

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an initial understanding of the research. It discusses the background, problem formulation, objectives, and significance of the research. It also discusses the study's terminology, scope, and limitations.

### **A. Background of study**

According to Brown listening is the process of actively paying attention to spoken symbols, fully comprehending, appreciating, and interpreting them to obtain information, grasp the message or content, and understand the meaning of the communication conveyed by the speaker through speech or spoken language.<sup>1</sup> Active and attentive listening can enhance relationships, trust, and understanding, both personally and professionally. Like in identifying sound meaning, it is processed through the cognitive skill of listening. It can be concluded that listening involves actively processing sounds to understand their meaning, and this understanding is crucial for compelling listening. In essence, listening is more than just hearing. It is an active process of constructing meaning from the sounds that we hear.<sup>2</sup> Considering this statement, it can be inferred that sound quality and listening skills are critical in learning. In addition, active listening, which involves focusing on the speaker, taking notes, and asking questions, also improves understanding and memory of the material. Thus, sound quality and listening skills are closely related and contribute to successful learning.

Moreover, beyond just hearing sounds, listening is a complex problem-solving ability that includes understanding words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and related conversations, in addition to listening intently and attempting to interpret what you hear. That is most kids, teens, and adults' primary source of concepts, values, viewpoints, and knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Good listening skills are necessary for

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<sup>1</sup> D. Brown, "The Third Edition Teaching by Principles; Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy. San Francisco State University" (New York: Pearson Longman, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Febriana Wahyuni, An Analysis Of Students' Listening Comprehension Through English Song, UIN Suska Riau, 2019, p.17

<sup>3</sup> Nigina Fayzullayeva, The Improving of listening skill, Modern Science and Research Vol 2 2023, p.2

receiving messages effectively, focusing on what others are saying and engaging in a psychological dialogue with the speaker. According to Ferris & Tagg in Evi, developing listening comprehension skills is essential for success in academic contexts. In essence, listening is the linchpin connecting information intake to the production of complex understanding, thus playing a critical role in attaining educational goals.<sup>4</sup> Based on this statement, the researcher argues that Listening comprehension is a cornerstone of academic success. It enables students to acquire knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, collaborate effectively, and achieve educational goals. Therefore, educators need to prioritize the development of listening skills in their classrooms. Students who can effectively listen and understand information are more likely to perform well in their studies

In addition, listening plays a crucial role in academic success. It provides the linguistic input necessary for language learning and development. By actively listening to lectures, discussions, and other scholarly materials, students can improve their understanding of complex concepts, develop critical thinking skills, and improve their ability to participate effectively in academic discourse. While listening is a fundamental skill, it can also present challenges for many students. Noise, accents, and rapid speech can hinder listening comprehension. Additionally, cultural differences and prior knowledge can influence a student's ability to understand and interpret spoken language.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, effective listening enables students to grasp complex ideas and concepts presented in lectures, discussions, and other academic materials. It requires students to actively engage with the spoken language and make connections between different pieces of information. While listening can present challenges, students can significantly enhance their academic performance by addressing them and developing effective listening strategies.

Michael Rost in Tabieh argues that the ability to focus and listen is known as listening ability. He also claims that teaching language is a highly complex

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<sup>4</sup> Yahfenel Evi Fussalam, Renda Lestari, and Rensi Yu Anggelia, "A STUDY OF LISTENING SKILLS THROUGH MOVIE: A REVIEW OF THE CURRENT LITERATURE," *Journal Of Language Education and Development (JLed)* 1, no. 2 (July 31, 2019): 158–68. p.4

<sup>5</sup> Preti Sinta, "An Analysis Of Students' Problems In Listening Comprehension (A Descriptive Study to the Third Semester Students of English Education Study Program at IKIP PGRI Pontianak in the Academic Year of 2023/2024)" (diploma, IKIP PGRI PONTIANAK, 2024). p.7

process that empowers students to comprehend spoken language through pacing, encoding units, and factual pacing. While these definitions pertain to listening in general, listening skill is essential to second-language proficiency. As listening is a sophisticated skill, we can leverage our prior knowledge to aid students in making sense of what they hear.<sup>6</sup>

As well as helping students understand the world around them, listening is a process that involves taking in what is said, applying creativity and engagement, and is one of the critical components of successful learning. Students need to understand the language they hear to learn how to speak. For students to understand what native speakers are saying in a real-world language context, they must first be able to converse with them. As a result, scholars argue that hearing is an active rather than a passive skill since meaning is created in this situation by the way sound flows. Learners can digest information and comprehend it to a reasonable degree when they are exposed to enough auditory input.<sup>7</sup>

Teaching listening skills is essential in language learning as it supports better comprehension of spoken communication. Top-down and bottom-up approaches are two main strategies used in listening instruction to help students understand spoken texts more effectively. The top-down approach focuses on utilizing background knowledge, context, and expectations to interpret the message being heard. Students rely on their prior experiences, cultural schemas, and general understanding of communicative situations to process the information they hear.<sup>8</sup>

Conversely, the bottom-up approach emphasizes sequential information processing, starting from the smallest units such as phonemes, words, and grammatical structures, to form a broader understanding. In this approach, students must be able to recognize sounds, distinguish words, understand sentence structures, and connect linguistic elements to grasp the overall meaning. In other

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<sup>6</sup> Ahmad A. S. Tabieh et al., "The Effect of Using Digital Storytelling on Developing Active Listening and Creative Thinking Skills," *European Journal of Educational Research* 10, no. 1 (2021): 13–21. p.13

<sup>7</sup> Talip Gönülal, "Improving Listening Skills with Extensive Listening Using Podcasts and Vodcasts," *International Journal of Contemporary Educational Research* 7, no. 1 (June 15, 2020): 311–20, p.2

<sup>8</sup> Carmen Lorena Benavides Vargas, "Comprehensible Input for Boosting Listening Skills among Seventh Grade English Language Learners" (Master's Thesis, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, 2023), (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, 2023), p.27

words, the bottom-up approach works from a micro to a macro level, ensuring that students comprehend essential details before building a complete understanding.<sup>9</sup>

These two approaches complement each other in listening instruction. Relying solely on the top-down approach may cause difficulties for students when encountering unfamiliar words or phrases. On the other hand, the bottom-up approach alone is insufficient because deep comprehension of a text depends not only on individual words but also on context. Therefore, effective listening instruction should integrate both approaches to help students better understand spoken conversations.<sup>10</sup>

In teaching practice, educators can use various techniques that support both top-down and bottom-up approaches. For example, before listening, students can be given a general overview of the topic to activate their thinking schema (top-down). Then, during listening activities, they can be asked to identify key words and understand sentence structures (bottom-up). By applying these two strategies in a balanced manner, students will be better prepared to engage in real-world spoken communication.<sup>11</sup>

EFL learners at Darussalam Gontor University exhibit several distinct characteristics. They are accustomed to applying self-directed learning strategies across all their academic subjects. Moreover, these students are assumed to possess substantial prior knowledge, which can significantly aid their learning. Additionally, this institution is renowned for its well-organized and effective learning environment conducive to language proficiency. The daily activity use of Arabic and English language within the *Pesantren*-based University setting is believed to foster students' language skills. This immersive linguistic environment profoundly impacts students' motivation, inspiring them to learn English with tremendous enthusiasm. Furthermore, the dormitory-based lifestyle of students at Darussalam Gontor University intensifies their English language learning

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<sup>9</sup> Yuldashev Sherzod Zairjanovich et al., "LISTENING AS A PART OF TEACHING ENGLISH," *Ethiopian International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 11, no. 05 (May 9, 2024): 56–63. p.3

<sup>10</sup> Nora Ristika et al., "Factors Causing the Low Listening Comprehension of English Students on the TOEFL Test at the University Muhammadiyah of Bengkulu," *Teaching English and Language Learning English Journal* 4, (February 28, 2024), p.2

<sup>11</sup> Leonita Maria Efipianas Manihuruk and Yanti Arasi Sidabutar, "The Effect of Top-Down and Bottom-Up Strategies on Students Listening Skill," *Jurnal Basicedu* 6, no. 2 (2022): 2783–92, p.4

experience. The mandatory use of English in daily communication provides ample opportunities for students to practice and improve their language skills.<sup>12</sup>

In addition, the implementation of listening learning is one of the skills at *Pesantren* University; not only listening learning in class but also the *Pesantren* dormitory environment, students are accustomed to listening to conversations or words in English as a mandatory language, such as announcements, English songs every afternoon, gatherings with lecturers on campus, studies, language classes, and conversations that are usually explicitly played on Fridays. Students must understand idioms, conversational phrases, verb or phrase groups, implied information, comparisons, and the overall meaning of the discussion. The urgency of developing robust listening skills is paramount for English language learners, especially at the university level.<sup>13</sup>

This research is crucial as listening is one of the most challenging aspects of foreign language learning, with many students struggling to understand spoken language due to factors such as natural speech speed, diverse accents, and informal structures. Therefore, exploring effective learning strategies is essential to improving listening comprehension.<sup>14</sup> This study investigate how combining top-down and bottom-up approaches enhances students' understanding of spoken texts, offering a more holistic perspective compared to previous research that focused on a single approach. The findings contributed to the development of more effective teaching methods, helping educators design better listening curricula tailored to students' needs while improving teaching efficiency and student comprehension. Beyond academics, this research had practical benefits, boosting students' confidence in spoken communication in both academic and social settings. Enhanced listening skills led to higher language proficiency, making this study highly relevant for real-world language learning.

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<sup>12</sup> Aries Fachriza, Kristi Nuraini, and Rihatul Karimah, "Information Transfer Technique in Teaching Descriptive Paragraph Writing," in *AIP Conference Proceedings*, vol. 2621 (AIP Publishing, 2023)

<sup>13</sup> Aries Fachriza et al., "Information Transfer Technique in Assessing Listening For Daily Conversation for EFL in *Pesantren*-Based University," *At-Ta'dib* 17, no. 2 (December 6, 2022)

<sup>14</sup> Windamayanti Haryanto Atmowardoyo, and Munir, "An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Listening Comprehension at Senior High School," *Journal of Excellence in English Language Education* 1, no. 4, October (October 18, 2022): 380–90.



This study aims to investigate the implementation of top-down and bottom-up approaches among English language learners at Darussalam Gontor University, a *Pesantren*-based institution. Although students receive informal exposure to English outside the classroom, they often struggle to comprehend everyday conversations in audio recordings. This poses a challenge for lecturers in delivering effective listening materials to help students successfully answer listening comprehension questions. By investigating this issue, the study aims to contribute to the field of EFL education by identifying challenges, evaluating current practices, and proposing improvements to enhance students' listening comprehension abilities in academic contexts.

This study analyzes how top-down and bottom-up approaches among English language learners at Darussalam Gontor University are implemented in classroom learning activities and how this implementation affects the teaching of listening skills for students at *Pesantren*-based university. This explanation encourages researcher evaluate the findings of this study, assessing the implementation of top-down and bottom-up approaches applied to students and their impact on the teaching of listening skills in a *Pesantren*-based university environment.

## **B. Statement of The Problem**

Based on the research background, the researcher formulates the research questions:

1. How is the implementation of top-down and bottom-up approaches in teaching listening skills on third-semester students of the English Department at the University of Darussalam Gontor ?
2. How is the effectiveness of top-down and bottom-up approaches in teaching listening skills to third-semester students of the English Department at the University of Darussalam Gontor ?

### **C. Purpose of The Research**

According to the research question above, the researcher formulates the purpose of the research as follows:

1. To describe the implementation of top-down and bottom-up approaches in teaching listening skills on third-semester students of the English Department at the University of Darussalam Gontor.
2. To describe the effectiveness of top-down and bottom-up approaches in teaching listening skills to third-semester students of the English Department at the University of Darussalam Gontor.

### **D. Scope and Limitation of the Study**

It is too broad to investigate the problems above due to financial constraints and limited time. Therefore, this research focuses on the application of bottom-up and top-down approach in teaching listening comprehension at the University of Darussalam Gontor. The implementation of these approach in teaching listening comprehension at the university level. Also assess their effectiveness in enhancing students' listening comprehension skills

### **E. Relevance of the Research**

The theoretical and practical benefits of this research show its relevance, as described below:

#### **1. Theoretical benefits**

The study's findings are helpful for the next researcher to obtain information about listening skills problems; it can also act as a roadmap for relevant research.

#### **2. Practical benefits**

##### **a. For Institution**

This study will be beneficial for the institution as a strengthener. This research is anticipated to make the Institution more understanding, accommodating, and comfortable for students to handle relevant concerns.

b. For students

This research shows that students' ability to listen actively is essential for individual and occupational growth. Furthermore, as it can enhance understanding, promote empathy, and facilitate communication, listening is a talent that can be taught.

c. For a further researcher

The study results are intended to provide information and understanding of the issues faced by the students and future researchers, which focus predominantly on paying attention to listening difficulties and their strategies.

## **F. Writing System**

### **CHAPTER I**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the main problem of the event, the author should provide a brief description of the material needed to conduct the investigation. The researcher provides an explanation of the background of the study, the problem statement, the purpose and objectives of the study, the scope and limitations of the study, the systematics of writing, and the definition of key terms.

### **CHAPTER II**

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter discusses a theory or resources to define some of the terminology used in linked research. To prevent and minimize misunderstandings, this clarification is required because of this, readers and researchers see things similarly.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This chapter discusses the research design, content, data collection methods, and data analysis methods.



#### CHAPTER IV:

##### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings on the implementation of top-down and bottom-up approaches in teaching listening skills to third-semester students of the English Department at the University of Darussalam Gontor. Data were collected through interviews with students and documentation of grades to assess the effectiveness of these approaches in enhancing students' listening skills. Additionally, this chapter offers practical suggestions for improvement and provides recommendations for future research.

#### CHAPTER V:

##### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter provides the conclusions drawn from the research on the implementation of top-down and bottom-up approaches in teaching listening skills to third-semester students of the English Department at the University of Darussalam Gontor, along with the factors that influence it. Additionally, it assesses the effectiveness of these approaches in enhancing students' listening skills and offers practical suggestions for improvement, as well as recommendations for future research.