, they can better understand the content."

Replaying the audio helps students gain a more complete understanding of the material and improves their comprehension of the listening content.

Post-Listening Stage

During the post-listening stage, the teacher and students discuss the content of the audio and review the answers to the completed tasks. The teacher provides feedback and

explains the parts that students still find difficult to understand.

The teacher explains:

"After the listening activity is finished, I usually go over the answers together so that students know which parts they got right and which parts still need improvement."

Through these discussion and evaluation activities, students can clarify their understanding and gain a deeper understanding of the material they have listened to.

Discussion

Based on the research findings, it was revealed that the teacher utilized a combination of top-down and bottom-up strategies in teaching listening comprehension. Furthermore, the teacher implemented a three-stage listening framework consisting of pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities to assist students in processing the material more systematically. The employment of these diverse strategies demonstrates the teacher's effort to create a learning process that helps students comprehend both the gist and the specific details of the audio input.

The implementation of the top-down strategy was evident when the teacher provided an initial overview of the topic before the listening activity commenced. The teacher prompted students to connect the lesson topic with their prior knowledge or personal experiences. Through this activity, students were able to generate predictions regarding the content of the audio they were about to hear. Based on the observations and interviews, this strategy helped students become more prepared for the listening task as they already possessed a preliminary understanding of the contextual background. This finding aligns with the theory proposed by Goh and Vandergrift (2021), who state that top-down strategies enable learners to leverage prior knowledge and available contextual cues to construct meaning from spoken texts. Consequently, students do not solely rely on the individual words they hear but also utilize existing information to understand the overall content.

In addition to the top-down strategy, the teacher incorporated a bottom-up strategy during the listening process. This strategy was executed by directing students' attention to

vocabulary, pronunciation, and specific information within the audio. The teacher required students to listen attentively, identify key vocabulary, and locate specific data necessary to complete the assigned tasks. The interview results indicated that the teacher regarded vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation recognition as crucial aspects of listening instruction, as both components assist students in understanding the audio in greater detail. This finding is consistent with Goh and Vandergrift (2021), who explain that bottom-up strategies help learners process linguistic information sequentially, ranging from speech sounds, words, and phrases to building full textual meaning. Therefore, this strategy affords students the opportunity to develop their proficiency in recognizing the linguistic features of the listening input.

The research findings also indicated that the teacher did not merely focus on instructional strategies but also systematically structured the listening lesson through pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening phases. In the pre-listening stage, the teacher introduced the

topic, clarified the learning objectives, and pre-taught vocabulary related to the upcoming material. This stage aimed to prepare students before exposure to the audio, ensuring they had a foundational grasp of the lesson. Subsequently, during the while-listening stage, students listened to the audio and completed the tasks assigned by the teacher. In this phase, students were required to pay attention to critical information in the audio and relate it to the previously provided instructions. Following the listening activity, the teacher conducted the post-listening stage by leading a class discussion on the answers, clarifying misunderstood information, and providing feedback on students' performance.

The systematic application of these three stages demonstrates that the listening instruction was delivered in a structured and scaffolded manner. This finding supports Wilson's (2008) theory, which asserts that effective listening instruction should be executed through pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening stages to optimize students' comprehension development. Through these phases, students were not abruptly exposed to the audio without preparation; rather,

they were given opportunities to prepare themselves, process information during the listening task, and evaluate their understanding afterward. Thus, the learning process became more goal-oriented and facilitated better comprehension of the listening material.

Moreover, the findings of this study illustrate that combining top-down and bottom-up strategies contributes positively to listening comprehension instruction. The two strategies complement each other in facilitating students' understanding of oral texts. While the top-down strategy helps students grasp the general overview of the audio by activating their schema, the bottom-up strategy assists them in deciphering detailed information. The combination of both strategies enables students to comprehend the listening material more comprehensively, as they can bridge the general context with the specific linguistic data in the spoken text.

In conclusion, the research results indicate that the teacher implemented diverse and structured instructional strategies in teaching listening comprehension. These strategies not only assisted students

in understanding the audio content but also enhanced their engagement throughout the learning process. This finding reinforces previous studies showing that the use of appropriate strategies and the systematic implementation of listening stages can foster successful listening comprehension in EFL classrooms. Consequently, teachers should continuously develop and adapt their listening instructional strategies to suit students' needs, thereby ensuring a more effective and meaningful learning process.

D. Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the strategies employed by teachers in teaching listening comprehension at a senior high school in Karawang. The findings indicate that the teacher integrates a combination of top-down and bottom-up strategies in the listening instruction process. Furthermore, the teacher systematically implements the learning process through pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening stages. The application of these strategies and stages assists students in comprehending listening materials both globally and in detail, while also

supporting their engagement throughout the learning process.

The utilization of the top-down strategy helps students connect their prior knowledge with the material to be learned, whereas the bottom-up strategy assists them in understanding vocabulary, pronunciation, and specific information embedded in the audio. Meanwhile, the implementation of pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening stages provides students with opportunities to prepare themselves, process information, and evaluate their comprehension progressively. Consequently, the strategies utilized by the teacher are capable of creating a more structured and effective listening learning process.

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the use of varied and structured strategies plays a vital role in supporting the success of listening comprehension instruction in the EFL classroom. Therefore, teachers need to continuously develop and adapt listening learning strategies to meet students' needs, thereby making the learning process more effective and enhancing students' listening comprehension skills.

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