

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



KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH: TIẾNG ANH THƯƠNG MẠI

Sinh viên : Phạm Thị Thanh Tuyền

Giảng viên hướng dẫn : ThS. Nguyễn Thị Thu Huyền

HẢI PHÒNG – 2023

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**A STUDY ON THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE SECOND-
YEAR ENGLISH MAJORS IN LEARNING
LISTENING SKILL AT HAIPHONG UNIVERSITY OF
MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY AND
SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE**

**KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY
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Tên đề tài: A study on the difficulties of the second-year English majors in learning listening skill at HaiPhong University of Management and Technology and suggested solutions to improve.

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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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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 sỹ

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XÁC NHẬN CỦA KHOA

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM

Độc lập - Tự do - Hạnh phúc

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN HƯỚNG DẪN TỐT NGHIỆP

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

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Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

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Họ và tên giảng viên:

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Họ và tên sinh viên: Phạm Thị Thanh Tuyền

Chuyên ngành: Tiếng Anh thương mại

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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

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Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm 2023

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1.1.Rationale

It cannot be denied that English is the most widely spoken language in the world. During the last few decades, the number of people learning English has risen dramatically. As a result, English is used to write a lot of educational materials for educational institutions and large universities. More than half of the websites on the Internet, including media, tools, and global online businesses, are also written in English. Knowing this language will give learners access to an unlimited source of information.

Even after years of studying English, students still find it hard to communicate properly. Instead of using what they have learned, they often use simple words. While the English language is mostly a collection of compound phrases, a verb can bond to form a noun or adjective..., and vice versa. Adjectives can add endings to modify the suffixes to become verbs or nouns. Furthermore, word choice is a crucial part of establishing the quality of an essay. When it comes to listening skills, students frequently struggle to discover the right and logical words.

As a researcher, I would like to present some techniques for further improving listening abilities for second-year English majors for several reasons. To start with, listening plays a vital role in communication in real life. Additionally, in learning a language, listening is a helpful method of providing students with understandable information, which is an essential part of the entire process of learning a language. Thusly, I would like to do this research to help students pay more attention to listening skills. Second, learning the listening skills is the most difficult in learning a foreign language. Listening, like reading, is a receptive skill, but it is often the most intimidating for students. During reading, a reader usually has more opportunities to refer to the text to clarify understanding, which a listener cannot do in most listening contexts such as TV shows, meetings, discussions or conversations. For this, I would like to highlight some tips to help teachers motivate their students to study listening skills in a

more enthusiastic and better way. At last, with four years of experience in learning the skill and what I observed from practicing listening to others, it can be seen that many students were unable to practice the listening skill. Some of them complained that they were not sure of their listening skills, so that they could barely understand the messages being spoken. All these above reasons have inspired me to do research on listening skill and as a result, a research title goes as “The difficulties of the second-year English majors in learning listening skill at HaiPhong University of Management and Technology and suggested solutions to improve”.

1.1. Aims of the study

The study is done with the following aims:

Firstly, I want to find out the most common difficulties in learning listening skill faced by second-year English majors. Secondly, on account of troubles, many students are not keen on learning and practicing this skill in the class, therefore the study would like to suggest some potential answers to improve 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.

1.2. Methods of the study

Considering all the characteristics, the study will be conducted using quantitative and qualitative methods. In addition, the questionnaires are designed as a means for researcher to collect data, which are more convenient, take less time, low cost and straightforward for students to answer. The questionnaire is also given to students who are studying listening skill for the first time. This is stage that students should be equipped with sort 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.

1.3. Scope of the study

The study focuses on difficulties of the second-year English majors in learning listening skill at HaiPhong University of Management and Technology encounter and afterward give a few recommendations for overcoming the problems discovered and improving the listening ability to students. The researcher chose to pick 36 students of English faculty at Haiphong University of Management and Technology.

1.4. Design of the study

This study is composed of three main parts:

- Part I is the introduction which consists of rationale, aims, methods, the scope and design of the study.
- Part II is the development – the main part of this study which is divided into three chapters:
 - o Chapter 1 is theoretical background
 - o Chapter 2 demonstrates detailed explanation of the data collection and analysis
 - o Chapter 3 shows the findings and discussion
- Part III is the conclusion which summarizes what was given in previous parts as well as some limitations of the study and recommendations for further study

PART II: DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 1: Literature Review

2.1.1. Definition of listening skill

Listening skill can be meant as ability to pay attention or to hear something.

But, listening is not same as hearing. The term hearing and listening are often used interchangeably, but there are important differences between them. Although both hearing and listening involve sound perception, the difference in terms reflects a degree of intention (Michael Rost, 2002). Hearing essentially just likes passive activity. Hearing is when we just hear the sounds without pay attention of the sound sources. While, in listening the brain does automatically translate the words into the message that the speaker told. That is essentially what listening is determining the meaning and the message of the sounds or words. It is active process that involves more than assigning labels to sounds or words.

Listening skill as a process of catching what the speaker says, getting the speaker's idea, and listening also consists of speaker, listener, and sound. Listening is ability of pay attention or to hear something. Moreover, listening and hearing are two different things, which hearing is essentially a passive activity, while the listening is determining the meaning and the message of the sounds or words.

Listening is one of subject that is taught in the field of language study. This skill can be improved by practice continuously and there are many kinds of strategy to develop studentsr listening skill. It is an active process in which listeners select and interpret information which come from auditory and visual clues. Listening is an active, purposeful process of making sense of what we hear. Listening skill are often categorized as receptive or productive. It is require us to receive and understand incoming information (input). Because listening is receptive, we can listen to and understand things at a higher level than we can produce. For this reason, people sometimes think of it as a passive skill. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Listening is very active. As people listen, they process not only

what they hear but also connect it to other information they already know.(David Nunan, 2003)

Listening comprehension is the process of understanding speech in first or second language. The study of listening comprehension in second language learning focuses on the role of individual linguistic unit (e.g. phonemes, words, grammatical structure) as well as the role of the listener's expectation, the situation and context, background knowledge and topic.(Richards, Jack C., and Willy A. Renandya, 2002)

Listening is viewed as part of a transactional process in which all participants are simultaneously 'sending' and 'receiving' messages.(Michael Rost,2002). The process of listening occur in five stages. They are hearing, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding.(BabitaTyagi, 2013). The process of listening standart is : (1) Poor when the student is having a hard time receiving, attending, and assigning meaning to words spoken. (2) Fair when the student is receiving information, but is having a hard time attending to it and assigning meaning. (3) Good when the student is comprehending what is being said because they are receiving, attending, and assigning meaning to what they hear. Listening involves doing many things such as dealing with the spoken language characteristic, using the context and knowledge of the world, understanding different text types, understanding different speeds of speech and accents, and using different listening skill.(Spartt, et.al., 2005).

From the definitions, it can be concluded that obviously listening influences other skills. A highly complex physiological process involving the human receptors and influenced by the human sensory capacity. An active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they have heard with what they have already known. It is a process to start mind. We can study other skills easilly after we pay full attention in listening skill.

Furthermore, listening skill is one of the basics of learning languages and acquiring them is very important in learning language. Moreover, with the development of high technology, we rely on our ears to get information. There is

no doubt that the speed of getting information is faster through listening than reading.

Thus, it is crucial to improve the level listening skill for the students. From the verse above we also know that when we want to catch what speaker says and to get the speaker's idea, we have to hear the speaker.

2.1.2. The importance of listening skill

Listening plays an important role in communication in people's daily lives.

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". 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 interworkings of language systems at various levels and thus establish a base for more fluent productive skills"

Listening has an important role not only in daily life but also in classroom settings. Anderson and Lynch (2003) state that "we only become aware of what remarkable feats of listening we achieve when we are in an unfamiliar listening environment, such as listening to a language in which we have limited proficiency".

Most people think that being able to write and speak in a second language means that they know the language; however, if they do not have the efficient listening skill, it is not possible to communicate effectively. That is, listening is the basic skill in language learning and over 50% of the time that students spend functioning in a foreign language will be devoted to listening. (Nunan, 1998). Rost (1994) explains the importance of listening in language classroom as follows:

1. Listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin.

2. Spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learner. Because learners must interact to achieve understanding. Access to speakers of the language is essential. Moreover, learners' failure to understand the language they hear is an impetus, not an obstacle, to interaction and learning.

3. Authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner to understand language as native speakers actually use it.

4. Listening exercises provide teachers with a means for drawing learners' attention to new forms (vocabulary, grammar, new interaction patterns) in the language.

To summarize, 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 skill are as important as speaking skill because people cannot communicate face-to-face unless both types of skill are developed together. Listening skill are also important for learning purposes since through listening students receive information and gain insights (Wallace, Stariha & Walberg, 2004).

2.1.3. Difficulties of listening skill

The first step of the learning problems in constructing a successful listening is to identify the learning problems that students are experiencing as a result of listening to related issues. So, there are some learner's problems:

2.1.3.1. Cannot understand fast, natural native-sounding speech.

The students can only understand if the teacher talks slowly and clearly. They cannot understand fast, natural native-sounding speech. To overcome this problem, the teacher has to expose the students to spontaneous-informal talk as possible, so they can understand the native speech. The teacher can also provide them with the sorts of discourse at the right level for them.

2.1.3.2. Doesn't recognize English sounds.

When asked about the cause of difficulties with sounds in English, some people believe that this difficulty is due to their inability to distinguish English sounds, homophones, especially words with similar pronunciation.

In particular, the confusion between the affirmative and the negative form is the main cause, especially the failure to recognize the main information to be heard is due to some features in the pronunciation of connected speech in English such as: the phenomenon of swallowing sound (elision), the weak form in pronunciation of some functional words (weak form), the phenomenon of phonemic assimilation (assimilation), the phenomenon of contraction of words (contraction), the phenomenon of sound connection (linking)...

Thus, learners' failure to recognize sounds in English is mainly due to: inability to distinguish between homonyms and words with similar pronunciations, confusion between affirmative and negative forms, especially due to some influence on the pronunciation of speech sequences in English.

2.1.3.3. Lack of concentration when listening.

The cause of the lack of concentration when listening can be due to lack of experience when listening, making it increasingly difficult for the listener to concentrate on the listening lesson.

2.1.3.4. It is difficult to grasp the main idea of the listening

The reason it is difficult to grasp the main idea of the listening is because the listener does not know what is the important information to hear in the text. Or because the listener cannot deduce the main content of the listening from the key words, making them unable to grasp the main idea when listening.

2.1.3.5. Can't keep up with the speed of the speaker

Listeners do not keep up with the speed of the speaker mainly because in the process of listening listeners always translate what they hear into Vietnamese and then understand, then their brain will have to do 3 things at the same time: listen, translate what they can hear from English to Vietnamese, then understand what in Vietnamese has just been translated.

Therefore, when listeners hear and understand a sentence, the speaker has said the second and third sentences, leading to listeners not understanding what they are saying. Not to mention that foreigners still stick to the ending sounds, they don't listen to English often, which leads to unfamiliar hearing, and consequently, can't keep up with the speed of the speaker.

2.1.3.6. Limited vocabulary to use in daily life

Sometimes may be mistaken for thinking that they know a lot of vocabulary, but they try to check if those words are common in everyday life, listeners know words about tourism, economics, sewing, wear... but have limited vocabulary to use in everyday life. When communicating, listeners and the other person talk about daily life more than talking about words specializing in a certain industry. So, learn vocabulary starting with the things that are closest to students.

2.1.3.7. Insufficient vocabulary and sentence structure.

The problem is not with the amount of vocabulary and structure, but with how many words students can remember and use in real communication situations. The traditional way of learning vocabulary and structures by repeatedly recording the words or structures they want to learn with their Vietnamese meanings has limited their ability to memorize for a long time of effort in order to not miss the meaning.

2.1.4. Factors affecting the English listening.

2.1.4.1. 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. As a teacher we have to take into account all this conditions in a body. The size of the classroom also makes difficult for teacher to manage the all class in group activity or to get feedback from students. The temperature of class can be counted as a factor that makes listening comprehension difficult. The class that does not have air conditioner or heater may be too hot in summer or too cold in winter.

2.1.4.2. Students' motivation.

Students' motivation is one of the crucial factors that affect listening comprehension. It can be difficult for students maintaining the concentration in a foreign language learning classroom. In listening comprehension, even the smallest pause in attention may considerably spoil comprehension. When students find the topic of the listening text interesting, comprehending would be easier. For all that, students find listening very boring even if they are interested in the topic because it needs a huge amount of effort in order to not miss the meaning.

2.1.5. Summary.

In conclusion, this chapter mainly summarizes the theories, ideas, opinions related to the listening skills. It has presented the relevant literature, which has helped to form the theoretical and conceptual framework for graduation paper. The following chapter will display the methodology and finding of the research under the light of all above

Charpter 2: Data Analysis and Dissscussion

This chapter, the researcher will give the full analysis of data collected through the survey questionnaires for students, interview students on the factors affecting English listening skill of the second-year students in HPU. It shows an attempt to answer the research question posed at the beginning of the study.

The survey subject consists of 36 second-year students at Hai Phong Management and Technology University, among whom 6 are male students, 30 are female students..

2.2.1. The students' experience in learning English

The subjects' English learning experience ranges from 2 to 15 years as they start learning English at different ages depending on the syllabus of the school they studied at. 22% (8 students) have been studying English for less than 7 years, 78% (28 students) have been studying English more than 7 years.

| Year of learning | Less than 7 years | More than 7 years | Total |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Number of student | 8 | 28 | 36 |
| Percentage | 22% | 78% | 100% |

Table 1.1.: The subject's experience in learning English

Obviously, it is essential to have a close look at the students' point of views towards listening skill since this provides motivations that greatly affect the effectiveness of students in learning listening. Being asked to choose the option expressing points of view on listening skill, 59% consider listening skill very important language skill and 41 % find it important. The percentages show that students do realize the importance of listening skill in their language development.

| The importance of listening skill in English acqisition | Very important | Important | Not important | Total |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Number of students | 19 | 17 | 0 | 36 |
| Percentage | 52% | 48% | 0% | 100% |

Table 1.2. The importance of listening skill in English acquisition

2.2.2. Different listening strategies utilized in listening

As it can be seen from the table 2, among the listening strategies exploited by the students, the most favorable one is activating previous knowledge to understand what is spoken. (50% choose this), followed by listening for key words stresses or repeated for several times that is utilized by 45% of all the students. 41% concentrate on key information and taking note main ideas. 32% try to guess answers and unknown words while listening. Only 27% predict what they are going to listen for.

| Strategies | Number of students | Percentage |
|---|--------------------|------------|
| Activate your previous knowledge to understand what is spoken | 22 | 50% |
| Guess your answers | 14 | 32% |
| Listen for key words stresses or repeated For several times | 20 | 45% |
| Predict about you are going to listen for | 12 | 27% |
| Guess unknown words based on the known words or the listening context | 14 | 32% |
| Take note the main/ key ideas | 18 | 41% |
| Concentrate on key information | 18 | 41% |

Table 2: Different listening strategies utilized in listening

2.2.3. Difficulties students encountered in learning listening

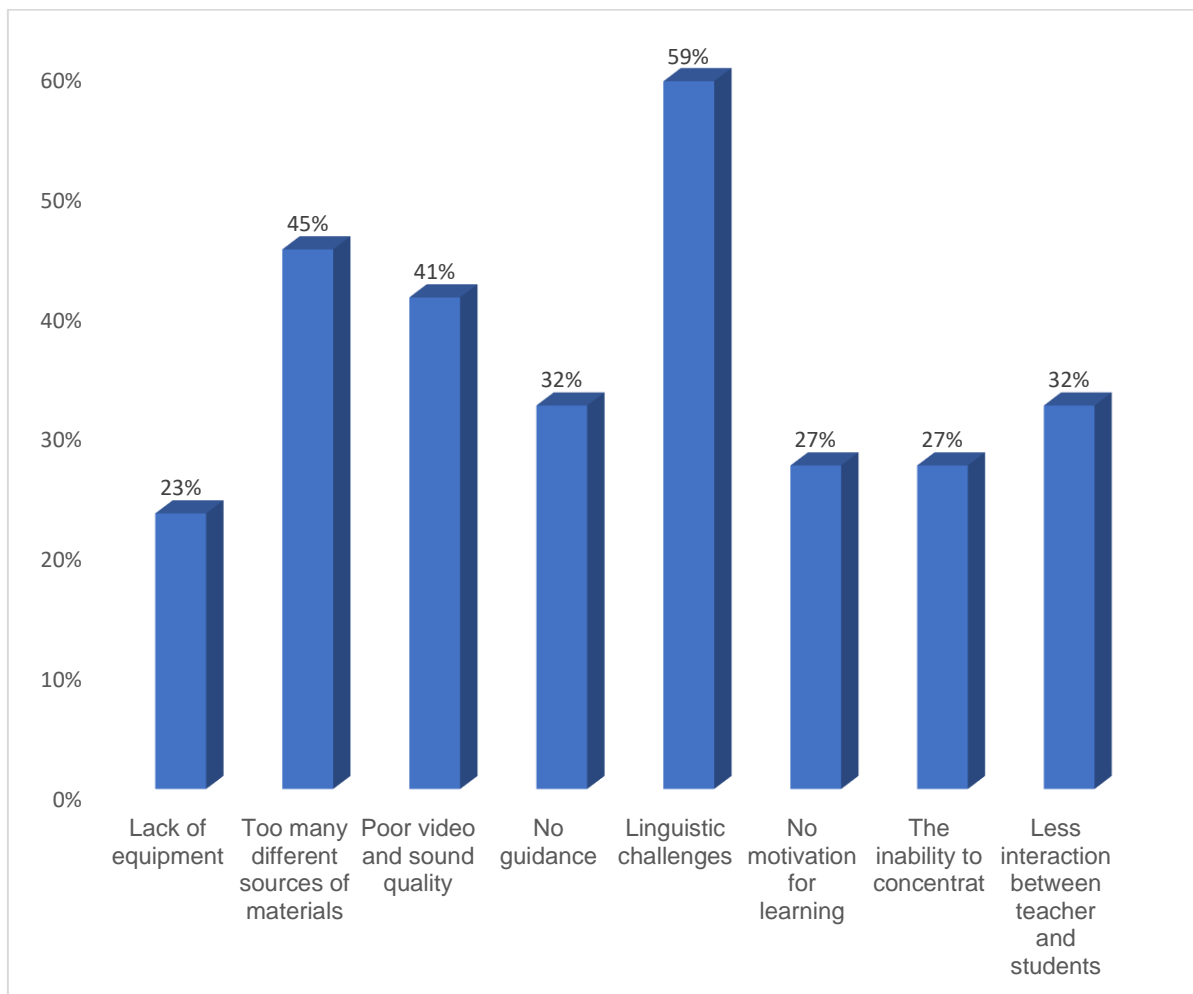
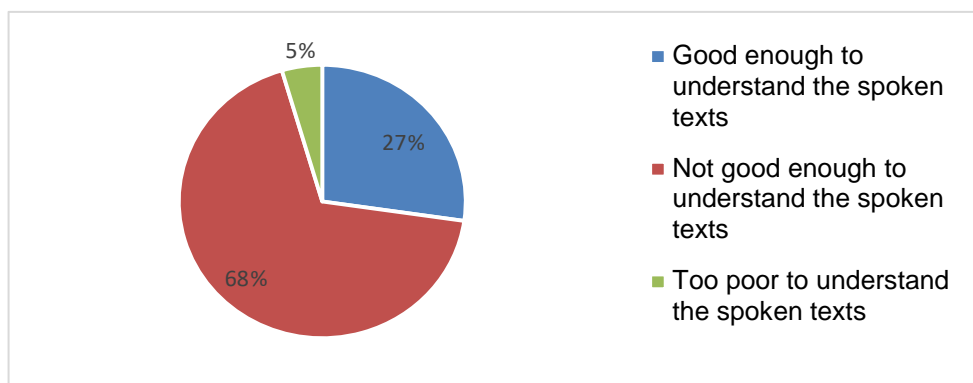


Chart 1: Difficulties students encountered in learning listening

According to the chart, the most difficult thing facing most of the students is linguistic challenges (59%). It shows that English itself is considered a common language but it is not easy to master and understand deeply. The second difficulty that students often encounter is too many different resources of materials. This reveals that students need to be guided to choose more suitable and reliable materials. This problem accounts for 45%. Poor video and sound quality is the third one with 41% of the students. No guidance and less interaction between teacher and students are agreed by the same percentage of the students (32%). 27% complain about bad listening because of the inability to concentrate and no motivation for learning. A few students (23%) find that listening problem come from lack of equipment.

2.2.3.1 The students' difficulty in lacking vocabulary in learning listening

Vocabulary plays an important role in students' listening, therefore, it is necessary to investigate into students' vocabulary so that understanding about their performances in listening becomes profound and much clear.

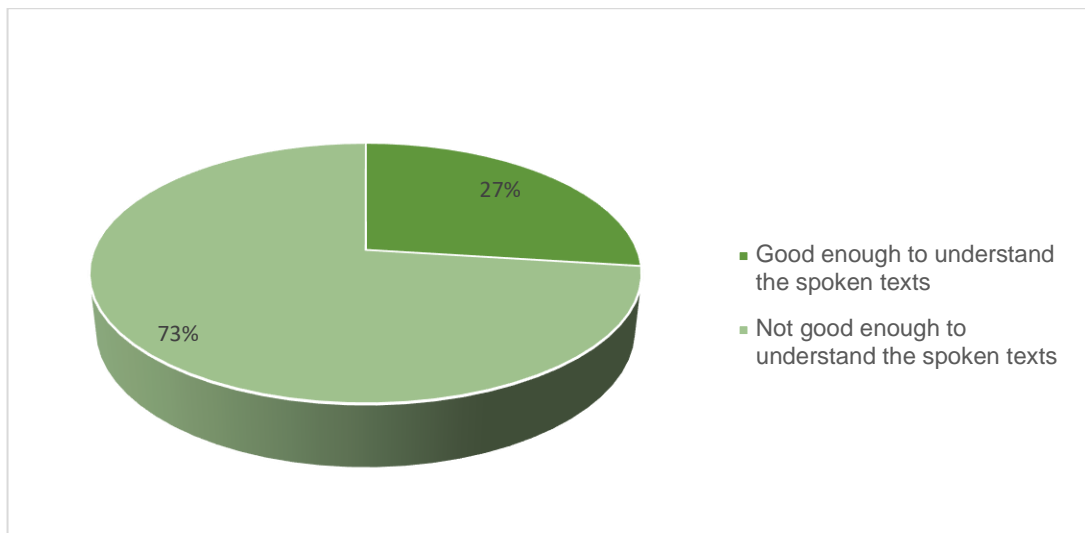


Pie chart 1: Students' vocabulary in learning English listening skill

As can be seen from the pie chart, 68% of the students report not to have sufficient vocabulary in listening. 5% complain that his vocabulary is too poor to understand. Meanwhile, 27% of the students agree that their sufficient enough to understand listening texts. ***It is clear that lack of vocabulary becomes a great obstacle to them in listening***

2.2.3.2. The difficulty of students' pronunciation in learning listening

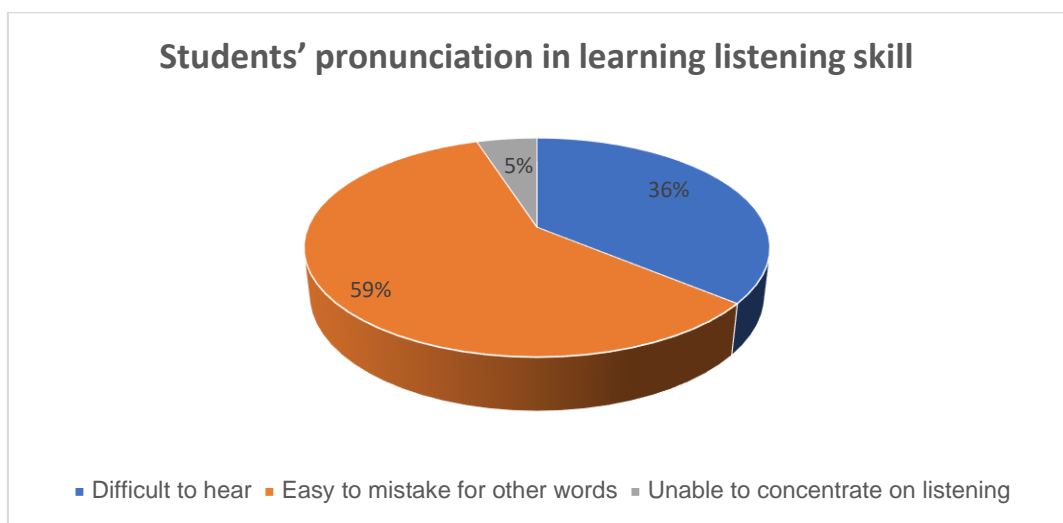
Pronunciation is an inevitable part of any spoken language, therefore, it greatly affects one's listening. Notably, HaiPhong University of Management and Technology students have a lot of difficulties in listening due to the fact that 73% of all students declare that their pronunciations are not good enough to understand spoken texts; and 27% are confident about their pronunciation in listening. ***The results indicates that failure of students in listening is due to poor pronunciation.***



Pie chart 2: Students' pronunciation in learning listening skill

2.2.3.3 Effects of connected speech to the students' learning listening

Spoken English is characterized by the features of connected speech which is totally different from Vietnamese language. These distinctive differences between two languages posed a great deal of difficulties for Vietnamese language learners in general and HPU second-year students in particular.



Pie chart 3: Students' performances in listening to connected speech

From the data collected, ***it is undeniable that students faced with problems of listening in connected speech***. 59% of the students make mistake for other words in listening. 36% find listening texts difficult to hear. Only 5% confess that he cannot concentrate on listening when connected speeches are made in listening.

2.2.3.4. *Effects of stress and intonation to the students' learning listening*

Stress and intonation are typical features of spoken English; thus to investigate to what extends these feature affect the students in understanding spoken language is necessary. As being asked how stress and intonation affect their listening comprehension, the students' responses are as follow:

| Great help to understand | Feel difficult to understand | Unable to concentrate on listening |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 59% | 32% | 9% |

Table 3: Students' attitudes towards stress and intonation in connected speech in listening

From the data collected it is interesting that stress and intonation do more good than harm; in other words, they help students understand the message (59%). 32% of the students find difficult to understand and 9% lack concentration on listening because of stress and intonation.

2.2.3.5. *Effects of unfamiliar and various accents to the students' learning listening*

| Options | Results |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Feel nervous | 27% |
| Feel unable to concentrate | 46% |
| Misunderstood spoken message | 27% |
| Cannot distinguish the speaker's age | 0% |

Table 4: Students' attitudes towards unfamiliar accents in spoken texts

The table shows that different accents of speakers lead to students' inability to concentrate on listening (46% agree with that). The same percentage (27%) comes from nervousness and misunderstanding. All of the students can distinguish the speaker's age. ***It is undeniable that unfamiliar accents become a big difficulty for learners in listening.***

2.2.3.6. *Students' perceptions on the effects of speech rate on the students' learning listening*

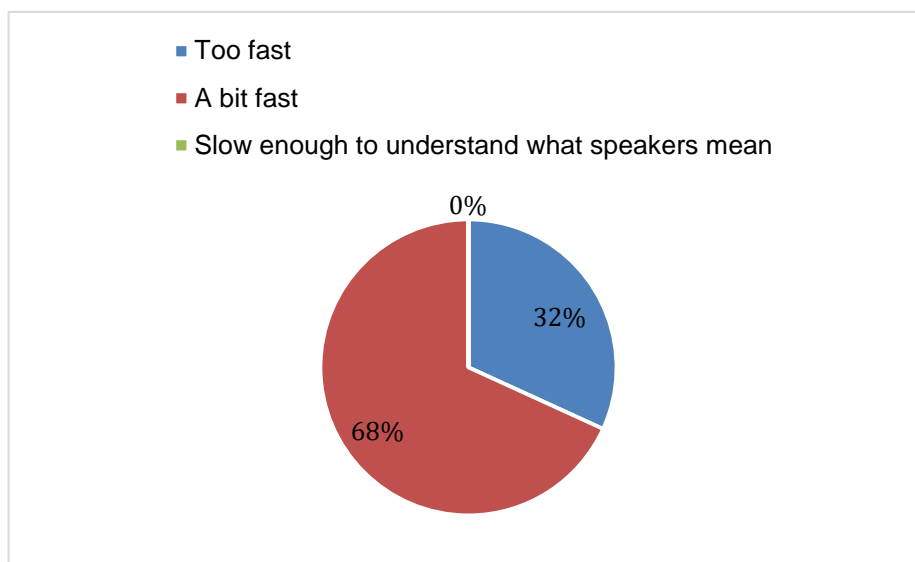


Table 5: Students' attitudes towards unfamiliar accents in spoken texts

As can be seen from the figure 5 above, the majority of the students (68%) remark that the speech rate of spoken English in the materials a bit fast meanwhile 32% consider it too fast. No one report that English is slow enough to understand what the speakers mean. ***It is clear that the students absolutely encounter certain difficulties in listening since they lack control over the speed at which the speakers speak.***

2.2.3.7. *Effects of hesitation on the students' learning listening*

| Options | Results |
|--|---------|
| Find difficult to concentrate on listening | 18% |
| Do not understand what speakers mean | 27% |
| Misunderstood what the speakers mean | 55% |

Table 5: Students' perceptions towards hesitation of connected speech in learning listening

The table shows that all students have difficulty in hesitation of connected speech when they listen. 55% misunderstand what the speakers mean. 27% do not know the messages conveyed. 18% are unable to concentrate in listening.

2.2.3.8. Effects of structure of spoken English on the students' learning listening

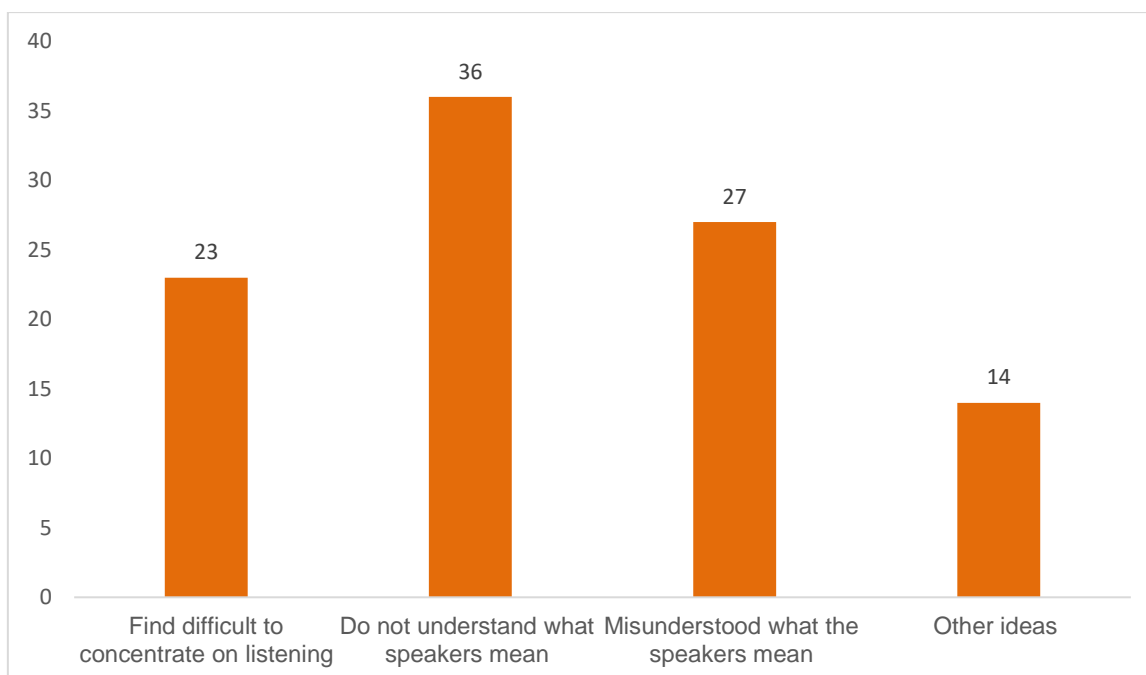


Table 6: Students' attitudes towards structure of spoken texts

The structure of spoken English is said to cause failure to understand the messages by 36% of the students. 27% have misunderstanding and 23% are unable to concentrate. Only 14% have the idea that structure of spoken English makes them easy to understand the spoken texts. **The figure indicates that the students in the research are not familiar with styles of spoken English, therefore, they have to encounter a great deal of troubles in listening.**

2.2.3.9. Effects of noise on the students' learning listening

| Options | Results |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Be unable to concentrate on listening | 82% |

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Misunderstand spoken messages | 0 % |
| Get nervous in listening | 18% |
| Other ideas | 0% |

Table 7: Effects of noise on the students' learning English listening

The table 7 shows that lack of concentration is the biggest difficulty caused by noise (82%). The rest of the students feel nervous in learning this skill. No one gets misunderstanding spoken messages. ***It is agreed that the noise is a great obstacle for second-year English major students in learning listening skill.***

2.2.4. Teaching methods to help students listen better and more effectively

When being asked “What has your teacher of listening skill done to help you listen better and more effectively?” The students give some answer as follows:

| Options | Results |
|---|----------------|
| Encourage you to activate your previous knowledge into listening texts | 100% |
| Create comfortable environment for you to exchange information before listening | 64% |
| Offer you as many chances for you to listen again as you expect | 45% |
| Provide you with certain key words | 91% |
| Explain clearly about the listening contexts | 45% |
| Suggest you essential listening strategies needed for each kind of listening tasks | 59% |
| Exploit different kinds of listening materials suitable to your listening ability and your interest | 23% |

Table 8: Teaching methods adopted in listening

As can be seen from the table that the teacher has used a variety of methods to help students overcome difficulties in listening. The most favorable way is that the teacher encourage students to activate their knowledge into listening texts (100% of the students agree). 91% report that they are provided with key words

related to listening texts. The other ways come from creating comfortable environment for you to exchange information before listening (64%), suggesting you essential listening strategies needed for each kind of listening tasks (59%), offering you as many chances for you to listen again as you expect (45%), explaining clearly about the listening contexts (45%), and exploiting different kinds of listening materials suitable to your listening ability and your interest (23%).

*The students' expectations toward teachers of listening

| Options | Results |
|--|----------------|
| Provide you with certain amount of words needed for listening activities | 73% |
| Equip you with necessary strategies in listening | 59% |
| Design more suitable listening tasks to students' listening levels and interests | 55% |
| Recommend and vary supplementing listening materials | 36% |
| Explain more clearly about the nature of spoken English | 55% |
| Be flexible in organizing listening activities | 32% |

Table 9: Expectations of the students towards teachers of listening skill

The table shows that the students wish to get a great deal of support from their teachers of listening to overcome the difficulties in listening. The majority of the students (73%) want to have necessary words before listening. 59% wish to be equipped with suitable listening strategies. The same percentage (55%) comes from designing suitable listening tasks and clear explanation about the nature of spoken English. 36% of the students like to be recommended with supplementing listening materials. The smallest number of the students (32%) want to have flexibility in listening activities.

* The students' expectations towards learning environment of learning listening skill

| Options | Results |
|--------------------|----------------|
| More well-equipped | 55% |
| More comfortable | 45% |
| Others | 0% |

Table 10: Expectations of the students towards listening learning environment

The table indicates that most of the students (55%) want to have more equipped learning environment. Others (45%) wish to have more comfortable one to have more effective learning in listening.

In short, HPU second-year English major students encounter a lot of difficulties in learning English listening skill. The problems are different in eight different categories including vocabulary, pronunciation, connected speech, accents, speed rate, spoken structures, repetition or hesitation and noise. Besides, teachers try to help their students to learn better by using various teaching methods and students themselves show their expectations towards teachers and learning environment to have more effective listening.

Chapter 3. Suggested solutions

The study backed by literature review and data collected has concluded that the listening difficulties encountered by second-year students fall into a lot of categories. Thus, it is essential to find out solutions to help the students overcome their problems in listening. The following are the recommendations for both teachers and students to do this.

2.3.1. Pre-listening activities

The pre-listening stage is very important because it is the base for the listening process. Pre-listening activities are the things to do before the students hear the passage to help them get the most out of what they are going to hear. In order to understand a piece of spoken discourse, the listener has to have not only knowledge of the language but also some background knowledge of the world. Pre-listening activities make it possible for all students to share common background knowledge before listening because it is impossible to expect all students to have the same level of knowledge about a particular world event.

Well-designed listening activity should be broken down into carefully sequenced "phases" that build on each other. The initial pre-listening phase should prepare students by helping them activate their background knowledge and clarify their expectations and assumptions about the text. An ideal pre-listening task is one in which the teacher, through carefully constructed questions, helps the students to activate the background information and language components needed to comprehend the text without "giving" this information to the students.



2.3.2. While-listening activities

While-listening stage is the time for students to listen to the text and understand it. It is not necessary for students to understand all about the listening text. They do not need to memorize the exact words or sentences that are said. They just need to catch the major ideas. There are various kinds of techniques which can be used to lead the students to focus on the general idea and the subject matter of the text they are listening to. Directed listening helps the students to extract the relevant information from the spoken discourse. Thus, teacher should ask more global rather than partial comprehension questions. Specific questions are asked only after the students have recognized the major ideas of the listening texts. Moreover, the teacher should prepare beforehand some forms or worksheets for the learners to fill in when they listen.

"Global comprehension" refers to understanding the very general idea(s) or gist of the listening text after the first or second listen. While the students might pick up some details after the first listen, our aim should be to help them focus on the general meaning first, so that they can establish a preliminary framework that will enable them to get more details in the subsequent listens.

"Holistic listening" means listening to the "whole" text while "segmental listening" involves listening to specific "segments" of the text. Holistic listening should precede segmental listening, and its aim is to allow students to develop strategies and build stamina in processing listening texts. Segmental listening is very beneficial while doing intensive listening.

Now that we're familiar with the terms, how should the listening activity proceed? How many times do we listen to the text? How can we check for global comprehension? Should we focus on segmental or holistic listening? How can we help students create focal points for subsequent listens?

In doing while-listening activities, it is important to remember the following:

- Allow students to listen to the text two or three times as a whole before going to intensive listening.
- Encourage student to focus on global meaning first and don't pose questions that ask them for details after the first listen.
- Encourage students to make assumptions after the first listen and verify them after the second listen.
- Focus your questions and attention at this stage on the segments of the texts that are accessible to the students in terms of vocabulary and structures. Always remember that students don't need to "get" everything in the text.

Especially we need Intensive Listening:

When designing listening activities keep in mind that, in addition to global comprehension, we need to focus our attention on intensive listening. This is crucial to help students develop effective listening strategies and build bottom-up listening skills, in addition to the top-down skills that are emphasized in global listening activities.

Intensive listening involves zeroing in on particular segments of the text, and this should come only after the students have developed global comprehension of the text. Intensive listening may target different goals such as

- Getting more detailed understanding of some segments of the text,
- Transcribing certain segments in the text,
- Guessing the meaning of a word or phrase from context,
- Looking at certain grammatical structures in the text to see how they can aid comprehension, etc.

Intensive listening activities can be done in class or in the lab or can be given as homework assignments. At the lower levels of instruction, consider doing global comprehension activities in class to work on strategies and utilize group work, and assign the intensive listening part for homework.



2.3.3. Post-listening activities

A post-listening activity represents a follow up to the listening activity and aims to utilize the knowledge gained from listening for the development of other skills such as speaking or writing. If we have listened to a TV program presenting a certain point of view regarding health care, for example, we can ask the students to do some research and identify some opposing views to present them in class. Alternatively, we may want to engage the students in a discussion of the merits of the views that were expressed in the listening segment.

Like post-reading activities, post-listening activities allow for recycling and further activation of vocabulary and structures as long as they are interesting and engaging and are carefully thought out.

As it has been introduced in the background, in this stage, students take the information they have gained from the listening text and use it for another purpose. Some following activities can be applied for this stage.



2.3.4. Recommendations for English majors of HPU

The students want to learn the listening better, they themselves ought to try their best to change their bad habits of listening passively and to improve their background knowledge. Today there are many ways to learn English, to improve your listening skills, every day you should spend 5 to 10 minutes or more to listen to a short English news. According to the survey, most students had habits of listening to every word in the recording so they soon got tired and frustrated of listening. As a consequence, they answered the listening tasks mainly by guessing but not by understanding the text. It is not necessary for learners to understand every word in order to understand the information they need from the recording. Therefore, learners should learn to focus on the message. When listening, the learners should summarize the ideas they listen to and take notes. They had better

not translate the listening text into the mother tongue, but try to understand it in the target language.



Moreover, outside the listening class, students have to practice regularly such as listening to English songs, listening in VOA, watching foreign channels (such as: HBO, CINEMAX, you can watch the American films to improve your English listening comprehension) so as to get acquainted with the native accent in normal speech. In addition, they must enrich themselves with general knowledge of the English speaking countries, English language, and social and cultural knowledge.



**I LOVE
LEARNING
ENGLISH WITH SONGS**



**BEST
MOVIES
To Learn
English**

2.3.5. Recommendations for teachers

Teachers play a crucial part in improving learners' listening skill. Teaching methods was the most considered factor that the learners mentioned in the survey. In teaching the listening skill to the beginners, the teachers have to pay attention to improving student's listening skills.



Additionally, teachers should provide more interesting topics for further listening. The authentic listening material is usually interesting because the listeners are exposed to the real life. With the listening text in the text book, the teachers can create more exciting activities to motivate students to take part in. Meanwhile, to help the learners omit their bad habits; they should be encouraged not to panic when they miss a piece of information.



On the other hand, teachers have responsibility for providing necessary background knowledge which relates to the listening texts for the learners before they listen. In addition, teachers can warm up by exciting games which introduce more about the culture, society and countries in the world. For example, pre-listening, teachers can hold games to the students, such as true/false statements used for prediction: the teacher writes 5 -10 statements on the board based on the main ideas in the listening text. Only half statements are true. Students work in pairs and guess these statements true. The teacher does not say they are right or wrong until they listen to the text. The requirement should be clear and also given before listening so that the learners can draw a clear purpose to listen. It is easier for them to catch the message they need. In teaching, teachers should require the learners to obey some regulations. For example, let students listen in a certain number of times, then ask them to express their own ideas with evidence and let students discuss together before giving confirmation. When checking their answers, teachers should not be led by some strong students, but all of them must be asked and get information. Because of the various differences in the learners, teachers should upgrade the level of the listening tasks in order to encourage them.



PART III: CONCLUSION

This chapter will deal with a summary of the major findings, limitations of the study and some suggestions for further studies.

3.1. Summary of the study

To reach what the author aimed at this study; the study was divided into four chapters with their own purpose. The first chapter briefly covers the theories related to the study. The second chapter presented the overview on situation of learning English listening skill at HaiPhong University of Management and Technology. The third chapter presented the research methodology and author's findings of the approach to listening at HaiPhong University of Management and Technology through the questionnaires and interview. This chapter also helps the author find the answers for three research questions that stated in the introduction. The last chapter is some recommendations and suggestions to improve English listening skill.

3.2. Recommendations

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 second-year students in Faculty of Foreign Language which account for a small number of students at HaiPhong University of Management and Technology. 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. 33 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 at HaiPhong University of Management and Technology.

All in all, despite the limitation of the study, 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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APPENDIX

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES FOR STUDENTS

This survey questionnaire is designed for my graduation paper namely: *“A study on difficulties and solutions in English listening of the second-year students in HaiPhong University of Management and Technology”*.

In completing these questions, 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. All your personal information as well as your answers will be kept confident and not be used for the other purposes.

Thanks for your help!

I. Personal information:

1. Your gender:

A. Male B. Female

2. How old are you?

.....

3. How long have you been learning English?

A. About 5 years

B. About 6 years

C. About 7 years

D. Over 7 years

II. Your opinion on studying listening skill

4. In your opinion, English listening skill is.....

A. Very difficult

B. Difficult

C. Quite difficult

D. Not difficult

E. Others.....

5. Do you like English listening lessons at class?

A. I like very much

B. I like

C. I don't mind

D. I don't like

6. What do you think about the importance of English listening skill?

A. Very important

B. Important

C. Quite important

D. Not important

E. Others.....

7. How much time do you spend on listening English?

A. 3 hours or more a week

B. From 1 hour to 3 hours a week

C. 3 hours or more a week

D. Sometime

8. How often do you have problems in your listening skill?

A. Always

B. Often

C. Sometimes

D. Rarely

E. Others

III. The causes affecting to listening English skill

8. Which of the following reasons make you difficult to learn listening English?

A. Lack of equipment

B. The inability to concentrat

C. No motivation for learning

D. Fast speed speaking

E. No motivation for learning

F. Linguistic challenges

G. Too many different sources of materials

H. No guidance

I. Other:.....

9. In listening classes, you often

A. Try to listen to every words so you can't catch up the speed of the speech

B. Only listen to stressed words

C. Need to listen more than three times to understand

D. Feel tired and unconcentrated when listen more than three times

E. Other:.....

IV. Activities for improving English listening skill

10. What listening activities do you like best?

A. Tick off (phrases/ pictures/items)

B. Complete the missing words

C. Choose the correct answers

D. Answer comprehension questions

E. Other:

11. What should you do before listening? (more than one choice)

A. Should pre-taught some related new words

B. Should predict the content of the listening texts by the activities that the teacher gives

C. Both A&B

D. Do nothing

E. Other:

12. While listening, you should:

A. Listen and take notes

B. Listen and answer the questions

C. Listen only

D. Other:

Thank you for your cooperation!

