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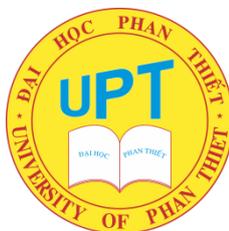
TRẦN NHẬT HẢO

**A STUDY ON DIFFICULTIES AND SOLUTIONS IN
DEVELOPING THE LISTENING SKILLS OF STUDENTS
AT THUAN QUY SECONDARY SCHOOL**

**MASTER'S GRADUATION PROJECT
MAJORED IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Bình Thuận Province - 2023

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CODE: 8220201

MASTER'S GRADUATION PROJECT

SCIENCE INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Lý Thị Thu Thủy, Ph.D.

Bình Thuận Province – 2023

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

I certify my authorship of the Master's graduation project submitted today entitled: *A STUDY ON DIFFICULTIES AND SOLUTIONS IN DEVELOPING THE LISTENING SKILLS OF STUDENTS AT THUAN QUY SECONDARY SCHOOL*

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Tran Nhat Hao

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ABSTRACT

Listening, the most fundamental language skill to effective communication, is inextricably linked to and interacted with the other language skills - speaking, reading, and writing.

This study aims to investigate the difficulties of secondary school students in listening and explore the factors that cause listening difficulties in secondary school students. This research is conducted at Thuan Quy Secondary school. The subjects of this research are 9-grade students and the sample consists of 80 students. The study is a mixed-methods approach utilizing a questionnaire and an interview. As for elements of those difficulties, it relates to the speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, different accents of speakers, lack of concentration, anxiety, and bad quality of the recording. This leads to a serious consequence that students' foreign language proficiency is low as well as difficulties in teaching and learning.

The issues of teaching listening are becoming increasingly clear as a result of new strategies that contribute to successful listening and, moreover, the widespread availability of technology to assist language learners in improving their listening skills. This study discusses the importance of listening in language acquisition, as well as the difficulties in obtaining listening competency and some ways for overcoming them.

Keywords: *listening skills, difficulties, strategies.*

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

English plays a vital role in daily life. First, English can be used as a way to communicate with people around the world. Second, it helps people prepare for the future. Third, they can access information, share information and win more opportunities, which helps them lead a better life. People desire to learn more English due to how important.

There are four abilities that must be learned when studying the English language. They are reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The fourth such ability must be achieved to fully master the English language. Listening is one of the other English abilities that students must develop. According to Hamouda (2012), listening as active listening is necessary for effective communication. Listening is a key to all effective communication because it is the most basic to make a connection with another person.

Therefore, listening is the first ability that English learners must master. Listening is a crucial language ability that English students employ to learn a second language. Despite its importance, listening is regarded as the hardest language skill to master. It necessitates complete focus, concentration, and the use of the other senses. As a result, it is still the most overlooked part of language teaching. According to Hamouda (2013), comprehending speech is a difficult activity for students. When students listen to a language, they confront a variety of difficulties. If teachers are expected to help students improve their listening comprehension, they must first understand their students' listening difficulties in comprehending spoken passages and then teach them effective listening comprehension strategies to solve their listening comprehension problems.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Goss (1982) said that in listening comprehension listeners try to construct a meaning when they get the information from the listening source. It may be deduced that listening skills are required for learners to be skilled and capable of thoroughly listening to the material being heard. Hamouda (2013) highlighted that comprehending speech is a hard process for students.

There are several elements that influence students' listening comprehension in general. First, students have a lot of difficulties comprehending the listening text because of their lack of background knowledge. The students were nervous and anxious since they have poor grammar and lexical comprehension and find it difficult to listen. Despite identifying the literal meaning of the phrases, many had difficulties grasping the intended messages. Second, most of the students can not recognize the main points in listening because they concentrate too much on listening word by word. Thus, they cannot identify the keywords or the content words of the listening tasks. The speed of the speech also supplies cues for catching the main points. As a matter of fact, natural talk is very fast for second language learners so it makes up for some trouble for non-native speaker. Next, students may find it difficult to concentrate in a foreign language; inattention for a short period of time may result in misunderstanding. The reason for this is probably because students have little exposure to English, do not often watch news in English, so it is difficult to understand native speakers with different accents and their pronunciation. Lastly, the quality of listening materials, such as length, speed of speech, and physical factors, has a significant impact on students' completion of listening activities.

Based on the foregoing, the researcher would like to discuss: **“A study on difficulties and solutions in developing the Listening skills of students at Thuan Quy secondary school”**. The researcher chose this title because many students still struggle with listening. By observing students' difficulties, the researcher tries to identify and analyze them.

1.3 Previous study

Several studies have been conducted on the problems faced by students in developing their listening skills. A study conducted by Nguyen et al. (2018) examined the challenges faced by Vietnamese students in listening comprehension and identified factors such as lack of vocabulary knowledge, limited exposure to authentic listening materials, and ineffective instructional strategies. The researchers found that students struggled with understanding unfamiliar words and phrases, as well as with comprehending spoken English at a natural pace. The study also highlighted the importance of vocabulary development and exposure to authentic listening materials in improving listening skills.

Similarly, Tran and Le (2019) investigated the problems encountered by students in listening comprehension. Their research revealed that poor pronunciation, lack of concentration, and limited listening practice were major obstacles for students. The researchers emphasized the need for targeted pronunciation practice and increased opportunities for listening practice to enhance students' listening skills.

While these studies provided valuable insights into the problems faced by Vietnamese students in listening skills, they did not specifically address the context of Thuan Quy Secondary School. Therefore, there is a need for further research to explore the specific challenges faced by students at this particular school. Understanding the unique problems experienced by students at Thuan Quy Secondary School will enable the development of targeted interventions and solutions to enhance their listening skills.

In summary, previous studies have highlighted the common problems faced by students in listening comprehension, including limited vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation problems, lack of concentration, and limited exposure to authentic listening materials. These findings provide a foundation for the current study, which aims to investigate the specific listening problems of students at Thuan Quy Secondary School and propose effective solutions to improve their listening skills.

1.4 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on the interactionist approach to language learning, which emphasizes the role of both individual factors and environmental factors in language development. The framework also draws upon the cognitive theory of listening comprehension, which posits that successful listening involves the integration of bottom-up processes (such as decoding sounds and recognizing words) and top-down processes (such as using background knowledge and making inferences).

In this study, the problems in developing their listening skills will be explored through the lens of these theoretical perspectives. The individual factors that may contribute to listening problems include limited vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation problems, and lack of concentration. Environmental factors such as the availability of authentic listening materials, instructional strategies employed by teachers, and opportunities for listening practice will also be examined.

Based on the findings, the study will propose solutions to address the identified problems. These solutions may include implementing effective instructional strategies, providing opportunities for extensive listening practice, and incorporating authentic listening materials into the curriculum. The conceptual framework will guide the data collection and analysis process, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by students and informing the development of practical recommendations to enhance their listening skills.

1.5 Aims and objectives of the study

The study aims at the following goals:

- 1) To find out difficulties affecting 9th graders' English listening.
- 2) To give some solutions to minimize the difficulties and improve efficiency in listening of secondary school students.

1.6 Research questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the difficulties that students at Thuan Quy Secondary school encounter while learning the listening skills?
2. What can be done to improve their listening skills?

1.7 Scope of the study

Within the scope of this research, the author only focuses on grade 9 students of Thuan Quy secondary school to find out the difficulties that students in this class often face and from there make some suggestions to overcome these problems. Difficulties were discovered and improved students' listening ability. Subjects participating in the study are 80 students in grade 9 of Thuan Quy secondary school, Ham Thuan Nam district, Binh Thuan province.

1.8 Significance of the study

The study is expected to make a significant contribution to the learning of listening skills. The present study can help 9th graders improve their listening skills so that they can pass the final exam and pass the entrance exam for high school. This is a document that helps English teachers know about some of the issues that students have encounter with listening comprehension skills to help students overcome the above obstacles to become more and more interested in English and achieve higher scores.

1.9 Overview of thesis chapter

This thesis is organized with five chapters: Chapter 1 – Introduction, Chapter 2 – Literature review, Chapter 3 – Methodology, Chapter 4 – Findings and discussions, Chapter 5 – Conclusion and suggestion

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter introduces the general information about the thesis. First, the statement of the problem is about the main reasons which enhance the author to do this thesis. Then, the purpose of the study introduces the aims to do the thesis. And the scope of the study gives the details about the objects that the thesis studies and the main content that the thesis covers. Next, the significance of the study shows how this study is important and helpful and research questions. Finally, the organization of the study briefly introduces the main parts of the thesis.

Chapter 2 – Literature review

This chapter presents a literature review on the general theoretical basis of listening skills, challenges and difficulties in learning listening skills. It explores various factors that can influence listening skill development, such as vocabulary knowledge, listening strategies, and the role of authentic materials.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

First, it will introduce the participants, the data collection instruments, data analysis. Then, it will discuss the current situations of teaching and learning English listening skill in general. Finally, the author will analyze the results of the survey, interviews as well as the teacher's observation in teaching to find out the real state of learning listening skill in the center.

Chapter 4 – Findings and discussions

This chapter provides an analysis of the survey questionnaire and the results obtained from the participants. It explores the students' listening habits, their preferred listening materials, and their perceived difficulties in understanding spoken English. Overall, this chapter provides valuable insights into the current state of listening English skill learning and teaching at Thuan Quy Secondary School.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion and suggestion

This chapter provides the conclusion and suggestions related to the learning and teaching of listening skills in English at Thuan Quy Secondary School. The chapter highlights the challenges faced by students in terms of limited exposure to English outside the classroom and the impact on their listening skills. The importance of self-study and consistent practice is emphasized, and recommendations are provided to promote listening activities outside of class.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

When talking about the ability to use a language, it is generally considered speaking that language. Only a few people think about the capacity to listen to the language. However, if a person can listen to a sentence, he must understand it. Thus, listening is an essential skill in learning a language. It can be used to evaluate a person's language competence.

2.1 Definition of listening

Listening is the process of actively receiving and interpreting auditory stimuli with the intention of comprehending and understanding the conveyed message. It involves not only hearing the sounds or words being spoken, but also paying attention, processing the information, and making meaning out of it. Effective listening requires focus, concentration, and engagement to accurately interpret the speaker's intended message.

According to Richard Field, a renowned expert in language teaching and learning, listening is "the process of receiving and constructing meaning from oral and/or signed language" (Field, 2008, p. 3). In his book "Listening in the Language Classroom," Field emphasizes the importance of listening in language acquisition and highlights how it is more than just a passive activity. He argues that listening is an active process that involves the integration of various cognitive skills, such as attention, memory, and inference-making, to comprehend and interpret spoken language.

Furthermore, Brown and Yule (1983) define listening as "the process of extracting and constructing meaning from spoken language" (p. 2). In their book "Teaching the Spoken Language," they emphasize that listening is a complex cognitive process that requires learners to not only decode the sounds and words, but

also understand the context, infer meaning, and make connections with prior knowledge.

Overall, listening is a vital skill in language learning as it provides learners with exposure to authentic language use, helps develop comprehension abilities, and contributes to overall language proficiency. It requires active engagement, cognitive processing, and the ability to extract meaning from spoken language. By actively listening and practicing this skill, learners can improve their ability to understand and communicate effectively in the target language.

2.2 The importance of listening skills

Listening skills play a crucial role in effective communication and language learning. They are essential for understanding and interpreting spoken language, and they contribute to successful interactions and relationships. The importance of listening skills is widely recognized in the field of language teaching and learning.

According to Vandergrift and Goh (2012), listening skills are vital for language learners as they provide learners with exposure to authentic language use and help develop comprehension abilities. Listening allows learners to become familiar with the natural flow of spoken language, including pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm. Through active listening, learners can improve their understanding of vocabulary, grammar, and discourse structures, which are essential for effective communication.

Field (2008) emphasizes the importance of listening in language acquisition, highlighting that listening is not a passive activity but an active process that involves cognitive skills such as attention, memory, and inference-making. Effective listening requires learners to focus, concentrate, and engage with the speaker's message. It helps learners extract meaning from spoken language, make connections, and respond appropriately in different communication contexts.

Furthermore, listening skills are not limited to language learning but are crucial in various aspects of life. In the workplace, strong listening skills are essential for effective teamwork, problem-solving, and customer service. Effective listening also enhances personal relationships by fostering understanding, empathy, and meaningful communication.

2.3 Listening process

The listening process can be approached in different ways, either by breaking it down into steps or treating it as an interpretive process. Some linguists, such as Gary Buck (2001:2) and Brown (1994), propose a division of listening into two processes: bottom-up and top-down. According to Brown, learners utilize bottom-up processing to recognize linguistic elements like vowels, consonants, words, and sentences to derive meaning. On the other hand, top-down processing involves drawing on prior knowledge to make predictions about the text. In this top-down listening model, listeners actively construct meaning by relying on expectations, inferences, intentions, schema knowledge, and other relevant prior knowledge, as well as selectively processing input.

Flowerdew and Miller (2005) suggest that developing listening skills involves integrating listening with cognitive development. To listen effectively, students should employ both bottom-up and top-down processing. In other words, students need to perceive individual sounds (bottom-up processing), retain them in their working memory for a brief period (several seconds), make connections, and then articulate their understanding before moving on to new information. Simultaneously, listeners draw on their background knowledge (top-down processing) to infer implications for prior knowledge and schema (Brown, 2005).

According to Anderson and Lynch (2003), successful listening in face-to-face conversations requires the utilization of various skills. They outline four steps that constitute the listening process:

1. The identification of spoken signals from background noise.

2. The segmentation of the continuous stream of speech into meaningful units, recognizing them as familiar words.
3. The comprehension of sentence structure and the speaker's intended meaning.
4. The application of linguistic knowledge to generate a suitable and accurate response to the spoken message.

According to John A. Kline (1996), the listening process includes the five steps: receiving, attending, and understanding, responding and remembering. Each of these steps plays a crucial role in effective listening and comprehension. In this study, we will delve into a comparison between the listening process and the electronic mail system, drawing parallels between the listener as the recipient of a message and the various stages of the listening process.

Step 1: Receiving

This step involves the physical act of perceiving sound waves and stimuli. Similarly, in the electronic mail system, the recipient receives an email message in their inbox. Both processes require an initial reception of information for further processing.

Step 2: Attending

This step refers to the listener's conscious focus and concentration on the incoming message. In the context of the electronic mail system, attending can be likened to opening and reading an email, where the recipient directs their attention to the content of the message. This step is essential for effective listening, as it allows the listener to filter out distractions and give their full concentration to the message at hand.

Step 3: Understanding

This step entails the interpretation and comprehension of the message's meaning. Similarly, in the electronic mail system, understanding corresponds to the

recipient's comprehension of the content and intent of the email. Both processes involve extracting meaning from the received information and making sense of it.

Step 4: Responding

The fourth step, responding, involves the listener's active engagement and feedback to the message. In the electronic mail system, responding can be seen as the recipient composing and sending a reply to the email. This step is crucial in both processes, as it allows for a reciprocal exchange of information and facilitates effective communication.

Step 5: Remembering

The final step, remembering, pertains to the listener's ability to retain and recall the information received. In the context of the electronic mail system, remembering can be likened to the recipient storing the email in their inbox or saving it for future reference. Similarly, in the listening process, remembering ensures that the information is retained and can be recalled when needed.

2.4 Stages of teaching listening skills

Underwood (1989) divides listening activities into three categories: pre, while, and post-listening activities. Many teachers utilize this three-stage listening lesson format because it is particularly effective in teaching listening. Each stage serves a specific purpose and contributes to a comprehensive and well-rounded listening lesson.

The pre-listening stage involves activities that prepare students for the listening task. These activities aim to activate students' prior knowledge, build necessary vocabulary and background information, and generate interest in the topic. Pre-listening activities may include brainstorming, discussing related questions, previewing vocabulary, or predicting the content of the listening material. By engaging students in these activities, teachers set the stage for effective listening by enhancing students' understanding and motivation.

The while-listening stage is the core of the listening lesson, where students actively engage with the listening material. During this stage, students listen to the audio or watch a video, focusing on understanding the main ideas, specific details, and the overall message. Teachers can employ various techniques to support students' comprehension, such as providing guiding questions, using graphic organizers, or incorporating interactive tasks like note-taking or gap-fill exercises. The while-listening stage encourages students to concentrate on the listening material and develop their listening skills, such as recognizing intonation, understanding context, and inferring meaning.

Once the while-listening activity is completed, the post-listening stage begins. Post-listening activities aim to consolidate and extend students' understanding of the listening material. These activities may include discussions, reflections, role-plays, or follow-up tasks that require students to apply the information they have learned. Post-listening activities serve multiple purposes, such as reinforcing comprehension, promoting critical thinking, and providing opportunities for language practice and production. They also allow students to reflect on their listening experience, identify areas for improvement, and enhance their overall listening skills.

2.5 Types of listening

Listening is a fundamental aspect of human communication, and its various types play a critical role in understanding and interpreting information. This part delves into an examination of the different types of listening, shedding light on their distinct characteristics, purposes, and implications. By understanding the spectrum of listening, individuals can enhance their communication skills, build stronger relationships, and achieve more effective outcomes in academic and professional contexts.

2.5.1 Active Listening

Active listening involves fully engaging with the speaker, demonstrating attentiveness, and providing feedback to ensure understanding. It requires focused attention, non-verbal cues, and verbal responses to demonstrate comprehension and encourage further communication. Active listening fosters an environment of respect, empathy, and collaboration, enabling effective information processing, problem-solving, and relationship-building.

2.5.2 Passive Listening

Passive listening occurs when individuals listen without actively engaging or responding. It may involve background noise or conversations that are not the primary focus of attention. While passive listening may provide a level of auditory stimulation, it lacks the depth of engagement necessary for effective communication and understanding. However, passive listening can serve as a form of relaxation or entertainment, allowing individuals to unwind and enjoy auditory experiences.

2.5.3 Empathetic Listening

Empathetic listening focuses on understanding and connecting with the speaker's emotions and experiences. It requires individuals to be fully present, non-judgmental, and responsive to the speaker's feelings. Empathetic listening nurtures trust, compassion, and support, facilitating effective communication, conflict resolution, and emotional well-being.

2.5.4 Critical Listening

Critical listening involves analyzing and evaluating the speaker's message to form a judgment or opinion. It requires active thinking, questioning, and assessing the validity or credibility of the information presented. Critical listening promotes critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and the development of informed perspectives. It plays a crucial role in academic research, debates, and decision-making processes.

2.5.5 Appreciative Listening

Appreciative listening involves listening for enjoyment and appreciation of the speaker's content. It focuses on finding pleasure and personal satisfaction in the listening experience, such as listening to music, stories, or speeches. Appreciative listening allows individuals to connect with the speaker's creativity, emotions, and artistic expression, fostering cultural understanding, inspiration, and personal growth.

2.5.6 Discriminative Listening

Discriminative listening focuses on distinguishing and understanding different sounds, tones, or accents in the speaker's communication. It involves focusing on the nuances and variations in speech to comprehend the intended meaning accurately. Discriminative listening is particularly important in language learning, cross-cultural communication, and understanding diverse accents and dialects.

2.6 Listening strategies

Listening strategies refer to techniques or actions that assist individuals in comprehending and retaining information from what they hear. These strategies can be categorized based on how listeners process the input.

In the context of listening comprehension, it is crucial to employ appropriate strategies to achieve the desired objective. According to Chatom (1987), learning strategies are intentional techniques, approaches, or actions employed by students to facilitate the acquisition and retention of linguistic and content information. These strategies are conscious efforts that individuals undertake to enhance their understanding and memory of what they listen to.

Oxford (1990) further expands on the concept of language learning strategies, defining them as conscious steps or behaviors employed by language learners to improve their ability to acquire, store, retain, recall, and utilize information. These strategies encompass various aspects of language learning, including listening comprehension.

Ellis (1994) emphasizes the role of strategies in language acquisition and language use. He suggests that strategies consist of mental or behavioral activities associated with specific stages in the overall process of language acquisition. These activities can aid learners in effectively understanding and utilizing the language they encounter through listening.

In their influential work, O'Malley and Chamot (1987) categorize listening strategies based on the information processing model. They identify three main types of strategies: cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and social-emotional strategies. Cognitive strategies involve mental processes such as making inferences, summarizing, and predicting to aid comprehension. Metacognitive strategies focus on self-regulation and monitoring of the listening process, including setting goals and evaluating comprehension. Social-emotional strategies involve interacting with others and managing emotions to enhance listening comprehension.

2.6.1 Cognitive strategy

Cognitive strategies involve the processing and acquisition of information in short-term or long-term memory for future use. The comprehension process begins with the received data, which is analyzed and decoded at successive levels. Cognitive strategies can be seen as problem-solving approaches that learners employ to facilitate their learning process (Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart, 2014).

These strategies encompass actions or activities that directly analyze, transform or synthesize learning information (Rubin, 1981). They primarily work on incoming information, utilizing it in a manner that enhances learning. However, their application may be limited to specific types of tasks within an activity. When it comes to listening comprehension, typical cognitive strategies include rehearsing, organizing, referencing, summarizing, inferring, visualizing, transferring, and constructing, among others. Higher-level practical skills may involve planning, monitoring, or evaluating the effectiveness of learning activities (Brown & Yule, 1983).

2.6.2 Metacognitive strategy

According to Rubin (1988), metacognitive strategy is a management technique learners use to take control of their learning through planning, testing, feedback, and change. These strategies involve the ability to reflect on one's own thinking and learning, set goals, plan and organize tasks, monitor comprehension, and evaluate progress. Rubin emphasizes that metacognitive strategies enable learners to take control of their learning, identify areas of weakness, and make adjustments to improve their performance.

According to Wenden (1998), metacognitive strategies involve the learners' awareness and understanding of their own cognitive processes and the ability to regulate these processes. Wenden argues that metacognitive strategies play a crucial role in language learning as they allow learners to actively engage in self-assessment, self-reflection, and self-regulation, thereby enhancing their learning outcomes.

Salataci (2002) investigates the relationship between metacognitive strategies and listening comprehension. He suggests that metacognitive strategies in listening involve planning and setting goals before listening, monitoring comprehension during the listening process, and evaluating understanding after listening. Salataci emphasizes that the use of metacognitive strategies in listening can enhance learners' comprehension and retention of information.

2.6.3 Social-emotional strategy

Vandergrift (2003) and Abdalhamid (2012) highlight the importance of social-emotional strategies in fostering interaction, understanding, and minimizing anxiety among language learners. They argue that these strategies involve learners' ability to engage with others, assess their own understanding, and manage their emotions during the learning process. Vandergrift and Abdalhamid emphasize that the use of social-emotional strategies can create a supportive and conducive learning environment.

O'Malley and Chamot (1989) further delve into the significance of social and affective strategies in language learning. They suggest that among the various listening comprehension strategies, social and affective strategies have the most significant influence on the learning context. O'Malley and Chamot argue that these strategies involve learners' interactions with others, their ability to cooperate, engage in self-questioning, and engage in self-talk. These strategies facilitate communication, feedback, support, and clarification activities, leading to enhanced language learning outcomes.

Wilson (2003) explores the relationship between social-emotional strategies and learners' interactions with both fellow learners and native speakers. She argues that these strategies encompass a broad range of behaviors, including interactions guided by social norms and the desire for influence. Wilson emphasizes that social-emotional strategies play a crucial role in learners' responses to learning, as well as their interactions with others.

By engaging in social-emotional strategies, learners can enhance their communication skills, receive valuable feedback, and foster positive relationships with both fellow learners and native speakers.

2.7 Difficulties in learning the listening skill

Learning to listen to a new language can be a challenge for many students. Difficulties in listening come from a variety of sources such as speakers, listening content, or the listeners themselves.

2.7.1 Difficulties from the speakers

One of the main difficulties that students often face when listening comes from speakers. Students may face problems with speaker's speed, speaker's accent, stress, intonation, the reduced form, elision and assimilation.

The speaker's speed

The speaker's speed also hampers learners' efforts to learn English. Because kids are unable to arrange them while listening before they go. It's not as if the reading content is just left on the page for people to consume anytime they wish. They might miss the next part while working on this one. Most foreign language students believe that native speakers speak too quickly, making them difficult to understand (Brown & Yule, 1983). According to Underwood (1989), the speed element might make listening much more difficult. Students may struggle to understand second-language terms if the speaker talks too quickly. In this case, the listener has no control over the speaker's speed, which might lead to major understanding issues. This is consistent with the findings of Flowerdew and Miller (1992), who stated that their participants universally evaluated the rate of distribution as one of the most significant barriers to knowledge. Students can replay recorded materials till they receive information. Furthermore, Hasan (2000) identifies unfamiliar words, difficult grammatical structures, and the length of spoken passages as the most significant factors that impair learners' listening comprehension. He went on to say that students' hearing understanding is hampered by a lack of clarity, a lack of interest, and a lack of sufficient answers to listening comprehension questions.

The speaker's accent

Even proficient listeners may encounter challenges when faced with a unique or unfamiliar accent. Research exploring the impact of accents on listening comprehension demonstrates that appreciation decreases and understanding becomes more difficult when the speaker's accent is unfamiliar. The accentuation of the speaker is a crucial factor to consider when selecting listening materials for English learners, as it significantly affects comprehension. Additionally, studies indicate that speaker familiarity is more important than factors such as speech speed or noise when it comes to listening comprehension. Munro and Derwing (1999) argued that excessive accent variation can lead to a significant decline in comprehension. Both

native and non-native accents that are unfamiliar can pose significant challenges for listening comprehension, while becoming accustomed to a particular accent helps listeners understand better. Buck (2001) emphasized that when listeners encounter an unfamiliar accent, such as Indian English, after primarily studying American English, they will face considerable difficulty in listening. This difficulty not only hinders the overall listening comprehension process but also renders it nearly impossible for the listener to understand the unfamiliar voice.

Stress and Intonation

The purpose of stress is to emphasize content words that carry meaning, while students often struggle to differentiate between content and function words. According to Wei (2004), the difficulty in acquiring listening skills may be attributed to various aspects of spoken language, including intonation, voice tone, and rhythm. In fact, intonation plays a crucial role in determining the meaning of a sentence within its context. A rising intonation is often perceived as a question or an invitation to continue the conversation, whereas a falling pitch is more commonly understood as confirmation or agreement. Additionally, students may not be aware that words spoken in continuous speech often do not receive the same level of stress as when they are spoken in isolation (Underwood, 1989).

The reduced form, elision and assimilation

The processes of reduced form, elision, and assimilation in spoken language can create listening difficulties for language learners and even proficient speakers. These phonetic phenomena can lead to changes in the pronunciation of words and make it challenging to understand spoken language accurately.

According to Derwing and Munro (2015), reduced forms, such as contractions and weak forms, can pose difficulties in listening comprehension. When words are spoken in connected speech, certain sounds or syllables may be reduced or omitted, leading to a change in the overall pronunciation. For example, the words "going to" may be reduced to "gonna" or "wanna." These reduced forms can be

unfamiliar to non-native speakers and may require additional practice and exposure to become accustomed to their usage.

Elision, as discussed by Roach (2009), involves the omission of sounds or syllables in connected speech. This can occur due to the influence of neighboring sounds or ease of pronunciation. For example, the word "library" may be pronounced as "li-bry" or "li-buh-ry" with the omission of the middle syllable. Elision can make it difficult for listeners to identify and comprehend certain words or phrases, particularly if they are not familiar with the specific elision patterns used in a particular dialect or accent.

Assimilation, according to Crystal (2008), refers to the process by which sounds in a word or between words change and become more similar to neighboring sounds. This can occur to facilitate smooth speech production. For instance, in the phrase "handbag," the /n/ sound in "hand" may assimilate to the /b/ sound in "bag," resulting in a pronunciation like "ham-bag." Assimilation can make it challenging for listeners to distinguish between individual sounds and can impact their ability to accurately perceive and understand spoken language.

These processes of reduced form, elision, and assimilation can create listening difficulties for language learners, as they may not be familiar with the specific patterns and variations that occur in natural spoken language.

2.7.2 Difficulties from the content

Information abundance, complex text

In some cases, the organization of the text is quite complicated. Cervantes and Gainer (1992) found that listeners to the syntactically simplified version of the lecture scored substantially higher on the memory test than those who listened to the more complex version of the lecture. Therefore, if students are not able to accurately outline the text, they will not be able to capture the information effectively.

It should be noted that density information is difficult for students, particularly beginners. A dense paragraph is a long paragraph (Rost, 2006) with a large quantity of information attached. Furthermore, higher information density is thought to create a higher cognitive need for listeners, potentially increasing the effort involved in listening comprehension (Gilmore, 2004).

Text length

According to Atkins (1995), with shorter passages or listening passages, this can facilitate listening comprehension and reduce tedium as well as encourage learners to concentrate. When the length of a listening portion of a conversation is too lengthy, it will be difficult for students to remember the information being communicated and it will be difficult for them to concentrate on listening. Missing information can confuse students and make them hesitate for a few seconds in the process of listening. This leads to ineffective attention. Length is also a factor that makes students nervous in the listening portion. It has been found that students' level can play an essential role when they listen to long sections and keep all the information in mind (Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart, 2014). For low-level learners, it is much more difficult to attend to longer than three minutes and complete listening activities.

Unfamiliar topic

Various factors contribute to the distinction between academic and non-academic passages, including the required background knowledge, the ability to discern relevant information, the presence of implied meaning, the capacity to handle lengthy passages, and the need for note-taking (Ferris and Tagg, 1996). It is believed that one of these elements, rather than being exclusive to non-academic content, may hold the key to understanding the impact of academic versus non-academic topics on listening comprehension.

The topic of a passage is another factor that can influence the comprehension of second-language listeners. Generally, passages on familiar topics

are easier for second-language listeners to understand compared to those on unfamiliar topics (Sadighi and Zare, 2006; Tyler, 2001). According to the International Test of English for Communication, exposure to information about a topic prior to listening to a passage about that topic enhances comprehension for both higher and lower level listeners.

Furthermore, whether a passage is academic or not also influences second-language listening comprehension. Two studies examined the relationship between this factor and second-language difficulty (Buck and Tatsuoka, 1998; Ying-hui, 2006), with only Buck and Tatsuoka finding a significant association between subject type, topic, and difficulty level. Non-academic subjects were found to be associated with easier items.

Noise and Redundancy

In the realm of listening skills, noise, and redundancy play significant roles in affecting comprehension. Noise and external interference can create challenges for language learners, requiring them to exert extra effort in filtering out distractions and making sense of the intended message. As noted by Ur (1984), this includes dealing with background noise and ambient sounds that may drown out certain words, leading to a potential loss of important information. Moreover, redundancy in speech, characterized by repetitions, false starts, self-corrections, refinements, reductions, and seemingly unnecessary additions, can further complicate listening comprehension. These redundant expressions may divert learners' attention or cause confusion, making it more difficult to extract the essential meaning from the spoken discourse. Consequently, both noise and redundancy pose hurdles that language learners must navigate to achieve effective listening skills (Ur, 1984).

2.7.3 Difficulties for learners

Lack of vocabulary

Understanding the meaning of a statement can be challenging without a solid grasp of the language. Learners of a language often encounter various obstacles

when it comes to listening comprehension, including difficulties in word selection, word connections, and knowledge of specialized terminology.

To begin with, students must comprehend the meanings of words to enhance their listening skills. Insufficient vocabulary is a common reason why students struggle to effectively express themselves in communicative activities. Words can have multiple meanings, and their interpretation can vary depending on the context. Students often find themselves perplexed when trying to choose the appropriate term for a specific situation. Overall, word selection poses a significant challenge for students.

Secondly, a lack of vocabulary knowledge poses a major hindrance to learning listening skills. Due to infrequent usage, students may forget words they have previously learned. This becomes problematic as they are then unable to recognize these words during a listening session. Additionally, speakers may link the last consonant of one word with the first vowel of the next word, making it difficult for students to identify and comprehend the words. Many students admit to struggling with linking terms due to their limited vocabulary.

Furthermore, encountering materials that contain specialized vocabulary can also lead to difficulties in listening comprehension. Specialized terms are specific to certain fields or disciplines. Learners with a limited and narrow vocabulary may become confused when exposed to such terms. In these cases, speakers may provide clarification by using synonyms or antonyms. Underwood (1989) demonstrated that children listening to foreign languages cannot be expected to understand every word spoken, just as they would in their native language. When encountering an unfamiliar word, learners may pause and attempt to deduce its meaning, similar to a sudden drop in comprehension. Therefore, a proficient listener is someone who comprehends the overall content of what is being heard.

In conclusion, vocabulary is a crucial aspect of learning English, particularly in the development of listening skills. Those who aspire to become proficient listeners can greatly benefit from having a wide-ranging vocabulary

Grammar mistakes

The ability to comprehend grammar plays a significant role in students' listening capacity. This encompasses the arrangement of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences, as well as the overall structure of the text. Grammar can be defined as "the rules for how words change their form and combine with other words to make sentences" (Cambridge Dictionary). It serves as the foundation of a language for students, enabling them to clearly grasp the meaning of each word and sentence in a given context, thereby facilitating comprehension of the speaker's message during listening. Undoubtedly, grammar holds a dominant position in the realm of listening skills.

However, students often underestimate the importance of grammar, considering it to be less significant than the four main language skills. Consequently, they frequently make errors in their speaking, writing, and even listening abilities. When encountering new language structures or grammar patterns that appear similar, students may become stuck, confused, or fail to understand what the speaker is saying. Consequently, they tend to overlook or neglect the listening aspect. In essence, grammar complicates the listening process for students.

Pronunciation errors

According to Cook (1996), "learning to pronounce a second language requires developing new pronunciation habits and overcoming first-language bias." To become a competent English listener or to succeed in learning a foreign language, you must first focus on pronunciation.

Pronunciation is critical for students who want to master both listening and speaking skills. Furthermore, if students can pronounce correctly, they will be able to

listen fluently. Pronunciation is crucial because it is a component of successful oral production or communication. Hismanoglu (2006).

According to Gilakjani (2012), "those who learn English pronunciation well are able to understand even if they make mistakes in other parts, while learners with poor pronunciation will not be able to understand, even with their grammar is perfect." In fact, kids who are strong at pronouncing will be able to express themselves confidently and even receive the exact message from others. Poor pronunciation, on the other hand, can lead to unfavorable misunderstandings or failures in both communication and listening. Overall, pronunciation is unquestionably the key to effective listening. To acquire accuracy in listening comprehension, learners should practice pronunciation and detect different sounds and qualities.

Background knowledge of the topic, content and culture

Having background information is crucial for effective listening. When learners are presented with unfamiliar topics, their ability to listen well is compromised. Background knowledge encompasses various aspects of daily life, including culture, society, and economics. Therefore, background information is not only essential for language learning but also for listening and speaking skills.

According to Brownell (1990), language and culture are inseparable. Background knowledge includes understanding the target culture, current events, art, politics, and literature. Culture provides the foundation for language development, while language, in turn, serves to express and reflect culture. Therefore, learners must grasp the cultural context of the language they are learning.

Moreover, Anderson and Lynch (2000) argue that a lack of socio-cultural, factual, and contextual knowledge of the target language can hinder comprehension, as language is used to convey meaning within specific contexts. Even if listeners understand the surface meaning of the text, they may struggle to fully grasp the intended message without familiarity with the context. Nonverbal cues such as facial

expressions, nods, gestures, or tone of voice can also be easily misinterpreted by listeners from different cultures.

Insufficient background knowledge poses a barrier to learning. Buck (2001) defines background knowledge as "general nonverbal knowledge about the world we live in and how things work within it, including knowledge of the target culture, current affairs, art, politics, and literature." Therefore, students need to engage with listening materials that cover a wide range of topics, such as political issues, business reports, and everyday conversations.

In conclusion, prior knowledge is crucial for developing listening skills. To become proficient listeners, learners must possess substantial knowledge of various topics, fields, and life experiences. Additionally, acquiring knowledge about the cultures of English-speaking countries can further enhance their understanding and appreciation of the language.

Psychological Factors

Scarcella and Oxford (1992) state that listening anxiety arises when students perceive a task as too difficult or unfamiliar, compounded by the belief that they must understand every word they hear. Many students lack confidence when it comes to listening in English, perceiving it as a challenging skill. This lack of confidence negatively affects their listening ability and can make them easily bored.

Psychological barriers are another challenging aspect that affects students' English listening skills. Psychological barriers refer to negative states that hinder students' ability to receive information and make them apprehensive (Horwitz, 2001). Anxiety is a common reaction observed in students during listening tasks. When faced with a challenging listening piece, an unfamiliar topic, or even standard content that they can hear, fear causes students to have limited comprehension of the listening text.

Lack of concentration also contributes to listening difficulties. According to Hamouda (2013), internal factors such as lack of focus, fear, and curiosity can

influence listening issues. Listeners' attention can easily be distracted when new words are spoken, and anxiety and worry persist when they struggle to understand what is being said. Additionally, the student's motivation and enthusiasm play a crucial role in understanding the subject matter. When listeners feel confused, they may forget important information necessary for comprehension. Frustration often leads to a loss of attention when students struggle to comprehend the spoken information. Various factors, including linguistic characteristics of spoken English, the listener's ability to extract meaning, and their level of motivation, can contribute to difficulties in listening comprehension.

In conclusion, focus and anxiety can be viewed as psychological barriers for learners, particularly when it comes to English listening skills. They are often the weak points for many learners in their journey to improve listening proficiency.

2.8 Chapter summary

This chapter mostly summarizes theories, thoughts, and points of view concerning various aspects of listening abilities. With an explanation of a massive amount of academic study. Providing important documents that aided in the formation of a possible theoretical conceptual framework for the graduation thesis. However, as can be seen, the majority of the literature is written in foreign contexts, making it unsuitable for Vietnamese students. As a result, the researcher expects that the analysis of the study's results will compensate for this constraint with their own observations and extensive explanations offered in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

Regarding the design of the research, this study is implemented with the use of both quantitative and qualitative data. This design was used in order to gather information about students' listening difficulties in grade 9 of Thuan Quy Secondary school.

3.2 Research site

The research location chosen for this study is Thuan Quy Secondary School, located in Ham Thuan Nam district, Binh Thuan province, Vietnam. The study will be conducted in two classrooms of 9th grade students at this school. Thuan Quy Secondary School is known for its commitment to academic excellence and its diverse student population. By choosing this research site, the study aimed to gain insights into the experiences and perspectives of students in this particular educational setting. This will provide a valuable understanding of the research topic within the context of local communities and education systems.

3.3 Sample and sampling procedures

This study involves 80 ninth-grade students at Thuan Quy Secondary School in Ham Thuan Nam district, Binh Thuan province, Vietnam who are asked to fill in the questionnaires. In addition, 5 teachers will take part in the interview. In choosing the participants, the writer used a purposive sampling technique.

3.4 Research instruments

This research combines both qualitative and quantitative research methods. It is because the study first determines the problems influenced by learners' motivation, age, and other characteristics. At the same time, it investigates why students find them difficult. Thus, by making use of both methods, they would complete each other and

help the writer have the most general view of the problem. Here, the interviews are conducted as qualitative research methods and the questionnaires are used as a quantitative research instrument.

3.4.1 Instrument one: Questionnaires

To ensure clarity and avoid any misunderstanding, the questionnaire for the students was written in Vietnamese. The main objective of the questionnaire was to explore the students' attitudes toward learning listening skills, identify the challenges they face in this area, and gather their expectations for improved teaching and learning experiences. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions. Following the collection of all the questionnaire responses, the researcher proceeded to calculate the number of responses and the corresponding percentages for each question in the questionnaire.

3.4.2 Instrument two: Interviews

To better understand the reality of teaching and learning listening as well as the problems that teachers face when teaching listening, the researcher conducted private interviews with five teachers. The interview questions were primarily derived from the questionnaire in order to uncover the underlying reasons behind the students' responses and to gain a better understanding of the actual teaching and learning practices related to listening skills.

3.5 Data collection procedures

First, the writer uses a questionnaire to collect students' opinions on how they learn English listening skills and their attitudes, motivations, or listening tasks. The student questionnaire consists of 15 questions that are concretized from two research questions. These 15 questions are divided into two parts: Part I consists of 3 questions to get some background personal information about the student; Part II consists of 12 questions to investigate issues related to students' English listening skills. In the 12 questions of part 2, the first part from sentences 1 to 3 is designed to get students'

opinions on learning listening skills, and questions 4 to 7 to find out how the problem affects their listening skills. Listening skills, questions 8 to 12 mainly find activities to improve English listening skills for 9th graders.

Second, interviews were applied with teachers. Five teachers were interviewed face-to-face about their own way of teaching listening and their comments on students learning the skill. In addition, the interviewer wanted them to suggest some helpful recommendations to improve and motivate students to learn listening skills.

3.6 Data analysis procedures

After the researcher has collected the data, the following stage is to analyze it. There are some steps to data analysis. They are listed in the following order:

- Reading and identifying the completed questionnaires.
- Sorting the answers to the questions
- Creating tables to organize students' problems and strategies based on questionnaire results.
- Using the tables, calculate the result based on the students' replies.
- Going to the conclusion based on the data analysis.

The researcher then evaluated the data into percentages after collecting all of the necessary data from the questionnaire. Then it was essential to study their point of view on the students difficulties in each category's items. Descriptive Statistics are used to determine the mean scores of the students' perception toward the role of listening skill development and listening problems.

3.7 Validity and reliability

To guarantee the reliability and validity of the samples, the questionnaires for learners were directly distributed to students in grade 9 during their break time in the class and collected right away. That meant these learners could pay the most attention to answering the questions related to what they had just experienced. Before asking

the learners to do the survey questionnaire, the researcher briefly stated the purpose and significance of the study and clarified any misunderstanding about the survey questions. Besides the written instructions on the handout, the oral instructions and explanations in Vietnamese were presented to avoid ambiguity.

3.8 Chapter summary

To conclude, this chapter presents the methodology of the study. In other words, it describes the research design, research site, sample and sampling procedures, instruments, and data collection procedures of the study. Given the collected data, Chapter 3 will depict the data analysis and the validity and reliability of the study. The questionnaire was distributed to the students in 80 copies. In Chapter 4, the data were evaluated in the tables and charts, which indicated the responses to the questionnaire questions.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Results of questionnaire

Question 1: How important do you think English listening skills are?

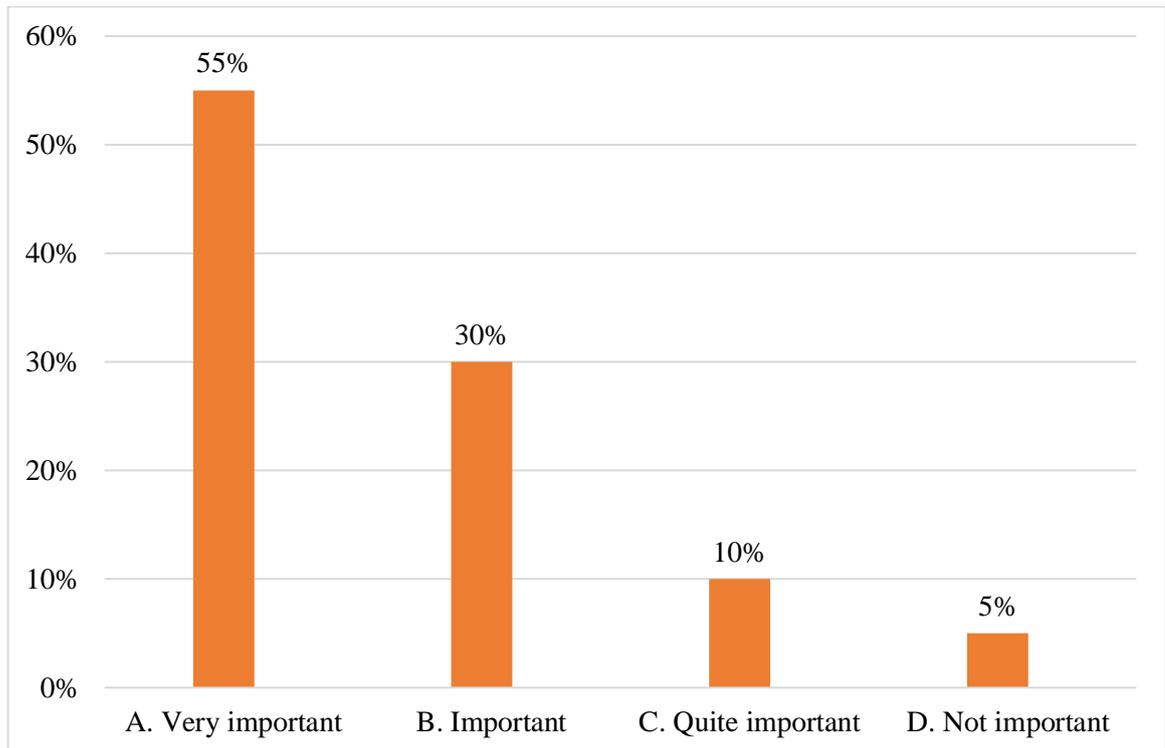


Chart 4.1: The importance of English listening skills

According to the data presented in Chart 4.1, the significance of listening skills is evident among students. A majority of 55% believe that listening is very important, while 30% consider it to be important. Additionally, 10% of students regard this skill as quite important, and only a small percentage of 5% do not view it as important. Overall, the findings highlight that the majority of students place great emphasis on the importance of English listening skills, particularly in relation to communication abilities. This underscores the recognition among students that effective listening plays a vital role in successful language use and communication. The findings

indicate a positive attitude towards the development of listening skills, which is encouraging for educators.

Question 2: What do you think about listening tasks in the “Tieng Anh 9” new textbook?

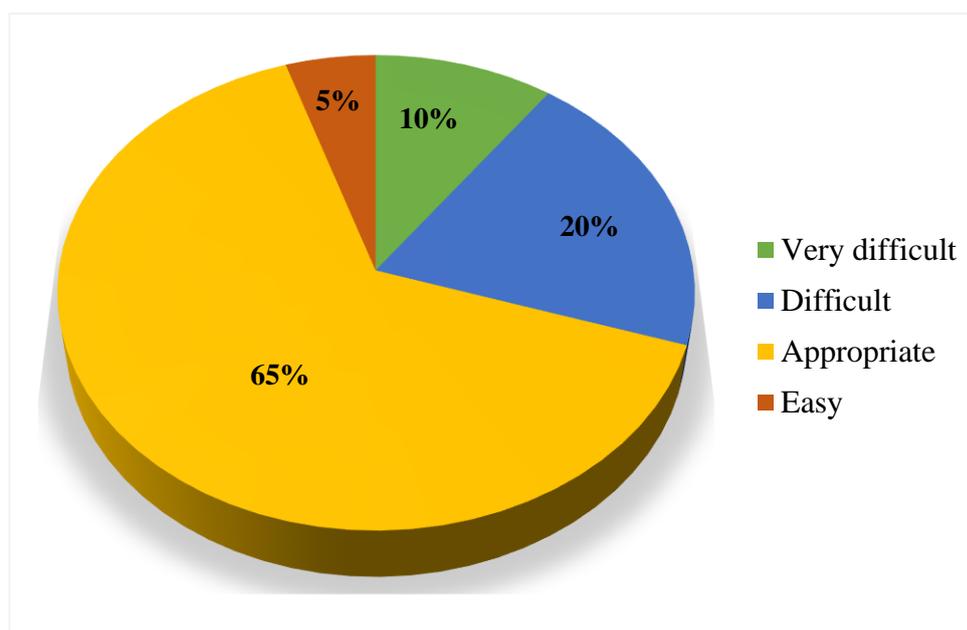


Chart 4.2: Students’ assessment of tasks in the new textbook “Tieng Anh 9”

According to the statistics in chart 4.2, 65% (52 out of 80) of respondents believe that the listening lessons in the new "English 9" textbook are appropriate and suitable for their level. 20% (16 out of 180) find the task at hand difficult, while 10% find it very difficult. Only 5% of participants found them easy. According to the findings, it appears that listening tasks pose a certain level of difficulty for approximately one-third of the student population. This difficulty can result in feelings of boredom and a lack of motivation to study, primarily due to the listening material exceeding their current proficiency level. Additionally, the majority of the activities used in the lessons are directly taken from the textbook without any modifications, which fails to stimulate students' motivation to learn. As a consequence, students may struggle to find the tasks engaging and may not feel inspired to actively participate in the learning process.

Question 3: How often do you listen to English outside the class?

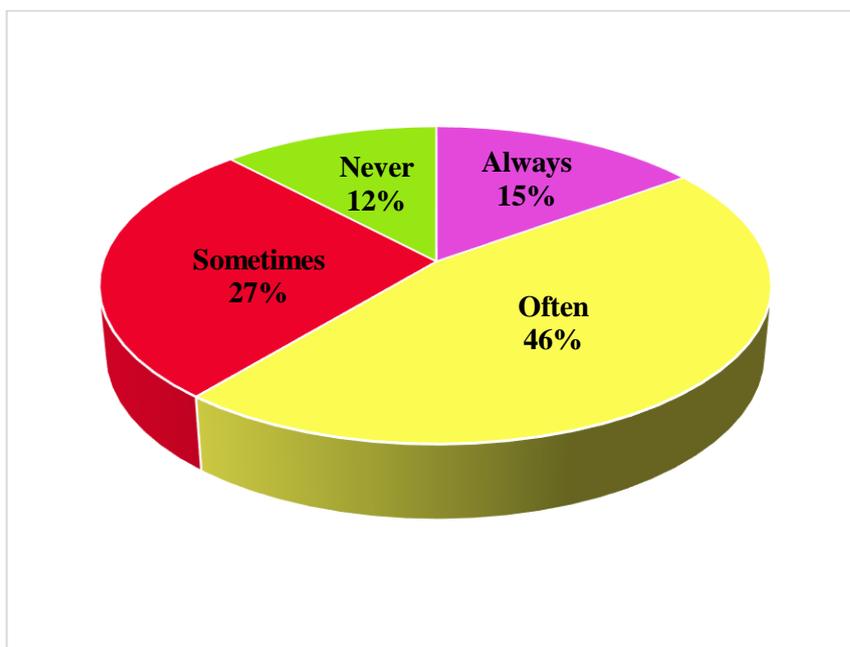


Chart 4.3: Students' frequency of listening to English outside the class

The results of the survey questionnaire are mentioned in the pie chart 4.3. It shows that 54% of students do not often listen to English outside the classroom. In particular, some students (12%) said they had never heard English outside of class time. This means they don't even listen to the English songs that many students love. Only 15% of students always practice listening to English at home and 27% say they regularly practice listening to English at home. Students who have never heard English at home may not like English because even the laziest students sometimes listen to English songs somewhere on social networks like Youtube or Tiktok. The fact that students rarely practice outside of class time is also the reason why it is difficult for them to absorb and understand the listening material. Learning a language takes constant practice. Therefore, just learning to listen to English in school is not enough to get good grades. No matter how good a teacher is, students' self-study plays a very important role in their learning process.

Question 4: Which of the following speaker-related problems has affected your English listening?

Problems	n.	%
A. Cannot listen to strange accents.	43	53.75%
B. The speaker speaks too fast.	52	65%
C. Difficulty understanding the listening passage if it is not repeated.	37	46.25%
D. Speech is full of hesitation and pauses	12	15%
E. The listening does not emphasize intonation.	18	22.5%
F. The words are spelled the same, with different stress.	11	13.75%
G. Difficult to understand the meaning of words that are not clearly pronounced due to the phenomenon of assimilation and swallowing.	63	78.75%

Table 4.1: Listening problems related to the speaker

Accent

Based on the findings presented in Table 4.1, it can be observed that 53.75% of the students interviewed perceive difficulties in comprehending speech delivered in unfamiliar accents. Additionally, 46.25% of the students reported that they are able to understand a listening passage without repetition. In summary, these results indicate that students face challenges when listening to accents that differ from what they are accustomed to, particularly when encountering them for the first time. This aligns with the assertion made by Yagang (1994) that listeners need to become accustomed to the primary voices they hear. Exposure to standard British or American accents may impede their understanding of other accents. It is important to note that each individual possesses a unique voice, underscoring the necessity for students to be exposed to various stress patterns and accents to enhance their listening skills.

Speed

According to Table 4.1, the majority of students agree that "The speakers speak too fast." As a result, the speed of speech provides suggestions for collecting crucial points. In fact, because natural speaking is relatively quick for second language learners, it can be difficult for non-native speakers. Speech speed is a significant challenge for students. Most speakers speak rapidly, swallow many words, and do not interrupt, resulting in numerous keywords being missed by listeners. 35% of students report being unable to hear because the speaker speaks too quickly. Moreover, the sound is played only once and it will be more difficult for them. 46.25% of students have difficulty if the listening test is not repeated. According to Osada (2004), listeners can't control the transmission speed, but they should strive to detect the listener's speed and state. Table 4.1 also reveals that students have difficulties understanding natural speech that is full of hesitations and pauses or is spoken too quickly. On the other hand, for the "Speech full of hesitation and pause" issue, 12% of the students felt it affected their listening. Listening is not seamless will cause students' listening to be interrupted and interrupted. This leads to confusion and loss of interest in listening. Because most students have difficulty speaking too quickly, this provides an opportunity for students to comprehend the relevant information during the listening session.

Stress and intonation

From the data in Table 4.1, 22.5% of students believe the issue "the listening lesson does not emphasize intonation" impacts them. Furthermore, "The words are spelled the same, but with different stress." confuses 13.75% of secondary school students when listening. Without stress and intonation, listeners will struggle to understand what information is significant. Particularly requests or questions. Furthermore, improper stress and intonation will confuse you and cause you to miss important information. They are unaware that words in the speech that are spoken continually frequently do not have the same stress as those stated in isolation

(Underwood, 1989). The goal of stress is to emphasize substantive words to convey meaning. When sentences lack stress or intonation, students cannot distinguish between content and function. As a result, when speaking, multiply the stress and intonation to generate formality and understanding for the audience.

The phenomenon of assimilation and swallowing

These are common phenomena that make it difficult for students to distinguish or recognize individual words in a stream of speech. It is related to the phenomenon of assimilation and swallowing. Looking at Table 4.1, we can see that the phenomenon of assimilation and swallowing produces problems for students, accounting for around 78.75% of the total. In general, we can see that the majority of students struggle when they do not grasp the lesson's topic, lose attention, and put pressure on themselves when there are too many homophonic phenomena and word swallowing in the dialogue. These phenomena have different effects on different people's hearing. Assessing and acknowledging this influence assists students in identifying the source of the problem and directing them to the best appropriate practice.

Question 5: Which of the following text-related problems has affected your English listening?

Problems	n.	%
A. The text is too long.	68	85%
B. The text has a boring topic.	36	45%
C. Information density.	56	70%
D. The text has complex content.	24	30%
E. The text contains many terms from different topics.	12	15%

Table 4.2: Listening problems related to the text

Length of texts

According to the data from Table 4.2, it is very clear that 85% of the participants said that they have difficulty listening to long passages. In addition, for the sentence "The text has a boring topic", the majority of students (45%) thought it was difficult to understand. In contrast, some students completely disagree with this statement (55%), they do not get bored when listening to long passages. Most students agree with the statement that long text affects their listening process to process information, especially long text affects mainly psychology, when they feel uncomfortable listening when the content too long. Therefore, it can be inferred that long speeches hinder learners' listening ability. According to Gilakjani, A.P. and Ahmadi, M.R. (2011) if the listening lesson is too long, it is more appropriate to divide it into shorter segments by pausing or changing words so that students can easily remember and absorb them.

Information density, complex text

Undoubtedly, when the density of complex textual information is one of the factors affecting listening ability. The higher the density of information, the greater the difficulty. According to the data from Table 4.2, the sentence "Information density" indicates that 70% of students find it difficult when the information density increases. Moreover, 30% of students have difficulty with "The text has complex content". This could be one reason to predict that longer, more complex passages will have a greater impact on the listening comprehension of low-level listeners. But besides that, many students are also confident in their ability to analyze information and complex structures, so they feel that this assessment does not affect them. Thereby, we see, the greater the information density, the higher the listener's cognitive needs (Gilmore, 2004). Therefore, if students do not clearly outline the text first, they will not be able to capture the information effectively.

Unfamiliar topic

As you can see in the table 4.2, 15% of students think that the text contains many terms from different topics that hinder their listening comprehension. According to Bingol (2014), when students find the topic of listening interesting, understanding the lesson will be easier. Such findings indicate that the role of working memory in listening comprehension may be influenced by the organization of the passage and its subject matter. When the topic of a passage is unfamiliar or its content is less organized, comprehension can be more difficult. They're complete strangers to them so it's hard to listen when the message is filled with jargon.

Question 6: Which of the following listener-related problems has affected your English listening?

Problems	n.	%
A. Difficult to predict what will happen next at the moment of listening.	67	83.75%
B. Don't know how to identify words.	43	53.75%
C. Unable to understand the meaning of words when there are too many specialized terms.	73	91.25%
D. The listening lesson has many complex sentences, pronouns and relational structures.	35	43.75%
E. I don't pronounce well so I can't listen fluently.	56	70%
F. I have difficulty with passages that use a lot of sociocultural knowledge that I do not know.	68	85%
G. Constantly worried, afraid of misunderstanding.	73	91.25%
H. Easy to lose concentration	57	71.25%

Table 4.3: Listening problems related to the listeners

Vocabulary

According to Table 4.3, 83.75% of students said that they could not predict what would happen next at the time of listening. Besides, 53.75% of students do not

know how to identify words. In addition, 91.25% of students admitted that they did not understand the meaning of words when there were too many specialized terms. This result also supports Underwood's (1989) theory that insufficient vocabulary is a major barrier to listening comprehension for most students. Listening material can cover a wide range of topics in life and society. It could be a business report, a casual conversation, or a political topic that confuses the listener. These talks may contain words, phrases, or terms that the listener is unfamiliar with. They are complete strangers to them, thus terminology makes it difficult for them to listen.

Grammar

Looking at Table 4.3, we can see that the majority of students (43.75%) consider that "the listening lesson has many complex sentences, pronouns and relational structures". According to the findings, grammar still has an impact on listening abilities, albeit a minor one. According to Bloomfield et al. (2010), different speaking styles of passages have distinct structures, which can make them simpler or more difficult for listeners to understand. Obviously, if students do not know how to form words, the listening portion will be considerably more difficult to comprehend. Students frequently try to interpret it by analyzing its grammar. Students frequently struggle with complex text structures and sentences with sound correlations. When they are exposed to new grammatical structures or grammatical structures that appear similar, they are unable to listen properly because they cannot analyze the correct meaning.

Pronunciation

From the data in Table 4.3, 70% of students consider that they don't pronounce well so they can't listen fluently. However, 30% of students say that they can hear well despite they don't pronounce correctly.

Pronunciation is an essential component of listening practice. It is clear that normal pronunciation has a major impact on students' listening efficiency. The unclear pronunciation of some speakers is also considered a source of hearing

problems. Many students think that unclear pronunciation will make it difficult for them to understand their English listening. Poor pronunciation can cause negative misunderstandings or failure in communication as well as in listening.

Background knowledge

"I have difficulty with passages that use a lot of socio-cultural knowledge that I don't know," responded 85% of students. Most students stated that not only do they struggle with a lack of social and cultural knowledge, but they also struggle with words relating to social, economic, and political topics.

Wardhaugh (1986) contends that language and culture are inextricably linked. They believe that the answer has a coherent view of the relevance of background knowledge because it mentions vast knowledge of other areas such as economics and society. This study supports Nuttall (1996) assertion that issues develop when there is a mismatch between what learners are hearing and their prior experiences. According to Hasan (2000), students' capacity to integrate newly heard material with existing knowledge is a potent and widely used method for predicting the meaning of listening passages. As a result, the majority of students' lack of basic understanding about culture, society, and the economy is unavoidable.

Psychological Factors

Referring to Table 4.3, "Constantly worried, afraid of misunderstanding" is the obstacle that 73 out of 80 students have when listening. Anxiety and fear decrease listening ability. Students cannot ignore the existence of fear and stress when thinking about foreign languages. When a person is uncomfortable, their ability to listen is considerably diminished. In addition, boredom and dissatisfaction are impediments to listening comprehension. Besides, 91.25% of students experienced difficulty focusing during the listening process. Psychological variables are essential for concentration and have an impact on the entire listening process. Concentration is difficult to maintain when listening since, according to Osada (2004), even the shortest attention span can substantially hinder comprehension. The process of

listening comprehension, according to Yagang (1993), is likewise a highly sophisticated psychological process. According to the findings of the preceding investigation, the majority of students agree with the concepts connected to psychological aspects. They frequently struggle due to a lack of concentration and anxiousness when listening.

Question 7: Which of the following physical conditions has affected your English listening?

Problems	n.	%
A. Sound is not clear due to poor speaker quality.	23	28.75%
B. Large room makes the sound diluted.	27	33.75%
C. Difficulty concentrating with background noise.	56	70%

Table 4.4: Listening problems related to the physical conditions

There are three things related to physical conditions that affect students' listening to English. Poor speaker quality factors are equally influential when accounting for 28.75% of students. Students agreeing with the large room factor accounted for 33.75% of the problem and 70% agreeing with the background noise.

The importance of learning equipment in encouraging students to learn listening skills cannot be overstated. If well equipped, listening activity will be favorable and conversely if poorly equipped, listening will be hindered. Some teachers use poor-quality recorded materials in their lessons. The student's ability to understand what is being heard can be impacted by the sound system's quality. Furthermore, the number of students in large classrooms is also affected by their sitting position because speakers are only rear-mounted and students sitting far away from the speakers will not be able to hear clearly. If the speaker is loud enough, the sound will be too loud, which will cause students to hear a buzzing noise. Thereby, it can be seen that the class size also makes it difficult for teachers to manage students in listening activities and students also have difficulty in listening.

Question 8: What activities should be done before listening?

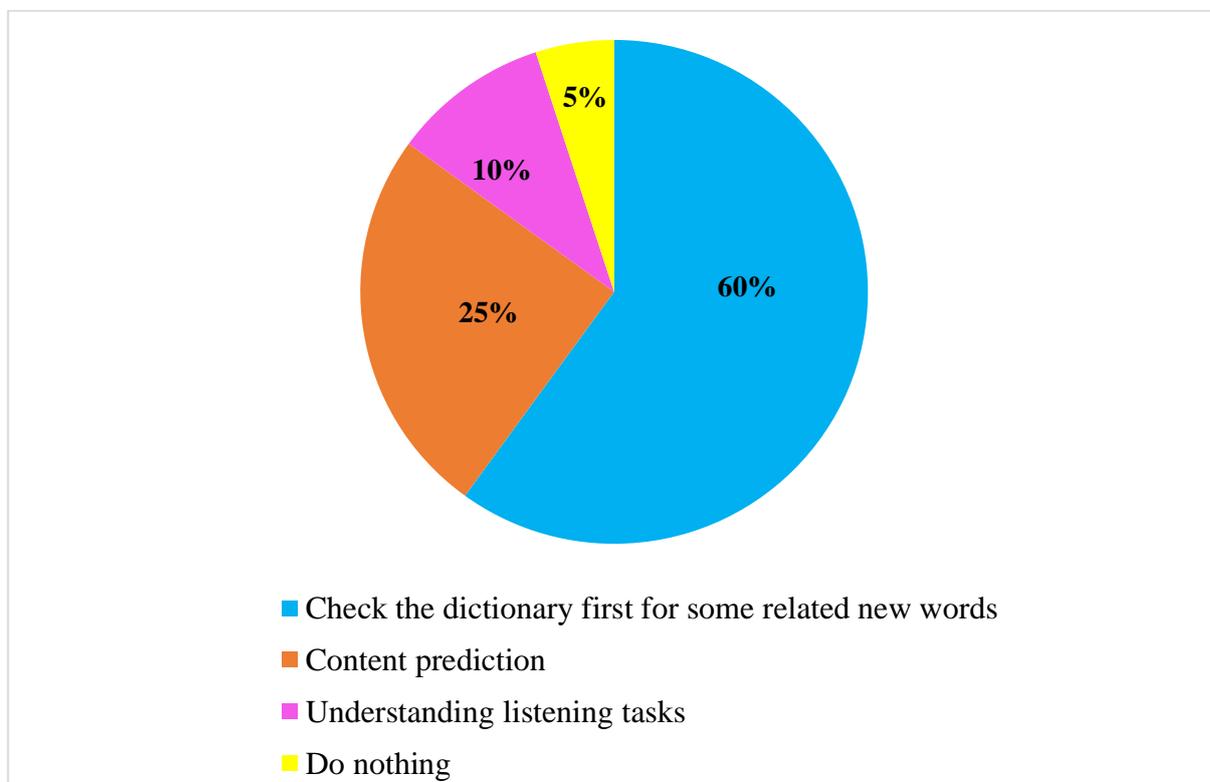


Chart 4.4: Activities students should do before listening

The chart 4.4 shows that the majority of students look up some related words in the dictionary because they think that they will guess the content of the article faster and more accurately. Students will be more confident and less surprised if they know the meaning of some unknown words. Besides, students often predict listening content based on teacher-provided activities, accounting for 25%. Perhaps suggesting that predictive activities are closer to listening conversations. Prediction is important because it helps them anticipate situations where they have to translate or have high context. Only 10% of students think that it is advisable to read and understand the listening task carefully before listening. However, this is an equally important step because sometimes students misunderstand and misinterpret the question requirements. Besides, 5% of students believe that they do not need to do anything before reading; this is a concerning figure due to students' indifference and lack of motivation when it comes to listening to and studying English.

Question 9: What activities should be done while listening?

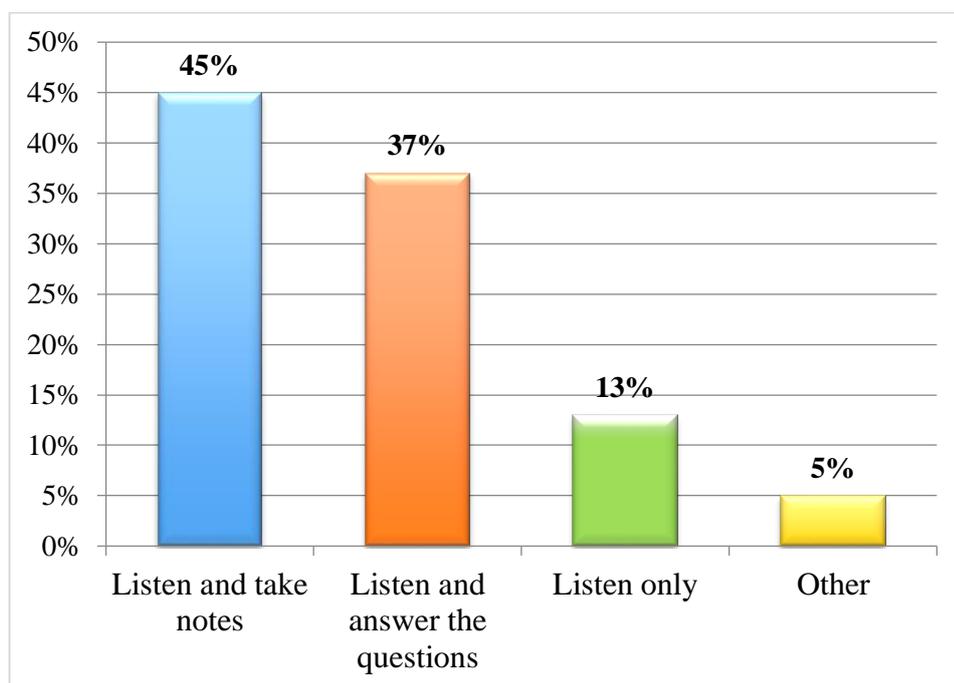


Chart 4.5: Activities students should do while listening

According to graph 4.5, 45% of students are prepared to take notes while listening. This is an engaging activity that allows students to practice their listening abilities in English class and allow them to practice critical thinking about words and respond to language in a sensitive manner. Support students in developing ideas and understanding informational tools. 37% of them frequently try to answer questions while listening. The remaining 13% just listen and 5% choose other activities such as focusing on keywords.

The entire listening process is for students to hear and understand the material. It is not necessary for students to understand all of the listening material. They only need to capture the key ideas. There are various approaches that can be utilized to help students focus on the general ideas and themes of the material they are listening to. This is in line with Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011), who suggest that students take notes on significant terms based on what they listen to construct the lesson's core theme. So activities such as taking notes are essential while listening.

Question 10: What activities should be done after listening?

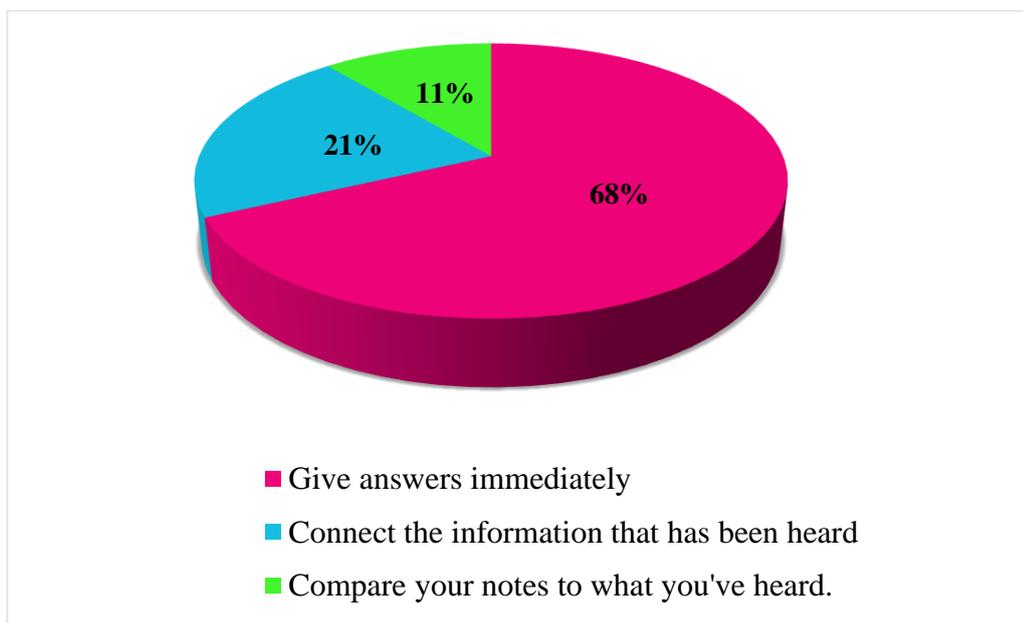


Chart 4.6: Activities students should do after listening

Based on the chart provided, it is evident that the majority of students (68%) are in agreement with the practice of answering questions immediately after listening. Additionally, 21% of students demonstrate the ability to connect the information they have heard, while 11% of students engage in the practice of comparing their notes to the content they have listened to. These findings highlight the various strategies employed by students to enhance their listening comprehension. The high percentage of students who favor answering questions immediately after listening suggests that this approach is widely recognized as an effective way to reinforce understanding. Similarly, the significant portion of students who connect the information they have heard indicates an aptitude for synthesizing and making connections. The practice of comparing notes to the content heard showcases a conscientious effort to verify comprehension and ensure accuracy. Educators can leverage these findings by incorporating activities that encourage immediate response, information integration, and note verification, thereby fostering students' listening skills and comprehension abilities.

Question 11: What listening activity do you like the most?

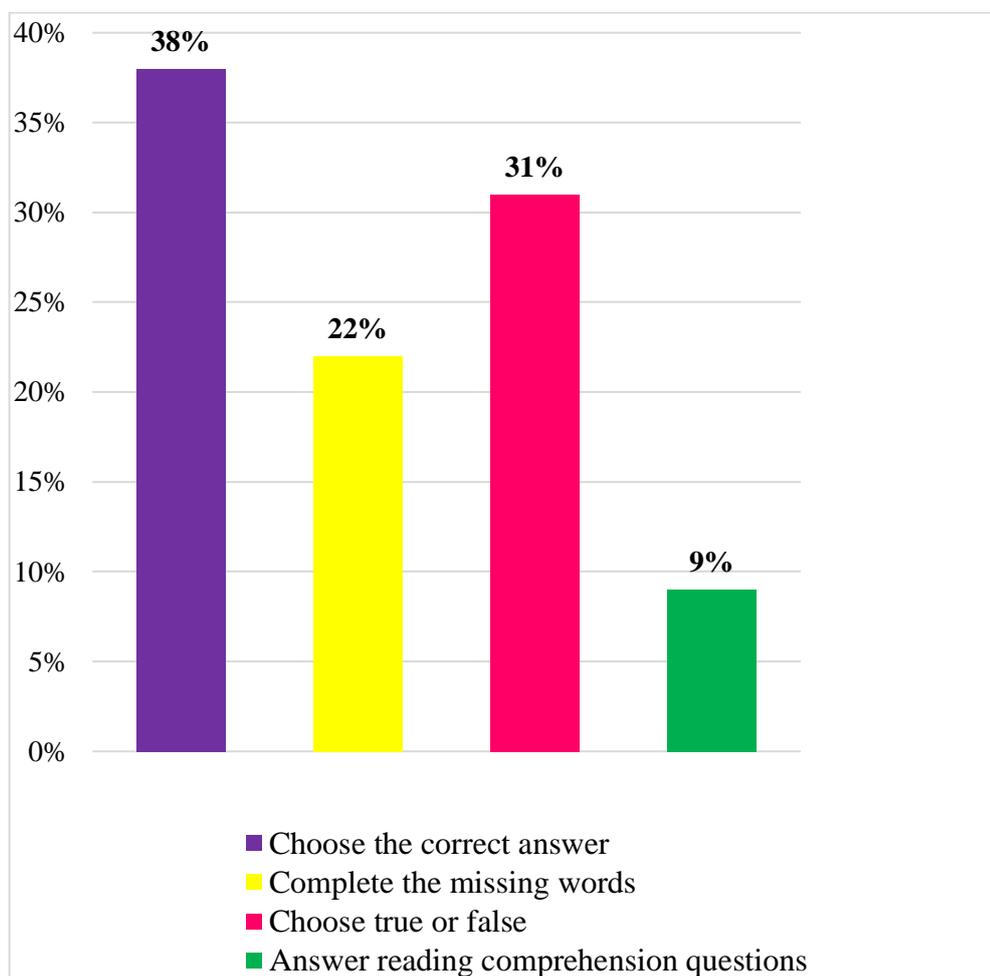


Chart 4.7: Students' favorite listening activities

From the chart 4.7, it can be seen that the listening activity that students choose the most is choosing the right answer (38%) and choosing true or false (31%). Only 9% of students choose to answer reading comprehension questions, indicating that most of students are uninterested in this type of practice. For students, this type of activity is really challenging. It necessitates that students have a general comprehension of the listening text as well as general abilities such as skimming, scanning, paraphrasing, and so on. In order to communicate thoughts based on what they hear, students must also have a strong command of grammar and vocabulary. Meanwhile, it is stated that completing the missing words or information is a natural activity. And

22% of the students chose for completing the missing words. At the time, listening activities had a significant impact on students' interest in developing this ability.

Question 12: What kind of listening lessons would you like to be taught in class?

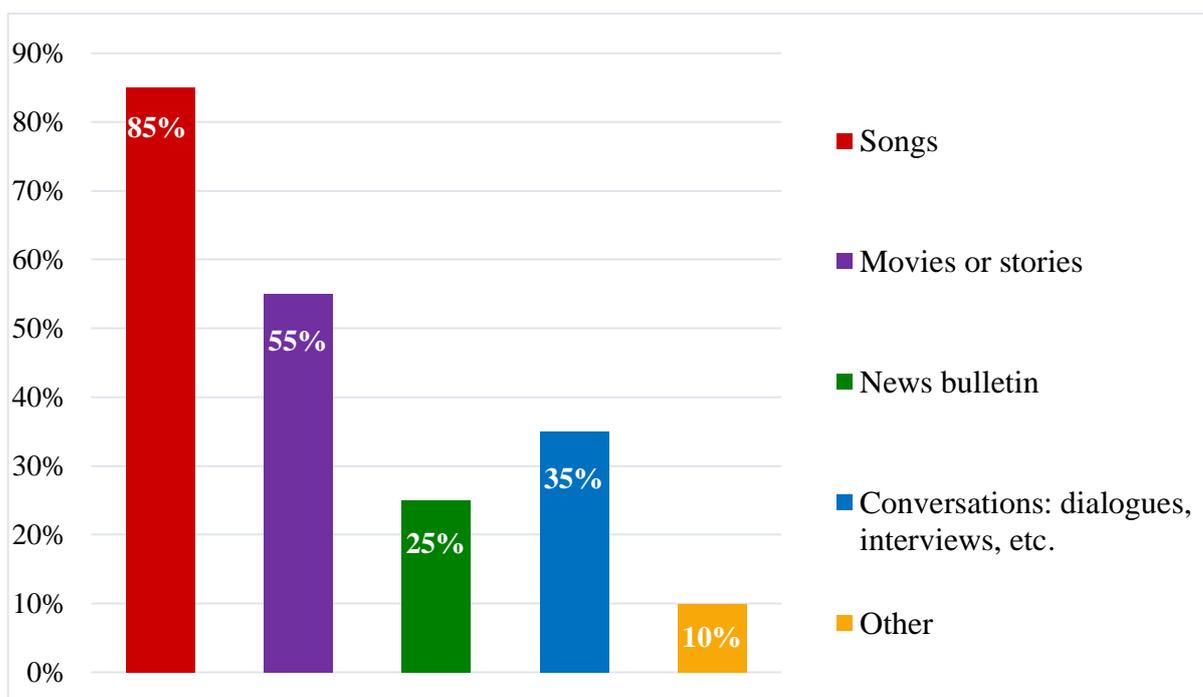


Chart 4.8: Student's interest in extra listening activities

It is not uncommon for the majority of students (85%) to want to add listening exercises in the form of songs. Songs are an excellent source of 'realistic' language, and they can also be used to enhance listening skills. Above all, songs are an entertaining method to learn English. There are many odd noises that your mouth is not used to creating when learning a new language. Singing assists our mouths in forming the proper shapes and producing loud and clear sounds. From there, you may get used to the sound and improve your listening skills in English. Similarly, movies and stories are the most popular method of listening (55%) since they contain many vivid visuals and provide students with a lot of excitement while listening to other languages. Furthermore, 35% of students prefer to listen to dialogues and interviews because they are more personal and authentic. However, only 25% of students prefer

to listen to news bulletin since they contain too much information and unfamiliar terms. 10% of students choose to listen to videos on Facebook or VOA, for example.

4.1.2 Results of the interview

The results were collected from interviews with teachers at Thuan Quy Secondary School. The writer interviewed 5 teachers who are teaching 9th grade. According to their responses, the information collected is as follows.

First, problems occur in the process of teaching English listening skills to students. Numerous challenges occur as a result of learner-related, problems document-related problems and other types of problems.

Students' difficulties in listening are widespread. Students are not familiar with native speakers. Most students lack the motivation to listen. Furthermore, students are typically hesitant owing to a lack of confidence and the fear of making mistakes in front of a large group of people. As a result, only certain students excelled at answering the questions, while others felt bored and excluded. It turns out that the class is not consistent. Furthermore, their basic knowledge of society and languages, such as British culture or the English language, is insufficient. The following problems are material-related. Teachers interviewed stated that the majority of the listening content was diverse and authentic, but not appropriate for the student's culture. Some of the listening lessons were uninteresting to the teachers. On the other hand, they all believe that the listening levels are adequate. There are many other issues relating to teaching and learning listening skills here. Teachers believe that low-quality equipment, such as old speakers that cause interference and reverberation, is a major problem that hinders listening activities. Some classrooms are so full that only the students at the front can hear effectively.

Second, the interviewees were asked how they teach listening skills to students. Teachers frequently teach or ask students to guess certain new words that may emerge in the listening passage before listening, and they also encourage students to brainstorm about the topics of the listening that the students will listen to.

Most teachers usually ask learners guiding questions, but no one ever summarizes the listening before listening. While students were listening, teachers urged them to respond as directed. Teachers usually allow students to listen to a listening passage twice or three times. One of them occasionally plays a segment of the audio and then stops to ask for clarification or repeat. Teachers employ extra listening material to help and encourage students to listen. They often use songs or movies, and they have never used a news bulletin. After listening, two of the five teachers frequently allows students to role-play, while the other lets students recall what they heard. No teacher ever requests that students translate it into their native language.

Finally, the teachers at Thuan Quy Secondary School discussed their experiences and innovative methods for teaching listening skills to students. To keep students interested, teachers should carefully arrange listening materials such as warm-up activities, brainstorming activities, and so on. Furthermore, before listening, the teacher should ask explicit direction questions, reading comprehension questions, and other forms of clarified requests. Of course, they proposed that the school invest more in listening equipment such as subject rooms and speakers, which have a direct impact on learners' listening quality.

4.2 Discussions

4.2.1 Difficulties and problems of 9th grade students

According to students, there are several major factors affecting students' learning of English listening skills. The findings from the data analysis can be classified into three main difficulties presented by the students. It is difficult related to language background and language skills, especially techniques and strategies to learn listening skills; difficulties related to speakers and difficulties related to text content.

First, many 9th-grade students encountered difficulties due to a lack of language knowledge. To some extent, 9th-form students at Thuan Quy Secondary School lacked an adequate vocabulary or understanding of English structures for the

materials they were listening to. As a result, they gained self-confidence in demonstrating their real abilities in practice. They were also frequently apprehensive, and less focused on the listening texts. Thus, failing to complete listening duties in class could lead to discouragement and a downward circle of expecting failure. Following that, the listening approaches and procedures that students had learned did not satisfy the need. They seriously lacked specific bottom-up and top-down listening skills. Other issues linked to students' learning strategies may directly interfere with their listening. Students should learn to process sounds fast; and while they must initially pay conscious attention to this processing, it must eventually become habitual for them to increase their listening capacity. Students naturally pay more attention to specific sounds and words while listening to a complex passage, an uncommon accent, or an altogether new notion.

Second, unlike reading, students cannot control the speed at which information comes to them. In the case of a conversation, they may ask the speaker to repeat the information or speak slowly, but in many other listening situations such as listening to a long passage, a program or a presentation, they will only hear the information once and the listening rate cannot be adjusted. Students are aware of these problems and are often quite worried about them. Understandably, their choice of listening tasks or activities depends on the theme, direction, and purpose being more relaxing, easier on the eyes. Indeed, if their teachers provide them with some useful and appropriate techniques or advice for certain tasks, their listening can improve. When students see that their goal is to grasp the main idea and important details, it doesn't take that much effort to understand and grasp every word.

Eventually, the questionnaire showed that most students found the listening texts in this textbook to be suitable for their English ability. These students make up three-quarters of the learners surveyed. It can be concluded that the textbook does not cause great difficulty in learning English listening skills for beginners here. However, that does not mean that they are easy for students. The question is whether those listening tasks are interesting enough for students to learn. In this textbook, the most

common types of listening activities are choosing the correct answer, completing the missing words, choosing true or false, and answering reading comprehension questions, and so on. So sometimes students lack interest in familiar patterns and focus only on the easiest listening with the fewest mistakes.

4.2.2 Current difficulties of teachers

Although English teachers at Thuan Quy Secondary School all have positive views about the new textbook “Tieng Anh 9” and communicative approach to language teaching, they find difficult to succeed when teaching listening in pedagogical practice. There are many reasons leading to the limitation in this unresolved problem, in which difficulties due to lack of experience and communication methods are the most difficult.

The interview shows that the teaching method of teachers' language skills, especially listening skills, is clearly the most difficult problem for all teachers at Thuan Quy Secondary School. This issue was specifically discussed in the following four aspects: teaching listening, time management, adjusting textbooks, and using language in the classroom.

First of all, teachers have difficulty in successfully implementing listening teaching methods in their listening lessons. One of the difficulties that English teachers at Thuan Quy Secondary School face is that they are confused in understanding the definitions of methodological terms such as teaching communicative language, top-down and bottom-up listening methods. As observed in class, the teachers selected in this thesis follow the same process of teaching listening: warm-up, pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening, and take advantage of the activities or tasks given in the textbook. The teacher presents new words, gives instructions, plays the tape or reads the lesson a few times, asks students to do the work in the textbook. Finally, perform the summary or answer the questions given. The fact is that teachers do not have the creativity or choice to use appropriate activities to stimulate students' learning and improve listening skills. Textbooks often

present questions or tasks that can be used to give students a purpose and focus their focus on specific aspects of meaning. However, teachers should review the questions and assignments and choose some questions for students to hear for the first time, others for the second listening, and possibly others for the third time. Otherwise, students may get overwhelmed hearing too much at once or may get stuck with difficult questions or tasks. In addition, teachers should ensure such questions or listening are appropriate for the level and needs of their students. In other words, it is the teacher's job to adapt listening tasks and activities flexibly and effectively depending on the students' background knowledge and skills as well as the teaching conditions.

Second, time management is also considered an art of language teaching that many teachers of communicative languages are currently having difficulty with. All the teachers involved in the study agreed on the time required for each stage of the theoretical listening and they tried to make the best use of it. However, their failure is inevitable and understandable for many reasons: inadequate classroom conditions, low level of knowledge and background, low initiative of students; and inexperience of teachers as well as inadequate methods and techniques in teaching listening. In which, the teacher's method is the decisive factor.

Third, textbook adjustments can be an effective solution to problems with students' poor and uneven hearing and difficult or irrelevant items in textbooks, as well as lack of facilities in high school. Therefore, one of the roles of the teacher is to make it more relevant and relevant to the background, level, and interests of the students. This can be done by simply changing the order of some parts of the quest or by removing some assignments or tasks and adding others.

Finally, the language used in the classroom should be considered methodologically by the teacher. According to the new communicative language teaching method, teachers should minimize the use of their mother tongue and maximize the use of English. This will give students more exposure to the target

language, as well as improve their listening and speaking skills. However, observations have shown that teachers do not usually speak English when giving instructions or explanations. If so, they immediately translate it into Vietnamese. As a result, teachers reduce students' chances of familiarizing themselves with English sounds, words, and listening skills. More importantly, the teacher's pronunciation is not good enough. They have problems with pronunciation that negatively affects students' pronunciation and listening in the target language.

4.3 Chapter summary

In summary, the findings and discussion section summarizes the statistics collected from surveys and interviews. It can be summarized in the following conclusions.

Regarding difficulties in learning listening skills, according to learners' feedback, it is difficult but they like it. In fact, there are many factors, both objective and subjective, that affect learners' listening. According to the research results, students have difficulty grasping the general message from the audio recordings. It happens for a number of reasons: the natural features of the spoken language in the recording with a lot of colloquialisms, idioms, and the learner's own lack of background knowledge of the language (vocabulary, grammar, discourse, pragmatics) and about the culture of English-speaking countries; the listening habits of learners; as well as unsatisfactory learning material conditions.

To overcome those difficulties, a synchronous solution is needed. According to the information suggested by the student feedback, the teacher's interview, and the writer's own observations, teachers and students as well as the school must try their best. Firstly, the school needs to equip good and necessary equipment such as speakers and these devices need regular maintenance to always be in good condition. In addition, technology devices need to be used effectively in teaching and learning. Second, teachers must have standard knowledge of languages and general background knowledge about society and culture in the world, especially in English-

speaking countries. Finally, learners must make efforts to overcome bad habits in learning listening skills and study hard. The most common point is that all children must be aware of the importance of listening as well as learning listening skills.

Based on the findings, the author would like to propose some implications to assist students to learn listening skills more easily, and teachers can have some additional strategies to improve listening skills teaching. The implications will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Summary

Through the four chapters, the study investigates the difficulties in learning listening experienced by 9th-grade students at Thuan Quy Secondary School. The research arrives at four main conclusions:

First, one of the most important points is students' awareness of the importance of listening skills. Students find learning English very important to successfully communicate with others from different countries. They also consider listening to be the most difficult of the four language skills. However, students don't like listening lessons for a number of reasons. For students, the topic is not interesting, the listening is too difficult and boring and the vocabulary is too large are the main reasons why they are not interested in the listening. In addition, students are less interested in learning to listen, mainly due to subjective reasons such as limited listening ability, boredom, and less interest in learning to listen. As a result, many students become lethargic and unmotivated when listening is too difficult to learn.

Second, the study also uncovered a range of listening activities commonly performed by teacher. In the pre-listening stage, teaching vocabulary and pre-structure, guiding questions and warm-up games are used very often in listening classes. Meanwhile, discussion, providing background knowledge, and ordering are rarely used by teachers because they depend on textbook design. Besides, at the post-listening stage, teachers often choose activities that create a comfortable atmosphere for students to participate in such as free talk, discussion, role-play or interview. Storytelling, communication games, writing on similar topics received little attention from informants. Moreover, research results show that teachers often face many difficulties in teaching listening skills. Prominent problems are listed such as limited student vocabulary, large class sizes and mixed abilities,

uninteresting and inappropriate listening tasks, low motivation to learn, students' passive attitude, time constraints as well as lack of teaching facilities and teaching aids.

Finally, the study revealed students' expectations for better listening and then extracted some solutions to teacher-suggested obstacles. Regarding students' desire for effective listening learning, two aspects have been considered to make some changes to current problems: facilities, and teachers' methods. In terms of teachers' methods, basic information and vocabulary, necessary listening strategies, and listening lessons more suitable for their level have been provided by most of them. Listening to students' wishes leads teachers to come up with effective solutions to improve their listening teaching. Provide students with keywords with pronunciation before listening to the passage, tailor listening to students' abilities, help students strategize listening, and use more interesting material next to the textbook recommended by most respondents. Next, for many of them, using fun games to motivate learners, having students work in groups and perform different listening tasks, and providing teachers with seminars or programs to exchange experiences and train teachers' methods are good solutions.

5.2 Implication

5.2.1 Implication for the school

The change of teaching and learning equipment should be considered by the leaders of Thuan Quy Secondary School. Schools should install modern equipment such as TVs, interactive whiteboards, speakers and headphones in classrooms and subject rooms. In addition, the lab room needs to be upgraded and checked regularly to help teachers take advantage of their teaching listening techniques.

The problem of large classes also needs the attention of the school. Schools and teachers should find ways to make entrance tests more rigorous and effective. The school should create conditions for students to have the opportunity to study with foreign teachers. Thereby, it will help students improve their English in general

and their listening skills in particular. More importantly, students can be a natural style in communicating with foreigners, helping them to become more confident in the listening part.

5.2.2 Implication for teachers

Firstly, one effective strategy for teachers to enhance their expertise in teaching listening is to observe other teachers' listening courses. By observing these classes, teachers can gain valuable insights into lesson content and teaching approaches, allowing them to reflect on their own practices.

Secondly, it is essential for teachers to invest time in upgrading their knowledge of teaching methodologies. This can be achieved through reading materials on methodology, exploring publications and journals available on the internet, and participating in relevant workshops and training sessions.

Thirdly, teachers should emphasize the importance of listening skills to their students and foster their interest in this particular skill. Students need to understand that listening is one of the fundamental language abilities that enable successful communication and facilitate the acquisition of other language skills.

Fourthly, teachers should be mindful of their students' individual learning preferences and linguistic proficiency levels. This awareness will enable them to tailor activities to suit the interests and abilities of their students. Incorporating various communicative activities such as role-playing, pair work, group work, and communication games can promote active participation and meaningful interaction among students. It is important to strike a balance between challenging tasks and maintaining student motivation.

Furthermore, teachers should be open to creative and flexible instructional approaches. For weaker students, teachers can provide support and simplify textbook assignments. Advanced students can be given the opportunity to work in

groups and engage in discussions after listening to different parts of a longer listening text.

Additionally, teachers can assign listening tasks with varying levels of difficulty. Starting with easier assignments allows students to build confidence before tackling more challenging tasks.

Moreover, teachers should be mindful of time management during the teaching process. While all three stages of listening (pre-listening, while-listening, post-listening) are important, teachers should allocate sufficient time to each stage. This ensures that students have ample opportunity to perform well during the listening task and develop their post-listening skills without feeling rushed.

Lastly, incorporating attractive teaching aids, such as visual aids, pictures, authentic materials like films, songs, stories, news, and engaging programs from various media sources, can capture students' attention and alleviate boredom during listening lessons. This not only motivates students but also exposes them to real-world listening, thereby enhancing their listening skills.

5.2.3 Implication for students

As mentioned above, the majority of 9th grade students at Thuan Quy Secondary School have not had any experience in listening practice because they do not regularly practice at school, so it is time for these students to change their methods of learning listening as well as their attitude towards listening.

Students who wish to learn to listen well must work hard to overcome negative listening habits and increase their existing knowledge. According to the survey, most students tend to concentrate on every word in the audio, which rapidly gets tiresome and annoying. Furthermore, students will be unable to catch up with the speaker to grasp the general meaning of the speech if they focus too much on the meaning of each word, structure, and sentence. During listening, students should rely on

background information, context, and hints to understand the meaning of the communication, rather than just specific words or structures.

Students need to have the habit of practicing listening to English at home every day. Just doing the listening exercises in class is not enough. At home, they can spend time listening to “classroom” listening again or new listening from the internet and other sources. They have to practice more including watching English TV shows, listening to English songs and stories to get used to foreign accents as well as improve their English pronunciation.

Finally, students should have the opportunity to talk with foreigners. That way, they can improve their pronunciation, enrich their vocabulary and background knowledge, which are essential for successful listening.

5.3 Limitations

The researcher has tried his best to come up with some insightful findings, however, there are still some limitations. The thesis is a topic of great significance in the education system and is quite difficult. All the steps and tools used for research may not be sufficient. Therefore, the quality may be limited.

Although the study includes survey questionnaires for students and observations, it is clear that the study contains a variety of shortcomings due to time constraints, a lack of sources, the researcher's skill, and other unexpected factors. Because of the study's scope limitations, the researcher solely focuses on 9th-grade students, who account for a small number of students at Thuan Quy Secondary School. As a result, the study's findings cannot be generalized. Furthermore, the researcher was unable to cover all parts of the issues. Furthermore, the methodologies proposed in this study are drawn from a variety of credible but limited sources.

5.4 Suggestion for further study

Some suggestions for further research are provided based on the study's findings and limitations. According to the findings of the study, teachers as well as

students encountered a number of issues that have yet to be remedied. The source of the issues that teachers face could be found in textbook policy or in the teacher's professional expertise and experience. Furthermore, further study on strategies to increase listening abilities and the effectiveness of listening classes is required. Obviously, an examination of student motivations and needs is required to acquire a better grasp of this. Additionally, research on how to employ various communication approaches to teach specific language skills such as speaking, writing, and reading would be beneficial.

Hopefully, this research will help teachers and students at Thuan Quy Secondary School to minimize the problems in the process of teaching and learning listening skills as well as for those who are interested in this issue. The researcher appreciates the reader's tolerance for any shortcomings of the study.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1. Survey questionnaire for students (English Version)

This questionnaire is designed to study 9th grade students at Thuan Quy Secondary School who have difficulty in mastering English listening skills. Completing this questionnaire will provide useful information for 9th grade students at Thuan Quy Secondary School. Hope you can give the most honest answer. Thank you very much for your cooperation!

I. Personal information:

1. Gender: (Male/Female)
2. Grade: 9.....
3. How many years have you studied English?

II. Survey questions about learning English listening skills:

(Circle the letter A, B, C or D expressing your opinion)

1. How important do you think English listening skills are?

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

2. What do you think about listening tasks in the “Tieng Anh 9” new textbook?

- A. Very difficult
- B. Difficult
- C. Appropriate
- D. Easy

3. How often do you listen to English outside the class?

- A. Always
- B. Often
- C. Sometimes
- D. Never

4. Which of the following speaker-related problems has affected your English listening?

- A. Cannot listen to strange accents.
- B. The speaker speaks too fast.
- C. Difficulty understanding the listening passage if it is not repeated.
- D. Speech is full of hesitation and pauses
- E. The listening does not emphasize intonation.
- F. The words are spelled the same, with different stress.
- G. Difficult to understand the meaning of words that are not clearly pronounced due to the phenomenon of assimilation and swallowing.

5. Which of the following text-related problems has affected your English listening?

- A. The text is too long.
- B. The text has a boring topic.
- C. Information density.
- D. The text has complex content.
- E. The text contains many terms from different topics.

6. Which of the following listener-related problems has affected your English listening?

- A. Difficult to predict what will happen next at the moment of listening.
- B. Don't know how to identify words.
- C. Unable to understand the meaning of words when there are too many specialized terms.
- D. The listening lesson has many complex sentences, pronouns and relational structures.
- E. I don't pronounce well so I can't listen fluently.
- F. I have difficulty with passages that use a lot of sociocultural knowledge that I do not know.
- G. Constantly worried, afraid of misunderstanding.

H. Easy to lose concentration

7. Which of the following physical conditions has affected your English listening?

- A. Sound is not clear due to poor speaker quality.
- B. Large room makes the sound diluted.
- C. Difficulty concentrating with background noise.

8. What activities should be done before listening?

- A. Check the dictionary first for some related new words
- B. Content prediction
- C. Understanding listening tasks
- D. Do nothing
- E. Other:

9. What activities should be done while listening?

- A. Listen and take notes
- B. Listen and answer the questions
- C. Listen only
- D. Other:

10. What activities should be done after listening?

- A. Give answers immediately
- B. Connect the information that has been heard
- C. Compare your notes to what you've heard.
- D. Other:

11. What listening activity do you like the most?

- A. Choose the correct answer
- B. Complete the missing words
- C. Choose true or false
- D. Answer reading comprehension questions
- E. Other:

12. What kind of listening lessons would you like to be taught in class?

A. Songs

B. Movie or story

C. News bulletin

D. Conversation: dialogue, interview, etc.

E. Other:

Appendix 2. Bảng câu hỏi khảo sát dành cho học sinh (Vietnamese version)

Bảng câu hỏi này được thiết kế để nghiên cứu đối tượng học sinh lớp 9 trường THCS Thuận Quý gặp khó khăn trong việc thành thạo kỹ năng nghe tiếng Anh. Việc hoàn thành bảng câu hỏi này sẽ cung cấp những thông tin hữu ích cho học sinh lớp 9 trường THCS Thuận Quý. Hy vọng các em có thể đưa ra câu trả lời trung thực nhất. Xin chân thành cảm ơn sự hợp tác của các em!

I. Thông tin cá nhân:

1. Giới tính: (Nam/Nữ)
2. Lớp: 9.....
3. Em học tiếng Anh được bao nhiêu năm?

II. Câu hỏi khảo sát về việc học kỹ năng nghe tiếng Anh:

1. Học kỹ năng nghe tiếng Anh có quan trọng với em không?

- A. Rất quan trọng
- B. Quan trọng
- C. Hơi quan trọng
- D. Không quan trọng

2. Em đánh giá như thế nào về các bài tập nghe trong sách giáo khoa tiếng Anh 9 mới?

- A. Rất khó
- B. Khó
- C. Phù hợp
- D. Dễ

3. Ngoài giờ học tiếng Anh trên lớp em có thường luyện thêm kỹ năng nghe không?

- A. Luôn luôn
- B. Thường xuyên
- C. thỉnh thoảng
- D. Không bao giờ

4. Vấn đề liên quan đến âm thanh bài nghe nào sau đây đã ảnh hưởng đến việc nghe tiếng Anh của em?

- A. Không thể nghe được các giọng lạ.
- B. Diễn giả nói quá nhanh.
- C. Khó hiểu bài nghe nếu nó không được lặp lại.
- D. Lời nói đầy sự ngập ngừng và ngắt quãng.
- E. Bài nghe không nhấn mạnh ngữ điệu.
- F. Các từ được đánh vần giống nhau, với trọng âm khác nhau.
- G. Khó để hiểu nghĩa của từ mà không được phát âm rõ ràng do hiện tượng nối âm hoặc nuốt âm.

5. Vấn đề liên quan đến văn bản nào sau đây đã ảnh hưởng đến việc nghe tiếng Anh của em?

- A. Văn bản quá dài.
- B. Văn bản có chủ đề nhàm chán.
- C. Mật độ thông tin trong văn bản dày đặc.
- D. Văn bản có nội dung phức tạp.
- E. Văn bản chứa nhiều thuật ngữ từ các chủ đề khác nhau.

6. Vấn đề liên quan đến người nghe nào sau đây đã ảnh hưởng đến việc nghe tiếng Anh của em?

- A. Khó dự đoán điều gì sẽ xảy ra tiếp theo tại thời điểm nghe.
- B. Không biết cách xác định từ.
- C. Không thể hiểu nghĩa của từ khi có quá nhiều thuật ngữ chuyên ngành.
- D. Bài nghe có nhiều câu phức, đại từ và cấu trúc quan hệ.
- E. Em phát âm không tốt nên không thể nghe lưu loát được.
- F. Em gặp khó khăn với những đoạn sử dụng nhiều kiến thức văn hóa xã hội mà em không biết.
- G. Thường xuyên lo lắng, sợ hiểu sai.
- H. Dễ mất tập trung trong quá trình nghe.

7. Vấn đề liên quan đến điều kiện vật lý nào sau đây đã ảnh hưởng đến việc nghe tiếng Anh của em?

- A. Âm thanh không rõ ràng do chất lượng loa không đảm bảo.
- B. Lớp học lớn khiến âm thanh bị loãng.
- C. Khó tập trung với tiếng ồn xung quanh.

8. Những hoạt động nào nên được thực hiện trước khi nghe?

- A. Nên tra từ điển trước một số từ mới liên quan.
- B. Nên đoán trước nội dung của các bài nghe.
- C. Hiểu được các nhiệm vụ nghe
- D. Không làm gì cả
- E. Khác:

9. Những hoạt động nào nên được thực hiện trong khi nghe?

- A. Nghe và ghi chép
- B. Nghe và trả lời câu hỏi
- C. Chỉ nghe
- D. Khác:

10. Những hoạt động nào nên được thực hiện sau khi nghe?

- A. Đưa ra câu trả lời ngay lập tức.
- B. Liên kết những dữ liệu đã được nghe.
- C. So sánh các ghi chú với những gì đã nghe.
- D. Khác:

11. Em thích hoạt động nghe nào nhất?

- A. Chọn câu trả lời đúng.
- B. Hoàn thành các từ còn thiếu.
- C. Chọn đúng hoặc sai.
- D. Trả lời câu hỏi đọc hiểu.
- E. Khác:

12. Những loại bài nghe nào em mong muốn được dạy trong lớp học?

- A. Bài hát

B. Phim hoặc truyện

C. Bản tin thời sự

D. Hội thoại: đối thoại, phỏng vấn, v.v.

E. Khác:

Appendix 3. Interview for teachers (English version)

This interview is designed for 9th grade English teachers at Thuan Quy Secondary School with the main objective to find out some of the difficulties in teaching English listening skills. From this point, there is further option, consideration, and assessment of whether teaching approach is effective and suited for students. The interview will be recorded so that important data is carefully preserved. Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Question 1. What are the challenges you have when teaching listening skills in students in grade 9?

Question 2. What materials do you use to help and motivate your students to listen?

Question 3. What do you do before you teach listening?

Question 4. Do you allow students to role-play or translate the listening text into their mother tongue once they have finished listening?

Question 5. What comments or recommendations do you have for improving students' listening skills?

Appendix 4. Phỏng vấn giáo viên (Vietnamese version)

Cuộc phỏng vấn này được thiết kế dành cho giáo viên dạy tiếng Anh khối 9 tại trường THCS Thuận Quý với mục tiêu chính là tìm ra một số khó khăn khi dạy học kỹ năng nghe tiếng Anh. Từ đó, có thêm sự lựa chọn, cân nhắc, đánh giá cách dạy nào hiệu quả, phù hợp với học sinh. Cuộc phỏng vấn sẽ được ghi chép lại để dữ liệu quan trọng được bảo quản cẩn thận. Xin chân thành cảm ơn sự hợp tác của các thầy cô!

Câu hỏi 1. Thầy/cô gặp khó khăn gì khi dạy kỹ năng nghe cho học sinh lớp 9?

Câu hỏi 2. Những tài liệu nào thầy/cô sử dụng để hỗ trợ và khuyến khích học sinh nghe?

Câu hỏi 3. Thầy/cô làm gì trước khi dạy nghe?

Câu hỏi 4. Thầy/cô có cho học sinh nhập vai hoặc dịch bài nghe sang tiếng mẹ đẻ sau khi nghe xong không?

Câu hỏi 5. Thầy/cô có nhận xét hoặc đề xuất gì để cải thiện kỹ năng nghe của học sinh?