

## **DIFFICULTIES IN LEARNING LISTENING SKILL OF NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS AT SAI GON UNIVERSITY AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOP THEIR LISTENING AUTONOMY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Listening Comprehension is believed to be the most difficult by most of non-major students in Asia generally and in Vietnam particularly. Researchers have found two main factors that influence Listening skill, including linguistic and non-linguistic ones. A survey was conducted among 500 non-English major students of Saigon University currently following the compulsory English program equivalent to levels from A1 to B1. The questionnaire was designed into three contextual aspects: student perceptions of listening, students' listening strategies, and students' listening autonomy in and out classroom. Also, those participants compulsorily took a mid-term test with four skills at the 12th week. Of four skills, the result of students' listening part could be used to test their listening achievement. As a result, those students agreed that their Listening scores are often low due to the lack of either Listening autonomy or encountering problems such as poor vocabulary, pronunciation practice and grammatical structures or inappropriate listening strategies. On the other hand, they also admitted that background knowledge, topic familiarity and listening anxiety are some other factors somehow affecting their Listening results. The paper with the effort to improve teaching and learning Listening skill, attempts to investigate whether theoretical frameworks of listening difficulties in Asian context discussed by many linguistics could fit the context of non-English major students of Sai Gon University. The study then puts forward some recommendations for non-English major students to recognize their weaknesses in listening skill and develop their listening autonomy by setting their own objectives and following strategies with the intervention of teachers and other tools in a classroom environment and extend beyond it.

*Keywords:* listening difficulties, listening autonomy, non-English major students, listening skill, listening objectives.

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

Although English is not an official language in most countries, it is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language and used to evaluate learners' language proficiency in international English tests namely TOEFL, IELTS or FCE in four skills. Hence, English is compulsorily taught in Vietnamese schools, colleges and universities in the hope of enhancing learners' English proficiency in those skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Among four skills, listening requires the EFL listeners to be able to process both linguistic knowledge (LK) and non-linguistic knowledge (NLK) concurrently and simultaneously (Buck, 2001), therefore the learners have had difficulties in listening because of these main factors.

Among four skills, Sawir (2005) presents that listening skill is the most difficult skill for students from Southeast Asian countries including Vietnam. Since listening skill is possibly the most challenging one, this research is done to seek its difficulties, to recommend some solutions so that the students are, hopefully, able to avoid unsatisfying experiences with listening practices. This topic is researched for the twin purposes as follow:

*The explanatory purpose: to answer one question below:*

What makes listening comprehension difficult for EFL learners in Asian context?;

The normative purpose: to suggest some basic strategies about how to practice and learn this listening skill more logically and effectively.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Linguistic knowledge difficulties**

#### **2.1.1 Acoustic input**

Acoustic input is a linguistic term referring to an ability to do with a word or utterance recognition (Buck, 2001). Actually, he states that speech is decoded in a system of sounds to convey meaning. Hence, it is really necessary for the listeners to make sense with the way the sounds are produced so that they can comprehend the message transferred through the sounds. However, this acoustic signal is often very “indistinct in normal speech” because the adjacent sounds influence each other (Buck, 2001, p.4). As a result, many EFL students have to struggle with the sound recognition ability (Ur, 1996). And even, the Asian EFL listeners cannot recognize the words they have already known (Stanley, 1978; Ur, 1996), not to mention to the normal state of many EFL listeners that “language is partly known” to them (Buck, 2001, p.7). In other words, in case of EFL students, when the ability to do with the word or utterance recognition tends to be low, it is seemingly challenging for EFL listeners to reach to the level of comprehensibility (Smith & Nelson, 1985). So, why do many EFL listeners have recognition problems? It can be summarized that the recognition problems come from as are explained in detail below.

#### **2.1.2 Accent and recognition**

*One expert points out that*

Accent is a combination of three main components: intonation (speech music), liaisons (word connections), and pronunciation (the spoken sounds of vowels, consonants, and combinations) (Cook, 2000, p.12).

This indicates that the accent recognition becomes of paramount importance in listening comprehension. However, the accent varies very much. It is really various from geographical regions to social groups. More specifically, Buck (2001) highlights that Australians pronounce English differently from Americans, which is different again from British English. Besides, he also indicates a little further that accents of English are noticeably different from particular classes as middle-class, working class and upper class. In addition to the varieties of standard English accents, there is a significant increase in the range of many non-standard English accents since English is widely known as an international language and learnt by many people. As a result, they make the utterance recognition almost impossible for many EFL learners being usually less familiar with the range of many different accents and maybe impossible for the natives also (Crystal, 1995). And this possibly leads to confusion and self-doubt and disrupts the whole comprehension process.

### **2.1.3 Speech rate and recognition**

Another factor that makes the recognition of many EFL listeners difficult is speech rate. In fact, many EFL learners have experienced that the speech rate is too fast (Buck, 2001; Carver, 1973; Griffiths, 1992). Therefore, foreign language listeners are usually lacking in controlling over the speed (Gwendolyn, 1984) partly because they try to listen to every word (Blundell & Stokes, 1989). Actually, according to the findings of Tauroza and Allison (cited in Buck, 2001), the average speech rate for British speakers in their daily conversations is around 210 words per minute. This translates that British speakers generally and normally speak more than 3 words per second. Besides, Cook (2000, p.65) sheds light that “each sentence sounds like one long word”. Furthermore, Buck (2001, p.6) supports the claim that listeners process the information at the speech rate determined by the speakers, which is quite fast. From that, hearers cannot refer back to the text- all the remaining is the memory span. But listeners seemingly have “imperfect memory”, and that leads the information to fly away. Consequently, Griffiths (1992) and Carver (1973) note that sound recognition is significantly better at low speech rate and considerably worse at high speech rate.

### **2.1.4 Linguistic study of EFL Asian students**

From the findings of Sawir (2005), she sheds light that most of students from East and Southeast Asian countries consisting of Vietnam, China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea do not have good communicative competence because their prior learning mostly lays an emphasis on grammar points and written language. Consequently, she criticizes that they are not quick at conversational English by “the lack of exposure to good English speakers at school” (Sawir, 2005, p.574). In addition, Sawir also conducts that most Asian EFL students do not have the good ears in listening because they do not learn much spoken language. Actually, since most Asian EFL learners learn a great deal about English through “printed words”, listening ability is really a demanding task (Cook, 2000, p.55). And if they learn listening, the materials are often “carefully-prepared” without many real spoken elements (Heaton, 1975, p.65).

## **2.2 Non-linguistic knowledge difficulties**

### **2.2.1 Background knowledge and topic familiarity**

Since Markham & Latham (1987) claim that background knowledge and topic familiarity would help to improve students’ performance in listening comprehension, Chiang and Dunkel (1992) investigate the effect of prior knowledge on EFL listening comprehension and find that the participants score higher on the familiar-topic lecture than on the unfamiliar-topic lecture. Additionally, Schmidt-Rinehart (1994) carries out a whole body of research with the main purpose of discovering the effects of topic familiarity on language-two listening comprehension and concludes that background knowledge in the form of topic familiarity lends a powerful hand to facilitate listening comprehension.

Furthermore, the number of speakers of English as a first, second, and foreign language is estimated to be as low as 1000 million and as high as over 1500 million, echoing Crystal’s estimate (1997). From this, English is used and spoken by many people from many different cultures. Zare and Sadighi (2006) present that while hearing the same information, listeners from different backgrounds or cultures possibly form different inferences and construct different meanings. Besides, culture-free varieties of English users certainly lead to communication problems among the interlocutors (McCarthy, 1998). This brings about incomprehension in listening to the same

information and contributes to make understanding much or less difficult because of not sharing the same knowledge (Buck, 2001).

### **2.2.2 Listening Anxiety**

According to Joiner (cited in Young, 1999), during the process of listening, EFL students increasingly get worried and nervous due to “a negative listening self-concept”- that is due to the feeling of anxiety and of low self-esteem in the area of listening. In addition, Vogely (1997) also agrees that listening comprehension anxiety probably springs from a fear of failure as the non-native hearers. Furthermore, Young (1999) points out that listening comprehension anxiety is possibly a result of the lack of time to process the input and of practice. Moreover, he reveals the fact that listening comprehension anxiety can short-cut the comprehensibility and even the entire English learning process.

## **3 AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Aims of the study**

The group of researchers, with effort to understand difficulties in learning listening comprehension skill of students who do not major in English at Saigon University, aim to help improve the quality of teaching and learning English listening at the school.

### **3.2 Participants**

About 500 non-English major students at Sai Gon University are asked to complete a sheet of 16 questions on their habit of studying Listening Comprehension, learning autonomy and strategies. Those students are required to take 3 compulsory English courses level 1, 2, 3 respectively equivalent to A1, A2 and B1. They have a 2-period class (for level 1 and 2) or 3-period class (for level 3) every week. Due to the limited time and huge amount of knowledge to cover, skills must be shared with great effort of both teachers and students. Therefore, the students often complain that they do not have enough practice for listening and that affects their listening comprehension.

On the other hand, the participants are required to do a compulsory text to evaluate their duration of English learning. The exam composes three separate parts, including listening, writing and speaking. The results that are always recorded as criteria for the students to pass the levels are undoubtedly low. There are two sections in the listening test, one of which was taken from a listening task in the course book that they learnt in class, the other one was chosen from another equivalent material.

### **3.3 Materials**

*Questionnaire*

*Data on midterm exam's results*

### **3.4 Description of methodology**

The questionnaire includes 15 multiple choice and open questions which are simple and reader-friendly to make sure the students understand the study's aim and cause interests in them to complete the survey honestly.

A data on the participants' listening midterm scores are collected and ranged into scales including below 5; 5-6; 7-8 and above 8.

The questionnaire was done after the participants had already finished their midterm and were waiting for the scores.

The research paper employs qualitative method.

## 4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Listening midterm results

The collected results are as in Chart 1 below. It is easy to tell the story about non-major students' listening performance at the school from the chart. More than half of them cannot pass the listening test even though 50% of the test was the task they used to practice in the course book. Moreover, among those whose scores are acceptable (5 and above), only some students can get an 8 or more which takes about 10% while the most popular point is 5-6 of about 60%.

In term of the test structure, there are 2 different sections, one of which was redesigned from one of the tasks in the course book that the students used to practice in class, with teachers' instructions. Therefore; they listened to the same recording but with different questions or options to make sure they did not luckily learn the answer key by heart. The other section was taken from another equivalent material. By that mean, students totally have a chance to earn higher scores than they actually did. The results tell the truth that the participants not only failed to listen effectively but also showed insufficient classroom listening activities.

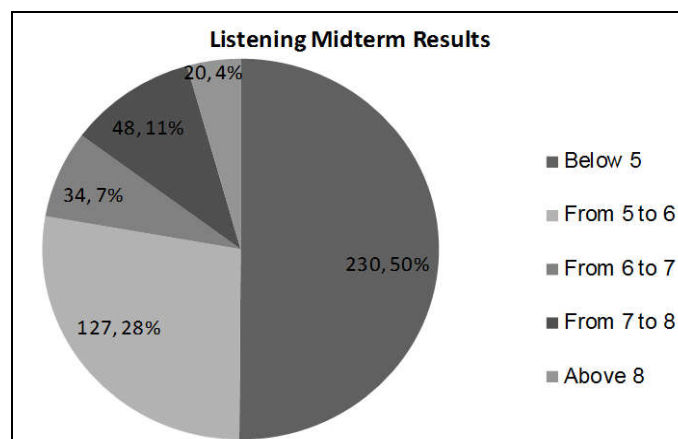


Chart 1

In fact, however, when being asked about the scores they expected to gain in the test, only 39% of the participants replied that they might get lower than 5, which is much less than the real results. Nearly half of them thought that they could have the average scores 5-6. That means though they all admitted that they listening ability was not so good, they were still optimistic that they were able to pass the exam as the lowest price. This can be explained that these students were quite confident as they recognized a familiar recording, grabbed the main idea and content. However, even though they were able to reproduce the gist of the script, they might make some silly mistakes that can prevent them from perfect scores, such as: spellings, word forms, words ending in s/es/ed, verb tenses, etc...

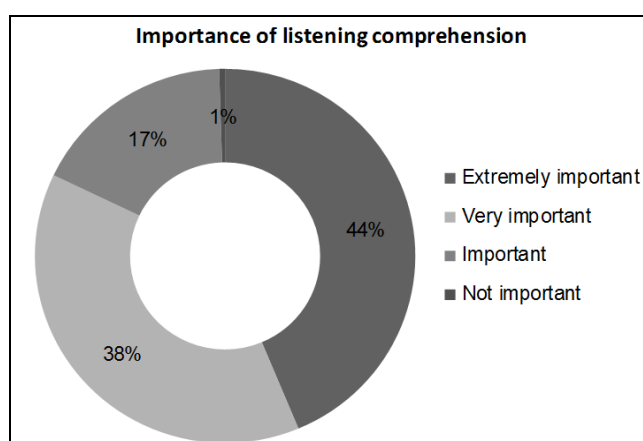
### 4.2 Students' perception of listening comprehension

Wenden (1986) figured out that students' perception might have an effect on their performance. In order to understand difficulties and reasons why non-major students tend to have insufficient

outcome in listening comprehension, there are some questions in the survey to measure their perception of the skill.

Firstly, how hard is it to study English listening comprehension? According to the survey, 90% of the participants agreed that listening is a very difficult skill, in comparison to other skills, it is definitely more complicated and is the skill they hesitate to acquire most. All of them have had problems in doing tasks. According to Underwood (1989) and Flowerdew and Miller (1992), the biggest matter is probably the ability to concentrate. Learners can easily lose the track with just a few seconds of neglect and then get upset because everything is passing too fast. Listening materials also often contain lots of vocabulary, functional structures or varieties of tasks that convey critical thinking and analysis which challenge listeners to be highly attentive. Moreover, course books may include unfamiliar topics with learners. As a consequence, they find it difficult to understand what they are listening, fail to follow the recording and normally rate themselves as average or poor performers.

On the other hand, the importance of listening study is another factor to evaluate students' perception. In the survey, the participants were asked to choose one out of four levels of difficulty that they thought best described listening comprehension, varied from Extremely important to Not important at all, in comparison with other English skills. The results are as followed in Chart 2:



**Chart 2**

The chart shows that almost all the students believed listening comprehension is an important skill, contrast with very few students underestimating it (1%). As a matter of fact, people all know that listening is a vital part of daily communication which takes up 40-50% of the total time spent, while they might use 25-30% of time for speaking, 11-16% for reading and only about 9% for writing (Mendelson, 1994).

Therefore, in the next question – why should you learn listening? – the answers were totally predictable. Nearly a third said listening was the basic skill to master other skills, 67% argued that was because listening helped understand the conversation and communicate well, only 3% admitted that they learnt the skill just because it is a compulsory curriculum. This is an open question then the participant felt free to add any other ideas they might think of such as: without effective listening, they could fail to absorb knowledge, interact with teachers and friends or develop social relationships.

Finally, when asked about the vital element to succeed in grabbing the skill, though a few mentioned the role of teacher in improving students' performance, 94% agreed that it was the learners themselves who decided the effect of the skill.

Discussion: as earlier stated, it is important to understand students' perception of listening learning, especially in the case that learners are non-major ones whose motivation for English is not so high. Their perception of the skill might have an impact on determination and learning autonomy which directly affect their plans and strategies to learn it appropriately.

### 4.3 Students' learning autonomy

Students' learning autonomy is basically related to their responsibility and independence in self-study. The theme might receive possible effect if learners choose English as their major in university. However, with non-English major students, this can be totally another matter. Self-study time must be shared among skills and knowledge they are required to absorb leading to restricted time doing listening practice. Chart 3 shows the percentage of self-practice of non-major students.

The participants have 4 options from learning a lot at home to not doing anything at all. The biggest figure refers to those who rarely and never practice respectively 60% and 21% of total. Numbers of learners who self-practice regularly and only do that when their teachers ask them to do so and keep track on their homework's performance are almost the same about 4-5%. It is true that their motivation is absolutely not enough to overcome laziness and the comfort of the bed. To that extent, learners too much depend on their teachers' instructions, materials and authority. Without assignments and necessary references, learners do not know what and how to begin self-study on their own. Teachers therefore play an important role in developing students' autonomy ability.

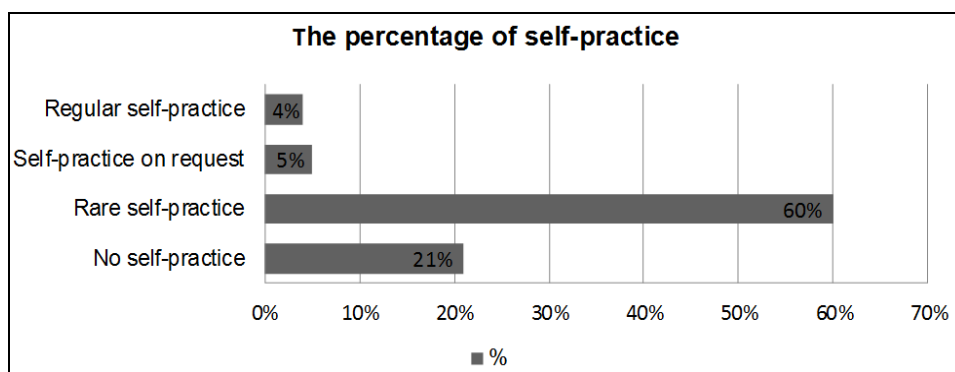


Chart 3

Consequently, resources for self-study are undoubtedly essential. Those who spend time for listening on their own prefer Internet as a great source of English learning. English songs are the best choices, followed by well-known TV channels such as Disney, Discovery, HBO, etc...; or popular learning websites like BBC, VOA, CNN, British Council, etc... Moreover, the participants also listed some other materials provided by their teachers or recommended by most of users in online forums. Finally, even if they cannot have any visual and audio aids, the course book can still play its good role in giving enough homework.

Discussion: Does students' learning autonomy affect listening comprehension? The answer is: Absolutely! Though it is agreed that teachers are necessary in setting students' habit of doing homework or self-practice, it is learners themselves who decide the effectiveness of self-study.

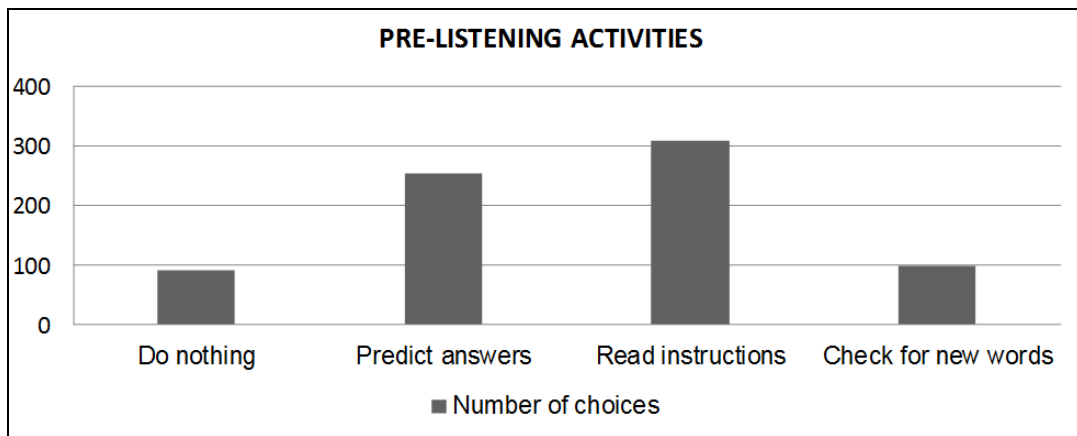
### 4.4 Students' listening strategies and factors that affect students' listening comprehension

Listening strategies are the factors that directly affect the effectiveness of listening comprehension. The key point is whether non-major students grab and show appropriate technique of the skill. The

survey raises some questions to understand what the participants normally do in classroom and whether or not they follow the suggested steps including pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening activities.

**4.4.1 Question 1**

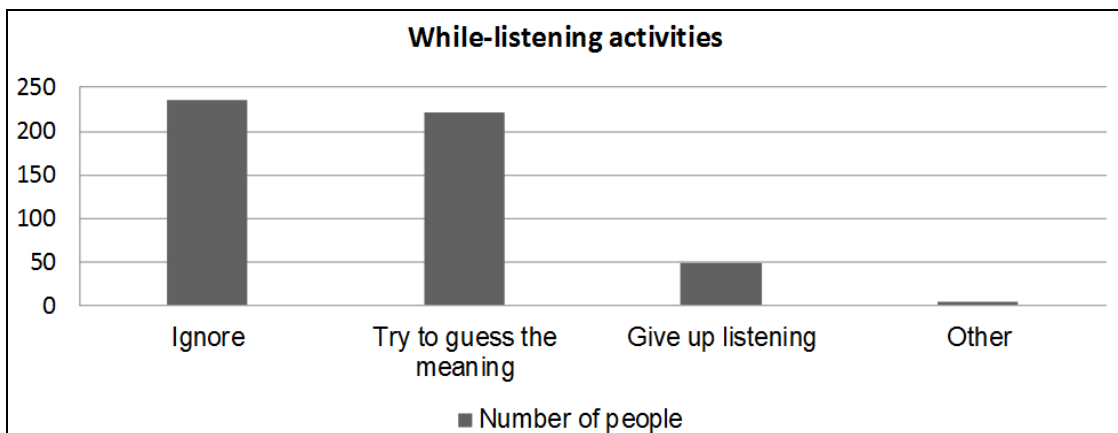
*What do you often do before listening? (it is possible to choose more than 1 option).* The result is shown in the below chart. Predicting the answers and reading the instructions are the most favorable choices. Some of them also pay attention to vocabulary though with a low rate. The least chosen option refers to doing nothing to prepare for the task. In fact, research has found that people are unlikely to listen to something without having no idea about what they are listening. The activities before actually listening or watching about a topic allows them to set the context, generate interests on the topics, activate their background knowledge and related vocabulary and therefore help them comprehend the recording better. In general, most of students at Saigon University obtain the basic strategies for pre-listening.



**Chart 4**

**4.4.2 Question 2**

While listening, what do you do if you do not understand a word or a phrase? Chart 5 tells the participants' responses as follows:



**Chart 5**

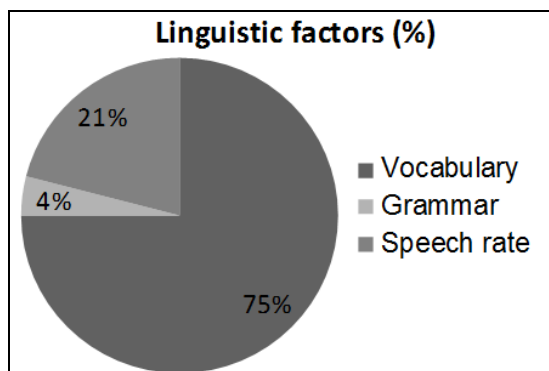


Problems occur when teachers turn on the audio file. Vocabulary is the most concerned element to comprehend a listening task. Listeners might hear lots of new words or the words that sound regular but take time to recognize their meaning in the context. This really challenges those who do not master a variety of vocabulary in different topics. A large number of listeners pause their mind for a few second to think about the words until they realize that they miss so much other important information that they start to feel disappointed and give up listening. However, almost half of the participants decide to ignore the words and keep on listening. This kind of strategy allows them to keep track of the recording and help them understand the main ideas without translating word by word. It is believed to improve listening comprehension. In comparison, there have seen quite equivalent rates between those who choose to ignore and guess the meaning of strange words.

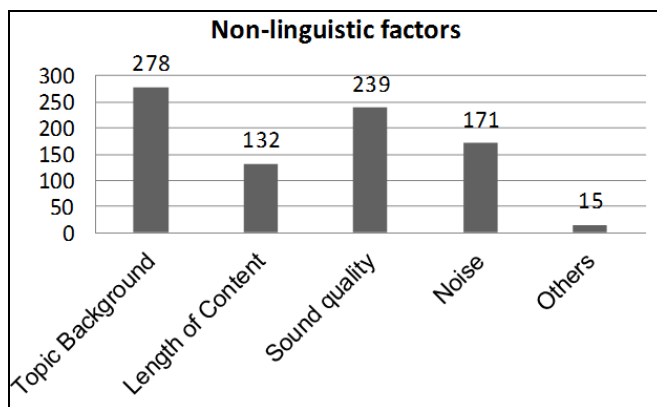
**4.4.3 Question 3 and 4**

In your opinion, which of the following factors has the most important effect to listening? (Chart 6) and Which of the following difficulties do you have when listening? (it is possible to choose more than 1 option) (Chart 7).

According to Yagang (1994), there are 4 basic elements that might cause problems for listeners, including: the messages, the speakers, the listeners themselves and the physical settings. The first 2 elements belong to linguistic factors that affect listening comprehension and the other ones list out some possible non-linguistic problems.



**Chart 6**



**Chart 7**

Linguistic factors include vocabulary, functional structures and speed rate. As earlier discussed in the previous part, reading materials contain lots of new words, phrases or expressions that might be difficult to understand. Once a new term is read out, listeners tend to either ignore it or take a short time to think about it and miss the next part of the recording. Therefore, it is quite predictable that vocabulary is the biggest problem that listeners encounter in listening tasks as shown in Chart 6, taking 75% of the participants. Another 21% of them have problems with speed rate. It also implies linking sounds and omitting sounds of the speakers that make the speed sounds faster than normal. Listeners find it hard to follow the rhythms and fail to understand some key details that can be asked in the comprehension. The lowest rate is from those who are influenced by grammatical structures

Non-linguistic factors are varied from background knowledge and topic familiarity, the length of the recording, sound quality or the learning environment. Though these factors are changeable and improvable, in certain contexts, it may cause unexpected results for the exams. According to the

survey, most of non-major students at Saigon University find it hard to listen because they lack basic information about the topic or at least they don't know how to activate what they know about the topic before listening. Of course, from time to time there are some unfamiliar or unfavorable topics that make students hesitate to deal with. This can also be explained that pre-listening activities are not sufficient enough in listening lessons. The second problem refers to the poor quality of the CD players and speakers. Noise from the surrounding environment such as the sport center, self-study area, the class next door or horn from vehicles on the street is another cause for poor performance. Moreover, a few students think that anxiety and stress can make them feel less confident in listening; especially when the recording is only played once, they become worried and nervous which then affect their psychology a lot.

#### 4.4.4 Question 5

After completing a listening task, what do you often do? (it is possible to choose more than 1 option).

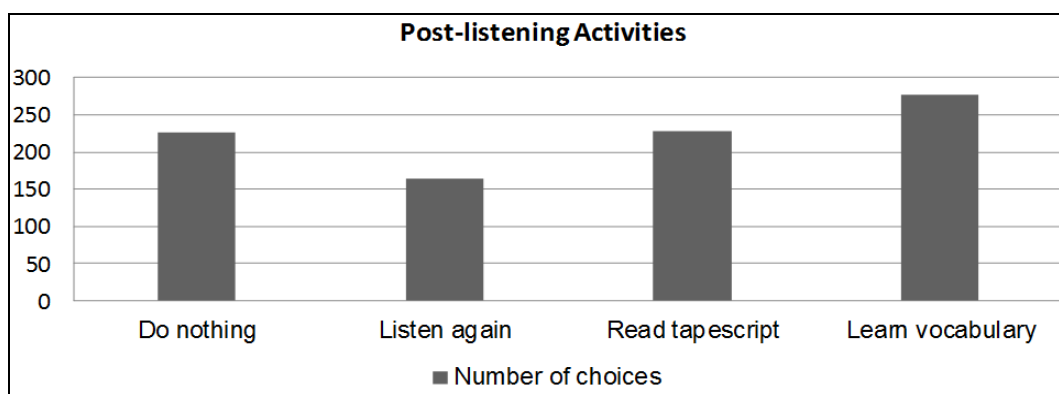


Chart 8

Post-listening activities are the ones done after listening to the text. According to Rixon (1986) and Underwood (1989), this stage is helpful in revising the language used in the text, having time to think, discuss and reflect what they have listened. It is obvious that tasks assigned are fully completed and a lot of students think that is the end of the stage. Nearly half of the participants stop at that point, they move to another task or decide to do nothing else after all. However, it is advised that students listen again to think about the language, vocabulary, grammar or any special points from the passage; or if they are too tired to do that they can simply read audio script to check some possible information they may miss while listening; or at least review vocabulary. Chart 8 shows the increasing number of those choices respectively. Vocabulary is again the best choice for learners.

#### 4.4.5 Question 6

In order to improve listening comprehension, which of the following methods may suit you?

In order to recommend some suitable ways to non-major students to improve their listening comprehension, some ideas are listed and available to choose the best one for each individual. As a result, 60% of the participants think that they can create a learning environment for themselves by turning on a radio or TV program, an English song or watching a movie to hear the language come into their mind naturally before actually learning to understand it. This is quite interesting because they can choose their favorite songs, movies or programs. Moreover, this kind of activities

encourage them to practice more than listening to a boring text. Another suggested method which is chosen by more than a quarter of listeners is listening again and again as many times as they can and then try to mimic words. This activity can also help improve pronunciation. Two last options sharing the same rate at about 7% include taking notes and write a summary about a listening text; and listening to a variety of topics by many accents to get used to them.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

This study could not be conducted without some limitations. The research is primarily based on the general theory about the field of listening difficulties in Asian context and then practically surveys the specific students within the context of Sai Gon university in Vietnam only. Second, the project does not include all of the levels of non-English major students at Sai Gon University in order to obtain the statistical differences in the data analysis due significantly to the shortage of the restriction of time length. Finally, it would be better if the findings of the study not only depend on the questionnaires and the listening test but apply interviewing and observing methods also.

On the whole, the study mainly lays an emphasis on figuring out whether the listening difficulties in Asian context fit the context of Sai Gon University. The results have shown relative similarities between the two mentioned contexts that might come to conclusions about possible problems in listening learning. In terms of non-linguistic prospect, background knowledge and topic familiarity are the main factors that make listening challenging, followed by technical problems, too long topics, noise and listening anxiety. Those are quite predictable and show no substantial difference with learners from other countries in the region. In linguistic side, while the ability to recognize a word or utterance is the key to listen successfully, vocabulary is the most concerned element after all of students at Saigon University. Students might get stuck with a large number of new words and expressions or miss some important part of the text coming later because they have to stop and think about a familiar word. Another problem that affects non-major students on mastering a language: motivation for self-study because as discussed earlier that it is students' role that determines the effectiveness of their study though the participants are quite clear about the importance and necessity of the skill, beside the compulsory curriculum, not many of them are motivated enough to self-practice. Importantly, through the survey, it is clear that students do not have appropriate listening strategies to help them overcome the above hardships, then they might find it hard to improve the quality of learning the skill as a non-major one. Therefore, some suggestions on the problems would be given below.

From the above discussions and conclusions, there are some suggested ideas from the writers of the paper, after carefully considering contributions of a group of teachers teaching English to non-major students at Saigon University:

### **For teachers**

SGU educators need to be more sensitive to the students' unacquaintance with the international standard measurement of the four skills in general, and that of listening skill in particular. Actually, teachers responsible for non-English major students' English learning need to commit significant resources related to the standardized tests (A1,B1,B2) so that they can further address the standard measurement to the students. The teachers of English could take the solutions to this problem a step forward by first providing the students with an opportunity to practically expose themselves to a sample test with the relevant skill of which the teachers are in charge. Next, give the students the answer keys so that they can self-evaluate their English competence in

accordance with the international standard measurement. Finally, it is necessary for the enthusiastic teachers to introduce them to some popular ways to approach the sources of the practice tests and to encourage their practice outside of the classroom whenever possible so that they can teach themselves more. In general, from the illustrated process, it is necessary that the students be more well-informed about the international standard tests of English competence by the responsible educators.

## **For learners**

### ***Direct Strategies***

The productive ways in the practice procedure to help the students to be better at listening skill are to listen to English lots, lots and lots!

#### *Wash over language lots:*

In light of the difficulties significantly related to the low ability of sound recognition of the respondents, students at SGU should “wash over language” lots - be exposed to the sound system of English language - in order to be familiar with the way the sounds are produced (Harmer, 1988, p.99). In other words, listening is just for the sake of listening, for sound familiarity first, and for meaning later. More specifically, listening for how the natives say needs to have priority over listening for what they say in the practice procedure. In that way, the students can get used to the rhythm and the flow of native English. This translates that washing over language helps the students improve their acoustic input recognition which is one of the major problems of many students in general and SGU students in particular. Actually, being accustomed to the sounds and the flow of speech positively helps to improve comprehension in listening (Buck, 2001). For the sake of being familiar to the natural sounds, the students at the Faculty, however, really need to listen to natural English as much as they can on account of the viewpoint of Heaton (1975) that natural speech input with more elements of spoken language is considerably different from carefully-selected materials. Great ways to do it are listening to net-based audio, broadcast news, radio, watching television, and other media supports. And, the point here in the light of listening without meaning mostly requires the engagement and involvement of the non-English major students at SGU

#### *Repeat and respond lots:*

One time for listening is not enough! The students at the Faculty must listen again...again...and again on a regular schedule. More specifically, the students should do it repeatedly until it is not something they remember but it is something they know since Schneider and Shiffrin (cited in Buck, 2001) assume that EFL listeners must have an automatic process, not a controlled one so as to deal with the normal flying speed rate of native speakers as well as other difficulties. In other words, the distinction between the two processes is best illustrated in Buck (2001): when students learn some new elements of a language, they have to pay much conscious attention and think about it, and their use of it is slow (a controlled process). But as those elements becomes more acquainted, and learners process them faster, with less thought, until the process of recognizing and producing them becomes entirely automatic (an automatic process). Consequently, doing rehearsal helps to get an automatic process and to improve the possibility of recognition ability of the students at SGU. Accompanying the rehearsal to get the language into our brain, the students also need to get it out to be heard or read by reacting to what they are hearing. This involves responding to a question or trying to elicit ideas on the topic. Other ways may be writing:

summaries and diary entries. That way, the responding is a way of listening for meaning and the practicing of listening helps to learn both receptive and productive skills. Gradually, the potential of the automatic process really comes to the minds of non- English majors. As a result, the automatic process certainly assists the students at the Faculty in tackling the difficulties in accordance with fast speech rate as well as anxiety of listening.

*Listen to many different sources lots:*

On account of the problems with relation to unfamiliarity of topic, disadvantage of not much listening exposure, and unfamiliar accent, the students should practice listening not only on a regular schedule but also in different situations with different topics. In other words, after doing the washing over language, the repeating and the responding, the non-English majors need to take the third step in the practice procedure to listen to many different sources so that the students can get more background knowledge or knowledge of the world because the possibility of being more relevant to the topic will enforce the process of interpretation and comprehension (Buck, 2001; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994; Chiang & Dunkel, 1992; Markham & Latham, 1987; Brown & Yule, 1983). Besides, hearing various topics practically assists the students at the Faculty with more listening exposure and with the familiarity of various accents.

*Indirect Strategies*

In addition to the important role of the direct strategies, it is absolutely necessary for the students at the Faculty to notice the indirect strategy. That is metacognition of learners- ability to think about thinking and learning of the learners themselves since listening comprehension is a very complex process. Actually, the serious attention or the personal ambition to overcome the listening problems of the students can have as strong an impact as the direct strategies suggested. In other words, it really needs to require money and more money to approach the source of listening materials. Also, it really needs to take time and to demand energy of the students due primarily to the complex process of listening comprehension. This translates that after washing over language, repeating and responding, the students must be exhausted and out of energy. However, energy is something everyone probably has; there is one thing which many people do possibly not have, that is determination and will power so as for the students to keep taking the third step to practice listening in different situations with different topics. And much or less, intelligence is noticeably required so as for the students to work well but hard. As a consequence, it becomes of paramount importance that the students give the listening practice a try slowly, regularly, and smartly.

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