

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



KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH : NGÔN NGỮ ANH - NHẬT

Sinh viên : Vương Thanh Hiền

HẢI PHÒNG – 2024

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**DIFFICULTIES IN LISTENING AND
UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH OF THE FIRST YEAR
NON-MAJORS AT HAI PHONG UNIVERSITY OF
MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY**

KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY

NGÀNH : NGÔN NGỮ ANH - NHẬT

Sinh viên : Vương Thanh Hiền

Giảng viên hướng dẫn : ThS.Nguyễn Thị Hoa

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NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Sinh viên: Vương Thanh Hiền Mã SV: 2012753001

Lớp : NA2401N

Ngành : Ngôn ngữ Anh-Nhật

Tên đề tài: Difficulties in listening and understanding English of the first
year non-majors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology

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 Hoa

Học hàm, học vị : Thạc sĩ

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

Nội dung hướng dẫn: Difficulties in listening and understanding English of the first year non-majors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày ... tháng ... năm 2024

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày ... tháng ... năm 2024

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Sinh viên

Vương Thanh Hiền

Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Giảng viên hướng dẫn

ThS. Nguyễn Thị Hoa

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm 2024

XÁC NHẬN CỦA KHOA

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: Nguyễn Thị Hoa
Đơn vị công tác: Trường Đại Học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng
Họ và tên sinh viên: Vương Thanh Hiền
Chuyên ngành: Ngôn ngữ Anh - Nhật
Nội dung hướng dẫn: Difficulties in listening and understanding English of the first year non-majors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology

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 đồ 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 CHĂM PHẢN BIỆN

Họ và tên giảng viên:

Đơn vị công tác: Trường Đại học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng

Họ và tên sinh viên: Vương Thanh Hiền

Chuyên ngành: Ngôn ngữ Anh – Nhật

Đề tài tốt nghiệp: Difficulties in listening and understanding English of the first year non-majors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology

1. Phần nhận xét của giáo viên chăm phản biện

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2. Những mặt còn hạn chế

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viên chăm phản biện

Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

Giảng viên chăm phản biện

(Ký và ghi rõ tên)

ABSTRACT

In Asia, and in Vietnam specifically, most non-major students consider listening comprehension to be the most challenging subject. Both linguistic and non-linguistic elements have been identified by researchers as the two primary determinants of listening proficiency. A survey was carried out among 35 Hai Phong University of Management and Technology's non-English major students who are currently enrolled in the mandatory English program, which corresponds to levels A1 through B1. So, the purpose of this study is to examine the challenges encountered by first-year non-English majors while also offering recommendations for how to enhance listening skills through both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The research was conducted using data collection tools such as survey questionnaires and interview questions. I have done my best to complete this thesis based on my personal experiences and knowledge of English learning methodology in the hopes of enhancing students' listening capacity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the process of doing this graduation paper, I have received a lot of essential assistance, precious ideas and timely encouragements from my teacher, family and friends.

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Mrs. Nguyen Thi Hoa, who has wholeheartedly guided and helped me. Thank you for following every step to guide me, patiently spending a lot of time reading, editing and meeting with me. Her comments, discussions and assessments during the research process helped me have a more comprehensive and profound view. Her help helped us acquire more specialized knowledge, as well as learn more about how to present a research paper, so that we can best complete our graduation thesis. Once again, I sincerely thank you.

I also would like to take this opportunity to convey my sincere thanks to all my teachers in the English faculty, Hai Phong University of Management and Technology, who have taught me basic knowledge for four years to complete this study.

Due to not having much practical experience, it is difficult to avoid mistakes during the essay writing process. I hope to receive evaluation and suggestions from my teachers to help me complete my graduation paper and improve my knowledge.

Finally, I would like to wish teachers good health, success, and happiness.

Hai Phong, 2024

Student

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Meaning
HPU	Hai Phong University of Management and Technology
TOEFL	Test Of English as a Foreign Language
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
FCE	First Certificate in English
KET	Key English Test
PET	Preliminary English Test

PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

In life, language is very important. We cannot downplay the significance of English in the modern process of internationalization and globalization for social progress.

Although English is not an official language in most countries, it is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language and used to evaluate learners' language proficiency in international English tests namely TOEFL, IELTS or FCE in four skills. Listening - Speaking - Reading - Writing are 4 important skills in English and are all skills that language learners must achieve. Listening is considered the most difficult skill due to the complexity and subtle nature of listening comprehension in a second or foreign language.

As a researcher, I would like to present the thesis title "Difficulties in listening and understanding English of the first year non-majors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology" for several reasons.

First of all, listening is the most important skill in communication in the real life. Studies have shown that when we communicate, we spend about 40-50% of our time listening, much larger than 25-30% speaking, 11-16% reading and only 9% writing. People who are learning a language must listen correctly before they can speak or read correctly. Listening is a useful means of providing learners with comprehensible input, which is an essential part of the entire language learning process. Without understanding input appropriately, learning simply can not get any improvement. In addition, without listening skill, no communication can be achieved (Cross, 1998). Communication allows people to comprehend one another. Communication is merely the transfer of information from one person to another. They understand others through their words. The communication process is complete as long as they understand each other, regardless of the language. Listening and speaking are the two most important aspects of communication out of the four language skills. They are heavily reliant on one another. Of course, if we cannot hear, we cannot speak. If we don't understand spoken language, we may miss important information and be unable to respond or respond inappropriately.

Second, listening skills is the most difficult in learning a foreign language. Listening, like reading, is a receptive skill but unlike reading, the reader can rely on the text and has the opportunity to refer back to read and re-read the text; besides, readers can control the reading speed and have more time to understand its meaning; meanwhile, the listener must understand the message without any text and only once.

Last but not least, developing the skill to listen involves a significant amount of time and work. That is why many people become bored and abandon their efforts to learn how to listen.

Like many other universities, many students at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology, especially first-year non-English major, are face with many difficulties when they listening. Listening skills not only broadens students' knowledge but also prepare them to improve other language abilities such as speaking and writing. That pushes individuals to seek out effective listening practices that will help them enhance their listening skills.

This justifies my decision to choose this thesis for my study.

2. Previous Studies

When researching this topic, the researcher looked into previous studies of other researchers.

Questionnaires, IELTS tests, and interviews were used in “A study of English Listening Problems and Listening Proficiency of Business Students at Bangkok University” by Asst. Prof. Watjana Suriyatham analyzes the main reason for students’ listening problems, which is the listening text. Furthermore, a lack of practice with listening skills and exposure to a variety of listening materials are significant factors. More importantly, the outcomes of this study assisted teachers in recognizing student’ listening difficulties. In this study, the author mainly brings out some solution for teaching effectively. My study presents solutions for learning English listening skills instead.

Another study titled “Difficulties in learning listening skills of first-year English majors at HPU” by student Nguyen Thi Minh Nguyet (2011). The author has

identified the difficulties of listening and found certain methods to improve listening abilities, although they have limitations.

According to the previous curriculum, the textbook used was the Solution book by Tim Falla and Paul A Davies, but now to serve the exit exam and certification exam, students have studied the new curriculum and studied the book Think 1 (Cambridge). Therefore, I make sure my research is completely different from previous research and gives some more aspects that affect listening as well as more precise tips and suggestions.

3. Aims of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out the difficulties in English listening of non-major students in order to find effective listening teaching methods to help students improve their listening ability. Specifically, the research aims to find answers to the following questions:

- What is the current state of listening ability of first year non-English major students at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology?
- Which listening skills do students not apply well when listening to English?

Based on the findings, the research tries to provide methods to help students overcome the problems in order to effectively develop their listening skills.

4. Research Subjects

The object of this study is “Difficulties in listening and understanding English of the first-year non-major at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology” and some proposed solutions. Furthermore, this study was not able to reach all students at HPU. It is only freshman of the Faculty of Information Technology. They come from different provinces and learn basic English according to university-level standards. Depending on their ability in English classes, some students are good at English while others have lower English proficiency.

5. Scope of the Study

Due to limitations in time and knowledge, and lack of reference materials, this study cannot cover all issues of listening skills. It only focuses on discovering common difficulties that students encounter in listening skills and offers some solutions to help students improve. It is carried out over the course of a month during the second semester of the 2023-2024 school year. However, the study only involved about 35 K27 students from the Faculty of Information Technology. Therefore, the results of the study are limited to the students who participated in this study, and the findings may influence generalization to a larger population of students. It can also serve as a resource for anyone looking to improve their English listening skills.

6. Research Methodology

To meet the research purpose, this study was completed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Data were collected using survey questionnaires and interview questions at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology. The main method of the research is to use a quantitative survey questionnaire.

Furthermore, to achieve the set goal, the researcher collected some information based on qualitative methods in his interviews to ensure that the data would be more accurate and reliable. The combination of the above two different methods will provide reliable data, based on which conclusions and recommendations will be drawn in the following sections. Quantitative data are presented in tabular form while qualitative data collected from open-ended questionnaires and interviews are presented by excerpts of relevant responses. The data were then analyzed both descriptively and interpretively. The goal of using questionnaires and interview questions as research materials to collect data in this study is to calibrate the data and overcome the limitations or disadvantages of other methods. This method can provide good support for other methods to help consolidate research results.

7. Organization of the Study

The study is divided into five main parts:

Part I is an Introduction, this chapter provides an overview of the research such as rationale, significance, aims, research questions, scope, methods and design of the study.

Part II is Development - the core of this chapter is divided into two chapters:

Chapter 1: Point out theoretical difficulties that need to be solved in learning: Theoretical basis related to English listening skills, English listening skill strategies, difficulties affecting English listening skills.

Chapter 2: Methodology - This chapter provides a detailed introduction to: participants; the textbook, resources and materials; instruments for collecting data; data collection procedures; and finally, a conclusion.

Chapter 3 is Data Analysis - studies on findings discussions of findings

Chapter 4 is the results and discussion, then the proposed solutions and finally some recommendations for teachers and students after the survey process.

Part III is the conclusion, which summarizes what was given in previous chapters, the limitations of the study, and makes recommendations for further study.

REFERENCE

APPENDIXES

PART II: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEWS

1. Overview of Listening

The goal of this chapter is to go over the theories related to the study's topic matter. The literature review contains four sections: Section one resolves definitions of listening; section two focuses on forms of listening; section three deals with the significance of listening; and the final section is on methods of listening comprehension.

1.1. Definition of listening skill

Listening has many different definitions in language learning approaches. Listening is described as the ability to recall and comprehend information conveyed orally. Listening is not only crucial but also tough, which is causing problems for many language learners. That is the reason why more and more people pay attention to this skill. So far, there have been a number of definitions of listening by different linguists.

According to Thomlison's (1984) listening is “the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This process involves understanding a speaker's accent and pronunciation, the speaker's grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of the meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously”.

Wolvin and Coakley (1982) regarded listening: “the process of receiving, attending to and assigning meaning to aural stimuli”.

Pearson (1983) stated “Listening involves the simultaneous organization and combination of skills in Phonology, Syntax, Semantics, and knowledge of the text structure, all of which seem to be controlled by the cognitive process. Thus it can be said that though not fully realized, the listening skill is essential in acquiring language proficiency”.

Hirsch (1986) gave another definition: “Listening as an aspect of skills: involves neurological response and interpretations of sounds to understand and to give

meaning by reacting, selecting meaning, remembering, attending, analyzing and including previous experience”.

Bentley and Bacon (1996) stated that listening, an important part of the second language learning process has also been defined as an active process during which the listener constructs meaning from oral input.

According to Brown (2001), listening is “not merely the process of unidirectional receiving of audible symbols”. He supposed that one aspect of listening comprehension which is “the psychomotor process of receiving sound waves through the ear and transmitting nerve impulses to the brain”. Hence, listening comprises of three elements: the sender, the message and the listener.

Gary Buck (2001), for example, points out that “listening comprehension is an active process of constructing meaning and this is done by applying knowledge to the incoming sound” in which “a number different types of knowledge are involved: both linguistic knowledge and non-linguistic knowledge”.

Scott Shelton (2008) thinks that listening effectively is a demanding and involving process. One must be able to deal with different accents or pronunciation, unfamiliar lexical items and syntactic structures, competing background noise, and also make a conscious effort to not switch off or become distracted while listening. All of this must be achieved and dealt with more or less simultaneously in order to identify and understand the meaning in any given message.

To sum up, listening skills are an individual’s ability to focus on listening and understanding in order to fully process information, opinions, and emotions from others. Listening skills include attention and concentration, the ability to understand and interact with the person speaking, and the ability to respond appropriately and appropriately to any context.

1.2. Types of Listening

The two main types of listening - the foundations of all listening sub-types are:

4. Discriminative Listening
5. Comprehensive Listening

Discriminative listening is first developed at a very early age – perhaps even before birth, in the womb. This is the most basic form of listening and does not involve the understanding of the meaning of words or phrases but merely the different sounds that are produced. In early childhood, for example, a distinction is made between the sounds of the voices of the parents – the voice of the father sounds different to that of the mother.

Discriminative listening develops through childhood and into adulthood. As we grow older and develop and gain more life experience, our ability to distinguish between different sounds is improved. Not only can we recognize different voices, but we also develop the ability to recognize subtle differences in the way that sounds are made – this is fundamental to ultimately understanding what these sounds mean. Differences include many subtleties, recognizing foreign languages, distinguishing between regional accents and clues to the emotions and feelings of the speaker.

Being able to distinguish the subtleties of sound made by somebody who is happy or sad, angry or stressed, for example, ultimately adds value to what is actually being said and, of course, does aid comprehension. When discriminative listening skills are combined with visual stimuli, the resulting ability to ‘listen’ to body-language enables us to begin to understand the speaker more fully – for example recognizing somebody is sad despite what they are saying or how they are saying it.

Comprehensive listening involves understanding the message or messages that are being communicated. Like discriminative listening, comprehensive listening is fundamental to all listening sub-types.

In order to be able use comprehensive listening and therefore gain understanding the listener first needs appropriate vocabulary and language skills. Using overly complicated language or technical jargon, therefore, can be a barrier to comprehensive listening. Comprehensive listening is further complicated by the fact that two different people listening to the same thing may understand the message in two different ways. This problem can be multiplied in a group setting, like a classroom or business meeting where numerous different meanings can be derived from what has been said.

Comprehensive listening is complimented by sub-messages from non-verbal communication, such as the tone of voice, gestures and other body language. These non-verbal signals can greatly aid communication and comprehension but can also confuse and potentially lead to misunderstanding. In many listening situations it is vital to seek clarification and use skills such as reflection aid comprehension.

Discriminative and comprehensive listening are prerequisites for specific listening types.

Listening types can be defined by the goal of the listening. The three main types of listening most common in interpersonal communication are:

- Informational Listening (Listening to Learn)
- Critical Listening (Listening to Evaluate and Analyze)
- Therapeutic or Empathetic Listening (Listening to Understand Feeling and Emotion)

*Informational Listening

Whenever you listen to learn something, you are engaged in informational listening. This is true in many day-to-day situations, in education and at work, when you listen to the news, watch a documentary, when a friend tells you a recipe or when you are talked-through a technical problem with a computer – there are many other examples of informational listening too.

Although all types of listening are ‘active’ – they require concentration and a conscious effort to understand. Informational listening is less active than many of the other types of listening. When we’re listening to learn or be instructed we are taking in new information and facts, we are not criticizing or analyzing. Informational listening, especially in formal settings like in work meetings or while in education, is often accompanied by note taking – a way of recording key information so that it can be reviewed later.

*Critical Listening

We can be said to be engaged in critical listening when the goal is to evaluate or scrutinize what is being said. Critical listening is a much more active behavior than informational listening and usually involves some sort of problem solving

or decision making. Critical listening is akin to critical reading; both involve analysis of the information being received and alignment with what we already know or believe. Whereas informational listening may be mostly concerned with receiving facts and/or new information - critical listening is about analyzing opinion and making a judgment.

When the word ‘critical’ is used to describe listening, reading or thinking it does not necessarily mean that you are claiming that the information you are listening to is somehow faulty or flawed. Rather, critical listening means engaging in what you are listening to by asking yourself questions such as, ‘what is the speaker trying to say?’ or ‘what is the main argument being presented?’, ‘how does what I’m hearing differ from my beliefs, knowledge or opinion?’. Critical listening is, therefore, fundamental to true learning.

Many day-to-day decisions that we make are based on some form of ‘critical’ analysis, whether it be critical listening, reading or thought. Our opinions, values and beliefs are based on our ability to process information and formulate our own feelings about the world around us as well as weigh up the pros and cons to make an informed decision.

It is often important, when listening critically, to have an open-mind and not be biased by stereotypes or preconceived ideas. By doing this you will become a better listener and broaden your knowledge and perception of other people and your relationships.

*Therapeutic or Empathic Listening

Empathic listening involves attempting to understand the feelings and emotions of the speaker – to put yourself into the speaker’s shoes and share their thoughts.

Empathy is a way of deeply connecting with another person and therapeutic or empathic listening can be particularly challenging. Empathy is not the same as sympathy, it involves more than being compassionate or feeling sorry for somebody else – it involves a deeper connection – a realization and understanding of another person’s point of view.

We are all capable of empathic listening and may practice it with friends, family and colleagues. Showing empathy is a desirable trait in many interpersonal

relationships – you may well feel more comfortable talking about your own feelings and emotions with a particular person. They are likely to be better at listening empathetically to you than others, this is often based on similar perspectives, experiences, beliefs and values – a good friend, your spouse, a parent or sibling for example.

1.3. Significance of Listening

Nobody can deny the importance of listening skills in foreign language learning because the key to learning a language is to receive input. Listening is the first language mode that forms the basis of cognitive development and the most common communicative activity in daily life. Morley (1991) stated that listening is the thing that people do most of their time. “We have two ears but only one mouth”, that is the reason why people listen more than they speak, read and write.

To understand more deeply about the importance of listening, it is necessary to distinguish between listening and hearing. Hearing is an accidental and automatic brain response to sound that requires no effort. We are surrounded by sounds most of the time. People can hear a variety of sounds on a daily basis, including those made by bicycles, airplanes, lawn mowers, and so on. People usually ignore them. Listening, on the other hand, is purposeful and focused rather than accidental. Therefore, it requires motivation and effort. Hearing is a part of five senses (hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and looking) and a part of listening as well. If hearing is through the ears, then listening is through the mind. The purpose of listening is to understand the meanings expressed by a speaker. Hence, listening is essential not only as a receptive skill but also to the development of spoken language proficiency.

According to Devine (1982), listening is the primary means by which incoming ideas and information are taken in. In fact, students from kindergarten to high school were expected to listen to 65-90 percent of the time. This is easily demonstrated at schools in Vietnam, where the main activity of students in class is listening to teachers. Wolvin and Coakley (1988) concluded that, both in and out of the classroom, listening consumes more of daily communication time than other forms of verbal communication. Listening is central to the lives of students throughout all levels of educational development.

For non-major students at HPU, the importance of English and listening skills is undeniable. It is a bridge that helps students easily reach international friends as well as find desired jobs for the future. When it comes to 4 skills in learning a language, people can easily list them. List them as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, not everyone understands that it is also an easy process for language learners. Listening is the first step and a solid foundation for developing other skills.

1.4. Processes of listening comprehension

As mentioned above, listening is the psychological process of receiving, constructing meaning, and responding to spoken or nonverbal messages. There are four steps in the listening process.

The first step is receiving. It refers to the reaction caused by sound waves stimulating the sensory receptors of the ear, which is a physical reaction.

The next step is understanding. It is the stage where you understand the speaker's meaning in thoughts and emotional tone.

The third step is memorization. This is an important listening process because it means that an individual not only receives and interprets a message but also adds it to the mind's storage bank. However, just as our attention is selective, so is our memory - what is remembered can be completely different from what was originally seen or heard.

The final step is evaluation. It involves evaluating messages in some way. Sometimes, you can try to gauge the speaker's underlying intentions or motives. Often this evaluation process occurs without much conscious awareness. It can be concluded that listening is a complex process.

When you have ears, you can hear everything within earshot, but that doesn't necessarily mean you understand what you hear. On the other hand, listening is a skill.

2. Difficulties in learning listening skill

2.1. What problems do students have with listening?

Another point of view has been expanded by Willis (1981, p.134) who lists a series of skills for listening dealing with problems, which she calls "enabling skills". To quote a few are:

Predict what people are going to talk about:

- Guessing at unknown words or phrases without panicking.
- Using one's own knowledge of the subject to help one understand.
- Understanding inferred information.

My personal classroom experiences and those of many writers that I have read on the subject seem to suggest that difficulty in listening come from four sources: i) the message to be listened to, ii) the speaker, iii) the listener, and iv) the physical setting. Most students find it difficult to listen to a message than to read the same message written in their text book, or elsewhere. Since, they can not control the speed of listening, it becomes a problem, whereas, they can take their time with reading, stopping and going back over the message at will. They can even consult a dictionary if they so choose. Giving dictations or having the students dictate to each other, I find there are some specific areas of vocabulary that give special problems. My students have problems 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".

Up until this point, I've dealt with pupils' difficulty listening. It is now time to offer ways for improving their listening skills. Foreign-language students typically spend more time reading than listening, and hence lack exposure to various types of hearing. Students get tired of spending so much of their listening time analyzing unfamiliar words and sentences.

2.2. What makes Listening so difficult?

There are eight characteristics of spoken language which makes listening difficult (Brown, 2001, p.252).

2.2.1. In spoken language, due to memory limitations we break down speech into smaller groups of words. They are called clustering. For examples: "a lot of", "a number of", etc. Therefore when listening, learners have to learn to pick out manageable clusters of words, avoiding trying to listen to every word of the speech. It is not necessary and makes learners become distracted.

2.2.2. Moreover, spoken language has a great number of redundancies. They are the result of rephrasing, repetitions, elaborations and some insertions such as “As I have said” and so on. At first, learners may get trouble with this. They are easy to be confused. However, with some training learners can take advantage of redundancies to have more time and extra information.

2.2.3. On the other hand, spoken language also has many reduced forms. It may be phonological, morphological, syntactic or pragmatic like “you're” instead of “you are”, “won't” instead of “will not”, or “can't” instead of “cannot”. These reductions are really significant difficulties to the learners, especially beginners when they start getting to know the full form of English language.

2.2.4. The next characteristic of spoken language is performance variables. As a result of unplanned action, spoken language consists of a lot of hesitations (“er”, “uhm”), false starts, pauses and corrections. They make the listeners confused.

2.2.5. Colloquial language is another problem that can interfere listeners in real life listening because they are familiar with standard written language. In monologues and dialogues, the appearance of idioms, slang, reduced forms and shared cultural language are common.

2.2.6. In listening, learners need to comprehend language delivered at varying rates of speed and delivered with few pauses because they do not have opportunity to stop speaker and listen again many times.

2.2.7. English is a stress-timed language so it is very important for learners to understand its prosodic features. By stress, rhythm, and intonation, listeners can interpret more subtle messages like sarcasm, endearment, insult, solicitation, praise, etc.

2.2.8. The last but not least, interaction is also an element that plays a large role in listening comprehension. Language learners should be taught the instruction in the two-way nature of listening. They have to learn to continue the process of comprehending. Some rules of interaction are negotiation, clarification, attending signals, turn-taking, topic nomination, maintenance, and termination.

In short, it is necessary for language learners to understand all of these characteristics of spoken language in order that they get more ease in interaction in general and in listening in particular.

2.3. Factors affecting the English listening

2.3.1. Lack of motivation

Motivation is an important term in language learning and it is multidimensional. Motivation is a process. It is not a goal, more like a product. On the contrary, it is a tool that helps us achieve our goals. At first, we feel excited and set a goal and then decide to take appropriate action. Then we try to stay interested and fight to fulfill our purpose. This process plays a big role, especially in language learning because it makes language learning more meaningful. Slavin (1997, 345) describes this process in general terms: “Motivation is what gets you going, helps you go, and determines where you are trying to go”. As evident, motivation provides students a direction to follow. It is a concept that reveals why people act and think as they do (Weiner 1992 in Wlodkowski (1999)).

These aspects of motivation are supported by Brophy’s (1998, 3) motivational approach: “Motivation is a theoretical construct used to explain the beginning, direction, intensity, and maintenance of behavior, especially behavior towards the goal. In the classroom context, the concept of student motivation is used to explain the degree to which students invest in attention and effort in different activities which may or may not be something that the teacher desire”.

Obviously, motivation is one of the important backbones of the learning process in student life, so many studies have appreciated this concept. Lack of motivation is still a big problem for both teachers and students in foreign language lessons. It is important to identify the causes of students’ lack of motivation and know how to deal with students who lack motivation.

Motivation is essential when doing anything, even when learning something. In language learning, learners need motivation because it helps them try and develop their understanding of a new language. Motivated, learners want to succeed. Therefore, without it, the person will certainly not make the necessary efforts. In addition, Harmer (2003, 10) points out some characteristics of good

learners in the classroom, including being willing to listen, willing to read, willing to ask questions, willing to think about learning, and willing to accept receive adjustments.

Therefore, part of a teacher's job is to encourage students and create a good learning atmosphere for them.

2.3.2. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the most important thing we must master. Otherwise, we cannot understand what people say. According to Penny Ur (2001), Jack C. Richard (2002), pronunciation is the sound of language or phonology, tension and rhythm, and intonation and can insert each sound and segment and ultrasound. From the above, we can conclude that the interpreter is a segmented sound generator and the segments are accepted or understood.

People who learn English pronunciation well can understand even if they make mistakes in other areas, while poor learners will not understand, even if their grammar is perfect. Pronunciation is one of the most important things that students must master to communicate fluently. According to Fangzhi (1998: 39), it is important to pay attention to the pronunciation as it results in the message that one can be passed on or not by others. This leads to the fact that only when we pronounce correctly, can we speak and listen correctly. In addition, Gilbert (quoted in Otlowsky, 2004: 3) stated that if someone could not hear English well, she or he would be ignored We can conclude from above that pronunciation has a significant effect on the meaning of what others say and hear.

2.3.3. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a key element required for teaching and learning a foreign language. It serves as the foundation for the development of all subsequent skills, including reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking, and writing. When dealing with a native English speaker, viewing a movie without subtitles, listening to a favorite English song, reading a text, or writing a letter to a friend, the learner must always employ vocabulary.

The reality is that students often have difficulty listening to English well. Their conversation was immediately interrupted because they did not know what the

speaker was saying. And the main cause of such communication problems is lack of vocabulary. Other students are facing the problem of forgetting words right after the teacher suggests the meaning or after looking at them in the dictionary, and this is also the cause of vocabulary deficiency. The more students learn, the easier it is to remember.

Cardenas (2001) believes that vocabulary is used to determine the level of proficiency of students in the communication process. It is said that vocabulary is an essential ingredient that determines how much students can communicate successfully. Therefore, learning vocabulary is very important for students learning English. That's why everyone who learns English or some other language must know this. A rich vocabulary can assist them in listening. If they don't know the meaning of the words, they just listen without understanding the message of the words.

2.3.4. Accent

According to Goh (1999), 66% of learners mentioned a speaker's accent as one of the most significant factors that affect listener comprehension. In reality, with the same language, listening to a countryman is easier than listening to a person who comes from another place.

2.3.5. Basic background knowledge

Background knowledge is also an important factor that can influence listening. Even if a person has mastered the skill of analyzing speech accurately and automatically, a lack of basic background knowledge can impair listening comprehension (Samuels, 1984). Underwood believes that a lack of background information and contextual knowledge is an obstacle to listening comprehension. Students may understand the surface meaning of what they are hearing, but they still do not know the meaning.

2.3.6. The speed rate of speech

Speaking speed has a significant impact on listening comprehension. Brown (1989) suggested that faster speaking rates negatively affect comprehension. Similarly, Korst (1997) conducted a study in which students were allowed to control the speaking rate of input text provided by a computer. He discovered

that a slower rate of speech leads to better comprehension. Therefore, students have difficulty forming meaning from information that is conveyed quickly and are unable to control the speaker's speed. Using contractions, linking and unpicking while speaking are reasons why native speakers speak faster. This possible shortening in terms of phonology, morphology, and syntax poses a big problem for learners, especially beginners who have not practiced listening to English much.

3. Conclusion of chapter 1

Listening skill is one of the four basic important skills of English as well as of any language. However, this is also a skill that many English learners encounter many obstacles and are even afraid of. You may not know it, but listening well will greatly support your speaking practice. Once you can hear clearly, talking to native speakers will not be as difficult as you thought. Surely, many people also think that communication skills are very difficult and they want to ignore them. But they don't know that as long as they have good listening skills, the process of learning English communication will be completed faster. Besides, if you listen well, improving your vocabulary will be much easier.

There are many difficulties an individual may face in understanding a talk, lecture or conversation in a second language (and sometimes even in their first language). Factors that cause difficulty include the speaker speaking quickly, noise, the listener's limited vocabulary, lack of background knowledge and unfamiliarity with different accents, etc. The important thing is that the students You must have motivation to learn listening as well as practice listening skills regularly to achieve the best results.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

In applied social research, survey research is one of the most important and useful measurement research methods. Survey research is defined as a systematic investigation conducted through the use of a survey. Surveys are an excellent way to collect opinions and learn what people think about the contexts and situations you want to investigate. This allows you to collect information directly from people who are affected by a specific context when used in research. One of the most compelling arguments for survey research is that it allows writers to collect the most authentic data sets through a systematic investigation. Survey research can be used to collect specific information from identified first responders.

Based on the benefits of survey research, the author decided to use a survey questionnaire as the main data collection method for the graduate paper. The writer describes the research context (students and their backgrounds, resources, and materials), resources and materials, data collection tools and procedures, and how they are integrated with the research paper in this chapter.

2. Participants

The research was conducted with the participation of 35 first-year students of HPU's Department of Information Technology. Ages range from 19 to 20. In this class, there are mostly male students, with only 5 female students. Most of these students have something in common: they have studied English for over 7 years and come from different countryside. Therefore, their English listening ability is not good because there is no environment to practice English and they do not learn English properly. In high school, students mainly focus on grammar and reading skills. That's why they don't spend much time on listening skills. Therefore, students encounter many difficulties in learning English listening skills at university.

3. The textbook

The listening textbook for first-year non-majors at HPU is the book: Think 1 (Cambridge). The book not only build strong language skills to develop the whole learner but also provide a comprehensive approach to learning:

- Develop their thinking skills, encourage them to reflect on values and build self-esteem.
- Themes are chosen to engage and challenge young people, ignite their imaginations and ensure effective learning.
- Exam-style exercises and tips help students prepare for KET and PET exams.
- Delivered by the Cambridge English Corpus, the course reflects real-life language use and a “Doing it right” section helps students avoid common mistakes.

4. Data Collection Instruments

4.1. Survey questionnaire

To gather data for this study, the questionnaire was distributed to 35 first-year students in students of the Department of Information Technology during class breaks and collected properly. Before they do the survey questionnaire, the researcher would briefly state the purposes and significance of the study and clarify any misunderstanding about the questionnaire. These aim to guarantee the reliability and validity of the samples.

All questions and its items were written in simple English words to make sure that the students had a clear understanding of the questions and answers before they answered. The questionnaire consists of two parts. Part one was intended to collect the personal information of the participants, such as years of learning English. Part two of the questionnaire consisted of 10 questions both closed and open-ended questions. The purpose of the questionnaire was to investigate:

- The student's general attitudes towards learning English
- Their perceptions of the importance of learning English listening skills
- Their ways of learning English listening skills

- Their difficulties in learning English listening skills

4.2. Data Collection Procedures

Data play a very important role in research because if there is no data, the researcher cannot get the results of the study. To collect information about the issues of learning English listening skills of first-year non-English major students at HPU, first of all, 35 copies of the survey questionnaire were handed out to students. After the data collection procedure has been completed, all the information was transcribed, typed, and translated for further explanations and analysis. When the data collection was accomplished, the researcher carried out data analysis.

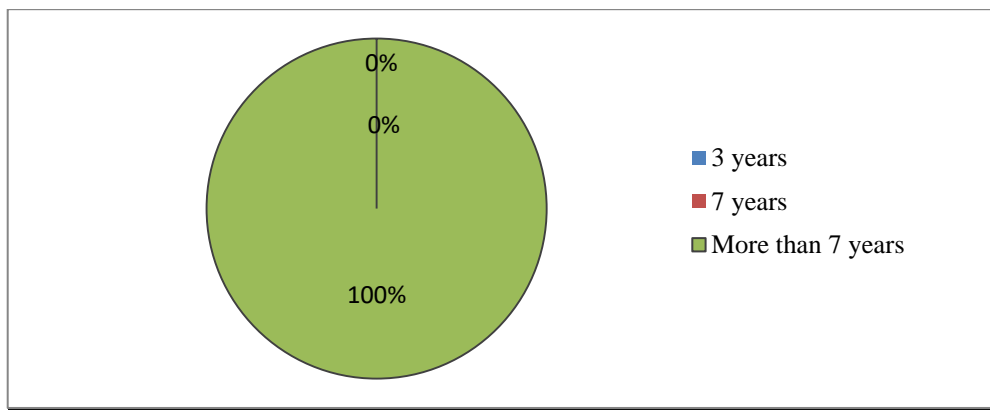
CHAPTER 3: DATA ANALYSIS

1. Data Analysis and Discussion

The 35 copies of the questionnaire were delivered to the learners. The data are analyzed in this part of the study in the below tables and charts which show the responses for the questions in the questionnaires. Besides, the question brings results that according to students' opinion, listening skills are very important.

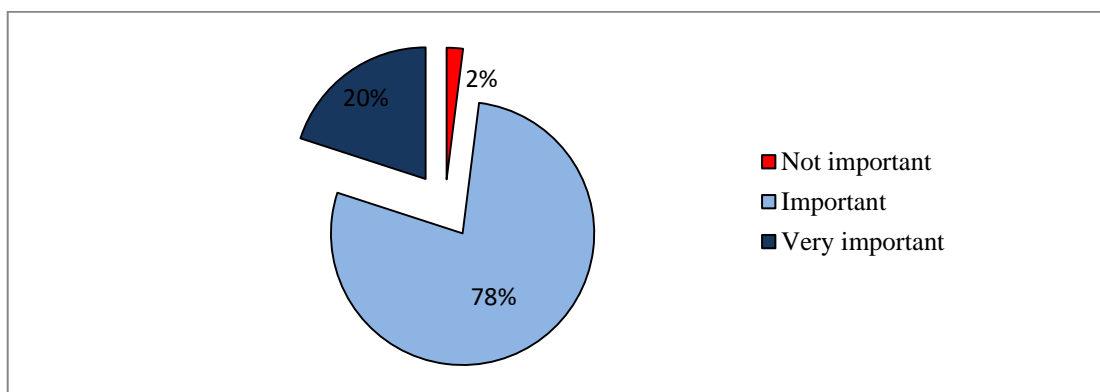
1.1. Student's real situations of learning English listening skill

Question 1: *How long you studies English?*



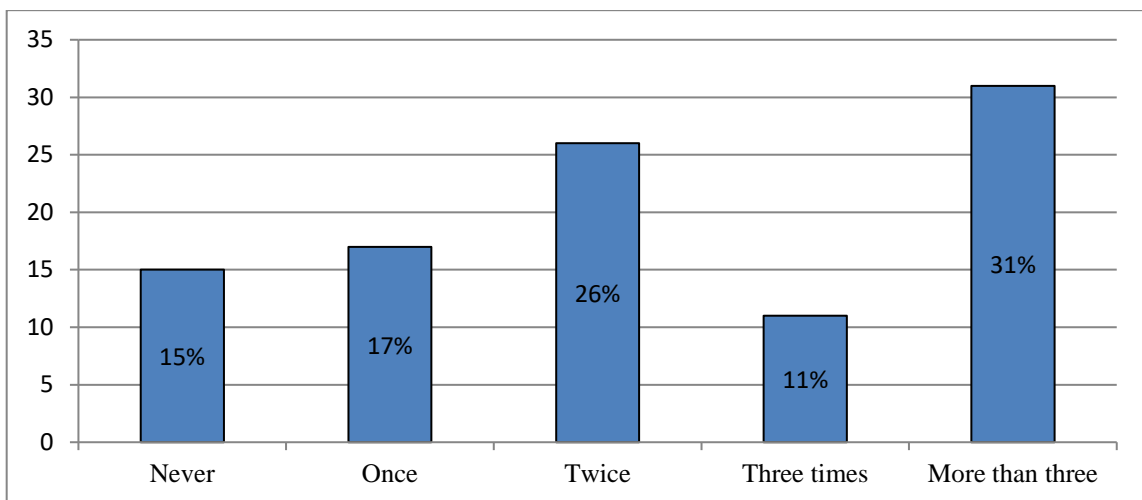
The chart above shows that 100% (35 students) of the respondents have studied English for more than 7 years. That is quite a long time for students, which proves that learning English has become crucial. The fact that most students are exposed to English at an early age in primary schools shows the importance and the necessity of English. Moreover, it is a compulsory subject in most schools, from elementary to university. Hence, they think that English is really important and learn it as a second language.

Question 2: *In your opinion, listening skills is important for students, isn't it?*



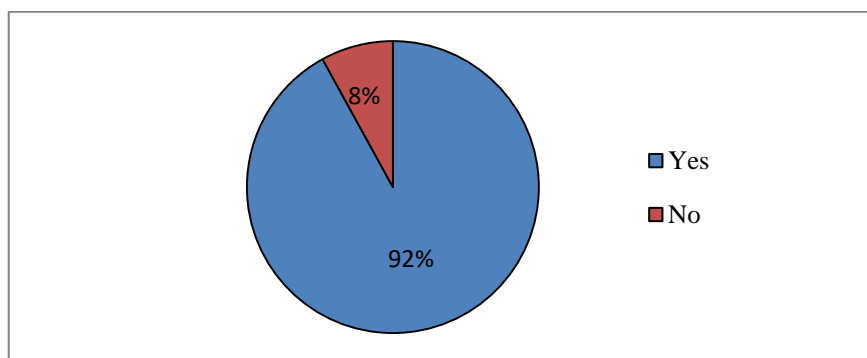
It can be clearly seen from the chart that listening is an important skill, 78% (27 students) of learners think listening is important. For students, listening to English and learning this skill is really a problem. Furthermore, the number of learners who agree that learning listening skills is very important accounts for 20% (7 students). This rate is equivalent to the number of learners who believe that learning to listen is not important (2%). In short, the survey proves the assumption about the importance of English listening skills.

Question 3: *Have you ever failed your listening test?*



The table above shows that 85% of students failed their listening tests. Of which 17% (6 students) failed once, 26% (9 students) failed twice, 11% (4 students) failed three times and the remaining 31% (11 students) failed more than three times. Only 15% (5 students) can pass the listening test. The learners who confirm that it never failed listening test are the best student. This means that listening is actually an obstacle to students. In fact, to possess a good listening skill, it takes times and effort.

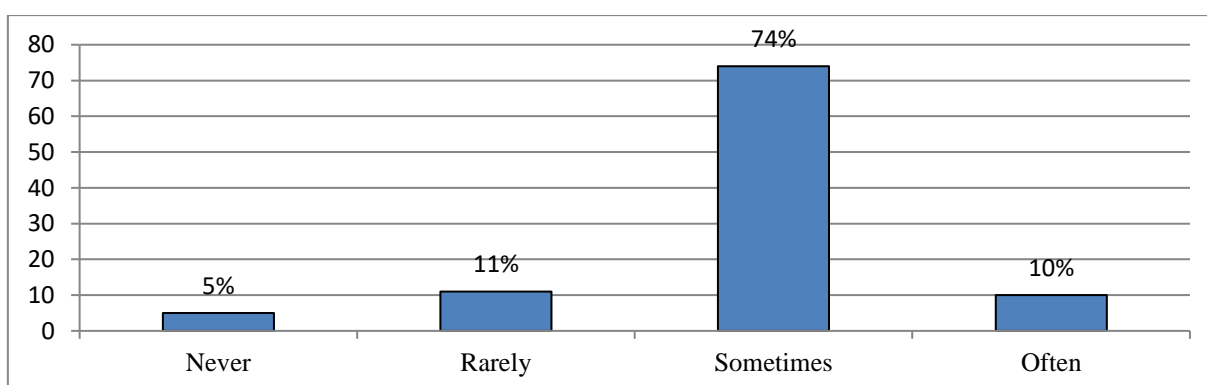
Question 4: *Does the teacher give specific methods?*



It can be seen that 92% (32 students) answered “Yes” and 8% (3 students) answered “No”. Teaching methods have a very important influence on the direction of individual thinking development. During the learning process, the teacher will be the one to provide knowledge and theory, and students will be proactive in thinking and applying practical problem solving. Each person will prepare for themselves a different teaching method, depending on their level, nature of work, and surrounding environment. Teaching methods can be creative for each individual, to bring high learning results as well as create interest in learning for students. Students who choose the answer “No” may be because they feel the teacher’s learning method is not suitable for them.

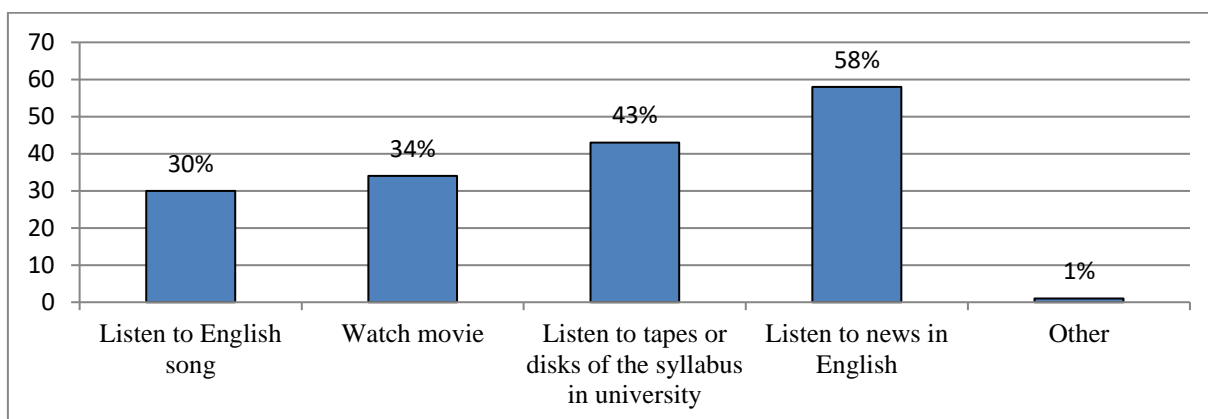
1.2. Students’ learning style

Question 5: *How often do you self-study listening at home?*



Despite affirming that listening skills are important, students seem to spend very little time practicing at home: 5% (never), 11% (rarely), 74% (sometimes). Only a small number of students practice regularly (10%). Without a lot of self-practice, students cannot achieve any progress or good results in listening comprehension. Self-study is one way to succeed in listening.

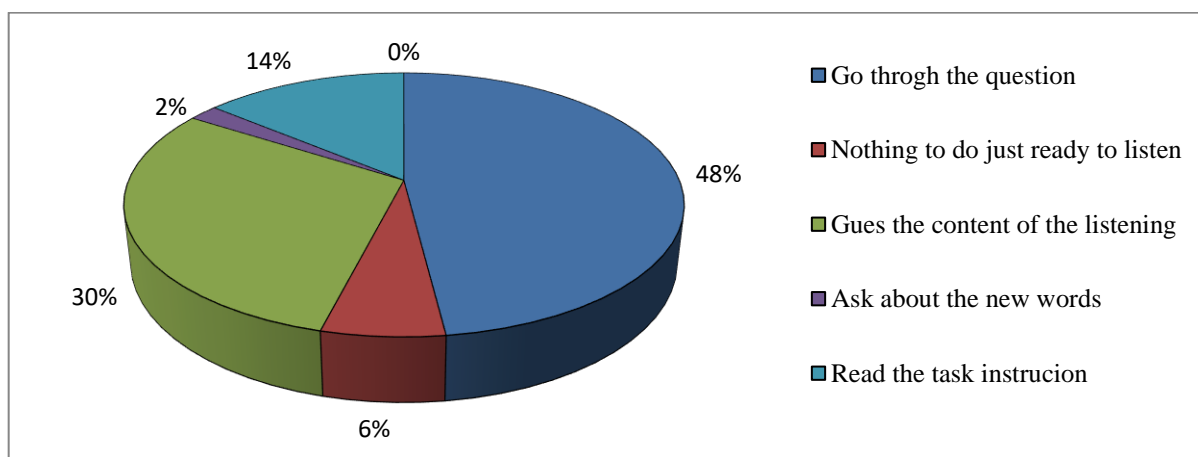
Question 6: *How do you self-study listening?*



Students have taught themselves English in many different ways to improve their scores. 64% (21 students) listen to English songs and watch movies; 43% (15 students) listen to tapes or discs of textbooks at University; 58% (20 students) listen to news in English. There is also another opinion that learns by playing games. However, practicing a lot will not bring any results if students cannot deduce strategies from each listening lesson as well as learn from common mistakes. Good results will be achieved if students recognize and apply the strategies through their practice.

1.3. Students' listening strategies

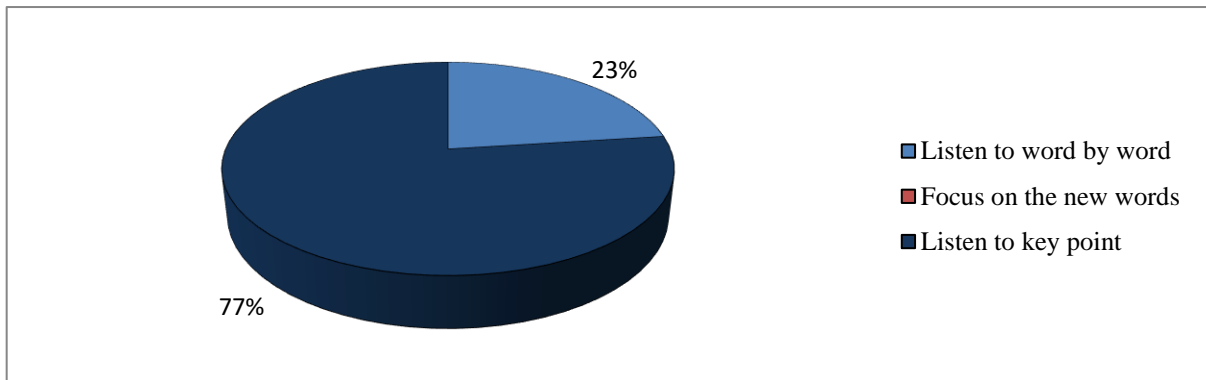
Question 7: *What do you do before listening?*



What students do before listening partly impacts their ability to understand the listening text. According to collected data, 78% of students said they would look through the questions and guess what the topic was. It's reasonable enough for this first listening phase. 6% of students did nothing and were just ready to listen. However, the mission instructions must be read first in all cases. When they read

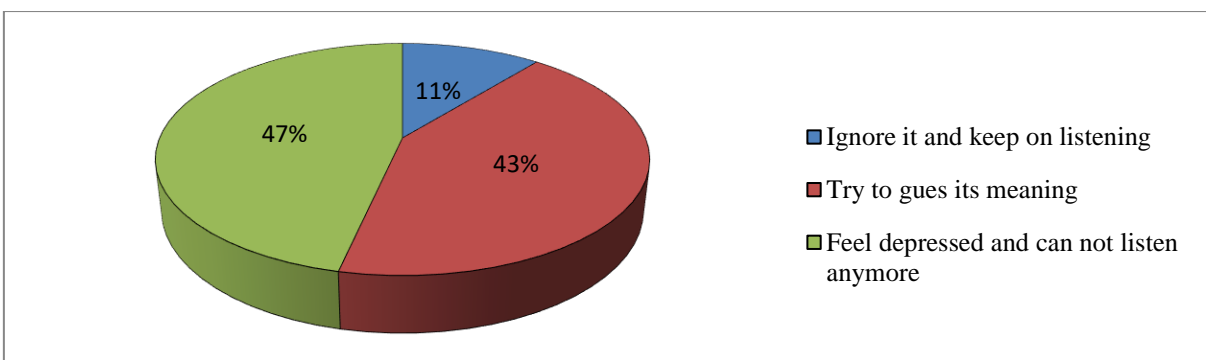
them, they know what to do and how to solve the problem and can predict the answer. Only 14% of students take this first step.

Question 8: *What do you do while you are listening for the first time?*



When taking a listening test, listening to each word does not guarantee that we will fully understand the content nor will it give us the correct answer. Hearing too much information can cause confusion and make us confused about which answer to choose. So it can be easily seen that only 23% (8 students) chose to listen to each word. Most of the students chose to listen to key points, 77% (27 students). Key points are the most important factor to optimize and increase exam performance. A good listener will not hear all the words in the listening passage. They can skip any section and focus only on the information they need for their answer.

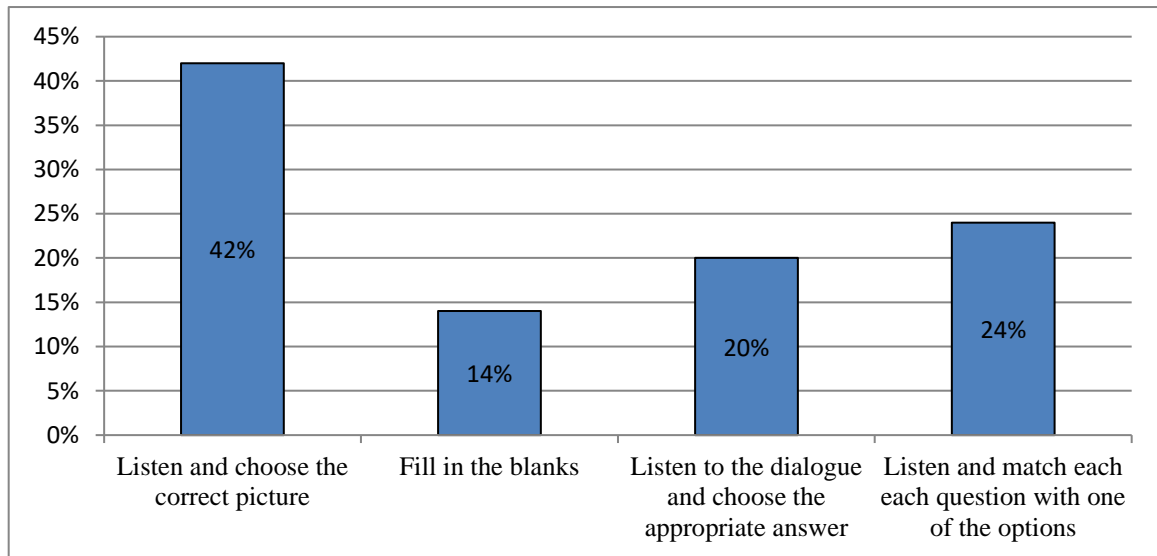
Question 9: *What do you do if you can not understand words or phrases while listening?*



In addition, new words are such matters that prevent students from understanding the text. When encountering a new word, just 11% (4 students) choose to ignore the word and keep on listening, 43% (15 students) try to guess

its meaning and 47% (16 students) feel depressed and can not listen anymore. From this, we can see that lacking of vocabulary could be a barrier to students.

Question 10: *What part of the listening test do you like best?*



The results showed that 42% (15 students) liked to listen and choose the correct picture. Students like the listening part of choosing the correct picture more than the other parts because the opening listening part is only short conversations and is also illustrated with vivid pictures to create excitement for students. Ranked 2nd and 3rd respectively are 24% (8 students) who like to listen and match each question with one of the options, 20% (7 students) who like to listen to the dialogue and choose the appropriate answer. These two parts are often recorded with many different topics. Finally, 14% (5 students) liked fill in the blanks, which is not the most difficult listening part but is difficult in spelling. Difficulties with new words or misremembering the correct spelling of words have caused many difficulties in achieving high scores.

1.4. Problems in learning listening

***Problems from the listening material**

Question 11: *How often do you encounter these following problems?*

Problems	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Unfamiliar topics		63%	32%	5%
Lacking of background knowledge		20%	45%	35%

Problems	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Pronunciation	5%	15%	45%	35%
Limited vocabulary		17%	63%	20%
Accents		21%	47%	32%
Speed of speech		31%	53%	16%
Linking words		74%	10%	16%

Statistics about problems from listening material

The results show that unfamiliar topics sometimes cause listening comprehension problems. 63% (sometimes) and 37% (often and always) of students had difficulty with unfamiliar topics. Listening materials can cover many different areas of life and society. For example, it could be a business report, an everyday conversation, or a political issue that confuses the listener. These conversations may include words, phrases, or terms that are unfamiliar to the listener. They are completely foreign to them so it's hard to listen when the message is filled with jargon. The solution is to have students practice as much as possible on these different materials. So, they can get used to listening to various topics without any difficulty.

Background knowledge is the basic knowledge of science, culture, economics, politics, religion, etc. This is where cultural knowledge is of paramount importance, as it greatly influences communication elements. The results show that 20% (sometimes), 45% (often), 35% (always) have difficulty due to lack of background knowledge. Cultural differences certainly affect not only listening ability but also many other elements of the English language. Therefore, background knowledge plays an important role in English listening comprehension. Some background knowledge will help you infer and understand what native speakers say and what they are trying to convey through their conversation.

Having difficulty with pronunciation is no longer too surprising for English learners. 5% (never), 15% (sometimes), 45% (often), 35% (always) of students encounter this problem. Vietnamese is considered a monosyllabic language, so when learning English - a multisyllabic language with many complex accent features, many Vietnamese people will have difficulty. Some phrases have up to 2 accents, causing confusion for many people. Besides, connecting sounds also

makes it difficult to practice listening and communication. Especially when speaking English, many people tend to Vietnameseize vocabulary and say it to make it easier to remember. This way of learning only has a temporary effect, but it has a significant impact on word listening habits as well as breaking important principles of stress, connecting sounds, etc.

The first reason why you can't listen to English is that you don't fully understand what you're hearing. Too many words you don't know make it difficult to understand everything. Limited vocabulary is a major barrier that makes students feel discouraged with listening practice. Up to 63% (22 students) often encounter this problem. First, cultivate your basic English vocabulary well to at least roughly understand the content indicated in the English listening passage.

The result from table demonstrates that 47% and 32% of the students experience this kind of problem. For instance, if learners listen to French people speaking English, they will feel hard to understand him or her as they speak English in a native French intonation. For this linguistic feature, students need much more exposing to different kinds of accents. Yagang (1994) assert that the listeners have tendency to get familiar with the accents which they mostly listen. If listeners are exposed to standard British or American accents, they will face problems in understanding other accents.

The results table shows 31% (sometimes), 53% (often), and 16% (always) of students have difficulty with speaking speed. For those who practice listening less, the listener will not be able to keep up with the speaker's speed. Not being able to control the listening speed makes listening and information processing slow and very difficult.

Linking words are one of the important grammatical parts in English. Hearing linking words correctly will help students determine the correct content of the listening lesson and also improve thinking. Because these connecting words are read at a fairly slow speed, students can easily catch this linking word. Only 10% (sometimes), 16% (often) of students find it difficult because they may not know the connecting word or have forgotten the meaning.

***Problems result from physical settings**

Difficulties come not only from the listening material, the listener or the speaker, but also from the environment around the student.

Problems	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
The poor equipments	85%	10%	5%	
Noise		5%	32%	63%
Others:				

Statistics about problems from physical setting

For educational and training institutions, in addition to educational programs, facilities are one of the important factors to ensure and improve the quality of training and research. Studying in an environment with good facilities means a lot to students. Children will gradually get used to a modern environment with high standards and quality. That's why HPU has always upgraded and used the best equipment to serve learning purposes. 85% (never) of students no longer have difficulty with poor equipment.

Table shows that there are 63% of students have to face the problem of noises. If the listening task is carried out with noises around, it is for sure they will not have a good result in listening. First, they are distracted by the noise no matter how hard they try to focus on the task. Otherwise, the noise makes a complex of sounds instead of the solo recording being played. This interrupts the students from hearing and focusing on the task.

1.5. Students improve their listening skills

Question 12: *Tick things you think can help improve your listening skill?*

	Disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Completely agree
Teachers spend more time teaching listening skill		10%	66%	24%
Teachers vary the teaching techniques: song, movie, YouTube,			78%	22%

	Disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Completely agree
stories				
Students practice more listening at home			35%	65%
Students go out and talk with foreigners		32%	48%	20%
There should be a native teacher during the semester		18%	54%	28%

The purpose of teaching a foreign language is not to provide students with knowledge of that language, but also to convey one's own experience to help students become better. Students always want teachers to spend more time testing and providing consulting support to ensure knowledge standards. The results showed that 66% (23 students) and 24% (8 students) agreed and completely agreed with this method. Organizing and controlling the classroom and distributing time appropriately helps students achieve the desired productivity and efficiency.

In addition to the listening lessons in the textbook, teachers diversify teaching methods through songs, movies, YouTube, and stories, which also create excitement for students because of the variety of topics, content, and good voices. 78% (agree) and 22% (completely agree) with this method. Practicing listening through movies and music videos regularly not only helps you become more familiar with the pronunciation and intonation of native speakers. It also provides a lot of interesting vocabulary, grammar and many other useful knowledge.

Practicing listening in class is not enough, students also need to practice listening skills at home. The results easily show that students agree with 78% (27 students). Listening skills are a long process, requiring hard work and patience. Therefore, practicing listening habits at home will help students improve their listening skills significantly.

Most of you when learning English communication will often be very shy to speak, especially talking to foreigners in English. Because you are not confident about pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and are afraid of being laughed at, 32% (partially agree). However, chatting with foreigners will help you correct these errors. Getting used to communicating with foreigners also helps us hear many different accents and speaking speeds. Since then, listening skills have developed a lot.

Native English Speaker Teachers are teachers from countries that use only one language, English or English as a first language. They were born and raised using one language, English, that's why they have the best pronunciation. When studying with them, students will be able to speak with the correct intonation and correct pronunciation errors. If you get it, listening also becomes easier. The results showed that 54% (19 students) agreed and 28% (10 students) completely agreed. Of course, besides the advantages, there are also difficulties when learning language with native teachers. Teaching classes solely in English creates stress for students, sometimes even pressure. 18% (partially agree) about this method. Choosing teachers who are both native speakers and good at teaching is also a difficult problem.

CHAPTER 4: FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Finding and discussion

In general, through analyzing the above data, it can be clearly seen that students have many difficulties in learning to listen. From the results, a large number of students failed the listening test. Although English listening skills are the golden key to connecting with people and conquering all communication situations, students spend very little time practicing this skill. Students only practice occasionally and many students never even practice listening at home. Besides, their students always have many difficulties in listening to English as well as finding suitable methods to improve their listening skills.

According to first-year students of the Information Technology Department, there are a number of main reasons (lack of background knowledge, pronunciation, limited vocabulary, accents) that greatly affect students when learning skills. In addition, a subjective factor affecting students' learning of English listening skills is that students try to listen to every word so they cannot keep up with the speaking speed. Therefore, students have not had time to process all the information to understand what the listener is saying, so they gradually feel discouraged. The part of the lesson that students like to do the most is listening and choosing the correct picture. This listening section uses many new images and topics to attract children's interest. Most students also agree that having some pre-listening habits is looking at the question and guessing what the topic is. And to improve listening skills, students are interested in teachers' diverse teaching methods and especially practicing listening skills at home.

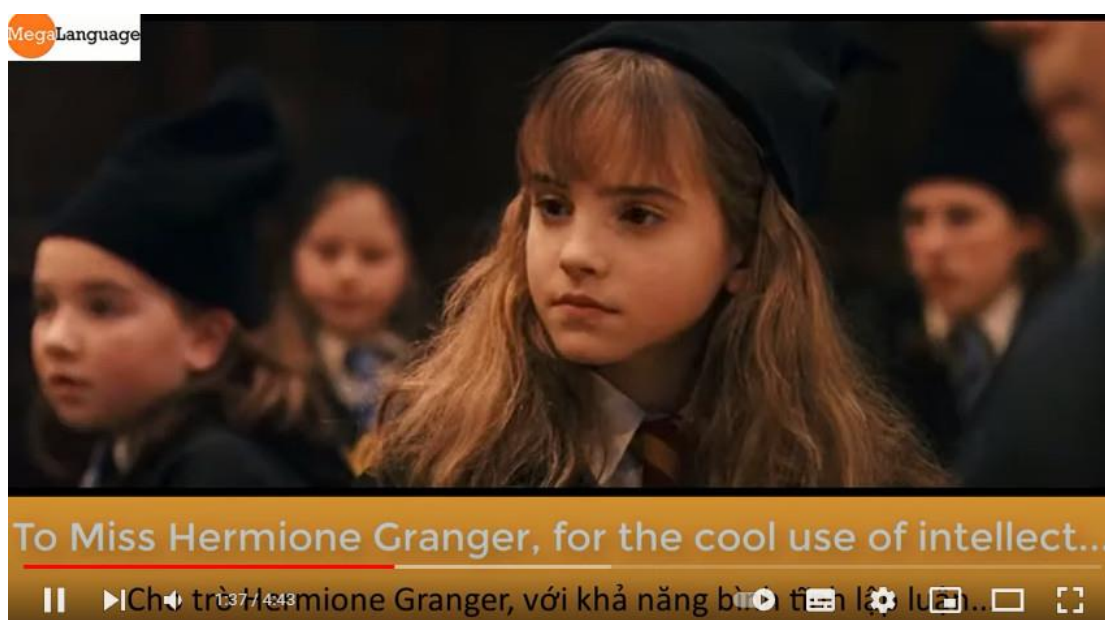
In conclusion, to gain maximum benefit from the technique provided, some recommendations are given for first-year non-English majors.

2. Suggested Solutions

2.1. For students

If students want to learn to listen better, they themselves must try to change bad listening habits and improve their basic knowledge. Nowadays there are many ways to learn English. To improve your listening skills, every day you should

spend 5 to 10 minutes or more listening to a short English news story. Self-study is the key to success. Learners do not need to understand every word to understand the information they need from the recording. Therefore, learners should learn to focus on the message. When listening, learners should summarize what they hear and take notes. It is best for them not to translate the listening text into their mother tongue but try to understand it in the target language. Furthermore, in addition to listening classes, students must practice regularly such as listening to English music, watching foreign channels (such as: HBO, CINEMAX, you can watch American movies to improve your ability to listen and understand English) to get used to the native accent in common speech. In addition, they must enrich themselves with general knowledge about English-speaking countries, English and social and cultural knowledge.



Practice listening skills through movies

2.2. For teachers

Teachers play an important role in improving learners' listening skills. Teaching methods are the factors mentioned most by learners in the survey. In addition, teachers should provide more interesting topics for deeper listening. Authentic listening material is often interesting because the listener is exposed to real life. With listening lessons in textbooks, teachers can create more exciting activities to motivate students to participate. At the same time, help students ignore bad habits; they should be encouraged not to panic if they miss out on information.

On the other hand, teachers spend more time providing the necessary background knowledge related to the listening lesson to learners before listening. In addition, teachers can warm up with interesting games, introducing more about culture, society and countries around the world. For example, before listening, the teacher can organize games for students to predict true/false statements: the teacher writes 5-10 sentences on the board based on the main idea of the listening lesson. Students work in pairs and guess the correct answers. The request must be clear and given before listening so that the learner can clearly draw out the purpose of listening. They will more easily grasp the message they need. In teaching, teachers need to require learners to follow some regulations.

2.3. Suggested techniques

2.3.1. Divide listening stages

“Getting the right answer is not our only goal. The main goal is the listening itself” (Lafi, 2001). How much listening that learners can understand all depends on how well-prepared teachers are and the use they can make of the listening texts? So the teacher's activities are really important. The writer would like to classify the suggested activities into three stages.

***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.

To understand a spoken passage, the listener must not only have knowledge of the language but also have background knowledge of the listening topic. Pre-listening activities help all students understand general background knowledge before listening and also answer their questions about new words. Not all students have the same level of knowledge so pre-listening activities are very important.

***While-listening activities**

While-listening 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. Therefore, teachers should ask specific questions so that students can recognize the main ideas of the listening lesson as well as remember more new words. Furthermore, teachers should stop listening when encountering important keywords so students can take notes.

***Post-listening activities**

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.

- Students record the information they get in the listening passage. They rewrite the text in their own words using notes or drawings as cues.
- Students exchange answers to the listening lesson and point out mistakes they and the other person are making. From there, students can correct mistakes and gain experience in doing the test.
- Students act out the listening lesson, taking on the roles of the characters in the story they just heard. You can both practice listening skills and improve communication skills for students.

2.3.2. Example of Listening Test

The Listening test is based on the structure of the Cambridge KET test and consists of 5 parts. For each section, students will listen to a recording and answer some questions. Students listen to each passage twice.

***Instructions for teaching Part 1**

In Part 1 of the test, students will listen to 5 tapes. Each recording comes with 1 question and 3 pictures. Students listen and choose the correct picture.

3 **▶▶ 1.31** You will hear five short conversations. There is one question for each conversation. For each question, choose the right answer (A, B or C).

0 What are the girls talking about?



A



B



C

1 When does Oliver play tennis?



A



B



C

2 Where is Brian?



A



B



C

3 What is Molly's hobby?



A



B



C

4 How much is the red jumper?



A



B



C

Method of doing the task:

- Guide students to read the question and look at the picture.

- Provide students with new words according to each picture.

+ As in the example sentence, it shows students the names of different types of shoes: flats, boots, and sneakers. Also, different colors such as red, brown, and pink should be presented beforehand.

+ In sentence 1, the teacher repeats knowledge about the days of the week to the students.

+ Sentence 2, explain new words with pictures. Picture A shows newspapers from which it can be understood that the word “newsagent” means “quàý báo”. Similarly, teachers can help students understand the meaning of pictures B and C.

+ Sentence 3 not only explains new words but also reminds students to pay attention to the tense of the person being asked. For example, the respondent replied that her hobby was in the past but now she has changed. The correct answer will definitely be in the present tense.

+ Sentence 4: Many students have difficulty not knowing how to read money in English. The rules for reading odd amounts are similar to the rules for reading decimals in English, read "point - dot" or "and - comma". Read the following decimal number. There is also a way to read numbers in the units and tens places: seven ['sevn] # seventeen [,sevn'ti:n].

- Check your answers on the second time. After listening, ask students what they remember.

- Skills to practice: listening and finding detailed information.

* **Instructions for teaching Part 2**

In this section, students listen to monologues and find detailed information (price, time, phone number, etc.).

Part 2

LISTENING (approximately 30 minutes)

Questions 6 – 10

For these questions, write the correct answer.

You will hear a teacher talking to her class about a cake competition.

Write **one word** or a **number** or a **date** or a **time**.

Cake Competition

When: (0) Monday 3rd May

Time: (1)

Where: (2) Room number

Cakes must include: (3) flour, butter, sugar and

More information from: (4) Mrs

Prize: (5)

Method of doing the task:

- Take advantage of the silence after the question paper runs to glance at the text.
- Predict what needs to be filled in the blank box: time, room number, person's name as well as knowing when to fill in a noun or adjective.
- Write ONE correct word in each blank box. Pay attention to correct spelling.
- In this part, students practice their spelling and note-taking skills.
- Practice skills: listening and looking for detailed information

***Instructions for teaching Part 3**

Listen to a conversation to find important information and answer 5 questions, each with 3 options.

For each question, choose the correct answer.

You will hear Robert talking to his friend, Laura, about a trip to Dublin.

- 11** Who has already decided to go with Robert?
- A** family members
 - B** colleagues
 - C** tennis partners
- 12** They'll stay in
- A** a university.
 - B** a guest house.
 - C** a hotel.
- 13** Laura must remember to take
- A** a map.
 - B** a camera.
 - C** a coat.
- 14** Why does Laura like Dublin?
- A** The people are friendly.
 - B** The buildings are interesting.
 - C** The shops are beautiful.
- 15** Robert's excited about the trip to Dublin because
- A** he can't wait to go to the music festival.
 - B** he loves the food there.
 - C** he wants to go to a new art exhibition.

Method of performing the task:

- Students skim through the questions to predict the topic of the conversation, circle key keywords.
- Ask students to listen to the conversation and choose the appropriate answer the first time they listen. Pay attention to the information to be answered that appears according to the words of both people on the recording and read the question carefully to know who is being answered. Ask who it is, is it male or female.
- Note the speaker's attitude. Depending on how the voice increases or decreases, the speaker may agree or disagree with the stated opinion.

- Check your answers the second time.
- Practice skills: listening and looking for detailed information.

*Instructions for teaching Part 4

Identify the main idea, important message, and theme in 5 monologues/short conversations and answer 5 questions, each with 3 options. These monologues have nothing to do with each other.

Exam Practice Test 1 Listening Part 4



Questions 16–20

For each question, choose the correct answer.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>16 You will hear two friends talking about shopping.
What did the boy buy yesterday?</p> <p>A something to wear
B something to eat
C something to read</p> | <p>19 You will hear a girl talking about her day at school.
Which subject did she like best?</p> <p>A geography
B English
C biology</p> |
| <p>17 You will hear a teacher talking to a student called Lyn.
Why didn't Lyn come to school yesterday?</p> <p>A She was sick.
B She was in a competition.
C She arrived back late from holiday.</p> | <p>20 You will hear two brothers talking about last night.
Why did they both sleep badly?</p> <p>A Their bedroom was hot.
B There were noises in the street.
C They were excited about going on holiday.</p> |
| <p>18 You will hear a boy talking about surfing.
How did he learn to surf?</p> <p>A by doing a course
B by watching videos
C by practising by himself</p> | |

Method of performing the task:

- Students read all 5 questions and underline the person being asked.
- In the first question, the person being asked is a boy, so we need to focus on his dialogue. Reading the answer we can predict that answer A. 'something to wear' can refer to clothes, shoes, gloves. Answer B. 'something to eat' can refer to food. Answer C. 'something to read' can refer to books, newspapers, magazines, etc. Predicting in advance will help students not get confused when listening and keep up with the listening speed.
- In the next 2 questions, students need to listen carefully to the answers. It is possible that the speaker will mention all 3 answers, but there is only 1 correct answer, the remaining answers may cause interference. Pay attention to

connecting words like "finally", "in the end", "however"... The teacher can stop the tape and let students listen carefully to these connecting words because they usually lead to the correct answer.

- Sentence 16 is a voice reading passage related to school subjects. In this sentence, after explaining new words to students, the teacher can predict some cases that the speaker will directly say the names of the subjects or just say typical characteristics of the subjects to let the listener guess subject mentioned.

- The last question is not answered by 1 person but by 2 people. Therefore, you need to pay attention to the words of both characters. If one person gives an opinion and the other disagrees, that is not the correct answer. When one person gives another opinion and the other person also agrees, this is the correct answer.

- Check your answers the second time.

- Practice skills: listening and looking for detailed information.

*** Instructions for teaching Part 5**

In this part, students listen to a conversation, find key information and match the answers.

You will hear Lucas talking to his mum about the jobs his friends want to do. What job does each friend want to do?

Example:

0 Lucas F

Friends	Jobs
21 Tyler <input type="checkbox"/>	A actor
22 Ava <input type="checkbox"/>	B coach
23 Mark <input type="checkbox"/>	C dentist
24 Victoria <input type="checkbox"/>	D journalist
25 Bobby <input type="checkbox"/>	E mechanic
	F pilot
	G receptionist
	H tour guide

Method of doing the task:

-Students will listen to a conversation and have 2 lists of words, then listen and connect the 2 corresponding lists. For example, this exercise talk about the job. Teachers can ask students about their dream jobs to increase student interest.

- Listen to the conversation and choose the appropriate answer the first time you hear it. Because each person's name is arranged sequentially according to the conversation, it is easy to determine the correct person and match the correct answer.
- Check your answers the second time you listen.
- Practice skills: listening and looking for detailed information.

After the listening lesson ends, students review their entire assignment. Students should not leave any answer blank and always confidently give reasonable answers. Finally, submit your assignment with a relaxed mind and wait for the results.

2.4. Conclusion of chapter 4

After learning and analyzing students' difficulties when listening, the researcher would like to propose some suggestions for students to improve their listening skills as well as help teachers have many new teaching methods like through games. A sample listening test was also created to clarify those suggestions.

PART III: CONCLUSION

1. Summary of the Study

It can be said that this study is the answer for any reader interested in the difficulty of learning to listen. This study consists of 3 parts.

Part I is an introduction to the study. The reader will get background information on why this research was done, how it was done, and what it was done for.

Part II is the study's development section, which consists of four chapters. The first chapter, they include the definition of listening, types of listening, and factors that affect listening comprehension such as: listener factors, speaker factors, subjective factors, and objective factors.

Chapter 2 contains information about this study. You can find the techniques used in this mini-thesis such as data collection and data analysis here.

Chapter 3 is a detailed examination of the data collected. A survey questionnaire consisting of 12 questions for students was developed; the results are explored and presented in this section using data analysis method. It is clear that first-year information technology students understand the importance of learning to listen. However, students still encounter many difficulties when listening such as lack of background knowledge, limited vocabulary, etc., causing them to lose motivation to learn. Besides students, teachers' teaching methods will also help students be more effective when learning to listen.

Chapter 4 summarizes the collected results, analyzes them, and makes suggested solutions and recommendations based on the previously collected data. Based on the compiled issues, solutions are suggested. The researcher gives advice to students and teachers. In addition, new technical suggestions are also given: dividing listening into 3 stages per-listening, while-listening and post-listening. A sample listening test was also created to apply the technique just mentioned.

The final part is a synopsis of the preceding sections and chapters. This is also the section where you will draw conclusions, discuss pedagogical implications, and make suggestions for future research.

2. Limitation of the study

Although the research has certain strengths such as the method of collecting information, specifically creating a questionnaire to survey students, due to limited time, lack of resources, and the ability of the researcher and Other unexpected factors but clearly the study has some limitations to come.

First of all, due to limitations in time and experience to a certain extent, the researcher cannot conduct other methods such as classroom observation to make the results obtained more reliable.

Second, due to the limited scope of the research, the researcher only focused on first-year students of the Information Technology Department, accounting for a small number of students at HPU. Therefore, the study results cannot be generalized.

In addition, the researcher cannot cover all the difficult aspects. The techniques proposed in this study are selected from many 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 at HPU.

3. Suggestions for further research

Because of limitations, this study cannot cover all aspects of the study. In addition, the study only focuses on the difficulties of first-year non-English major students at HPU to help them improve their listening skills. Furthermore, for further studies, to get better results, the researcher should invite more participants and data collection methods. Along with using survey questionnaires and interviews, observation is also necessary to obtain more convincing conclusions.

Overall, although limitations could have been avoided, the research was completed under the guidance of the supervisor and one's own efforts. Any comments and criticisms will be appreciated for further research.

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APPENDIX 1 : STUDENTS' SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX 1.1:

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH VERSION)

I made this survey to find out the problems that most students encounter when listening. Hopefully the results I get from this project will contribute a small part to help you listen better.

I really appreciate it if you take your valuable time to fill out this questionnaire.

1. How long you studies English? (tick the best answer)
 - 3 years
 - 7 years
 - More than 7 years
2. In your opinion, listening skills is important for students, isn't it? (tick the best answer)
 - Not important
 - Important
 - Very important
3. Have you ever failed your listening test? (tick the best answer)
 - Never
 - Once
 - Twice
 - Three times
 - More than three
4. Does the teacher give specific methods? (tick the best answer)
 - Yes
 - No
5. How often do you self-study listening at home? (tick the best answer)
 - Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
6. How do you self-study listening? (tick more than one)
 - Listen to English songs
 - Watch movie
 - Listen to tapes or disks of the syllabus in university
 - Listen to news in English
 - Other:.....

7. What do you do before listening? (tick the best answer)
- Go through the questions
 - Nothing to do just ready to listen
 - Guess the content of the listening
 - Ask about the new words
 - Read the task instruction
 - Predict possible answers (word form, meaning)
8. What do you do while you are listening for the first time? (tick the best answer)
- Listen to word by word
 - Focus on the new words
 - Listen to key point
 - Other:.....
9. What do you do if you can not understand words or phrases while listening? (tick the best answer)
- Ignore it and keep on listening
 - Try to guess its meaning
 - Feel depressed and can not listen anymore
10. What part of the listening test do you like best? (tick the best answer)
- Listen and choose the correct picture
 - Fill in the blanks
 - Listen to the dialogue and choose the appropriate answer
 - Listen and match each question with one of the options
11. How often do you encounter these following problems? (put a tick in the appropriate column)

Problems	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Unfamiliar topics				
Lacking of background knowledge				
Pronunciation				
Limited vocabulary				
Accents				
Speed of speech				
Linking words				
The poor equipments				
Noise				
Others:				

12. Tick things you think can help improve your listening skill (put a tick in the appropriate column)

	Disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Completely agree
Teachers spend more time teaching listening skill				
Teachers vary the teaching techniques: song, movie, YouTube, stories				
Students practice more listening at home				
Students go out and talk with foreigners				
There should be a native teacher during the semester				

Thank you for your participating in our survey!

APPENDIX 1.2:

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (VIETNAMESE VERSION)

Tôi thực hiện cuộc khảo sát này để tìm hiểu những vấn đề mà hầu hết học sinh gặp phải khi nghe. Hi vọng kết quả tôi nhận được từ dự án này sẽ góp phần nhỏ giúp các bạn lắng nghe tốt hơn.

Tôi thực sự đánh giá cao nếu bạn dành thời gian quý báu của mình để điền vào bảng câu hỏi này.

1. Bạn học tiếng Anh trong bao lâu? (đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất)
 - 3 năm
 - 7 năm
 - Trên 7 năm
2. Theo bạn, kỹ năng nghe rất quan trọng đối với học sinh phải không? (đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất)
 - Không quan trọng
 - Quan trọng
 - Rất quan trọng
 - Không bao giờ
3. Bạn đã bao giờ trượt bài kiểm tra nghe của mình chưa? (đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất)
 - 1 lần
 - 2 lần
 - 3 lần
 - Nhiều hơn 3 lần
4. Giáo viên có đưa ra phương pháp học cụ thể không? (đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất)
 - Có
 - Không
5. Bạn có thường tự học nghe ở nhà không? (đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất)
 - Không bao giờ
 - Hiếm khi
 - thỉnh thoảng
 - Thường xuyên
6. Bạn tự học nghe như thế nào? (đánh dấu nhiều hơn một)
 - Nghe bài hát Tiếng Anh
 - Xem phim
 - Nghe băng hoặc đĩa giáo trình ở trường đại học

- Nghe tin tức bằng tiếng Anh
 - Khác:.....
7. Bạn làm gì trước khi nghe? (đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất)
- Xem qua các câu hỏi
 - Không làm gì chỉ sẵn sàng nghe
 - Đoán nội dung bài nghe
 - Hỏi về từ mới
 - Đọc hướng dẫn làm bài
 - Dự đoán các câu trả lời có thể có (dạng từ, nghĩa)
8. Bạn làm gì khi nghe lần đầu tiên? (đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất)
- Nghe từng chữ một
 - Tập trung vào từ mới
 - Nghe điểm mấu chốt
 - Khác:.....
9. Bạn sẽ làm gì nếu không hiểu được từ hoặc cụm từ khi nghe? (đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất)
- Bỏ qua nó và tiếp tục lắng nghe
 - Thử đoán nghĩa của từ
 - Cảm thấy chán nản và không thể nghe được nữa
10. Bạn thích phần nào nhất của bài thi nghe? (đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất)
- Nghe và chọn hình đúng
 - Điền vào chỗ trống
 - Nghe đoạn hội thoại và chọn câu trả lời thích hợp
 - Nghe và nối các câu với một trong các lựa chọn
11. Bạn có thường xuyên gặp phải những vấn đề sau đây không? (đánh dấu vào cột thích hợp)

Các vấn đề	Không bao giờ	Thỉnh thoảng	Thường xuyên	Luôn luôn
Chủ đề xa lạ				
Thiếu kiến thức nền				
Cách phát âm				
Vốn từ vựng hạn chế				
Giọng nói				
Tốc độ nói				
Từ nối				
Trang thiết bị nghèo nàn				
Tiếng ồn				
Khác				

12.Đánh dấu vào những điều bạn nghĩ có thể cải thiện kỹ năng nghe của bạn (đánh dấu vào cột thích hợp)

	Không đồng ý	Đồng ý 1 phần	Đồng ý	Hoàn toàn đồng ý
Giáo viên dành nhiều thời gian hơn để dạy kỹ năng nghe				
Giáo viên thay đổi phương pháp dạy: bài hát, phim, YouTube, câu chuyện				
Sinh viên luyện tập thêm kỹ năng nghe ở nhà				
Sinh viên nói chuyện với người nước ngoài				
Nên có giáo viên bản ngữ trong học kỳ				

Xin chân thành cảm ơn các bạn đã tham gia cuộc khảo sát của tôi!