

Using the bottom-up approach for Listening activities in Grade Six ESL classroom in Asgiriya Junior Model School, Gampaha

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Abstract

Listening is one of the four major skills of learning a language. Teaching listening is a challenging task especially when the students have a lesser exposure to the target language. It is found that listening is not taught due to various reasons; especially due to a shortage of audio equipment, disturbance of adjoining classes, a large number of student population in classrooms in schools. Moreover, there is no prescribed learner-friendly approach to teach listening. As a result, the students have very poor exposure to listening skills. Therefore, a case study was conducted focusing on a school in a rural setting in Gampaha district, with the objective of finding a suitable approach to teach listening in the ESL classroom. The study was done with a sample of ten grade six students in Asgiriya Junior Model School. The students were given a simple listening test and were divided into two groups as the experimental and the control group based on the test marks. The control group was taught two units from grade six English textbooks and the bottom-up approach (using the incoming output as the basis for understanding the message (Richards, 2008)) was employed for the experimental group to teach the same lessons. All the lessons were conducted using English and the students were encouraged to use only English in the classroom. After a week, a common test was held to evaluate whether there was an improvement in the experimental group. A notable improvement was seen in the experimental group. Hence, the bottom-up approach can be considered an effective way of teaching listening in the ESL context.

Keywords - Listening Skills, Bottom-Up Approach, Experimental Group, Control Group, ESL Context.