

## DEPELOVING STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION BY APPLYING BOTTOM-UP TECHNIQUE

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### ABSTRACT

*The aim of this study was to depelove students' listening comprehension by applying Bottom-Up technique. This study is a classroom action research which has done in three cycles. The subject of the study was the eight grade of the students of MTs. Darul Aminin NW Aikmual Lombok Tengah. The study was conducted by applying Bottom-Up technique which consists of three main stages. There are word processing, phrase processing, and comprehension. The writer observed students' depelovement in listening comprehension by collecting data through field notes, observation checklist and listening test. Field note and observation checklist were used to gather the students' attitude in learning process. The data of listening was collected through listening test and it was assessed through scoring rubric. The result showed that students' problems in understanding the contents of listening and vocabulary had been solved by applying Bottom-Up technique. In the third cycle, the students mean score was 83.7. It increased in the second cycle to 82.1, and 76.7 in first cycle. As the conclusion, the technique was able to be applied in depeloving students' listening comprehension. As a technique in teaching and learning process, the writer recommends the teacher to apply Bottom-Up technique.*

**Keywords:** *Bottom-Up, Classroom Action Reseach, Listening Comprehension*

## INTRODUCTION

One of the four main skills in language learning is listening skill. An important skill for English for Foreign Language (EFL) students is the ability of listening. As one of receptive skills, listening activity could be a tool for having informations, ideas, or even thoughts. It plays a significant role in conversation. In language learning, students are expected to master listening skill. Students will be able to receive the information or the lesson which have been given by the teacher if the students mastery in listening skill. In case of listening, students have to pay much attention because listening is a foundation for other language skills. Carol (2005, p.24) said that listening is related to speaking because both are oral skills. Furthermore, Carol (2005, p.24) also said that by listening students are preparing to imitate the sounds when they speak. For instance, students learn to speak by listening to what is said to them and creatively putting things into words by themselves.

The problem of comprehending the listening material is often found among students. From the result of preliminary study carried out at MTs. Darul Aminin NW Aikmual Lombok Tengah through class observation and interview with the eight grades of the students of MTs. Darul Aminin NW Aikmual Lombok Tengah, the writer found some difficulties regarding to students' low listening ability. The first

difficulty that the teacher faced in the classroom regarding to the listening activity was that the students were not able to find the main idea in monologue text. In this case, when the students listen to the monologue text they felt confused. When the teacher gave a task, the students got lower score means under 75 where they were supposed to get at least 75 to pass. The second difficulty was while they listen to the monologue text, the students could not get any detailed information. They could not deal with new words such as names of things or number. They had difficulty in answering the task which demanded them to find the detailed information. These difficulties occurred because the students had low motivation to learn English and they assumed listening activity was hard to do and monotonous. As the result, they could not develop their listening ability.

The teacher needed to find a technique which is suitable and could develop listening ability of the eight grade students of MTs Darul Aminin NW Lombok Tengah based on the facts above. There were a lot of teaching techniques that could be applied by the teacher in the classroom. The Bottom-Up technique is a technique which found by a psychologist, Eleanor J. Gibson. The main focus of Bottom-Up technique is incoming sensory data and it occurs directly. It starts with sensory data and it will be sent to

brain's integration of the sensory information.

In the classroom, the Bottom-Up is joyful to be applied. The teacher could make the students more interested in learning listening by this technique. Bottom-Up could build understanding from the smallest units of the acoustic message, such as phonemes, and combined into words, phrases, clauses, and sentences (Carrel, 1988; Flowerdew & Miller, 2004; Rost, 1990).

The Bottom-Up technique could help the students to develop their ability in listening comprehension especially to find the main idea and detailed information of monologue text in form of descriptive text. The students also would be able to recognize new words in descriptive text. Descriptive text is one of monologue texts which are needed to be learned by the students of eight grades at the second semester. Therefore, the writer applied this technique to a group of eight grades of the students of MTs. Darul Aminin NW Aikmual Lombok Tengah to develop their listening skill.

The previous study was held in China by Tsui & Fullilove in 1988. They were conducted a research with 150.000 item performances by Chinese learners of English to investigate whether skill in Bottom-Up technique make some listeners more

successful than others. The result shows that Bottom-Up technique could improve the listening skill of the participants. The second study from Mahmudi entitled "Improving Students' Listening Comprehension by Applying Bottom-Up Technique" in 2013 shows how effective Bottom-Up technique for students of SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pontianak in academic year 2011/2012. The study was done by the writer because he was intended to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The writer took the mean score in each cycle during the study. It was applied to know the development of students listening skill. There was a significant development of the students' achievement in listening skill. The third study was conducted by Rika Lestari in 2019. She was intended to investigate listening comprehension difficulties and Top-Down & Bottom-Up strategies among the students of SMP Negeri 3 Pontianak in Academic year 2018/2019.

The writer was conducted this study to overcome the problem of listening comprehension of vocational high school students which has different syllabus with senior high school. This study also focuses on three main problems of listening comprehension. There are difficulty in finding main idea, detailed information, and also vocabulary understanding. On the

previous studies, they conducted the study to overcome the students' problem in finding general understanding of listening material.

Considering the success of the implementation of Bottom-Up, the writer conducted a classroom action research as an effort to overcome the problem. As cited in Cohen et al. (2007, p.299) said that one of the characters of action research is to enhance the competencies of the participant. Action research will help the students to develop their listening ability by applying Bottom-Up technique. This study was conducted to answer this question based on the background of the study above: How does Bottom-Up technique develop the students' listening comprehension.

## METHOD

To identify the answers for questions that take place in any type of work is the Study. Mertler (2006, p.3) states that research is simply one of many means by which human beings seek answers to questions. The writer was applied classroom action research because the writer aimed to develop teaching and learning process and to overcome the problems found in classroom. Classroom action research is one of the best ways to enhance the classroom situation in teaching and learning process. It

was suitable to be applied in this study. In this study, the writer intended to design classroom activity with bottom-up listening to overcome the problems which occurred in classroom.

Classroom action research could develop the teaching and it could help the writer to discover what technique would work best in classroom. Action research could give a good chance and freedom for the writer to apply any techniques which could develop and overcome the problems. The use of bottom-up listening will be a good technique to develop students' listening skill according to the writer.

During the teaching-learning process, it is important to know how far the students' progress in the process. Besides, the purpose of the indicators of process is to know whether the activity that is considered during the teaching-learning process is in line with what has been planned. Hence, the writer indicated the indicators of the process below: (1) All students are able to be active during teaching-learning process. (2) All students are able to enjoy the classroom situation while teaching-learning process. (3) All students are able to participate in listening comprehension through activity of bottom-up technique. (4) All students are able to do

the listening test. (5) All students are able to depelove their listening comprehension.

The process always determines the success as an addition. Thus, it is important to provide the indicators of success to be the standard of the students' achievement to know how far the action that has been given can overcome the problem or depelove the teaching-learning process quality. They are: (1) Students' mean score is B up to A (average to good or excellent). (2) All students reach KKM (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimum) that is 75 in eight grades of MTs. Darul Aminin Aikmual Lombok Tengah for English Subject. (3) To overcome the problem of comprehending the listening tasks and making the students interested in listening class by applying Bottom-Up technique.

Validity is one of important keys of the study, especially CAR. Cohen, Manion and Marrison (2005, p.105) state that validity is the key to effective research. Validity is needed in qualitative and quantitative data. Therefore, the writer worked with a collaborator to discuss the progress of each cycle to avoid bias and exaggerated subjectivity. Then, the researcher conducted the stages of conducting action research according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005, p.226) as follows:

**Planning:** In this stage, the writer identified and limited the topic, reviewed the literature, and developed a plan of the study. The plan of the study includes the research proposal, lesson plans, teaching materials, achievement, and observation checklist table and field notes.

**Acting:** The writer acted in the classroom as a teacher then teaches the students with the material of which the purpose is to depelove the teaching-learning process. In this case, the writer became the real teacher who has authority and responsibility to manage the class. It is expected to help the students overcoming their listening comprehension problems in order to depelove their listening skill by applying Bottom-Up technique. The writer explained what he do in cycle 1. In cycle 1, the writer had two meetings to do his study because it was not enough that classroom action research is done in one meeting. The writer focused on the first step in the first meeting. Especially listening, the teacher motivated the students, asked some questions about listening, and gave explanation what would be learned. Activities and exercises to be carried out while the learners listened to the listening audio and the teacher directed them as they tried to get the main information of the listening passage on the

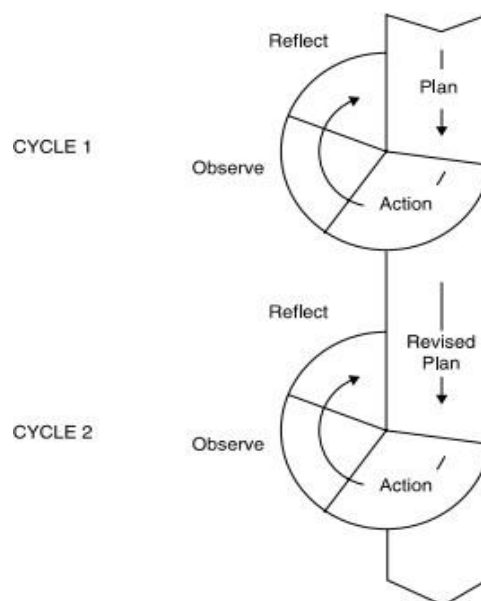
second step. It was how the teacher controls the listening activity. It contains of several activities to reflect on some language aspects as they have comprehended the main information and the content of the listening passage in third cycle. The teacher also added some additional work to do base on the content of the listening text.

**Observing:** The writer gave a test to the students by giving questions based on the listening comprehension. While the students were answering the questions, the writer checked the students' score with checklist table. During this process, the collaborator as writer's assistant filled the field notes down to get anything that occurred in the teaching learning process including the difficulties which are found as well as solution to overcome them. The collaborator also concerned with teacher's work whether the teacher applies by following phases appropriately or not. To get the scores of judgement, the writer combined his score with the collaborator to get objective result on the final step.

**Reflecting:** The writer and the collaborator shared and communicated the result, and reflected on the process in this stage. The writer also discussed the result with the students to get feedbacks on what have been done. Reflecting is one way of

getting feedback from the teaching process. From this activity, the writer was assigned to find out the strengths and the weaknesses of the process. After knowing the weaknesses, the teacher then decides what action will be treated in the next cycle. Reflecting on the process means the teacher reflected on and critically examined their entire teaching practice continuously during the process of teaching. These included the reflection on the lesson plan, teaching materials, performance in the classroom, data collection and data analysis.

Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) as cited in Burns (2009, p.9) divides action research into 4 phases. There are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting in which will be done in a cycle of research. The action research process could be drawn in the scheme below.



Picture 1. Cyclical AR model based on  
Kemmis and McTaggart (1988)

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### The Findings of the Study

This study was Classroom Action Research (CAR) which was done in three cycles. The writer applied Bottom-Up technique and all the students have the same opportunities to participate the teaching and learning process in the classroom. After that, the writer and the teacher observed the students' behavior during teaching and learning process.

The writer computed the individual student's score based on the listening assessment, and then computed the students' individual score and mean score. After that, the writer proceeds the result of mean score and the data from the field note in order to achieve the contrast in the findings of the study.

#### *Cycle 1 (September 10th, 2021)*

When the students had English class, the writer found problems when the writer observed the students in the classroom. The students were not able to get the information of listening audio about descriptive text which was played by the teacher. The students were confused to receive the information from the audio; hence they were not paying attention of listening audio.

Therefore, they had difficulties in listening comprehension. Most of the students were unable to listen to the audio of descriptive text especially in finding main idea, detailed information, and they were lacked in vocabulary mastery. Because of that reasons, the writer applied Bottom-Up technique to help students in order to depelove their listening comprehension in terms of finding main idea and detailed information, and also vocabulary mastery.

Planning: The cycle was designed in two meetings and time allocation was 90 minutes (2 x 45 minutes). The students learned about definition, aim, kind of monologue text, generic structure and language features of monologue text, especially descriptive text. The tools were students' worksheet, observation checklist table and field note.

Acting: The writer acted as a teacher and as the collaborator is teacher. The writer applied Bottom-Up technique in teaching and learning process to depelove students' listening comprehension of descriptive text. The writer began the teaching and learning process by greeting and reviewing the previous material. The teacher started the class by conducting brainstorming. The writer asked the students about vocabularies which were related to the descriptive text

audio that would be learned. All students responded to teacher's greeting. The students also got involved in brainstorming activity for example they mentioned the meaning of the related words. After that, the writer explained about the definition of descriptive text, the generic structure and the language features of descriptive text.

All the students listened very carefully to the explanation. In Indonesia, the writer gave them an example of descriptive text audio especially the description of historical building. The writer asked them to identify the generic structure of the descriptive text that had been listened. After that the writer gave them a group task to rearrange the order of main ideas based on the descriptive text audio that had been listened. This task was given in order to know the students' ability in finding the main ideas of the descriptive text. For the following activity, the students were given a Point out the Meaning task. The students had to do the task individually. The aim of this activity was to know the students' understanding of the vocabulary that had been listened. On the other hand, the writer also gave a task of "True or False Statement". This activity aimed to know the students ability in finding the detailed information of the descriptive text that had been listened. The task still connected to the

previous task. Then the students answered the multiple choice questions individually.

The writer also explained the procedure of Bottom-Up technique in the teaching and learning process in this session. In Indonesia, the writer provided an example of listening audio of historical building. In order to make the students understand the content of the audio, the writer gave the related vocabulary and the students had to understand the vocabulary. After that, the writer played the audio and paused in every sentence. In each gap, the writer explained the structure, meaning, and also the ideas of the sentence. Then the writer played the audio again and paused in every paragraph. This activity was aimed to make the students understand of the main ideas and detailed information in each paragraph of the audio. The writer played the whole descriptive text audio without pausing as the last step. Then, the writer asked the students to find the main ideas of whole text. This activity was aimed to make the students understand of the descriptive text generally. This activity helped the students to be more aware and to get more information of the audio without missing any main ideas and detailed information.

By making conclusion of the lesson material with the students the writer ended



the class. The writer also asked the students about the difficulty during the teaching and learning process. This helped the teacher to decide in the cycle what action to be applied.

**Observing:** The writer and the collaborator observed the result of acting stage in this stage. They observed all process of the first cycle by applying observation checklist table and field notes. They tried to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the technique by observing the whole process and the students' participation.

Based on the data taken by observation checklist table and field notes; it was found the students were enthusiastic when they were participated in Bottom-Up technique by understanding the whole information of the descriptive text audio. But some students were still could not pay attention because they found that audio was not interesting enough for listening comprehension activity.

The writer and the collaborator compute the individual score to obtain the students' mean score after getting the students' tasks.

**Reflecting:** The writer and the teacher reflected what had been done in the first cycle in this stage. The writer made summary of the problems and weakness in this cycle. Then, the writer discussed about the solutions and added another action in

order to overcome the problems that happened, so the teaching and learning process as well as the students' achievement can be developed.

It could be concluded the first cycle was not satisfying based on the discussion between the writer and the teacher. It needed some developments to achieve the goal of the technique. Students were able to understand the descriptive text by finding the main ideas and determining the paragraphs include generic structure of descriptive text, but they still had several weaknesses that were not solved. It means that the second cycle had to be conducted in the classroom. The weaknesses were as follows: (1) Students were difficult in finding specific information of the audio which had been listened. (2) Students were difficult in understanding the meaning of the vocabulary related to the descriptive audio that had been listened. (3) Some Students were lack of paying attention to the listening audio since it was not interesting enough for them.

#### *Cycle 2 (September 18th, 2021)*

**Planning:** The writer and the teacher found that the students were still difficult in finding specific information of the audio based on the result of reflection in the first cycle. The students were confused in remembering the detailed information of the

descriptive text and it gave impact on students' listening comprehension. The students also had problems in understanding the meaning of the words related to descriptive text audio. During the listening activity in the classroom, some students were also lacked of attention. Hence, the students were still getting low score in comprehending the detailed information and understanding the vocabulary.

The writer and the teacher intended to cover the weaknesses happened in the previous meeting. The writer and teacher prepared the lesson plan, teaching media, observation checklist table and field notes. The writer used video rather than audio to depelove students' attention on listening material for the teaching media.

Acting: The writer and the teacher conducted the second cycle on September 18th, 2021. The writer reviewed the previous material. By having brainstorming activity, the teacher started the class. The writer asked the students about vocabularies which were related to the descriptive text audio that would be learned. All students responded to teacher's greeting. The students also got participated in brainstorming activity for example they mentioned the meaning of the related words. After that, the writer played an audio of the descriptive text about the

tourism place in Indonesia. The writer wanted to make the students understand of the detailed information and also pay attention to the vocabulary that related to the audio. Some students were active in the review by helping the writer finding the detailed information and also finding the meaning of some vocabulary.

After that, the writer remained the students about the previous "True or False Statement" activity. The writer also remained the students about how to answer the task. The students answered the task individually in order to know the students' understanding progress of detailed information. Then as the following activity, writer also gave the students "Point out the Meaning" task. This task was given to know how good the depeloovement of students' voabulary understanding which was related to the descriptive text audio that had been listened.

By reviewing and concluding the lesson with the students, the writer ended the teaching and learning process. During today's activity, the writer also asked the students' difficulty. The teacher wrote down all process happened during the teaching and learning process.

**Observation:** The writer and the collaborator observed the result of acting

stage in his stage. They observed all process of the second cycle by using observation checklist table and field notes. By observing the whole process and the students' participation, they tried to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the technique.

From the data taken by observation checklist table and field notes, it was found the students were enthusiast when they were participated in Bottom-Up technique by understanding the whole information of the descriptive text audio. They also could collaborate well in the classroom. All the students paid attention to teacher's explanation during teaching and learning process. The students also did the task carefully. But some students were not active in asking about several difficulties that they faced during the teaching and learning process. The writer and the collaborator compute the individual score to obtain the students' mean score after getting the students' tasks.

**Reflecting:** The writer and the teacher reflected what had been done in the second cycle in this stage. The writer and the collaborator concluded that the second cycle had been good but they needed some depelovements to reach the goal of the technique. There were several depelovements in finding the specific

information from the descriptive text audio. They were also depeloved in understanding the passage by determining the paragraphs and finding general information. The weakness of students' listening comprehension was the students were still a bit slow in comprehending the meaning of the words which were related to the listening audio. Some students were also afraid to ask the difficulties that they encountered during the listening activity.

*Cycle 3 (September 25th, 2021)*

**Planning:** The writer and the teacher needed to overcome the problems happened in the previous meeting based on the reflection result in the first and second cycle. The writer and the teacher prepared the lesson plan, teaching media, observation checklist table and field notes. During the listening activity, the teacher also gave an opportunity to students to tell their difficulties.

**Acting:** The writer and the teacher conducted the third cycle on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The writer reviewed the previous material and also had brainstorming activity. After that the writer played an example of descriptive text audio of historical building in Indonesia. All students were carefully listened to the audio.

By applying Bottom-Up technique, then the writer started the activity. After that the students were given a task of “Point out the Meaning”. They had to answer it individually. This activity was aimed to know the students’ progress of vocabulary understanding. During the teaching and learning process, the writer was monitoring the students’ activity. As following activity, the writer gave multiple choice questions to know the students’ listening comprehension of the descriptive audio that had been listened. The students answered carefully the questions.

To end the class, the writer made a conclusion of lesson material. The writer also discusses with the students about some difficulties the students had during today’s teaching and learning process (reflection). During the teaching and learning process, the collaborator wrote down all process occurred in the classroom.

**Observing:** The writer and the collaborator observed the result of acting stage in this stage. They observed all process of the third cycle by using observation checklist table and field notes. By observing the whole process and the students’ participation, they tried to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the technique.

From the data taken by observation checklist table and field notes, it was found the students were enthusiast when they were participated in Bottom-Up technique by understanding the whole information of the descriptive text audio. They also could collaborate well in the classroom. All the students paid attention to teacher’s explanation during teaching and learning process and they also active in asking about several difficulties that they faced during the teaching and learning process. The students also did the task carefully. Both the writer and the collaborator compute the individual score to obtain the students’ mean score after getting the students’ tasks.

From second cycle to third cycle Students’ reaction to the teaching and learning listening process showed good progression. It showed by students’ behavior of being more active to answer and to participate every task which given by the writer and also in listening the descriptive text carefully.

**Reflecting:** The writer and the collaborator concluded that Bottom-Up technique could develop students’ listening comprehension of descriptive text in this reflection stage of the third cycle. This was because based on observation checklist table and field notes which were filled by the

teacher and the result of achievement test. It was found that the learning process was satisfied. The students were able to find the main ideas and specific information. In addition, the students also could develop the vocabulary understanding. The students' achievement also continued to rise. It can be concluded that Bottom-Up technique was able to develop students' listening comprehension. The teacher also should ask the students to keep practicing their English.

### **Discussion**

The result of the study showed that there was an development by applying Bottom-Up technique in teaching and learning process. Most of the students actively participated in Bottom-Up activity. The result supports Mahmudi's (2013) research that Bottom-Up technique gave positive impacts on students' listening comprehension and also enhanced the students' motivation in listening activity. It can be seen that the students enjoyed the activity when the students tried to listen carefully aimed to get the main ideas and detailed information. The students also enhanced the understanding of related vocabulary. The students were enjoying their learning delivered by the writer.

The findings of the study extended what Flowerdew & Miller (2004) stated

Bottom-Up could build understanding of such phonemes, and combined into words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. It could benefit the students to gain more information of what they have listened both generally and specifically. It helps a lot in students' listening comprehension.

The students were able to understand the definition, the aim and the kinds of descriptive text also determining the main ideas of the descriptive text audio in the first cycle. The students more understand about how to get the specific or detailed information of the descriptive text audio in the second cycle. There was good development in comprehending the descriptive text audio. The writer and the teacher actively monitored the students' activity in understanding the meaning of vocabulary that the students listened in the third cycle. In Indonesia, the writer also reviewed the material and gave the example of another descriptive text audio about historical building. The students were more active and enjoyed the teaching and learning process in this cycle. They also showed a good progress and development of listening comprehension. The students could do the activities well and the writer provided good opportunity for students to tell the difficulties they found during the teaching

learning process. The writer and the collaborator decided to stop the actions because the data showed that the indicators of success were fulfilled after observing the process and in processing the data.

Bottom-Up technique supports higher level of listening comprehension and also could stimulate the students to participate well in listening activity. Bottom-Up technique helps the students to pay more attention in getting information of listening audio and it could give more opportunities to get more information in general or specific way.

The findings of the study of the classroom action research were satisfying in conclusion. The students' listening comprehension of descriptive text is developed by applying Bottom-Up technique. The students can easily understand the main ideas and also the detailed information. They also can develop their understanding of related vocabulary. During teaching and learning process the students showed their interest in listening activity.

## CONCLUSION

It could be concluded the students' listening in eight grades of the students of MTs. Darul Aminin NW Aikmual Lombok

Barat in academic year 2021/2022 developed by applying Bottom-Up technique from the discussion in the previous chapter. The use of Bottom-Up technique in teaching listening was able to make the students active in teaching and learning process based on the data in field notes and observation checklist table. Bottom-Up technique developed the students listening comprehension by applying the three main stages. The first stage is word processing where the students listened and comprehended the listening material word by word. The second stage is phrase processing where the students listened and comprehended the listening material phrase by phrase. The last stage is comprehension where the students had to understand the whole passage of listening material. In addition, Bottom-Up technique can provide good opportunity to create active students in listening class. The students are able to think critically and individually about the given task and they are also able to get more information from the listening activity specifically and generally. The students will not feel confused to identify the listening comprehension of descriptive text now.

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