



## TEACHING ADVANCED LISTENING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: LECTURERS' STRATEGIES EXPLAINED

Saiful Akmal<sup>1</sup>, Mulia<sup>2</sup>, Ghiffary An-nur<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh, Aceh, Indonesia

Email: saiful.akmal@ar-raniry.ac.id<sup>1</sup>, awaksiem@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>, ghiffaryannur99@gmail.com<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:** Listening is one of the four sub-skills in English that need to be mastered. Learning will be more effective when using the appropriate learning strategies. In this pandemic period, appropriate learning strategies are necessary to optimize learning. The purpose of this research is to find out what strategies lecturers need and use in teaching advanced listening during COVID-19 at UIN Ar-Raniry and how lecturers apply and implement the strategy in teaching advanced listening during COVID-19 at UIN Ar-Raniry. The researcher used email and WhatsApp as the media. The data collection method used in this study is qualitative, using a narrative approach. In collecting data, the researcher also used data collection techniques using the semi-structured interview type. The researcher used data reduction and written summarization to analyze the data. The participants are three permanent lecturers and one substitute lecturer in the Department of English Language Education of Ar-Raniry State Islamic University. They are selected purposively using specific criteria. This study's results indicate that using the right strategy in the learning process will produce effective learning. All participants can investigate their right thoughts, opinions, and arguments, including any aspect of listening teaching strategies.

**Keywords:** Teaching strategies, Advanced listening, COVID-19, Lecturers, Listening Skill

**Abstrak:** Keterampilan mendengarkan adalah salah satu dari empat sub-keterampilan dalam bahasa Inggris yang perlu dikuasai. Pembelajaran akan lebih efektif bila menggunakan strategi pembelajaran yang tepat. Di masa pandemi ini, diperlukan strategi pembelajaran yang tepat untuk mengoptimalkan pembelajaran. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui strategi apa yang dibutuhkan dan digunakan dosen dalam mengajar advanced listening selama COVID-19 di UIN Ar-Raniry dan bagaimana dosen menerapkan dan menerapkan strategi tersebut dalam mengajar advanced listening selama COVID-19 di UIN Ar-Raniry. Peneliti menggunakan email dan WhatsApp sebagai medianya. Metode pengumpulan data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif, dengan menggunakan pendekatan naratif. Dalam pengumpulan data, peneliti juga menggunakan teknik pengumpulan data dengan menggunakan tipe wawancara semi terstruktur. Peneliti menggunakan reduksi data dan ringkasan tertulis untuk menganalisis data. Pesertanya adalah tiga orang dosen tetap dan satu orang dosen pengganti di Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry. Mereka dipilih secara purposive dengan menggunakan kriteria tertentu. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan strategi yang tepat dalam proses pembelajaran akan menghasilkan pembelajaran yang efektif. Semua peserta dapat menyelidiki pemikiran, pendapat, dan argumen mereka yang benar, termasuk aspek apa pun dari strategi pengajaran mendengarkan.

**Kata Kunci:** Strategi Pengajaran, Mendengarkan Tingkat Lanjut, COVID-19, Dosen, Keterampilan Mendengarkan

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## INTRODUCTION

The pandemic of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020 had a significant impact on a variety of routine-related concerns, including education. This can be handled using a range of newer and more effective learning strategies, despite the fact that the strategies are old but have been adapted to the period of technological advancement. Particularly during the present epidemic, teachers are urged to be more dependable and aware of this issue in order to develop new, more effective learning practices. A learning process will be easier to accomplish if it employs proper and effective teaching strategies and methods, particularly in teaching listening skill Allen et al. (2020), which will be discussed in this study.

Listening is a crucial aspect of learning English and is also done in everyday life. Students frequently face numerous challenges in listening class. A number of students consider the listening course a burden (Rakhmyta, 2019). Inadequate speakers and unclear voices, a lack of English vocabulary mastery, and a lack of concentration in the listening course are obstacles for students. When facing challenges, it is preferable to employ certain methods for overcoming them. Prior to the learning process, it is important, according to Sepeng and Sigola (2013), to identify the obstacles that prevent students from comprehending learning. Different difficulties require distinct approaches to overcome. Strategies are needed to complete or make a process more effective and accessible.

Strategy is a way of accomplishing a goal by employing particular, effective, and efficient methods. A good and effective strategy would greatly assist in accomplishing specific tasks. Specific strategies, such as listening and learning strategies, teaching strategies, comprehending strategies, etc., will vary for each person who employs them. According to Nickols (2012), strategy is the relationship between high-level objectives on the one hand and actual tactics on the other. Not only are strategies utilized in daily activities, but also academic ones. Some strategies can be used to help students learn when teaching listening. Two sorts of strategies are utilized in listening lessons: top-down and bottom-up. A top-down strategy relies on the listener's previous abilities, such as the type of text and knowledge of the issues to be addressed, to predict or interpret the case you demand to learn, discuss, and listen to (Renukadevi, 2014). In addition, a bottom-up method is based on the context of language knowledge in terms of knowing the vocabulary contained in the text that will be listened to or discussed during listening learning (Khuziakhmetov & Porchesku, 2016; Yeldham, 2016). These two strategies can help and facilitate the achievement of learners' listening comprehension objectives. These techniques are applicable to listening class.

A listening course does not always require face-to-face activities between the teacher and students because learning to listen is more concerned with focus, listening acuity, and audio. Therefore, teaching listening during this pandemic was not too difficult to understand. During the period of the pandemic, not only lecturers but also students are expected to be able to adapt to new learning strategies. With their attention to each other, learning will be easily achieved. It is very important and should be noted that more effective learning strategies are needed to support students' interest in learning materials.

Lee (2010) stated that determining whether the strategies used were appropriate is when the students successfully understand a lesson and the learning is effective. As a teacher, a more efficient teaching strategy is needed to improve good and effective teaching performance so that the learning process will take place better.

Several prior researchers have concentrated on this topic. For instance, Susilowati (2020) discusses various obstacles to online learning in university-level listening classes. The result reveals that three obstacles arose as a result of online learning in the EFL classroom. First, about the selection of appropriate technological devices, systems, and applications used in class. The second challenge is simplifying the packaging of the materials without compromising the quality of the materials. The third obstacle is the adoption of practical online learning approaches and strategies in listening classes. Nurani and Widiati (2021) investigated the perspectives of undergraduate students towards online listening courses during the COVID-19 epidemic, focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of participation in the courses. According to the results of their poll, not only did students like the online listening course technique, but they also valued the program's difficulty. It indicates that they agreed that online listening lessons could be effective in this pandemic situation. This survey revealed that the majority of respondents felt online listening courses were appropriate and convenient for the teaching and learning of listening in this epidemic era. In addition, they found that delivering feedback on the listening lectures was one of the lecturer's strategies.

The listening process will require a number of steps, and in each step, the teacher should guide students to effectively manage any difficulties they encounter in class. During the COVID-19 epidemic, face-to-face learning activities are not possible, and thus students are unable to achieve this ideal condition. Consequently, some difficulties arise in listening class. This study aims to determine the strategy and implementation of lecturers in teaching advanced listening at UIN Ar-raniry, Banda Aceh, during the pandemic. During the pandemic, the researcher expected finding helpful strategies for teaching listening.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Strategies in Teaching Listening**

Carrying out activities using specific strategies will facilitate and help in achieving a goal in carrying out the activities. According to Nickols (2012), strategy is the relationship between high-level aims on the one hand and actual methods on the other. Strategies are utilized not just in daily activities but also in academic activities. Some ways of teaching listening can be employed and applied to assist students in learning. Strategies for teaching listening can be defined as a listening teaching technique that employs specific methods to promote more effective learning. Two sorts of strategies are used in listening lessons: top-down and bottom-up. According to Ardini (2015), top-down processing in listening is the dynamic process of constructing meaning depending on assumption, conclusion, purpose, and other pertinent information. Bottom-up listening is more specific about grammar and word meaning. Ardini argues that both top-down and bottom-up processing can be applied to the student. Combining the two strategies

improves Listening Comprehension by gaining student knowledge from daily experience and then attempting to comprehend the meaning and grammar of each word.

According to Goh and Vandergrift (2012), there are three basic forms of listening strategies: cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective. A cognitive strategy is a solution to challenges connected to short-term or long-term comprehension in learning activities that facilitates student comprehension. Furthermore, metacognitive strategies can be interpreted as learning procedures used by students to comprehend and regulate their learning by planning, checking, evaluating, and modifying. The socio-affective approach pertains to the attitude of the learner toward language acquisition and interaction with the interlocutor or other speaker. Socio-affective is a technique used by learners or listeners to collaborate with the interlocutor or other people during the learning process, thereby enhancing comprehension, reducing anxiety, and boosting self-confidence.

### **Teaching and Learning Process Situation during Pandemic**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, studying at home through online learning became the best solution, as the governments of many nations were unwilling to risk a more widespread transmission of the virus in schools and colleges. Online learning consists of activities in which teachers or lecturers are not present, delivering content and facilitating interaction between teachers and students or students and teachers via Internet access and specialized technology devices and applications. Dhawan (2020) further adds that online learning is like a panacea during the time of COVID-19. In addition to the significance of online learning, it is also viewed as the use of the internet to access material, interact with content, teachers, and other students, and receive assistance during the learning process to acquire knowledge, construct meaning, and advance in the learning experience. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many students worldwide engaged in this type of learning as normal and traditional offline classrooms were no longer viable amidst health crisis (Tarkar, 2020).

The process of learning during the COVID-19 epidemic differs from the process of learning during regular days. Teachers continue to maximize the learning process, despite certain impediments. Aminullah et al. (2021) describe some of the obstacles encountered when online learning is implemented, such as the lack of maximum student participation in the ongoing learning process, limited facilities when conducting online learning processes, and the limited ability of teachers to use and implement technology to carry out the online learning process. According to Risalah et al. (2020), the majority of school-based learning activities can function effectively. Others, however, continue to face a number of difficulties, such as teachers' low ability to master information technology to enhance the learning process, poor facilities and infrastructure, and limited internet connection. During the epidemic, several obstacles to the online learning process were created, including limited internet access and the inability of teachers to master learning-supporting technology.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a qualitative narrative approach. A qualitative narrative approach necessitates obtaining stories, experiences, and data from people deemed trustworthy. Riessman (1993) noted that narrative research demonstrates that conducting research requires the respondents' individual stories, which will become the study's data. The objective of employing a qualitative narrative technique is to facilitate the researcher's ability to collect data from credible and knowledgeable individuals.

Participants in this study were lecturers in the English Education Department at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. They are purposefully chosen based on the following criteria: mastery of English listening teaching strategies, permanent lecturer position, and active status at UIN Ar-Raniry. In addition, the researcher chooses participants who are more familiar with online learning media. Therefore, the participants were four lecturers with the following detail description:

Table 1. Participants' details

No	Initial	Age	Gender	Teaching Experience	Subjects Taught
1.	AL	40	F	8 years	Public speaking, advanced speaking, speaking skills, english for tourism, listening, English for business, basic language skills.
2.	AZ	45	F	13 years	Basic, intermediate, advanced listening and speaking.
3.	HJ	35	F	9 years	Intermediate and advanced listening.
4.	FT	45	F	13 years	Listening 1, listening 2, listening 3, listening 4, basic listening, intermediate listening, advanced listening, academic listening.

In addition, the researchers employed a semi-structured interview to collect the data. According to Kallio et al. (2016), semi-structured interviews are a common data collection method in qualitative research, and the quality of the interview guide substantially impacts the study's outcomes. The advantages of the semi-structured interview research technique are that interviewers can prepare to control the conversation and keep responses on topic, participants can react with open-ended questions for more in-depth information, and information exchange in both directions is encouraged. The objective of semi-structured interviews is to collect qualitative data, analyze participant ideas, feelings, and opinions about a certain issue, and delve deeply into personal and frequently sensitive matters. A semi-structured interview is an effective method for collecting data. After gathering the data, the researcher conducts an analysis processes: data reduction, data display, and data verification (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

#### The lecturers' strategies in teaching advanced listening during COVID-19

There are several strategies used to help and support the learning to be more effective and easier. These strategies include:

### **1. Self-record or self-report**

One approach in cognitive behavioral therapy is the self-record or self-report method. This technique includes self-recording, self-evaluation, and self-reinforcement (Safaria, 2004). Children are taught to undertake self-recording through questions linked to their hyperactive behavior, commonly equated with the terms self-observation or self-monitoring.

Participants AL and AZ gave comparable answers. They give assignments and ask students to complete and send the assignments in the form of reports and self-records:

I asked them to fulfill the task by meeting strangers and doing self-record. From the assignment that used the self-record, I asked the students to bring the self-record to watch with other students for learning purposes and also to answer the problems that occurred when the task was done. [AL]

I asked them to listen to the news and asked them to re-report what they had heard. [AZ]

### **2. Student-centered learning**

Student-Centered Learning (SCL) is a teaching technique that emphasizes the importance of students as learners of subjects. This strategy enables pupils to learn more actively and freely and apply and comprehend learning materials based on their unique talents. Student-centered learning (SCL) is a type of learning that encourages students to take an active role in developing their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors, and thus, achieving higher level of understanding (Overby, 2011).

Participant AL explained that in teaching advanced listening, she uses a student-centered learning strategy that aims to increase student activity, independence and understanding the materials according to each ability:

For the strategy that I use in teaching listening is to use self-record and student center method instead of teacher center. So, it is as if the lecturer is only their guide in extracting information from the material provided and to sharpen their thinking. [AL]

### **3. Top-down and bottom-up**

Bottom-up involves interpreting information through sound analysis, word meaning, and grammar. In contrast, top-down processing refers to applying schemata or learner knowledge to grasp the information received. Damaiyanti (2016) believed that in ESL Listening Classes, introducing pragmatic competence of a sentence is part of equipping students with communicative competence that often comes from top-down approach. The top-down and bottom-up technique is one strategy that can aid in comprehending listening comprehension in the classroom, which is still a considerable challenge for English learners (Yeldham, 2018).

Participant HJ explained that she not only used metacognitive strategies but also asked students to use bottom-up strategies in learning advanced listening:

But, I also asked them to do a bottom-up-like strategy. [HJ]

Likewise, FT added that:

I used to applying top down, bottom-up strategies, together with, metacognitive strategies. [FT]

#### **4. Metacognitive**

A metacognitive technique is a learning strategy in which students are challenged to consider reflecting, analyzing, and comprehending their thought processes to make better decisions and solve problems (Goh, 2008). Participant HJ explained that she used metacognitive strategies in teaching advanced listening:

In general, I asked them to do more practice on listening. So, it can be said that it is a cognitive strategy, they do it by themselves, according to the notion of metacognitive strategy. [HJ]

Similarly, FT also added that:

I used to applying top down, bottom-up strategies, together with, metacognitive strategies. Well, in my opinion Metacognitive strategies are one of the strategies in language learning that helps students in managing and understanding their own learning. It can build their self-awareness of the way they learn. These strategies tend to be appropriate in learning because they can minimize the problems in relation to online learning. [FT]

#### **The strategy implementation in teaching advanced listening during COVID-19**

There are several ways for lecturers to implement and apply those strategies as mentioned above, including:

##### **1. Material explanation**

All lecturers used the same strategy in explaining and providing teaching materials about advanced listening during COVID-19. As Niswa et al. (2022) found in their study, students with less interesting materials can easily feel bored and discouraged in listening class. Irrelevant materials or non-authentic materials and its explanation can seriously impact the quality of student's comprehension in listening classrooms (Nurkholida, 2018). They use supporting media to present and deliver teaching materials. As mentioned by the participants:

The strategy is that I usually explain the teaching material class (Google Classroom). [AL]

I send audio materials to Google Classroom. [AZ]

So, we only do with Google classroom and we do the conference (explanation) with Google meet. [HJ]

I used Google Classroom chat and sometimes Google Meet to discuss and explain the materials with the students. [FT]

##### **2. Extra assignment and activity**

Participant AL explained that she provided teaching materials and practiced using supporting media (Google Classroom):

The strategy is that I usually explain the teaching material and then practice it a little in class (Google Classroom) then I ask them to assign a lot of assignments. [AL]

Participant HJ asked the students to practice in listening by themselves:

In general, I asked them to do more practice on listening. So, it can be said that it is a cognitive strategy. [HJ]

Such practices are often meant to add extra exposure to the language context and content of the given materials (Rodrigo, 2006). However, Zulfikar et al. (2020) add that this could trigger bigger problem for students when improperly implemented.

Similarly, participant AZ provided video and audio and asked students to listen as practice:

I send audio to Google Classroom,...I send videos and ask them to listen then like before. [AZ]

Participant FT also added:

They listened to the recording and answered the questions I'd already sent to Google Classroom. [FT]

### **3. Make a self-record and self-report**

Participant AL explained that she asked students to record a video of themselves and asked students to submit the results of the record into Google Classroom media.

From that assignment, I asked them to record a video of themselves about the presentation of the task. From the record, I asked them to submit it to Google Classroom. [AL]

Furthermore, AZ added:

I send videos and ask them to listen then make a report of it. [AZ]

In such practices, Alhanbali et al. (2021) add that it could cause them problem as fatigue and overloaded with assignment can only add to their overall performance in the classroom due to this problem.

## **Discussion**

After the interviews were conducted, it was found that there were four strategies mentioned and used in teaching listening in online learning, which could help students understand and participate in learning effectively. Furthermore, it also found how those strategies were implemented. The strategies used are self-record or self-report, student-centered learning, bottom-up, top-down, and metacognitive strategies. Furthermore, the researchers also found that all participants implemented these strategies through online learning facilities. There are various ways that lecturers implement their strategies. First, providing material through Google Classroom and asking students to be more active and independent in the learning process (student-centered learning). Then, the extra assignment is also provided as a self-recorded and self-reported task. Another participant also reveals that they send the video or audio material to Google Classroom or WhatsApp and then ask students to make a report about it. In implementing a bottom-up and metacognitive strategy, the participant gave a task in the form of a different listening test for each student, discussed the students' answers together, and asked them to practice a lot by themselves.

The facilities supporting the participant's strategy are Google Classroom, Google Meet, and YouTube for providing videos explaining the material. In facilitating students' access to material and assignments, the lecturers send them through Google Classroom and ask students to collect answers. After that, they discuss the answers that have been gathered. The lecturer believes that it can help students solve their problems. In this study, the interviews showed that using appropriate strategies could help students solve problems, organize their learning, and improve their understanding skills. Using

appropriate learning strategies is very important in the learning process so that the learning process runs effectively. It is very difficult for lecturers to control students using online learning. Therefore, appropriate metacognitive and student-centered strategies effectively use today's online learning conditions. Pham (2012) stated this teaching strategy "can accommodate a wide range of students who are either at a low level and need intensive support or at a high level and need their skills sharpened" (p. 17). Lv and Chen (2010) also explains that a higher-order executive talent is a metacognitive strategy, including planning, monitoring, and evaluating. The student-centered strategy is a learning process that aims to encourage students to be actively involved in building knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Lightweis (2013) explained that because of the success of this student-centered model, higher education institutions could replicate it in their classrooms.

Online learning does indeed present a challenge for lecturers. There is no way for lecturers to monitor students' learning activities directly. Miscommunication and inaccurate information frequently occur between lecturers and students, making learning harder to comprehend (Nasution & Ahmad, 2020). It is difficult for lecturers to evaluate students' progress since they do not know whether they are being honest in their progress or not. The lecturers address these issues by offering easy-to-understand teaching materials, quickly describing the teaching materials, asking students to practice more of the topic being taught, and allowing students to ask questions if they do not grasp specific ideas or materials. The final step is to inspire students' confidence in their ability to complete the project.

## CONCLUSION

Delaying educational activities will demotivate students and disturb their learning patterns. Teachers as well as lecturers should be prepared to adapt their lesson plans to online learning, which will be the favored method of instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic. The strategy employed in online learning should be the most significant consideration. Because online learning has limits, instructors can employ their most effective strategy. Students are encouraged to learn individually and critically by using listening records and other supporting applications such as WA, Google Meet, Youtube, and others. If the maximum amount of learning can be completed in each meeting, listening to audio and video can be successful since students will have more time to learn and practice independently at home. Extra tasks and practice can also help improve students' comprehension. Furthermore, a class discussion with the lecturers should not be overlooked. Lecturers must be aware of their students' listening skill difficulties through regular discussions on Google Meet or other tools.

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