AN INVESTIGATION INTO EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF PRE-LISTENING ACTIVITIES IN ENGLISH CLASSES AT QUOC HOC HUE HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract: This paper examined EFL teachers' perceptions and reality of an implementation of pre-listening activities in English classes at Quoc Hoc Hue high school. The study involved 10 teachers of English department of Quoc Hoc high school. A mixed-methods approach was employed and data were collected from an online survey and semi-structured interviews. The result showed that most of EFL teachers were aware of the importance of pre-listening activities in English listening comprehension. The finding also indicated that different pre-listening activities served different functions and exerted different effects on the improvement of students' listening comprehension skill. Furthermore, the study revealed the differences in teachers' implementation of pre-listening activities between English-major classes and non-English major classes and presented two major factors - the teachers and students - directly determining the success of pre-listening activities in English classes at Quoc Hoc Hue high school.

Key words: Pre-listening activities, perception, English-major students, non-English major students

1. Introduction

So far listening has been considered as one of the key components in the English textbooks for Vietnamese high school students; however, this skill is sometimes neglected by some EFL teachers because they assume that listening is not assessed in the national exams. The most popular way used by some teachers in English listening lessons is to play the cassette, have students listen to the recordings and ask them complete listening tasks by themselves. In fact, listening is more than just perceiving the sound. It is a complex problem-solving skill in which the meaning of words, phrases, clauses, sentences and the discourse must be comprehended. The traditional way of teaching listening in which listeners are simply given a series of pre-recorded listening texts on a tape, and then are tested how much they have understood by answering a lot of comprehension exercises is not quite responding. Listening is virtually a difficult skill to acquire even in one's own language (Oxford, 1993) because it requires attention, thought, interpretation, and imagination of both students and teachers (Austin, 1970). Normally, in some EFL classrooms, the role of teachers is also very important in improving students' listening skill. Specifically, the language teachers can supply students with a variety of pre-listening activities in order to help students gain essential knowledge or related information before they begin listening. As claimed by Underwood (1989), in listening the content schema must be activated in order for students to access their prior knowledge. Thus, before listening some pre-listening activities are expected to be given to students to help them activate existing knowledge, build prior knowledge and define a purpose for the listening.

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Thanks to the pre-listening stage, the students can complete listening tasks in while-listening stage with ease and have a chance to improve their listening skill to meet B1 level requirements set by Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) for high school graduation.

In order to help EFL teachers better understand the significance of pre-listening stage and effectively apply it to listening classes in high school context, this study aims to investigate EFL teachers' perception of effects of pre-listening activities on students' listening comprehension skill, and discover the practices of teachers' implementation of these activities to stimulate students' background knowledge in English classes at Quoc Hoc Hue high school.

2. Literature review

2.1. Definition of key terms

Two key terms in this research, "perception" and "pre-listening", are clearly defined as follows. Firstly, "perception" refers to one's belief, or understanding of something. However, in the sense of the present study, "perception" is understood as one's belief, opinion, and thought which are shaped by one's background knowledge and life experiences (Iris Center, 2012). Secondly, concerning the term "pre-listening", as stated by Rajaei (2015), "pre-listening is the preparation stage for while-listening" (p. 36) and is also considered as stage to prepare students to listen, establish the purpose of the listening activity and activate their schemata (Chastain, 1988).

2.2. The purposes of pre-listening stage

As asserted by Chastain (1988), the pre-listening activities are probably the most important aspect of any listening sequence because the success of all the other activities depends on the extent to which the teacher manages to give the students the necessary background, guidance, and direction to achieve (Chastain, 1988). Some dominant goals of pre-listening stage suggested by well-known linguistics include (1) to help students identify the purpose of listening beforehand (Rixon, 1986; Schwartz, 1998 & Underwood, 1990), (2) to contextualize the text, provide any information needed to help learners appreciate the text, the setting and the role relationship between participants, (3) to generate interests from students, activate students' current knowledge and vocabulary, predict the content, check their understanding about the listening tasks (Rost, 1990), (4) to give students more confidence that is necessary for successful listening (White, 1995 as cited in Rajaei, 2015).

2.3. Pre-listening activities

To satisfy the goals above, Almutairi (2012) claims that pre-listening activities could consist of three types: (a) brainstorming, (b) the use of advance organizers (e.g. vocabulary pre-teaching, pre-questioning, etc.) and (c) graphic organizers (e.g. pictures, Venn diagram, flow charts, T charts, KWL chart) and some other pre-listening activities such as discussing, anticipating and spoken language feature previewing. These activities might be applied separately or in a combination "depending on the nature of the listening task, learners' linguistic proficiency level and the time available for the pre-listening phase" (Almutairi, 2012, p.6).

2.4. Factors affecting the choice of pre-listening activities

Teaching and learning listening comprehension skill becomes a big challenge to many teachers and students. Therefore, according to Martinez (2015) in order to minimize difficulties in teaching listening comprehension skill, it is necessary for teachers to bear in mind the following factors so as to choose the most appropriate and helpful pre-listening activities for their listening classes.

The first factor is the time-consuming of pre-listening activities. Normally, pre-listening is a very short phase so it is inexpedient for teachers to invest too much time in this stage. Since if pre-listening activities take up too much time, it might curtail the time allocated for while- and post-listening, and decrease students' motivation and concentration on the listening tasks. Next, it is materials. It will be better if teachers use authentic listening materials and know how to adapt these materials suitable for different genres of students. Thirdly, the ability of the class is also an important factor that teachers should take into consideration. When designing pre-listening activities for multilevel classes, teachers need to pay more attention to different proficiency levels of students in the same class and to be cognizant of each student's strength and weaknesses so that all the students have equal opportunities to take part in these activities. Moreover, students' interest is another element determining the effectiveness of the pre-listening stage. If teachers choose listening tasks which best match with students' interests, the quality of the listening process will be improved considerably. Last but not least, the nature and content of listening text also directly affect the choice of pre-listening activities

3. Related studies

So far in the world there have been several studies which were done to investigate into the impacts of different forms of pre-listening activities. Specifically, Linang (2005) conducted a study about teachers' report on the use of pre-listening activities in activating students' prior knowledge in a Malaysian ESL classroom in Kuching. The study is based on the qualitative research design and the research instrument employed was the semi-structured interview. Fifteen lower secondary school English language teachers having five years and above experience from five secondary schools in and around Kuching Division were selected as samples for the purpose of this study. The findings revealed that 60% of the English Language teachers employed the bottom-up model. Most pre-listening activities employed by the English language teachers were oral questioning, introducing related vocabulary and distributing pre-text questions. The findings also showed that most of the English language teachers took into consideration the students' level, suitability and practicality, the related topic, and the context when selecting and designing their pre-listening activities. In the same vein, Allen (2011) with his work proved the effectiveness of two types of pre-listening activities, including top-down and bottom-up, for students' listening comprehension skill of Chinese Mandarin. There were volunteers from intermediate level courses at Brigham Young University participating in two treatment groups and a control group. Results showed both treatment groups significantly outperformed the control group for both the top-down and bottom-up activities. It was determined that both the vocabulary activity and the advance organizer helped to increase the listening comprehension of intermediate level students of Mandarin Chinese.

In Vietnamese education context, Nguyễn Thị Tâm (2012) conducted a study named "An investigation into the reality of using pre-listening activities in English third-year classes at Phu Xuan University" to examine the truth of carrying out pre-listening activities at Phu Xuan University in Hue, Vietnam. The participants consisted of 4 teachers and 60 third-year students at Phu Xuan University. To collect reliable data, classroom observation, questionnaires, and interviews were delivered to the teachers and students. The findings of the study showed that most of teachers and students were aware of the significance of pre-listening activities in teaching and learning listening comprehension skill. Hence, they often made a great effort to organize different kinds of pre-listening activities to boost an effectiveness of their listening lessons.

All in all, there have been a number of studies conducted with an aim of emphasizing effects of varying pre-listening activities on learners' listening comprehension skill. However, most studies done by researchers of the English language teachers were conducted mainly on tertiary level and lower secondary English language teachers with students and curriculum greatly different in many ways from those of high school level. A more important point is that no single study has been found to investigate teachers' perception of the same matter at high school level with regard to the listening tasks included in the text book of the new version. Therefore, the current study is expected to fill in a brand new gap in the research field.

4. Research methodology

4.1. Research context and participants

The study was conducted at Quoc Hoc Hue high school, a school for the gifted in Hue city, in a period of two months of the second semester, academic year 2017-2018. There were two groups of participants in the research. The first group consists of 10 teachers from English Department who have taught English to either non-English-major and/or English-major students at Quoc Hoc high school. At the same time, to validate the responses of the first group of participants, the second surveyed group including 6 students from 6 different classes of 3 grades of Quoc Hoc high school in the academic year 2017-2018 was invited to join oral interviews in Vietnamese. These 6 students were divided into two groups, embracing English-major and non-English major students. It is noticed that the personal identity information of all research participants was coded by using the English pseudo names for the group of Vietnamese teachers and using Alphabet letters for the group of students at Quoc Hoc high school.

Table 1. Back ground information of the surveyed teacher group

Group of surveyed teachers					
No	Pseudo name	Year(s) of experience	In charge of teaching		Timeline for the data gathering
			English-major Students	Non-English major Students	
1	Ms. Anna	30	√	√	March 5, 2018
2	Ms. Tranny	24	√		March 5, 2018
3	Ms. Joe	23		√	March 5, 2018
4	Ms. Hannah	21	√		March 8, 2018
5	Mr. Phillip	19		√	March 8, 2018
6	Ms. LyLy	11	√		March 11, 2018
7	Ms. Nancy	10	√		March 11, 2018

8	Ms. Thuna	9	√		March 11, 2018
9	Ms. Hollen	2	√	√	March 12, 2018
10	Ms. Amy	2		√	March 12, 2018

Table 2. Back ground information of the interviewed student group

No	Name	Grade	Major	Timeline for the data gathering
			Group of surveyed students	
1	Student A1	10	English-major student	April 1, 2018
2	Student A	10	Non-English-major student	April 1, 2018
3	Student B1	11	English-major student	April 3, 2018
4	Student B	11	Non-English-major student	April 3, 2018
5	Student C1	12	English-major student	April 4, 2018
6	Student C	12	Non-English-major student	April 5, 2018

4.2. Data collection and analysis

The study collected data through an online survey, and semi-structured interview. For the first phase, online surveys, a questionnaire was designed to investigate the EFL teachers' awareness and the practices of the use of pre-listening activities in English classes at Quoc Hoc Hue High School. The survey was structured with both closed and open ended questions to give the answers for two research questions. After the questionnaire was piloted to ensure the validity and reliability of the questions, 10 electronic copies in Vietnamese version were delivered to 10 EFL teachers of English Department at Quoc Hoc high school through their professional emails. After that, the data were categorized and analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2010.

Phase Two was reserved for collecting qualitative data to reaffirm the result collected in Phase One. In this research, the interviews were conducted after the questionnaires distribution. A total of 10 teachers of English Department of Quoc Hoc high school, who already took the online survey, were invited to join interviews in Vietnamese, at a room on the school campus. After all the data collected from teachers' questionnaires was generated and analyzed, the second group of research participants, English and non-English major students, was invited to participate in the interviews. The information gathered from the students' responses would be used for comparing with the data from teachers' surveys and doubly checking on the reliability of teachers' answers. Finally, the collected data were transcribed and then translated from Vietnamese into English by the researcher. Finally, in order to gain the final version which would be easily comprehensible to average readers, an American proof-reader was employed to check the accuracy of the translation. The teachers' ideas were always quoted with pseudonyms in this paper to preserve anonymity for the participants.

5. Findings

5.1. The importance of pre-listening activities in the English lessons at Quoc Hoc Hue high school
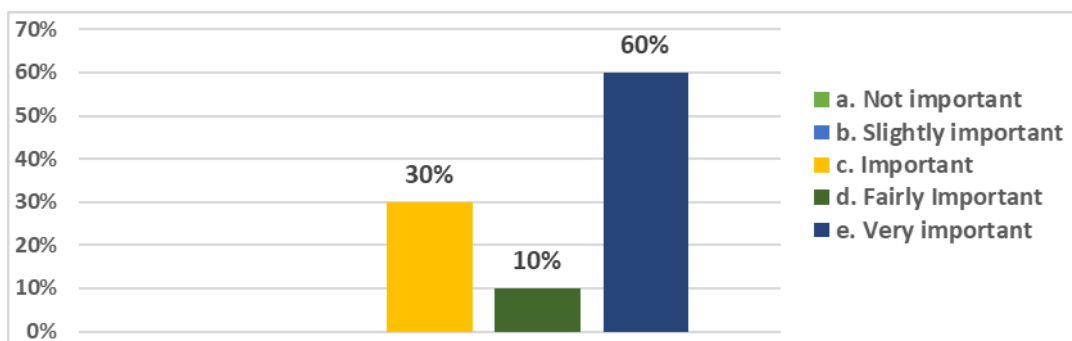

Figure 5.1. Importance of pre-listening activities in English classes at Quoc Hoc Hue high school

Figure 5.1 displays the disparity in choices related to the role which pre-listening activities play in English lessons at the high school for the gifted - Quoc Hoc Hue. Two options including "Very important" and "Important" received high agreement percentage from teachers. Six of ten participants chose the option "Very important" and at the same time, three other teachers in the surveyed group picked the option "Important" when being asked about the role of pre-listening activities in English lessons. Next, only one teacher chose option "Fairly important", accounting for 10% of the total percentage. Noticeably, the teachers made no choice for the rest, embracing "Not important" and "Slightly important".

The figures shown above released that a large proportion of the teachers was aware of the significance of pre-listening activities in teaching English listening skill and considered the activities as "*an indispensable part of English lessons at Quoc Hoc high school*" (from teacher Phillip). His viewpoint was in line with the findings of Chastain (1988) who said that these activities were probably the most important aspect of any listening sequence because the success of the activities in listening lessons depended on the extent to which the teachers managed to give the students in pre-listening stage. Another essential point highlighted by Ms. Thuna and Ms. Tranny is that if pre-listening activities were not carried out in English lessons, students would have to confront some challenges during listening process such as lack of vocabulary, ideas, and background knowledge, etc. Besides, with the support of pre-listening activities, students' stress, nervousness or pressure would be released before the listening section.

However, among ten teachers participating in the survey, there was one teacher who assumed that pre-listening activities were fairly important because "*their levels of importance depend on the nature of listening texts, the English proficiency levels of students, the content and topic of different listening lessons*" (from teacher Lyly). The opinion of Ms. Lyly was accompanied with the findings of Rees (2003) and Martinez (2015) about the factors affecting the choices of pre-listening activities.

In brief, even though there were different opinions about the role of pre-listening activities in English classes the activities in pre-listening stage are still believed to be the most important aspect of any listening sequences in English teaching context at Quoc Hoc high school.

5.2. Effectiveness of different pre-listening activities in English class in Quoc Hoc Hue high school

	a. Brainstorming	b. Vocabulary pre-teaching	c. Pre-questioning	d. Graphic organizer using	e. Pair or group discussing	f. Content predicting
■ Very effective	70%	0%	30%	20%	20%	20%
■ Fairly effective	30%	20%	50%	60%	50%	20%
■ Effective	10%	20%	20%	10%	20%	50%
■ Poor	0%	60%	0%	10%	10%	10%
■ Not effective	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

■ Very effective   ■ Fairly effective   ■ Effective   ■ Poor   ■ Not effective
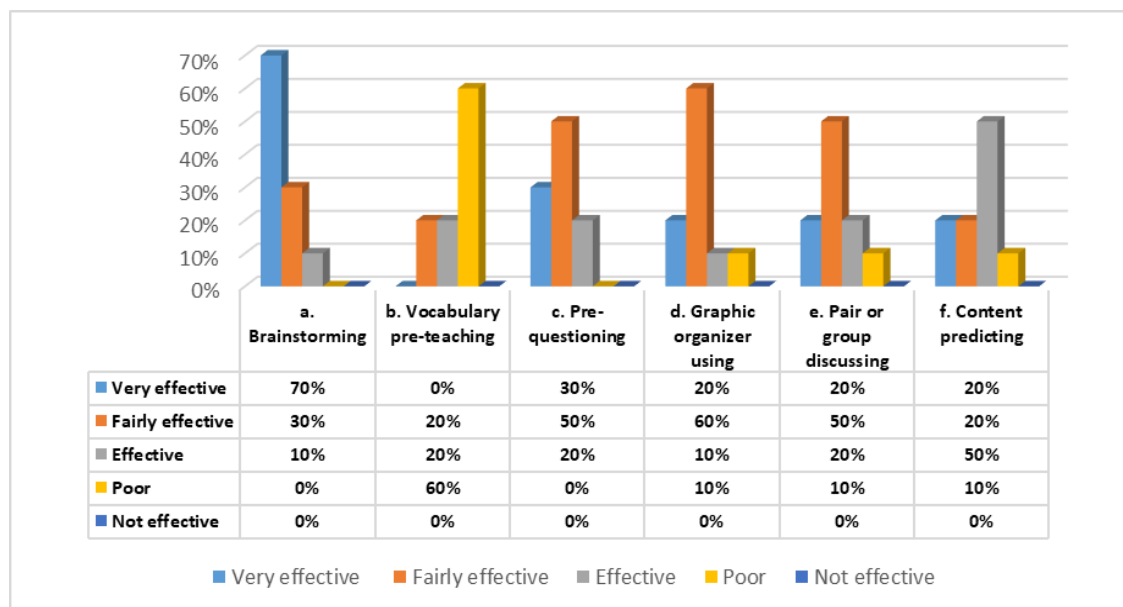
Figure 5.2. Effectiveness of different pre-listening activities in English classes in Quoc Hoc Hue high school

Figure 5.2 compares the differences in the effectiveness of pre-listening activities when these activities are applied in listening classes. As can be observed from the figure above, seven of ten teachers, accounting for 70% of the total proportion, admitted that "brainstorming" was a "very effective" pre-listening activity. This finding was proved by Vandergrift's study (2003) which indicated that brainstorming activity had effective impacts on boosting students' second language listening comprehension through triggering their schema. These activities *"give the teachers insight into their students' schema, thus revealing interests, gaps and misconception, and fostering English language learning comprehension skills among teachers"* (Oxford, 1993; Olafe, 1994, as cited in Almutairi, 2012, p. 6). Through the interviews with EFL teachers at Quoc Hoc Hue high school, some great examples of the brainstorming activity were revealed. For instance, some teachers used KWL chart with 3 separated columns including "*What I know", "What I want to know", "What I learned"* to activate students' schema in pre-listening stage. One of the most remarkable advantages of KWL charts was that teachers could use students' thoughts or responses to examine how much students comprehended the information in the listening recording and how much new knowledge students grasped from the listening lessons. Ms. Thuna also highlighted KWL chart as a good example of the graphic organizers.

In the view of a group with very low effectiveness, the pre-listening activities entitled "vocabulary pre-teaching" was evaluated as the poor choice for pre-listening stage by six of ten teachers in the surveyed group. Although so far there has been several studies which certified the effectiveness of glossary pre-listening activity to the improvement of students' listening

comprehension such as a study of Allen (2011), Hashim (2012); however, contrary to the results of the studies above, the findings of Bern (1995), Chang (2007), Farrokhi (2012) indicated that the glossary pre-listening activity might "not be a particular means of improving listening comprehension performance" (Bern, 1995, p. 324); or this activity even had no significant effects on enhancing second language learners' comprehension (Ehsanjou, 2014). From the viewpoint of EFL teachers at Quoc Hoc High school, *"vocabulary pre-listening activity was not truly effective because students do not have enough time to fully memorize the words they have studied before the listening section occurs"* (Ms. Nancy). Moreover, teachers were afraid that *"paying too much attention to the meaning of the target lexical items could slow down the students' listening comprehension ability, affecting their listening results"* (Ms. Joe). Although what was found in this study in this view is quite different from the study of Allen (2011), Chang (2007) and Hashim (2012), it best matches with the study of Bern (1995) and Farrokhi (2012). The reason for these differences might fall on the disparity in scope of the studies. While the scope of the research of Allen (2011), Chang (2007), Hashim (2012) focuses only on the impacts of vocabulary preparation or glossary pre-listening activity on students' listening comprehension, the other researches such as the study of Bern (1995) and that of Farrokhi (2012) have larger research scopes which range from effectiveness of using different forms of pre-listening activities to the improvement of learners' listening comprehension. Hence, because of having the same research scope, the results of this research paper in this view are consistent with several related studies mentioned above.

In conclusion, the present findings in this view showed that brainstorming was considered the most effective activity in the preparation for the listening tasks by the respondents, followed by graphic organizer, pre-questioning, group/pair discussing and content predicting. Noticeably, vocabulary pre-teaching was the least preferred in groups of effective pre-listening activities, according to the respondents.

5.3. Differences in pre-listening activities between English-major classes and non-English-major classes
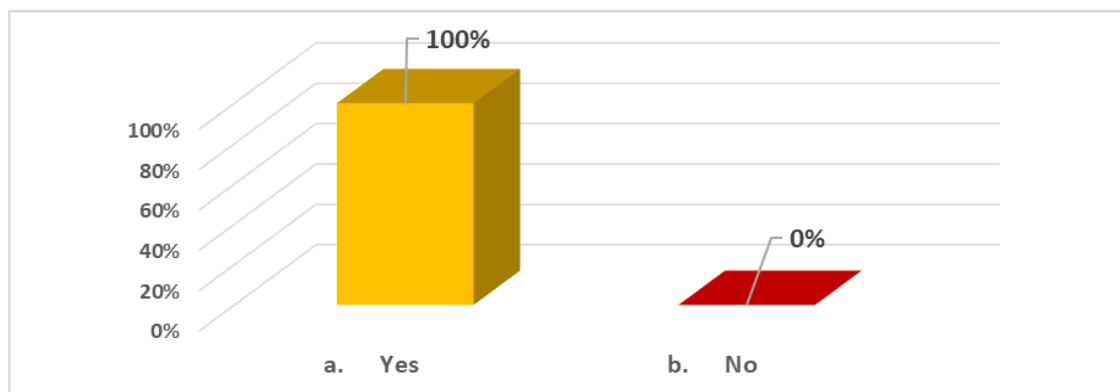

Figure 5.3. Differences in pre-listening activities between English-major classes and non-English-major classes at Quoc Hoc high school

It was obvious from the data of Figure 5.3 that option "Yes" got 100% in the total percentage. It means that all of the teachers in the surveyed group agreed that implementing pre-listening stage in English-major classes was totally different from that in non-English major classes.

In the light of teachers' applying different types of pre-listening activities for different genres of students, five of ten surveyed teachers assumed that teachers' choice of pre-listening activities had a great impact on the learning attitudes and listening comprehension results of two groups of students. For instance, "*non-English major students prefer joining entertaining activities such as playing games or some simple vocabulary pre-teaching activities before listening*" (from Ms. Amy). Meanwhile, *"students in English-major classes are often keen on doing some kinds of game which are relevant to the content of the lesson, a bit challenging, thought-provoking and require high IQ such as guessing topics of lessons through pictures or teachers' hints, doing quiz, discussing, listing related words, chain game, catching the words, and crosswords, etc, because these activities are both funny and effective for us to obtain related information before starting listening"*, said student C1. From the response of both teachers and students participating in the interview, it was apparent that there was a relationship between students' levels and types of pre-listening activities. English-major students with high English proficiency levels seemed to be more interested in some content related supports such as predicting the topics or content of related pictures, discussing, pre-questioning, etc. while non-English major students with low or intermediate English abilities preferred simple vocabulary activities. With this finding, the present study was in line with the research of Farrokhi (2012), which justified that there was "existence of differences in supportive roles of pre-listening activities across two different proficiency levels." (p. 149). In other words, Farrokhi (2012) indicated that the glossary of unknown vocabularies in low proficiency level and content related support in high proficiency level both improved learners' listening comprehension.

In the view of timing pressure, this factor was also considered as a cause leading to the differences in conducting pre-listening activities between English-major classes and non-English-major classes. In the cases of English-major classes, *"because the main focus of listening lessons is on while-listening stage, in which lots of listening comprehension tasks were given to students to practice, time for pre-listening stage was often shorten or cut down. Normally, pre-listening activities in these classes were carried out quickly, in less than 3 minutes, for example."* (Ms. Nancy). Contrary to the situations of English-major classes, *"pre-listening stage in non-English classes often last from 5 to 8 minutes as these students need time to do several things before listening such as guessing the meaning of new words from teachers' hints, thinking of the answers to the given questions and preparing themselves for the coming listening tasks"* (Ms. Hellen). These findings best matched with the results from Farrokhi's research which indicated that "time factor had a crucial role in helping the learner process and internalize the lexical items during the offered time" (p. 148). Hence, "preparation time… might be another factor affecting listeners' listening comprehension". (Farrokhi, 2012, p. 148).

Briefly, what has been found in Figure 4.13 reveals that teachers' implementation of pre-listening activities in English-major classes is different from non-English major classed due to

the differences in the teachers' choice of students' favorite pre-listening activities, students' language proficiency level and time spent on pre-listening stage.

5.4. Factors affecting success in conducting pre-listening activities in English classes at Quoc Hoc Hue high school
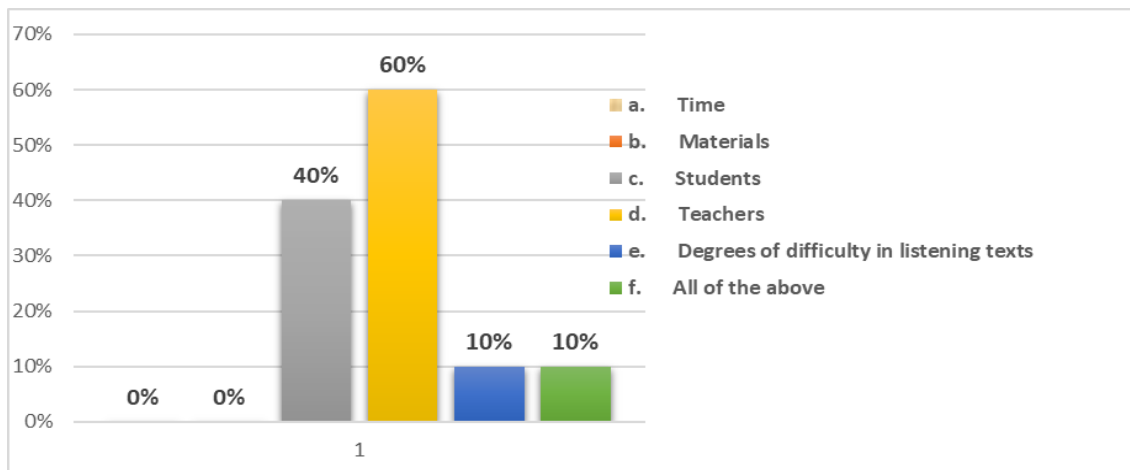

Figure 5.4. Factors affecting success in conducting pre-listening activities in English classes at Quoc Hoc Hue high school

Figure 5.4 shows detailed findings for the question "What makes pre-listening activities in English lessons at Quoc Hoc Hue high school successful?". As shown in the figure above, options such as "teachers" and "students" belonged to a group holding high percentage, with 60% for the former and 40% for the latter. Of these two factors, option "teachers" was considered as the greatest source of influence on the implementation of pre-listening stage in classes. As Ms. Tranny highlighted in her sayings in the interview, *"it is teachers that take responsibility for setting up specific teaching goals appropriate for students' ability, and designing suitable activities to draw students' attention to the activities in pre-listening stage"*. The opinion of Ms. Tranny matched with the finding of Rees (2003)'s study which clarified that if the teachers had a class who were generally struggling with listening work, then the more extensive pre-listening work, the better result. If, however, the teachers wished to make the work very demanding, they could simply do work on the context of the listening.

Agreeing with Ms. Tranny, Mr. Phillip also affirmed that "*teachers were also the ones who should take notice of students' characteristics and knew how to adapt pre-listening activities suitable for different groups of students*" (Mr. Phillip). Indeed, what Mr. Peter said in this view coincided with the findings of the studies of Linang (2005) and Martinez (2015). In the work of Linang (2005), it was concluded that most of the English language teachers took into consideration the students' level, suitability and practicality, the related topic and the context when selecting and designing their pre-listening activities. Similarly, as Martinez (2015) emphasized in the research, it was necessary for teachers to bear in mind some factors to be able to choose appropriate and helpful pre-listening activities. Needless to say, teachers play an important role in making pre-listening stage successful.

At 40%, "students" was the second factor having impacts on the success of pre-listening activities in English classes at Quoc Hoc Hue high school. According to Ms. Anna, attention should be paid to the students' English proficiency levels, interests, concerns, etc. In relation to this viewpoint, there was a concurrence between Martinez's findings (2015) with the analyzed data and the responses collected in the present paper. According to Martinez (2015), the ability of the class and students' interests were factors affecting an effectiveness of pre-listening stage. When designing pre-listening activities for multilevel class, Martinez (2015) illustrated, teachers needed to pay more attention to different proficiency levels of students in the same class and to be cognizant of each student's strength and weaknesses so that all of students had equal opportunities to take part in these activities. Additionally, if teachers chose listening tasks which best match with students' interests, the effectiveness of listening process would be improved considerably.

In conclusion, among many factors, teachers and students are two greatest sources of influence on the success of teachers' implementation of pre-listening. Moreover, though time and material are not the main influential components, they should be taken into consideration by teachers when designing and conducting activities in pre-listening stage.

6. Conclusion

This study examined EFL teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of pre-listening activities on students' listening comprehension skill in English classes and also investigated the reality of the activities that EFL teachers employed to support Quoc Hoc students in the pre-listening stage. Various practical ways of supporting the students and teachers in the implementation of pre-listening stage have been found, covering the development of teachers' perception and the improvement of the implementation of pre-listening activities.

Concerning some pedagogical implications for the growth of teachers' awareness, firstly, teachers had better have an autonomous and serious attitude toward the implication of the pre-listening activities in English classes. They should conduct enough three stages in every listening lesson and avoid dull thoughts, laziness, fatigue and irresponsible actions when doing these activities as that will negatively affect students' learning attitudes and motivation in classes. Secondly, for each lesson, teachers should set specific goals for every pre-listening activity so that they could design or select the activities suitable for the objectives of lessons. Next, teachers need to have explanations or practical examples for students to let them know the necessity of pre-listening stage in English lessons. For instance, teachers should tell students the purposes of pre-activities or the goals of pre-listening stage once they conduct pre-listening activities. Besides, teachers could carry out some listening lessons with and without pre-listening activities and have students explore the differences between these two lessons. This way will enable students to understand better the significance of pre-listening activities in English lessons.

Regarding some recommendations for the quality improvement of teachers' implementation of pre-listening activities in English classes at Quoc Hoc Hue high school, teachers should know how to control and divide time appropriately between the three stages of listening classes. Especially, teachers had better not make pre-listening stage become a burden to students in their classes. An ideal time suggested for a pre-listening stage is around 5 minutes.

Secondly, teachers should vary pre-listening activities and avoid the repetition of these activities. Thirdly, teachers had better know how to appropriately adapt these activities to suit students' abilities, students' attitudes and different topics of lessons. Additionally, it is better for teachers to combine different language skills such as reading, speaking and writing in pre-listening stage to make lessons more diverse and involve more students with different life styles in classrooms activities. Apart from integrating language skills into pre-listening stage, some teaching aids such as computer, smart TV, cassette, pictures, real objects, etc, should be used to support pre-listening activities. What's more, if teachers have little experience or time in designing pre-listening activities, they could look for some sources of materials such as Total English, American English File and Solution and websites like www.busyteacher.com, www.freeworksheet.com, where pre-listening activities are available in a complete lesson plan. More importantly, some opportunities for students to study together should be given because cooperative learning can greatly enhance low language proficiency level students' confidence, willingness and motivation to study and promote active processing of information.

Although the study achieved its aims, limitations are inevitable. For one thing, this paper has a rather narrow scope which only focuses on investigating EFL teachers' perception about the implementation of pre-listening activities in listening lessons. It is suggested that other researchers conduct a study related to students' awareness and response to pre-listening activities in listening lessons. If this research is carried out, it will be very meaningful for EFL teachers. Another limitation is that only 10 Quoc Hoc English teachers participated in the surveys and interviews to provide the data for the study. This small number of participants might affect the validity and reliability of the study's results. Hence, for further studies, the researcher expects to involve a number of research participants who come from different high schools in Thua Thien Hue province in order to collect more considerable data for further studies. Finally, as regards to data collecting instruments, in this research, due to the limited time, the researcher only used two instruments, which are questionnaire and interview. In relation to this point, it will be better if a classroom observation is applied to further studies to examine the participants' responses and thereby improve the reliability of data and findings.

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KHẢO SÁT VỀ NHẬN THỨC VÀ THỰC TẾ ỨNG DỤNG CÁC HOẠT ĐỘNG TRƯỚC NGHE CỦA CÁC GIÁO VIÊN DẠY TIẾNG ANH TẠI TRƯỜNG TRUNG HỌC PHỔ THÔNG CHUYÊN QUỐC HỌC HUẾ

Tóm tắt: Bài nghiên cứu này khảo sát nhận thức và thực tế ứng dụng các hoạt động trước nghe của các giáo viên dạy tiếng Anh tại trường trung học phổ thông chuyên Quốc Học Huế. Nghiên cứu bao gồm 10 giáo viên thuộc tổ Tiếng Anh của trường chuyên Quốc Học Huế và sử dụng phương pháp nghiên cứu kết hợp định tính và định lượng để thu thập dữ liệu từ việc khảo sát trực tuyến và phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc. Kết quả cho thấy rằng phần lớn các giáo viên dạy tiếng Anh tại trường Quốc Học Huế đều nhận thức được tầm quan trọng của các hoạt động mở đầu của một bài dạy kỹ năng nghe. Kết quả nghiên cứu cũng chỉ ra rằng các hoạt động trước nghe khác nhau đều có những chức năng và hiệu quả khác nhau trong việc giúp học sinh cải thiện kỹ năng nghe hiểu. Thêm vào đó, nghiên cứu cũng chỉ ra rằng có sự khác biệt trong cách tiến hành các hoạt động trước nghe ở các lớp chuyên và không chuyên Anh và phát hiện hai nhân tố chính – giáo viên và học sinh – quyết định sự thành công của việc thực hiện các hoạt động trước nghe ở các lớp học tiếng Anh tại trường Quốc Học Huế.

Từ khóa: Hoạt động trước nghe, nhận thức, hiệu quả, học sinh chuyên Anh, học sinh không chuyên Anh