Enhancing TOEIC Listening Skills by Applying Bottom-Up and Top-Down Listening Strategies for Students of Aviation Personnel Development Institution at Kasem Bundit University

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to 1) Study English listening problems of first year students 2) Compare the achievement in doing the test of the academic performance by using the virtual exam of Tactics for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (only Listening Part) before and after teaching, using Bottom Up and Top down Processing for Listening strategies and 3) Study the students' satisfaction of the strategies to increase the ability of the TOEIC test on listening skills. The samples were 155 first year students of Aviation Personnel Development Institute Kasem Bundit University. The class will take 10 teaching sessions. The experiment was conducted using a research plan of One Class Group Pretest – Posttest Design. Tools used in the experiment include 10 lesson plans, using Bottom Up and Top down Processing for Listening strategies, an achievement test by using the virtual exam of Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (only Listening Part) containing a total of 100 items, 495 points of a total score, a questionnaire for student satisfaction with the use of Bottom Up and Top down Processing for Listening strategies and a dependent t-test. The analysis results showed that students have problems in all parts of the test. Determined from the percentage of incorrect answers, the number of incorrect answers is high in all listening skills (Listening for main idea, Inference or conclusion, Listening for specific details and Predictions). After the sample has been taught by using Bottom Up and Top down Processing for Listening strategies, the score on the achievement test by using the virtual exam is higher than before studying. With the statistical significance at the level of .01, it was found that students can use both of strategies to increase listening skills and also use the skill to enhance the ability to take the TOEIC test better. From the study, it can be concluded that successful listening requires both of these strategies (Bottom Up and Top down) together. Activities that are suitable for each skill are a combination of both top-down and bottom-up strategies. This type of training is to train students to be effective listeners in real life.

*Keywords***:** *Bottom Up Processing for Listening Strategy, Top down Processing for Listening strategy, TOEIC*
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1. Introduction

To be good at learning English, the first and foremost thing is the listening skill. Students must "focus" on listening skills. "English conversation" is the first thing thatwe must be able to listen to the dialogue used in everyday life before developing into speaking, writing or reading skills in English which corresponds to Nihei Koichi (2002). Listening is an important skill for the person who is learning English because, in verbal communication, we cannot communicate with each other without listening to the speaker's utterances and understanding them. In addition, everyone wants to listen to what English speakers are saying at a natural speed and understand it. But what is seen today, most students begin by learning through textbooks, Grammar teaching books and learning in the classroom with teachers, whether Thai or native speakers. Everyone believes that they come in the right way to help students speak English fluently but the truth is the opposite, causing many students to have a bad attitude towards using English. Teaching listening skills is one of the most difficult tasks for any ESL teachers. This is because successful listening skills are acquired over time and with lots of practice. It is frustrating for students because there are no rules as in grammar teaching. Speaking and writing also have very specific exercises that can lead to improved skills. This is not to say that there are not ways of improving listening skills; however they are difficult to quantify.

Gwan-Hyeok Im and Liying Cheng (2019) wrote in detail about the TOEIC test which stands for Test of English International Communication. *Test purpose:* The primary purpose of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC®) is to measure the everyday English skills of individuals who speak a first language other than English working in an international environment (Im & Cheng, 2019). The TOEIC

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also has six secondary purposes: (1) to verify the current level of English language proficiency (2) to qualify for a new position and/or promotion in a company (3) to enhance professional credentials (4) to monitor progress in English (5) to set learning goals and (6) to involve employers in advancing English ability (ETS TOEIC, 2015: ETS TOEIC, 2016). As embedded in these purposes, there are five approved intended uses that are explicitly recommended for TOEIC scores: hiring, placing, promoting applicants, measuring English language proficiency, and evaluating progress in English (ETS TOEIC, 2015: ETS TOEIC, 2016).

Therefore, Aviation Personnel Development Institute English Department for Thai program sets the TOEIC test to students to prepare for job applications when they graduate, and offers a course to support them, including the relevant content of the TOEIC test in the course Fundamental English for Airline Business (ES 101 and ES 102) for first year students with the primary objective of getting the TOEIC score of 550 or higher, according to the researcher's findings from previous TOEIC scores of APDI students with an average score of 200-400 points.

Divided by part, the average score of the TOEIC listening part is 85-200 points and the reading part score is 150-200 points. Therefore, this case study aims to study the results of using Bottom-Up and Top Down Processing for Listening strategies to increase the students' points in the TOEIC test (Listening Part) and help to solve the problem appropriately and correctly which will be useful for students to learn in the future.

2. Objectives

1. To study English listening comprehension problems of 1st year students of Aviation Personnel Development Institute using the Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part).

2. To use Bottom-Up and Top-Down Processing for Listening strategies to enhance listening skills in TOEIC test.

3. To compare achievement in learning by using the virtual exam of Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part) before and after teaching by using Bottom-Up and Top-Down Processing for Listening strategies.

4. To study the students' satisfaction ofteaching using Bottom-Up and Top-Down Processing for Listening strategies to enhance listening skills of TOEIC test at a high level.

Research hypothesis

1. Achievement in doing the test of learning evaluation by using the virtual exam of Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part)after teaching the Bottom- Up and Top-Down Processing for Listening strategies is higher than before studying.

2. Students are satisfied with the teaching by using the Bottom-Up and Top-Down Processing for Listening strategies to increase the potential of the TOEIC test on listening skills at a high level.

Research Questions

How to enhance the English proficiency of listening for particular details of the students

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Research design

In this research, participants are the first year students of Aviation Personnel Development Institute, Kasem Bundit University in academic year 1/2019, enrolled in ES 101 course: Fundamental English for Airline Business 1, who the researcher assigned to teach 155 students.

A tool used in this research is a virtual test of Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part) containning 60 items by listening to short conversation and talks, and answering questions from what is heard. It can be divided into:

- Part 3, Article 41-70 Conversations, there will be problems and answers as well, then choose the answer from the conversation that has been heard (30 questions)

- Part4, Article 71-100 Short Talks, there will have a short speech to listen to. There are problems and choices. Choose to answer. One of the chapters used in 3 questions (30 questions). Combined two parts together, there are 60 questions in total. The duration of the listening test is 30 minutes.

In each section can be classified into 5 skills as follows:
- listening for main idea (article 44/48/53/59/62/69/72/75/77/81/85/95/98)
- listening for specific details (article 41/42/46/47/50/54/67/70/76/79/84/88/90/97/99/100)
- inference or comment (article 45/52/57/64/73/74/89/96)
- prediction (article 49/51/55/60/61/65/68/71/82/87/93/94)
- summary (article 43/56/58/63/66/78/80/83/86/91/92)

(National Capital Language Resource Center, 2004)

This study was designed as experimental research to conduct the study of listening problems for understanding of first year students of Aviation Personnel Development Institute Kasem Bundit University in Academic Year 1/2019. Tools used for data collection are virtual tests of Tactics test 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part) containing 60 items. This will collect points for analysis via computer program using descriptive statistics.

3.2 Population/Sample

The researcher collected data by using virtual tests of Tactics test 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part) to collect data from 155 samples whom researcher was assigned to teach for four sections in this semester. At the beginning, the researcher clarified the objectives, benefits and methods of doing tests. Students will take a 30-minutes test. The researcher let the sample group listen to the audio recording once after listening to each question and let the sample choose only one answer that is considered the best from the given options. Once the data has been collected completely, checked an answer and analyzed the test results using statistical methods.

3.3 Research Instrument

1. TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University
2. Lesson plans for Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening for language usage testing, consisting of 10 lessons, taught in 10 weeks, once a week, 90 minutes each.
3. The achievement test by using the Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part), 60 items, with a total score of 300
4. A questionnaire for student satisfaction with the use of Bottom- Up and Top- down Processing for Listening strategies to increase the TOEIC test listening skills.

3.4 Data Collection

1. Creating lesson plans. There are development steps as follows:

1.1 Study the course, textbook, document, scope of TOEIC test content (percentage of incorrect answers, the number of incorrect answers) and the technique for taking the TOEIC test for the first year students, in which the researcher has specified the purpose of the study to be comprehensive and suitable at the tertiary level by focusing on:

- Listening for the main idea: The objective is to test students about identifying key ideas from dialogue and information received.
- Listening for specific information is intended to test students about the perceived details of the dialogue and information received.
- Drawing inferences: The objective is to test students about inferring ideas from situations, conversations and related information.
- Predicting aims to test students about predictions from the situation of the dialogue that will occur in the next order.
- Summarizing is intended to test students about clearing the description and details of the conversation or talks.

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1.2 Analyze question purposes based on the TOEIC test, classified as follows:

• listening for main idea (Article 44/48/53/59/62/69/72/75/77/81/85/95/98) using Top-down Processing for Listening strategy

• listening for specific details (Article 41/42/46/47/50/54/67/70/76/79/84/88/90/97/99/100) Bottom-Up Processing for Listening strategy

• inference or comment (Article 45/52/57/64/73/74/89/96) using Bottom-Up Processing for Listening strategy

• prediction (Article 49/51/55/60/61/65/68/71/82/87/93/94) using Bottom-Up Processing for Listening strategy

• summary (Article 43/56/58/63/66/78/80/83/86/91/92) using Top-down Processing for Listening strategy

1.3 Create the lesson plans. The researcher has applied the process of teaching English listening from Mohamad Ramadan's five key components of a lesson plan which consist of the following steps:

Step 1 Objectives:

Write what I expect my students will do by the end of the lesson e.g. by the end of the lesson, students will be able to recognize words and clause division and measurable in the classroom.

Step 2 Warm up:

Revise the previous lesson, check homework orally, correct common mistakes,   etc. or any other activity that can activate students and prepare them to receive the new material.

Step 3 Presentation:

Present the new material using the suitable techniques; write the procedures that I will follow to explain the new material.

Step 4 Practice:

It is the work done by the students whether it is controlled, guided, or free. Students answer some exercises based on the material presented. These exercises are often there on the set book.

Step 5 Assessment:

Write some sentences on the board or distribute printed papers to see whether the objectives were achieved or not and to check whether students learned or not according to the objectives. If not, I should reteach the lesson using different techniques.

1.4 Create Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening lesson plans and present the strategies to two English language teaching experts and foreign experts to correct the language. Consistency with objectives and the accuracy of the content are specified in the lesson plans.

1.5 Modify the lesson plans according to the experts' advice and apply to the samples

2.   Achievement tests by using the virtual test of Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part). There are 60 items divided into 2 parts as follows:

• Part 3, Article 41-70 Conversations, there will be problems and choices as well. This is done by choosing the answer from the conversation that has been heard (30 questions).

• Part 4, Article 71-100 Short Talks, there will have a short speech to listen to. There are problems and choices. Choose to answer. One of the chapters used in 3 questions (30 questions), 60 questions in total. The duration of the listening test is 30 minutes.

3. Creating a questionnaire for student satisfaction with the use of Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies to increase the TOEIC test listening skills.

3.1 Collect the content of the questionnaire to inquire about the level of students' satisfaction with using the Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies to increase the TOEIC test listening skills.

3.2 Present the questionnaire to the experts for review and further suggestions.

3.3 Improve the questionnaire according to the expert's suggestion before trying it out

3.5 Data Analysis

      1. Collect points from pre-study tests by using the achievement test, the virtual test of Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part) for 60 items with a total score of 300.

      2. Collect scores of processes and results from the teaching and learning activities according to the 10 teaching plans.

      3. Collect points from the post-test by using the achievement test, the virtual test of Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part), which contain the same number of 60 items as before the test Statistical analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Description of the test

      To compare the academic achievement by using the virtual test Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part) containing 60 items that have been taught using Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies before and after the experiment, to the dependent t-test is used to analyze the data. SPSS program is used for collecting the questionnaire results and processing the data by using computer software to calculate and analyze the statistical values.

4.2 Research results

      This study is the study of using the Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies to increase the TOEIC test listening skills. The researcher would like to present the results of the data analysis as follows:

Table 1 The main problem in listening comprehension.

Part	Items		Correct		Incorrect		Average scores
	No.	Max.	f	%	f	%	
1. Main idea	13	8	48.0	30.73	107.0	69.03	1.84
2. Specific information	16	9	48.54	31.32	106.46	68.68	1.68
3. Drawing inferences	8	6	48.0	30.97	107.0	69.03	1.07
4. Predicting	12	7	46.5	30.00	108.5	70.00	1.52
5. Summarizing	11	7	48.09	31.03	106.91	68.97	1.73

      Table 1 shows that students have problems in all parts of the test. Determined from the percentages of incorrect answers, the number of incorrect answers is high in all listening skills.

      Part 2 Data analysis of achievement test by using the virtual test of Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part)

Table 2 Comparing the average score ($\overline{X}$), standard deviations (S.D), average difference score () and t-test values of the sample.

Test	n	mean	S.D	t	df	Sig
Pre-test	155	92.58	18.91	13.04	154	.000
Post-test	155	112.29	27.20			

$p < .01$

      According to the average score from the achievement test by using the virtual exam before using the Bottom- Up and Top-Down Processing for Listening strategies, the mean score (X) was 92.58, the standard deviation (SD) was 18.91, and from the average score after using the Bottom Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies, the mean score (X) was 112.29. The standard deviation (SD) was 27.20. The average development score between before and after using the Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening

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strategies was 15.21. The t-test statistic was 13.04, indicating that the achievement in taking the test of the academic performance by using the virtual exam with scores after teaching is higher than before teaching using the Bottom- Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies with the statistical significance at the level of 0.01, which is in agreement with the hypothesis.

Part 3 Analysis of student satisfaction with the use of the Bottom- Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies to increase the ability of the TOEIC test on listening skills

Results, number and percentage of personal data of 155 respondents can be classified as follows: Gender: there are 49 males, accounting for 31.61%, and 106 females, representing 68.39%.

The results show the number and percentage of 1st-year students' satisfaction towards the use of Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies as follows:

- Regarding the learning atmosphere, it was found that the level of satisfaction was very high which has an average of 4.10

- Regarding the curriculum in learning, it was found that the level of satisfaction was very high which has an average of 4.17

- Regarding educational activities, it was found that the satisfaction levels were very high which has an average of 4.24

- Regarding the teaching and learning media, it was found that the level of satisfaction was very high which has an average of 4.20

- Regarding the benefits, it was found that the satisfaction levels were very high which has an average of 4.20

According to the analysis of the information about the satisfaction of the first-year students towards the use of the Bottom Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies in various aspects, they agreed that the students were satisfied with the teaching by using the Bottom Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies to increase the potential of the TOEIC test for listening skills at a high level, based on the assumptions.

5. Conclusion

The result of the research shows that every part of the English listening test has problems. With the listening ability, the results shown in Table 1 revealed that the mean and standard deviation can be explained to students who tend to have problems with listening skills. They cannot summarize and grasp the importance of making comments, finding specific details, or predicting what they are hearing. In accordance with Sittler (1975), it points out that even after learning EFL many times, students with knowledge of English grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing and speaking still have difficulty of listening to native speakers.

EFL listening skill is regarded as a problematic language skill especially in a foreign language context where real practice chances are narrow (Nowrouzi, Tam, Zareian and Nimehchisalem, 2015). Teaching students listening skills may be difficult for teachers and namely difficult for students to learn as well. For instance, even the students who are adequate in speaking and reading might confront problems with listening skills when facing a record with a quick conversation (Ghaderpanahi, 2012). Many students find English pronunciation that they have heard before is different from the pronunciation that they have spoken or have heard it before, which makes them difficult when listening to English with the native speaker's accent.

1. The results of the data analysis on the comparison of the difference of scores before and after learning of the achievement test by using the virtual exam of Tactics 2 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University for first-year students, first semester, the academic year 2019

The sample group of 155 students had an average score (X) after studying higher than the average score (X) before studying. The reasons may be as follows:

1.1 Strategies for bottom-up and top-down processing for listening strategies that the researcher put into making lesson plans: The researcher ranked the content from easy to difficult content by comparing the problems encountered in the virtual exam of Tactics 1 for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University, by taking questions and listening content to find details in the teaching. By

teaching to listen in Bottom-Up strategies, namely listening to find out the details of the content including the synonyms of that vocabulary, and to listen in Top-Down strategies is listening to understand the importance of what you listen to in the TOEIC test requires both listening skills, which is consistent with the research of Natalia Batova. (2013). (International Journal of Education and Research) This article deals with top-down processing and bottom-up processing of a piece of information in academic listening. It is equally important to activate background knowledge and expectations through lexical access (top-down) as well as to piece together linguistic data until a contextual meaning of an utterance is arrived at (bottom-up) in order to make language learners to be effective listeners to natural speech in a communicative competence framework. Therefore, contemporary teaching strategies or techniques adopted for developing the listening skill involve a synthesis of the two processes. However, adopting a Top-down approach to academic listening and neglecting a Bottom-up one can seem more realistic for certain teaching aims, particularly in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. In the course specifically designed for 4th-year students, at the School of World Economy and International Affairs, Top-down processing guides the listening process and provides a connection with higher-level reasoning.

1.2 The subjects were first-year students who would like to use the TOEIC scores in the future, therefore, they were more interested in developing their listening skills and this is very enthusiastic about learning Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies, therefore, the sample has behaviors to use the knowledge gained to increase their potential and use it to their advantage in learning English and also can be used in daily life which is consistent with the research of Shinichi Harada (2016). The present study investigated the effects of the TOEIC course at a junior college in Tokyo. To examine the effectiveness of 2014, 2015, and 2016 classes, the TOEIC scores of 60 first-year students were analyzed by administering one-way ANOVAs and t-tests. The relationship between the vocabulary test and TOEIC scores was estimated using Pearson product-moment correlations. The results showed that the TOEIC course was effective in improving students' TOEIC scores. In addition, the study discovered that the section-balanced teaching method was more effective than the section-focused one. Furthermore, the results also suggest that the use of vocabulary tests contributed to TOEIC scores; however, a new method for students to memorize vocabulary could be used in tandem with the vocabulary test.

2.	Results of student satisfaction analysis on using Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening to increase the TOEIC test listening skills. Regarding personal information of respondents:

On the gender, it was found that respondents are mostly females, maybe due to this sample group is the first-year students of the Aviation Business Department. From interviews before entering the study, there is understanding of people who tend to think that admission to the Faculty of Aviation Business after graduation; they believe that they will have the opportunity to become an Air Hostess more than other faculties. Another, which is a career hostess (Air Hostess), it is the dream career of many women to have the opportunity to travel to almost all over the world, and have a good income which corresponds to the article of Thanawat Prompramote (according to the article https://kyoproject.wordpress.com/) which rank the careers that women are most interested in flight attendants or flight attendant. It may be because of the charm that attracts a lot of people's attention and the opportunity to travel to various places all over the world to learn new and exciting things all the time.

Overall, all aspects are at a high level, indicating that students are satisfied with the teaching by using Bottom-Up and Top-down Processing for Listening strategies to increase the potential of the TOEIC test on listening skills at a high level. As consistent with the research of Kataya Mahachanawong Suvarnaphaet (2017), this paper considers the effectiveness of a combined teaching method using the Direct Method and Task-Based Learning Teaching approach in the context of an intensive TOEIC course after presenting background information on the two language teaching methods that are Task-Based Learning Teaching Method and Direct Method; this paper evaluates the appropriateness of the lesson plan both for teaching listening and reading to prepare students for the TOEIC test. A satisfaction survey of the overall course has been conducted for all the participants and showed a high level of student's satisfaction ($\bar{x}$ 4.30, SD = 0.70).

6. Discussion

It is clear that an adequate amount of time needs to be given to implement a study of this nature. First and foremost, it is very unlikely that there would be a significant improvement of these students' TOEIC scores in a four-week period given the amount of time as in each week the students spend time in English class, studying English, or in some other way to use the English language. On the other hand, the amount of time university that instructors have the same students in their class is not generally longer than fifteen weeks, which may or may not allow for a significant difference in TOEIC score improvement from just the four weeks. Moreover, the timing of the second test – the last week of classes and right before the exam period began – was not ideal. It is possible that the students were under stress from studying for their other exams and finishing final assignments for the spring term. A way to improve the timing of this study would be to give Test#1 at the beginning of the twelve to fifteen week term and Test#2 about three weeks before the end of the term, so the treatment period is longer and the second test does not occur near the exam period.

1. Restrictions on teaching time: Since this experiment is taught in a regular class with ES101, the teaching lasts for approximately 90 minutes. The researchers agreed that teaching should be done separately and taught separately. The duration is approximately 120 minutes per teaching in order to give students sufficient time to analyze words

2. Using the Tactics for TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test by OXFORD University (Listening Part): It is accepted by most users who bring it to practice before the real exam. But when measured in the experiment the researchers think that some students have already passed the eye tests, therefore causing the score to have a slight discrepancy. So, in the next research, the test should be changed by using the exam that was improved by referring to the exam content from many publishers or from content that is closest to the actual TOEIC test in order to make the research results accurate and reliable.

7. Suggestion

1) Research Utilization: Clearly, more research is needed to see if there is any positive – or negative – correlation between students' participation in communicative English language activities in class and their TOEIC score improvement. It would also be ideal to further investigate which type of communicative activities are the most useful in improving those scores.

2) Further Research: there is a new TOEIC test that debuted in Thailand in January of 2020, which supposedly "includes more authentic English-language reading and listening tasks" and shows a more practical side of the English language (Ewing, 2019). Future studies on the topic of TOEIC should look specifically at this new test and if their "more authentic" style produces higher scores for students who are learning English in authentic and communicative ways.

1. Study and research about creating more specific English vocabulary exercises, such as business vocabulary for business studies. Technical terms for science and technology studies, etc.

2. Should experiment with classrooms that have more students or conduct ongoing research for former students in order to make the research more reliable and to extend knowledge.

3. Since this research is an experiment with a mixed capacity sample group. Next time, I propose to experiment with a sample with similar knowledge by selection from the test.

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