

BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢN LÝ VÀ CÔNG NGHỆ HẢI PHÒNG



KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH : NGÔN NGỮ ANH – NHẬT

Sinh viên : Nguyễn Tất Thành

Giảng viên hướng dẫn : Th.S Phạm Thị Thúy

HẢI PHÒNG – 2023

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TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢN LÝ VÀ CÔNG NGHỆ HẢI PHÒNG**

**A STUDY ON DIFFICULTIES AND SOLUTIONS IN
LISTENING SKILL OF THE FIRST YEAR ENGLISH
MAJORS AT HAI PHONG MANAGEMENT AND
TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY**

**KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY
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1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp

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2. Các tài liệu, số liệu cần thiết

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Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp

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CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

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Nội dung hướng dẫn: A Study on Difficulties and Solutions in Listening Skill of the First Year English Majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology University.

1. Tinh thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp

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Giảng viên hướng dẫn

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

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Đề tài tốt nghiệp: A Study on Difficulties and Solutions in Listening Skill of the First Year English Majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology University.

1. Phần nhận xét của giáo viên chăm phản biện

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2. Những mặt còn hạn chế

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viên chăm phản biện

Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm
Giảng viên chăm phản biện
(Ký và ghi rõ tên)

ABSTRACT

Listening skill is one of the four major skills of language that most language learners desire to get mastery in order to communicate effectively in different contexts. It is one of the most challenging skills for many students. The main aim of this study was to explore students' learning listening difficulties and solutions for first-year English majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology University. Therefore, I applied the quantitative methods to do the research. So, the collecting data instrument like questionnaires, informal interviews were used to do the study. The results of the research will help improve listening skills for first-year majors. I hope that my research would bring students advantages and improve their listening skill.

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Hai Phong, October 2022

Student

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

I. Rationale of the study

So far, English has been recognized by the whole world as the most common and common language around the globe. In Vietnam, English has also been used regularly to serve people's daily lives. Therefore, learning English is very important and necessary because mastering English is the best and shortest way for us to have a lot of opportunities to achieve our goals in life. Listening – Speaking – Reading – Writing are four important skills in English. Listening is part of our lives. Listening is the first skill we learn and will also be the first skill to learn when starting a new language. And it's not easy especially for freshmen. There are many reasons why learners find it difficult to learn to listen, one of the basic reasons is that listening skills are often not focused on the process of learning English from a young age until entering a college or university for language students. First-year foreign language students at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology have many difficulties in listening, leading to poor scores and poor listening skills. Surveys and entrance tests of listening skills are often lower than speaking, reading and writing skills. Therefore, this study was conducted with the aim of understanding the difficulties in the listening learning process of first-year students majoring in foreign languages, thereby proposing solutions to improve the listening skills of students.

As research, I would like to present the thesis title “A Study on Difficulties and Solutions in Listening Skill of the First Year English Majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology University” for reasons above.

II. Aims of the study

This study will focus on two main objectives:

First, this study will show the common difficulties encountered by first-year students in the foreign language department.

Finally, the study will come up with some solutions to help them improve their listening skill.

III. Scope of the study,

The study focuses on understanding and investigating the difficulties students face and gives suggested solutions to help the first-year students. The participants were 40 first-year English majors selected from the Foreign Language Department at HPU to conduct the survey.

IV. Methods of the study

The main method used for research is to collect information through the results of survey questionnaire of first-year majors.

All survey results and comments will be represented on tables and charts.

V. Organization of the study

The study has three parts:

Part I: INTRODUCTION, includes the rationale to the study. It also covers the study's objectives, research topics, scope of work, and methods with organization of the study.

Part II: DEVELOPMENT

Chapter I: Literature Review, the researcher discusses the literature and theory related to the research topic.

Chapter II: The Study, the researcher has justified and described the research method in full detail. From the results obtained after the actual survey, the researcher has drawn new findings and made comments and evaluations on the survey results.

Chapter III: Recommendations and suggestion, from the actual results obtained, the researcher offers practical and specific solutions to the topic.

Part III: CONCLUSION, summary of research

PART II: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. English listening skill

1.1.1. The definitions of listening

Listening is a passive process that just requires us to receive all kinds of sounds. Listening is a passive physical act that requires a sense and involves the perception of sound. It doesn't rely on concentration. Sounds like data collection, we hear sounds and words all day, even when we don't pay attention to them.

Listening is the first skill and basic ability in learning a new language that beginners must learn. It is a receptive skill meaning that the language learning beginners receive new words from what they have heard or listened to. The ability to receive will affect the ability to produce. If they are good at listening; as a result, they will understand and even have a good competency in productive skills namely speaking and writing. According to Nation and Jonathan “Listening is the natural precursor to speaking; the early stages of language development in a person’s first language (and in naturalistic acquisition of other languages) are dependent on listening.” According to Brown listening is a spoken or written response from the student that indicates correct (or incorrect) auditory processing. In order to become better listeners, the learners must think actively when they are listening. Listening is involved in many language-learning activities, both inside and outside the language classroom. The improvement in listening will provide a basis for the development of other language skills.

Brown defines listening is a complex activity, and we can help students comprehend what they hear by activating their prior knowledge. The next section will consider another way teachers can help ease the difficulty of listening: training students in different types of listening. Bowen, Madsen, and Hilferty (1985) demonstrated that listening is understanding the oral language. Students hear oral speech, divide sounds, classify them into lexical and syntactic units, and comprehend the message. Listening is a process of receiving what the speaker says, making and showing meaning, negotiating meaning with the

speaker, and answering, and creating meaning by participation, creativity, and empathy...

According to Lorena Manaj listening is yet another necessitates in language. The more efficient a listener you are the more successful and satisfied you will be. Listening is not merely hearing it is a state of receptivity that permits an understanding of what is heard and grants the listener full partnership in the communication process.

1.1.2. The definitions of listening skill

Listening is the activity of hearing, which helps people receive information in the form of sounds. You can hear a lot of different sounds from birds singing to talking... Since it is an available human activity, listening is considered an unconditioned reflex action. That is, you can accidentally hear many different things without having to do anything, practice.

But listening skills are not so simple. Listening skills can be considered higher than normal listening activities because you must practice every day to get good listening skills. Listening skills are the process of receiving information from sound in a focused, proactive, selective manner and giving appropriate feedback to what has been received. Listening skills not only help at work but are also very important in life and especially when learning a new language.

Some linguists have made judgments about listening skills. Listening skill is the communication process, according to Johnson (1951) and Hampleman (1958), while it is to distinguish words from recognizing other words. Vishwanath Bite defines Listening skill is key to receiving messages effectively. It is a combination of hearing what another person says and psychological involvement with the person who is talking. According to Herbert J. Walberg Listening skills are essential for learning since they enable students to acquire insights and information, and to achieve success in communicating with others. Based on several definitions above, it can be concluded that listening is one of the abilities of every human being who can be seen directly, but not all people in the world can listen to English except those who are indeed their native speaker or first language in English or involved in many language-learning activities, both inside and outside the language classroom and about listening skills are the ability to actively understand the information provided by the speaker, and

display interest in the topic discussed. It can also include providing the speaker feedback, such as the asking of pertinent questions; so the speaker knows the message is being understood.

1.1.3. The importance of listening skill in language learning

Listening is always considered the most important and the most difficult skill in the communication process, so there is a saying: "It takes two years to learn to speak but it takes a lifetime to learn to listen". Or "Speaking is silver, silence is gold, listening is diamond" to see how important listening is for all of us – regardless of age, gender, occupation... Listening plays an important role in the art of communication, is one of the ways to win people's hearts, is a way to shorten the path to success.

First, listening shows respect for the other person: According to Maslow's research, people have 7 levels of needs ranked in the following order: material, safe, emotional, recognition, respect, dedication, and aesthetics. Thus, being respected is one of the needs that always exist in each person, regardless of wealth, position, occupation, age, gender because everyone has a certain feeling, narcissism, and self-esteem. So, when we listen to the other person speak with both ears, eyes, and sincerity, it is our way of satisfying the need to be respected, meeting the desire of others to listen to us. On the other hand, if you want to have the ability to speak, you must know how to listen, to be cared for by others, you must first learn to respect and care for others because "in life, it is impossible to give a cold stone to ask for loving and warm feelings".

Not only that, listening comprehension needs more concentration and a quick understanding is also required. When listening, a lot of factors should be specifically paid attention. They are context, facial expressions, and body gestures that are very important for the listeners to facilitate the understanding of what is conveyed by speakers (Ziane, 2011). According to Rost (1994) and Ziane (2011), listening comprehension is very important because it is a process through which we get input and without its comprehension learning does not happen. Doff (1995) and Ziane (2011) represented that listening has a significant effect on developing speaking. That is, we cannot develop our speaking ability unless we develop our listening skill. If a learner has a good listening ability in English language, it would be very easy for him to listen to the radio, to study,

watch films, or communicate with foreigners. Learners should have a lot of practice and exposure to English in order to develop this ability. There is a relationship between listening to a language and learning it. If we compare two learners; one is living in a country where the target language is the first language, and the other is living in a country where English is only spoken in academic places. The difference is that the first learner can acquire English more easily, effectively, and rapidly than the second one. Consequently, learners need as much exposure to English language as possible. According to Hedge (2000), listening has an important role in everyday life and when people are engaged in communication nine percent is spent to writing, 16 percent to reading, 30 percent to speaking, and 45 percent to listening which shows the significance of listening in the communication process. Lundsteen (1979) expressed that listening is the first skill to appear. He continued that children listen before they speak. Hedge (2000) indicated that modern society likes to change from printed media towards sound and its members. Therefore, the significance of listening cannot be ignored. He emphasized that listening is of great importance in English language classrooms.

And for students, coming to class attentively listening to the knowledge imparted by the teacher, actively discussing the lesson content is the fastest way for them to learn the lesson, remember the deepest knowledge. Therefore, at home, you do not need to spend a lot of time reviewing the content of class assignments, instead you can read more books, learn more knowledge, or you can arrange part-time working time to gain experience and higher income. As a result, when you leave school, you can easily apply your knowledge in practice to improve work efficiency. On the other hand, it is the awareness of the learning attitude of students and honorees expressed through the enthusiasm of listening, exchanging, and discussing lively lessons that will invigorate the fire of love for the profession, inspiring the transmission of knowledge of teachers.

1.1.4. Types of listening

People use different types of listening when listening for different purposes. A first step toward becoming an effective listener is to understand the type of listening that is appropriate for particular purposes. The listening may

either be passive listening (casual listening) or active listening (focused listening).

1.1.4.1. Passive listening

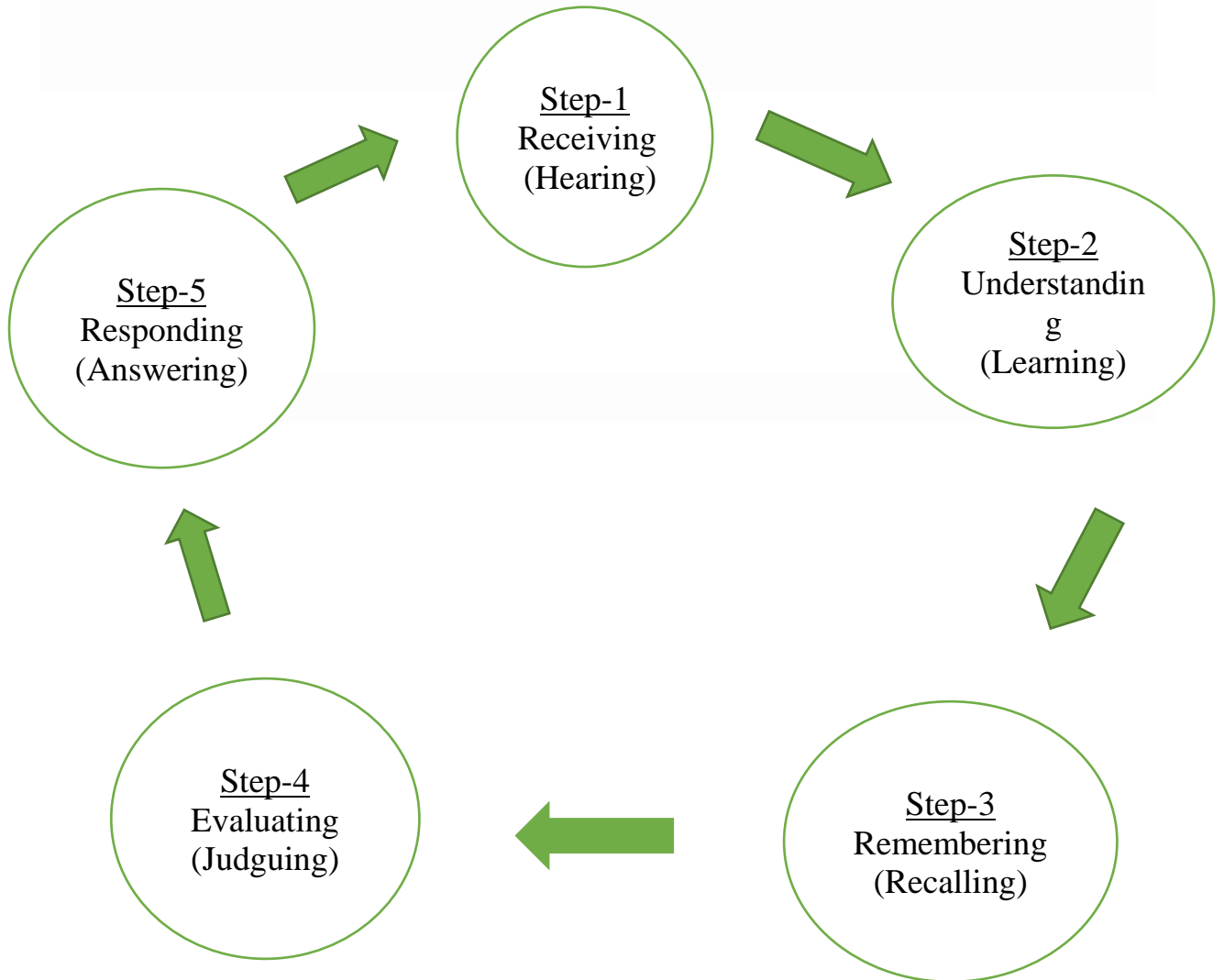
Passive listening, also called casual listening, occupies a good deal of our listening time — we listen to music, our favorite television program, or a friend sharing an interesting tidbit of gossip or telling a humorous story. At such times we may suspend our critical faculties, relax, and enjoy the stimulation. At other times, for example, at a concert or at the theatre, we may listen for enjoyment, but we nevertheless respond intellectually or emotionally to the music or the words of the play. Casual listening expends little energy or effort because the response is to us rather than to the performers.

1.1.4.2. Active listening

Active listening, also called focused listening is more goal-oriented than passive listening. Active listening means, as its name suggests, actively listening. That is fully concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively ‘hearing’ the message of the speaker. Active listening is hearing and trying to understand and remember a message. It has a purpose. It implies that you have a definite goal in mind as to why you are listening. You work harder to absorb the contents of the message shared by your team leader, for example, than listening to a DJ announcing your favorite piece of music. The following type of listening provide an idea of the different levels at which we listen actively.

1.1.5. Listening process

The process of listening occurs in five stages. They are hearing, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding.



RECEIVING (HEARING) – It is referred to the response caused by sound waves stimulating the sensory receptors of the ear; it is physical response; hearing is perception of sound waves; you must hear to listen, but you need not listen to hear (perception necessary for listening depends on attention). Brain screens stimuli and permits only a select few to come into focus- this selective perception is known as attention, an important requirement for effective listening.

UNDERSTANDING - This step helps to understand symbols we have seen and heard, we must analyze the meaning of the stimuli we have perceived; symbolic stimuli are not only words but also sounds like applause... and sights like blue uniform...that have symbolic meanings as well; the meanings attached to these symbols are a function of our past associations and of the context in which the symbols occur. For successful interpersonal communication, the listener must understand the intended meaning and the context assumed by the sender.

REMEMBERING - Remembering is important listening process because it means that an individual has not only received and interpreted a message but has also added it to the mind's storage bank. In Listening our attention is selective, so too is our memory- what is remembered may be quite different from what was originally seen or heard.

EVALUATING - Only active listeners participate at this stage in Listening. At this point the active listener weighs evidence, sorts fact from opinion, and determines the presence or absence of bias or prejudice in a message; the effective listener makes sure that he or she doesn't begin this activity too soon; beginning this stage of the process before a message is completed requires that we no longer hear and attend to the incoming message-as a result, the listening process ceases

RESPONDING - This stage requires that the receiver complete the process through verbal and/or nonverbal feedback; because the speaker has no other way to determine if a message has been received, this stage becomes the only overt means by which the sender may determine the degree of success in transmitting the message.

1.1.6. Significance of listening

Stephen R. Covey once said, "When you listen to others, you not only hear with your ears, but more importantly, you hear with your eyes and your heart. You listen to feel, to interpret, to understand the actions of others."

Listening is the attitude of silence, focusing when the other person is speaking, the opening of one's heart to the sound of life echoing into one's heart. Listening and understanding is crucial to our human success. Listening in communication not only shows respect for oneself and respect for others, but also causes sympathy for others. When we listen humbly, we learn a lot from everyone. When you listen to yourself, it will be a way to improve your personality. Often people will prefer to talk rather than listen, so if we try to change a little, listen to others more, we will definitely understand others better, thereby creating really good and long-lasting relationships. As Guo and Wills (2006) state "it is the medium through which people gain a large proportion of their education, their information, their understanding of the world and human affairs, their ideals, sense of values". According to Mendelson (1994) "of the total time spent on communicating, listening takes up 40-50%; speaking 25-30 %; reading 11-16%; and writing about 9%". Emphasizing the importance of listening in language learning, Peterson (2001) states that "no other type of language input is easy to process as spoken language, received through listening through listening, learners can build an awareness of the interworking's of language systems at various levels and thus establish a base for more fluent productive skills". Listening has an important role both in daily life and in academic contexts as it is crucial for people to sustain effective communication. Emphasizing the importance of listening, Anderson and Lynch (2003) state that listening skills are as important as speaking skills because people cannot communicate face-to-face unless both types of skills are developed together.

As such, listening is the key to success; is a means to bond and create relationships; is a way for us to show respect for others before we want to receive the respect, love, and trust of people for us.

1.2. Difficulties in listening

1.2.1. Pronounce

Pronunciation is an extremely important element in communication, especially in listening. Whether students are good at listening skills or not that depends on their pronunciation knowledge. Gilakjani (2012) said that "learners with good English pronunciation are likely to be understood even if they make errors in the other area, whereas learners with bad pronunciation will not be understood, even if their grammar is perfect". Actually, students who are expert at pronunciation, they will confidently show their ideas and even precisely listen to a message from others. On the opposite, poor pronunciation can cause negative misunderstanding or failure in communication as well as in the listening process. In other words, as stated by Cook (1996), "learning to pronounce a second language means that building up new pronunciation habits and overcoming the bias of the first language". To be a good English listener or to be successful in learning a foreign language, pronunciation should be taken into consideration first. Remarkably, most of students often encounter many difficulties in learning pronunciation. When they practice how to pronounce an English word, their mother tongue has affected their pronunciation that makes them produce unclearly and unnaturally. This causes a difference between the students' and the native speakers' pronunciation. Therefore, they are hard to identify the words that speakers are saying. Moreover, there are many new words that students have never known its pronunciation leading to the strange for students when listening. In brief, pronunciation is also a drawback for students in listening skills.

1.2.2. Limited English vocabulary

Wilkins in Thornbury (2004: 13) states that without descriptive linguistics brief or no can be brought, without vocabulary nothing can be carried. It implies even somebody bears smart grammar even so it will be futile if they are making not understand several vocabularies. Vocabulary is the "material" to be able to create communication. And proficiency and fluency of vocabulary are the "backbone" for fluent communication. But often vocabulary learners do not know from which source to learn, where to start learning, how to learn.

1.2.3. Grammatical structure

Quirk (2000) said that grammar as complex system in which all parts of grammar are mutually defining and there is no simple linear path, we can take in explaining one part in terms of another. The grammatical correctness is described as analyzing and explaining in a sentence while the letter is focused in the attempt of making the learners understand how to use the language in a real context.

Grammar also plays influential role in all aspects of English. In speaking and listening for example, the use of grammar in communication, regardless the country and the language of it, will help the better understanding of the communication. People will be considered more professional, and the information delivered through the correct grammar will be easier to understand as how the communication supposed to be. Moreover, the delivery of information which does not use the grammar will only lead to confusion and misunderstanding. As the result, the communication will not run well between speaker and listener.

1.2.4. Concentration

You're too worried about listening, or you're always thinking about different things. As a result, in the process of listening comprehension, you will be negligent and difficult to catch all the main ideas that you hear. Actually, this is not your own problem but the problem of a lot of English learners, even those whose other English skills are already quite good.

1.2.5. Length and speed of the listening

The level of students plays a great role when listening long parts and keeping all the information in the mind. It is not easy for the lower-level student to listen more than three minutes long listening then completing the desired activities. Short listening texts facilitate listening comprehension and diminish boredom, keep learners' concentration alive (Atkins et al 1995). If the text contains a lot of information, it is not easy to store everything in mind, exceptional listening ability and strategy required to understand (Carroll, 1977). Another reason makes listening text difficult is the speed. If the speakers speak faster than normal listener may have difficulties to catch target words. On the

contrary of reading comprehension, the listener cannot control speed of the speaker, and this cause the greatest difficulty with listen in comprehension (Underwood, 1989, p. 16). It is clear for most language learners and teachers that a slower speech speed would facilitate beginner learners' listening comprehension (Flaherty, 1979; Griffiths, 1990, 1992; King & Behnke, 1989; Zhao, 1997). Blau (1990) concluded that lessen the input speed is one of the effective technics that helps comprehension for second language learners.

1.2.6. Not grasping the gist of listening

The reason for the difficulty of grasping the main idea of the listening lesson is because the listener does not know what the important information is to hear in the lesson. Or because the listener's inability to deduce the main content of the listening from key words makes them unable to grasp the main idea when listening.

1.2.7. Barriers to listening

Listening is an important communication skill that helps us to have the love of people, receive knowledge to improve understanding, show that we are polite, always respect others, and it is also the key to help us succeed at work, life. However, not everyone understands this and of course some people understand the importance of listening but cannot master this skill. So, what are the barriers to listening?

It can be due to noise, it is the "culprit" that distracts both the speaker and the listener. For example, students who talk in the classroom not only show disrespect to the classroom teacher, do not absorb the lesson, but also affect the listening activities of other students. Besides, the quality of support facilities for speakers such as microphones, projectors ... also plays a rather important role. If the means of quality assurance will help the speaker's ability to communicate better so that our listening process is not interrupted. On the contrary, poor microphone quality will affect the ability to transmit information and the ability to listen.

There are many objective factors that influence listening, but the biggest barrier to this problem is still subjective factors. These are the elements of the

listener himself such as physical, mental, cognitive, personality ... has affected the ability to listen.

Physical fatigue, hearing loss: If we hear in a state of body fatigue, illness or hearing loss, the listening efficiency will also be low.

Low level of concentration: To listen effectively requires a highly focused mind with a calm mind with ears, eyes always directed to the speaker. But on the contrary, listening to a dreamy state, thinking about other problems, the effect will not be high. Or many people have their own habit of working when listening, which also makes listening less effective.

Lack of patience when listening: Patience is an important quality in listening because sometimes communication takes hours. At the same time, to listen and to fully understand the meaning of the speaker, we not only listen to the simple content, or we think it is interesting, but also listen to the dry content, confusing information. So, if you lack patience, you will quickly let yourself go of listening and divert your thoughts to other things.

Ability to think slowly: Listening is to understand so the listener needs to be actively thinking and needs to be able to think well. Therefore, if the listener with the ability to self-sustain is slow when he cannot understand the content of the information he has just received, the speaker has talked to another content, making the listener not keep up with the problem. And when you don't understand, the listener will feel discouraged and quit listening halfway.

And for students, the subjective cause of inefficient listening is due to many bad habits that affect the ability to listen such as: inattention, preference for selective listening, mechanical listening, failure to define goals, lack of motivation in learning.

It can be said that the highest goal of students coming to school is to receive knowledge, especially professional knowledge as a luggage so that after graduation, they have the opportunity to choose the right job, in accordance with their own aspirations. Therefore, students who identify goals and motivations in learning, they will go to class with an excited spirit, the desire to explore and conquer each knowledge scale. With this group of students, they have a very good sense of learning attitude, are passionate about learning, listen to lectures

actively and actively participate in building lessons. However, the percentage of this group of students is not high. According to the survey results, this rate is only 25% and falls on students with high academic results. And 15% of students only listen selectively, that is, listen attentively to the subjects and content they consider attractive. And because only part of the information is listened to, part of the content of the lecture, the knowledge received is not systematic, not deep, but on the contrary, it only brings chutes, so it cannot achieve the desired high results. And a much higher percentage is that up to 60% of students do not like to listen, these are those who do not value learning, are not motivated in learning, so they only consider going to class as a mandatory task for yes. Therefore, it is not difficult for us to see the situation of "you say keep talking, sleep just sleep" is sleeping soundly, not knowing whether to leave school, or not sleeping, talking in class. And most of these students do not set goals in study and life, studying just to pass the subject or retake the exam, relearning is still not a problem. And with the above spirit and attitude of learning, it is impossible to improve the ability to listen.

CHAPTER 2: THE STUDY

2.1. Participants

2.1.1. The researcher

The researcher is a final year student of Hai Phong Management and Technology University, he wants to help the first-year majors in the foreign language department to minimize the difficulties of learning listening English and improve their listening skill. Therefore, the researcher has studied the problems of students and offered them useful solutions when learning listening English.

2.1.2. The students

This study was conducted with the participation of 40 first-year English majors of the foreign language department. Most of students have been studying English for 7 years at the junior level. However, their English background is not much different due to past teaching programs, leading to students have difficulties and being limited in many aspects when entering the university.

2.2. The survey questionnaire

2.2.1. The design of the survey questionnaire

The survey questionnaires are given to students to study the reality of teaching and learning listening skill at Hai Phong Management and Technology University. Students were asked to tick the most suitable answers which correspond with their opinions. The questionnaire includes 8 questions as follows:

Question 1: Gives information on students' English learning time. The researcher wants to have further understood about students' bonding time with English. Basing on this understanding, the author can get right information about them.

Question 2: Gather students' information on assessing listening skills, so that the author can give them more inspiration and motivation to learn listening skills.

Question 3: Get information about the importance of listening skills through student opinions, so that the author can see the student's attitude towards listening skills.

Question 4: Provide information about students' difficulties in learning to listen. This is indispensable information in this study.

Question 5: This is a question about the frequency and current level of self-study of students, which can provide information to help the researcher come up with a more appropriate improvement for the student.

Question 6: The researcher wants to know about the current learning method of student, this information will help the researcher synthesize and make more radical recommendations.

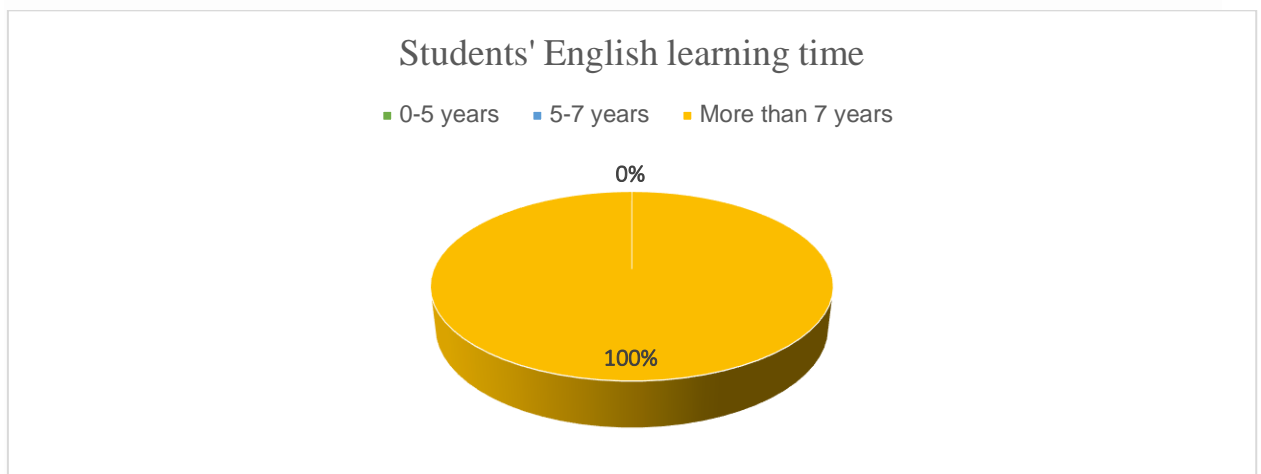
Question 7: The students' preferred method of learning to listen is also a useful information for the researcher on the problem of providing solutions to improve listening skills.

Question 8: Gather students' opinions on the effectiveness of listening methods.

2.2.2. The data analysis

2.2.2.1. Students' English learning time

Question 1: How long have you studied English?

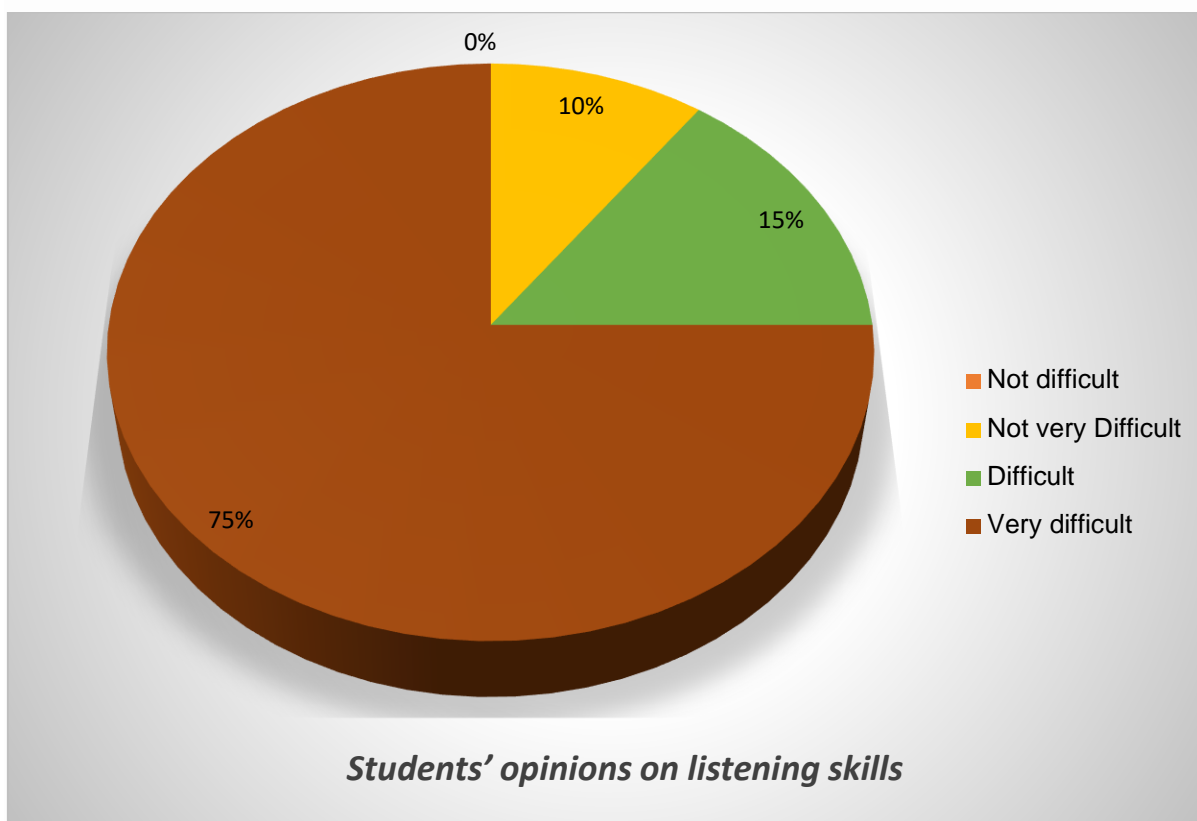


The chart above shows that 100% of students answered that they have studied English for more than 7 years. It is quite a long time for students, which proves that learning English has become a very important. The fact that most students are exposed to English early shows the importance of English and its

necessity when the English program has been taught since primary school. Moreover, it is a compulsory subject in most schools from elementary to university. Therefore, they are fully aware that English is important and learn it as a second language.

2.2.2.2. *Students' opinions about listening skill*

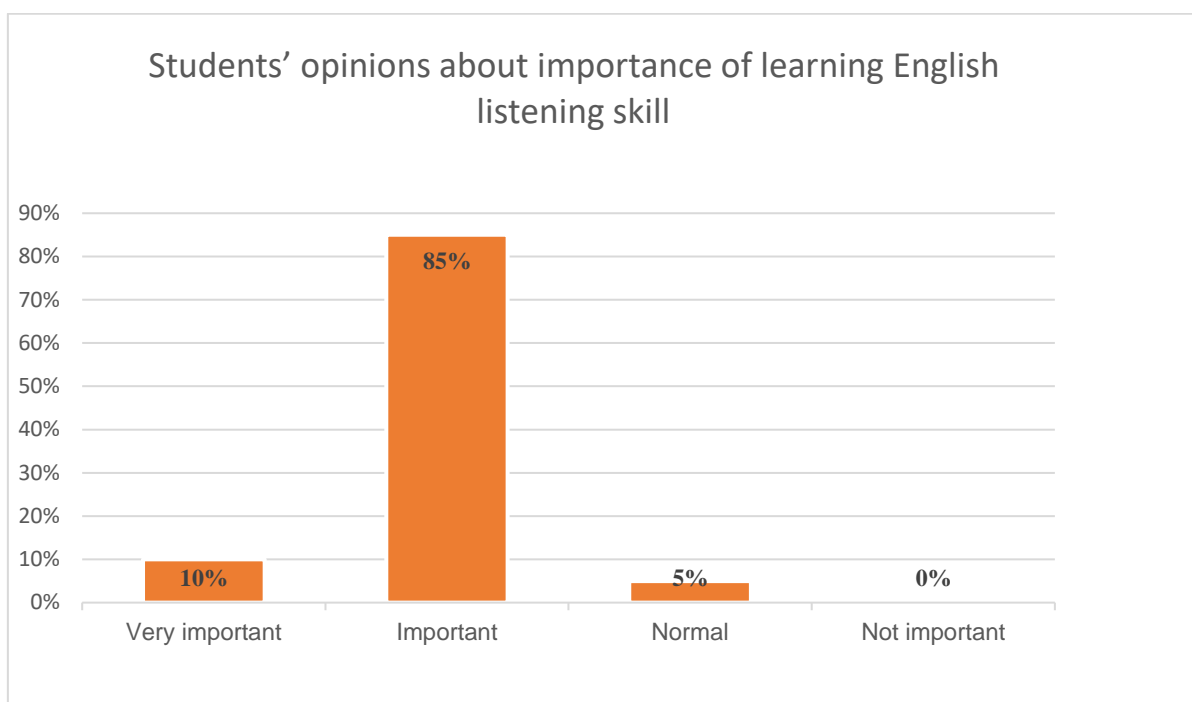
Question 2: In your opinion, listening skill is difficult for students, isn't it?



The chart above shows us how students generally feel about their English listening skills. Up to 75% of students think listening is very difficult subject. In addition, the opinion that learning listening skills is difficult accounts for 15%. The remaining students felt that listening was not very difficult at 10% and these are all students with good listening skills. And no student chooses listening as a not difficult skill. From the assessment table above, it can be noticed that students realize that listening skills are always a difficult skill and they always face many challenges when learning this skill.

2.2.2.3. Students' opinions on the importance of listening skill

Question 3: What do you think about the importance of English listening skill?



From the chart above, students know the role and importance of listening skills. Most students think that listening skills are important accounting for 85% and very important accounting for 10%. Meanwhile, only 5% of students said that listening skills are normal. This makes it clear that the role of listening skills is indispensable in English. It can be concluded that listening skills are one of the most important skills for communication in life and in learning a foreign language.

2.2.2.4. Problems faced by students when learning listening English

Question 4: Which difficulties have you faced when you listen to English?

Difficulties	Number of students selected (/40)
The sound quality from radio is not good	10/40
Limited vocabulary	34/40
The inability to concentrate	13/40
Limited cultural and social knowledge	14/40
Different accents	28/40
Idioms and slangs	19/40
Difficult topics	11/40
Too difficult to understand a lot of new information in a short time	29/40
Not keeping up with the speaker's pace in the listening	15/40
Don't understand the content of the listening	19/40
Other factors	3/40

The biggest difficulty for students is too difficult to understand a lot of new information in a short time (29/40) and limiting vocabulary (34/40). Next, two difficulties include not understanding the content of the listening lesson and not recognizing idioms if appearing in the listening lesson in equal proportion (19/40).

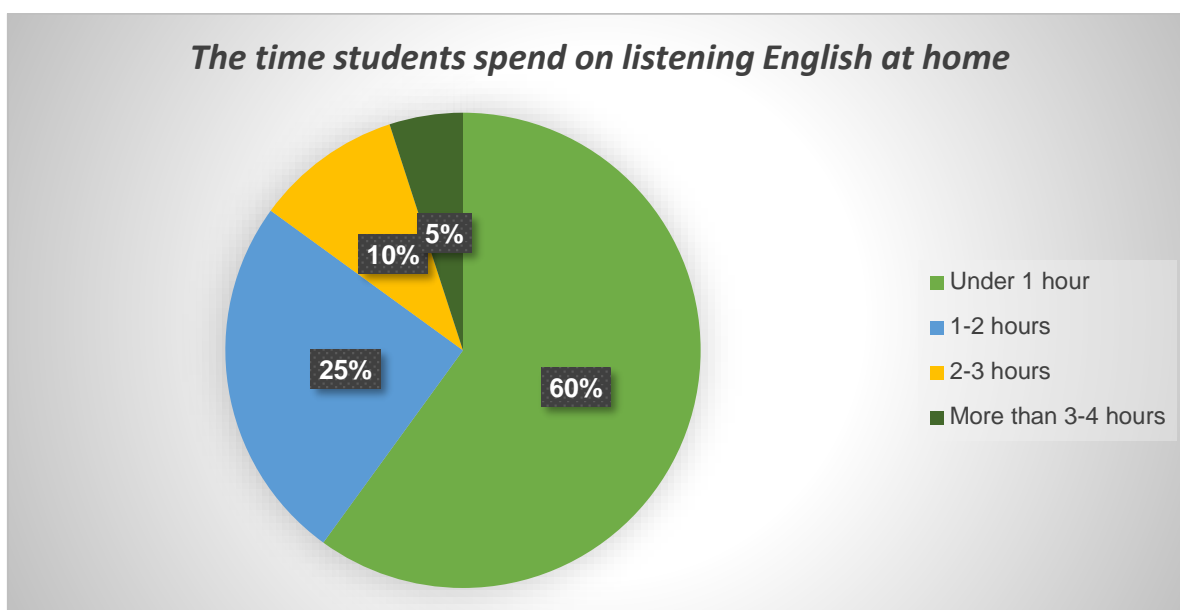
The impact of tape quality is only a small percentage (10/40). The ability of students to concentrate is average (13/40) and not keeping up with the speaker's pace in the listening (15/40) which greatly hinders the improvement of their abilities.

The limited knowledge of culture and society is not high (14/40) students said that with the power of the internet in this digital age, the chances of them being exposed to this knowledge are great.

Different accents are also one of the great difficulties (28/40). In addition, the difficult topic only accounts for (11/40) because the students give the opinion that the classroom listening lessons are normal and quite difficult. The rest are other problems are very low (3/40) such as external sound, hearing loss, not understanding the topic requirements.

2.2.2.5. Students' learning time while homeschooling

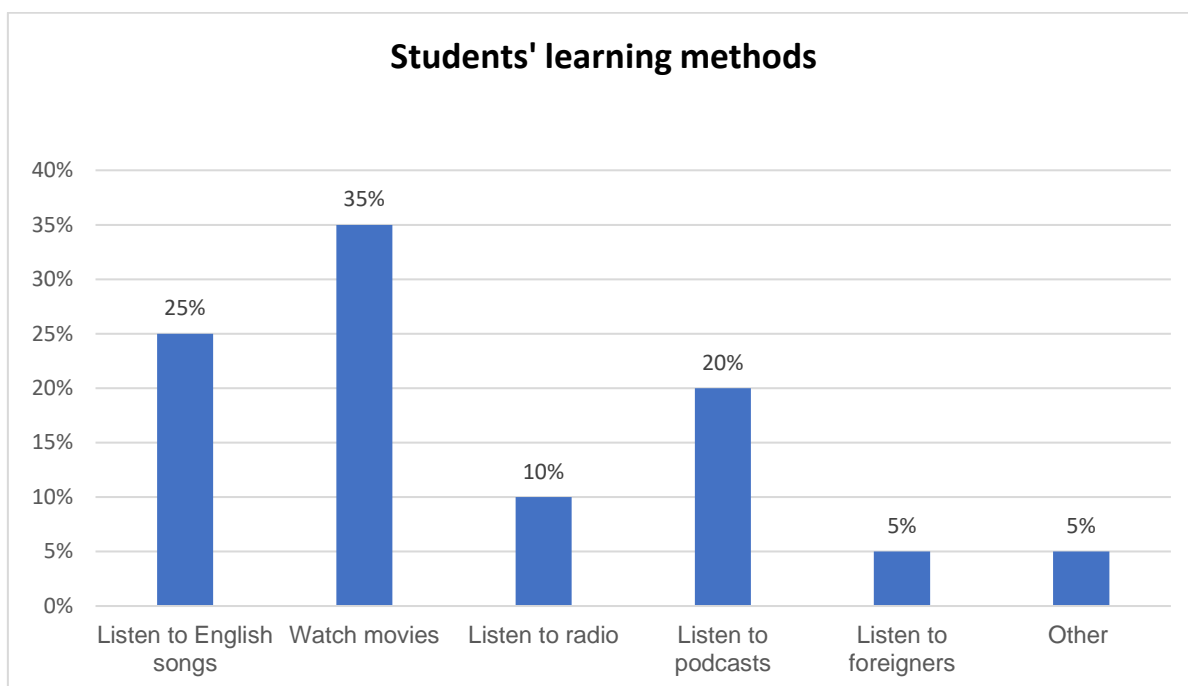
Question 5: How long do you often spend on listening at home every day?



As we can see from chart above, up to 60% of students spend less than 1 hour listening to English. Students have said that the more they listen, the more they will get bored and not grasp and understand the content of the lesson. Students who listen from 1 hour to 2 hours account for 25% and from 2-3 hours account for 10%, these numbers are not high because they say that if they feel in a good mood and comfortable, they can listen for a long time and vice versa, they do not even hear anything for a week or more. The rest are students who listen more than 3-4 hours (5%) accounting for a very small percentage, and these are the students with the best listening ability in class. They reported that they regularly split their listening time throughout the day, so they could listen a lot without getting bored and could practice more effectively. It can be concluded from the survey results that students are less interested in practicing their listening skills. They can improve if they discipline themselves and have sound learning methods.

2.2.2.6. Students' methods on self-studying listening

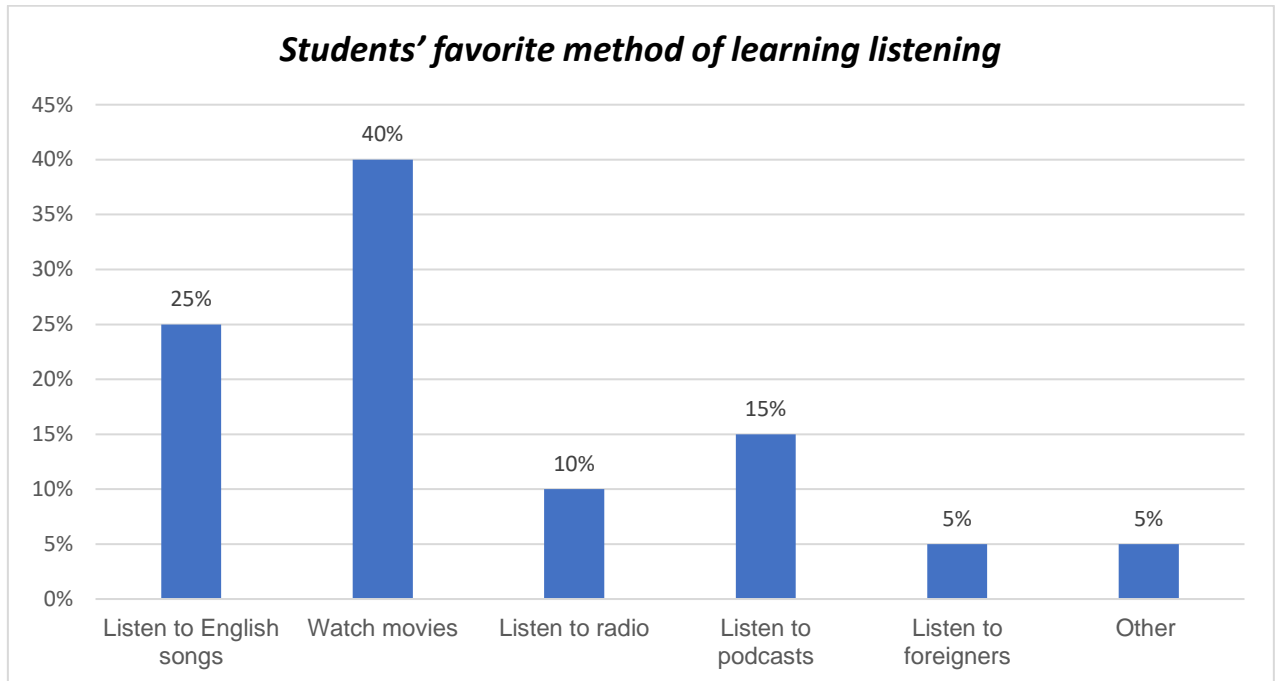
Question 6: How do you often study listening?



The survey results show that the most students' method is watching movies accounted for the highest percentage (35%). Next, listening to English songs (25%) and listening to podcasts (20%). It is easy to understand because these are all common ways that students often use to learn English. Listening to the radio is not high (10%), according to the information collected, students think that listening through the radio is boring and not interesting. The remaining students who choose to listen from foreigners account for an extremely low percentage (5%) of students who are hesitant to communicate with foreigners because their vocabulary is poor and their listening and speaking skills are limited so they cannot hear foreigners. Only a few students choose other ways (5%) such as studying online, playing English games.

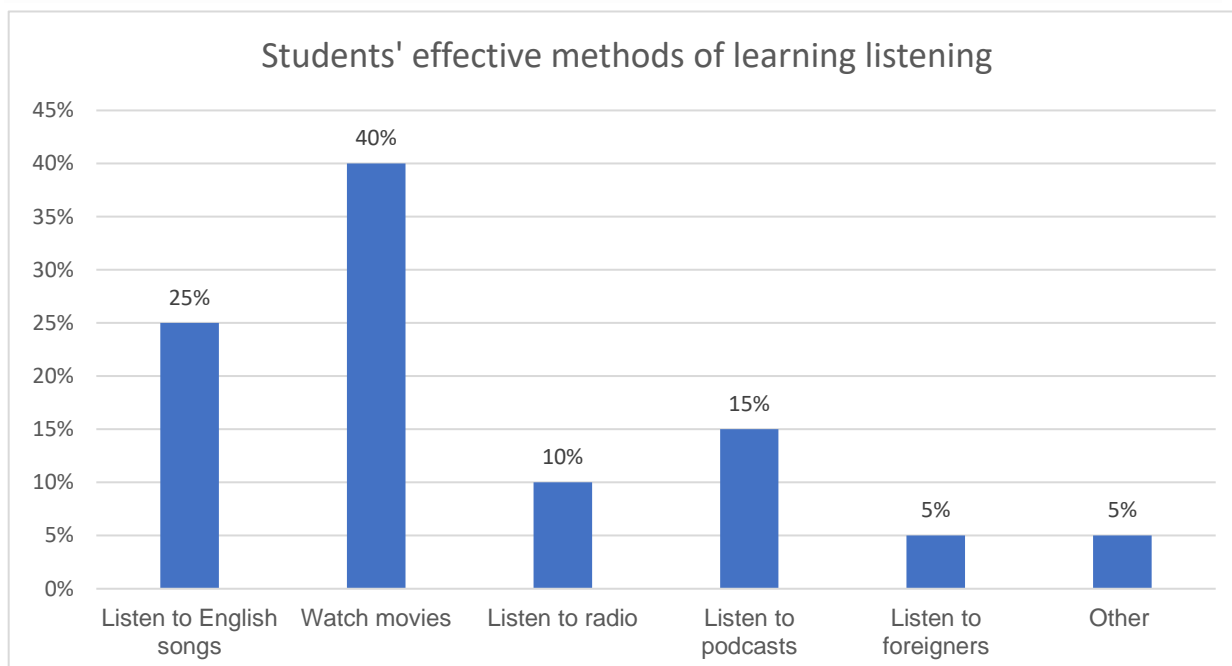
2.2.2.7. Students' favorite methods of learning listening

Question 7: What is your favorite way of learning listening?



As we can see the survey results from the chart above. There are 6 suggestions given to this question. The most of students prefer listening method is watching movies (40%). Next, the methods of listening to English songs (25%) and podcasts (15%). The remaining methods are quite low such as listening to the radio (10%) and listening to foreigners (5%), these students are all students with a fairly solid vocabulary and knowledge, which they think can help them communicate well and improve their listening ability. The rest are a small number of students who choose other ways (5%) such as playing games or learning through websites.

2.2.2.8. Students' effective methods of learning listening



Question 8: Which method do you find effective?

From the results of the survey, the most of the effective method is watching movies (40%), student said that this is an effective method. Next, the methods listening to English songs (25%) and listening to podcasts (15%) are not very effective. The remaining methods such as listening to the radio (10%) and listening to foreigners (5%), or some other methods (5%) are ineffective.

2.3. Findings and discussions

Generally, from the survey results from 40 first-year majors, it can be seen that the difficulties faced by students, (85%) students are mostly vocabulary is lacking a lot (34/40), students cannot understand a lot of new information in a short time (29/40). The reason for these difficulties is mainly because the amount of time that students spend on learning and practicing this skill is quite low, the most of them study less than one hour (60%). However, majors are still aware of the importance of listening skills and have taken the time to study and practice at home. The students also have favorite methods for learning listening skills, following the data in study watching movies is an effective method (40%), besides that, there are some methods is not very effective and certain difficulties in the learning listening process.

CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

3.1. Recommendations

There are many ways to learn how to listen effectively, but students who want to improve their listening skills need the right methods that can make up for the shortcomings. Based on the survey results and student status, this study will provide some of the most useful suggestions for improving listening skills for majors.

3.2. Some suggested solutions

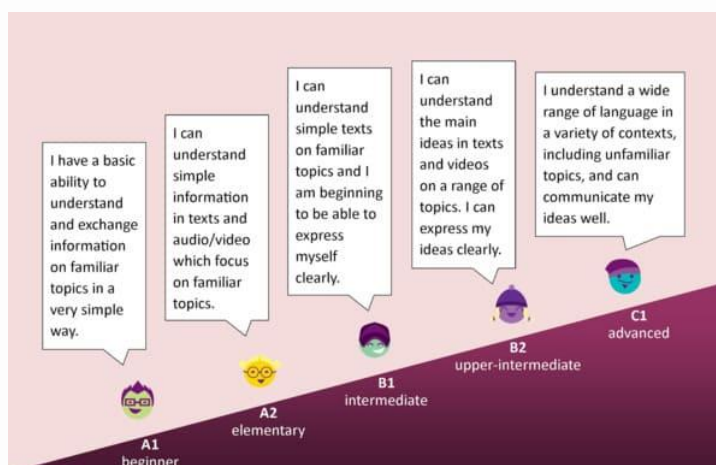
3.2.1. Improve English vocabulary

If you want to hear English well, you have to remember a lot of vocabulary. You can learn English vocabulary every day by choosing a group of vocabulary to learn, using images and sounds to help you remember, using a small notebook to record words and phrases, learning related vocabulary and reviewing new words on a regular basis.

3.2.1.1. Some suggestions on how to learn vocabulary effectively

✓ *Learn at the right level!*

If you encounter any new words you list on your list of words to learn innocently, you will not be able to remember anything but also mess up your memory, because all those words are unlikely to meet in your daily life. Therefore, when you first start learning, the way to learn English vocabulary quickly and effectively is that you should learn the vocabulary in group A1 – A2 (the most basic level for beginners).



Don't force yourself to memorize. Instead, make that vocabulary a familiar and obvious thing, being able to see it every day without trying. Try collecting vocabulary words according to topics you like such as movies, music, newspapers, fashion, or collect vocabulary from life activities, daily needs.

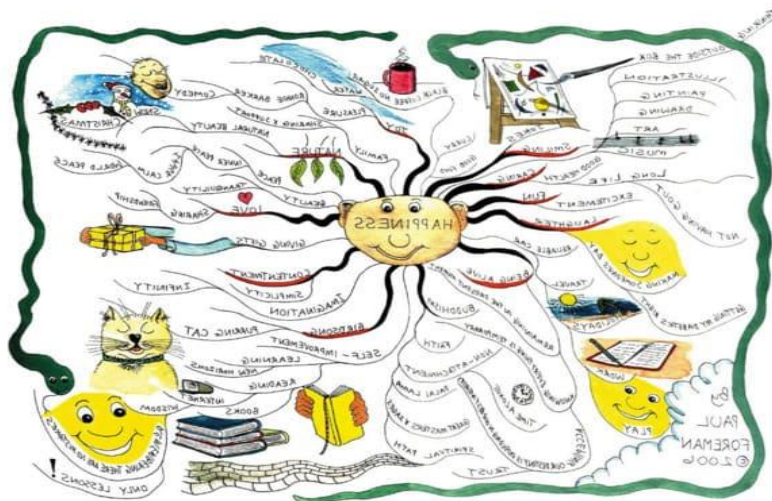
✓ ***Read books, listen to music, and watch English movies regularly!***

Reading books and watching videos in English has always been rated as the longest-lasting way to learn English vocabulary and without much pressure.

However, to get the best results from this way of learning, you need to pay attention to a few small things: Start with simple, everyday topics in daily life with words and grammar, simple sentence structure, easy to remember. Don't rush to follow advice like reading any book, watching any type of video you like. Because unless your English level is good enough, these things will only make you more pressured and depressed when learning vocabulary.

✓ ***Use mind maps when learning!***

One of the easiest and most applied ways to learn English vocabulary in recent times is to use mind maps. For those of you who like to draw, want to use visual images or funny symbols for less boring lessons, this method is extremely suitable. Using a mind map will make learning English vocabulary more interesting. The way to do it is also quite simple, you can refer to it here: Put the topic you want to learn as the center. Highlight it by writing the loudest text or using eye-catching colors. Next, start dividing the sub-branches that are in the big topic: capitalized, bolded to distinguish it from the big topic. Finally, split the smaller branches from the sub-branches: lowercase, small font size.



With this way of learning, you can not only increase your ability to memorize synonyms or learn phrases more easily. Establishing relationships between sub-and primary topics will help you think more logically, so that reviewing is also more convenient.

Nevertheless. If you choose a mind map, you should also note:

- Avoid splitting through many small branches at the same time. Because embracing too much knowledge will cause the brain's memory to stagnate. It is best to start with only 2-3 branches, then each day will gradually expand and add more.
- Do not use too many colors because it will confuse the map.
- Use keywords or phrases instead of long sentences.

3.2.1.2. Some suggested apps for learning vocabulary

3.2.1.2.1. *FourEnglish*

FourEnglish is one of the famous free English learning apps. 4English integrates all 3 skills: reading, listening and vocabulary learning. However, the most prominent function of 4English is vocabulary. Users learn vocabulary on 4English through the articles of more than 30 famous newspapers such as BBC News, VOA, Express. The articles on this free English learning software are compiled from many fields. From the field of Politics, Society, Culture, all over the world are constantly updated by 4English.

In addition, 4English has a treasure trove of podcast, audio and video with subtitles up to more than 1 million. It is too large a number for them to learn to listen and speak with peace of mind.

3.2.1.2.2. *Magoosh - Vocabulary Builder*

Magoosh is an English vocabulary learning application that is no stranger to everyone. It is one of the English learning apps that is free of vocabulary. With his massive vocabulary treasure, *Magoosh* allocates to all levels from low to high, from extremely easy to extremely difficult. Each level will have lessons according to the topic and a fixed amount of vocabulary to learn. And when they complete 1 level, they can open the next level. Very interesting, isn't it?

3.2.1.2.3. Duolingo

Duolingo is a very popular English learning app. The application is designed for users to get acquainted with English from easy to difficult. It teaches you vocabulary related to common everyday topics such as study, science, school. Besides, you can also do exercises to help strengthen your ability to memorize the vocabulary you have learned.

3.2.2. Practice listening through podcasts

Podcasts are considered modern radio programs, which can search, store and download audio files in mp3 format. The content of the podcast is usually a discussion revolving around life issues.

Today, with a smartphone installed with a podcast app and headphones, learners can practice listening to English anywhere, anytime.

Practicing listening to English podcasts will help learners develop listening skills, improve pronunciation, expand vocabulary, distinguish English accents (e.g., American English, British English), practice reading skills (if you listen to podcasts with subtitles). This is really a great English practice tool outside of the traditional foreign language class.

As a beginner, you should listen to podcasts with subtitles or English recordings. This helps you quickly find new words or phrases in the correct context and understand sentence structure or grammar rules. After listening to the recording once or twice, practice listening to the podcast again without the recording to develop your listening skills and help you grasp the way native speakers speak.

There are so many English learning podcasts broken down from easy to difficult that you can't listen to one podcast at a time. If you maintain the habit of listening to and learning from podcasts, your listening ability will improve significantly over time. Let's start with podcasts dedicated to learning English to build a foundation of vocabulary, grammar, and listening. After the review period, if you feel that your listening comprehension skills have improved, you can choose podcasts for native speakers such as podcasts about news, science, culture, and history.

3.2.2.1. *ESL Podcasts – Beginner English Podcasts.*

Podcasts for those who want to learn or improve their English listening. In this Podcasts, slow speaking speed, quality audio and content written by professors of languages, so it's easy for beginners to understand. So, it's no surprise that this is considered the top listening training Podcasts. Furthermore, this Podcasts has over 1,800 episodes.

3.2.2.2. *Voice of America (VOA) – Beginner English Podcasts.*

Podcasts cover various topics, including health and lifestyle, science, technology, culture, and news, which can be particularly helpful for chatting to friends in English. All Podcasts come with a transcript to help students follow along.

The highlight of this Podcasts is that it includes many different types of listening programs that are repeated at a slower rate than regular English. Therefore, this is a very suitable source of data for those who are just starting to practice listening.

Furthermore, VOA's topics are interesting, contemporary, and responsive to the interests of each audience. However, as the name implies, the programs often focus on issues related to the US, so if students choose to follow the British-American accent then the Podcasts are definitely for them.

3.2.2.3. *Podcasts in English – Beginner English Podcasts*

Podcasts in English is a series of lessons on learning English with programs for beginners, intermediate and advanced levels. There are also podcasts for those who need to use English in business. The short lessons are conducted in English, and it is a conversation between two English speakers to each other. The types of podcasts here cover a wide range of topics that talk about nearly every aspect of life. Some of the topics you might hear about are the Winter Olympics, equestrian experiences, and Facebook. These short, difficult podcasts are provided with additional dialogue and accompanying vocabulary exercises – you'll learn a lot from it.

3.2.2.4. FluentU – Beginner English Podcasts

FluentU is a basic English listening app that you cannot ignore. The app was developed by 1 of the world's largest English learning communities. The lessons will be music videos, movies, or news that you can choose for yourself. FluentU's video lessons are all subtitled and explain each vocabulary in detail to ensure you can understand the content. Whether you're at a beginner level or losing your roots, you won't have a problem encountering new words in your listening.

3.2.3. Listen to English every day to create a continuous English learning environment

Maintaining continuous and regular listening is a prerequisite for mastering English. You need to accumulate long and steadily to be able to communicate effectively. Listening time per day may be small but necessarily listening. Do not give up any day, if you give up a day, you will give up two days, get 1 week and quit. Effective English listening practices can only be promoted if you work hard and maintain your habits. This repetitive process will help you remember more deeply for creating an English learning environment every day. New vocabulary words will be constantly recognized by the brain and used not only when listening but also when communicating and writing in English.

To make listening to English a daily habit, you need to try to train yourself and create the easiest conditions to be able to listen to English. You can save the listening material in your phone, music player or find it right on the TV. Every day pops up to listen, learn and remember them.

So, in short, to listen to English effectively, you need to effectively coordinate the above ways. When constantly listening, try to understand the meaning, note words, write words, read words... You will remember more and more vocabulary. Not only that, English listening methods also help you remember for a long time and communicate more easily.

3.2.4. Listen to the right level material accompanied by the correct grammar

Listening a lot but sounding too difficult with in-depth topics, you are also easily discouraged. Therefore, you need to choose the listening material after listening to everything you like for a while. When listening to content, an effective method to practice listening to English is to understand 80% of the content. Choose radio shows, movies, TV shows, not too difficult or too easy. Finding listening content that matches your level at 80% is best.

To easily find the right listening content, you need to know where your level is. The most common standard for assessing English is the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). According to this framework, each person's English level will be tested and divided into 6 levels from low to high: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2. In TOEIC, TOEFL, IELTS exams are studied to best assess candidates' English ability. You can find practice tests online; You can try and score points for yourself.

Once you know your level, you'll find your listening content. Next, you need to learn more correct grammar when listening. The process of learning grammar through listening materials will help you remember lessons faster and easier to learn.

3.2.5. Experiment with different accents

You might have trouble understanding some English accents the first few times you listen to them.

This is normal! Even native English speakers can have trouble understanding different English accents. But all English accents are beautiful, and you can understand them all if you just keep on listening.

Remember that Practice makes perfect. If you think a specific English accent is more difficult to understand for you, all you have to do is keep on practicing your listening skills with audio from that accent...

3.2.6. Use different audio speeds

Look for 1 video in any platform or program that allows you to change the speed of the audio/video. The first time you watch it, do it at normal speed. You may miss the information, but it happens to all of us. On the second

listen, select a speed of 0.75. This will play the same video at 75% speed. It will happen more slowly, and you will be able to understand more words or expressions than the first time. You can even go slower if you want, but you should not choose less than 60% otherwise the voice will be distorted, and the words will probably no longer be words but a string of sounds. When you think you're up for the challenge, do the opposite. Choose 1.25 or even 1.5 and watch videos at a faster speed. Challenge yourself and get up to speed as your listening skills get better. Do this regularly every day and you will notice your improvement very clearly.

3.2.7. Steps to learning listening English effectively

Step 1: Listen to the entire conversation

This is the first step you need to take when listening to English. Let's try to see what is the general theme of the dialogue, how many characters are involved, what is the main content of the dialogue? You should not stop each sentence, but let the tape run from beginning to end. If you have not grasped the core ideas, you can listen to them over and over again. If the content is too difficult then you can choose the easier level so as not to discourage your will to learn.

Step 2: Take notes

Do not just listen, but you should prepare a memory pad or notebook to record the words and sentences that you hear. However, do not write them all down, but only "note" the main ideas. Pay attention not to listen to each sentence, but to listen continuously.

Step 3: Copy spelling

This is a step for you to double-check your grammar and vocabulary. When transcribing spelling, you should stop at each paragraph to record exactly what the speaker wants to convey. Phrases with "s" or "ed", try to listen carefully. Words that can't be heard, you can skip to write down the next words until the end of the conversation! The spelling step will help you in finding errors in your pronunciation and grammar very effectively. Often, prepositions are often skimmed or concatenated, which will be difficult to hear. Therefore, copying will help you better understand the grammar of the speech.

Step 4: Listen and check back

This step is just as important as the steps above. It makes it possible to compare your "notes" with the standard content for any errors. At the same time, you'll also know why you can't hear that line or that vocabulary. Most especially, you can recognize your weaknesses when listening to English. It can be due to poor vocabulary, poor grammar, or non-standard pronunciation. From there, you can easily find a more suitable learning method to improve your English.

PART III: CONCLUSION

1. Summary

For first-year English majors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology, their listening skill is not good and they face many difficulties. Therefore, this study wants to show difficulties and suggested solutions to learn listening. This study uses survey questionnaires as the main data collection tool, the researcher also uses informal interviews as an additional tool to make this study more reliable and valid.

As the result, the students are also aware of the importance and consciously learning listening skill. The study has also shown that the main problems that make it difficult for students to learn to listen are different accents in the listening lesson (28/40), not understanding the content of the listening lesson (19/40) leading to students not understanding a lot of information in a short time (29/40) and the biggest problem of students is the vocabulary limit (34/40). Besides, the students also have listening methods and the most effective is watching movies (40%). In addition, there are some other methods but not very effective.

So that, after this research paper is finished, I would like to provide some suggestions to support the English majors who are learning listening English with the hope that this research paper will contribute some usefulness to learning listening English.

In summary, this research is my sincere thanks to all of my beloved teachers in Foreign Languages Department at Hai Phong Management and Technology University and what the researcher wants is to help the first year English majors improve their listening skill to make it easier for them to have better communication in the future.

2. Limitations & Suggestions for further study

This study also has certain limitations. The first is that the research subjects are limited to first-year students specializing in English of Hai Phong University of Management and Technology. Secondly, the researcher only focuses the difficulty of students learning listening skills and coming up with options that the researcher thinks are suitable for them. Moreover, for further

studies, to obtain better results, the researcher should invite more participants and methods of data collection. Along with the use of survey questionnaires and informal interviews, observation and experimental research are also necessary to obtain more convincing conclusions. Opinions and comments about this study can help researchers recognize shortcomings so that they can do better research. I hope this research topic can help and attract participation in the foreign language department to be able to support English communication more effectively.

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SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS (ENGLISH VERSION)

Your comments are important information to complete with my research titled "A Study on Difficulties and Solutions in Listening Skills of the First Year English Majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology University". Please choose the answer by circling the letter next to your choice, ticking off the items in a checklist or expressing your idea in the blanks. Thank you for your participating in our survey!

Question 1: How long have you studied English?

- A. 0- 5 years
- B. 5- 7 years
- C. More than 7 years

Question 2: In your opinion, listening skill is difficult for students, isn't it?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. May be

Question 3: What do you think about the importance of English listening skill?

- A. Very important
- B. Important
- C. Normal
- D. Not important

Question 4: Which difficulties have you faced when you listen to English?

- A. The sound quality from radio is not good
- B. Limited vocabulary
- C. The inability to concentrate
- D. Limited cultural and social knowledge
- E. Different accents
- F. idioms and slangs

- G. Difficult topics
- H. Other factors (noise, poor equipment.)

Question 5: How long do you often spend on listening at home everyday?

- A. Under 1 hour
- B. 1 hour- 2 hours
- C. 2 hours- 3 hours
- D. 3-4 hours
- E. More than 4 hours

Question 6: How do you often study listening?

- A. Listen to English songs
- B. Watch movies
- C. Listen to radio
- D. Listen to podcasts
- E. Listens to foreigners
- F. Others

Question 7: What is your favorite way of learning listening?

- A. Listen to English songs
- B. Watch movies
- C. Listen to radio
- D. Listen to podcasts
- E. Listens to foreigners
- F. Others

Question 8: Which method do you find effective ?

- A. Listen to English songs
- B. Watch movies
- C. Listen to radio
- D. Listen to podcasts
- E. Listen to foreigners
- F. Others.....

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS (VIETNAMESE VERSION)

CÂU HỎI KHẢO SÁT

Ý kiến của bạn là thông tin quan trọng để hoàn thành với nghiên cứu của tôi có tiêu đề "Nghiên cứu về những khó khăn và giải pháp trong kỹ năng nghe của năm thứ nhất chuyên ngành tiếng Anh tại Trường Đại học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng". Vui lòng chọn câu trả lời bằng cách khoanh tròn chữ cái bên cạnh lựa chọn của bạn, đánh dấu vào các mục trong danh sách kiểm tra hoặc thể hiện ý tưởng của bạn trong chỗ trống. Cảm ơn bạn đã tham gia vào cuộc khảo sát của chúng tôi!

Câu hỏi 1: Bạn đã học tiếng Anh được bao lâu rồi?

- A. 5 năm
- B. 5- 7 năm
- C. Hơn 7 năm

Câu hỏi 2: Theo bạn, kỹ năng nghe rất khó đối với học sinh, phải không?

- A. Có
- B. Không
- C. Có thể

Câu hỏi 3: Bạn nghĩ gì về tầm quan trọng của kỹ năng nghe tiếng Anh?

- A. Rất quan trọng
- B. Quan trọng
- C. Bình thường
- D. Không quan trọng

Câu hỏi 4: Bạn đã gặp phải những khó khăn nào khi nghe tiếng Anh?

- A. Chất lượng âm thanh từ radio không tốt
- B. Vốn từ vựng hạn chế
- C. Không có khả năng tập trung
- D. Kiến thức văn hóa và xã hội hạn chế
- E. Các giọng điệu khác nhau

- F. Thành ngữ và tiếng lóng
- G. Chủ đề khó
- H. Các yếu tố khác (tiếng ồn, thiết bị kém.)

Câu hỏi 5: Bạn thường dành bao lâu để nghe ở nhà hàng ngày?

- A. Dưới 1 giờ
- B. 1 giờ - 2 giờ
- C. 2 giờ - 3 giờ
- D. 3-4 giờ
- E. Hơn 4 giờ

Câu hỏi 6: Bạn thường học nghe như thế nào?

- A. Nghe các bài hát tiếng Anh
- B. Xem phim
- C. Nghe radio
- D. Nghe podcast
- E. Lắng nghe người nước ngoài
- F. Khác.....

Câu hỏi 7: Cách học nghe yêu thích của bạn là gì?

- A. Nghe các bài hát tiếng Anh
- B. Xem phim
- C. Nghe radio
- D. Nghe podcast
- E. Lắng nghe người nước ngoài
- F. Khác.....

Câu hỏi 8: Các phương pháp mà bạn thấy hiệu quả là gì?

- A. Nghe các bài hát tiếng Anh
- B. Xem phim
- C. Nghe radio
- D. Nghe podcast
- E. Lắng nghe người nước ngoài
- F. Khác.....