

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



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KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH : NGÔN NGỮ ANH

Sinh viên : Nguyễn Thị Thùy Linh

Giảng viên hướng dẫn: Ths. Nguyễn Thị Thu Huyền

HẢI PHÒNG 07- 2020

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

**A STUDY ON THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BY THE
FIRST-YEAR ENGLISH MAJORS AT HAIPHONG
MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY
AND STRATERGIES TO HELP FOR THEIR SELF-
IMPROVEMENT IN LISTENING SKILL**

**KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY
NGÀNH: NGÔN NGỮ ANH**

**Sinh viên : Nguyễn Thị Thùy Linh
Giảng viên hướng dẫn: Ths.Nguyễn Thị Thu Huyền**

HẢI PHÒNG 07 – 2020

NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

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Tên đề tài: A study on the difficulties faced by the first-year English majors at HaiPhong Management and Technology University and strategies to help for their self-improvement in listening skill

NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI

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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3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp

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CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên : Nguyễn Thị Thu Huyền

Học hàm, học vị : Thạc sĩ

Cơ quan công tác : Trường Đại học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng

Nội dung hướng dẫn: A study on the difficulties faced by the first-year English majors at HaiPhong Management and Technology University and strategies to help for their self-improvement in listening skill

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày 03 tháng 08 năm 2020

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Sinh viên

Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Giảng viên hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày 01 tháng 07 năm 2020

HIỆU TRƯỞNG

TS. Nguyễn Tiến Thanh

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
Độc lập - Tự do - Hạnh phúc

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIÁNG VIÊN HƯỚNG DẪN TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên giảng viên:

Đơn vị công tác:

Họ và tên sinh viên: Chuyên ngành:

Nội dung hướng dẫn:

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

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2. Đánh giá chất lượng của đề án/khóa luận (so với nội dung yêu cầu đã đề ra trong nhiệm vụ Đ.T. T.N trên các mặt lý luận, thực tiễn, tính toán số liệu...)

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viên hướng dẫn tốt nghiệp

Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

Giảng viên hướng dẫn

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
Độc lập - Tự do - Hạnh phúc

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIÁO VIÊN CHẤM PHẢN BIỆN

Họ và tên giảng viên:

Đơn vị công tác:

Họ và tên sinh viên: Chuyên ngành:

Đề tài tốt nghiệp:

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1. Phần nhận xét của giáo viên chấm phản biện

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2. Những mặt còn hạn chế

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viên chấm phản biện

Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm phản biện

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

Giảng viên chấm phản biện

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

QC20-B19

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the study:

Listening is receiving language through the ears. Listening involves identifying the sounds of speech and processing them into words and sentences. When we listen, we use our ears to receive individual sounds (letters, stress, rhythm and pauses) and we use our brain to convert these into messages that mean something to us. Listening in any language requires focus and attention. It is a skill that some people need to work at harder than others. People who have difficulty concentrating are typically poor listeners. Listening in a second language requires even greater focus.

As a researcher, I would like to present “The difficulties faced by the first-year English majors at Haiphong Management and Technology University and strategies to help for their self- improvement in listening skill” for several reasons.

First of all, listening is a vital skill for language learning. Research shows that when we communicate, we spend around 40-50% of our time listening, 25-30% speaking, 11-16% reading and only 9% writing (although that last one might have changed in recent years due to the rise in social media). Moreover, in learning a language, listening is a useful means of providing students with comprehensible input, which is an essential component of the whole language learning process. Therefore, I would like to do this research to help students pay more attention to listening skill.

Secondly, learning listening skill is the most difficult in learning a foreign language. Listening, like reading, is a receptive skill but it is often the most daunting for students. When reading, a reader usually has more opportunities to refer back to the text to clarify understanding, which a listener can not do in most listening contexts such as TV programs, meetings, discussion, lectures or conversations. That is the reason I would like to put out some suggestion so as to help teachers motivate their students to study listening skill more excited and better.

After studying at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Haiphong Management and Technology University, for nearly four years, I realize that the first-year students of English major still have many difficulties in their listening skill. In the hope of finding out the solutions learning listening , a study : “The difficulties faced by the first-year English majors at Haiphong Management and Technology University and strategies to help for their self- improvement in listening skill” has been conducted because of all above mentioned reason.

2. The aims of the study

The study is done with the following aims:

- Firstly, the study is carried out in order to survey the real state of learning English listening skill in Haiphong Management and Technology University so that I can work out the solutions.
- Secondly, most students find it difficult to learn listening skill so I would like to find out the common difficulties encountered by the 1st year English majors when they study English listening skill at Haiphong Management and Technology University.
- Finally, due to such difficulties, many students are not interested in learning and practicing this skill in class, therefore the study would like to suggest some possible solutions to help for their self- improvement in listening skill. These solutions also aim to help the students catch up with the speed of a normal conversation in the real life so that they can improve their communication competence.

3. Research questions

1. What are the real situations of learning English listening skill for the first- year students in Faculty of Foreign Languages at Haiphong Management and Technology University ?
2. What are the difficulties of listening to English at Haiphong Management and Technology University ?
3. What are solutions to help for their self- improvement in listening skill for the first-year students in Faculty of Foreign Languages at Haiphong Management and Technology University ?

4. The method of the study:

4.1 Research methodology

The researcher used Quantitative and Qualitative method for the study. The quantitative method is questionnaire-based survey of 20 the first year English-major students at HaiPhong Management and Technology University. The qualitative method is observations and a semi-structured interview for students used to enrich the quantitative data. Interview process was held to know deeply about the students' difficulties. Then, all of the result questionnaire and interview were analyzed.

4.2 Survey questionnaires

In terms of the methods, the questionnaire is designed as a mean for researcher to collect data. Questionnaires are more convenient, take less time, cheap and easy for students to answer. Moreover, questionnaires are considered more reliable way since they are anonymous and this encourages greater honesty. Questionnaires included closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaire is given to students of the first-year students of foreign languages department with the hope to find out their attitudes towards their listening skill and their difficulties in listening to English as well as their expectations to their teachers. As they are in their first academic year, they often experience such problems. It is stage that students should be equipped with variety of techniques right from their early listening. With appropriate strategies, they will have built up their listening skill by the time.

After gathering all the results of questionnaire with answers, the method of analyzing data is applied. Basing on the statistic numbers, I analyze and find out the situation, difficulties and then causes in order to suggest reasonable and effective solutions for the problem.

4.3 Population and sample

With the aim of completing the research, the researcher will need a group of participants called the population of the study. In this study, freshmen of Foreign Languages Department at Haiphong Management and Technology University will be the population. The total is 20 students in academic year 2019 – 2020. The research took all 20 students at class NA2301 as the sample of the research.

A large numbers of them have learnt English for 7 years (4 years at secondary school and 3 years at high school). However, their English backgrounds are quite similar because of the influence of curriculum of English for high schools students in the past, students did not have many chances to practice English skills. Thus, when entering Haiphong Management and Technology University, their English levels were limited and they have to face up with many difficulties in studying. They have recognized their difficulties, needs, achievement related to listening activities.

5. The organization of the study

The study includes 3 Parts mainly organize as follows:

Part I: Introduction

Part II: Development

Chapter 1: Theoretical basis of the study

- Definition of listening comprehension
- The significance of listening
- The types of listening
- Factors make listening comprehension difficult

Chapter 2: Data analysis and discussion an investigation into the first-year students of foreign languages department difficulties in listening comprehension

Chapter 3: Recommendations to strategies to help for their self-improvement in listening skill

Part III: Conclusion

PART II: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE STUDY

This chapter is named Theoretical basis of the study in which the researcher will provide the foundation of knowledge about listening skill so that the readers have an overview of the topic of the study. It includes the definition, the significance and types of listening, factors make listening difficult.

1. Definition of listening

Listening has been defined by many researchers. Howatt and Dakin (1974) defined listening as the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This process involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, the speaker's grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously. Moreover, Chastain (1971) said that listening is the ability to understand native speech at normal speed. According to Postovsky (1975), listening differs in meaning from sound discrimination to aural comprehension. Goss (1982) defined listening as a process of understanding what is heard and organizing it into lexical elements to which meaning can be allocated. Besides, Bowen et al. (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. In short, listening has been recast as an activity central to the second language (L2) acquisition process (Krashen, 1985; Dunkel, 1993; Rost, 2002), and a skill integral to overall communicative competence (Savignon, 1991; Brown, 1994). According to Krashen (1994), listening is now treated as a much more complex activity and one that is the cornerstone of language acquisition.

In conclusion, listening is a process of identifying and understanding what the speakers say, which includes understanding a speaker's pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. Listeners have to know how to conduct and do the process under the circumstance in an active way, not make listening viewed as a passive process.

2. Definition of listening comprehension

Listening comprehension is regarded as a complex, interactive process in which listeners are involved in a dynamic construction of meaning. Listeners understand the oral input from sound discrimination, prior knowledge of vocabulary, grammatical structures, stress and intonation, as well as other use linguistic, paralinguistic, or even non-linguistic clues in contextual utterance (Rost, 2002).

The increased importance of listening comprehension in language learning may be attributed largely to the development of communicative language teaching approach, which attempts to prepare learners to transfer their classroom skills to real-life context, over the past three decades (Asher, 1977; Krashen, 1982; Omaggio Hadley, 2001; Vande Berg, 1993). There has been a shift from nonteaching listening comprehension in the audio-lingual period to teaching listening comprehension in a strategy-based approach (Mendelsohn, 1998). Before World War II, the teaching of reading was given the most attention while that of listening comprehension was the most infertile and the least understood language skill (Winitz, 1981). Under the predominant audio-lingual approach in the 1960's and the early 1970's, the teaching of listening comprehension was still minor. With the increasing interest towards communicative language teaching approach, several researches revealed the importance of listening comprehension (Brown & Yule, 1983; Faerch & Kasper, 1986; Feyten, 1991; Long, 1985). Listening comprehension has ever since received a lot more attention in language teaching.

On the one hand, technological advances and the growing awareness of the importance of listening in the world have made listening even more important in the communication process (Mendelsohn, 1998). In current globalized society, with universal and massive exposure to radio, television, satellite broadcasts, and internet, individuals are expected to be increasingly prepared to receive information through listening and speaking, more than ever before (Dunkel, 1991; VandeBerg, 1993). On the other hand, some scholars (Nord, 1981; Winitz, 1981) considered proficiency in listening comprehension as a necessary condition for acquiring production language skills, specifically speaking and writing. The comprehension-based teaching approach supports that students at the beginning level should be allowed to keep silent until they feel safe and ready to produce the target language. Thus, it can be reasonably concluded that students are probably engaged in listening before they are able to speak and write in the target language, which means that second language instruction at a beginning level should focus on developing learners' listening comprehension ability. Still, other scholars (Dunkel, 1991; Long, 1985; Rost, 1990; Vogely, 1999) stressed

that listening is important because it provides input as the raw material for learners to process in language learning. Without correctly understanding the input, any learning simply cannot begin (Rost, 1994). Furthermore, the failure of listening comprehension of the target language is an impetus, not merely an obstacle, to language learning as well as to communication interaction (Rost, 1994).

The recognition of the importance of listening comprehension has resulted in an increased number of listening activities in students' textbooks and even in comprehension-based methodology texts designed specifically for teaching listening (Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Rost, 1990; Underwood, 1989; Ur, 1984). Several studies have found that through the use of effective pre-listening activities, instructors can increase students' understanding of the listening passages, which in turn develops their listening proficiency and contributes to their mastery of the target language (Herron, 1994; Richards, 1983; Rubin, 1994; Teichert, 1996; Vande Berg, 1993).

3. Significance of listening

Listening has an important place in learning as it is one of the four major skills in language acquisition. Even though the other skills such as reading, speaking and writing are essential to develop language proficiency, listening contributes primarily for language expertise. Listening awakens awareness of the language as it is a receptive skill that first develops in a human being. Learning to listen to the target language improves language ability. The sound, rhythm, intonation, and stress of the language can only be perfectly adapted through listening. To understand the nuances in a particular language, one must be able to listen. As we get to understand spoken language by listening it is easier to improve the other skills and gain confidence. Other than being the primary form of communication, listening helps the language learner to understand the beauty of the language. Especially in terms of communicative language teaching it is said that the basis for communicative competence is listening as it provides the aural input and enables learners to interact in spoken communication and hence language learning largely depends on listening. Thus listening forms the concrete basis for the complete language proficiency.

4. Types of listening

Listening skills including of two main types are casual and focused listening going together, up to the aim of listening (Nguyen Thi Van Lam and Ngo Dinh Phuong, 2006).

4.1 Casual listening

Casual listening – The term says it all, Listening without showing much attention. However actual attention may vary a lot from person to person. Its importance lies in the fact that even though we are not listening carefully, our subconscious is alert to it. Everything that we hear is being observed by the brain and indirectly it enhances our memory to the point that we can recall certain types of accent which were being spoken and even more.

4.2 Focused listening

Focused listening is intentional and systematic process. The listener gives his full attention and concentration on what the speaker is saying to get information, knowledge and ideas. This type of listening is also considered as “ Intensive Listening”.

5. Factors make listening difficult.

It seems that, for a long time, the skill of listening didn't receive adequate acknowledgement as a skill in its own right, but rather was long “regarded as a passive skill, [...] an ability that would develop without assistance” (Osada 2004:53). Such lack of regard for developing listening skills may seem quite absurd when according to Burley-Allen (in Flowerdew and Miller 2005:22-23) more than forty percent of our daily communication time is spent on listening, with thirty-five percent being dedicated to speaking, sixteen percent devoted to reading and only nine percent of our daily communication being occupied by writing. It was only really at the turn of the 1970s that listening comprehension began to be explored (Osada 2004:53), conducting to a shift in listening skills being viewed as a passive skill to being viewed as elements which students should actively acquire. However, with this newly found accreditation having only been proportioned very late on in comparison to the other three standardised language skills (reading, writing and speaking), listening skills have been rendered the “least researched of all four language skills” (Vandergrift 2007:291). This lack of research means that listening “remains one of the least understood processes” (Osada 2004:53), making the effective teaching of these skills a somewhat grey area, subjecting it to often being viewed as a “somewhat neglected and poorly taught aspect of English” (Osada 2004:57). Furthermore, the very complex nature of

the activity of listening also contributes to the teaching of such skills being a rather challenging affair indeed.

5.1 Factors relating to listener

5.1.1 Lacking necessary listening skills

Lacking necessary listening skills is a critical factor affecting the students' listening comprehension. Because of the ignorance of the importance of listening teaching, the students have less listening practice for their foreign language learning, and the teaching purposes of listening class and most listening material which is selected in the class focus on checking the students' ability, instead of teaching necessary listening skills. So the teaching models of most listening class confine to "listening and checking answers".

5.1.2 Attitude factor

Everyone will tend to listen carefully to topics or topics that he can agree with or that interest him. Basically, human life has two main attitudes about everything, namely the attitude of acceptance and attitude of rejection. People will be receptive to things that are interesting and beneficial to him, but to be resistant to things that are not interesting and not favorable to him.

5.1.3 Hearing habits are impaired

Classroom teaching found that students in the process of listening to try to understand each word, each sentence, encounter strange words will stop to think, can not effectively grasp the focus of the material, difficult to adapt to the English listening speed faster. This is not conducive to the cultivation of hearing habits, nor can the content of the material heard to predict, thus affecting the overall understanding of sentences and paragraphs, hindering the improvement of students' hearing level.

Students have problem hearing the past tense of regular verbs ending in voiceless sounds such as, 'work, wish, or watch'. The final /t/ sound of 'ed' sound is usually omitted when taking dictation so that the sentence, "I worked hard yesterday." Comes out as "I work hard yesterday." The students fail to hear the final voiceless 't'. Another problem is liaison (the linking of words in rapid speech). "What are you going to do tonight?" sounds like, /Whadiyagunnadotanight?/ For the untrained ear liaison presents an awesome problem.

5.1.4 Students have problems with different accents

Munro and Derwing (1999) expressed that too many accented speech can lead to an important reduction in comprehension. According to Goh (1999), 66% of learners mentioned a speaker's accent as one of the most significant factors that affect listener comprehension. Unfamiliar accents both native and non-native can cause serious problems in listening comprehension and familiarity with an accent helps learners' listening comprehension. Buck (2001) indicated that when listeners hear an unfamiliar accent such as Indian English for the first time after studying only American English will encounter critical difficulties in listening. This will certainly interrupt the whole listening comprehension process and at the same time an unfamiliar accent makes comprehension process and at the same time an unfamiliar accent makes comprehension impossible for the listeners.

5.2 Factors relating to listening materials and some another factor

5.2.1 Incorrect and insufficient codes

In Vietnam, because of the traditional teaching style which stressed the ability to deal with every kind examinations, both teachers and students have paid much attention to the ability of reading comprehension and lot of written exercises, while ignoring the students ability of listening and speaking, as a result, most students only pay attention to the spelling and superficial meaning of most words, and they don't grasp the exact pronunciations of words. Their poor linguistic competence does not enable them, presumably, to recognize the formatives of the heard utterance, i. e, to dissect out of the wave form of the morphemes, words, and other meaning-bearing elements of the utterance.

5.2.2 Psychological quality and external environmental barriers

In addition to vocabulary and background knowledge barriers, due to the difference between their own language and the difficulty of listening to text, the listener in the process of listening inevitably to experience a variety of psychological pressure or emotional stress, the emergence of inattention and other phenomena. In addition, external noise, recording clarity, sound size, etc. are the external environmental factors that affect students' listening understanding.

5.2.3 Inappropriate listening material

In listening class, teachers tend to choose passages, record news of broadcasts, or prepare lectures. All of them have value, but they are extremely difficult sources for early practice in selective listening. This type of listening exercises does not present

the redundancies , the colloquialisms, the hesitations, the gestures and the facial expressions that are an inseparable part of the spoken language. They emphasize informational content and fail to provide the of the signals used to communicate information and meaning.

5.2.4 The class atmosphere

Sometimes inconvenience of classrooms affects students listening comprehension. In the large classrooms students who are sitting on the back rows may not hear the recording as students sit in front. Students who prefer to stay next to the windows also effected by the noise that come from outside. The size of the classroom also makes difficult for teacher to manage the all class in group activity or to get feedback from students

CHAPTER 2: DATA ANALYSIS DISCUSSION AND RESULT

1. The Analysis of the Data Collected from Questionnaire

1.1 Students' attitude toward learning English in general and listening skill in particular

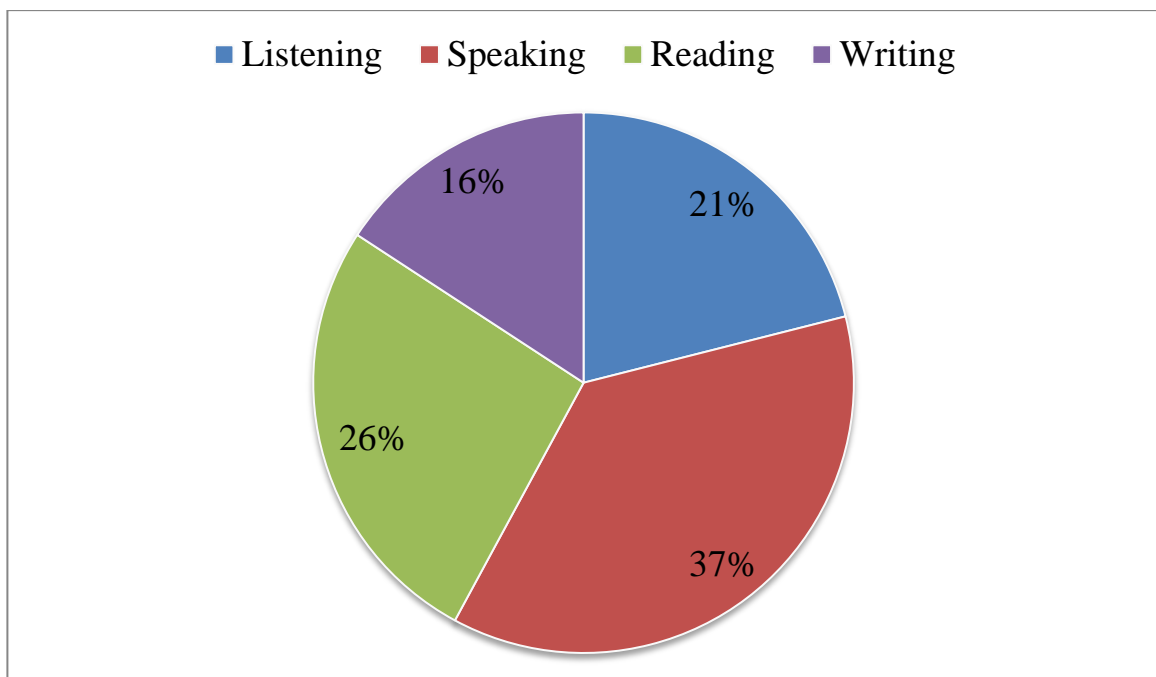


Chart 1: The most favorite skill to students' view

The aim of this question is to research which English skill students like most. The result given in chart 1 reveals the fact that four skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing all receive strong emphasis in language learning but the pie chart above shows the most favorite skill that students are interest in. We can easily see that prominent one among the four skills is speaking with the percentage of 37%. While listening is only occupies 21%. There are many reasons for this figure. First, listening skill is more difficult than other skill, it requires listener must practice usually in a long time and operate with other skill such as pronunciation, knowledge, grammar...Second, Vietnamese teachers' voice makes students not vary interested in. Moreover, when learning listening in class, students often listen to CD disc, MP3 files on computer...in which the native foreigners speak quite fast with so many homophones, accents...so it is very difficult for students to catch the words and understand what the speakers mean. The figures show that the two skills reading and writing account fo 26% and 16% in turn. In general, two in four skills are speaking

and listening playing important role in communication, but there is a far gap in students' ambition between them from chart 1. It needs to find the ways to attract students' interest in listening skill.

1.2 Listening Problems Related to the Content of The Listening Text

The materials became the main source of listening comprehension problems. Some problems found of listening material were unfamiliar words, difficult grammatical structure, limited vocabulary, unclear pronunciation and long spoken text.

1.2.1 Problems pertinent to unfamiliar word

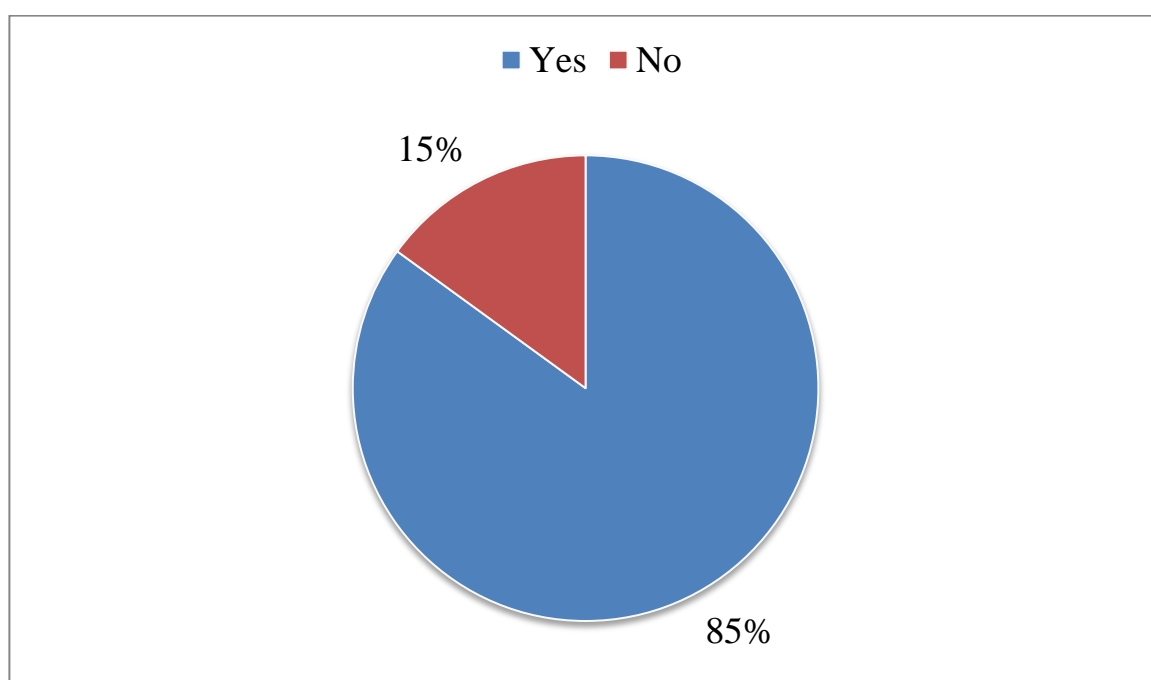


Chart 2: Problems pertinent to unfamiliar word

The first question were asked to know unfamiliar word including jargon and idioms, interfered the learners' listening comprehension. There were 17 from 20 student have responded that unfamiliar words including jargon and idioms interfered with their listening comprehension. It means that vocabulary is a big obstacle to most students in listening comprehension. The students did not know what are the different of jargon and idioms. Their practice in listening too limited because they learning listening only in the laboratory when they learn about listening comprehension. It became their problems pertinent to unfamiliar word.

1.2.2 Problem pertinent to various grammatical structures

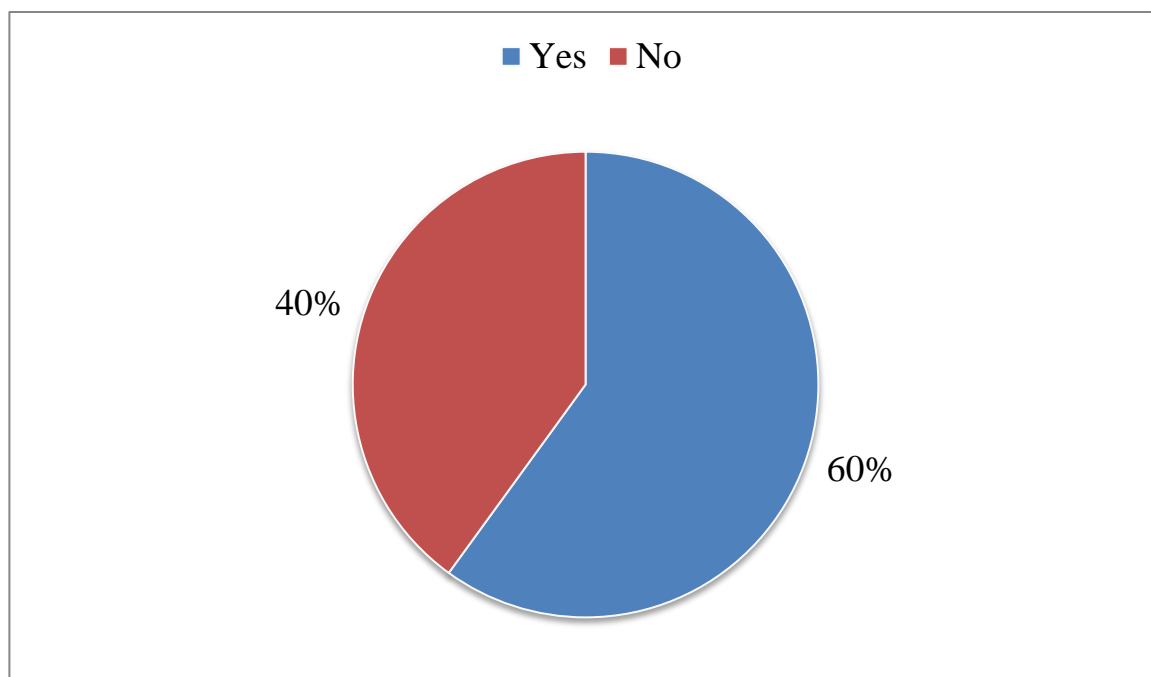


Chart 3: Problem pertinent to various grammatical structures

The second question was asked to know whether complex grammatical structures interfered with the learner's listening comprehension. There are 12 from 20 students have responded that difficult grammatical structures interfered their listening comprehension. The student's answer point out difficult grammatical structures caused much trouble to students. It means that know about the structural component of the text most important in listening comprehension. Some students found difficulties because they poor of grammar so their ability to listen complex sentence too bad. Understand complex sentence spend much time also.

1.2.3 Problem pertinent length of spoken text

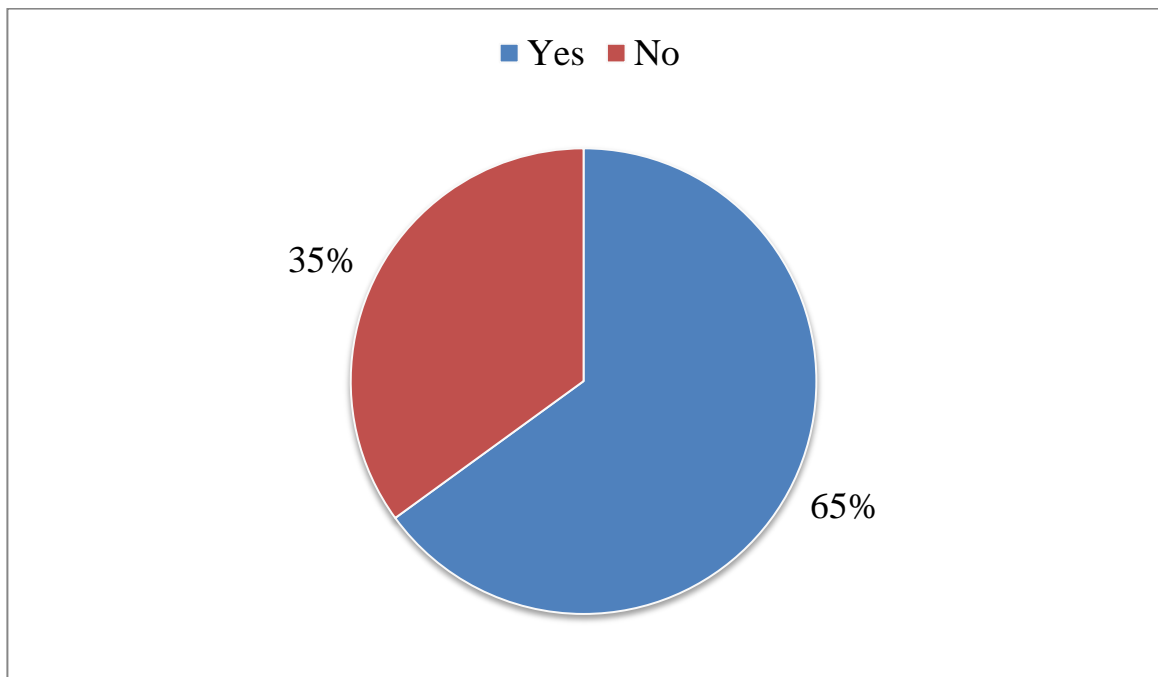


Chart 4: Problem pertinent length of spoken text

Both vocabulary and the difficulty of grammatical structures, the length of the spoken text was one of main reasons why the student difficult to understand most of the talk. Based on the 20 respondents, there were only 7 students answered “No” this question. This result clearly shows that the length spoken text can be one major factor interfere the learners’ listening comprehension because it distracted their concentration. Long spoken text bore the student also. Therefore, it is possible to infer that long spoken text interfere learners’ listening comprehension.

1.2.4 Problem pertinent fatigue of long spoken text

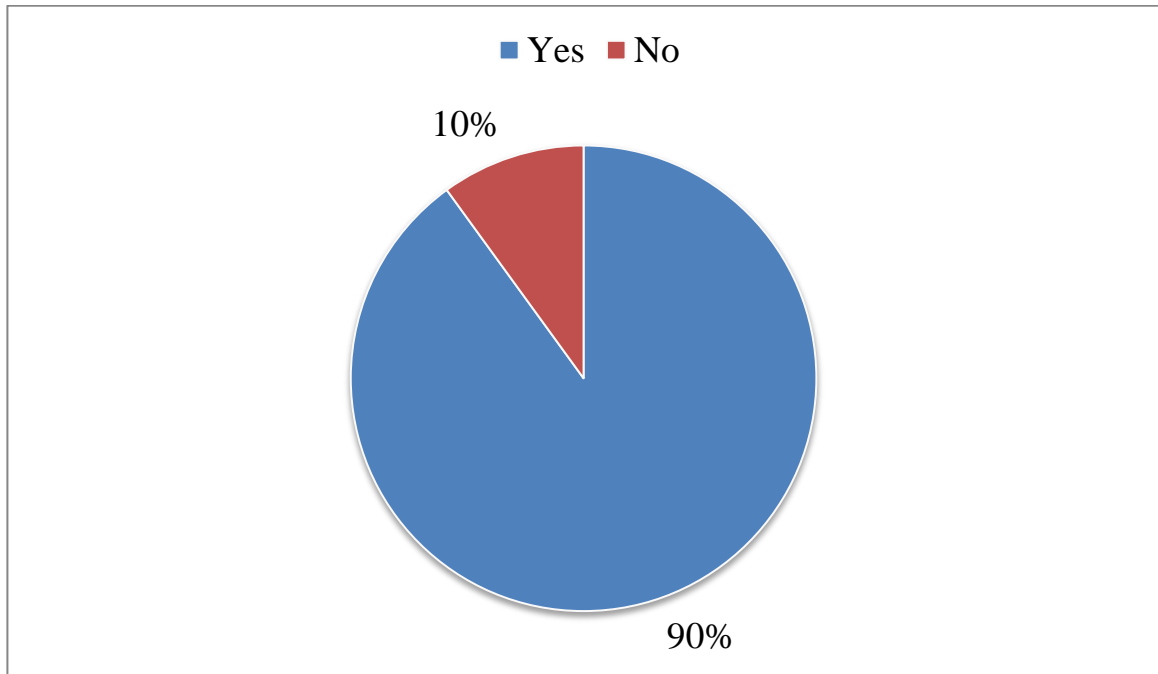


Chart 5: Problem pertinent fatigue of long spoken text

Foreign language learners felt fatigue and distracted when they listen a long spoken text because they tried to understand unfamiliar sounds. The results from 20 respondents had 18 answered “Yes” and 2 students answered “No”. Thus, felt fatigue distract students’ attention from interpret the meaning of the text and made them loss concentration. Listening long spoken text make the listener felt tired because they tried to understand the unfamiliar sounds, lexis, and syntax for long stretches of time. The learners’ might miss the text also when there was a lapse in concentration.

1.2.5 Problem pertinent to unfamiliar topic

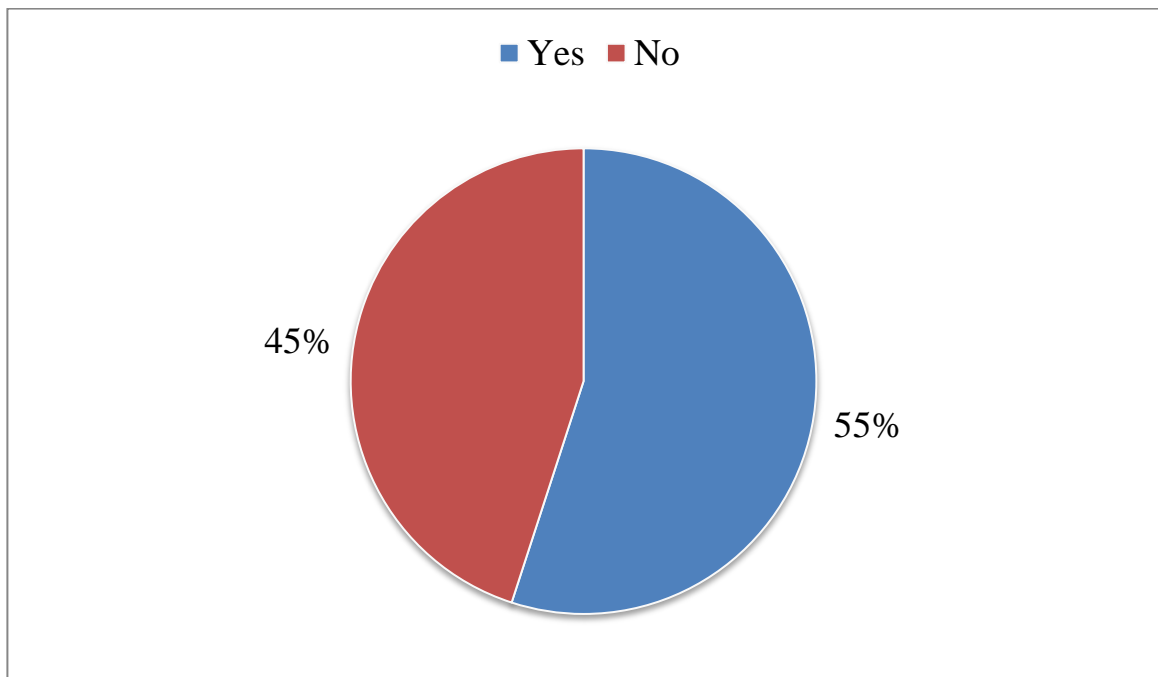


Chart 6: Problem pertinent to unfamiliar topic

From the results of questionnaire, unfamiliar topic is one of students' difficulties in listening comprehension. There were 11 students have responded yes. The students' respond indicated that many students find difficult in listening when the topic is unfamiliar. It means that the student construct their understanding basis on their experience. Sometimes there were dialog and talks about different topic, so many students do not know any of the words related. The problems may affect them because they lack of reading about various topics. They had to increase their lexical knowledge by reading more.

1.2.6 Problem pertinent to the unclear pronunciation

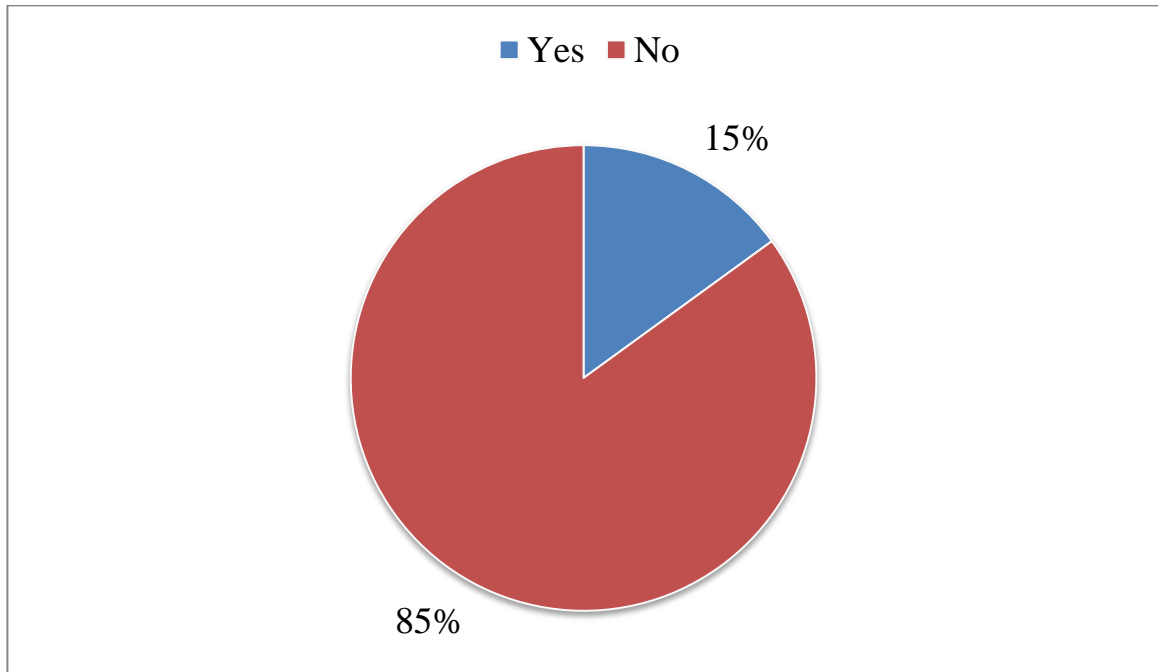


Chart 7: Problem pertinent to the unclear pronunciation

There were 3 students have responded yes that they difficult in listening because unclear pronunciation. They recognized the words in written text but they couldn't understand what they hear. It means that unclear pronunciation of some speaker is also considered as a source of listening problem. Many students' said they were not successful since it was impossible for them to know what the speaker said because they lack of pronunciation ability. They need to practice the words with pronunciation clearly.

1.2.7 Problems pertinent to unknown words

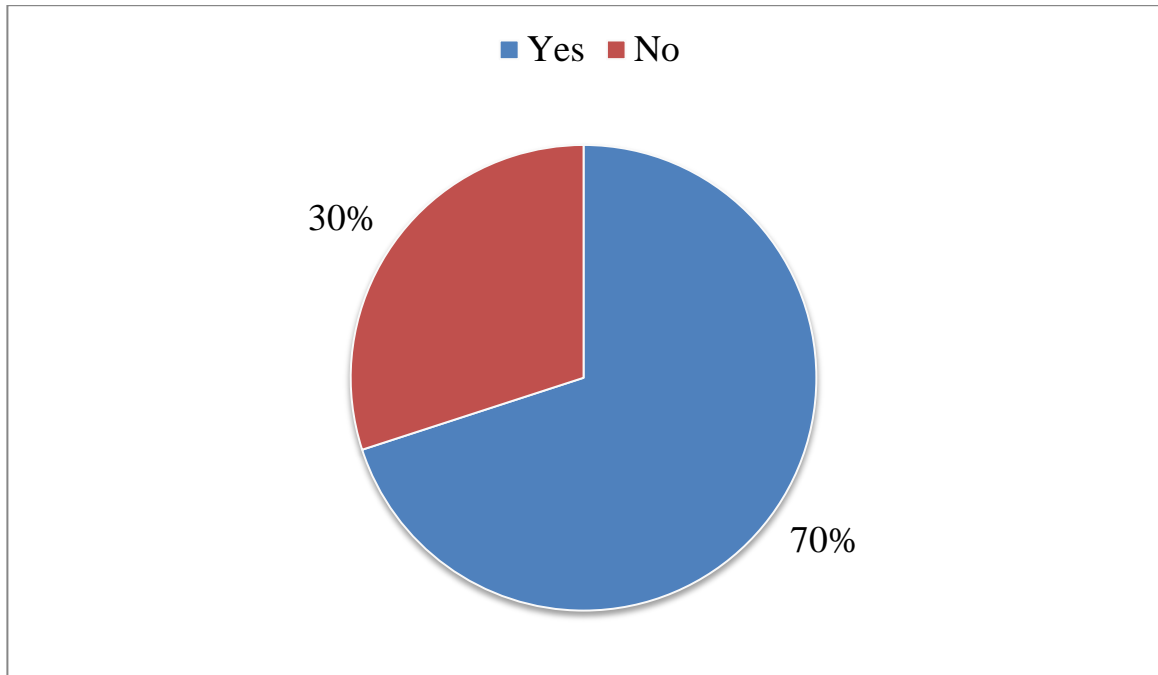


Chart 8: Problems pertinent to unknown words

When encountering an unknown word, many students stop listening and think about the meaning of new word. There were 14 students said “Yes” and 6 students answered “No”. This problem interrupting their listening and make them miss some information in listening. There were so many unfamiliar words in listening comprehension. When they listening long conversation and talk, they try to understand all of the speakers said to get the correct answer, then when they got an unknown words they focus to find the meaning that words.

1.2.8 Problems pertinent to recognize the word

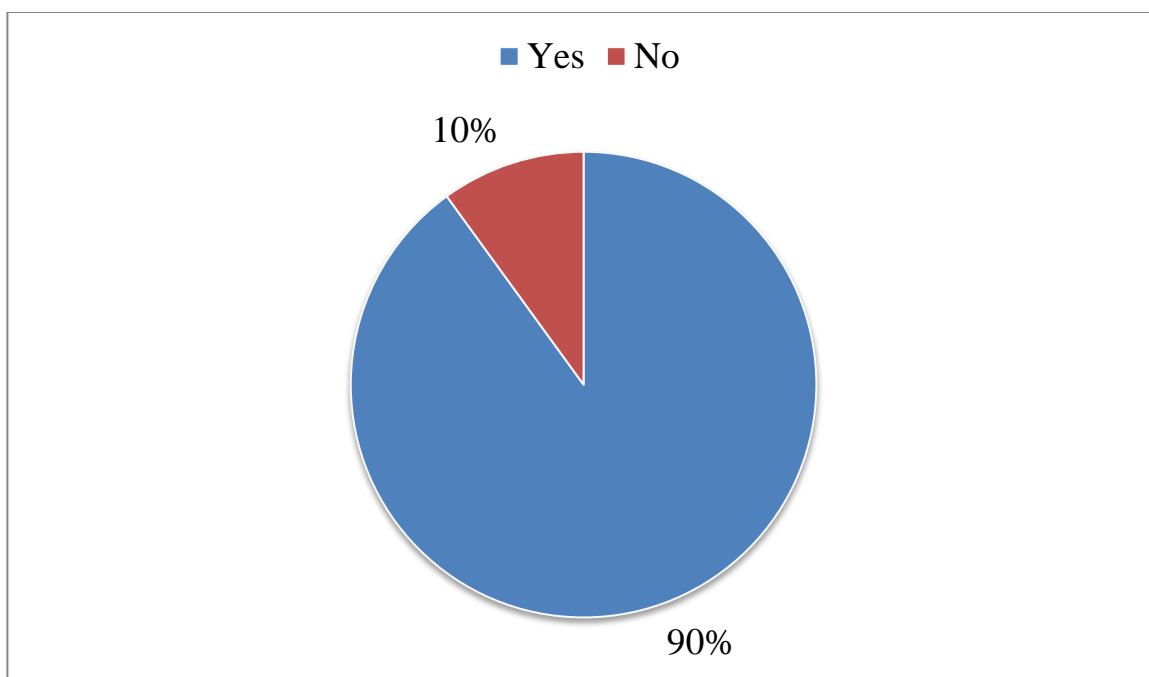


Chart 9: Problems pertinent to recognize the word

There were 18 said “Yes” and only 2 said “No”. Almost all students have responded that they unable to recognize the word because the way speaker pronounce. The word were pronounced differently from it was learn. At this point, the listener may not recognize it as the same words or may even miss its existence completely. The different culture may be influence this problem

1.2.9 Problems pertinent to variety of accents

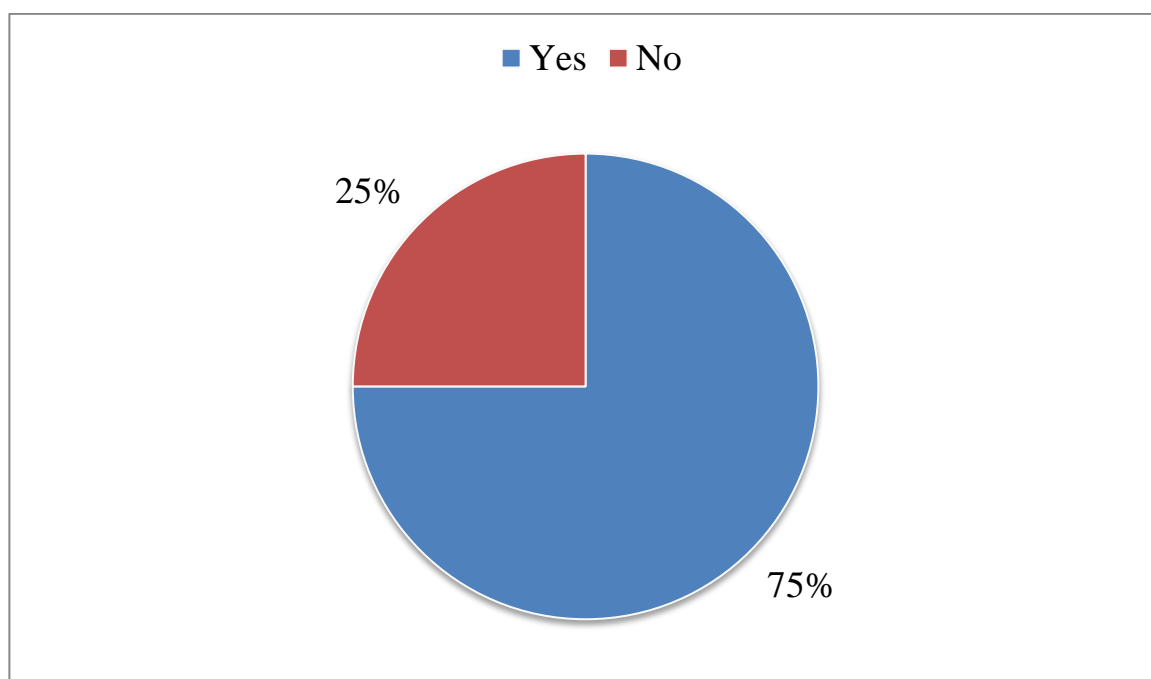


Chart 10: Problems pertinent to variety of accents

There were 15 students said yes and 5 students said no. It indicates that many students difficult to understand spoken text because variety accents of the speaker. The students felt confused with British English and American English because the pronunciation and intonation are quite different. It shows that the students had to learn not only English language but also variations of it.

1.3 Listening Problems Related to the Listener's competence

Students' difficulties in listening from not only the material of the listening but also lack of English language skills of the listeners. Understanding listening also needs concentration, when the students feel nervous or anxious they cannot concentrate. The problems encountered by listeners were the fear before doing listening, losing their attention, difficulty in recognize signal, encountering unknown word, losing concentration on listening without transcript.

1.3.1 Problem pertinent to understand every single word in the text

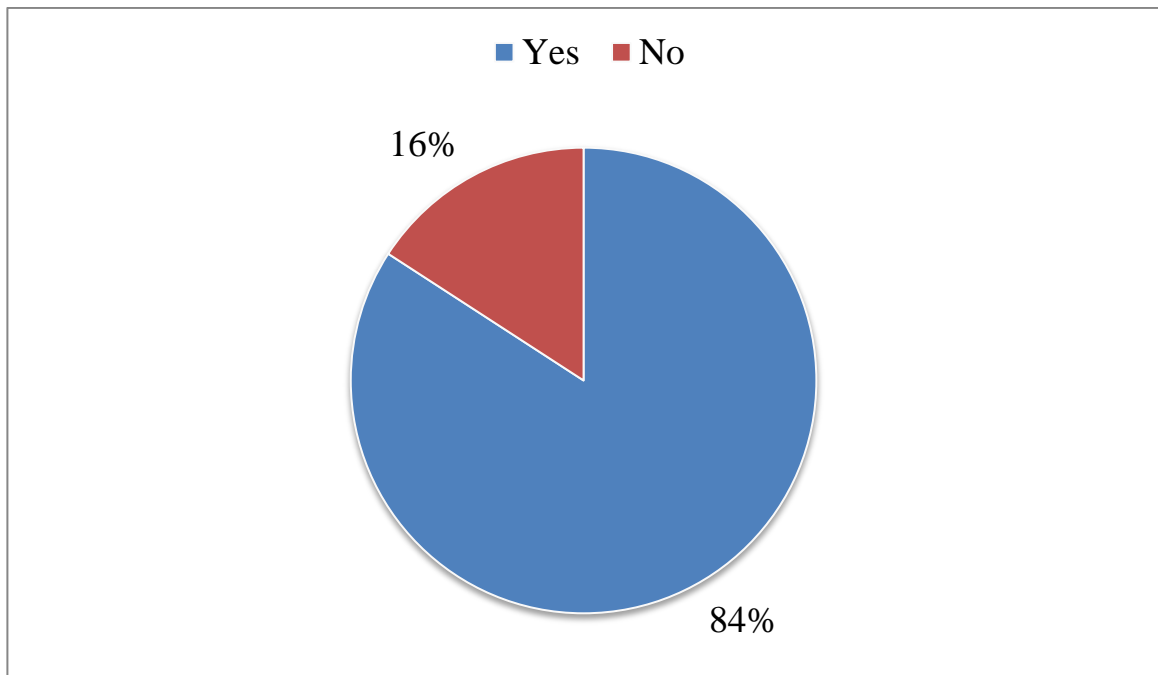


Chart 11: Problem pertinent to understand every single word in the text

Based on the respondents' answer about the difficulties to understand every single word in the speech, there were 17 students said yes and only 3 students said "No". The students cannot answer the question from the speakers because they try to understand every single word. Actually, it is unnecessary and impossible because when they are trying hard to get every individual word can waste their time to answer and make them loss focus.

1.3.2 Problem pertinent to inability of understanding listening tasks

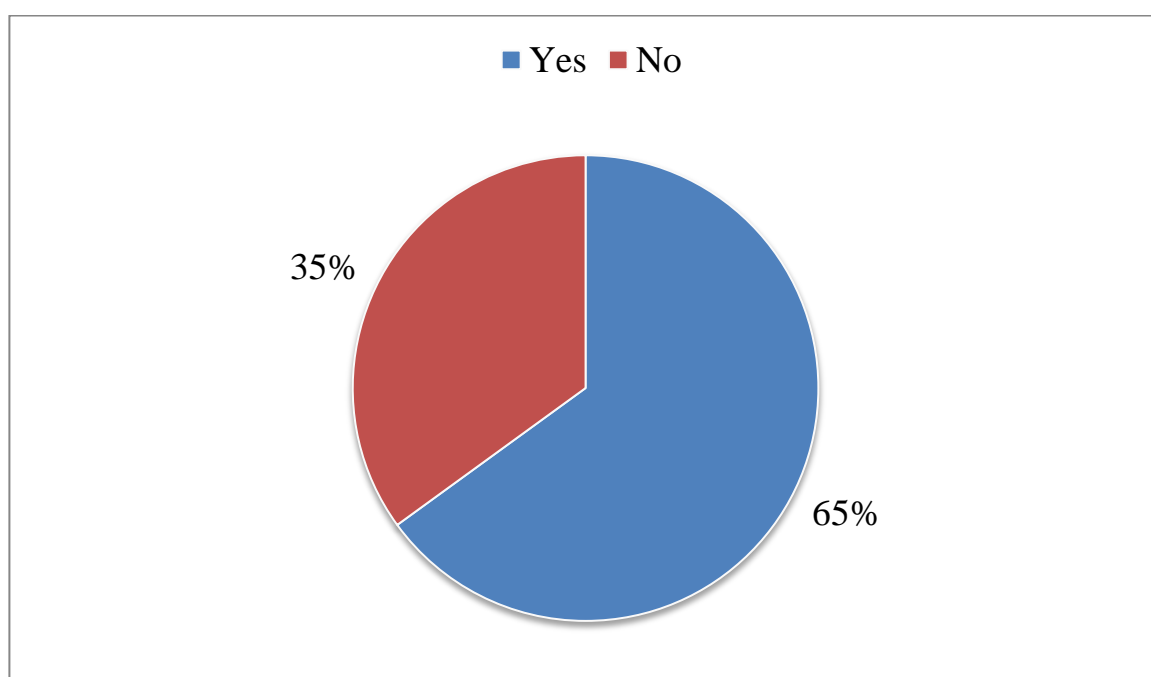


Chart 12: Problem pertinent to inability of understanding listening

Before doing listening comprehension tasks, there were 13 students have responded they fear that they cannot understand what they will hear. The students lack of confidence before doing listening comprehension because they have not much knowledge and lack of practice in listening. They are shy with her friends also when they don't understand what tasks are required. It is the lecturer's job to arouse the students' interest, help them gain confidence and make sure that they can achieve success in listening with the limited amount of English. It means that the lecturer have to find good strategy to make the class enjoyable and relaxing.

1.3.3 Problem pertinent lack basic background knowledge

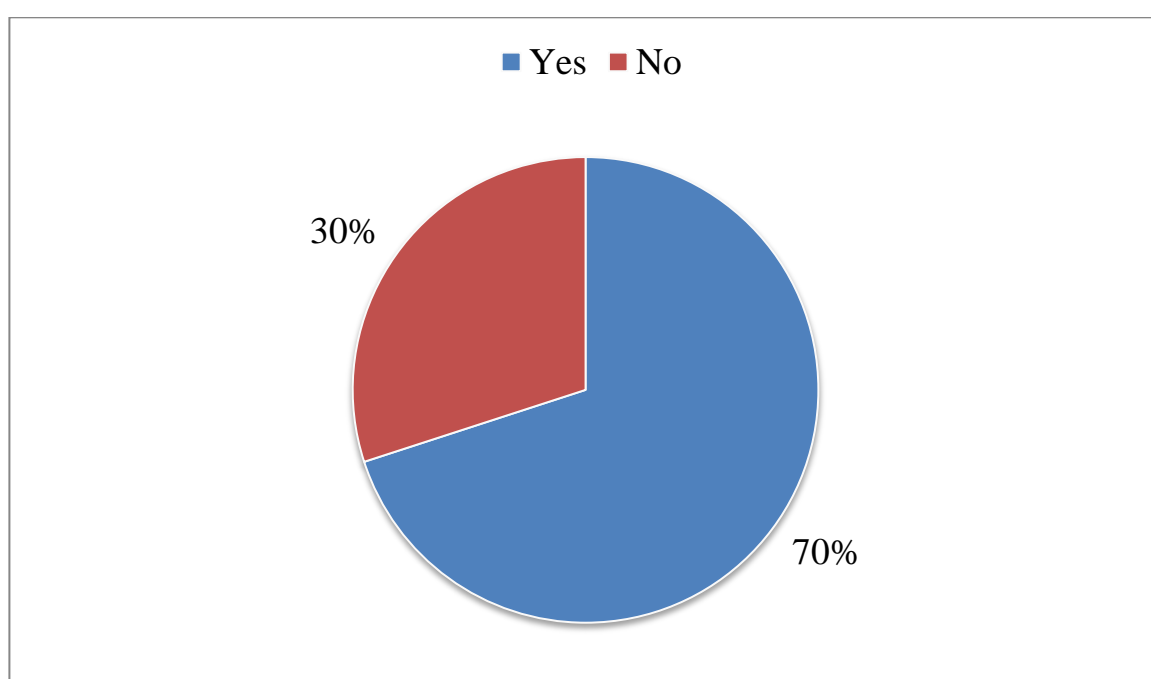


Chart 13: Problem pertinent basic background knowledge

Background knowledge is an important thing that can influence students' listening comprehension. Even if they have mastered of the skill, lack of background knowledge can cause reduced their listening comprehension. The result of questionnaire shows that from 20 respondents there are 14 students answer "Yes". They students who answer yes lack of knowledge about that. It shows that background knowledge is very important thing to get meaning of the listening text.

1.3.4 Problem pertinent to anxiety while listening

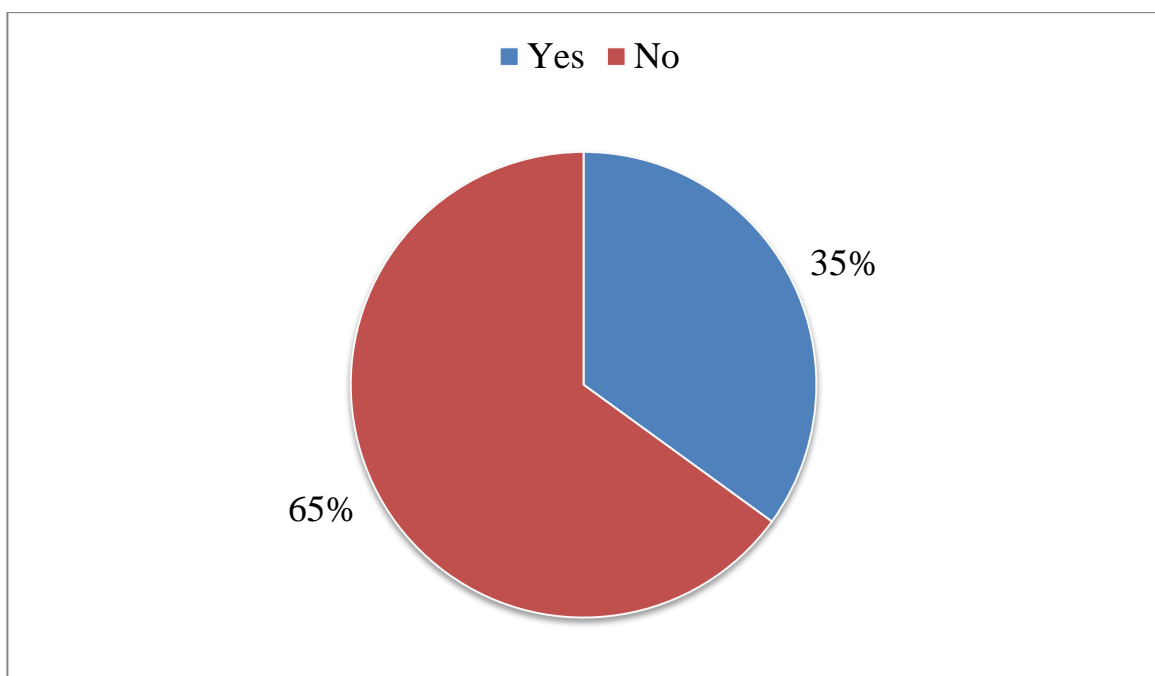


Chart 14: Problem pertinent to anxiety while listening

Based on the questionnaire, there were 7 students have responded that they feel worried if they don't understand spoken text. The students panic when they fail to understand spoken text because they fear to get lower score in listening. These figures point out this factor creates psychological problems of the learners. The lecturer had to motivate them in order to make them feel relax during listening.

1.3.5 Problem pertinent to lose focus when get an expected answer

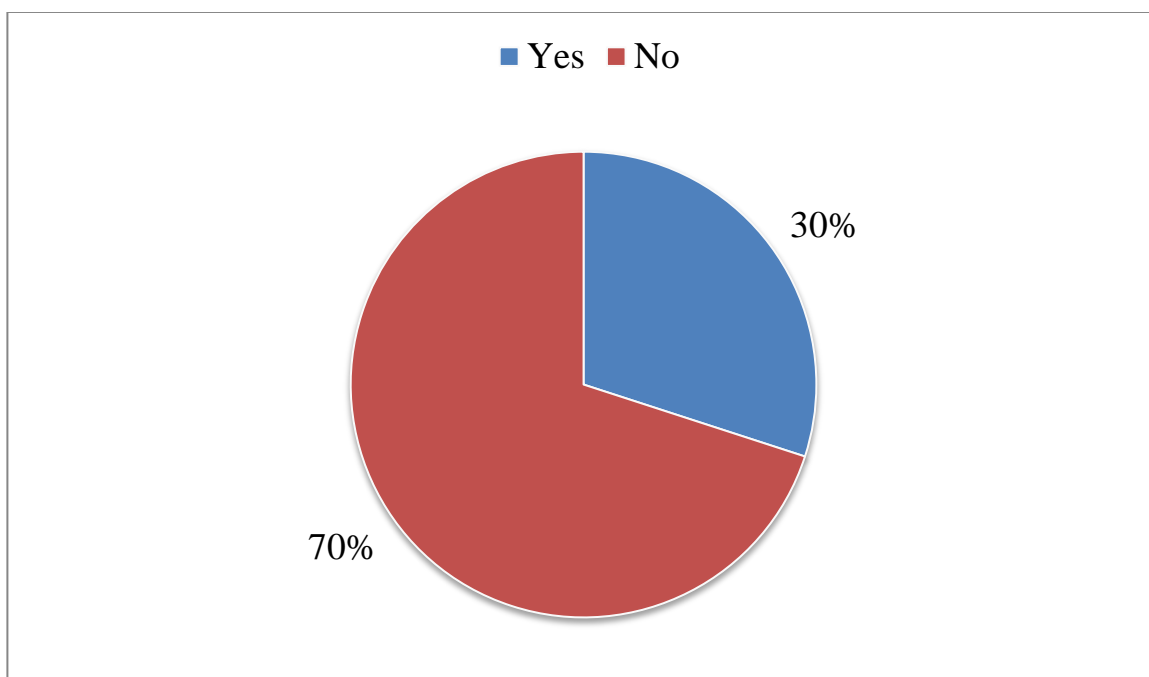


Chart 15: Problem pertinent to expected answer

There were 6 students from 20 respondents lose focus when get an expected answer in their mind. This problem will interrupt their listening because they can unable to concentrate and miss their listening. When they understand what the speaker said, they try to looking for the answer. They spend much time to choose the correct answer. Finally, they miss next questions.

1.3.6 Problem pertinent unable to concentrate when answer and listen at the same time

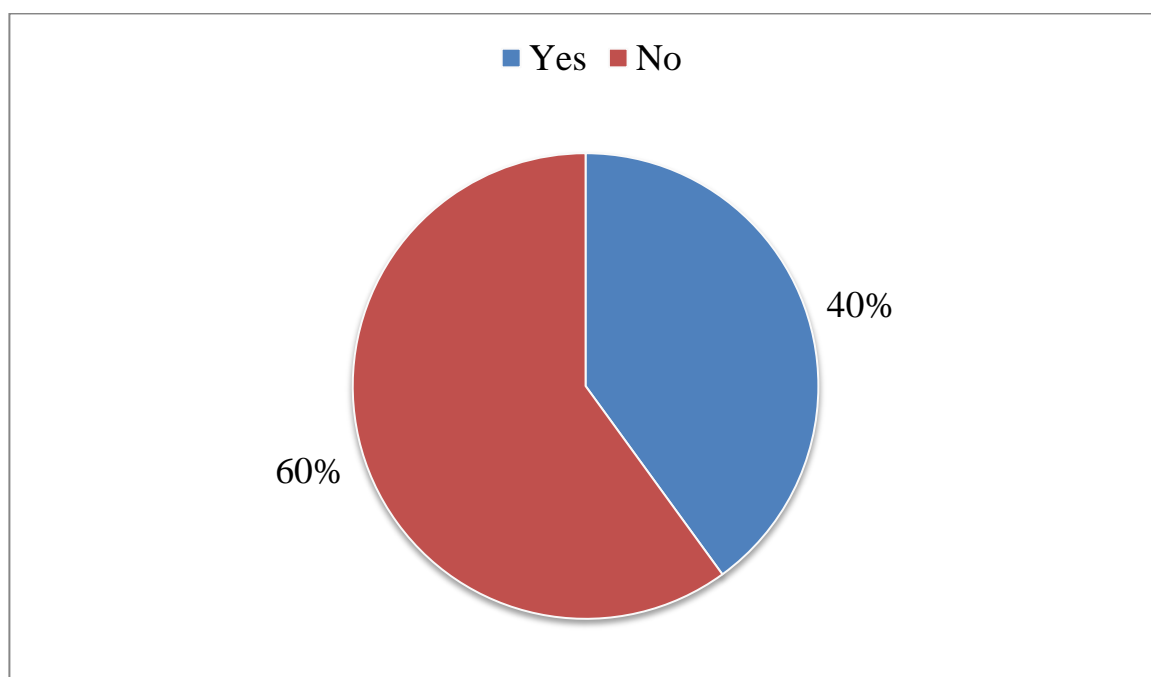


Chart 16: Problem pertinent unable to concentrate when answer and listen at the same time

There were only 8 students said “Yes” and 12 said “No”. It means that a few student find difficulties to concentrate when answer and listen at the same time. It was because limited time of English Listening comprehension test. They did not have time

to think what the correct answer. It shows that the students were not able to concentrate because they search the answer, at the same time, listen to the dialogue.

1.3.7 Problem pertinent to memory

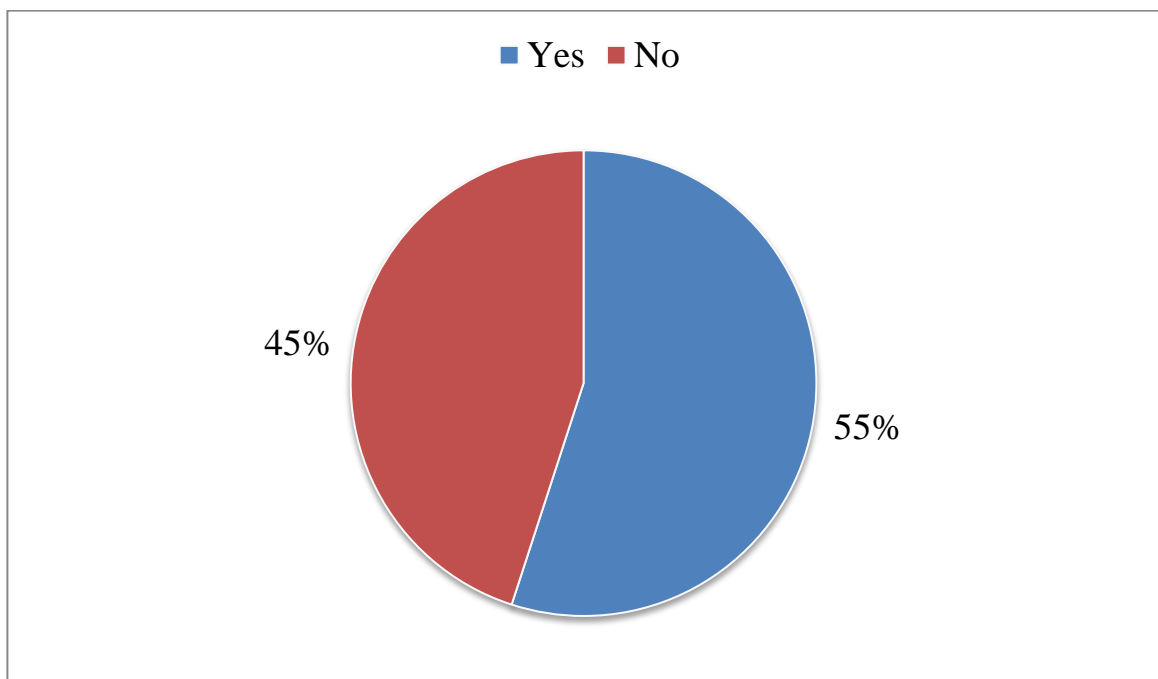


Chart 17: Problem pertinent to memory

The students' response shows that there were 11 students said "Yes" and 9 said "No". It means that the student find difficult to quickly remember key words that they have just heard. When they forget what they heard, they will spend too much time on translating and they do not know which answer is correct. It shows that remembering of what just hear in listening very important thing.

1.3.8 Problem pertinent inability to get repeated

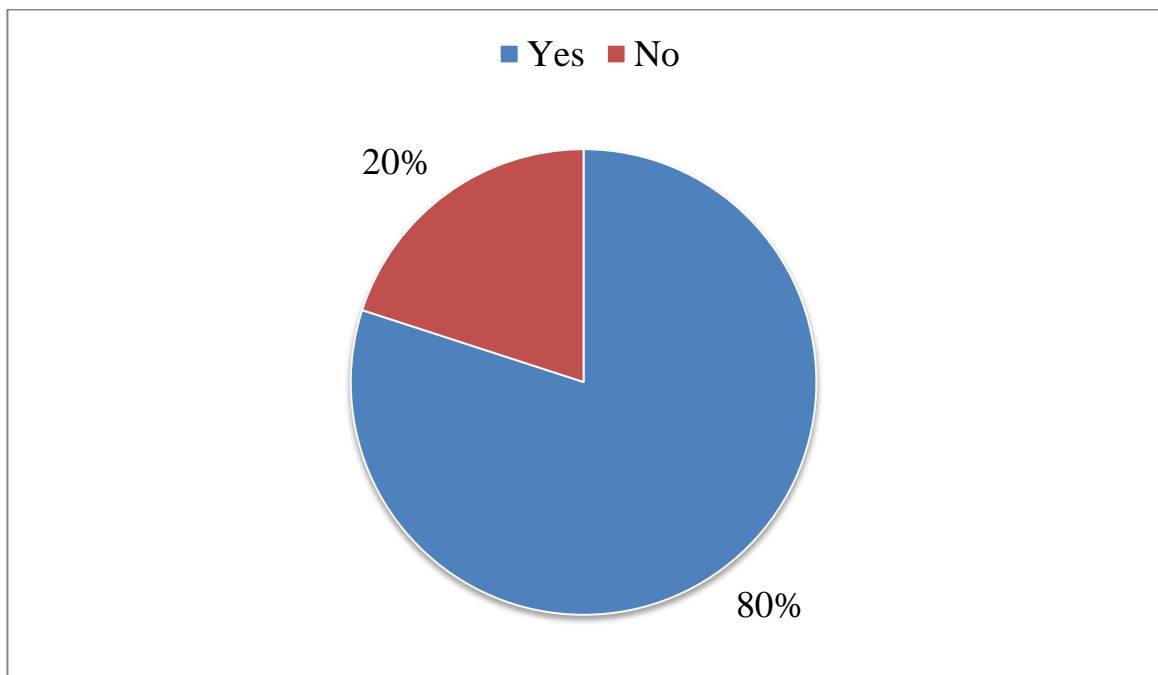


Chart 18: Problem pertinent inability to get repeated

According to the students' responses, the problem that interfere their listening comprehension was inability to get repeated. Nearly 16 of 20 students find difficult to understand the spoken text if they are unable to get repeated. When they get repeated, their listening will make easy to complete ideas, however, there is

a fact that the listeners cannot make the speaker repeat what they have just said. In listening comprehension test there are only once to listen one question, decision to replay the recording not in the hands of listeners. Accordingly, the students need to practice more and more listening TOIEC, PET or IELTS test without replayING the recording.

1.4 Listening Problem Related to Physical Setting

Not only the difficulties come from the message, the listeners, but also come from the surrounding environment called physical setting. Noise and poor quality of the speaker, the listening files disturb students in listening comprehension.

1.4.1 Problem pertinent lose concentration because poor quality of recording

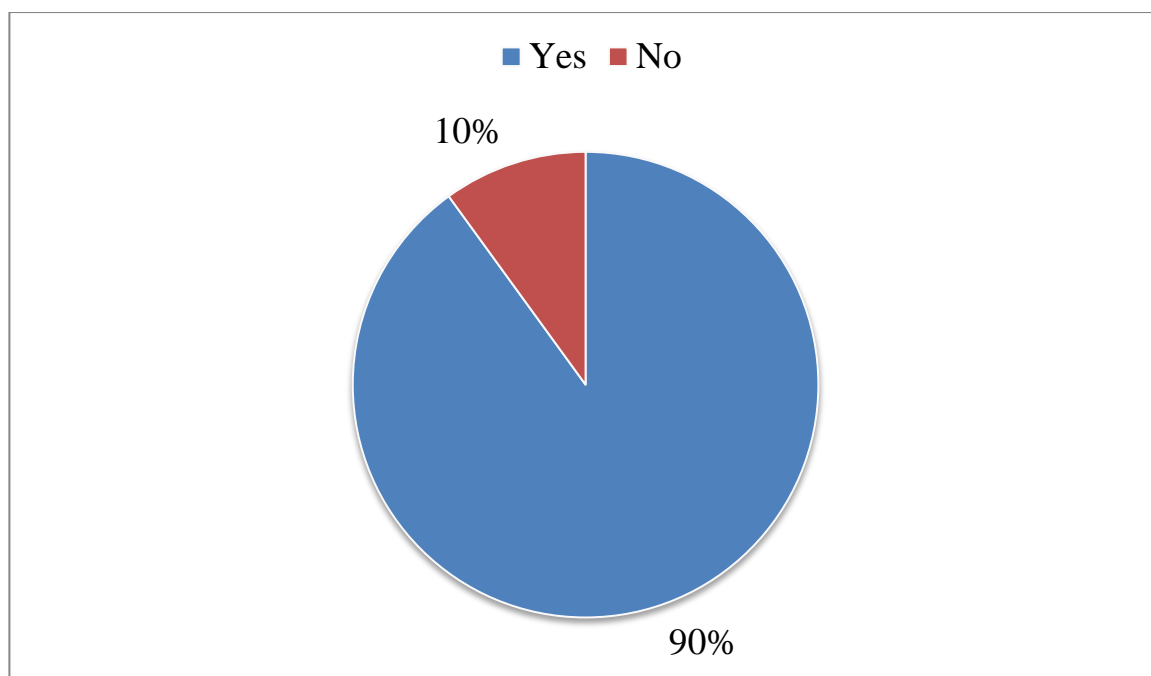


Chart 19: Problem pertinent lose concentration because poor quality of recording

The result of the questionnaire shows that there were 18 students said “Yes” and 2 students said “No”. Many students have answered that poor quality of recording

interfere their listening comprehension because they lose concentration. They cannot focus what the speaker said

1.4.2 Problem pertinent noise around

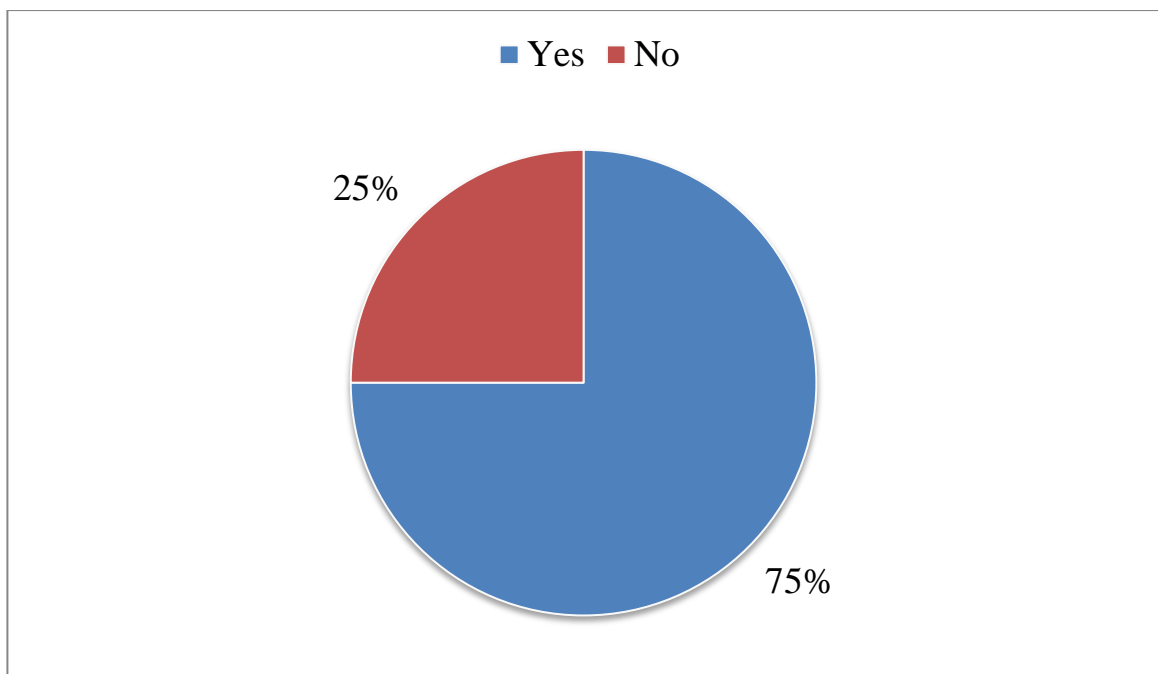


Chart 16: Problem pertinent noise around

Noise around listening test is an obstacle to comprehension. The result indicated that there were 15 students said yes and 5 students said no. When noise in the room

and the poor preparation of classroom, will make the students cannot concentration on listening to the recording material. It is sure that noises around will not have good result in listening.

2. The result of interview

The interview was carried out with 20 volunteer students as discussed in research methodology. These interview due to know deeply about students' difficulties in listening skills. The questions from interview generally were taken from questionnaire. There are five question to know about students difficulties, the first question was: "What problems that affect your listening comprehension as the listener?", the second question was "What are the difficulties in listening material?", the third question was "What are the difficulties to answer the question during listening?", the fourth question was "What make you lose concentration during listening comprehension test?", the last question was "Have you ever used own personal experience or background knowledge to answer the question in listening? Why?". All of the questions in interview used English because the students from English education department.

2.1 Problems Affect Listening Comprehension of Learner

First question were asked to know the problems affect students listening comprehension as the listeners. The result showed all of the interviewee have various answer, almost all of them found difficult in listening comprehension because they poor knowledge of grammar and lack of vocabulary. The other problems are the length of content material, speaker spoke too fast, and unclear pronunciation.

2.2 Problems toward Listening Material

The second questions were asked to know what make them difficult in content material of listening comprehension. The result of the second question showed, all of participants responded that the difficulties in content material are unfamiliar topic and long conversation of listening. There were 5 students' said the difficulties in listening material are variety accents and grammar rules of the sentence.

2.3 Problems to Answer the Question during Listening

The third questions were asked to know the problems encountered by students to answer the question during listening. There were some problems the students cannot answer the question from the tapes. Among these, difficult to catch meaning because lack of vocabulary and poor grammar knowledge, they also lose concentration because focus to know unknown words. Consequently, they missed what the speaker said in the next question and so on, so they felt panic and make them difficult to answer the question.

2.4 Problems Lose Concentration during Listening

The fourth questions were asked to know what problems that make students lose concentration during listening comprehension. The students' answer showed that average of them said the problems make them lose concentration is noise in laboratory. The others problem is if the students cannot understand what the speaker said, this interrupts their heard. It means that failure concentrate will make them missing what the speaker said.

2.5 Problems Using Personal Experience

The fifth questions were asked to know the students use own personal experience to answer the question from the speaker. The students' respond indicated that all of them have used their personal understanding to complete the meaning what the speaker said and to answer the question. It means that prior knowledge is a powerful and very frequently used to catch the meaning of a listening comprehension task

CHAPTER 3: SUGGESTION FOR SELF IMPROVEMENT

Based on the result of study formerly, listening is one of difficult skills for students as foreign language learners even though they are students in Foreign Languages Department. Although students encountered various kinds of problems in listening skills, they need to practice hard to become better listeners. Because listening is one of the important skills that it provides input for the learners not only in language learning but also in daily communication. Accordingly, the researcher offers the following suggestions with the hope of motivating the learners' further practice for their self-improvement.

1. Active listening

When you actively listen to something, you listen to less information but have a much deeper way of thinking about it. That means you learn English through listening more efficiently and effectively. For example, you may just listen to 3 minutes of the news instead of 30 minutes, but think about any new words or phrases you hear, guess their meaning and then note them down.

Important things you can think about when active listening are pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and structure. You don't need to think about all four at once. Instead, you can start by focusing on your weakest area.

2. Learn Actively by Taking Notes

As learners, it is easy to view listening as an exclusively passive activity. Unlike speaking, reading, and writing, you don't really need to do anything at all to listen; you just need to be within earshot, and the sounds will enter your ears on their own. The passive quality of listening is great for when you just want to sit back, relax, and listen to a piece of music or dialogue in a movie. It is not so great, however, for productive learning sessions.

Learning happens best when it is active—when you, the learner, are engaged in what you are doing and take action to process new information. If learning is not active, you will absorb less information, and even run the risk of forgetting what you learned quickly. To get the maximal value from your listening activities, you need to turn passive listening into active listening, which will greatly increase your comprehension and retention rates. One of the best ways to do this is through taking notes while listening.

When working on your listening skills, take out a notebook or piece of paper, and do the following:

- Write down the topic of the audio
- If there are multiple speakers, write down their names, or come up with labels for each (e.g. Speaker 1, Speaker 2)
- Write down the gist of what each speaker says, including any main points they try to communicate
- If you frequently hear a word you do not understand, try to write it down so you can look it up later
- If there's a word or sentence you find interesting, write it down so that you can practice using it in your own conversations.

By listening and taking notes at the same time, you will be much more interested and engaged in the audio content, and, as a result, you will learn in a much more organized and efficient way.

3. Read and listen at the same time

Another way to improve your listening skills is to use two sources of information at the same time. This simply means that you should be not only listening, but also getting your English from another place at the same time. The easiest way to do this is by watching an English video with English subtitles. This way, you'll be listening to and reading the words, which will make it easier to understand everything and will help you to remember more.

4. Practice daily for short memory

For students, to develop the listening skill for the long term, students also should practice daily for short memory by listening short news or dialogues then take notes and repeat content of the passage. Additionally, learning for new words, more and more, doing many exercises for improving grammar. Reading more and more documents or watching videos on social network to know more and have knowledge of culture of the local. For listening materials, this is dependent on mainly teachers, grading listening materials, designing task-oriented exercises, or providing students with different kinds of input, etc. All are useful ideas for improving listening efficiency of the students.

5. Try Watching Movies or Listening to Podcasts After English class

Everyone has an accent and people speak English in many different ways. The more you expose yourself to native speakers, the better you will be at listening. Watching a movie or listening to a podcast is an excellent way to practice listening.

After you watch a movie or listen to a podcast you can summarize what you hear. For example, you can tell a friend what the movie was about, or you can write down what you remember. It may also help to watch a movie twice. The first time you can practice focused listening. Pause and try to repeat words or sentences. The second time, you can use your general listening skills and enjoy the movie.

6. Improve listening skill by listening English song

Listening to songs is another great way for language learners to develop English vocabulary and to improve listening skills. You can do something that you enjoy and learn English at the same time.

Listening to songs in English while following along with their lyrics is a fantastic way to discover new vocabulary and memories commonly-used expressions and idioms that will help you become more familiar with the practical side of language. When you discover a new word, remember to write it in your vocabulary notebook, look it up in a dictionary, and try to use it in a sentence! When you're done, talk to your classmates or teacher to check that you've understood it.

7. Vary Your Listening Routine

For any language learning routine to be successful, it needs to keep you interested. For long-term success, you need to be engaged in a variety of different activities that challenge you and make you want to keep learning, day after day.

Your listening routine, which is a vital part of your overall daily learning routine, should be frequently changed, mixed-up, and varied in much the same way. Even if you like playing back language audio while sitting at your desk, don't do that all the time. Try to listen to your target language at other places and times as well.

This can include listening while:

- Reading a transcript of the audio

- Doing household chores
- Exercising
- Listening to target language music

Test out as many variations of listening activities as you think of. When you've found a number that you like, you can then work them into your routine by rotating which activities you practice on certain days of the week.

8. Ask your classmates for help

While you can learn a lot from your teacher, it can also be helpful to learn from your classmates. Find someone in your class who wants to learn with you. You can agree on a certain podcast, speech, song or other audio and listen together. Then, quiz each other on what certain words or sentences mean.

By doing this with someone else, your classmate will probably understand words that you don't, and vice versa. In addition to the listening practice, this will let you get to know your classmates better, which can make you more comfortable in class.

9. Listen to What You Enjoy

Understanding most of what the learner listen to is the fundamental step to improving listening skills. Once you have that in place, you then need to decide exactly what kinds of comprehensible content you will practice with. While you technically could listen to anything that meets that 60%-80% comprehensibility standard, you ideally want to choose materials that are relevant and interesting to you as a person.

This is important because relevant and interesting materials will always be more enjoyable to listen to compared to other resources. If you enjoy what you listen to, you will have more motivation to continue listening, and be more resistant to stopping, or losing focus. Be selective, and make sure that most of your practice time is spent with audio materials that you look forward to listening to, and match up well with your goals and interests.

PART III: CONCLUSION

1. Summary of the study

Being one of student at Haiphong Management and Technology University, from facing a lot of difficulties in listening skill, together with the deep awareness about the importance of listening; the researcher decided to carry out the study with the hope of finding some obstacles that students experience in listening comprehension as well as suggesting some pre-listening activities to improve their listening skill.

The study includes three main parts. Part I is the introduction of the research. It introduces to the readers the basic information why this thesis is fulfilled, how it is conducted and what is conducted for. Part II is the development of the thesis including four chapters. The first chapter provide readers an overview of the theoretical background on which this study. They include the definition of listening comprehension, potential difficulties in listening comprehension, etc. The next chapter presented the theoretical basis of learning English listening skill. The third chapter presented the research methodology of the approach to listening in English Department through the questionnaires and interview. The last chapter is some recommendations and suggestions to improve English listening skill at Haiphong Management and Technology University.

2. Limitation of the study

Although the study has certain strong points such as collection methods, survey questionnaires for students, due to limited time, lack of sources, the researcher's ability and other unexpected factors, it is obvious that the study has got a number of short-comings.

First of all, due to the limited of time, experience to some extent, the researcher could not conduct other methods such as classroom observation which can make the obtained results more reliable.

Secondly, due to the limitation of scope of the study, the researcher only focus on the first-year students in Faculty of Foreign Language which account for a small number of students in foreign languages department Haiphong Management and

Technology University. Therefore, the result of the study can't be generalized. Besides, the researcher could not cover all the aspects of difficulties.

In addition, the techniques suggested in this research are selected from different reliable but limited sources.

In spite of the mentioned limitations, I hope that this exploratory research will contribute to the better situation of teaching and learning English listening skill in in foreign languages department at Haiphong Management and Technology University.

3. Suggestions for the further study

Because of the limitation, this study could not cover all of aspects of the study. Besides, the study only focuses on difficulties and solutions for only first-year students at Haiphong Management and Technology University in order to help them improve their listening skill. Moreover, for the further studies, to get better results, the researcher should invite more participants and the data collection method. Together with using survey questionnaires and interviews, observation is also necessary to get more persuasive conclusions.

All in all, although the study cannot avoid to the limitation, the research has been completed under the guiding of the supervisor and self-effort. Any comments and criticism will be highly appreciated for better further study.

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APPENDIXES

A Study of English Listening Skill Problems freshmen of Foreign Languages Department at Haiphong Management and Technology University.

Instruction

The main objective of this research is to investigate English listening problems and listening proficiency of students from the Foreign Languages Department program at Haiphong Management and Technology University. Questionnaire and Interview are used in this research study.

APPENDIX A : Questionnaire

Part 1: General background information of the respondents

Part 2: The survey questionnaires “For the first year students” on listening problems

APPENDIX B : Interview

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

PART 1: GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Instruction: Give the mark in the square in front of the message which true for you, or fill in the blank

1. Experiences of learning English

- 0-3 years 4-6 years 7-10 years more than 10 years

2. Which English skill do you like most?

- Speaking Reading Listening Writing

3. Have you ever had English language listening skills development?

- No
 Yes, please specify

1. Name/ Topic of training

Organize by

Duration hours

2. Name/ Topic of training

Organize by

Duration hours

3. Name/ Topic of training

Organize by

Duration hours

5. How often do you communicate with foreigners?

- Never 1-2 times/day 3-4 times/day more than 4 times/day

6. Which Problems Related to the Content of The Listening Text do you have?

I have listening problem when...	Yes	No
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Unfamiliar words		
Unfamiliar topic		
Complex grammatical structures		
Problem pertinent length of spoken text		
Difficult to interpret the meaning of a long listening text		

7. Which listening problems you meet while listening?

I have listening problem when...	Yes	No
Lack basic background knowledge		
Difficult to quickly memory word		
Difficult to recognize the word		
Complicated grammar		
Problem pertinent to speaker the unclear pronunciation		
Problem pertinent inability to get repeated		
Anxiety when don't understand spoken text		
Lose focus when get an expected answer		
Unable to concentrate when answer and listen at the same time		

8. Listening Problem Related to Physical Setting

I have listening problem when there is/ are...	Yes	No
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Limited times for each listening task		
Noise around		
Poor quality of listening files, recorder, CD player, speaker		

APPENDIX B

Interview

1. What problems that affect your listening comprehension as the listener?
2. What are the difficulties in listening material?
3. What are the difficulties to answer the question during listening?
4. What make you lose concentration during listening comprehension test?
5. Have you ever used own personal experience or background knowledge to answer the question in listening? Why?

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation!