

USING SHORT STORY GAP FILL TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION ABILITY

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Abstract This research explained how listening comprehension by Short Story Gap Fill improved students' listening comprehension achievement, observed students' behavior during listening comprehension class and described the teacher's Gap Fill technique along with the research. It used Classroom Action Research (CAR) with quantitatively data then analyzed into qualitative. The qualitative data were about students' interview, while the quantitative data was their scores in pre-test and post-test on listening comprehension. Short Story Gap Fill contained listening comprehension exercises which tend to prove the missing words or phrases on a script of a story or a dialog; they were "pre, while and post-listening which focused on students' ability to carry out the gap on the listening exercises. This research consisted of two cycles. The findings involved, the third-semester students of the English Department were fascinated by Short Story Gap Fill and immersed in listening comprehension well. However, during the first cycle, there were still 3 from 31 incompletely fulfill the gap in listening comprehension because they could not catch the vocabulary well and less focus. Ultimately, on the second cycle, the students' accomplishment in listening comprehension through this technique improved dramatically on their score of using the same technique.

Keywords: CAR, Gap Fill, Listening Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Listening is very essential in learning English because this skill is integrated the three other skills. Listening is necessary as language advice for students who learn a language. Listening is one of the beneficial components in language communication because listening draw students' knowledge in many aspects such as linguistic, pragmatic and prior knowledge Vandergrift (2009: 17). The linguistic knowledge is the fundamental knowledge to learn a language.

Discussing about listening, it provides input that can be very noteworthy for foreign language acquisition in general and for the advance of the speaking skill in particular. Input creates the students capability and competency in language acquisition. As written on Kauffman (2016), students with good listening comprehension capability, another skills also create automatically, speaking skills' enhancement, also the grammar and the acuteness. All the competencies above will derive if students have had so much associates with the language which the students comprehend when the language is spoken by the native speaker. So, hearing the native speakers' utter their language inspired students' memory to keep new words in longer time, students also get something new to learn much how to pronounce the same as the natives do.

In other ways, the difficulties faced by students learning foreign languages in Indonesia, namely the very lack of knowledge and vocabularies that students could get before to learn languages, students found it difficult and unclear when listening to foreign languages that they had never known before. Brown (2006)

explained that learning to listen to foreign languages for foreign students as well as Indonesian learners (EFL) was a very difficult thing to solve the problem of hearing everything, but will only further reduce the problem by introducing students to the purpose of learning to listen and to assign tasks well structured. Therefore, teachers need to give learning stimulation to listen to foreign language recordings beforehand. The problem of students learning to listen to foreign languages that occurred in Indonesia was in line with Underwood's theory (1990: 16-19) that the problem of many Indonesian students faced in learning English was the lack of mastered vocabulary, lack of meaning of several repeated words, interpretation problems, lack of focus in listening, could not easily recognize signals and lack of habit of learning to listen independently.

In addition, Hamouda (2013) also stated that there are several factors causing problems in students' listening comprehension that are related to the text used in listening. Listening problems associated with student assignments and activities, problems with students' hearing were also associated with the teacher's method of teaching. These problems commonly happen on foreign language learners. Besides that, less concentration, unfocused, unable to catch the unfamiliar words, complexity on interpretation and also lack of English vocabularies will arise students' problems in listening comprehension class. In this study, as a researcher, all the problems above made me interested in taking a research for resolving the problems. This study will show detail information about students' behaviors in learning the subject of listening comprehension from beginning up to the last by using the *gap fill* short story technique to improve students' capability in comprehending the short story audio of listening.

A technique as mentioned by Harmer (1983) that can be prepared by teachers when teaching listening comprehension in the classroom such as gap fill, guesses the picture, and sentence arrangement. The teacher used gap fill with a way of emptying a few words in a paragraph or dialog. Students must listen to the recording given by the teacher or audio file and fill the empty words or blank words. But as explained by BBC teaching English (Anonim, 2018), the meaning of gap fill is a type of exercise that is applied to students where they are asked to complete some missing vocabularies from the learning text of listening comprehension in the classroom. Some of the omitted words are words that have been selected and omitted as an emphasis on the context of certain language elements. Gap-fill exercises compare with cloze texts, where words are removed at regular intervals. Gap fill technique here is a kind of listening exercise with some words on the short story are missing and students must complete the missing with the correct words or phrases while they are listening to the audio.

Gap fill here was in the form of short story text. As written on Lumen website, a short story is a short work which is done narratively. It is usually centered by one single event but it has some elements related to the short story. The elements consist of setting, characters, plot and structure, narrator a point of view, style and theme. Based on these elements, students are learning to listen completely.

There are two previous types of research as the literature review for this current research. The first research is done because of the previous research done

by Darti and Asmawati (2017). This research shows the difficulties made by students in English listening comprehension and some resolutions given to students and teachers in listening comprehension class. Consequently, that is why the researcher does the same research on listening comprehension, but here the focus of the study is different. The researcher doesn't investigate the students' difficulties in listening class but it resolves the problems on students' capability in comprehending the audio listening with different technique and method of teaching. The second previous study by Hadijah and Salawati (2016) was to suggest that there were five factors that greatly influenced students' skills in listening comprehension such as some of these namely lack of training, limited vocabulary mastery, still with native speaker accents, pronunciation methods, and learning material listening comprehension that sometimes does not attract the attention of students.

Hence, from the two above previous researches, this current study had a different focus from both previous types of research. Then, a researcher here focus the investigation on the students' behavior, vocabulary mastery and focusing capability while they were listening comprehension by Short story gap fill technique in teaching and the three steps of doing listening class. The aims of this paper are resolving the students' problem in understanding the short story by gap-fill exercises technique and enhancing students' achievement in listening comprehension capability.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research with classroom action research contains two cycles in enhancing the students' listening comprehension ability by short story gap-fill exercises. Bahri in (Ikhsanudin, 2015) wrote action research is an observation activity and phenomenon learning occurred in the classroom which will prove the students' achievement on learning. In this study, researcher proves different technique and steps of teaching English listening comprehension. The data of this research was accumulated by the same technique, applied in different short story topic of listening audio comprehension in two dissimilar lectures and time, but both two lectures are running with the same techniques and teaching steps of listening comprehension.

In Dick (2004, 2006), lecturer as a researcher tried to provide an explanation of several subjects and trend trends in classroom action research and several research books relating to class actions, journals, and some real problems. The class action cycle description that used in this study is as in Figure 1, which describes the process in a continuous cycle. The first cycle includes a number of steps that must be carried out, namely starting from planning, implementing actions, observing and reflecting, which then there are new innovations that modify the process and the cycle in the next stage as stated by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988). Treat what is in the class (Observe) then individually and collaborate together reflected on (Reflection) whose direction approaches the revision of activities carried out in the class depending on the student to be taught (Revised plan) (Winter and Munn-Giddings: 2001).

At the stage of observation and reflection, researchers need to integrate several elements of research, namely the use of quantitative and qualitative research tools that are widely applied through research models through several other things such as questionnaires, interviews, observations, research journals, collection of several listening documents and case study. Furthermore, the process that will be assessed must incorporate various kinds of perspectives and current convergent validity. This research will process values quantitatively with pre-test and post-test assessments that will be carried out during the cycle. After the assessment for one cycle is considered insufficient, it will be continued in the second cycle and so on. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to improve students' ability to listen to understanding by gap-fill audio short stories. Then, the researcher explained the process of listening to the understanding of lectures on the cycle and student achievement in each cycle.

The process of the classroom action research as illustrated by Mertler (2017) shows that the process of listening starts from the first cycle which consists of four stages of the cyclic process including planning, acting, developing the skill of listening comprehension (pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening) and reflecting. This continues into the second cycle with the same stages which is shown on the figure below.

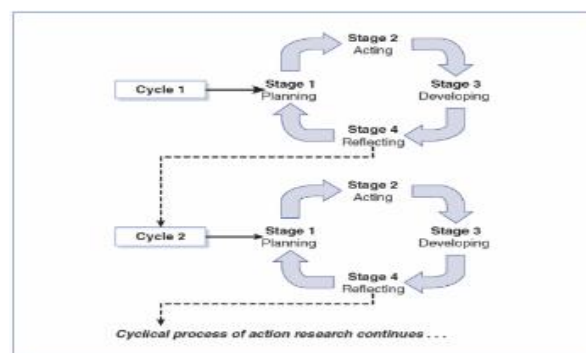


Figure 1. The ongoing, cyclical process of action research (Source: Mertler, 2017, p. 38).

The cycles above are applied in this study to enhance the capability of students in listening comprehension. The participants in this study are students of the third semester of English Education Department of UNISSULA Semarang year academic 2018/2019. The investigation was conducted to 31 students in one class. The third-semester students in this department had so many different backgrounds of linguistic competence. There are two students have higher competence than the other students. Sometimes, when the researcher delivered the test for both students. They can finish the test in a shorter time than the time given by the researcher. The researcher's position is also the lecturer who does the research and teaches them listening comprehension to this class. Listening Comprehension on the third semester is only for two credits for one semester but they must finish into ten (10) credits for all listening skills. As written on PJM

Faculty Book (2018: 41-43), the listening skills consist of five subjects, they are Intensive Course A (on the first semester), Basic Listening (on the second semester), Listening Comprehension (on the third semester), Listening for Academic Purposes (on the fourth semester) and Listening for Proficiency Test (on the fifth semester)

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As a lecturer, the syllabus of listening comprehension has targeted for the students of the third semester with the subject's description. The Listening Comprehension Course aims to provide intensive training to advanced skills students to understand oral English texts with more complex and diverse topics, varied genres, such as news broadcasts, stories, dramas, discussions, and interviews. Listening skills included capturing information appropriately, determining whether or not the information is heard, and completing the information. From the topics given, the researcher was interested in "stories" topic for the research. The research process described here into two cycles following topics in RPS (Lesson plan) of English Education Department (Intansari: 2017).

From the description of the listening comprehension above, the researcher had demanded that students must be able to capture the right information when listening skill done in a classroom. In addition, they must also determine whether the information which had been heard was true or not, and able to answer questions of understanding what had been heard too. Thus, students must be able to master the understanding of vocabulary and to understand how to answer questions about what content was heard. So far in the classroom, when lecturers gave materials to listen to English audio file stories, students could understand while doing the exercises. There were still many students who scored less than lecturer's target. Through the topic of this story, the researcher described the results of observations during the research in the class when applying gap-fill exercises with short stories.

First Cycle

Planning

On this step, on the second meeting from the lesson plan, the researcher plans the short story which had relations to syllabus topic on the second listening comprehension meeting as the first cycle of this research. Based on the syllabus, the story was a free topic. The lecturer prepared just short story with gap-fill exercises as the pre-test, practice and post-test short story. All stories will be a different topic but still in terms of stories. The exercises also use the same technique by gap-fill but the stories in each section will be a different topic. The story topics can be divided into two categories in the recount and narrative stories. Besides preparing the story, I also prepare a copy of the story script with missing words there. I erase ten words on each story with different parts of speech missing.

Acting

In this stage, I as researcher brainstorms the students about the recount story that they had ever studied on junior and senior high schools. Recount stories can be in various kind of stories such as someone's biography and experiences both sad and happy. They have to remind again the subjects they had ever learned. The listening comprehension class will run in about 100 minutes. By the time given in two credits, I divide the time into three categories of time 35 minutes pre-test, 35 minutes again for practice and 30 minutes at last for posttest. Each step in listening comprehension for posttest will be done in about 35 minutes with three steps (pre, while and post-listening). Then 35 minutes again will be the practice of listening with a different topic of the story. The 30 minutes at last will be the posttest listening comprehension by doing the same activities and techniques.

Developing

In this section, times for me to give the students materials of listening comprehension by delivering a listening script on a piece of paper for each student with containing gap-fill exercises for the first story. I send the first instruction for students to read the script of the story, secondly to pay attention to the missing words or phrases on each sentence for pre-listening. There are ten words and phrases missing on the text and they must find them by listening to the recording that is played in three times. They have to complete the missing after they listen to the audio for three times. The scripted story for pre-test is like this.

Betty Friedan is often called the mother of the(1) movement. Her famous book, "The Feminine Mystique," changed America. Some people say it changed(2). It has been called one of the most influential(3) of the twentieth century. Friedan re-awakened the(4) in the United States. That movement had helped women gain the right to vote in the(5). Modern feminists disagree about how to describe themselves and their movement. But activists say men and women should have(6), social and intellectual satisfaction in life. Fifty years ago, life for women in the United States was very different from today.(7) urged their daughters to become lawyers or doctors or professors.(8) doing the same jobs as men earned much less money. Women often lost their jobs when they had a baby. There were few child care centers for(9). Betty Friedan once spoke to ABC television about her support for sharing responsibility for the care of children: "If child-rearing was considered the responsibility of women and men or women and men and society, then we really could pull up(10) and declare victory and move on."

Figure 2 : Script of Listening Comprehension (pre-test) Source : <https://learningenglish.voanews.com>

Comprehension Questions:

1. Who is the mother of women's liberation movement?
2. What is the famous book of her?
3. What kinds of book is Betty's book?
4. When did Betty help women to gain the rights?
5. Along time ago, who did the same job with the men but get less money?

Figure 3 : Listening Comprehension (pre-test) in WH Questions

The gap-fill exercise on the short story script is completing the missing noun-phrase on the story. The recounted story above is just a part of the story for

giving them a pre-test. After completing the missing words, the students must answer five questions in comprehension. The record is played for three times and finished in about 10 minutes. The 35 minutes listening time is divided into 10 minutes for brainstorming and listening to lecturer's instruction on how to do the exercises (pre-listening). In 10 minutes (while-listening), students must listen to audio in three times, concentrate to fulfill the gap, and write the answer on the gap-fill recount script. Then in 8 minutes (post-listening), students are checking the missing phrases then answering comprehension questions based on the audio short story recount.

After checking the answer, the students must score the pre-test by scoring as the pattern below:

$$S = ((10 \text{ gap-fill} \times 1) + (5 \text{ comprehension} \times 2)) \times 5$$

$$S = 100$$

After checking and counting the score for pre-test. I can deliver the result like this.

Table 1. The Pre-Test Score

Score	Low (20-40)	Medium (50-70)	High (80-100)
Number of students	19	10	2

In the practice section the story will be continued to the next story with the same topic of Betty Friedan but the *gap-fill* is in different categories with verbs missing like this.

Betty Friedan was born Betty Goldstein in nineteen twenty-one in Peoria, Illinois. Her immigrant father(1) as a jeweler. Her mother(2) her job with a local newspaper to stay home with her family. Betty(3) Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. It was one of the country's best colleges for women. She(4) her studies in psychology in nineteen forty-two. After college she(5) the University of California at Berkeley to continue her studies. But her boyfriend at the time did not want her to get an advanced degree in psychology. He apparently(6) threatened by her success. So Betty(7) California and her boyfriend. She(8) to New York City and(9) as a reporter and editor for labor union newspapers. In nineteen forty-seven, Betty Goldstein(10) Carl Friedan, a theater director who later became an advertising executive.

Comprehension Questions:

1. Where was Betty born?
2. What did her father do?
3. When did Betty continue her study?
4. Why did Betty leave her boyfriend?
5. Whom did Betty get married to?

From the practice listening comprehension, the result of this practice is shown here.

Table 2. The Practice Result

Score	Low (20-40)	Medium (50-70)	High (80-100)
Number of students	10	12	9

Then, I continue on the next phase will be on post-test listening comprehension. Almost the same as the previous activities but in this section, the students must complete the gap-fill in terms of adjectives and single-nouns, I instruct them read the third story as given like this.

They had(1), the first of three. The(2) were to remain married until nineteen sixty-nine. When Betty Friedan became(3) for the second time, she was(2) from her job at the newspaper. After that she worked as an(4) reporter for magazines. But her editors often rejected her attempts to write about subjects outside the(5) interests of women. In nineteen fifty-seven, Friedan started research that was to have(6) results. Her(7) at Smith College was to gather for the fifteenth anniversary of their(8). Friedan prepared an(9) study for the women. She sent(10) to the women about their lives. Most who took part in the study did not work outside their homes.

Figure 6 : Script of Listening Comprehension (post-test) Source : <https://learningenglish.voanews.com>

Comprehension Questions:

1. When did Betty dismiss from her job?
2. What did Betty do after dismissing?
3. When did Betty start a research?
4. What was her college name?
5. What did Betty send to women about their lives?

Figure 7 : Listening Comprehension (post-test) in WH Questions

Table 3. The Result of Post Test

Score	Low (20-40)	Medium (50-70)	High (80-100)
Number of students	3	14	14

From all above process starting from pre-test, practice and post-test, I find the increasing score of students while they are completing the *gap-fill* short story and answering the comprehension questions.

Reflecting

This section, the observation shows that most students give their good comments on this technique of listening. As said by Daffa (2018) that he really likes learning to listen with gap-fill technique and comprehension questions. This statement is the same opinion with Cikal (2018) that she is really easy to catch the words by gap-fill, and without gap-fill for the first step technique in listening, she cannot answer the comprehension questions easily. In the two students' opinion, I am as a researcher can see higher motivation on listening comprehension arisen on the students' individual motivation.

Second Cycle

Planning

In this stage, on the third meeting, lecturer prepares the materials of teaching into the different topic of the story and the genre. The record is in the form of a narrative story. The narrative can be divided into two categories too such as legend and fable. The gap-fill technique is still used in listening comprehension. The story script will be in gap-fill exercises with the different aspect of responses in a gap-fill. The narrative stories also consist of moral value and the generic structure which are different from the recount story. The narrative story is more interesting from the recount because the narrative is more enjoyable to listen to.

Acting

In this step, I as researcher brainstorms the students about the narrative story that they had ever studied on junior and senior high schools. Narrative stories can be in various kind of stories such as legend and fable. They have to remind again the subjects they had ever learned. The listening comprehension class will go on in about 100 minutes. By the time given in two credits, I divide the time into three categories of time 35 minutes pre-test, 35 minutes again for practice and 30 minutes at last for posttest. Each step in listening comprehension for posttest will be done in about 35 minutes with three steps (pre, while and post-listening). Then 35 minutes again will be the practice of listening with a different topic of the story. The 30 minutes at last will be the post-test listening comprehension by doing the same activities and techniques.

Developing

On the pre-test section

In this part, the researcher gives a short narrative story in gap-fill exercises too. The teacher delivers clear instructions for what the students do in this exercises of listening. The first instruction is reading the whole script of the text, then the second instruction is to take a note for the unfamiliar words they found. Then, the third, students should complete the missing words based on the instructions given while they are listening. The Pre-test result is shown here.

Table 4. Result of Pre-Test

Score	Low (20-40)	Medium (50-70)	High (80-100)
Number of students	10	16	5

On the practice section

Then, lecturer continues the activities of listening into practice but the lecturer gives the additional instruction and suggestion to pay more attention and to identify about the missing words on the text because on this section the category of gap-fill is mixed. So, in one text, the missing words can be in noun, adjective, verbs or adverbs. Then, in the practice section, I can show the result as follows.

Table 5. Result of Practice

Score	Low (20-40)	Medium (50-70)	High (80-100)
Number of students	4	16	11

On the post-test section

Then the final post-test section is surprising result. In this section the low score is missing. There are not any low score occurred in this section.

Table 6. Result of Post-Test

Score	Low (20-40)	Medium (50-70)	High (80-100)
Number of students	0	12	19

From the three scores above, I can see three different stages of different self-efficacy on students' learning. The students has got more individual motivation to learn listening by themselves because if there aren't any self-motivation, this event will be impossible happened in the listening classroom. The sample of the scripts on each section is written below.

Once upon a time, there was a(1) princess named Snow White. She was(2) and gentle and a friend to all(3). The Queen was(3) of Snow White's beauty that she ordered her(4) to kill the young princess. But the Huntsman couldn't(5) himself to hurt Snow White. He told her to run far away so the(6) would never find her. Now White ran(7) The woods. She was lost and(8) but soon found herself in front of(9). The princess knocked, but no one was home. She(10) stepped inside. "Maybe whoever lives here will let me stay," said Snow White.

Figure 8 : Script of Listening Comprehension (post-test) Source : <https://learningenglish.voanews.com>

Comprehension questions:

1. Who was Snow White?
2. What did Snow White look like?
3. What did the Huntsman tell to Snow White?
4. Is there anyone in a house in the wood?
5. What did Snow White do after knocking the house door?

Figure 9 : Listening Comprehension (post-test) in WH Questions

Reflecting

In this part, the students mostly comment that the gap-fill techniques are really simple to do. After catching the missing words or phrases in the short story text in the form of narrative, the students can answer the comprehension easily because they can understand the content well after the finished completing the gap-fill exercises on the narrative story on the second cycle.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, after the learning process above with different topics of a story on the different meeting. The researcher does the research in two meetings for two cycles with different topics of the story. We can see the conclusion from the following chart.

The First Cycle

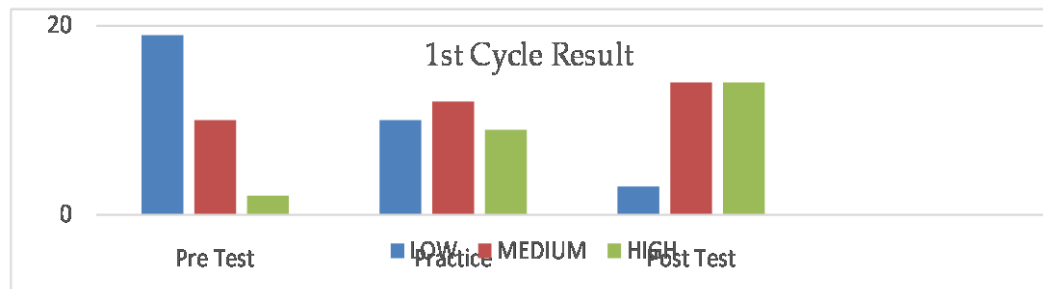


Figure 10 : The First Cycle Chart of Using Gap-fill Short Story

From the first cycle, the researcher can see the increasing score after doing the *gap-fill* technique. But there are still three students on the position of low scores. There were three different colors on the chart based on the students' scores of listening comprehension after following the class. Students who got lower scores in blue color were decreasing sharply. It happened because students with medium scores were increasing. Unfortunately, in this first cycle, there were few students with high scores got lower score in the process of post-test. So, the researcher decided to continue into the second cycle.

The Second Cycle

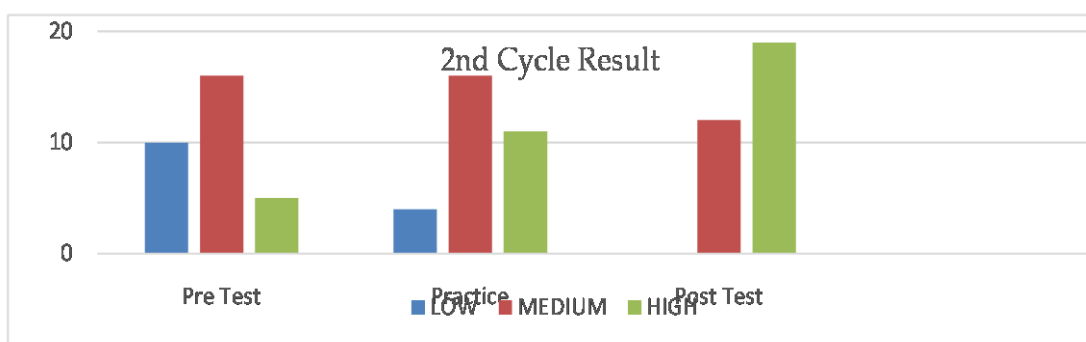


Figure 11 : The Second Cycle Chart of Using Gap-fill Short Story

The second cycle chart is proof that the gap-fill exercise in doing the listening comprehension create a better score in listening comprehension practice. This could be seen from the above chart. The chart showed, the blue color which evidenced students with low score were decreasing up to zero blue color on the Post-Test. On the contrary, when the blue color was missing, the grey color which

referred to students with high scores were dramatically going up in the final process of listening comprehension. The Post-Test showed that the students with high score were getting higher than the previous stages, in pre-Test and Practice. Hence, the gap-fill techniques exercises in the listening comprehension class could truly enhance the students' capability in listening comprehension. By this technique, there were three advantages the students could take. They could improve their mastery of vocabularies as their linguistic achievements, change their behavior in learning, and the steps of learning can be adopted in different condition and places, then the future research can be done in many different situation and many kinds of students' backgrounds.

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