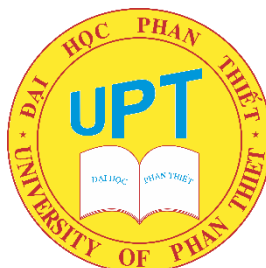


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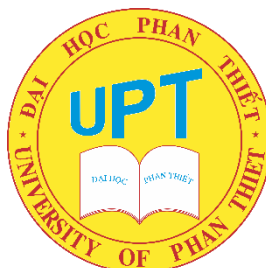
**NGUYỄN HỒ SƠN TUYỀN**

**INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF  
PRE-LISTENING ACTIVITIES IN ENHANCING  
LISTENING SKILLS: A CASE STUDY FOR FIRST YEAR  
ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF  
PHAN THIET**

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

**BINH THUAN PROVINCE, 2024**

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

**INSTRUCTOR: TRAN THI QUYNH LE, PhD.**

**BINH THUAN PROVINCE, 2024**

## **STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP**

I confirm that the work presented in this research entitled “Investigating the Effectiveness of Pre-Listening Activities in Enhancing Listening Skills: A Case Study for first-year English major students at the University of Phan Thiet” has been performed and interpreted solely by myself.

I confirm that this work is submitted in partial fulfillment for the MA Course of English Language at the University of Phan Thiet and has not been submitted elsewhere in other forms to fulfill any other article/paper.

Binh Thuan, 10 September 2024

Nguyen Ho Son Tuyen

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## ABSTRACT

Listening comprehension is a crucial aspect of language learning and teaching, particularly in the context of English Language Teaching (ELT) reform. Students at the University of Phan Thiet, who have lower proficiency in English, often face challenges in developing this essential skill. The main objective of the study is to find out the effectiveness of pre-listening activities in enhancing listening skills and discuss some suggestions for how to use pre-listening activities in teaching and learning listening skills. The author used quantitative and qualitative data to achieve the thesis's goals. Data analysis in this study included the scores of pre-test, and post-test as well as the results of questionnaires were collected and analyzed using SPSS statistic software version 26. Ten English teachers and 104 English major students from the University of Phan Thiet took part in a survey about this. The researcher looked at the students' answers on questionnaires, and interviews. The experiment was employed with the participation of two groups: the experiment group and the control group. The effectiveness of pre-listening activities was evaluated by comparing the difference between the results of a pre-test and a post-test.

The result showed that the application of various pre-listening activities has a positive influence on the test results of the experiment group. Both teachers and students think activities before listening are highly important. Students found some activities, like learning new words and grammatical structures and predicting the content of the topic before listening to be very helpful. They made positive changes in their academic results after doing pre-listening activities. Teachers also have good methods to help students improve listening comprehension.

**Keywords:** *listening skills, pre-listening activities, pre-listening stage, guessing the topic, listening comprehension tasks. activities before listening*

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATION**

1. L1: First language
2. L2: Second language
3. Std. Deviation: Standard deviation
4. UPT: University of Phan Thiet
5. EFL: English as Foreign Language
6. CG: control group
7. EG: experimental group
8. SPSS : Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
9. ELT : English Language Teaching
10. ESA: Engage, Study, Activate.
11. SLA : Second Language Acquisition
12. IELTS : International English Language Testing System

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# INTRODUCTION

## **I. Background of the study**

English has been an exigent need for the social and economic development of the country as well as for college students. For the former, Vietnam has attracted investment from other countries, so English has become a very significant means that facilitates this international cooperation. Regarding the latter, English proficiency is now seen as one of the vital requirements for recruitment by domestic and foreign companies.

Cao (2008), who is responsible for the certification of vocational teaching and evaluating English teaching in vocational training schools, has remarked that: teachers have used traditional methods to teach English, and they have not focused on speaking and listening skills. As a result, after graduating from their vocational schools, the students cannot communicate in English. The lack of listening skills is one of the main reasons for the failure of communication. It is stated that during conversations, people spend 50 percent of their time listening, 25 percent speaking, 15 percent reading, and 10 percent writing (Richards, 2008). Moreover, according to Morley (1984), listening is the key to all effective communication. Indeed, without the interlocutors' ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. While reading and writing are crucial for acquiring and retaining information, vocabulary, and structures in language acquisition, listening and speaking are the primary means of language communication. Therefore, these four skills cannot be separated, and they can be improved only by training and practicing. Similar to other skills, listening is intrinsically related to the storage of vocabulary that has the most meaning of the passage, but students must get it through the ear, this is difficult because of the speed, the tone, the volume, and the external factors that cause the interrupted sound.

Vietnamese students have few opportunities to practice or communicate with native speakers. At the University of Phan Thiet, many students from mountainous regions lack foundational knowledge, making it challenging to improve their listening skills. Additionally, many English teachers often neglect to adequately prepare for the

pre-listening stage due to factors such as limited class time or their misconception that it is unnecessary. This lack of preparation may contribute to students' lack of motivation in lessons, leading to feelings of fatigue and disengagement in class. As a result, some students find listening to be the most difficult skills to master.

In the context of listening teaching in many schools, the traditional method has been employed. In that method, the listeners are viewed as passive “recorders”, and listening word-for-word is more popular in classes. When learners cannot understand all the words in a text, they are usually anxious and then frightened of listening. As a result, students’ listening comprehension is very limited. According to Anderson and Lynch (1988, p.10), “the problem with the tape-recorder analogy is that it does not capture all the relevant features of comprehension.” Morley (1984) suggested that listening is crucial for effective communication. Without good listening skills, messages can be easily misunderstood. So, activities before listening are significant. To help students improve their listening skills, teachers first must find out teaching techniques to attract them to the listening lesson, then to assist them enlarge the store of vocabulary, and becoming familiar with the pronunciation of native speakers.

After observing some classes for the second term, the researcher realized that students’ listening comprehension was not very good. They were unable to understand most of what the speaker said in the recordings. Students also did not have a positive attitude toward improving their listening skills. They could not enhance their listening competence to their fullest potential mostly because the teacher used the same pre-listening activities in the textbook. Moreover, the instructor seldom designed various pre-listening activities for students. The main contents of the lesson were quite lengthy, so the teacher was afraid of running out of time. The teacher used merely 1 or 2 pre-questions for the listening task. The student’s background was not sufficiently built to answer the questions, so they were demotivated in further listening activities. Because students were not well-prepared for the listening tasks, their lexical resources remained significantly low for listening comprehension.

Moreover, during teaching time, teachers sometimes do not pay attention to the pre-listening stage because they think that it is not as important as while- and post-stage. Therefore, students did not complete the task well. It is suggested that teachers should take time to design appropriate and flexible pre-listening activities although it may be time-consuming and difficult.

As a result, the author chose the topic “Investigating the Effectiveness of Pre-Listening Activities in Enhancing Listening Skills: A Case Study for first-year English major students at University of Phan Thiet ” to explore the real effect of pre-listening activities on students' listening comprehension as well as their studying results.

## **II. Aims and objectives of the study**

Having good listening abilities is beneficial to students who use the Internet and listen to English programs without subtitles. Hence, an effective method of listening development is important for students in a technological era. This research aims to create a set of effective pre-listening activities to enhance university students' listening comprehension. The author experimented with various pre-listening activities to determine their effectiveness and identify what works well and what does not. By doing so, a helpful framework or guiding principles can be established for developing suitable pre-listening activities tailored to the specific needs of the students. Additionally, the study also investigated the students' feedback on these pre-listening tasks, as student input is valuable for teachers in creating teaching materials and designing lesson plans to achieve the desired learning outcomes, particularly in listening lessons.

The researcher conducts this study to answer the following questions:

- (1) What specific benefits do pre-listening activities offer in enhancing first-year English major students' listening skills at the University of Phan Thiet?
- (2) Which pre-listening activities demonstrate the highest efficacy in enhancing listening skills during classroom instruction?

## **III. Significance of the study**

In terms of significance, the research focuses on the importance of this research and its practical findings. The pre-listening activities could provide students with some

background knowledge to help them interact with others and the teacher in the class before listening and to find out the topic of the listening task. Moreover, the implication of pre-listening activities is that they can raise students' interest, motivation, concentration, and level of enjoyment in the listening lesson.

The outcomes of this study are anticipated to be a valuable exploration of the author's teaching practice. Students are expected to enhance their listening comprehension with these activities. Moreover, other teachers can benefit by incorporating pre-listening activities to spark interest, support students in acquiring proficiency in listening skills, and inspire their teaching methods. It is hoped that the research will contribute to a great improvement in teaching and learning English at UPT as well as those who are interested in this issue.

#### **IV. Scope of the study**

This study was carried out at the University of Phan Thiet to find out the effects of pre-listening activities on listening comprehension tasks in the training program for first-year English major students. The research was carried out during their second term at their school. Participating in the study were 104 first-year students in classes K15NNA1 and K15NNA2 at UPT.

#### **V. Design of the study**

The study includes three parts:

Part A: Introduction. This part introduces some background information about the study: context, aim, research questions, scope, significance, and organization of the study.

Part B is divided into three chapters:

Chapter 1: Literature review. In this chapter, the researcher discusses the theoretical background of listening, pre-listening activities, and related prior studies.

Chapter 2: Research Methodology. This chapter presents the research site and methods including participants, data collection instruments, and data analysis. The researcher

shows the detailed results of the survey and analyzes the data collected from questionnaires, interviews, and tests.

Chapter 3: Result and Discussion. This chapter discusses the findings of the data presented in the previous chapter and then gives some suggestions for implementing pre-listening activities.

Part C: Conclusion and Recommendation. The researcher summarizes the results of the study and its implications for English language teaching and learning. Moreover, it also highlights the inevitable limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

## **CHAPTER I. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1.1 Second language acquisition**

Brown (2000) defined language learning as a system of arbitrary conventionalized vocal, written, or gestural symbols that enable members of a given community to communicate intelligibly with one another. In other words, language is a meaningful systematic set of arbitrary symbols that are primarily vocal and visual. On the other hand, he defined teaching as showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing knowledge, causing to know or understanding.

Stephen Krashen, as cited in Krashen and Ierirel (1953), proposed a theoretical model of second-language development that includes five hypotheses. In the first hypothesis, Krashen (1982) defined the language acquisition process for a first language as one that is subconscious and that occurs in a natural environment out of the learner's need to communicate. Krashen (ibid) characterized the language learning process for a second language as conscious attention to structure, verbalization about rules followed, and in the classroom by particular exercises to internalize the matter under consideration. In Krashen's (ibid) second hypothesis on the natural acquisition process, he mentioned that not all learners will acquire specific grammatical structures in a similar order as certain structures might be acquired earlier. The acquisition of skills involved in any communicative task requires the organization of information from multiple domains. As listeners have limited mental capacities, many required skills must be automatized for the listener to function in communication. Listening tasks and instruction are expected to facilitate students' understanding of the sounds the speaker uses so that they can respond to relevant aspects of what is heard. When a second language is acquired, a silent period occurs. As stated in Krashen, in the third hypothesis during the silent period, the learner attends to the sounds of the language while attempting to create the logic of the sounds. Typically, no linguistic output is produced during this period which illustrates that comprehension precedes production. In the



fourth hypothesis, as pointed out by Hatch (1978), we have assumed that the acquisition process involves initially learning structures, followed by practicing their use in communication, thereby contributing to the development of fluency. According to this viewpoint, teaching listening is simply to provide comprehensible input. Stevick (1976) explains in the fifth hypothesis the connection between emotional factors and the process of acquiring a second language by suggesting that learners differ in the intensity of their Affective Filters. Individuals with suboptimal attitudes towards second language learning not only tend to seek limited input but also possess a high filter level. Even if they comprehend the message, it may not reach the language acquisition area of the brain. Conversely, those with more favorable attitudes towards second language acquisition are inclined to seek and receive more input with a lower filter strength. They are more receptive to input, allowing it to have a more profound impact on their language-learning process

One important observation is that Krashen. S, in his book "Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning," posited that language acquisition mirrors the methods children employ when learning their primary and secondary languages. He emphasized the necessity of meaningful interaction in the target language, emphasizing natural communication. Here, the focus shifts from the structure of speech to the content of the messages being communicated and comprehended. Notably, researchers often turn to psychologists in their endeavors to elucidate how individuals can concurrently acquire multiple languages and understand the mechanisms behind first language acquisition.

Subsequently, there has been a proliferation of research examining the process of language acquisition, with particular emphasis on second language acquisition. A significant portion of these studies delve into the various factors that contribute to second language learning. It has been highlighted that "Contemporary theories of second language acquisition have evolved from extensive research across diverse disciplines such

as linguistics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and neurolinguistics" (Freeman & Freeman, 2001).

The study of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is becoming more interdisciplinary, incorporating elements from linguistics, cognitive psychology, educational research, sociology, and neurology. Its aim is to elucidate the processes involved in how individuals acquire second languages in diverse contexts and to understand the biological, cognitive, and social mechanisms that underpin these phenomena. Key factors under examination include the impact of instruction, age, attitude, native language, universal grammar, communicative practice, and sociolinguistic environment. The characteristics of Second Language Acquisition are commonly recognized as follows:

- Second language acquisition is highly systematic
- Second language acquisition is highly variable

These traits highlight the distinct nature of acquiring a second language, which follows a structured process similar to that observed in first language acquisition. Moreover, the effectiveness of second language acquisition varies among individuals with some showing a natural inclination towards language learning, while others excel under specific motivational and environmental conditions.

The effectiveness of second language acquisition varies among individuals. Some excel in natural language learning, while others thrive under the right motivation and circumstances. "Despite appearing contradictory, these two assertions are not mutually exclusive. The first pertains to what is known as the route of development, describing the stages all learners pass through in acquiring a second language (L2). This progression remains largely unaffected by the learner's mother tongue (L1) or the learning context, whether formal instruction in a classroom or natural exposure. On the other hand, the second statement generally addresses the pace of learning (how quickly learners progress in acquiring the L2) the level of proficiency attained, or both. It is widely acknowledged

that learning speeds and skill levels vary considerably among learners, with some progressing much faster and achieving greater proficiency than others.

## **1.2 Factors Affecting Second Language Acquisition**

Many studies have indicated that factors influencing second language acquisition may be divided into three categories: contextual factors, social factors, and linguistic factors. According to Walqui. A., contextual factors include: Language distance, Native language proficiency, Knowledge of second language, Dialect and register, Language status, Language attitude, The learners, Diverse needs, Diverse goals, Peer groups, Role models, Home support, The learning process, Learning styles, Motivation, and Classroom interaction

Social factors influencing language learning include age, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnic identity, and cultural proximity. Research suggests that younger learners tend to be more successful, possibly due to their less threatened sense of identity regarding target language norms. In terms of gender, females generally outperform males in language classrooms and exhibit more positive attitudes. The impact of social class may vary depending on the learning environment, with working-class children often facing challenges in formal language learning settings compared to their middle-class counterparts. Ethnic identity is considered a key factor, with proximity to the target language culture potentially influencing language learning outcomes.

The linguistic factors influencing students' proficiency in a second language include the following items::

- Linguistic disparities between the two languages

- The student's proficiency in their native language

- The dialect of the student's native language (standard or nonstandard)

- The societal standing of the students' language in their community

- Societal perceptions of the student's native language

Since this research is concerned with second language acquisition in the classroom, it will focus on contextual factors rather than social and linguistic ones.

Motivation is one of the contextual factors that influence second language acquisition in the classroom.

### **1.3. A brief overview of listening comprehension**

A lot of ideas about listening comprehension have been discussed by many different scholars, but generally, it is understood as an active and purposeful process in making the meaning of the message. Lian (1985, p. 168) states that it is a dynamic process involving the interaction between the self and the text during which meanings are negotiated. This means that listeners do not just extract or draw the meaning directly from the words or texts. Rather, they have to create the meaning by filtering the new information through their own accumulated experiential history, or socio-historical background. The meaning created or constructed, therefore, will differ from and depend upon each individual (i.e., each listener interprets the listening texts differently). Nunan (1991, p. 9) also agrees with this idea that in comprehending aural language, listeners do a great deal of constructive and interpretative work in which they integrate what they hear with what they know about the world. Rost (2002, p. 279) considers the term as “mental process of constructing meaning from spoken input.” These views of listening comprehension led to various ways of treatment for listeners in the classroom. Listening, according to Howatt and Dakin (1974:34 - 36), is the ability to identify and comprehend what others are saying. Understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of meaning are all part of this process. A good listener can do all four of these things at the same time.

Ronald, K., and Roskelly (1985:78) define listening as an active process that requires the same skills of prediction, hypothesizing, checking, revising, and generalizing that writing and reading do; these authors present specific exercises to help students become active listeners who are aware of the inner voice one hears when writing. Rost (2002, p. 279) considers the term “mental process of constructing meaning from spoken input.” These views of listening comprehension led to various ways of treatment for listeners in the classroom.

Overall, listening is not a passive process, and it is not simply hearing or perceiving speech sounds. The listener is doing more than decoding what he/she is listening to. It requires learners to actively apply their background history to grasp the meaning of listening to texts they receive. Depending on their background knowledge, learners would interpret the listening texts differently. To promote listening comprehension, teaching, and learning practice should, therefore, place more emphasis on learners by providing them with environments or opportunities to confront texts in their ways and construct their meanings. Especially, students should prepare for listening, which helps them succeed in comprehension.

#### **1.4 Factors affecting students' listening comprehension**

According to Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yildiz, and Tugrul Mart (2014), there are several obstacles that learners may have throughout the listening comprehension process. Some of these difficulties could be listed as follows:

##### ***1.4.1 Limited vocabulary***

A key challenge in listening activities is the limitation of vocabulary. A narrow vocabulary range can hinder comprehension as listeners may struggle to understand unfamiliar words or expressions. To address this issue, educators can implement strategies like vocabulary-building exercises, context-specific word lists, and opportunities for learners to encounter new terms in various contexts. By broadening students' vocabulary, instructors can improve their ability to comprehend a wider array of spoken material. According to Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yildiz, and Tugrul Mart (2014), texts containing familiar words can significantly aid students' comprehension. Familiar words can spark interest and motivation, positively impacting listening comprehension. Many words have multiple meanings, and if not used contextually, students can become confused. Listeners may lack extensive vocabulary knowledge, leading to comprehension gaps when speakers use unfamiliar terms. Encountering unknown words can cause listeners to pause and ponder their meanings, potentially causing them to miss subsequent parts of the speech.

### ***1.4.2 Pronunciation, accent, stress, rhythm and intonation***

Rost (1994) states that pronunciation is one of the major sources of difficulties students encounter in the listening process. Sharing the same idea, Rixon (1986) claims that word stress, strong form, and weak form in natural spoken utterances make listening comprehension far more challenging than reading a written text. Assimilation and elision are other sources of complication, as Helgesen et al. (1994) added. These features of spoken English can be a terror to several learners. Rhythm and intonation also contribute to making listening more troublesome. The unfamiliarity with rhythm and intonation patterns makes listening more difficult. Brown (1977) sees rhythm as part of the general look of how the speakers of their language speak it. With its own characteristics, the rhythm of English is worth much attention since it is also the guide to the structure of information in the spoken message.

Incorrect stress patterns and linking sounds can disrupt the natural speech rhythm, creating challenges for listeners processing information. Teachers can help learners improve stress and intonation through practice exercises and feedback on stress placement. Targeted instruction on linking sounds can also assist learners in connecting words smoothly, enhancing listening comprehension skills. Munro and Derwing (1999) noted that excessive accented speech can significantly reduce comprehension. Goh (1999) reported that 66% of learners identified the speaker's accent as a key factor affecting comprehension. Unfamiliar accents, whether native or non-native, can pose significant obstacles to listening comprehension, underscoring the importance of familiarity with different accents. Buck (2001) observed that encountering a new accent, such as Indian English after learning only American English, can lead to critical listening challenges, disrupting overall comprehension. Bloomfield et al. (2010) explained how regional accents can impact listener understanding, highlighting the easier comprehension of familiar accents compared to unfamiliar ones.

### ***1.4.3 Nervousness and lack of confidence***

Frequently, such students as foreign language learners may experience a loss of confidence and difficulties with concentration during prolonged periods. This issue has

been observed by various instructors teaching similar courses to different groups, as well as noted in multiple countries (Buck, 2001 and Hayati, 2010). Research findings have demonstrated that challenges in listening comprehension in a foreign language are common among individuals from varying language backgrounds. For instance, Underwood (1989) and Flowerdew and Miller (1992) emphasized that the inability to maintain focus can significantly impact comprehension, highlighting how even brief lapses in attention can hinder understanding. Goh (2000) highlighted learners' struggles with word recognition due to perceptual difficulties.

Nervousness and a lack of confidence serve as psychological barriers that can hinder learners' listening performance. Elevated anxiety levels and low self-assurance can disrupt concentration and affect comprehension. Teachers can address these obstacles by incorporating activities that foster self-belief, such as peer practice sessions, constructive feedback mechanisms, and stress-reduction strategies. By boosting learners' self-confidence and cultivating a supportive learning environment, instructors can help mitigate nervousness and improve listening skills.

#### ***1.4.4 Length and Speed of Listening***

Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yildiz, and Tugrul Mart (2014) noted that the proficiency level of students plays a significant role in their ability to listen to longer passages and retain all the information. Lower-level students often struggle to maintain focus for more than three minutes and complete listening tasks. Shorter listening passages are found to enhance comprehension and reduce fatigue among learners. Underwood (1989) highlighted that the speed of speech can impact the difficulty level of listening passages, as rapid speech can pose challenges for students to grasp L2 words. When speakers talk too quickly, listeners may encounter significant comprehension issues due to their inability to regulate the speaker's pace.

Underwood (1989) identified various barriers to the efficient listening comprehension process. Listeners face challenges in controlling the speed of speech, as they cannot request repetitions of words, leading to critical difficulties in understanding. Students cannot replay sections of a recording, leaving teachers responsible for deciding

when and what parts to repeat, thus complicating the assessment of learners' comprehension.

Graham (2006) highlighted additional factors contributing to listening comprehension problems, including limited vocabulary, poor grammar skills, and misconceptions regarding listening tasks. Seferoglu and Uzakgoren (2004) pointed out that issues with listening comprehension can also stem from the nature of the listening materials used, emphasizing a lack of focus on teaching listening strategies by teachers.

The inability to concentrate during listening sessions, as emphasized by Hamouda (2013), is crucial for students as they must process new information within a short timeframe. Failure to concentrate may result in students missing key content, ultimately affecting their overall comprehension of the listening task.

#### ***1.4.5 Unfamiliar topics***

Unfamiliar topics have remained one of the most challenging problems for listeners. According to Ur (1984) and Rixon (1986), as we rarely know exactly what we are going to hear although we may have already had some general expectations, it is much easier to process a familiar topic than a strange one. Nunan (1988) also confirms that listening to unfamiliar topics that are not addressed to listeners is much more difficult to comprehend than listening to familiar topics that are addressed to them. Similarly, Rost and Candlin (2014) state that listening to unfamiliar topics that are not addressed to listeners is more problematic than listening to popular ones. As listeners comprehend better a common topic, it is suggested that teachers' selection of input in the early stage should surround themes that frequently occur in life conversations. This not only facilitates students at the beginning of the course but also helps ease the learning and teaching process (Anderson and Lynch, 1988).

### **1.5 Theoretical Framework**

The research is based on a theoretical framework proposed by Jeremy Harmer (2001) in his book "How to Teach English". The theory consists of a set of procedures that fit neatly the task-based learning approach. These procedures are applied in the listening tasks to develop effectively the learners' listening skills. Thus, students "will



need to be motivated, be exposed to language, and be given chances to use it. We can, therefore, say what elements need to be present in the language classroom to help students learn effectively” (Harmer, 2001: Chapter one Review of the Literature 13 25).

Jeremy Harmer (2001) highlights the challenge of replicating natural language acquisition in the classroom and suggests emulating certain elements to enhance language learning. These elements, referred to as Engage, Study, Activate (ESA), are crucial components in the language classroom to facilitate effective language acquisition. The ESA model was developed by Harmer (2001) and comprises three key stages: engage, study, and activate. The engagement stage aims to spark student interest and emotional involvement, while the study stage focuses on language components and structure. The activate stage encourages students to use language autonomously for communicative purposes.

The research is based on the ESA teaching model, specifically in teaching listening skills through various tasks in the classroom. According to Harmer (2001), different listening stages necessitate distinct listening tasks, with initial listening tasks being broad and uncomplicated in the engagement phase. Subsequent listening focuses on detailed information, language usage, and pronunciation. The study and activate stages require tasks that delve into linguistic details, analyze language from listening passages, and demonstrate its practical application moving forward.

To reinforce Harmer’s (2001) framework which does not provide all the listening tasks related to each phase, we have intended to use Wilson’s (2008) listening sequence proposed in *How to Teach Listening* (2008) that presents a set of listening tasks to adopt in each stage. The two frameworks are interrelated because they concern the field of teaching listening through tasks. Both Harmer (2001) and Wilson (2008) propose a set of teaching listening sequences which are respectively: engage, study, activate sequence, and pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening sequence.

## **1.6 Listening Instruction in Second Language Teaching**

Listening instruction in the classroom has evolved from traditional methods to embrace three distinct models: bottom-up, top-down, and interactive. The bottom-up

model focuses on decoding the smallest units, such as phonemes and syllables, to derive meaning. In this model, listeners are passive "recorders" (Anderson & Lynch, 1988). Conversely, the top-down model utilizes background knowledge (schemata) to predict content, enhancing comprehension and positioning learners as active participants. The interactive model integrates aspects of both bottom-up and top-down approaches. The latter two models have gained popularity in contemporary classroom settings.

Listening teaching is usually divided into three stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening (Underwood, 1989; Willis, 1996; Helgesen & Brown, 2007; Wilson, 2008). The pre-listening stage is designed to prepare listeners for upcoming content, with teachers leveraging appropriate activities to activate their students' background knowledge. During the while-listening phase, learners practice their ability to extract meaning from spoken language, which can involve tasks like identifying details, grasping main ideas, making inferences, or understanding the purpose of the communication. Post-listening activities serve as a follow-up to the listening exercise, aiming to apply the obtained knowledge towards enhancing other skills like speaking or writing. This study, however, focuses solely on the pre-listening stage. In the classroom, to make listeners' comprehension more effective, it is necessary for them to have time to prepare before they listen. It is seen that the pre-listening stage attaches much importance to the function of top-down processing.

### ***1.6.1 Top-down model***

In the 1980s and 1990s applied linguists began to borrow new theoretical models of comprehension from the field of cognitive psychology. Accordingly, a distinction between bottom-up processing (the listener becomes a 'tape recorder') and top-down processing appeared which led to an awareness of the importance of background knowledge. The top-down model of listening counters the limitations of the tape recorder by underscoring the active role of the listener in actual listening. Here listeners will activate schematic knowledge and bring knowledge of scripts into play in order to make sense of content and will try to match their perception of meaning with the speaker's intended meaning (Hedge, 2000, p. 234). Rost (2001) also believes that top-down

processing involves the listener using his prior knowledge and expectation to create meaning (p.7).

Moreover, Vandergrift (2004) states that 10 listeners use a top-down process when they use context and prior knowledge (topic, genre, culture, and other schema knowledge in long-term memory) to build a conceptual framework for comprehension (p. 4). Wilson (2008) believes that “the top-down model is based, at least in part, on the listener; much of the comprehension relies on what happens in the mind before the listening has even begun” (p. 15). Tsui and Fullilove (1998) carried out the most extensive investigation on top-down processing and suggested that low-proficiency listeners relied heavily on top-down processing in order to compensate for the problem of perception (pp. 432-451).

In summary, it can be said that top-down listening refers to the use of background knowledge, a critical component of the listening process, in understanding the meaning of the message.

### ***1.6.2 Definition of the Pre-Listening stage in listening comprehension***

Pre-listening stage involves activities that are often carried out in a short period of time (seven to fifteen minutes) aiming at preparing the necessary background for learners to understand the spoken text. They may also elicit students’ previous knowledge about the topic of listening, making them aware of the vocabulary items, and related experience and consequently capture their interest. As summarized by Baker and Westrup (2000) as well as Lewis and Hill (1992), the pre-listening stage contains purposeful activities that can help arouse interest in the topic, provide certain linguistic preparation for the text, and then promote and activate a flexible learning environment. By giving learners a reason for listening, this stage undoubtedly initiates a willingness to listen.

Pre-listening activities are designed to prepare students before they listen to a piece of audio or video. These activities help students focus on what they are about to hear, activate their prior knowledge of the topic, and set the context for the listening task. Ur (1984) suggests that incorporating a pre-task period is beneficial for teaching listening skills. This pre-listening stage, which precedes engagement with listening tasks, serves as a preparation stage. During this stage, learners are provided with various activities aimed

at supporting their ability to carry out tasks effectively. Underwood (1989) further defines pre-listening activities as essential for ensuring that students are adequately "tuned in" to anticipate what they will encounter, both generally and in specific tasks. Similarly, McDonough and Shaw (1993, pp. 140- 143) also propose this stage as an establishment of a framework for listening.

This preparatory phase is commonly referred to as "pre-listening work" or simply "pre-listening." Chastain (1988) emphasizes the critical role of pre-listening activities in the listening process, highlighting that the success of subsequent activities hinges on the teacher's ability to activate students' background knowledge and guide them toward the activity's objectives. Pre-listening activities help students predict the content of the listening text.

### ***1.6.3 The purposes of Pre-listening activities***

The objectives of pre-listening activities have been consistently clarified by prominent scholars through their extensive research over the years. Medley (1977, pp. 21-22) categorizes this phase into two main activities: readiness and guidance activities. Readiness activities aim to activate learners' prior knowledge by engaging them in tasks such as reading the headline, familiarizing themselves with new vocabulary from the text, examining relevant pictures, and posing thought-provoking questions. Guidance activities, on the other hand, focus on preparing students with specific objectives in mind, thus enabling them to understand the tasks they will undertake or make informed decisions about how to approach the text.

Helgesen and Brown (2007, p. 40) also acknowledge two essential tasks before the listening phase. Firstly, learners should be presented with a context for interpretation, and secondly, the teacher should stimulate background knowledge to support students' comprehension. They emphasize that pre-listening activities serve more than just an introduction to the topic. It assists learners in defining the purpose of listening, furnishes necessary background information, and establishes their expectations for incoming information. Sheerin (1987) found that pre-listening activities can considerably increase students' interest in listening. A successful pre-listening stage should supply students with

linguistic items that will help them grasp the listening text and increase their interest in the recordings.

In summary, there are two purposes in the pre-listening stage: (1) to prepare students for necessary background knowledge; (2) to clarify their expectations and assumptions about the text.

#### ***1.6.4 The roles of pre-listening activities***

It is obvious that students may find the listening lessons difficult when they do not know what they are going to listen. Although the words are familiar, they may not understand the speaker because they may lack basic knowledge and the context of the speaker. Thus, the listeners' expectations and purposes should be taken into account. These make listeners feel as in real-life listening situations in their native language. Teachers can help their students to arouse their expectations and see the purpose before a listening lesson. This kind of work is described as "pre-listening activities". The two main aims of pre-listening are to help activate students' background knowledge, guess the topic of what they are going to hear, and provide a certain context for the listening task. The teacher should vary the activities such as two people having a conversation about their daily life and ask students to complete the true or false questions or vocabulary building for the student before the listening task (Nunan, 2002). According to Sheerin (1987), pre-listening activities significantly help arouse students' interest in listening. A good pre-listening stage should provide students with linguistic items necessary to understand the listening text and make them feel more interested in the recordings. With the acknowledged significance of the stage, a variety of pre-listening activities have been introduced and recommended for use by various researchers namely Baker and Westrup (2000), Doff (1988), (Lingzhu, 2003), Rost (1994), Underwood (1989) and Ur (1984). In the following part of the study, the researcher will provide a list of different activities for the pre-listening stage.

#### ***1.6.5. Roles of Activation of Background Knowledge in Pre-listening Activities***

The role of the activation of background knowledge in pre-listening has been recognized by many researchers as an important factor that affects listening comprehension. It can be drawn the general significance of their ideas that they increase listeners' comprehension and change the role of learners from passive participants to active ones. First, it increases listeners' comprehension. When background knowledge is activated correctly, it can help learners explain the meaning of a text.

Brown and Yule (1983), for example, describe schemata as “organized background knowledge which leads us to expect or predict aspects in our interpretation of discourse” (p. 248). Rost (1990) defines the base or schematic meaning of the text as “the cultural and experiential frame of reference that makes a text interpretable by a listener.” According to Harmer (2001), only after the schemata are activated, one can see or hear because it fits into patterns that she/he already knows. The notion of schemata is related to the organization of information in the long-term memory that cognitive constructs allow. Wilson (2008) says that activating the students' schemata allows them to tune into the topic and helps them to develop their expectation of the input, a crucial factor in getting them to predict content (p.15). He adds that “related to memory is the process of activating the listener's prior knowledge, a technique that can help to reduce the memory load.”

Second, it changes listeners' roles from passive participants to active ones. Anderson and Lynch (1988, p. 11) state that the listener has to construct “a coherent interpretation” by linking what is said with what is known and then inferring, or interpreting, the message. As a result, the listener creates “a mental model,” which is the listener's representation of what he has heard, by combining previous knowledge and experience with the just received input. They indicate that understanding is not something that happens because of what a speaker says. The listener has to activate various types of knowledge, apply what he knows to what he hears, and try to understand what the speaker means (ibid, p. 6). The meaning of a text is the result of the collision between students' world knowledge and the information in the text. It means that in the

course of foreign language, students do not have difficulties in understanding each word in a sentence, but they are not able to figure out the sentence as a whole unit. Rost (2002, p.61) says that the listener may know everything that the speaker is saying, but there is no comprehension unless the listener integrates information from the speaker's text with what he/she already knows.

Therefore, contextual information reduces listeners' dependence on the acoustic signal as most of the information needed for the comprehension of speech is already available in a non-linguistic form. That helps them become active in listening. In conclusion, the above theories prove the importance of background knowledge to listening comprehension that it relates listeners to a dynamic process where they understand the meaning through matching what they hear with what they know. It has great significance in improving listening comprehension by changing the listener's role from a passive participant to an active one and promoting their comprehension. Listeners comprehend better when they actively use their knowledge of the topic, their own experience, and the world around them.

#### ***1.6.6 Some typical types of pre-listening activities to activate background knowledge***

Underwood (1989) and Wilson (2008) offer numerous activities for effective pre-listening activities that help students activate their background knowledge. These activities may include brainstorming key vocabulary related to the topic, predicting the main idea of the text, or discussing some background information that may be relevant to the listening task. By engaging in these activities, students can better understand what they are going to hear and can make connections between their existing knowledge and the new information. There are certain pre-listening activities which can be adapted easily for different classes and levels, as well as for general English and listening lessons. The researcher will offer a list of pre-listening activities in the study:

#### **Brainstorming**

Brainstorming activates students' prior knowledge, enabling learners to make inferences and form expectations about common situations. Wilson (2008) states that brainstorming has two goals: the first is to generate large numbers of ideas based on a topic or a problem, and the second involves whittling the ideas down to those that may be practically applicable (p. 64). It is a particularly useful thing to do before listening to a factual passage with one main topic. He offers some suggestions for effective brainstorming activities. For example, students work alone, making notes on paper, before sharing their ideas with the group, which is called from one to many. Another activity is called board writing. It means that students work in groups and each group is allocated a section of the board and given different colored board pens or pieces of chalk. If the students are all brainstorming the same topic, they first note down their ideas on paper in their groups, and then one scribe from each group comes up and writes the group's ideas on the board (ibid, p. 65).

To conclude, this kind of activity can make students aware of the knowledge they already have. The process will enable them to connect what they are going to learn with what they have already known.

### **Questioning**

Underwood (1989) suggests that asking questions can help students anticipate upcoming information. He recommends showing students the questions before they start listening to the text, as it allows them to understand what they need to look for in the text (p. 39). For example, in listening tasks where students need to answer questions based on the information they hear, it is beneficial to provide them with the questions in advance to help them predict the answers. Without this preview, students may not align their expectations with the information presented.

Wilson (2008, p. 75) emphasizes that questions act as guideposts, directing students in the right direction and preventing confusion. They serve to highlight the key points of the text and lead students through it. Additionally, he suggests that thought-provoking questions encourage critical thinking. Teachers who analyze a listening



passage before class, identifying engaging themes, potential inconsistencies, and cultural elements, should consider incorporating these aspects into the questions for students to discuss before listening (ibid, p. 76).

### **Visuals**

In the classroom setting, visuals serve as a valuable tool for bridging language barriers. Wilson (2008, p. 66) emphasizes that visuals can activate various schemas related to any theme or listening passage. There are several effective ways to incorporate visuals in the pre-listening stage.

Initially, teachers can use pictures, maps, brochures, and other objects to introduce the lesson theme, allowing students to predict the content of the listening material by simply observing the pictures. Additionally, visual aids enable students to collaborate in groups to make informed guesses about the scenario depicted. It is recommended that teachers provide images that stimulate creative thinking among the listeners. For instance, students may analyze a silent video clip and speculate about the events or conversations taking place. Wilson also suggests presenting sequences of pictures depicting events or stories and encouraging students to infer the dialogues or interactions represented in the images. He asserts that visuals are universally accessible, making them a versatile tool for enhancing literal, critical, and creative thinking in learners of all languages. Furthermore, visuals offer immediacy and evoke strong responses, catering to students with visual learning preferences who benefit from tangible representations of educational content (p. 65).

Ur (1984) further supports the notion that engaging visual aids can enhance students' motivation and concentration levels in the classroom (p. 30). Ultimately, incorporating visuals in pre-listening activities facilitates students' engagement with the lesson material, enabling them to make accurate predictions and enhance listening comprehension skills.

### **Pre-teaching new words or difficult keywords**

For students, a large number of unknown words may hinder listening, and certainly lower confidence. Therefore, it is crucial to present the new words, especially items of great difficulty to the students' comprehension, prior to ask them to listen. There are many ways to present the new words such as: using visual aids, using games, definitions, or explanation and translation. Among them, visual aids might be the most useful technique. They help to make the language in class more real and alive. Moreover, using visual aids is a quick way to reduce anxiety, stimulate self-confidence, and improve language competence, Buck (2001)

### **Class discussion**

This is a very common form of pre-listening activity, principally when students are going to hear a recorded text. This activity can be started by the teacher's instruction to students about the topic of listening text. The teachers generally give their students some background information, begin to talk about the topic, and indicate what the students should expect to hear. Pair and group discussions before listening are essential for students. They engage students in the sharing of ideas and render them concentrate more on their job Lingzhu (2003). Generally, teachers raise guiding questions and discuss topics. When organizing groups, teachers should gather students of different levels so that they can help themselves in expressing ideas as well as prepare students with some background of the topic and get them more willing to listen.

### **Prediction of the content**

The activity helps activate students' background knowledge. Once listeners have had some ideas about the context of the listening, they usually become more inquisitive about the listening and the comprehension of the spoken text will likely be more accurate. One way to encourage the prediction of content is by asking students to anticipate the context and content of the listening through the title or illustrating pictures. The prediction of the listening can also be done by asking students to read through the questions of the listening tasks, which prepare them for the content of the listening and facilitate their process of comprehension. Another predicting activity is through True or

False statements. Teachers provide a variety of statements that are based on the general or detailed information of the listening. The principle is that teachers let students discuss among themselves and make a prediction but do not reveal their decision of true or false statements until they finish the listening task.

### ***1.6.7 Factors influencing the selection of pre-listening activities.***

It's important to recognize that not all pre-listening activities may be relevant to a specific lesson, thus selecting appropriate ones demands thoughtful consideration, energy, and time. Underwood (1989: 33) indicates that the selection of activities is influenced by several factors:

- the time available;
- the material available;
- the ability of the class;
- the interests of the class;
- the interests of the teacher;
- the place in which the work is being carried out;
- the nature and content of the listening text.

The last one is very important when choosing activities. Therefore, teachers first need to pay much more attention to the nature and content of the listening text to design some suitable activities, then consider whether they fit the other factors to choose the best pre-listening activities. However, the learners' proficiency level is also a factor in deciding the effect of these activities.

## **1.7 Previous research on Pre-listening activities**

A few empirical studies have explored the potential relationship between the activation of background knowledge in pre-listening and students' listening comprehension. Long (1990) carried out an exploratory study of background knowledge and L2 Listening comprehension. The subjects in his study were 188 university students of Spanish. They listened to two passages: one was deemed familiar (popular rock music), and the other was unfamiliar (gold rush in Ecuador). Comprehension was assessed by a recall protocol in English and a recognition measure. There were checklists of statements that after listening they had to identify if those statements were true or false compared to the content of the listening passage. The results were found that the scores on familiar passages were higher than those on unfamiliar ones. Yet, no significant differences were found between the familiar and unfamiliar passages for the recognition measure. The author attributed this result to, the content of the checklist which was less difficult compared to the recall measure and thus, could have enhanced the probability of correct answers.

Ash Pekin, Janset Muge Altay, and Didem Baytan (2001) conducted an interesting study about listening activities. He found a contrast between effective and 15 ineffective listening habits to become effective listeners. He said that instructors should provide various chances for students to practice listening skills and to become actively engaged in the listening process. He emphasized that there are three stages in the listening process: pre-listening, during listening, and after listening. He defined pre-listening help students with cultural backgrounds, building prior knowledge, and stimulating students' interest in the listening lesson. However, in his study, he suggested that instructors should let students watch movies rather than listen to the tapes because it can help students pay more attention to listening. Students can both practice listening and see manners and culture visually. It may be good to apply in teaching but depending on the modern technological condition.

Hui Sui Yuehua Wang (2002) also concluded that pre-listening activities not only motivate students, and help change them from passive to active listeners, but also effectively increase the language input. According to these researchers, it is necessary for teachers to make good efforts to design and apply pre-listening activities in their teaching process for the sake of their students. Moreover, Farrokhi (2012) carried out a study on the effects of two pre-task activities (glossary of unknown vocabulary items and content-related support) on the improvement of Arian EFL learners' listening comprehension. The research findings indicated that providing pre-task activities before listening tasks led to improvement in learners' listening performance. The study concluded that pre-task activities played distinct supportive roles in enhancing the performance of both low and high-proficient learners.

In other studies, relating to background knowledge, Bern (1995) and Andrade (1997) found the kind of pre-listening activities that influenced listening comprehension. Berne (1995) made an experimental study to determine what kind of pre-listening activities affected learners' listening comprehension. Subjects of the study were 62 English-speaking learners of Spanish as a foreign language at a university. Learners were divided into three groups, each group given a different pre-listening activity. The first group previewed the questions from the comprehension test before listening and predicted the answers to the questions. This kind of activity aimed to activate the subjects' background knowledge. The second group was provided a list of new vocabulary from the listening text. They were asked to express the meaning of the words in their mother tongue, English. The third group, the control one was required to do a filter activity with no relation to the listening passage. After the pre-activities, all the subjects watched a video lecture in Spanish consisting of 862 words and answered 10 multiple-choice questions. After the test, the subjects were required to view the video lecture again and then retake the test. It was found that both the question-preview group and the vocabulary-preview group gained higher scores than the control group on the comprehension test; besides, the question-preview group did the test better than the vocabulary-preview one. However, there was not a significant difference. The study

suggested that more positive effects were obtained by activating background knowledge through the preview of questions.

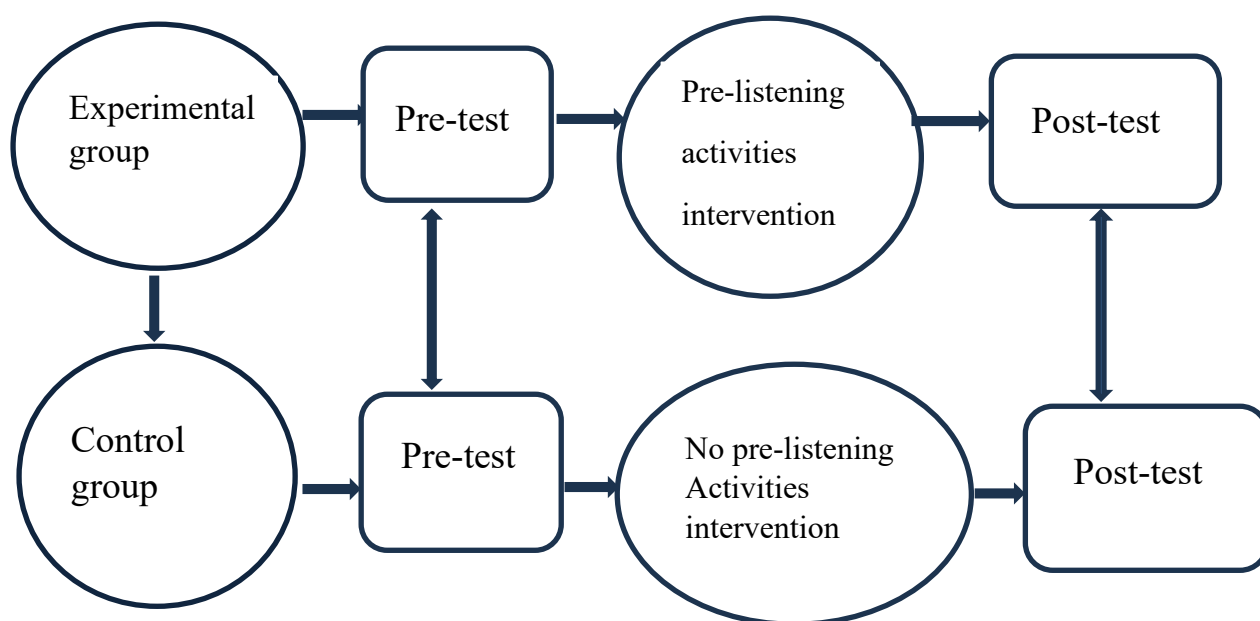
Andrade (1997) did research with 120 Japanese college students studying English as a foreign language to find out the effects of different types of pre-listening activities. The subjects were asked to view a series of American TV commercials in English on videotape. The subjects were divided into four groups. Before watching TV commercials, the first group was introduced to some social and cultural background knowledge related to TV commercials in Japanese. The second group was given a list of new vocabulary with the definition in Japanese, and they were requested to pronounce these words. The subjects in the third group engaged in both activities. The fourth group did not receive any pre-listening activities. After viewing the videotape all subjects of four groups did open-ended questions and dictation-style questions. The study found that the third group's comprehension was the best of the four groups although the differences did not reach statistical significance. The background knowledge-activation group obtained better comprehension than the vocabulary pre-teaching one. The control group's listening comprehension was the worst.

Vu Thi Thanh Ha (2006) carried out an experiment to examine the effects of pair and group pre-listening activities on Dong Do university first-year English major students' attitudes, their motivation, and her listening comprehension in comparison with the whole class pre-listening activities. The results of the study showed that pair and group pre-listening activities were better at helping students increase their motivation and improve their listening comprehension better than in whole class pre-listening activities. This study makes a contribution to teaching and learning English at Dong Do University. If there had been more effort and contributions, the study has been more successful.

Moreover, Duong Thi Ngoc Tu (2012) explored the effects of the use of video in pre-listening stage on grade 10 students' motivation in English listening lessons at Tran Hung Dao School. She emphasized that the students also showed great interest in

listening activities. They were willing to share knowledge and opinion as well as positively discuss the listening topic before listening to the tape script or doing the comprehension tasks when the teacher used video in the pre-listening stage.

## 1.8 Conceptual framework



**Chart 1.1. Conceptual framework**

The conceptual framework for the study involves two groups: a control group and an experimental group, with pretest and posttest assessments conducted for both groups. The control group serves as the baseline against which the effects of the intervention in pre-listening activities are measured. Initially, both groups undergo a pretest to assess their initial English listening skills. That step allows for the comparison of the groups' baseline performance and ensures the groups are initially at a similar proficiency level. Following the pretest, the control group does not receive any pre-listening interventions and continues with their regular English language instructions. That group serves as the control condition, representing the typical instructions received by the teacher.

In contrast, the experimental group also undergoes a pretest to establish their initial listening skills. Subsequently, the experimental group receives pre-listening activities interventions, designed to provide students with opportunities for collaboration, problem-solving, and authentic language use.

After the intervention period, both groups are assessed again using a posttest, which evaluates their English listening skills at the end of the study. The posttest allows for the comparison of the two groups' performances after the implementation of the pre-listening activities intervention in the experimental group. By comparing the posttest results of the control group and experimental group, the study aims to determine the impact of the interventions on the development of English listening skills. If the experimental group shows a significant improvement in their posttest scores compared to the control group, it can provide evidence of the effectiveness of pre-listening activities in enhancing English listening skills.

Summarily, the conceptual framework provides a systematic approach to evaluate the impact of the interventions on English listening skills by comparing the performances of the experimental group with that of the control group. The inclusion of pretest and posttest assessments ensures a comprehensive evaluation of the effects of the pre-listening activities interventions on students' language development.



## CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Research Site

The research was conducted at the University of Phan Thiet (UPT), located at 225 Nguyen Thong Street, Phu Hai Ward, Phan Thiet City for four weeks from 15 August to 15 September 2024. UPT is a private university in Binh Thuan province and was established on March 5, 2009. English is one of the compulsory general subjects at UPT. The Faculty of Foreign Language is in charge of teaching general English to all students.

The University of Phan Thiet is widely recognized as one of the prestigious schools in Phan Thiet City, making effective contributions to the training of high-quality human resources, fostering talents, and developing science for economic development in Binh Thuan. The school is well-equipped with modern study facilities, including 100-inch screens and computers with internet access in each classroom. The teachers in the Foreign Languages faculty are regarded as caring, helpful, and knowledgeable. The school aims to apply modern teaching approaches to provide the best learning experience for students.

### 2.2. The participants

The participants involved in this research were students at the University of Phan Thiet and ten experienced teachers in UPT who were specified in the following table:

Participants	Population	Age	Means of collecting data
Students	104	18-20	Tests, interview, questionnaire.
Teachers	10	35-45	Questionnaire, interview

#### 2.2.1 Students

The participants for the study consist of 104 English major students from two classes: K15NNA1 and K15NNA2, aged 18-20 in the school year 2023-2024. All of

them have learned English at least for seven years in secondary and high schools. However, their ability to use English is not the same.

Choosing first-year students for this research study was based on the rationale that they are at a crucial stage of their language learning journey. First-year students are typically new to the university environment and are still adapting to the academic expectations and requirements in their English major courses. By focusing on this cohort, the researcher can evaluate the effectiveness of pre-listening activities in enhancing their listening skills right from the beginning of their academic pursuits. This can provide valuable insights into the preparatory strategies that can best support these students in developing strong listening comprehension abilities early on, setting a solid foundation for their future language learning and academic success.

### ***2.2.2 Teachers***

In terms of teachers, there are ten male and female teachers of English at UPT aged from 35 to 45 participating in the study. They were invited to observe the class during the time when the researcher implemented the action plan. All of them have been teaching English major students and they have been discovering the most effective techniques to help students improve listening skills.

## **2.3 Syllabus for Teaching English**

### **2.3.1 Materials**

The main material for the general English course is the book Pathaway (Chase & Rebecca Tarver, 2018, National Geographic Learning). It is a four-level series at elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate. It combines general English with business situations, making it the perfect course for adult professional learners who need English for work, travel, and socializing. The first-year students work with the elementary students' books. Each book is composed of ten lessons. Listening skill explores different topics such as personal, relationship with nature, communication...

Nonetheless, to decrease extraneous incidents or events affecting the results, the experimental time of the study lasted four weeks. Accordingly, treatment lessons comprised five units (from unit 6 to unit 10). In addition to the main course book, teachers are encouraged to refer to some other books to complete the lectures such as Listen First (Creighton & Adelson Goldstein, 1991), Listening Carefully (Richards, 1997), Let's Talk (Jones, 2002), Basic Tactics for Listening (Richards, 2003), Cutting Edge (Cunningham, & Moor, 2005), Market Leader (Cotton, Falvey, & Kent, 2006), International Express (Taylor & Lane, 2007) and Active Listening (Brown & Smith, 2008), etc.

### **2.3.2 Program Outcome Standard for English major students at University of Phan Thiet**

Listening comprehension plays an important role in the language learning and teaching process, particularly in the reform of English Language Teaching (ELT). Students at the University of Phan Thiet, who possess low proficiency in the English language, often face challenges in acquiring this essential skill, especially when aiming to achieve a minimum score of 500 on the TOEIC test to graduate. In an effort to contribute to tackle this issue, a research project was conducted. The research findings demonstrated positive improvements in students' academic performance, their perception of listening skills, and engagement in pre-listening activities.

## **2.4 . Methods of the study**

To achieve the study objectives, qualitative and quantitative methods are employed by the researcher with various data collection instruments. These instruments include interviews, survey questionnaires, and tests. The survey involves 104 students who are majoring in English from two different classes, as well as 10 teachers with extensive experience teaching English at the University of Phan Thiet.

Participants are requested to provide feedback by completing the questionnaires and interviews. Subsequently, the gathered data is analyzed and interpreted. In addition

to the questionnaires, interviews with students and teachers, along with tests during listening lessons, are conducted to enhance the findings.

## **2.5 Data collection instruments**

To answer the research question of this study, the researcher chose three kinds of data collection instruments including tests, participants' questionnaires, and interviews to collect information about students' listening comprehension.

### ***2.5.1. Tests***

Brown (1977) argues that tests are effective tools for gathering both quantitative and qualitative information. Furthermore, tests can assess students' general level, pinpoint specific language problems, and evaluate their performance in previous programs. In this study, the researcher developed two major tests to achieve the study's objectives, which are pre-test and post-test. The first test was conducted at the beginning to investigate students' listening comprehension, while the researcher used the second test at the end using various pre-listening activities to determine the improvements in listening comprehension. The pre-test and post-tests were designed in the format of the IELTS listening test since many listening tests in the textbook follow the structure of the IELTS test, so students are familiar with this kind of test.

In thirty minutes, students were required to complete twenty listening questions. The level of difficulty of the two tests is equal so that the author can easily recognize the students' changes across the tests.

### ***2.5.2. Questionnaires***

A questionnaire is a survey tool that participants complete and return to the researcher. This method is considered valuable in research (Creswell, 2002) as it allows researchers to gather a significant amount of information from a large number of participants. Questionnaires are time and cost-effective, analysis of answers to closed questions is straightforward, reduces pressure for an immediate response, and maintains respondents' anonymity (Gillham, 2000)

Survey questionnaires were delivered to both teachers and students. The questionnaire for the teachers is written in English and includes ten questions. These questions aim to find out the teachers' opinions about pre-listening activities in enhancing listening skills; the frequency the teachers apply pre-listening activities, difficulties when using pre-listening activities in a listening lesson; and their opinions on improving the effectiveness of pre-listening activities on listening comprehension tasks.

A questionnaire was given to the students in the experimental group after finishing the post-test. They can write their answers in Vietnamese as well. There are ten questions for students to answer and show their opinion towards the effectiveness of pre-listening activities on listening comprehension tasks and to show their preferences for types of pre-listening activities.

### ***2.5.3 Interviews***

Some interview questions are raised for both teachers and students to get better insights into research questions. The interviews include 6 questions for ten teachers and six items for 52 students during break time. While teachers and students give their answers, the researcher takes notes on key points. All the interview questions are about the same matters as shown in the questionnaires.

## **2.6 Data analysis of pre-test and post-test of two groups**

Data analysis was carried out following the pre-test in four weeks. There were two groups: the experimental group (EG) received pre-listening instruction to activate background knowledge, and the control group (CG) received no special pre-listening instruction. For the former group, the researcher as a teacher instructed various pre-listening activities in all the treatment lessons including using pictures, brainstorming, using questions, and games, pre-teaching vocabulary and grammar, previewing the listening task, and class discussion. In this way, they activated background knowledge to facilitate the listening process. The students did the required activities in individuals,

pairs, or groups. On the other hand, the subjects in the latter group did not engage in any pre-listening activities to activate background knowledge. They simply listened to the passage and then took the listening comprehension test.

Following the collection of test data, the statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 26. The analysis involved frequency (percentage), central tendency (mean), and variability (standard deviation). Subsequently, t-tests were employed to compare the mean scores of the two groups and the pre-test and post-test mean scores within the experimental group, based on the findings from the descriptive statistics.

### **2.6.1 Pre- test**

At the beginning of the term, the pre-test of listening comprehension was administered in both classes using the same test. At that time, the subjects had not been taught anything, which meant that the experimental group had not been given treatment lessons yet. When the subjects did the test, the audio was played three times. The teacher was also reminded to pause the audio at the end of each part to give the students sufficient time to complete their tasks. After the pre-test, the researcher analyzed the participants' results and compared two means of scores to determine whether the listening comprehension levels of students of the experimental and control groups were significantly different before the study. The results of the pre-test are presented in the following table:

**Table 2.1: Descriptive Statistics for Pre-test Results of Two Groups**

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	CG	52	4.9808	1.96529	.27254
	EG	52	4.3846	1.62280	.22504

As can be seen in Table 2.1, the mean of the EG (4.3846) was smaller than that of the CG (4.9808). The EG's standard deviation was 1.62280 , and the CG's one was

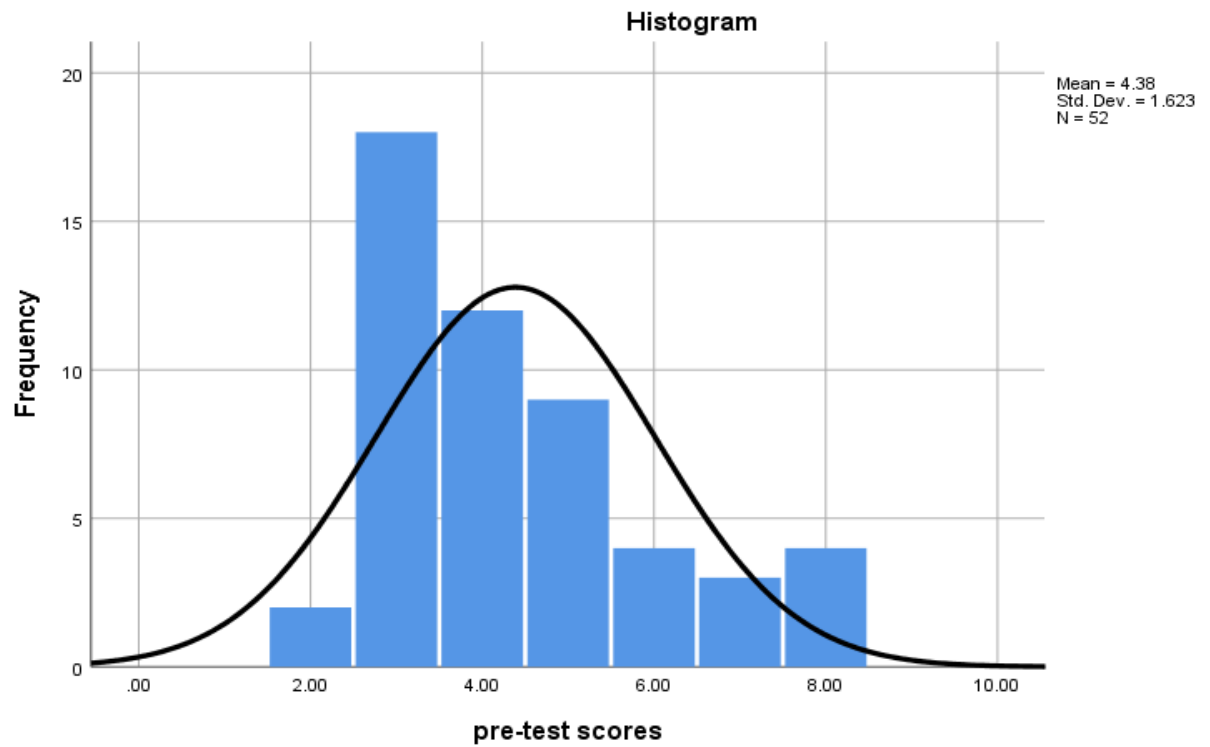
1.96529. Similarly, the minimum score obtained by the subjects in the CG and EG was 2, and the maximum of these groups was 8.

**Table 2.2: Independent Samples t-Test for Pre-test Results of two Groups**

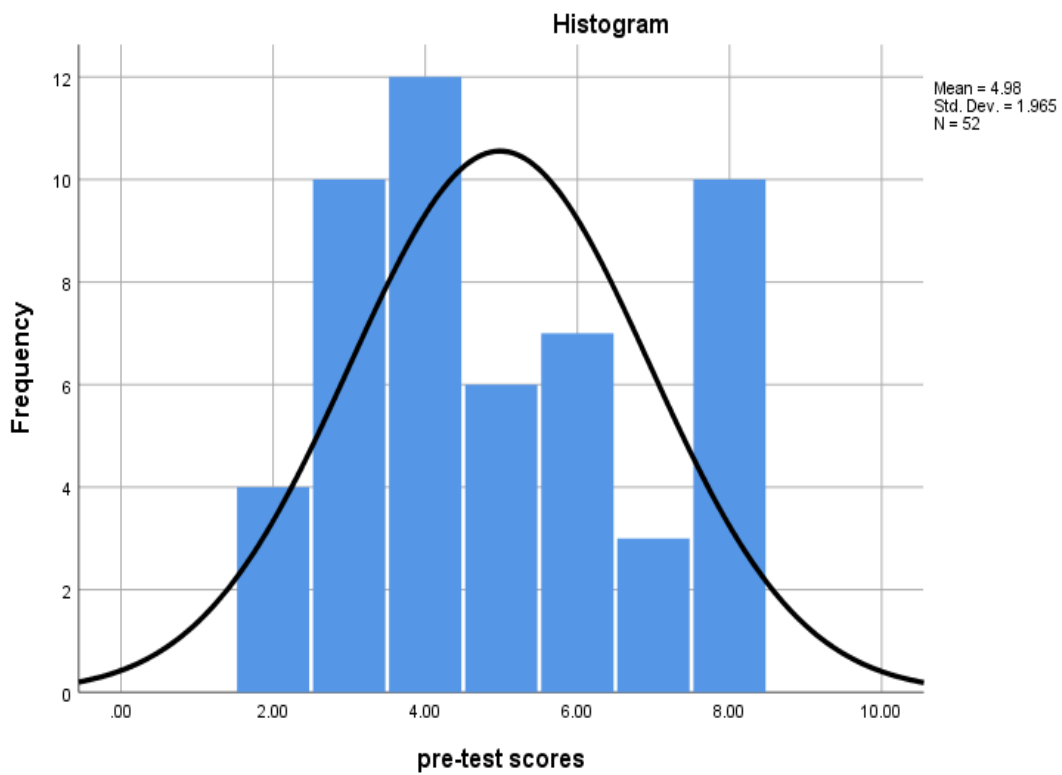
Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	3.482	.065	1.687	102	.095	.59615	.35344	-.10489	1.29720
	Equal variances not assumed			1.687	98.476	.095	.59615	.35344	-.10520	1.29750

The Independent Samples Test (table 2.2) was performed to examine the pre-test scores between the control and experimental groups based on the provided data. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was initially conducted to assess the assumption of equal variances. The results indicated that the sig. was .065, which was greater than .05, so it could be assumed that the variances were approximately equal. Therefore, the results of the independent samples t-test on the top line were considered. the p value or sig. (2-tailed) was .095, which was greater than 0.05.

Moreover, the difference in mean values between the two groups was not statistically significant. It could be concluded that at the beginning of the study, the listening comprehension of the two groups' students did not differ from each other and was not good as well. On average, the control group had slightly higher pre-test scores than the experimental group.



**Chart 2.1: Histogram of EG's pre-test scores**



**Chart 2.2: Histogram of CG's pre-test scores**



From charts 2.1 and 2.2, both histograms along with curves showed that the distributions of EG and CG scores were nearly normal, slightly positively skewed, and similar to each other.

### **2.6.2 Post- test**

After four weeks of listening instruction, both groups enhanced their listening comprehension skills. However, the extent of improvement varied significantly. It is shown in the following table:

**Table 2.3. Descriptive Statistics for Post-test Results of Two Groups**

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PostTest	CG	52	5.0192	1.77665	.24638
	EG	52	6.1346	1.77155	.24567

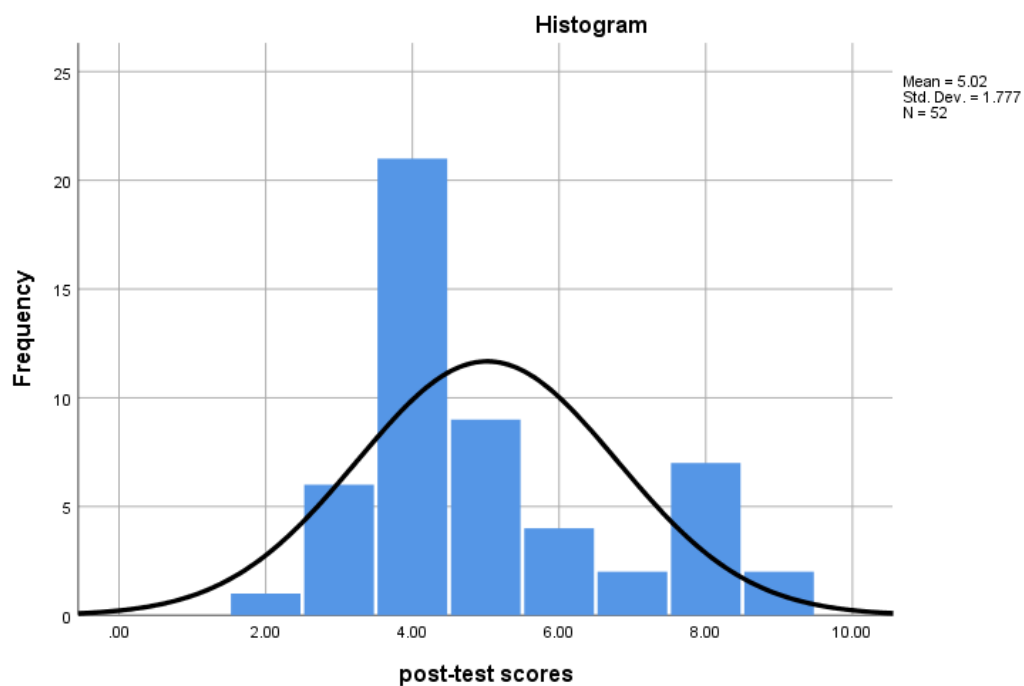
According to Table 2.3, the mean of EG was 6.1346, while that of CG was 5.0192. After the four-week learning, the listening comprehension of EG might be much higher than that of CG and even outperformed it. The standard deviation of CG was 1.77665, and EG was 1.77155. In addition, it was more varied among the listening scores of the CG as compared with those of the EG. The minimum post-test score obtained in the CG was 2.0, and the maximum was 9.0. Differently, the minimum score of the EG increased to 3.0, and the maximum was 9.0. Considering the achieved data, one could claim that the subjects in EG performed more homogeneously than those of the CG.

**Table 2.4. Independent Samples t-Test for Post-test Results of Two Groups**

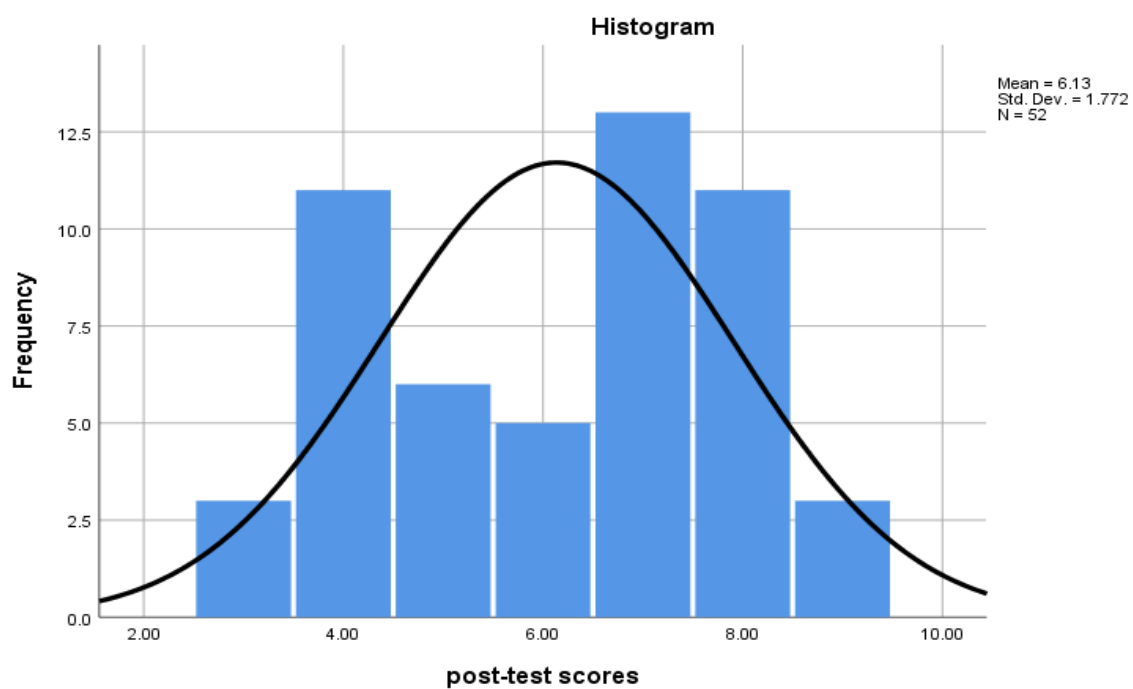
Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
PostTest	Equal variances assumed	.569	.452	-3.206	102	.002	-1.11538	.34793	-1.80550	-.42527
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.206	101.999	.002	-1.11538	.34793	-1.80550	-.42527

The sig. in Levene's test for equality of variances (Table 2.4) was .569, greater than .05, thus it could be said that the variances were approximately equal. For this reason, the results of the independent samples t-test on the top line were read, which demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean values of the two groups gained in the study because the p-value or sig. (2- tailed) was .002, which was less than 0.05.

Overall, the performance of the EG students tended to be superior to the control group in the post-test. In other words, after the research, the subjects in EG achieved better results on listening comprehension tests than those in CG did.



**Chart 2.3: Histogram of CG's Post-test Scores**

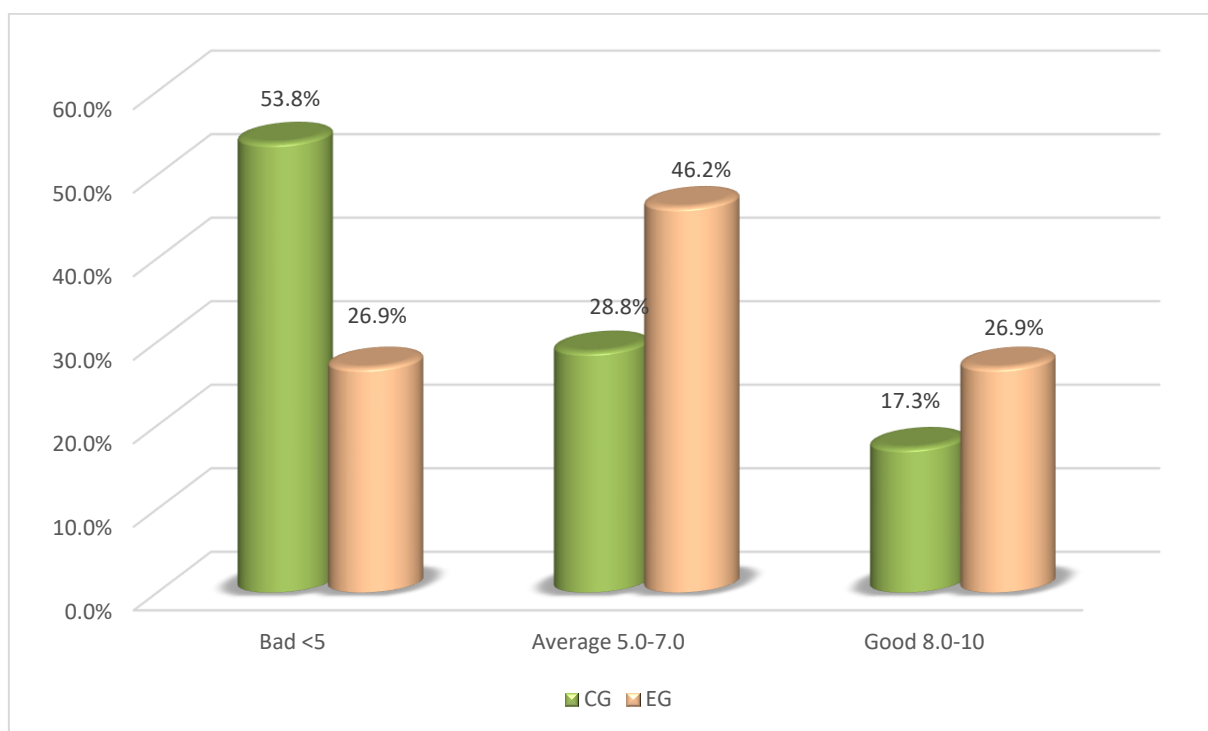


**Chart 2.4: Histogram of EG's Post-test Scores**

According to Chart 2.3, there was a slight development of the control group learners' listening comprehension, but it was very heterogeneous among individuals.

Some students' scores were worse than before the study, some had the same marks in both two tests, and some had better points. The improvement of some participants might be the cause of their efforts. In contrast, Chart 2.4 shows that although the vast majority of the experimental group's scores had not been high yet; however, almost all of them gained an average level or over that one.

For indicative purposes, the students' scores of both two groups were categorized into three levels: bad (<5.0), average (5 -> 7), and good (8 ->10 ). The results are presented in summary form in Chart 2.5.

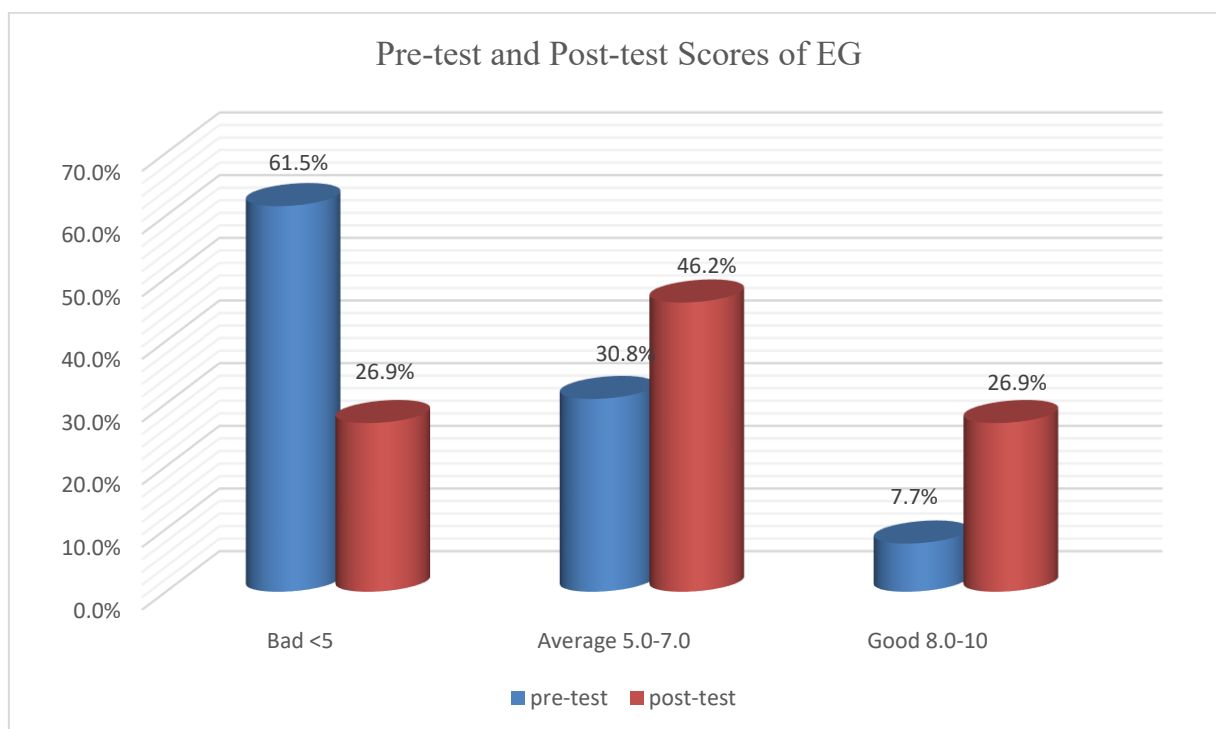


**Chart 2.5: Post-test Scores of CG and EG**

Chart 2.5 indicates that the percentage of students in the experimental group getting good marks was much higher than that in the control group; compared 26.9% to 17.3 %. Moreover, in the EG, the number of students who gained average marks (from 5 to 7) was quite high at 46.2 %, while that of the CG students was 28.8 %. In contrast, more students in the CG (53.8%) received a bad level than those in the EG (26.9%).

### ***2.6.3 Statistical Analysis of Pre-test and Post-test Results of Experimental Group***

EG's pre-test and post-test scores were grouped under three different levels whose headings were bad (<5) average (5->7), and good (8->10), and the percentage of subjects at each level was performed in Chart 6



**Chart 2.6: Pre-test and Post-test scores of EG group**

As it can be seen in Chart 2.6, after the treatment, students' achievement at each level was positively changed clearly. The number of students who obtained average marks increased sharply from 30.8 % to 46.2%. Besides, there were 26.9% of students getting good marks on the post-test, whereas 7.7% of students possessed these scores on the pre-test. The percentage of students who received bad marks on the post-test went down dramatically to 26.9%, compared with that before the treatment, 61.5%. Overall, all subjects' improvement was very homogeneous and remarkable after applying the treatment to lessons. It was necessary to do a paired samples t-test to determine whether the difference between the two means of EG scores before and after the treatment was significant.

**Table 2.5: Paired Samples t-Test for Pre-test and Post-test Results of ExG**

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre	4.3846	52	1.62280	.22504
	Post	6.1346	52	1.77155	.24567

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pre & Post	52	.500	.000

Paired Samples Test								
		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper		
Pair 1	Pre - Post	-1.75000	1.70207	.23604	-2.22386	-1.27614	-7.414	.000

The results in Table 2.5 indicated that the subjects performed a good improvement because the post-test mean score (1.77155) was higher than that of the pre-test (1.62280). In addition, there was a positive correlation (.500). It meant the students who did well on the pre-test also did well on the post-test. The sig. (2-tailed) value was .000, which was less than .05. Thus there was sufficient evidence to conclude that the difference between the two means of EG scores before and after the treatment was statistically significant. In conclusion, the subjects' listening comprehension in the EG changed much more positively after the study. It showed that the subjects in the EG performed much better on the post-test. This better performance seemed to be the result of the treatment. The intervention of pre-listening activities in lessons helped the students of this group effectively improve their listening comprehension.

#### ***2.6.4 Summary of Tests***

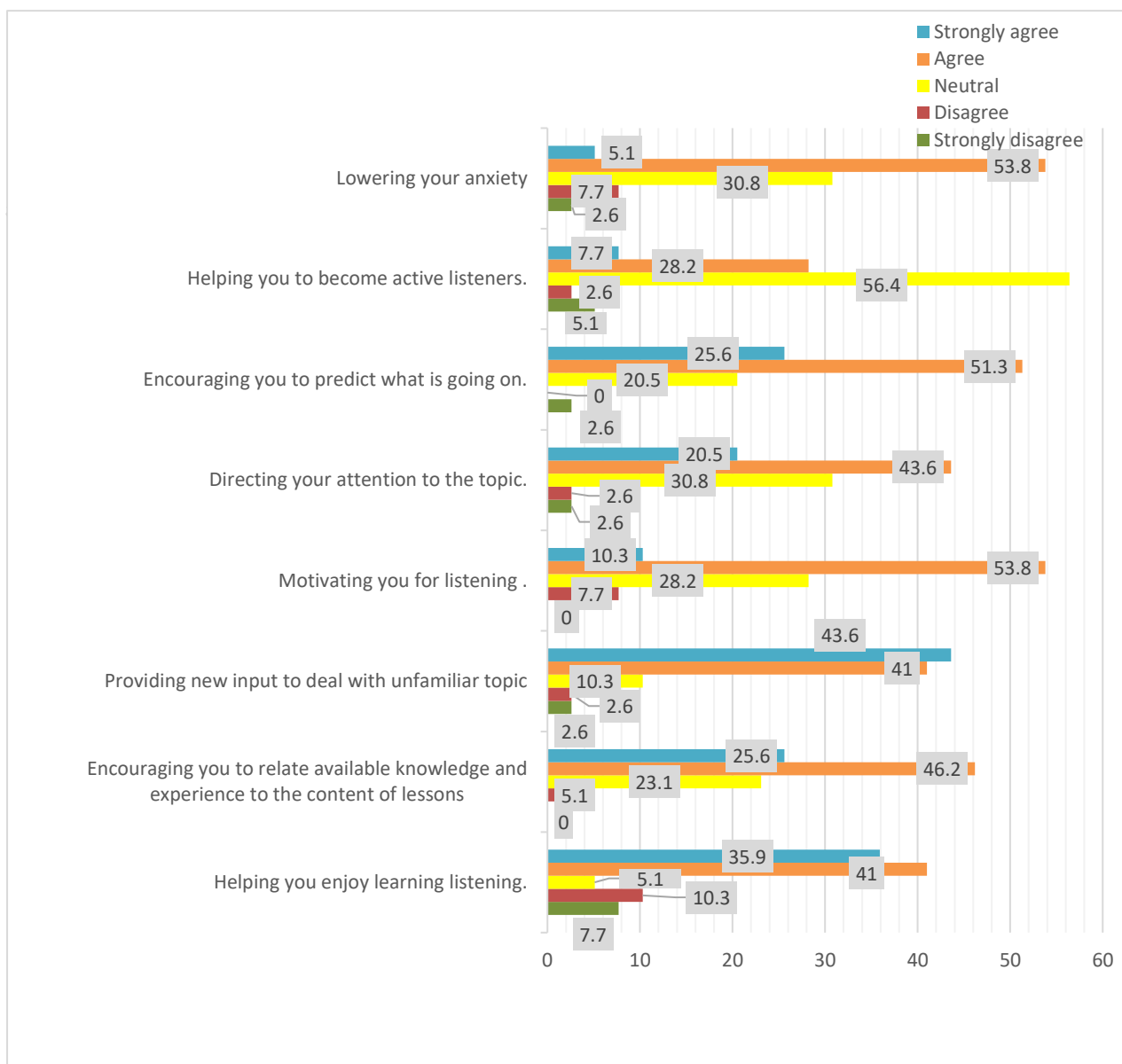
To sum up, at the beginning of the research, students' listening comprehension of the two groups was similar. After the period of four weeks for learning listening, mean scores showed a big difference between the two groups. It was proved that there was no significant improvement in CG's listening comprehension, whereas students in the EG made good progress on this skill which seemed to be due to the treatments. It means that by using a variety of pre-listening activities, students have a better comprehension of listening tasks.

## **2.7. Data analysis of the questionnaire**

### ***2.7.1 Students' awareness of the Pre-listening Stage of Listening comprehension***

After finishing the post-test, students in the experimental group (EG) filled out a questionnaire to gather information about their background, thoughts on listening skills, pre-listening activities, and behavior in listening class. They completed it in fifteen minutes. Then it was analyzed to clarify the students' attitudes to the teacher's application to their learning of listening comprehension.

With the aim of contributing to clarifying the results that the subjects in the experimental group got on the pretest and post-test, the questionnaire included the following content: the pre-listening stage helped students to (1) lower their anxiety (2) help them to become active listeners, (3) encourages them to predict what is going to happen (4) directs their attention to the topics (5) motivates them for listening (6) provides new input to deal with unfamiliar topic, (7) encourage them to relate available knowledge and experience to the content of lessons and (8) help them to enjoy learning listening.



**Chart 2.7. Students' awareness of Pre-listening stage on listening comprehension**

These numbers illustrates students' awareness of pre- listening activities to their listening lessons. Firstly, it can be clearly seen that large number of students (53.8%) believed that activating background knowledge in pre-listening stage could motivate them for listening and lower their anxiety. 46.2 % of the students agreed that pre-listening activities encourage them to relate available knowledge and experience to the content of lessons, and 25.6 % expressed their strong agreement. 28.2% agreed and 7.7 % strongly agreed that background knowledge could help them to become active.



51.3 % agree that pre-listening activities helped students to predict what they were going to hear while only a small minority of those surveyed (2.6 %) strongly disagree with it, and 20.5 % were uncertain. 43,6% of respondents agreed that the activation of background knowledge directed their attention to the topic, only 2.6 % disagreed, and 30.8% of students had no ideas.

Furthermore, most students recognized that pre-listening activities provided them necessary input to deal with unfamiliar topics (43.6%). 41% of students agreed with this idea, while 10.3% were not sure about this statement, and 2.6 % had the opposite idea. 35.9% strongly agreed that pre-listening activities helped them enjoy learning listening skills and 41% agreed with this idea. Overall, teaching listening with pre-listening activities was successful in stimulating students' interest in learning listening.

### ***2.7.2 Students' perception towards specific techniques used in each pre-listening activity.***

Over the course of four weeks, the students in EG group took part in various activities before listening to texts. These were designed to help the researcher determine if the students' understanding was improving. Some of the activities included:

- Prediction of the content of the listening passage
- Pre-teaching new vocabulary or grammatical structures
- Using audio-visual aids to introduce the topic of the listening passage
- Class discussion
- Previewing the listening tasks
- Questioning
- Using games to introduce the topic of the listening passage
- Brainstorming

The percentage and mean were computed to determine students' awareness of pre-listening activities on their listening comprehension. This result is shown in Table 6 below.

**Table 2.6: Responses on students 'perception of pre-listening activities**

Student's choice Pre-listening activities	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	Std. D	Decision
	1	2	3	4	5			
Prediction of the content of the listening passage	0	0	0	25	27	4.52	.505	High Perception
	0	0	0	48.1 %	51.9 %			
Pre-teaching new vocabulary or grammatical structures	0	1	1	22	28	4.48	.641	High Perception
	0	1.9 %	1.9 %	42.3 %	53.8 %			
Using audio-visual aids to introduce the topic of the listening passage	0	2	5	18	27	4.35	.814	High Perception
	0	3.8 %	9.6 %	34.6 %	51.9 %			
Class discussion	3	11	6	19	13	3.54	1.24	Low Perception
	5.8 %	21.1 %	11.5 %	36.5 %	25 %			
Brainstorming	1	2	5	17	27	4.29	.936	High Perception
	1.9 %	3.8 %	9.6 %	32.7 %	51.9 %			
Questioning	4	4	6	21	17	3.83	1.20	Low Perception
	7.7 %	7.7 %	11.5 %	40.4 %	32.7 %			
Using games to introduce the topic of the listening passage	7	16	4	15	10	3.10	1.39	Low Perception
	13.5 %	30.8 %	7.7 %	28.8 %	19.2 %			
Previewing the listening tasks	7	12	6	16	11	3.23	1.38	Low Perception
	13.5 %	23.1 %	11.5 %	30.8 %	21.2 %			

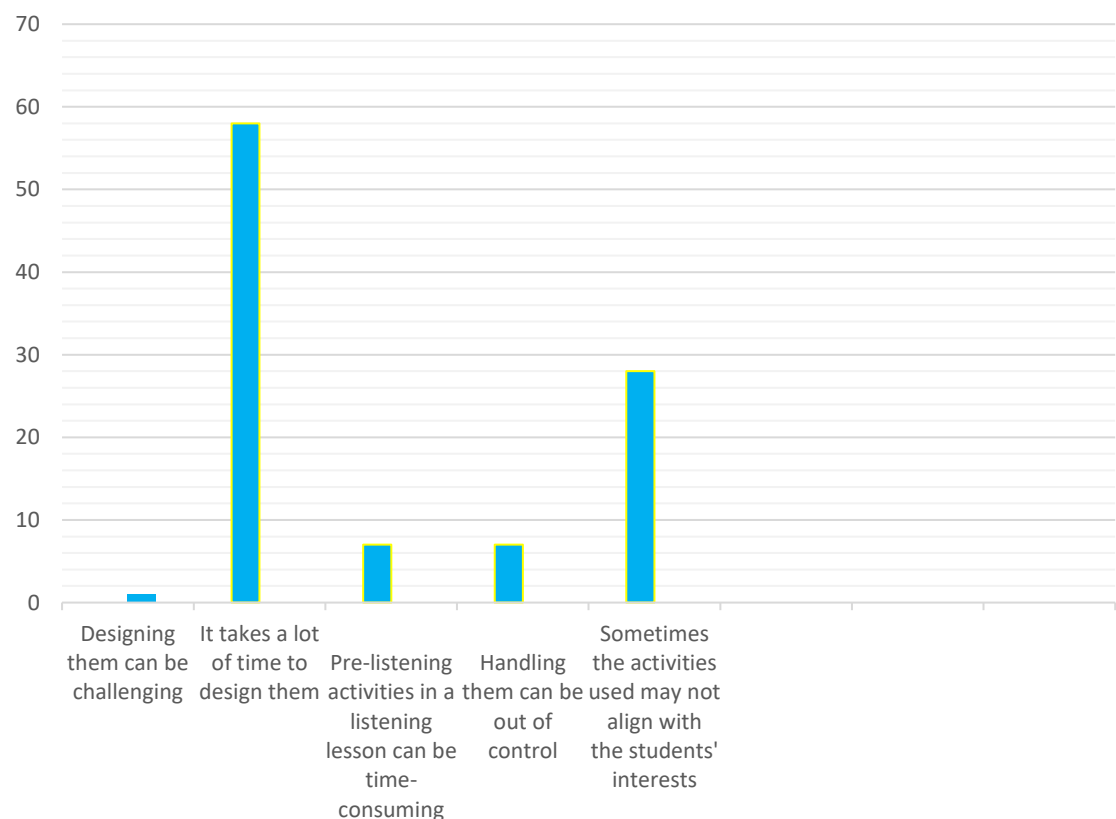
Note: 1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Don't know 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree  
N=52. Decision (weighted average value) = 3.92

As shown in Table 2.6, the students had a high perception towards the prediction of the content of the listening passage, Pre-teaching new vocabulary or grammatical structures, using audio-visual aids to introduce the topic of the listening passage, and brainstorming on improving their listening comprehension. The means of these responses ranged from 4.29 to 4.52.

### ***2.7.3 Teachers' difficulties in using pre-listening activities***

Teachers may find pre-listening activities difficult to use due to the time and effort required to design engaging and relevant activities that cater to students' interests. The responses are presented in summary form in Chart 2.16.

**Teacher's responses about the difficulties in using pre-listening activities**



**Chart 2.8 Teacher's responses about the difficulties in using pre-listening activities**

The chart demonstrates that 58% of teachers find that designing pre-listening activities takes a lot of time. Another 28% supposed that these activities are sometimes

not interesting to students. Only 7% of them thought that pre-listening activities can be time-consuming and occasionally out of control in class. Significantly, none of the teachers considered designing these activities difficult. Overall, it can be said that most teachers do not have any challenges with pre-listening activities except for the time-consuming in designing them.

#### ***2.7.4 Teachers' frequency of using pre-listening activities***

Being teachers of foreign languages in schools, all of them are aware of the great importance of pre-listening activities. All ten teachers often start a listening lesson by leading students to the topic of the listening text through some pre-listening activities and 7 out of 10 teachers find that they are very necessary and the other find them necessary. This can be explained that all teachers have got to know many roles or purposes of pre-listening activities. All the activities should be used to have the most effective lessons.

**Table 2.7: Teachers' frequency of using pre-listening activities**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Sometime</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Never</b>
Prediction of the content of the listening passage	40%	35%	25%	0%	0%
Pre-teaching new vocabulary or grammatical structures	60%	25%	15%	0%	0%
Using audio-visual aids to introduce the topic of the passage	20%	50%	25%	5%	0%
Discussion	30%	10%	14%	20%	26%
previewing the listening task	65%	13%	10%	7%	5%
Brainstorming	55%	20%	13%	10%	2%
Questioning	20%	40%	13%	21%	6%
Using games to introduce the topic of the listening passage	30%	27%	30%	7%	6%

From the survey data (table 2.7), all teachers agree that pre-listening activities are very important because they help students understand the text better. When regarding previewing listening tasks, findings show that 65% of teachers always require students to preview the first task, while only 5% of teachers don't use this technique.

Analysis of the survey revealed that the majority of teachers (60%) engaged in pre-teaching vocabulary and grammar through explanations and definitions in English, alongside the use of pictures, real objects, gestures, synonyms, and antonyms.

Brainstorming emerged as a frequently utilized activity among survey participants (55%), particularly in prompting students to generate ideas related to the listening passage. In the pre-listening stage, the majority of teachers favored utilizing WH questions, as indicated by seven responses, while multiple-choice questions and Yes-No inquiries were less common.

40% of the teachers frequently prompt students to predict the content of a listening passage based on visuals and titles. The teachers surveyed expressed a preference for using pictures as a means to infer the subject of the listening material, citing its effectiveness in conveying diverse concepts. Additionally, preparing students with relevant vocabulary and grammatical structures before the main listening task was deemed essential.

Furthermore, audio-visual aids were favored by many teachers for introducing listening passage topics, 50% of teachers often apply this technique with pictures being the primary choice. Although short videos are less commonly used due to difficulty in finding suitable resources, they were sometimes employed by 25% of teachers.

30% of the teachers sometimes used games to introduce the topic of the listening passage, 27% of them often used this activity and 7% of them seldom applied games because they claimed that strategy is a complete waste of time and difficult to prepare. They only apply games as a pre-listening activity in order to change the learning atmosphere for students.

The percentage of teachers who used questions and discussion is 20 and 30 % respectively. WH-questions remained the preferred questioning technique, while multiple-choice and Yes-No questions were employed less frequently. In terms of group dynamics during the pre-listening stage, both group work and pair work activities were more commonly employed than whole-class discussions, fostering student engagement and confidence.

In terms of group dynamics during the pre-listening stage, both group work and pair work activities were more commonly employed than whole-class discussions,

fostering student engagement and confidence. Brainstorming activities primarily focused on idea generation, with less emphasis on brainstorming vocabulary, as teachers viewed ideas related to the listening passage as critical for aiding student comprehension. WH-questions remained the preferred questioning technique, while multiple-choice and Yes-No questions were employed less frequently.

It is clear that various methods for teaching vocabulary and structures were identified, with a selection of common pre-listening activities illustrated in the charts. Many students encountered challenges with listening skills due to insufficient vocabulary and structure knowledge in the listening field, while others struggled due to a lack of background information on the specific task. Both teachers and students acknowledged the significance of these activities in providing background context, enhancing student engagement, and fostering confidence in listening comprehension.

## **2.8 Interviews**

### ***2.8.1 Interviews for Students***

Students found the listening lesson enjoyable, useful, satisfying, and appealing after the treatment. They were attracted by the ways teachers used pre-listening activities because they could easily understand the listening lessons and comprehend the lesson better. The majority of students find listening lessons engaging and beneficial as they help enhance their vocabulary and communication skills. However, a minority of students struggle with these lessons due to inadequate vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation difficulties, and poor listening skills, making comprehension challenging. Additionally, students encounter obstacles such as CD quality and speaker speed during the lessons.

Students note that teachers typically initiate listening lessons by posing questions or providing topic-related suggestions to stimulate interest and help students predict the lesson's subject. Many students find these introductory activities engaging as they provide context and aid in the retention of information. These activities serve to captivate students and are perceived as effective for improving listening skills.

On average, students complete about 70% of the tasks, although some find the pre-listening activities repetitive and boring.

### ***2.8.2 Interviews for Teachers***

All teachers prepared pre-listening exercises before introducing students to the main listening session. None of them go straight to listening without any pre-listening activities because they understood the importance of them. It is clear that different types of pre-listening activities can inspire students to participate in the listening lesson, however, the tasks for the pre-listening should be offered more images, maps, graphs, and short videos....

Some activities they often use are pre-teaching vocabulary and grammatical structures, Predicting the content of the listening passage, playing games, and asking and answering questions, among which predicting and questioning are the most effective. Perhaps, new words and structures always need to be taught in each lesson, so the activity of pre-teaching them is not mentioned. The main difficulty they encounter when designing and implementing these activities is students' background and levels. Besides, controlling students' reactions while doing the activities also makes the teachers troubled. To the activities given before listening, teachers find them suitable to the content. This is the reason why they often use it in the lesson.



## **CHAPTER 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Results**

By reviewing the literature about listening, the researcher, firstly, emphasized the importance of listening skills in English language classes and, secondly, revealed a literature gap in the factors affecting student listening comprehension. After reviewing several research, articles and journals, the theoretical framework of this study was chosen, which includes a list of factors influencing students' listening skills. During the teaching time using the conventional teaching method, the researcher realized that the students were not interested in the listening lesson and their listening comprehension was low. The reason for this was the teachers' teaching method, especially the pre-listening activities. The same activities in the textbook could not be useful and effective for students' listening comprehension. Because different listening tasks require different pre-listening activities to activate students' background knowledge, interests, and motivation, they could better comprehend the listening.

The data from the pre-test and post-test showed that the student's scores on the first test were quite low. After the four weeks of the experiment, the students' scores were much better than that before the experiment. In other words, in the post-test, fewer students got low or average scores while the percentage of good scores was greater than that in the first test. It means that there was an improvement after using the new teaching method. The findings proved that diversification of pre-listening activities had a positive impact on students' listening comprehension. So the answer is students' listening skills can be improved if the teacher varies pre-listening activities in the first stage of the listening lesson.

Secondly, applying pre-listening activities in the first stage of the listening lesson helps reduce difficulty in the listening process. Results from the questionnaire showed that most students agreed that if the teacher used pre-listening activities, the factors that affect students' listening skills could be diminished. They also had a positive attitude on the view of such activities in the future. The students were motivated from

the pre-listening stage, they could perform better while listening. Moreover, when students try to complete the while-listening tasks well, they understand the listening texts better. In short, the different pre-listening activities that the teacher used during the four weeks of the experiment enhanced the student's listening comprehension more than the ones that were used in the pre-listening stage before the experiment.

As a result, some pre-listening activities should be included in the lesson such as pre-teaching vocabulary or grammatical structures, prediction of the content of the listening passage, using audio to introduce the topic of the lesson, using pre-listening questions, brainstorming and previewing the listening task before going to listen to the tasks. These activities are considered as traditional pre-listening exercises, with many of them being used in textbooks, allowing teachers to utilize them effectively and save time.

### **3.2. Discussion of the findings**

The study highlights the importance of listening skills in English language classes and the role of pre-listening activities. Data is discussed and findings are considered concerning the objectives of the study. With the data collected and analyzed, this study provides several important findings. The first finding is that it emphasizes the roles of teachers in organizing interesting and suitable activities in the listening lesson. The lecturer's role in the classroom is essential in maintaining the interest and motivation of students to participate in listening classes. Moreover, pre-listening activities encourage learning among students as they have a chance to engage themselves in purposeful listening activities as well as to take initiative in preparing knowledge related to the listening passages. It means that students tend to focus not only on the language itself but also on the tasks. After the experiment, the students had higher levels of participation in the pre-listening activities varied by the researcher. The students also showed great interest in pre-listening activities. They are now more willing to share their knowledge and opinions as well as discuss the listening topic before listening to the tape script or doing the comprehension tasks. It means that their motivation has increased.

Consequently, the student's listening comprehension of the listening tape script was higher.

### **3.2.1 Findings on Research Question 1:**

*What specific benefits do pre-listening activities offer in enhancing first-year English major students' listening skills at University of Phan Thiet?*

All students (100%) believed that the activation of background knowledge during pre-listening activities increased their interest in listening. It might be explained that those activities brought the students of UPT a new trial in their learning listening. Teaching listening without the pre-listening stage seemed to make them tired, bored, and passive.

Pre-listening activities helped learners in EG make an active interpretation of the message's meaning. Anderson and Lynch (1988, p. 10) say "Effective learners actively engage in the process of comprehension". They applied the relevant internal information available to them to construct their own explanation of what had been said. These listeners did not passively receive and record. Differently, those of CG might listen word-for-word, so they might have trouble when meeting difficult vocabulary or grammatical structures.

Students narrowed down meanings and built reliable expectations when stirring their background knowledge before listening. According to Celce Murcia (1995), activating listeners' pre-existing knowledge and their information of specific listening situations might help to reduce the range of possible meanings and make plausible expectations about the message received. The activation of background knowledge before listening might enhance the learners' confidence which is very important to promote their listening comprehension on the test. Hedge (2005) believes that the most important element in effective listening is confidence which comes with practicing and achieving success from an early stage (p. 255). On the other hand, the CG might become worried when they do not listen to every word, which has a negative impact on listeners' comprehension.

Pre-listening activities supported the learners to set their purpose for each task in the test. When knowing the reason why they were listening, they might determine what information they need to get the most from the message. Therefore, they listened more successfully. Helgesen and Brown (2008) believe that “when learners take time at the beginning of a task to rehearse, to think about and plan what they’re going to do, they are usually more successful at the task” (p. 33). When the learners knew in advance that they were able to make a certain kind of response, they were immediately provided with a purpose in listening and they knew what sort of information to expect and how to reach it.

In conclusion, the activation of background knowledge in pre-listening activities helps listeners comprehend the text more easily. These activities might support the subjects to overcome the lack of linguistic knowledge, explain actively the message, build reliable expectations of what is going on, enhance confidence, establish the context, and contextualize their prediction.

### **3.2.2 Findings Research Question 2**

*Which pre-listening activities demonstrate the highest efficacy in enhancing listening skills during classroom instruction?*

To implement pre-listening activities, teachers use many different techniques. However, some are more frequently used than others. Here are the most effective activities:

- Pre-teaching vocabulary or grammatical structures
- Introducing the topic by using audio-visual aids
- Asking students to work in pairs/ groups to ask and answer questions related to the topic or do guided exercises such as matching, gap-filling, and true/ false statements.
- Using the yes-no questions and wh-word questions. Among types of questions, yes-no questions are considered the easiest to give answers, but they also include much information.

- Asking students to brainstorm for the details of the text based on the title of the topic.

As teachers, we need to consider all of the factors affecting the selection of activities, especially the content of the text, students' levels and background, and the sub-skills of listening we want to focus on in the lesson or the types of listening comprehension tasks. We can use the given activities in the textbook or design new ones that match our needs to help students improve their listening. For English major students at university, pre-teaching vocabulary and grammar is necessary. Guessing the topic and questioning are believed to be very effective on the result of the listening tasks, so they should be paid attention to when they are suitable in the lesson. However, we need to design more suitable activities to vary the types and to attract students to the lesson as well.

These activities are easy to apply in listening lessons. In addition, it does not take much time to prepare them. While the first activity is considered the most frequent as a result of most of the students' difficulty that they lack vocabulary and structures, guessing the topic is an interesting activity to generate students' interest. They highly appreciate the effectiveness of teachers' suggestions as well as their instructions in helping them understand what is concerned in the lesson. Among them, the students like pre-teaching vocabulary and grammatical structures most because they are basic factors to help them to listen well. Poor listeners are usually very passive in listening. They all tend to hear word-for-word. As a result, when they have new vocabulary or grammatical structures, they spend a lot of time on them, which causes great loss. Students can move from memorizing information to meaningful learning by calling on their background knowledge. They will begin connecting learning events rather than remembering bits and pieces. To do this better, we can change the techniques for implementing these activities. For example, to pre-teach vocabulary, we can use pictures on the computer screen instead of real ones; gestures by actors in a film instead of the actions made by ourselves. This can make activities more interesting. Similarly, other techniques students think the most effective should be considered, but they also need to be varied.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Conclusion**

The findings, as discussed in the previous chapter, have shown that it emphasizes the roles of teachers in organizing interesting and suitable activities in the listening lesson. The lecturer's role in the classroom is essential in maintaining the interest and motivation of students to participate in listening classes. Moreover, diversification of pre-listening activities encourages learning among students as they have a chance to engage themselves in purposeful listening activities as well as to take initiative in preparing knowledge related to the listening passages. It means that students tend to focus not only on the language itself but the tasks.

Generally, the vast majority of students had positive attitudes towards the teacher's application. Pre-listening activities enhanced their great enjoyment of learning listening, which was very important for success in comprehension. And most of them admitted that this application facilitated their listening comprehension. They are now more willing to share their knowledge and opinions as well as discuss the listening topic before listening to the tape script or doing the comprehension tasks. It means that their motivation has increased. Consequently, the students' listening comprehension of the listening tape script was higher.

With appropriate methodology, based on the findings and discussions, we concluded that the student's English skills were significantly enhanced when they applied pre-listening activities in listening tasks. They made great progress in listening competence and attributes expressed in the post-test scores. The results of the study met the expectations and pointed out obvious answers to the research questions. Our research supported the previous dissertations in affirming the benefits of pre-listening activities on students in English listening skills.

In conclusion, from these findings and conclusions of two research questions, it can be claimed that there has been a successful application of the background knowledge

activation in pre-listening instruction in a real context where subjects' listening comprehension is very limited. It is also drawn from findings that it is necessary for poor listeners to activate background knowledge before listening.

### **Implication**

Based on the findings presented in the previous chapter concerning students' listening comprehension and their perception of pre-listening activities, several important implications might be considered.

When it comes to pre-listening activities, it's important for teachers to use a variety of activities that cater to different learning styles and proficiency levels. Activities that interest students and are at their proficiency level should be used more, even if they require more preparation time. Teachers should also use different activities to help students listen better. It's also beneficial for teachers to incorporate game-like elements and rewards to create an engaging class atmosphere. For the listeners, research shows that they aim to improve their language knowledge in areas such as grammar and vocabulary. Therefore, listeners should try to use their existing knowledge to understand the meaning and make connections, rather than focusing solely on learning new language items. The English teacher should acknowledge the significant impact of activating students' background knowledge in the pre-listening stage on their comprehension. This activation enables learners to link new information with their existing knowledge, thereby enhancing their ability to tackle listening tasks effectively.

Second, teachers should provide learners with the opportunity to use language for communicating in a meaningful context at the beginning stage. Because they are "limited processors" (Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Brown, 1990), doing that helps listeners narrow down their attention to the upcoming input and concentrate on the relevant parts to deal with the load of listening.

Third, teachers should view listening comprehension as an interactive process, involving learners as active "mental builders" who constantly infer and predict using

internal resources. By adopting this perspective, instructors can better support students in developing their listening skills.

Finally, designing engaging pre-listening activities that capture learners' interest is crucial. That will require more work and more effort from instructors. Teachers should recognize that the poorer listeners are, the more background knowledge they need to activate. Therefore, they must do more than provide students with linguistic knowledge which is very difficult to help them make inferences about the meaning, especially when they face unfamiliar topics.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Although the research has reached its aims, there are some unavoidable limitations. The study investigates the effects of pre-listening activities on listening comprehension tasks for English major students at the University of Phan Thiet, but the selection of activities in this research is limited. Consequently, it is recommended to incorporate a broader range of pre-listening exercises to identify more effective strategies for enhancing students' listening skills.

Moreover, the investigation focuses exclusively on pre-listening activities, not on while- and post-listening stages. The population of the research is quite small; it may be more persuasive if there were more participants with a wide range of competencies. Due to the short time and the author's limitations in knowledge and experience, inevitable shortcomings and mistakes may have occurred. Besides that, the researcher conducted only three data collection instruments – tests, questionnaires, and interviews. It is suggested that classroom observations should be applied to further studies to enhance the examination of participants' responses and increase the reliability of the data and research findings.

Therefore, comments and corrections are wholeheartedly welcomed to refine the study. Despite these limitations, the study provides some insights into implementing pre-activities in listening instruction.



## **Recommendations for Further Research**

The teachers and students at UPT often have difficulty in teaching and learning listening skills. One of the most common problems is that students are not well-prepared for the listening lesson. This leads to students' low listening comprehension. Being a teacher for several years, the researcher is aware of the significance of pre-listening activities at the first stage of the listening tasks. This stage may have a good influence on students' listening comprehension. However, the limitation and the scope of the study leave gaps for other research in the field of using pre-listening activities to teach English skills to fill in.

First, further studies can investigate the factors influencing listening skills which have not been done here, to complete a picture of factors affecting students' listening skills. In addition, the study was carried out with the first-year English major students whose knowledge and language competency were not very high; therefore, the approach can be applied to the third year and senior students.

Secondly, this thesis has not discussed the other stages of listening (while- and post-listening) so this proposes further studies to make great usefulness for students to learn listening skills. Based on the findings as well as the limitations of this research, this study has implications for further studies, such as conducting with students at the while-listening and post-listening stages. The further study can also focus on the other students' level such as the second, third, or senior students. Moreover, as for teaching and learning practice, the teachers should focus on the factors that affect listening skills as in the study, the researcher only focuses on pre-listening activities.

It is hoped that the research will surely of positive contribution to the improvement of teaching and learning English at UPT as well as those who are interested in this issue.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: The pre-test

#### LISTENING COMPREHENSION (Approximately 30 minutes)

##### SECTION 1

Question 1-5: Complete the table below. Write ONE WORD AND/OR NUMBERS for each answer.

<b>JOB HUNTING</b>			
Company's name	Job details	Reference number	Contact
<i>Example</i> <b>POWER</b> (manufacturing company)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work in a <b>1</b> ..... section</li> </ul>	<b>SW35FT</b>	<b>Jane 2</b> .....
<b>COTTON</b> (grocery company)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>good pay</li> <li>work                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in <b>3</b> ..... office</li> <li>in a <b>4</b> .....</li> </ul> </li> <li>chance of promotion</li> </ul>	<b>5</b> .....	go to office

Question 6 -10 Complete the notes below. Write ONE WORD ONLY for each answer

##### Notes on Jobs

- Local jobs can be found in the **6** .....
  - Buy the **7**..... to get one free magazine (Job Plus)
  - Feel stress and spend a lot of time looking for jobs
  - Advisable to go to an **8** ..... instead of the recruitment seminar
- Bring a student card (10% discount)
- Referee: - former boss (once had a job) - one of the **9** ..... (if not)
  - Intend to take the art course • Fill out a **10** ..... form at the end of the course.



## SECTION 2

**Question 11 – 15: Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.**

11 The reason why David is replacing Jane is that

- A. she is unwell.
- B. B. she is very busy.
- C. C. she is inexperienced.

12 According to the speaker, what is the problem for the museum currently?

- A. lack of staff
- B. lack of publicity
- C. lack of money

13 Why were the thieves able to successfully steal the statue?

- A. The security device is outdated.
- B. The security guard is not well-trained.
- C. They knew what they were searching for.

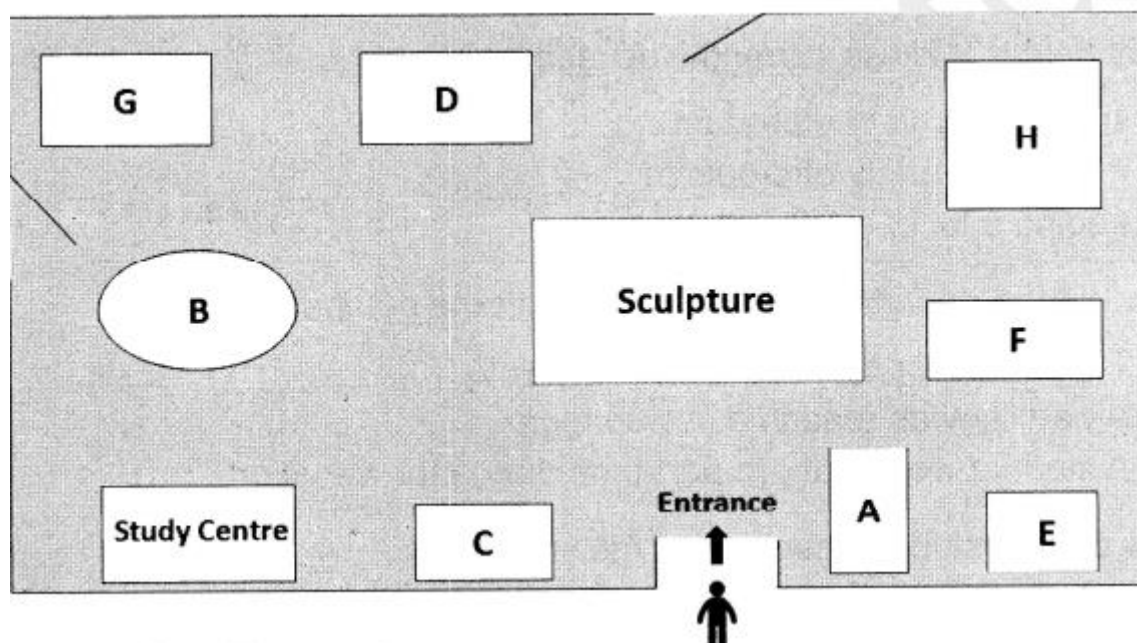
14 In order to improve security, they are going to

- A. get more closed-circuit television cameras.
- B. hire more security guards.
- C. buy more computers.

15 What kind of librarian are they looking for?

- A. responsible
- B. experienced
- C. highly-trained

**Question 16 – 20** Label the map below. Write the correct letter, A-H, next to questions 16-20.



- 16 Box Office .....
- 17 Children's Room .....
- 18 Cafe .....
- 19 Multimedia Room .....
- 20 Showroom .....

## Appendix 2: The post-test

### LISTENING COMPREHENSION (Approximately 30 minutes)

**SECTION 1.** Questions 1-10. Complete the table below. Write ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER for each answer.

#### Notes on A Part-time Society

Name of society: Leighton Location: (1) ..... house. Want: (2) ..... actors and singers (no experience required) Transportation: shuttle services (need someone who is able to (3) .....)

Meeting time: 6:00-8:00pm, every (4) ..... Close time: during (5) ..... Membership fee (including (6) .....)

- £40 for employed members (under 30 years of age)

- £ 60 for employed members (30-60 years of age)

- £(7)..... for retired or unemployed members (over 60 years of age)

Minimum joining age

-( 8) ..... Most members are friendly and fond of culture and music.

– ( 9)..... authors looking for new experiences to write about in their books. The children's (10) ..... will get the money raised by the annual dinner.

**SECTION 2.** Questions 11-14 Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.

11 What kind of changes is the station making?

A. relocation

B. reconstruction

C. expansion

12 The original buildings on the site were

A. houses.

B. industrial buildings.

C. shops.

13 Firstly the station intended to use the site as

A. a leisure centre.

B. a car park.

C. a lounge

14 The new buildings will be situated to the right side of

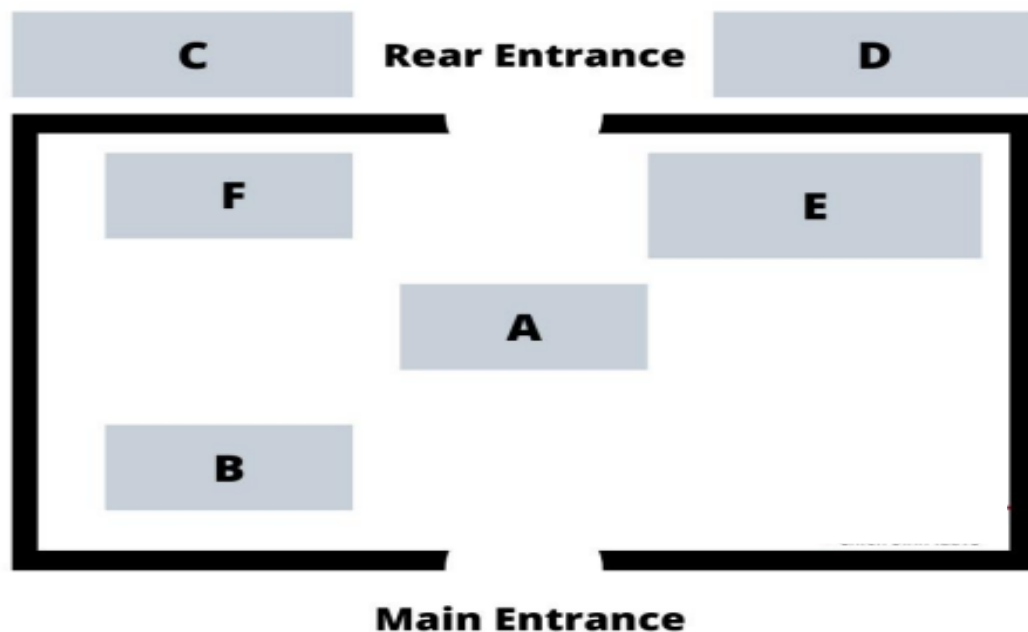
A. the shopping district.

B. the apartment blocks.

C. the new formal gardens.

Question 15- 20. Label the map below. Write the correct letter A-F next to questions 15-20.

### Leisure Complex Plan



15 Café .....

16 Taxi Rank .....

17 Car Park .....

18 Passenger Waiting Area .....

19 Waiting Area for Wheelchair Users .....

20 Tourist Office.....

Source: <https://ielts-fighter.com/tin-tuc/de-thi-ielts-listening-test-co-dap>

### **Appendix 3: Pre-test and Post-test Scores of two groups**

<b>Student</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Pre-test</b>	<b>Post-test</b>
1	CG	4.00	9.00
2	CG	5.00	5.00
3	CG	7.00	4.00
4	CG	6.00	4.00
5	CG	4.00	8.00
6	CG	8.00	5.00
7	CG	6.00	5.00
8	CG	5.00	4.00
9	CG	6.00	8.00
10	CG	4.00	4.00
11	CG	6.00	5.00
12	CG	3.00	5.00
13	CG	4.00	8.00
14	CG	3.00	4.00
15	CG	8.00	3.00
16	CG	2.00	3.00
17	CG	4.00	4.00
18	CG	4.00	4.00
19	CG	8.00	3.00
20	CG	5.00	4.00
21	CG	8.00	6.00
22	CG	2.00	4.00
23	CG	6.00	5.00
24	CG	5.00	3.00

25	CG	3.00	4.00
26	CG	6.00	3.00
27	CG	3.00	8.00
28	CG	3.00	3.00
29	CG	4.00	4.00
30	CG	6.00	5.00
31	CG	7.00	5.00
32	CG	2.00	4.00
33	CG	4.00	4.00
34	CG	3.00	8.00
35	CG	8.00	9.00
36	CG	4.00	4.00
37	CG	8.00	2.00
38	CG	3.00	8.00
39	CG	3.00	6.00
40	CG	5.00	5.00
41	CG	2.00	4.00
42	CG	8.00	4.00
43	CG	4.00	6.00
44	CG	5.00	4.00
45	CG	3.00	4.00
46	CG	8.00	7.00
47	CG	8.00	8.00
48	CG	7.00	4.00
49	CG	4.00	4.00
50	CG	3.00	6.00
51	CG	4.00	7.00

52	CG	8.00	4.00
53	EG	8.00	9.00
54	EG	6.00	8.00
55	EG	5.00	6.00
56	EG	5.00	9.00
57	EG	3.00	4.00
58	EG	3.00	4.00
59	EG	7.00	7.00
60	EG	4.00	8.00
61	EG	3.00	6.00
62	EG	3.00	4.00
63	EG	3.00	4.00
64	EG	5.00	7.00
65	EG	4.00	5.00
66	EG	6.00	7.00
67	EG	4.00	4.00
68	EG	7.00	9.00
69	EG	4.00	4.00
70	EG	4.00	6.00
71	EG	5.00	5.00
72	EG	5.00	6.00
73	EG	8.00	8.00
74	EG	6.00	7.00
75	EG	4.00	5.00
76	EG	5.00	5.00
77	EG	3.00	7.00
78	EG	3.00	4.00

79	EG	3.00	7.00
80	EG	3.00	8.00
81	EG	3.00	3.00
82	EG	6.00	7.00
83	EG	7.00	8.00
84	EG	2.00	8.00
85	EG	4.00	4.00
86	EG	3.00	7.00
87	EG	8.00	8.00
88	EG	4.00	8.00
89	EG	4.00	3.00
90	EG	3.00	4.00
91	EG	3.00	5.00
92	EG	5.00	7.00
93	EG	2.00	8.00
94	EG	3.00	4.00
95	EG	4.00	7.00
96	EG	3.00	4.00
97	EG	3.00	7.00
98	EG	3.00	3.00
99	EG	8.00	8.00
100	EG	5.00	7.00
101	EG	4.00	8.00
102	EG	3.00	7.00
103	EG	4.00	5.00
104	EG	5.00	6.00



#### **Appendix 4. Survey questionnaire (for students)**

This survey questionnaire is designed to get data for my thesis: “Investigating the effectiveness of pre-listening activities in enhancing listening skills: a case study for first-year English major students at University of Phan Thiet.”

Your assistance in completing the following items is highly appreciated. All the information you provide is solely for the purpose of the study.

Thank you very much for your assistance!

**Part 1. Please tick (✓) the number on each scale to show what benefits pre-listening activities bring to students.**

Note: 1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Don't know 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

Number	Question	5	4	3	2	1
1	Lowering your anxiety					
2	Helping you to become active listeners.					
3	Encouraging you to predict what is going on.					
4	Directing your attention to the topic.					
5	Motivating you for listening.					
6	Providing new input to deal with unfamiliar topic					
7	Encouraging you to relate available knowledge and experience to the content of lessons					
8	Helping you enjoy learning listening.					

**Part 2. Please tick (✓) your answer or write your answer in the blanks.**

1. How do you prefer the listening lesson to start?
  - a. The teacher plays the recording and students complete exercises in the textbook.
  - b. The teacher organizes some activities to lead into the lesson before listening.
2. In your opinion, Is organizing activities before listening important? Why?
  - a. Very important
  - b. Important
  - c. Not important

Reason: ...

3. Which of the following factors make it challenging for you when listening to audio and completing listening exercises? (You can mark more than one answer)
  - a. Lack of vocabulary and grammar structures related to the listening passage.
  - b. Lack of fundamental knowledge.
  - c. Unfamiliar topic of the listening passage.
  - d. Not prepared for the listening exercises.

Other opinions: ...

4. In your view, what is the impact of pre-listening activities? (You can mark more than one answer)
  - a. Increases interest in the listening content.
  - b. Helps understand new vocabulary and structures.
  - c. Provides basic information about the listening passage.
  - d. Helps predict the theme of the listening.
  - e. Helps predict the content of the listening.
  - f. Encourages participation in pairs/groups.
  - g. Increases confidence before listening.
  - h. Leads to better results in listening exercises.

Other opinions: ...

5. Before listening, what activities do you prefer the teacher to organize?
  - a: Prediction of the content of the listening passage
  - b: Pre-teaching new vocabulary or grammatical structures
  - c: Using audio-visual aids to introduce the topic of the listening passage
  - d: Discussion

e: Previewing the listening tasks

f: Brainstorming

g: Questioning

h: Using games to introduce the topic of the listening passage

Other opinions: ...

6. Do you agree that the following pre-listening activities should be implemented in listening lessons? Please circle the number on each scale to show your responses  
( Note: 1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Neutral 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree)

A: Prediction of the content of the listening passage	1	2	3	4	5
B: Pre-teaching new vocabulary or grammatical structures	1	2	3	4	5
C: Using audio-visual aids to introduce the topic of the listening passage	1	2	3	4	5
D: Discussion	1	2	3	4	5
E: Previewing the listening tasks	1	2	3	4	5
F: Brainstorming	1	2	3	4	5
G: Questioning	1	2	3	4	5
H: Using games to introduce the topic of the listening passage	1	2	3	4	5

7. According to you, which technique is the most effective to carry out pre-listening activities? Tick ✓ the box

**a. Teaching new vocabulary and grammar structures used in the passage by using:**

- ☐ Pictures, objects, visual aids.
- ☐ Context in sentences/situations.
- ☐ Synonyms/antonyms.
- ☐ Vocabulary exercises.
- ☐ Translation into Vietnamese.
- ☐ Explanation or definition in English.

Other opinions: ...

**b. Asking questions using:**

- ☐ Multiple-choice questions.
- ☐ Questions with keywords.
- ☐ Yes or no questions.
- ☐ Tag questions.

Other opinions: ...

**c. Requiring students to work in pairs/groups to:**

- ☐ Ask and answer questions related to the theme of the listening passage.
- ☐ Do guided exercises.
- ☐ Discuss a topic, a situation, a movie clip.

Other opinions: ...

**d. Asking students to guess the theme or title of the listening based on:**

- ☐ Suggestions from the teacher.
- ☐ Games related to the theme.
- ☐ Audio-visual aids.
- ☐ Guided exercises.
- ☐ Pair/group discussions.
- ☐ Previewing the listening exercises.
- ☐ Appropriate reading materials.

Other opinions: ...

8. How do you perceive the effectiveness of the pre-listening activities in your English book that you are currently studying? (You may mark more than one answer)
- a. Engaging and interesting for your learning.
  - b. Relevant to your knowledge and proficiency level.
  - c. Aligned with the content of the listening passages.

d. Lack of variety.

e. Boring.

Other opinions: ...

9. How do you evaluate the impact of the pre-listening activities on listening skills?

Why?

a. Very effective.      b. Effective.      c. Not effective.

Reason: ...

10. In your opinion, which of the following measures make the pre-listening activities in your English book more effective for the listening exercises? (You may mark more than one answer)

a. Each listening task has a specific objective.

b. Use of visual aids to aid in predicting themes and content.

c. Multiple-choice answers for questions.

d. Designing various exercises for pair/group work closely related to the listening content.

Other opinions: ...

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH!**

## **Appendix 5: Survey questionnaire (for teachers)**

This survey questionnaire is designed to get data for my thesis: “Investigating the Effectiveness of Pre-listening Activities in Enhancing Listening Skills: A case study for first year English major students at University of Phan Thiet.”

Your assistance in completing the following items is highly appreciated. All the information you provide is solely for the study purpose.

Thank you very much for your assistance!

**Please tick (√) or write the answer where necessary**

1. How do you often start a listening lesson?
  - a. Ask students to listen to the text and do the listening tasks at once.
  - b. Led students to the topic of the listening text through some pre-listening activities.
2. How important it is to organize pre-listening activities?
  - a. Very important      b. Important   c. Not important at all
3. Why do you use pre-listening activities? (You can tick more than one)
  - a. To generate students’ interests in the lesson
  - b. To provide students with new words/ phrases/ structures that exist in the listening text
  - c. To help students activate background knowledge about the topic.
  - d. To help students to guess the topic of the listening text.
  - e. To help students to brainstorm for the details of the text.
  - f. To get students involved in pair/ group work.
  - g. To make students more confident before listening to the text.
  - h. To help students obtain better results of listening tasks.

Others: .....
4. How often do you use the following pre-listening activities?  
(1 – Always; 2 – Often; 3- Sometimes; 4 – Rarely; 5 – Never)

<b>Pre-listening activities</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
A Prediction of the content of the listening passage					
B: Pre-teaching new vocabulary or grammatical structures					
C: Using audio-visual aids to introduce the topic of the listening passage					
D: Discussion					
E: Previewing the listening tasks					
F: Brainstorming					
G: Questioning					
H: Using games to introduce the topic of the listening passage					

5. Which types of question do you often use in pre-listening stage?

Types of question :	1	2	3	4	5
Multiple choice questions					
Wh-word questions					
Yes-No questions					
Tag questions					

7. How do you pre-teach new words, phrases or grammatical structures that appear in the listening text? Please circle the number on each scale to show your responses (1 – Always; 2 – Often; 3- Sometimes; 4 – Seldom; 5 – Never)

- Using pictures, real objects, gestures.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
- Using the context in sentences/ situations.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
- Using synonyms/ antonyms	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
- Designing small exercises (gap-filling, matching ..)	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
- Translation	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
- Explanation and definition	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

8. How often do you introduce the topic of listening texts by using these strategies?

- |                               |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| - Directly stating the topic. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| - Using games                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| - Using audio-visual aids.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| - Questioning                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| - Reading relevant materials  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

9. What challenges have the negative effect on your implementing pre-listening activities? (You can tick more than one)

- ☐ The limitation of time.
- ☐ The students' interest.
- ☐ The students' background and levels.
- ☐ The topic and content of the listening text.

10. What do you think of using pre-listening activities to enhance student's listening skills? Why?

- a. Very effective      b. Effective      c. Not effective at all.

- Reason(s): .....

11. What should be done to make pre-listening activities more effective on listening comprehension tasks ?

- a. Add more some various kinds of pre-listening activities.
  - b. Omit some pre-listening activities.
  - c. Provide pre-listening activities regularly for each lesson.
  - d. Design pre-listening activities that meet students' interests and related to the text.
- Others: .....

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH**



## **Appendix 6: Interview Questions**

### **TEACHERS**

1. How do you often start the listening lesson?
2. Do you think it is very important to organize pre-listening activities in a listening lesson? Why or why not?
3. Name some pre-listening activities you often use.
4. According to you, which pre-listening activity you have used is the most effective on listening comprehension tasks?
5. What difficulties or problems did you meet when designing and implementing these pre-listening activities?
6. What should be done to make these activities more effective on listening comprehension tasks?

### **STUDENTS**

1. Do you like listening classes? Why?
2. What difficulties do you come across during listening classes?
3. How does your teacher usually start the listening class? Do you like the way the listening class begins? Why?
4. What do the activities before listening to the book and those of the teacher help you with?
5. In your opinion, Are the activities before listening effectively for listening exercises? Why?
6. When participating in activities before listening, can you understand the content of the listening and complete the listening test? (By what percentage?)