



A STUDY OF ENGLISH LISTENING IMPROVEMENT OF  
MASTER'S DEGREE STUDENTS IN LINGUISTICS  
AT MAHACHULALONGKORNRAJAVIDYALAYA UNIVERSITY

ASHIN TEJANIYA

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
(Linguistics)

Graduate School  
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University  
C.E. 2018



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The Graduate School of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has approved this thesis of “A Study of English Listening Improvement of Master’s Degree Students in Linguistics at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University” in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics.

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### **Abstract**

The objectives of this study are: (1) to study the problems of English listening improvement of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics, academic year 2015/17, (2) to investigate the causes of students' perception of English listening improvement, (3) to propose how to overcome the difficulties of English listening improvement. The present study attempts to investigate the listening problems encountered by a group of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics 2015/17 at MCU. 30 students who took the listening course in 2015/17 were selected for the study. Data was gathered by means of questionnaires and interviews.

The results of the study showed that accent, pronunciation, speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, and different accent of speakers, lack of concentration, and bad quality of recording were the major listening comprehension problems encountered by students in linguistics. Understanding students' learning difficulties may enable linguistic teachers to help students develop effective learning strategies and ultimately to improve their English listening abilities. Suggestions are made for addressing problems regarding how teachers can help their students overcome listening comprehension problems. The results of this study may also be useful for participants who are interested in this field.

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**Ashin Tejaniya**

March 21, 2019

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### List of Abbreviations and Symbols

MCU	= Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
e.g.	= Example gratia
etc.	= Et cetera
EFL	= English as a foreign language
S'	= Singular
's	= Plural
()	= Bracket
;	= Colon
;	= Semicolon
“”	= Quotation mark

.	= Full stop
,	= Comma
-	= Hyphen
!	= Exclamation mark
?	= Question mark
&	= Ampersand
/	= Solidus
%	= Percentage
S.D	= Standard Deviation

## Appendixes

**Title: A Study of English Listening Improvement of Master of Arts Students in Linguistics at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University**

### Instruction

The main objective of this research is to investigate English listening problems of listening proficiency of students from 2015/17 second-year In MCU.

1. Questionnaires
2. Interviews

### Appendix 1: Questionnaires

Brown defined questionnaires as “any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions of restatements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting them among existing answers”.<sup>1</sup> The questionnaires used in this study were modified versions of a questionnaire designed by researcher which investigated teacher and student perceptions of practice. The researcher in second-year students 2015/17 adapted this for use with teachers and students.

In this research place, questionnaires can be classified as both, quantitative and qualitative method depending on the nature of questions. Specifically, answers obtained through closed-ended questions with multiple choice answer options are analyzed using quantitative methods and they may involve pie-charts, bar-charts and percentages. Answers obtained to open-ended questionnaire questions are analyzed

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<sup>1</sup> Brown, J. D, **Using surveys in language programs**, (UK: Cambridge University Press, (2001), p. 45.

using qualitative methods and they involve discussions and critical analyses without use of numbers and calculations.

On the other hand, this questionnaire is designed to survey the problems experienced by second-year students in 2015/17 Academic year at MCU. The answers will be analyzed in order to improve the methods used to teach English listening skills.

This questionnaire is a part of a research study in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master of Arts in Linguistics in English Program in MCU.

All of this information provided will only be used for the purposes of this research. I would like to thank you all for your cooperation in answering this questionnaire.

Questionnaires are divided in to 3 parts

1. General Background Information
2. Problems with English Listening
3. The Causes of Problems with English Listening

## 1. General Background Information

**Directions: Please fill your personal information in blank**

With this questionnaire I would like to get an impression of the personal background and English listening problems in second-year 2015/17 at MCU. It consists of 59 items. It is important that you answer these questions on your own, because I am interested in your English listening in the classroom. If you don't understand a certain question, please do not hesitate to ask me. There are no right or wrong answers!

Your name: .....

Date of birth: .....

Are you:  male  female

Your country: .....

You're the highest level of education you have completed.

- Primary school, level: .....
- Secondary school, level: .....
- Higher education, namely: .....
- University, degree: .....

Did you attend any English classes and University before coming to MCU? (This has to be in an educational environment, like a school or some similar institution):

- No
- Yes, less than 4 years
- Yes, less than 5 years
- Yes, less than 6 years
- Yes, less than 7-8 years
- Yes, more than 9-10 years

Have you pursued further education while living in Thailand?

- Yes, for (number of years): .....
- No

What language or languages did you learn professionally at school or University?

.....

What language or languages did you learn outside of an educational environment?

.....

In general, how would you rate your English language proficiency before you studied to MCU?

- None  Very bad  Bad  Sufficient  Good  Very good

In general, how would you rate your English language proficiency at present?

- None  Very bad  Bad  Sufficient  Good  Very good

How often do you speak English?

Rarely  Few times a year  Monthly  Weekly  Daily

Do you feel more comfortable speaking English?

English  No preference

Do you ever listen to English songs?

Yes  No

Do you ever watch English television programmes?

Yes  No  I would love to, but I can't get them

Do you ever listen to English radio programmes?

Yes  No  I would love to, but I can't get them

Do you ever read English newspapers, books or magazines?

Yes  No

If you have indicated that you never listen to English songs or radio programmes, nor read English newspapers, books or magazines and that you don't watch English television programmes, could you indicate why you think that is?

.....  
 .....

## 2. Problems with English Listening

**Directions:** Please mark to show how much you agree with each of the following items.

Notes: **5** = Strongly agree

4 = Agree

3 = Uncertain

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly disagree

	Description	Level of Agreement				
No.	Problems with English Listening	5	4	3	2	1

1	I feel that I know English as well as a native speaker.					
2	I feel that I know English better than other on average.					
3	I feel that I know English well enough.					
4	I am ashamed of my English skills.					
5	I want to learn more English.					
6	I am nervous when I listen to English.					
7	I find it difficult to listen to speakers speaks too quickly.					
8	I find it difficult to understand some idioms.					
9	I find it difficult to understand English because of my limited pronunciation.					
10	I find it difficult to understand English because of my limited vocabulary.					
11	I find it difficult to understand a native speaker speaking at a normal pace. (i.e. TV, Radio)					
12	I find it difficult to understand English because of my limited understanding of grammar.					
13	I find it difficult to understand a speaker with bad pronunciation.					
14	If I find difficult to understand a speaker with a regional accent, such as an American, Thai					
15	If I cannot catch every word, it is difficult for me to guess the meaning from the context.					
16	It is difficult for me to understand every word when listening to English speech.					
17	I find it difficult to catch words with linking sounds.					
18	I find it difficult to understand without seeing the speaker's body language.					
19	I stop listening when I do not understand English.					
20	I find listening English very difficult.					

21	I am too shy to practice English with others.					
22	If someone dispraises at me while I am practising English listening, I do not want to continue my practise.					
23	If I do not understand what they are saying in English, I find it difficult to concentrate.					
24	It is difficult for me to understand every word when listening to English speech.					
25	I find it difficult to catch words with linking sounds.					
26	I find it difficult to understand without seeing the speaker's body language.					
27	I stop listening when I do not understand what a speaker is saying.					
28	I find listening English very difficult.					
28	I am too shy to practice English with others.					
29	If someone laughs at me while I am practising English listening, I do not want to continue my practise.					
30	If I do not understand what they are saying in English, I find it difficult to concentrate.					
31	I want to understand as fluently as a native speaker but I find it difficult.					
32	I find it difficult to understand English intonation.					
33	I lose my self-confidence when I make mistakes and someone corrects my English.					

### 3. Cause of Problems with English Listening

No.	Description Student's attitude	Level of Agreement				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	My language skills did not improve at all.					
2	English is displacing other languages in the world.					

3	It is important for the development of a multicultural society that everybody should be able to study English					
4	English is spreading the market economy and materialistic values.					
5	English is the language of advancement.					
6	English skills should become more common in the world.					
7	English does not give me opportunities to gain more knowledge.					
8	To be up-to-date, people must be able to function in English.					
9	English is not important for communication in my daily life.					
10	English does not give me opportunities to be successful in my life.					
11	I do not need to use English to make friends from other countries.					
12	I have not enjoyed learning English since I first semester.					

	Description	Level of Agreement				
No.	Student's Motivation	5	4	3	2	1
1	I do not enjoy practice English with my classmates because we cannot understand English very well.					
2	I am too shy to practice listening and speaking with my foreign friends because I am afraid that they will laugh at me					
3	I am not sure if listening English will ensure a good life in the future.					

	Description	Level of Agreement				
No.	Classroom Environment	5	4	3	2	1
1	I am too shy to practice English in front of my classroom.					

2	I am too shy to presentation in front of my classroom.					
3	If the class is noisy during a listening activity, I do not pay much attention.					
4	It is too hot in the classroom to concentrate properly.					
5	It is too late for lecture in the classroom because of lecturer always no have on time.					
6	It is too late for lecture in the classroom because of lecturer come from far away to MCU.					

	Description	Level of Agreement				
No.	English Exposure	5	4	3	2	1
1	I hardly ever speak English with my teachers or classmates.					
2	I do not have foreign friends to practice speaking English with.					
3	I do not like watching English language movies.					
4	I do not like listening to English language songs.					
5	I do not like to watch English language TV programs.					
6	There no in my family I can practice speaking English with.					
7	I always busy with other.					
8	I like writing English than reading and speaking in English.					
9	I would rather speaking English than listening English.					
10	Lecturer always gives the assignment.					
11	Lecturer never interested to answer two time					

### Frequency on Problems of English

**Instruction:** Give the mark in the number which is true for you. Each number refers to the following:

1. Always
2. Often
3. Sometimes
4. Rarely
5. Never

### Respondents on Listening Comprehension Problems

#### Listening Problems Related to Listening Test

I've listening problem when...	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Unfamiliar words					
Slang, idiom expression					
Difficult grammar					
Difficult to interpret					
Unorganized texts					

#### Listening Problems Related to Listener

I've listening problem when...	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Difficult to understand the text from the first listening					
Questions after listening poor quality equipment					

#### The English Listening Problems Experienced MCU Students

No.	Problems	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	Difficult understanding a speaker with a regional accent, such as Thai, an American and British					
2	Difficulty understanding when a speaker speaks too					

	quickly					
3	Difficulty understanding spoken English of because of a limited vocabulary					
4	Getting nervous and worried to understanding when a speaker is saying English					

#### The English Listening Problems of second semester 2015 Academic year Students

No.	Problems	Level of Problems
1	Difficult understanding a speaker with a regional accent, such Thai, an American	High
2	Difficult understanding a speaker with poor pronunciation	High
3	Getting nervous and worried to understanding when a speaker is saying English	High
4	Difficulty guessing the meaning from the context, when failing to catch every word	High
5	Difficulty understanding a native speaker speaking at a normal pace (i.e., on the radio or TV)	High
5	Difficulty understanding English because of a limited understanding of grammatical rules	High
6	Stopping listening when failing to understand what a speaker is saying English	High
7	Difficulty understanding every word when listening to English speech	High
8	Difficulty understanding spoken English because of a limited vocabulary	High
9	Difficulty concentrating if failing to understand what a	High

	speaker is saying	
--	-------------------	--

## Interviews

Instruction: Please answer the questions and give some suggestions.

### 1. for Students

1. What did you do in your last semester in linguistics?

.....

2. Do you like learning linguistics?

.....

3. In your classroom, what kind of things do you like doing most?

.....

4. Is there anything you don't like about your classroom?

.....

5. Why is learning linguistics in MCU?

.....

### 2. for Lecturers

1. Why do you want to work here?

.....

2. What are your plans for research?

.....

3. How would you engage a reluctant student?

.....

4. How would you deal with a student who is habitually late?

.....

5. Why do you want to teach at a University?

.....

# Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of Significance

Language is the great gift that distinguishes human beings from other creatures. Like most gifts, it can be used thoughtfully and to be good advantage or it can be used carelessly, indifferently and quite unsuccessfully. It's hard to imagine a young person nowadays who doesn't speak or study at least one language besides their mother tongue. Globalization forces so many people to communicate and cooperate more in a variety of businesses. English language has increasingly become the medium of communication around the world both in local and global contexts. All over the world, English is taught by all sorts of teachers to all sorts of students. Therefore, the realization of importance of English highlights the necessity of every country to have its people become better equipped with English performance. Moreover, some scholars say that the world has always needed this clarity, and as English is now the chief world language it is vital it should be properly used and understood.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, the most commonly spoken language in 67 countries, English is the most widely taught as a second language, and an official language of 27 non-sovereign entities including the UN, the EU, the IOC, NATO, ASEAN, NAFTA, and the Commonwealth of Nations.<sup>2</sup> Besides its importance as major window on the world, which means that English gives us the view of the various progresses taking place in the world? Consequently, students in today's world should be able to use

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<sup>1</sup> Jarrett. Hugh, **How to write English**, (London and Glasgow: Press, 1965), p. II.

<sup>2</sup> Change-Castillo, "Language", **Facts about the Most Important Languages in the World**, [Online], Resource: <http://www.ccalanguagesolutions.com/facts-important-languages-world/> [14 April 2016].

English not only in class at school or university, but also in their daily living. Nevertheless, to achieve the goal set educators then should find barriers to English language learning and helping students to overcome these obstacles and achieve their goals. That is why, every government has long realized the importance of the English language as a major core subject in schools and it has been a compulsory subject at verifying levels for several decades.

English listening system based on pronunciation. Many listening errors are due to omission, addition, substitution and transposition of the pronunciation. Some students also fail to use the rules correctly, and rely on their sound, when they transmit ideas to a target language. Listening is one of four important skills in English. Therefore, a lot of people should have a good listening skill. Many of the listening errors are due to these sound problems. So, students have a clear weakness in English listening. Listening is one of the most important skills in everyday communication and educational process. Listening is known as receptive skill while speaking and writing considered as a productive skill. It is said that, of the total time spent on communicating listening takes up 40-50%, speaking, 25-30%, reading, 11-16% and writing, about 9%.<sup>3</sup> In our daily lives, we spend far more time listening than speaking, reading or writing. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. Therefore, listening is so important that many students provide listening skills training for understanding of lecture in the classroom. This is not surprising when students consider that good listening skills can lead to better that in turn lead to more creative and innovative on lecture. Poor listening is a hindrance for the students to get the meaning of written language. Listening be given a central role in every language curriculum and teachers should concentrate on developing listening improvement to a significant level throughout the term of the English course.

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<sup>3</sup> Mendelsohn, **A Study of Factors Affecting EFL Learners' English Listening Comprehension and the Strategies for Improvement**, (Saints Malaysia: Mohammad Reza Ahmadi University Press, 1994), p. 1.

When we study the history of English language we come to know that English plays a vital role in developing the status of a country. English is spoken by some 380 million people as their first language, including 231 million in the US and about 60 million in the UK.<sup>4</sup> As many as one million people use it as a second language. English language is a crucial tool to access and gain the benefits from learning. Therefore, more schools or universities around the world are designing their curriculum by using English as a media of instruction to prepare and help students be ready to live in this world happily. It becomes increasingly necessary for us English speaking people to reconsider that all too facile notion that we need not bother our heads very seriously about language learning because all the rest of the world will be able and willing to talk us in bad English before the dawn of the twenty first century. We should surely be better advised to extend the range of our studies to include the great languages to be more realistic. Being able to make ourselves confident in English, we should speak English in a hard effort. For this confidence, individuals need to make sure that they are proficient in the English language. Considering this situation, many factors have been identified as the cause of such issue to occur among the students and teachers.

All students practice in a general education program, the speaking and listening ability in English of international students at MCU have little chance to practice English language in or outside the classroom. The other problems that results in silence of the students during classroom interaction and instruction are because the student's level of English proficiency compared to each other are relatively different. The students have differences among them in terms of English proficiency.

This means that their level of competency, especially in oral English, differs from one another. Therefore, with this problem, they become more afraid of

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<sup>4</sup> Change-Castillo, "Language", **Facts about the Most Important Languages in the World**, [Online], Resource: <http://www.ccalanguagesolutions.com/facts-important-languages-world/> [14 April 2016].

making mistakes when they speak, thus resort to being silent and avoid any oral communication in the classroom with other students. Does this problem apply to the focused students of the research? Based on the practicum learning experience, I found out that some problems apply to my linguistics at MCU during class times and outside. Even though we are already in our final semester of learning and the ability to converse in English should have been sharpened throughout the 3 semesters, many still hesitate to voice out opinions or provide individual answers during the classroom. Therefore, I decided to look at this problem and come up with necessary solutions for this issue. Based on the problems explained above, this topic best interests me since I will get benefit from the findings of this research whereby I can use it to overcome any difficulties pertaining to this issue for the betterment of my learning and instruction as a student in the classroom. Additionally, these problems could cause a lot of disadvantages to students. The researcher, therefore, tries to present English listening of students in Master of Arts program under the title “A study of English listening improvement of Master of Arts students in linguistics at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University”.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

1.2.1 To study the problems of English listening improvement of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics, academic year 2015/17.

1.2.2 To investigate the causes of students’ perception of English listening improvement.

1.2.3 To propose how to overcome the difficulties of English listening improvement.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

The following questions were designed to fulfil the needs of this research:

1.3.1 What are problems of English listening improvement of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics, academic year 2015/17?

1.3.2 What are the causes of students’ perception of English listening improvement?

1.3.3 What are the suggestions about how to overcome the difficulties of English listening improvement?

## **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This research is obviously desired to study the problems of English listening improvement of Master of Arts students in linguistics in Thai program in 2015/2017 at MCU. Therefore, this study is divided into four scopes as follows:

### **1.4.1 The Scope of the Data**

This scope of content focused on the study of the problems of English listening improvement of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics, academic year 2015/17.

### **1.4.2 The Scope of Time**

The scope of time is focused on the time to study, starting from August 2018 to February 2019.

### **1.4.3 The Scope of Place**

The scope of place is focused on Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Lamsai sub-district, Wangnoi District, Ayutthaya Province, Thailand.

### **1.4.4 The Scope of Population**

The scope of the population in this study is focused on 30 second year students of Master of Arts in linguistics at MCU, academic year 2015/17.

## **1.5 Definitions of Terms**

It is very important to know the specific terms before studying difficulties in learning English of listening. For this study, definitions of terms of this research are the following:

**1.5.1 Students** refer to people who are the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics at MCU in the academic year 2015/2017.

**1.5.2 English Listening** refers to help interpersonal communication, solve problems, ensure understanding, and resolve conflicts, and improve accuracy.

**1.5.3 Listening Problems** is related to hear oral speech, divided sounds, classify them into lexical and syntactic units, and comprehend the message.

**1.5.4 Faculty of Humanities** refers to one of the main Faculties of MCU. This faculty arranges an education at different levels such as Bachelor's Degree (B.A.), Master's Degree (M.A.) and Doctorate Degree in English and linguistics.

**1.5.5 MCU** refers directly to the Buddhist University for monks and all people who want to study the advanced Dhamma and other at Wangnoi District, Ayutthaya Province, Thailand.

## **1.6 Expected Benefits**

This study points out the listening improvement problems of Master of Arts students in linguistics, academic year 2015/2017.

1.6.1 Making us understand English listening improvement and listening proficiency of Master of Arts students in linguistics, academic year 2015/2017.

1.6.2 Investigating the causes of students' perception of English listening improvement.

1.6.3 Making us know suggestion for Master of Arts students in linguistics academic year 2015/2017.

## Chapter II

### Review Literature and Research Works Concerned

This chapter takes a survey of the knowledge on listening skills which is a very vital part of the research work related with the problems of English listening skills and also the techniques to solve those difficulties. This study not only focuses on investigation about the problems of Master's Degree students English listening in MCU, but also on ways to deal with the difficulties of listening skills and some techniques for teachers to teach English listening skills.

The theories of studying in this research work are divided into 3 key points as the following.

- 2.1 Definition of listening
- 2.2 Significance of listening
- 2.3 Importance of listening improvement
- 2.4 Relevant research listening improvement

#### 2.1 Definition of Listening

Listening problem was main in the chapter, was also necessary to provide definitions of listening skill, like establish the important listening skill. Listening has been defined by many researchers. Having the factors leading to listening problem, the problem of listening with English listening are also discussed commonly. Listening makes the person who is effort and concentration. If the learners who are careless in attention or not ready to listen so good listening skill failure may occur. Occurred poor listening skill a man encounters the serious problem in the classroom. Chastain defined listening as the ability to understand native speech at normal speed.<sup>1</sup> Morley said listening involves auditory discrimination, aural grammar, selecting necessary

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<sup>1</sup> Chastain, (Kenneth), **The Development of Modern Language Skills: Theory to Practice**, (Philadelphia: Center for Curriculum Development. k. Press, 1971), p. 40.

information, remembering it, and connecting it to the process between sound and form of meaning.<sup>2</sup> Goss defined listening as a process of understanding what is heard and organizing it into lexical elements to which meaning can be allocated.<sup>3</sup>

Bowen, Madsen, and Hilferty demonstrated that listening is understanding the oral language. Students hear oral speech, divide sounds, classify them into lexical and syntactic units, and comprehend the message. Listening is a process of receiving what the speaker says, making and showing meaning, negotiating meaning with the speaker and answering, and creating meaning by participation, creativity, and empathy.<sup>4</sup>

According to Jafari and Hashim emphasized that listening is a channel for comprehensible input and more than 50 percent of the time learners spend in learning a foreign language is devoted to listening.<sup>5</sup> Listening is receiving language through the ears. Listening involves identifying the sounds of speech and processing them into words and sentences. When we listen, we use our ears to receive individual sounds (letters, stress, rhythm and pauses) and we use our brain to convert these into messages that mean something to us. Listening in any language requires focus and attention. It is a skill that some people need to work at harder than others. People who have difficulty concentrating are typically poor listeners.<sup>6</sup> According to Anderson and Lynch, arguing what is successful listening, understanding

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<sup>2</sup> Morley, (M), **Aural Comprehension Instruction: Principles and Practices**, (In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), **teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language Boston**, (J. 2001), Heinle and Heinle pp. 69-85.

<sup>3</sup> Goss, **Listening as Information Processing**, (B. Communication Quarterly, 1982), pp. 30, 304-307.

<sup>4</sup> Bowen, J. D., Madsen, H., & Hilferty, **TESOL Techniques and Procedures**, (Boston, A. 1985).

<sup>5</sup> Jafari, K., & Hashim, "Comparison of Normal and Moderately Slow Speech Rates: Listening to Students' Voices in Listening Comprehension Classes in EFL Context", **International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching in the Islamic World**, (2015): 337.

<sup>6</sup> English Club, **What is listening**, [Online], Resource: <https://www.englishclub.com/listening/what.html> [23 November 2017].

is not something that happens because of what a speaker says: the listener has a crucial part to play in the process, by activating various types of knowledge, and by applying what he knows to what he hears and trying to understand what the speaker means.<sup>7</sup> Underwood simplified the definition of listening to "the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear".<sup>8</sup>

Mendelsohn defines listening comprehension as the ability to understand the spoken language of native speakers. " O'Malley, Chamot, and Kupper offer a useful and more extensive definition that listening comprehension is an active and conscious process in which the listener constructs meaning by using cues from contextual information and from existing knowledge, while relying upon multiple strategic resources to fulfill the task requirement.<sup>9</sup> Mendelsohn points out that, in listening to spoken language, the ability to decipher the speaker's intention is required of a competent listener, in addition to other abilities such as processing the linguistic forms like speech speed and fillers, coping with listening in an interaction, understanding the whole message contained in the discourse, comprehending the message without understanding every word, and recognizing different genres. Listeners must also know how to process and how to judge what the illocutionary force of an utterance is- that is, what this string of sounds intended to mean in a particular setting, under a particular set of circumstances – as an act of real communication.<sup>10</sup> Listening comprehension is an inferential process. Linguistic knowledge and world knowledge interact as listeners create a mental representation of what they hear. Bottom up and top down processes are applied to get to this

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<sup>7</sup> Anderson, A. & Lynch, **Listening**, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Underwood, "teaching listening", **American Journal of Educational Research**, Vol. 3, No. 9, (2015): 1091-1097.

<sup>9</sup> O, Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., Stewner-Manzanares, G., Kupper, L., & Russo, **Learning strategies used by beginning and intermediate ESL students. Language Learning**, (R. P. 1985), pp. 35, 21-46, p. 19.

<sup>10</sup> Mendelsohn, **Learning to Listen: A Strategy-Based Approach for the Second Language Learner**, (San Diego: Dominie Press, D. J. 1994), p. 124.

mental representation and achieve comprehension. Rost defined listening as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says, constructing and representing meaning, negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding, and creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy. To listen well, listeners must have the ability to decode the message, the ability to apply a variety of strategies and interactive processes to make meaning, and the ability to respond to what is said in a variety of ways, depending on the purpose of the communication.<sup>11</sup>

Likewise the students in MCU, they have to study English listening power through they are studying in MCU. That's why, they need to be good at reading, writing, and listening. It's often said that English is one of the hardest languages to learn. Therefore, all students are frustrated in English language to be clear. Moreover, some of them cannot catch any words when they are having class with native lectures. As a results, the lecturer tries to communicate with students, they don't understand what lecturer' voices and meaning.

## 2.2 Significance of Listening

Listening skills are an important part of effective communication. Listening skill feature focused on communication skills and their importance in the workplace. Hearing is the physical ability, while listening is a skill. Listening skills allow one to make sense of and understand what another person is saying. In other words, listening skills allow people to understand what someone is talking about-the meaning behind the words.

Good listening skills make confidence more success. The ability to listen carefully allows students to better understand assignments they are given. They are able to understand what is expected of them by their assignments. The ability to listen and to comprehend also allows students to build a strong confidence with lecturers and other.

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<sup>11</sup> Rost, **Teaching and Researching Listening**, (London, UK: Longman. M. Press, 2002), p.22.

Good listeners also have a better track record resolving problems in the classroom. Students who listen well tend to learn better in a team-based environment. Team members are usually assigned a portion of the classroom. Later, their completed tasks will need to fit in with other team members' results. Those who were able to listen well and perform accordingly will find their learning results fit better than those who misunderstood.

## 2.3 Importance of Listening Improvement

### 2.3.1 Listening Skills in Classroom

Listening is important because it enable students to learn the language more easily. For example, after hearing words, students will be able to pronounce the words as well as sentence or even intonation patterns. Listening skills are the ways to help you listen something more effectively. A study by wilt (1950), found that people listen 45% of the time they spend communicating, speak 30% of communication time, read 16% and 9% is writing.<sup>12</sup> That finding confirmed what Rankin had found in 1928 that people spent 70% of their waking time communicating and those three-fourths of this time was spent listening and speaking.<sup>13</sup> We probably spend more time using our listening skills than any other kind of skill. A wise person said Listening is the hardest thing in the world. Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Nature has given us one tongue, but two ears, so that we may hear from others twice as much as we speak.

The students failed their listening tests. This means that the listening is actually an obstacle to students. In fact, to possess a good listening skill, it takes times and effort. However, students seem to spend very little time on practicing anywhere. Therefore, listening is a key to effective working relationships among students and teacher and between management and staff. Listening skills also

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<sup>12</sup> Wilt, Miriam E, "A Study of Teacher Awareness of Listening as a Factor in Elementary Education", **Journal of Educational Research**, (1950): 626-636.

<sup>13</sup> Rankin, Paul T, "The Importance of Listening", **English Journal**, Vol. 33, No.5 (1928): 623-630.

impact a company's interaction with customers and other businesses. To improve your listening skills, give the other person your full attention and maintain eye contact. When she is done speaking, rephrase her remarks and ask whether you understand her correctly. Continue to ask questions to gain a better understanding of her statements. For truly effective communication, second year students must hone their listening skills to ensure they fully understand the whole message: not just the content, but the motivation behind what's being said, the circumstances around which they're conversing, even what gets left out of the conversation. Colleagues must listen with ears and eyes, picking up on voice tone and physical cues to take in the whole message.

This research is focused on common problems with listening skills by experienced by second year's student in Academic 2015/2017 year at MCU. This chapter an overview of the MCU system education was presented. In generally people never want to listen they are busy speaking, reading, and writing skills. But they take few courses devoted to listening.

Students need to hear language before they are able to successfully reproduce it. Listening is one of the hardest parts of language learning for students. Listening skill who hearers comprehend in spoken language are crucial to language learning and help language. Listening skills have cause of problems for MCU students. So important is English for second year students at MCU in all subjective. All conversation is communicated in English. As they have lack of English proficiency, they may not complete the program.

Listening brings in effort and concentration and it's difficult to know whether someone is listening to the speaker or not. Poor listening skills make serious problems for second year students might get result in lower grades unclear assignment and less job opportunities. Grant pointed out that listening is important for you reasons first, without listening skills, communication can break down. It is easy to communicate if we understand spoken language after listening. Second, listening is important because it enables students to learn the language more easily. For example, after hearing words students will be able to pronounce the words, as

well as sentences or even intonation patterns. Students need to hear language before they are able to successfully reproduce it.<sup>14</sup>

According to Nunan and Miller listening is vital in the language classroom and also provides input for learners. Learning cannot begin without correct understanding of level appropriate input. Second, spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learners. Learners must cooperate to achieve understanding and also have access to native speakers. Furthermore, the failure of the learner to understand may be seen as a motivating factor in terms of interaction and learning rather than a barrier.<sup>15</sup> Third, authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner as they must comprehend language as actually used by native speakers. Finally, teachers can use listening exercises to introduce students to new forms of vocabulary, grammar and language interaction patterns.

It can be concluded that listening skills are crucial to language learning and help language learners to comprehend spoken language. Therefore, listening is a critical means of acquiring a second language and language performance skills.

Listening is a key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated. If there is one communication skill you should aim to master, then listening is it. Listening is so important that many top employers provide listening skills training for their employees. This is not surprising when you consider that good listening skills can lead to better customer satisfaction, greater productivity with fewer mistakes, and increased sharing of information that in turn can lead to more creative and innovative work. Many successful leaders and entrepreneurs credit their success to

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<sup>14</sup> Grant, **Making the Most of Your Text Book**, (London New York. Long Man. N. Press, 1978) p. 79.

<sup>15</sup> Nuna, D., & Miller, Alexandria, Va., **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other language**, L. (Eds.). Press, 1995), Dynan, Muredach B., Ed.; Fraser, Barry J., Ed, **Sample records for science seminar series**, (Western Australian Institute of Technology: Press, 2014) p. 33.

effective listening skills. Richard Branson frequently quotes listening as one of the main factors behind the success of Virgin. Effective listening is a skill that underpins all positive human relationships. Spend some time thinking about and developing your listening skills, they are the building blocks of success.

Good listening skills also have benefits in our personal lives, including: A greater number of friends and social networks, improved self-esteem and confidence, higher grades at school and in academic work and even better health and general well-being. Studies have shown that, whereas speaking raises blood pressure, attentive listening can bring it down. Listening is not the same as hearing refers to the sounds that enter your ears. It is a physical process that, provided you do not have any hearing problems, happens automatically.

Listening, however, requires more than that: it requires focus and concentrated effort, both mental and sometimes physical as well. Listening means paying attention not only to the story, but how it is told, the use of language and voice, and how the other person uses his or her body. In other words, it means being aware of both verbal and non-verbal messages. Your ability to listen effectively depends on the degree to which you perceive and understand these messages. Listening is not a passive process. In fact, the listener can, and should, be at least as engaged in the process as the speaker. The phrase 'active listening' is used to describe this process of being fully involved. The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention. We spend a lot of time listening adults spending an average of 70% of their time engaged in some sorts of communication. Of this, research shows that an average of 45% is spent listening compared to 30% speaking, 16% reading and 9% writing.<sup>16</sup> That is, by any standards, a lot of time listening. It is worth while taking a bit of extra time to ensure that you listen effectively. Effective listening requires concentration and the use of your other sense-

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<sup>16</sup> Adler, R., Rosenfeld, L. and Proctor, **The Process of Interpersonal Communicating (8<sup>th</sup> edn)**, (Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt. R. Press, 2001) p. 32.

not just hearing the words spoken. Listening is not the same as hearing and in order to listen effectively you need to use more than just your ears. Barriers to effective listening to improve the process of effective listening, it can be helpful to turn the problem on its head, and look at barriers to effective listening, or ineffective listening. For example, one common problem is that instead of listening closely to what someone is saying, we often get distracted after a sentence or two, and instead start to think about what we are going to say in reply. This means that we do not listen to the rest of the speaker's message. We may also get distracted by the speaker's appearance, or by what someone else is saying, which sounds more interesting.

These issues not only affect you, but you are likely to show your lack of attention in your body language. Generally, we find it much harder to control our body language, and you are likely to show your distraction and/or lack of interest by lack of eye contact, or posture. The speaker will detect the problem, and probably stop talking at best. At worse, they may be very offended or upset.<sup>17</sup> According to Nunan and Miller, there are four main factors in terms of listening for foreign language learners. First, listening is vital in the language classroom and also provides input for learners. Learning cannot begin without a correct understanding of level appropriate input. Second, spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learners. Learners must cooperate to achieve understanding and also have access to native speakers. Furthermore, the failure of the learner to understand may be seen as motivating factor in terms of interaction and learning rather than a barrier. Third, authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner as they must comprehend language as actually used by native speakers. Finally, teachers can use listening exercises to introduce students to new forms of vocabulary, grammar and language interaction patterns.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, listening skills are crucial to language learning

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<sup>17</sup> Skill you need, **Listening Skills**, [Online], Resource:  
<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/listening-skills.html> [26 March 2016].

<sup>18</sup> Nuna, D., & Miller, Alexandria, **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Language**, (Inc., L. (Eds.). 1995), p. 55.

and help language learners to comprehend spoken language. There are many causes of the problems that affect the listening skills of English learners. Underwood organizes the major listening problems as follows: The first problem is a lack of control over the speed of speaker, and the fact that the listener cannot control the speed of the speaker. Many English language learners believe that the greatest difficulty with listening comprehension is that the listeners cannot control the speed of the speaker. It is impossible for the listeners to control the speed of speech from an uncontrolled source. For example, if the listener is listening to a radio broadcast, they cannot ask for a slower speed.

The second problem is the inability to have things repeated. The inability to have things repeated is something the listeners must face when exposed to an uncontrolled source. Listeners are not always in the position to have the speakers to repeat their speech. For example, if they are listening to the radio or watching television, they are unable to ask for repetition. The third problem is the limited vocabulary of the listeners. This is one of the most significant problems with listening. When listening to speech from an uncontrollable source. The listeners may be distracted by a word that they are unfamiliar with. A listener needs to understand the vocabulary in order to comprehend what they are listening to. For example, if the speaker chooses words which the listeners do not know it will be difficult for them to understand what they are hearing. Encountering unknown words may cause listeners to stop and think about meaning of the word and miss the next part of the speech.

A failure to recognize signals is the fourth problem of listening. These signals can make the listener confused about what they are hearing, For example, if we are giving directions, we need to use sequencing words to put our information in order by using words like first, second, and third. If the listeners do not know these signals, it will be difficult for them to follow the directions. These signals indicate that the speaker is moving from one phase to another, giving examples, or repeating a point. The listener may notice some markers like secondly, or then, or react to the body language, gestures, or changes in the speaker's intonation. The fifth problem is interpretation. This problem is found with listeners who lack the requisite

background knowledge to understand the context of what they are hearing. An example of this is if Thai students, who are unfamiliar with the context of snow, hear the sentence. The snow was so bad that there was nobody in the school. This might be difficult for Thai students to interpret correctly if they have never experienced snow. In other words communication is easier if the listener has some relevant knowledge. The sixth listening problem is the ability to concentrate and the concentration level of the listener. Even the shortest break in attention can lead to students becoming bored. For example, if students are listening to something from a poor and unsuitable machine, it can make listening hard and boring for them, it can be difficult for the listener to concentrate when listening to a foreign language. Learners sometimes feel that listening is very tiring even if they are interested, since it requires a strong effort to follow the meaning. The final problem is established language habits or learning behaviors that the learner has picked up from their teachers. As a teacher wants their students to understand everything they hear, they may repeat and pronounce words slowly and carefully. This can make students worry if they fail to understand particular word or phrase. For example, if a teacher requires students to listen to something and do an exercise, the students feel that if they do not understand every word they are not confident they can complete the task successfully. It can be concluded that the process of learning listening skills is very complex. The background knowledge and the skills of listeners must be all utilized simultaneously. However, our processing space is limited. Before we can understand what we have heard the speech is over and what is worse, we cannot always ask for repetition. Students must comprehend the text as they listen to it, retain the information in their memory, and integrate it with that which follows, and continually adjust our understanding of what we hear in the light of both prior knowledge and incoming information. As a result of processing all this information, listeners may lose concentration rather quickly and sometimes give up listening. Less proficient learners of English as a second or as a foreign language have even more serious problems. Many of them are fully occupied with identifying the words used in

the speech, and there is almost no space for top-down processing. These types of situations are far from the ideal atmosphere for listening and learning.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Yan studied the effects of anxiety on listening and found that there were three main part causes, those of the learner, the teacher, and those related to the environment. The causes of the learner's problems can be attributed to their experiences as a listener. Their past experience plays a key role. They may feel anxious because they have never taken any formal listening courses before entering university. As a result, they may feel frustration if they do not grasp every idea and understand every word. When students are overly concerned about what other students think of them, it may lead to a decrease in their self-esteem.

The cause of problems related to the teacher is concerned with how students feel about their teachers. Students may experience anxiety if their teachers are dictatorial, authoritarian, and intimidating. Also, students may feel that the teacher is biased if they are not treated equally in class. Moreover, many students report increased anxiety when they are called on individually in class or if they fear that they are being evaluated solely on the results of their examinations. If a student cannot provide a good response or fails to frequently ask and answer questions in class, they fear that the teacher may regard them as foolish. The environmental causes are related to the class atmosphere. When learners compare themselves unfavorably with others, their anxiety may increase. When their efforts are met with frustration or failure, they may begin to doubt whether or not they can do as well as other students. In evaluations, some students reported that they were often frightened when asked questions and afraid that they would be laughed at if they gave the wrong answers. The validity of this anxiety is well established among.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, Chonpraky investigated the listening problems of Thai undergraduate students and found that listening was a serious and widespread problem. It can be

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<sup>19</sup> Underwood, "teaching listening", *American Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 3, No. 9, (2015): 1091-1097.

<sup>20</sup> Yan, *Effects of anxiety on Listening Performance and Suggestions for Improving Listening Teaching*, (Shandong University of Science and Technology, S. Press, 2005), p. 40.

seen from this study that in order to be an effective listener, students need more practice and should try to learn from the media around them and the teacher should use various visual aids to give learners more opportunity to practice their listening and to become more acquainted with the sounds.<sup>21</sup>

### 2.3.2 Importance of Listening Skills

Listening is important because it occupies a big chunk of the time we spend communicating in the language. Think about the times you spend listening to others speak or listening to songs, news, lectures, YouTube, etc. Recent advances in technology have served to raise the profile of the listening skill in language teaching.

Listening provides input that can be very significant for second language acquisition in general and for the development of the speaking skill in particular. Listening promotes non-linear processing of language and encourages learners to develop "holistic" strategies to texts. As language students, we need to think of how we can incorporate listening into our study and provide opportunities both inside and outside the classroom for our classroom to be exposed to significant listening input. Listening plays an important role in communication in people's daily lives. As Guo and Wills state "it is the medium through which people gain a large proportion of their education, their information, their understanding of the world and human affairs, their ideals, sense of values".<sup>22</sup> Emphasizing the importance of listening in language learning, Peterson states that "no other type of language input is easy to process as spoken language, received through listening ... through listening, learners can build an awareness of the interworking's of language systems at various levels and thus establish a base for more fluent productive skills".<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Chonpraky, **An investigation of listening problems of Thai undergraduate students**, (Unpublished master's project), King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok, Thailand. S. Press, 2009) p. 60.

<sup>22</sup> Guo, N. & Wills, "An Investigation of Factors Influencing English Listening Comprehension and Possible Measures for Improvement", **AAER Journal**, (R. Press, 2006): 3.

<sup>23</sup> Peterson, **Skills and Strategies for Proficient Listening**, (In M. Celce Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*, P. W. Press, 2001), p. 69-85, Boston: Heinle & Heinle. p. 87.

Listening has an important role not only in daily life but also in classroom settings. Anderson and Lynch state that “we only become aware of what remarkable feats of listening we achieve when we are in an unfamiliar listening environment, such as listening to a language in which we have limited proficiency”.<sup>24</sup> Most people think that being able to write and speak in a second language means that they know the language; however, if they do not have the efficient listening skills, it is not possible to communicate effectively. That is, listening is the basic skill in language learning and over 50% of the time that students spend functioning in a foreign language will be devoted to listening.<sup>25</sup> Rost explains the importance of listening in language classroom as follows: (1) Listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin. (2) Spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learner. Because learners must interact to achieve understanding. Access to speakers of the language is essential. Moreover, learners’ failure to understand the language they hear is an impetus, not an obstacle, to interaction and learning. (3) Authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner to understand language as native speakers actually use it. (4) Listening exercises provide teachers with a means for drawing learners’ attention to new forms (vocabulary, grammar, new interaction patterns) in the language.<sup>26</sup>

To summarize, listening has an important role both in daily life and in academic contexts as it is crucial for people to sustain effective communication. Emphasizing the importance of listening, Anderson and Lynch state that listening skills are as important as speaking skills because people cannot communicate face-to-face unless both types of skills are developed together. Listening skills are also

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<sup>24</sup> Anderson, A. & Lynch, **Listening**, (Oxford: Oxford University Press. T. 2003), p. 3.

<sup>25</sup> Nunan, **Approaches to Teaching Listening in Language Classroom**, (In proceedings of the 1997 Korean TESOL Conference. Taejon, Korea: KOTESOL. D. Press, 1998), p. 55.

<sup>26</sup> Rost, **Introducing Listening**, (London: Penguin books. M. Press, 1994), pp. 141-142.

important for learning purposes since through listening students receive information and gain insights.<sup>27</sup>

## 2.4 Relevant Research Listening Improvement

### 2.4.1 Causes Leading to English Listening Problems of Students in MCU.

Although they have been studying English for more than 10 years, some students cannot speak English effectively. Many factors that lead to poor performance in listening had in MCU. They are three causes to consider. The first is the teacher, the second is the students' attitudes, the third is student' motivation, followed by the classroom environment. The teachers are very important role in teaching in MCU. There are many students which support the idea that the teachers are one of the factors that impairs the ability of a student to listen to English effectively. In spite of the importance of listening in the development of the communicative and cognitive skills, it did not start to take its place in language teaching curriculum until 1970s.<sup>28</sup> However, in recent years, with the emphasis given in communication in language teaching, listening started to take its long deserved place in language programs.<sup>29</sup> For most second and foreign language learners, being able to communicate in social contexts is one of the most important reasons why they learn a language.

Through listening, the learners receive input that is essential for language learning to take place. Therefore, teaching listening comprehension is important as listening lessons "are a vehicle for teaching elements of grammatical structure and allow new vocabulary items to be contextualized within a body of communicative

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<sup>27</sup> Wallece, T. Stariha, W. E. & Walberg, **Teaching Speaking, Listening and Writing**, (France: Typhon. H. J. 2004), p. 44.

<sup>28</sup> Rost, **Listening in Language Learning**, (New York: London, M. Press, 1990), p. 62.

<sup>29</sup> Richards, "Second Thoughts on Teaching Listening", **RELC Journal**, J. C. (2005): 36 (1), 85-92.

discourse”.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, teaching listening has also been a challenge for language teachers for several reasons. Nobody’s per perfect. And when you are a teacher, it becomes even more difficult to become perfect for all your students. It’s clear, that we all are different, so your students are, and each of them has his own learning style. When your teaching style suits a learning style of your student, you will definitely become his best teacher ever. This is like to be on the same wave with someone. But it’s obvious, that all your 30 students (or 20, or even 10, it doesn’t matter actually) will never have the same opinion about your teaching methods, so, misunderstandings are impossible to avoid. However, you always can become a better teacher for your students, the main thing is to listen to them carefully. Here we have 10 advices from students to teachers that will help you understand their principles better. You teach them of course, but you can always let them teach you a bit as well, can’t you? So, if you want to become the best teacher for your students, you’d better not ignore what they say.<sup>31</sup>

#### 2.4.2 Studies Related to English Listening Problems of Learners

There are many causes of the problems that affect the listening skills of English’s learners. Underwood (1989) organizes the major listening problems as follows: The first problem is a lack of control over the speed of the speaker, and the fact that the listener cannot control the speed of the speaker. Many English language learners believe that the greatest difficulty with listening comprehension is that the listeners cannot control the speed of the speaker. It is impossible for the listeners to control the speed of speech from an uncontrolled source. For example, if the listener is listening to a radio broadcast, they cannot ask for a slower speed. The second problem is the inability to have hangs repeated. The inability to have things

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<sup>30</sup> Morley, **Aural Comprehension Instruction: Principles and Practices**, In M. Celce Murcia (Ed.), **Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language**, (Boston: Heinle & Heinle, J. Press, 2001), pp. 69-85.

<sup>31</sup> Andrei Zakhareuski, **How to Become the Best Teacher**, [Online], Resource: <http://www.busyteacher.org/16874-how-to-become-the-best-teacher-students-advice.html> [22 May 2017].

repeated is something the listeners must face when exposed to an uncontrolled source. Listeners are not always in the position to have the speakers to repeat their speech. For example if they are listening to the radio or watching television, they are unable to ask for repetition. The third problem is the limited vocabulary of the listeners. This is one of the most significant with listening. When listening to speech from an uncontrollable source, the listeners may be distracted by a word that they are unfamiliar with.

A listener needs to understand the vocabulary in order to comprehend what they are listening to, For example, if the speaker chooses words which the listeners do not know, it will be difficult for them to understand what they are hearing. Encountering unknown words may cause listeners to stop and think about meaning of the word and miss the next part of the speech. A failure to recognize signals is the fourth problem of listening. These signals can make the listener confused about what they are hearing. For example, if we are giving directions, we need to use sequencing words to put our information in order by using words like first, second, and third.

If the listeners do not know these signals, it will be difficult for them to follow the directions. These signals indicate that the speaker is moving from one phase to another, giving examples, or repeating a point. The listener may notice some markers like “secondly, or then,” or react to the body language, gestures, or changes in the speaker’s intonation. The fifth problem is interpretation.

This problem is found with listeners who lack the requisite background knowledge to understand the context of what they are hearing. An example of this is if foreign students, who are unfamiliar with the context of snow, hear the sentence. “The snow was so bad that there was nobody in the school.” This might be difficult for foreign students to interpret correctly if they have never experienced snow. In other words communication is easier if the listener has some relevant knowledge.

The sixth listening problem is the ability to concentrate and the concentration level of the listener. Even the shortest break in attention can lead to students becoming bored. For example, if students are listening to something from a

poor and unsuitable machine; it can make listening hard and boring for them. It can be difficult for the listener to concentrate when listening to a foreign language. Learner's sometimes feel that listening is very tiring even if they are interested since it requires a strong effort to follow the meaning. The final problem is established language habits or learning behaviors that the learner has picked up from their teachers.

As a teacher wants their students to understand everything they hear, they may repeat and pronounce words slowly and carefully. This can make students worry if they fail to understand particular word or phrase. For example, if a teacher requires students to listen to something and do an exercise, the students feel that if they do not understand every word they are not confident they can complete the task successfully. It can be concluded that the process of learning listening skills is very complex. The background knowledge and the skills of listeners must be all utilized simultaneously.

However, our processing space is limited. Before we can understand what we have heard the speech is over and what is worse, we cannot always ask for repetition; Students must comprehend the text as they listen to it, retain the information in their memory, and integrate it with that which follows, and continually adjust our understanding of what we hear in the light of both prior knowledge and incoming information. As a result of processing all this information, listeners may lose concentration rather quickly and sometimes give up listening. Less proficient learners of English as a second or as a foreign language have even more serious problems. Many of them are fully occupied with identifying the words used in the speech, and there is almost no space for top-down processing. These types of situations are far from the ideal atmosphere for listening and learning. Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. Listening is key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated. If there is one communication skill you should aim to master, then listening is it. Listening is so important that many top employers provide listening skills training for their employees. This is not

surprising when you consider that good listening skills can lead to better customer satisfaction, greater productivity with fewer mistakes, and increased sharing of information that in turn can lead to more creative and innovative work. Listening was only considered as a receptive skill where students listened to repeat and develop a better pronunciation. Listening ability is considered among the most important factors in academic student in MCU.

Although listening seem to imply distinct categories. It has been revealed that good listening comprehension contributes significantly to academic success. There are various core academic activities like listening to teacher's questions, reports, and summaries, which are dependent's on active listing comprehension skills. Listening to lectures is the most essential requirement for students in MCU, which is itself quite a challenging area for most of the students due to their likely inadequate general English proficiency level and difficulties in comprehending and remembering the content of lectures. Classroom activities and textbooks can support MCU listeners, but there is still the need to develop strategies competence among learners through more effective instruction and material preparation.

### **2.4.3 Review of Previous Studies on the Cause of English Listening Problems**

According to Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart, there are a lot of difficulties that learners may encounter in the listening comprehension processes and the purpose is to be aware of these problems and try to solve them. Some of these problems are as follows: Quality of Recorded Materials In some classes, teachers use some recorded materials that do not have high quality. The quality of sound system can impact the comprehending of learners' listening.<sup>32</sup> Cultural Differences Learners should be familiar with the cultural knowledge of language that has a significant effect on the learners' understanding. If the listening task involves completely different cultural materials then the learners may have critical problems

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<sup>32</sup> Azmi, B. M., Celik, B., Yidliz, N., & Tugrul, "Listening Comprehension Difficulties Encountered by Students in Second language Learning Class", **Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the World**, (M. C. Press, 2014): 4 (4), 1-6.

in their comprehension. It is the responsibility of teachers to give background knowledge about the listening activities in advance. Accent Munro and Derwing expressed that too many accented speech can lead to an important reduction in comprehension. According to Goh, 66% of learners mentioned a speaker's accent as one of the most significant factors that affect listener comprehension. Unfamiliar accents both native and non-native can cause serious problems in listening comprehension and familiarity with an accent helps learners' listening comprehension.<sup>33</sup> Buck indicated that when listeners hear an unfamiliar accent such as Indian English for the first time after studying only American English will encounter critical difficulties in listening. This will certainly interrupt the whole listening comprehension process and at the same time an unfamiliar accent makes comprehension impossible for the listeners.<sup>34</sup> Unfamiliar Vocabulary According to AzmiBingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart, when listening texts contain known words it would be very easy for students to them. If students know the meaning of words this can arouse their interest and motivation and can have a positive impact on the students' listening comprehension ability. A lot of words have more than one meaning and if they are not used appropriately in their appropriate contexts students will get confused. (6.5) Length and Speed of Listening AzmiBingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart stated that the level of students can have a significant role when they listen to long parts and keep all information in their mind. It is very difficult for lower level students to listen more than three minutes long and complete the listening tasks. Short listening passages make easy listening comprehension for learners and reduce their tiredness.

According to Underwood, speed can make listening passage difficult. If the speakers speak too fast students may have serious problems to understand the words. In this situation, listeners are not able to control the speed of speakers and this can create critical problems with listening comprehension and there are some

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<sup>33</sup> Goh, **Teaching Listening in the Language Classroom**, (Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, C. Press, 1999) p. 23.

<sup>34</sup> Buck, **Assessing Listening**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, G. 2001) p. 54.

barriers to effective listening comprehension process. First, listeners cannot control the speed of speech. The biggest problem with listening comprehension is that listeners are not able to control how quickly speakers talk. Second, listeners cannot have words repeated and this can cause critical difficulties for them. Students cannot replay a recording section. Teachers decide what and when to repeat listening texts and it is very difficult for teachers to know whether or not their learners understood what they have heard. Third, listeners do not have high vocabulary knowledge. Speakers may select words that listeners do not know them. Listeners may face an unfamiliar word which can stop them and think about the meaning of that word for a while and miss the next part of the speech. Fourth, listeners may lack contextual knowledge. Mutual knowledge and familiar texts can make communication easier for listeners. Listeners can sometimes comprehend the surface meaning of a passage but they can have substantial problems in understanding the whole meaning of a passage unless they are familiar with it. Fifth, it is not very easy for listeners to concentrate on the listening text. Sometimes a shortest break in attention can prevent comprehension. If the listening passage is interesting for listeners, concentration will be easy for them.<sup>35</sup> Graham said that there are some other factors that increase learners' listening comprehension problems such as restricted vocabulary, poor grammar, and misinterpretations about listening tasks.<sup>36</sup>

According to Vandergrift, in addition to identify the words despite their unfamiliar pronunciation, students should try to decide which linguistic part belongs to which word. Prosodic features of spoken language like where the stress falls, weak forms and strong forms of words, and intonation also impact the comprehension of oral text. Moreover, Vandergrift and Walker indicated that oral passages exist in real time and should be processed rapidly and when the passage is over, only a mental representation remains. Listening needs immediate processing to access the spoken input again, making the skill more complex than reading. Students' cultural

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<sup>35</sup> Underwood, **Teaching Listening**, (London, Longman" M. 1989) p. 30.

<sup>36</sup> Graham, **Listening Comprehension": The Learner's Perspective System**, (S. Press, 2006), pp. 34 (2), 165-182.

background knowledge can have an important role in their listening comprehension. A general understanding of the country's culture and its history can facilitate listening processes. On the other hand, Vandergrift and Walker declared that listeners can use pragmatic knowledge to make inferences and identify speakers' implied meaning that these should be specifically considered by teachers when teaching listening comprehension.<sup>37</sup>

Hasan indicated that unfamiliar words, difficult grammatical structures, and the length of the spoken passages are the most important factors that cause problems for learners' listening comprehension. He continued that clarity, lack of interest, and the demand for complete answers to listening comprehension questions are the serious difficulties of students' listening comprehension.<sup>38</sup>

## 2.5 Summary

The purpose of this paper was to review the basic concepts related to the listening problems second-year students in MCU and to focus on listening comprehension problems experienced by English language learners. In the light of the aforementioned literature and research works, it can be showed that listening problems should not be disregarded in the language classrooms and teachers should be aware of and should try to address and minimize listening comprehension problems experienced by the students.

The following suggestions from two researchers can be help students and lecturers in MCU and design and implement better listening lessons.

Peterson suggests the following six principles for teaching listening in the second language classroom: increase the amount of listening time in the second language class, use listening before other activities, include both global and selective

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<sup>37</sup> Vandergrift, "Recent Developments in Second and Foreign Language Listening Comprehension Research", **Cambridge Journals**, (L. 2007):. 40 (3), 191-210.

<sup>38</sup> Hasan, **Learners' Perceptions of Listening Comprehension Problems**, (Language, Culture and Curriculum, A. S. 2000), pp. 13 (2), 137-153.

listening, activate top-level skills (e.g. giving advance organizers or script activators), work towards automaticity in processing, and develop conscious listening strategies.<sup>39</sup>

Brown suggests the following principles for designing listening techniques: make sure that you don't overlook the importance of techniques that specifically develop listening comprehension competence, use techniques that are intrinsically motivating, utilize authentic language and contexts, carefully consider the form of listeners responses, encourage the development of listening strategies, include both bottom-up and top-down listening techniques.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Peterson, **Skills and Strategies for Proficient Listening**, (In M. Celce Murcia (Ed.), **Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language**, (Boston: Heinle & Heinle. P. W. 2001), pp. 69-85.

<sup>40</sup> Brown, **Teaching by principles, an Interactive approach to Language and Pedagogy**, (White Plains, (NY: Longman, year), H. D. 2001). pp. 258-260.

## Chapter III

### Research Methodology

In this study, the data has been collected from second-year students of linguistics in Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Lamsai sub-district, Wangnoi District, Ayutthaya Province, Thailand. Samples of their experiences were recorded in addition to the observation in which some notes were written about their experiences in listening in English. A structured questionnaire to be answered by the university teachers to write their opinions and ideas about the exact reasons that make suitable ways that help them improve their English listening. All the data were analysed later on statistical and descriptive basis. For the reliability and the validity of the findings of the whole study sample some statistical instruments were used such as mean, median and test, and this is described in detail in the discussion section of the whole study.

This methodology is comprised of 5 parts:

- 3.1 Quantitative Research
- 3.2 Population and Sampling Group
- 3.3 Tools
- 3.4 Collecting Data
- 3.5 Data Analysis

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study is a mixed method research, including qualitative and quantitative methods in nature.

3.1.1 To collect data from English articles, thesis, journal, internet, textbooks, documents, and academic books of English language in University Library.

3.1.2 To choose 30 Master of Arts students of the second year class who are studying in Thai program at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Wangnoi District, and Ayutthaya province.

3.1.3 To study about the problems of English speaking skills by using questionnaires for testing students which are classified definitely in the method.

Another objective in this study, it is qualitative and quantitative methods, aiming to study English listening improvement and analysing the data, including the usage of the tools that are questionnaires and interview. As the participants are studying on improvement before they are going to study in linguistics. The researcher decides to use the listening comprehension test to examine the participants. The students in linguistics in Thai program at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Lamsai sub-district, Wangnoi District, Ayutthaya Province, Thailand will listen to the 10 minutes English test in order to show whether they understand the main idea. Questionnaires are used for testing 30 first year students. All interviewees are three English teachers who are currently teaching linguistics program at Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Humanities at MCU.

The primary research question addressed in the current study is: What are the English listening improvements of students from the linguistics in Thai program at MCU?

The secondary research question asked in the study is: What is the English listening proficiency of students from the linguistics in Thai program at MCU?

The objective of this study is to investigate the factors on listening comprehension improvements of participants from linguistics in Thai program at MCU. The researcher wants to find out why the participants cannot understand while they listen in English. In order to answer this purpose, the researcher uses questionnaire as an instrument. As a quantitative research, questionnaire can collect the data from a larger sample than any other techniques.

## **3.2 Population and Sampling Group**

### **3.2.1. Selection of the University**

The participants of this study will be 30 students from linguistics in English program at MCU. The MCU where the researcher was working at the times of this study was chosen to this study for purposive sampling. The students participated in mandatory making to prepare

for study. This also allowed them the opportunity to use their English skills and overcome their English problems in real-life situations. In a MCU, linguistics studying is offered at the beginning of the all students to prepare for the following year, when their linguistics studying is held in real-life. Based on the researcher's studying experience, the students studying in MCU could not use English effectively in a variety of situations. For example, as mentioned in outside of classroom and; the students did not understand certain types of foreign accents and generally lacked confidence when speaking English.

The students had the problems with listening during their studying in linguistics in English program. For this reason, the researcher chose students of MCU where there were in the fourth years.

### **3.2.2 Selection of the Students**

Campbell and Cleland (1999) state that the research is conducted among the minority populations, and sampling size is small; and the qualitative research is focused on the intermediate process between reason and result. We need to understand many details in this process.

The second year students who lived outside in MCU were asked to participate in this study. These students were also selected because they had already completed their study in the second year and still experienced difficulty using English for communication. It will not be possible to include the entire research population. All of them were volunteers as they were asked to do all parts including questionnaire and interviews. The reason to select 30 students from linguistics, Thai program at MCU is that they are studying in the last two years of linguistics English program. These participants have already studied linguistic Thai program at MCU during their past two years and they are preparing to write their thesis.

Moreover, they are quite familiar with every English skills, reading, writing, and listening in linguistics English program. As a result, the result of the survey will be more accurate because it is conducted by the appropriated people which in this case they are the students of linguistics.

### 3.3 Tools of Research

The instruments used in this study consist of questionnaire and listening comprehension test. The questionnaire is designed according to the purpose of the study and it was divided into 3 parts:

(1) The general background information of the respondents and their listening strategies in English listening.

(2) To rate their level of their agreement with the statements.

(3) Some of the students will be interviewed.

### 3.4 Collecting Data

Part 1: The general background information of the respondents concerning their gender, education background, English training experience, and English communication frequency.

Part 2: The data collected from the lecturers and students questionnaires were analyzed descriptively using a pilot test, investigated the respondents' strategies in listening comprehension. The five point Likert scale was used in this questionnaire with the following criteria:

5 = Strongly agree

4 = Agree

3 = Uncertain

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly disagree

Part 3: The questionnaire focused on the causes of problems with English listening. There are five causes, including the English teachers and the classroom environment, the attitude and motivation of the students, and their level of agreement or disagreement.

#### 3.4.1 The Details of Each Part in Questionnaire in Table 1

##### Conclusion of the Questionnaire

No.	Description	Number of Items
1	Participants' general background information	3
2	Problems with the English listening	22
3	Causes of English listening English lecturers	4

No.	Description	Number of Items
4	Student's attitude	4
5	Student's motivation	10
6	Classroom environment	2
7	English exposure	4

### 3.4.2 Pilot Study

The researcher developed the questionnaire. In order to test the efficacy of the questionnaire, it was pilot tested with 30 students in MCU in Wangnoi Ayutthaya. The respondents were asked to answer the preliminary questionnaire in order to identify ambiguities, uncommon terms, and statements. They were also requested to comment on the contents of the questionnaire, express their opinions, or make suggestions concerning this study. After the pilot test, the questionnaire was also evaluated by the study my friends for appropriateness to use as an instrument of this study.

### 3.4.3 Details of the English Listening Comprehension Test

The participants were asked to listen to the 10 minutes English listening Pilot test. In this research study of items was used because of the limitation. The participants were asked to answer the preliminary questionnaire in order to identify ambiguities, uncommon terms and statements, and interview so the time was limited. After the pilot test, the questionnaire was also evaluated by the study advisor and teachers for appropriateness to use as an instrument of this study.

### 3.4.4 Details of the Interviews

To ask the participants about their opinions and suggestions on solving the listening problems.

### 3.4.5 Procedures

1. 30 students from linguistics Thai program at MCU will be the focus group. They will be asked to attend in a room to listen to the 10 minutes English listening test.

2. The questionnaire is distributed to 30 second-year students from linguistics Thai program at MCU. The participants are asked about the background information.

3. The participants are interviewed about their opinions of problems of listening English and their suggestions on listening problems.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

The data obtained from the questionnaire was processed, computed, and analyzed by using descriptive statistics. In order to calculate the results of this questionnaire, percentage and mean scores were used, and the collected data were coded according to the following research questions.

The following questions were designed to fulfil the needs of this research:

1. What are problems of English listening improvement of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics academic year 2015/17?

2. What are the causes of students' perception and misinterpreting in English listening improvement?

3. What is the current situation of teaching in English listening improvement while doing their practice and during the classroom?

4. What are the suggestions about how to overcome the barriers and difficulties of English listening improvement while doing their practice and during the classroom?

Part 1 of questionnaire was concerned with the general background of the students about how long they had been studying English. A five-point Likert scale was used to score the level of problems in part 2, part 3, and part 4 of the questionnaire. Part 2 was concerned with improvement with English listening, while part 3 was concerned with improvement English listening. Part 4 examined the causes of problems with English listening skills. The scale used in questionnaire to specify the students' level of agreement or disagreement were based on the following criteria.

## Chapter IV

### Results of the Data Analysis

This chapter presents the results of the study conducted on “A Study of English Listening Improvement of Master of Arts Students in Linguistics at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University”. Moreover, In order to get the results of data analysis, researcher uses statistical table features accompanying with descriptive statistics. The survey was divided into 4 parts:

- 4.1 General Background information
- 4.2 Respondents’ Problems
- 4.3 Respondents’ Score
- 4.4 Opinion from the Research Questions

#### 4. General Background Information

General background	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	21	70.00
Female	9	30.00
Total	30	100.00
<b>Age</b>		
20 years old	2	6.70
21 years old	8	26.70
22 years old	10	33.30
23 years old	7	23.30
More than 23 years old	3	10.00
Total	30	100.00

From the table 1, It can be assumed that most of the respondents were female (30%) whereas the rest were male (70%). Refer to the age of the respondents, most them were 22 years old (33.30), (26.70% of the respondents were 21 years old, and 23.30% were 23 years old only 10% of the total respondents were over 30 years old, whereas 6.70% were 20 years old. Apart from that, it can be summarized 70% of the responds studied English for 7-10 years, whereas 20% studied it over 10 years. Only 10% of the respondents studied English for 4-6 years.

General Background	Frequency	Percentage
<b>How do you practice your English in your daily life?</b>		
Listening English songs.	35	89.7
Watching English movies.	31	79.5
Reading English books.	25	64.1
Reading English newspapers.	24	61.5
Talking with foreign friends.	9	23.1
Studying private course.	6	15.4
Other(Playing English games)	1	2.6

The table above shows that 89.7% of students practice their listening English songs. The 79.5% of the respondents refer to the watching English movies, 64.1% of the respondents refer the reading English books. 23.1 % of the respondents talked to foreigners. The rest of them 15.4% and 2.6% had studied private course and other (playing English games.)

#### 4.1 The Problems of English Listening Improvement

**Table 2: Listening Problems Related to Listening Test.**

I've listening problem when	ever	Sometimes	Often	Always
Unfamiliar topics		63.2%	31.6%	5.2%
Different accents		21.1%	47.4%	31.5%

I've listening problem when	ever	Sometimes	Often	Always
Authentic material		10.5%	68.4%	21.1%
Colloquial words	10.5%	36.8%	36.8%	15.8%
Speech of speech		31.6%	52.6%	15.8%
Noise		5.3%	31.6%	61.1%
Poor equipment		47.3%	36.8%	15.8%
Ungrammatical sentences		52.6%	47.4%	
Hesitation	21.1%	47.4%	31.5%	
Long listening	15.8%	52.6%	31.6%	

The table 2 shows that unfamiliar topic sometimes brings about a problem in listening comprehension. 63.2% sometimes and then 31.6% and 5.2% (often and always) of the students have problems with topic which are unfamiliar to them. The variety of accents causes difficulties to students in listening comprehension since they do not have must exposure do different accents. The 47.4% and 31.5% of the students experience this kind of problem. For instance, if learners listen to Spain people speaking English, they will feel hard to understand him or her as they speak English in a native Spain intonation. For this linguistic feature, students need much more exposing to different kinds of accents. Yagang (1994) assert that the listeners have tendency to get familiar with the accents which they mostly listen. If listeners are exposed to stand British or American accents, they will face problems in understanding other accents.

Besides, it is the real language or authentic material that causes a great difficulty to students. Students have been exposed themselves to materials which are designed for teaching and listening purposes. Therefore, the language in these materials, to some extent have been simplified and contained less colloquial English. Consequently, they do not know what they are listening to the real language includes colloquial words, expressions and even slang which absolutely hardly bring the students any concepts about them.

McCarthy (1990:15) points out that it takes native speakers years to acquire an acceptable knowledge of collocation. On the other hand, Heron and Seavy (1991) highlight the importance of authentic material for their great improvement in listening comprehension since authentic material related closely to the lives and language variety. The speech of the speaker also supplies cues for catching the main points. As a matter of fact, the natural speech is very fast to second language learners so it makes up some trouble to the non-native speaker. Nevertheless, in the streaming of listening students would notice that sometimes the speaker speaks a bit slower and clearer than he did before. There are 63.1% of students who have to face the problem of noise. If the listening task is carried out with noises around, it is for sure they will not have a good result in listening. First, they are distracted by the noise. No matter how hard, they try to focus on the task. Otherwise, the noise makes a complex of sounds instead of the solo recording being played. This interrupts the students from hearing and focusing on the task. The poor equipment is somehow an obstacle in listening. For an example, in listening comprehension, it is the best place for students to do the listening in the laboratory room. This somehow will bring out the better result for the noises outside cannot get through the lab room. A good CD player may give them the better rather than that of the old one.

The first problem students have is predicting what the speaker is going to say with 68.3%. In fact, the predicting brings about a number of advantages to students in their listening comprehension. According to Hasan (2000) the problem is believed to be caused by the habit of listening to word by word.

They do not focus on any particular cues which help them predict what is going to be talked about. However, in every listening task, cues are provided indirectly that a well-trained or experienced listener could recognize naturally. For instance, the title of the task can help learners to guess the points coming next. In addition, prediction can be made by photos, maps, charts or anything that is provided in the listening. Besides making questions relating to the listening topic would keep students motivated and improve their comprehension. The most basic strategy is to use the clues which are the words or phrases coming after the unknown words. Nevertheless, students have to make sure that they do not spend much time on guessing the unfamiliar word or they will miss the speaker's next point.

In addition, the speaker's may use synonyms, antonyms or appositives to explain the words. The problem is recognizing the main points in listening comprehension. If students cannot obtain any main points, failure will be on inevitable result. 73.6% of the students cannot recognize the main points in a listening because they concentrate too much on listening to word by word. Thus they cannot identify the key words or the content words of the listening tasks. However, there clues suggested by Berman (2000) to identify the main points in listening.

In fact, students often try unlock the meaning by analysis of sentence structure. Unfamiliar structure would be confusion to them. Therefore, there are 47.4% of students who face this problem. Hasan, cited in (Vogely, 1994) agrees that difficulty in listening comprehension is partly due to the structure component of the text. In informal talk, difficulties stem from the ungrammatical sentences or the message is spoken with much hesitation. 78.9% of students think they suffer from this problem. Furthermore, whether it is a habit or not, the adding something or reducing something to a sentence seems to confuse the students. Yagang (1994) also find out that in conversation, ungrammatical structure is used due to the nervousness and hesitation of the speakers. The long listening text is supposed to be an obstacle to students in listening claimed by 84.2% (sometimes and often). Actually, if the students do the listening for a long time, they will be under pressure. This will not bring out good result. Furthermore, if the listening text is too long, the listener is required the skill of not-taking. However, the note-taking is not easy for students. Most students find it hard to take not while listening for they are not trained with this skill.

**Table 3: Listening Problems Related to Listener**

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
Making prediction what the speaker talk about		36.8%	36.8%	6.4%
<b>Problems</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
Guessing unknown words or phrases		15.8%	36.8%	7.4%
Recognizing main points	21.1%	10.5%	31.6%	6.8%

This table shows that the average of the respondents from listening problems related to listeners. Most of the faced the problem when they need to understand the text from the first listening. Some respondents got trouble if they need to listen from the poor quality equipment. At least, they felt difficult to answer questions after listening.

**Table 4: The English Listening Problems Experienced MCU Students**

No.	Problems	M	SD	Level of Problems
1	Difficulty in understanding for a speaker with a regional accent, such as Thai, an American and British	3.70	.94	High
2	Difficulty in understanding, when a speaker speaks too quickly	3.69	1.00	High
3	Difficulty in understanding, spoken English of because of a limited vocabulary	3.53	.91	High
4	Getting nervous and worried to understand when a speaker is saying in English	3.59	.98	High
5	Difficulty in understanding after listening only once	3.68	.97	High
6	Difficulty in understanding a speaker with poor pronunciation	3.66	.97	High

Table 4 indicates that students agreed that it was difficult to understand a regional accent ( $M=3.70$ ) or when a speaker speaks too quickly ( $M=3.69$ ). The students thought it was difficult to understand spoken English language due to their limited vocabulary ( $M=3.53$ ). Moreover, it was difficult for them to understand spoken English because of their limited understanding of grammatical, so they got nervous and worried when they did not understand when a speaker was saying

English (M=3.59). They recognized that they found it difficult to understand after on listening once (M=3.68) and is difficult for them to understand a speaker with a poor pronunciation (M=3.66).

The English listening problems experienced by MCU students from second year 2015 academic year and second year 2017 academic year are shown in following tables.

**Table 5: The English Listening Problems of Second Year 2015/2017 academic year students**

No.	Problems	M	SD	Level of Problems
1	Difficulty in understanding accent of speakers such as Thai and American	3.98	.83	High
2	Difficulty in understanding pronunciation of speakers	3.90	.90	High
3	Getting nervous and worried to understand when a speaker is saying in English	3.88	.88	High
4	Difficulty in guessing the meaning from the context, when failing to catch every word	3.78	.95	High
5	Difficulty in understanding about native speaker speaking at a normal pace (i.e., on the radio or TV)	3.85	.83	High
6	Difficulty in understanding English because of a limited understanding of grammatical rules	3.65	1.05	High
7	Stopping listening when failing to understand what a speaker is saying in English	3.63	1.00	High

No.	Problems	M	SD	Level of Problems
8	Difficulty in understanding every word when listening to English speech	3.60	1.03	High
9	Difficulty in understanding spoken English because of a limited vocabulary	3.58	1.06	High
10	Difficulty in concentrating if failing to understand what a speaker is saying	3.58	.87	High

The table 5 students agreed that it was difficult to understand a speaker with a regional accent (M=3.98). They also had difficulty in understanding a speaker with poor pronunciation (M=3.90). They were difficult to get nervous and worried if they did not understand what a speaker was saying in English (M=3.88). They were unable to catch every word, it was difficult for them to guess the meaning from the context (M=3.78). They found that it was difficult to understand a native speaker speaking at a normal pace (M=3.85). It was limited understanding of grammar made it difficult for them to understand spoken English (M=3.65). They stopped listening when they failed understand what a speaker was saying in English (M=3.63). The MCU students experienced difficulty to understand every word when they listened to English speech (M=3.60). Their limited vocabulary made it difficult for them to understand spoken language, and if they did not understand what a speaker was saying, they found it difficult to concentrate (M=3.58).

The problem students have is predicting what the speaker is going to say with often and always. In facing the prediction, it brings about a number of advantage to students in their listening comprehension. According to Hasan (2000), the problem is believed to cause by the habit of listening to word by word. They do not focus on any particular cues which help them predict what is going to be talked about. However, in every listening task, Cues are provided indirectly that well-trained or experienced listener could recognize it naturally. For instance, the title of the task can help learners to guess the points coming next. In addition, prediction can be made by photos, maps, charts or anything that provided in the listening. Besides,

making questions relating to the listening topic would keep students motivated and improve their comprehension.

There would be no worry if these problems do not match the next points in the listening task creating prediction questions of problems, as Berman (2003) thought, would maintain the students' focus on their tasks. Furthermore, the answers to these prepared questions in the pre-listening stage could be the actual main ideas of the listening task. In this way, prediction question is such a useful way comprehension improvement.

The second problem is the limitation of vocabulary power of the participants suffer from incomplete comprehension. Some listeners thought that meaning resides within the unfamiliar words so they need a huge amount of vocabulary. On facing a new word, they tend to find out the meaning rather than infer it from the context (Hasan, 2000).

The third problem shows that unfamiliar topic sometimes bring about a problem in listening comprehension. Sometimes and often of the students have problems with topics which are unfamiliar to them. The listening material may contain a variety of fields in life or society. For instance, it is likely a business report, a daily conversation or political issue which confuse the listener. These conversations may include words, phrases or terms unfamiliar to listeners. They are totally strange to them to it is such a hard job to listen when the message is full of terminology. The solution is to ask the students to practice as much as they can on these various materials. Therefore, they can get used to listening to variety of topics without any difficulties.

The four and five problems are recognizing the main points in listening comprehension. If students cannot obtain any main points, failure will be an inevitable result. Sometimes the students cannot recognize the main points in a listening because they concentrate too much on listening to word by word. Thus they cannot identify the key words or the content words of the listening tasks. However, there are clues suggested by Berman (2000) to identify the main points in listening.

The problems of six shows that there are always students who have faced the problem of noises. If the listening task is carried out with noises around, it is for sure they will not have a good result in listening. They are distracted by the noise no matter how hard they try to focus on the task. Otherwise, the noise makes a complex of sounds. This interrupts the students from hearing and focusing on the task.

Seven problems of the speed of the speech also supplies cues for catching the main points. As a matter of fact, the natural talk is very fast to second language learners so it makes up some trouble to the non-native speaker. Nevertheless, in the streaming of listening students would notice that sometimes the speaker speaks a bit slower and clearer than he did before. This is mostly the points of the listening. It is the chance for students to capture the necessary information in a listening text. Emphasis is natural factor in speaking so speaker also emphasizes to signal the most significant ideas. What students should do is to pay attention to the speed and the intonation of the speaker and identify the points. As in his books "advance listening strategies" (Berman, 2003) assumed that pace is the speed of speech. Unimportant points or small details are usually spoken more quickly. Important points, such as main ideas, are usually spoken slowly and clearly.

Eight problems of variety of accent cause difficulties to students in listening comprehension since they do not have much exposure to different accents. The result from this table demonstrates the students experience this kind of problem. For instance, if learners listen to people speaking English, they will feel hard to understand him or her as they speak English a native. For this linguistic feature, students need much more exposing to different kinds of accents. Yangan asserts that the listeners have tendency to get familiar with the accents which they mostly listen. If listeners are exposed to standard British or American accents, they will face problems in understanding other accents.

Nine problems of authentic material that causes a great difficult to students who have been exposed themselves to materials which are designed for teaching and listening purposes. Therefore, these materials, to some extents, have

been simplified and contained less colloquial English. In addition, students in MCU mostly have no learning English with non-native teachers. As for that, if students listen to an informal conversation, it is for sure that it is much harder than listening to a formal conversation used mostly in classroom. Consequently, they do not know what they are listening to. The real language includes colloquial words, expressions and even slang which absolutely hardly bring the students any concepts about them. Me Carthy (1999:15) points out that it takes native speakers years to acquire an acceptable knowledge of collocation. On the other hand, Heron and Seavy highlight the importance of authentic material for their great improvement in listening comprehension since authentic material related closely to the lives and language variety. The liaison, the linking of the first word and the word coming right after which begins with a vowel, is claimed the students to be the most common obstruction in listening since the students are used to hearing each separate word by unit in a sentence and slow stream of listening. Hence, they misunderstand the linking words or they have no idea of the meaning delivered. The students often try to unlock the meaning by analysis of sentence structure. Unfamiliar structure would be confusion to them. Therefore, the students who face this problem, Hansan, cited in (Vogely, 1994) agree that difficulty in listening comprehension is partly due to the structure component of the text. In informal talk, difficulties stem from the ungrammatical sentences or the message is spoken with much hesitation. The students think they suffer from this problem. Furthermore, whether it is a habit or not, the adding something or reducing something to a sentence seems to confuse the students. Yagang (1994) also find out that in conversation, ungrammatical structure is used due to the nervousness and hesitation of the speakers. Therefore, speakers may omit parts of a sentence or add something redundant. Consequently this limits the understanding of the listeners. The long listening text is supposed to be an obstacle to students in listening claimed by sometimes and often. Actually, if the students do the listening for a long time, they will be under pressure. This will not bring out good result. Furthermore, if the listening text is too long, the listener is required the skill of note-taking. However, the note-taking is not easy for students. Most students find it hard to take note while listening for they are not trained with this skill.

## 4.2 Lecturers

### Causes of Problems with English Listening were found from Lecturers' Teaching Techniques

No.	Questions	Mean	S.D	Level
1	Lecturers do not use multimedia to support teaching English listening.	3.55	.90	High
2	Lecturers always ask the students with the English skills the most questions	3.56	.94	High
3	Lecturers focus much on grammar	2.67	1.03	High
4	Lecturers rarely motivate me about the importance of English listening skills	2.54	1.04	High

Second-year students in linguistic were the only group that reported that their English lectures were the cause their English listening problems. There only rate two items at a high level of problems English lecturers. Students reported that their lecturer did not use multimedia to support teaching listening (M-3.55) and that their lectures asked the students with the best English skills the most questions (M-3.51). Lecturers focus much on grammar (M- 2.67) and No 4 Lecturers rarely motivate me about the importance of English listening skills (M-2.54).

## 4.3 Result of interviewing people concerning the improvement of English listening skills and other points that are related.

Actually, the interview was conducted to let students speak more freely about listening improvement and the difficulties they face while listening. The results of the interview supported the questionnaires. Accordingly, it is not surprising that students hate listening exercises, feel disappointed and find listening improvement difficult. However, unfamiliar vocabulary, lack of background knowledge, not enjoying the listening excerpt, noises around and poor recordings received high effect degree in the questionnaire results. In fact, in the questionnaire and interview, students showed a positive perspective towards the importance of listening skills. In the

questionnaire, items are got a very high effect degree. In the interview, students ranked listening as the first and second amongst the other skills.<sup>1</sup>

### **What are English listening problems encountered by your students while teaching English in your class?**

The results are shown from the objectives Number 1, Dr. Samorn Ketsom was pointed out the first step to simply listen to the audio alone. Don't read the text in advance and don't follow along with it as listening. The point here is to focus solely on students aural skills and see how much students can understand without any visual aid. Of course, unless students are already at a very high level, this can be very difficult. Rather than trying to understand every single word, it's better to focus on trying to understand the 'gist' of what's being said. Many students make the mistake of turning to the text too quickly. However, the point here is to practice listening skills so just stay focused on listening for the time being. On the first listen, students will probably have identified one or two key words or ideas. As students repeat the audio, listen carefully and see if students can pick out and words or phrases students may have missed the first time. By now students may already have some idea what this piece of audio is about, so use the context to students' advantage. If students can't figure out exactly what's going on, don't worry. Go back and listen again a few more times without the text. By this point, students should be able to understand almost everything quite well even without the visual aid of the text.

### **What are the main problems when you taught your students in English class?**

The results are shown from the objectives Number 2, lecturer Sitthiches Chenruay was pointed out the same problems that the students' listening were that they don't get used to or aren't familiar with the native or standard pronunciation as

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Dr. Samorn Ketsom who is a lecturer at MCU, 5 Jun 2016.,  
Interview with lecturer Sitthiches Chenruay who is a scholar of MCU, 27 February 2019.,  
Interview with Dr.Kam-Ing Kongsi who is a lecturer at MCU, 4 Jun 2016.

well as lack of knowledge in vocabularies. Moreover, when the students who know much try to dominate the class, some of students who couldn't speak or be able to respond immediately might not have the chance to express themselves.

### **What is the best way to improve English listening skills of your students?**

The results are shown from the objectives Number 3, Dr. Kam-Ing Kongsi point out that English is a second language for many of students. Therefore all students follow as I show this 4 kind of way. 1. Students at MCU need to enrich and improve their English vocabulary knowledge by downloading useful and relevance listening materials from the website and practice frequently in order to facilitate their leaning improvement. 2. Students at MCU should practice to communicate with native speakers for fluently and at the same time, improve their listening skills. 3. Students at MCU are encouraged to discuss their listening problems with the instructors for further learning and also seek help at MCU students who are their classmates. 4. The instructors need to understand that the students' basic linguistic ability is relatively low. In order to improve the students' English listening proficiency, the instructors should encourage the students to constantly improve their English linguistic ability. The students need to be advised that this is a long-term effort and eventually the outcome can be very promising.

The results from interviewing people that they pointed about the problems of English listening skills and the ways to improve English listening skills of 30 students at Thai program, Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (Main Campus), Lamsai Sub-district, Wangnoi District, Ayutthaya Province. As a result, the interview with five English scholars are as the following: The results from interviewing people about the problems and the ways to improve English listening skills of the second year students in the following topics;

#### **4.4 The Attitudes of the Students**

The cause of the attitude of the students was only found among the students at a high level. The results showed that students thought that learning English listening with teachers was better than independent study. Therefore, student

attitudes on learning determine their ability and willingness to listen. A positive learning attitude requires motivation and gratification; the timing of those variables depends on the age of the students.

## 4.5 The Motivations of Students

This part presents overall details of the study's results. The following two tables (Table 1 and 2 ) outlines all the 5 questioned items, their resulting itemized mean scores, using descriptive statistics of Mean scores and Standard Deviation (S.D.) and their corresponding motivation levels, which serve as the basis for further interpretation and implications.

The following Table 1 contains 5 instrumentally motivated related items.

### 4.5.1 Instrumental Students' Motivation

Table 1 Instrumental Students' Motivation

No.	Instrumental Students' Motivation	Mean	S.D	Level
1	I mainly focus on using English for class assignment and the exams.	4.33	0.45	High
2	I am more interested in earning a university degree and a good job.	4.20	0.78	High
3	I am more interested in furthering my higher education than learning English language itself.	4.21	0.49	High
4	Learning English is important for making me an educated person.	4.47	0.50	High
5	Being proficient in English can lead to more success and achievements in life.	4.60	0.43	High
	<b>Total</b>	4.56	0.57	High

Table 1 reveals that the respondents possessed a high level of instrumental students' motivation. This is shown clearly by the average mean score of 4.56 in the table. Statement number 5 (Being proficient in English can lead to more success and achievements in life) has the highest mean (4.60). The statement number 4 (Learning English is important for making me a knowledgeable and skillful person.) has an average mean score of 4.47. However, the overall mean score of instrumental motivation demonstrates a high level of motivation.

#### 4.5.2 Integrative Students' Motivation

Table 2 Integrative Motivation

No	Integrative Motivation	Mean	S.D	Level
1	Studying English enables me to keep in touch with foreign acquaintances.	3.80	0.85	High
2	Studying English enables me to discuss interesting topics in English with the people from other national backgrounds.	4.20	0.76	High
3	Studying English enables me to participate freely in academic, social, and professional activities among other cultural groups.	4.27	0.91	High
4	Studying English enables me to transfer my knowledge to other people E.g. giving directions to tourists.	3.97	0.96	High
5	I am determined to study English as best as I can achieve maximum proficiency	4.40	0.72	High
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.94</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 2 shows the overall high degree of integrative motivation of the respondents with a high average mean score of 3.94.

The statement number 2 (Studying English enables me to discuss interesting topics in English with the people from other national backgrounds.), the statement number 3 Studying English enables me to participate freely in academic, social, and professional activities among other cultural groups. The statement number 5 (I am determined to study English as best as I can to achieve maximum proficiency.) show the highest level of instrumental motivation with the mean scores of 4.20, 4.27 and 4.40 respectively. However, the statement number 1 (Studying English enables me to keep in touch with foreign acquaintances.) and the statement number 4 (Studying English enables me to transfer my knowledge to other people e. g giving directions to tourists.) both have the lowest mean score which is 3.47 and is considered as moderate level of motivation.

## 4.6 Classroom Environment

### 4.6.1 Causes of Problems with English Listening Found from English Environments

No	Questions	Mean	S.D	Level
1	The teaching aids in the classroom are ineffective.	3.70	1.28	High
2	The classroom is too hot to concentrate.	3.52	1.40	High
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>1.08</b>	<b>High</b>

There were two items regarding the classroom as a cause of English listening problems. Two items that were rated at a high level of classroom environment problems Master of Arts students at MCU. The teaching aids in the classroom such as microphones, computers, and projectors were ineffective (M-3.70) and that classroom was too hot for them to concentrate properly (M-3.52). The teaching aids in the classroom, such as microphones, computers, and projectors were ineffective, and that the classroom was too hot for them to concentrate properly at the same mean score of 3.62.

#### 4.7 Causes of Problems with English Listening Found from Students' Lacking of Times to Listening English.

No	Questions	Mean	S.D	Level
1	Losing self-confidence when mistake is corrected by someone else	3.71	.95	High
2	Difficulty to understand English because of limited vocabulary, complete sentences	3.63	.83	High
3	Being afraid of speaking English with foreigners because of poor listening English	3.53	.93	High
4	Difficulty in catching words with linking sounds	3.52	.85	High
5	Difficulty in understanding after listening only once	3.75	.92	High

The students reported that they lost confidence when someone corrected their mistakes (M-3.60) and the reported that it was difficult to understand English because of their limited vocabulary, listening English in complete sentence and correct intonation, and they were afraid of making mistakes when listening (M-3.63.) They also found it difficult to speaking foreigners (Native speakers) because they were afraid that their pronunciation would not be understood and it was difficult to concentrate if they did not know how to say something in English. And then, difficulty catching words with linking sounds(M-3.52) The students realized that it was difficult to understand after listening only once (M-3.75).

#### 4.8 English Exposure

Only the students reported a high level of English exposure problems, as presented in the following table. There was only MCU student's related English exposure as high level. The MCU students reported that they do not have friends to practice to get English listening power.

On the other, for lecturers the main problem is either not to know what to do with the listening skills or absolute obedience to the course book they have selected. If they cannot adopt, edit or change listening activities for their learner, the listening skill becomes the main anxiety source for them and instead of supporting

the learners with a kind of comprehensible input it maybe come the reason for learners' discouragement. The solution of making listening skills digestible for learners is in two ways: at word level and at sentence level.

At word level, in the early stages, the students need practice in hearing and saying the sounds of isolated words as they are ideally pronounced by a native speaker, without the distortions or blurs which commonly occur within the context of natural speech. The exercise types those early level pupils can be given are repetition which they are only expected to repeat what they hear, asking if what they hear is English or not and to decide if they hear the same or different utterances.

At sentence level recognizing colloquial and spontaneous speech becomes easier for learners. So the exercise types at this level are again repetition but this time the length of the utterance is either the phrase or sentence they have heard, identifying word divisions which they are to determine the spoken and the written forms of the utterances, identifying the stressed or unstressed words are in a sentence, and dictation which the teacher seeks for students' understanding the sounds and utterances.

The third type is meaning based activities Ur, divides the comprehension exercises into different purpose based activities in listening comprehension; these are:

These exercises may also be called no-response exercises and they are used to enrich the learners' listening comprehension skills as much as possible.

The exercise types in this group may be:

**A. Following Written Text:** where students both read and listen to the text to see how words are pronounced or have the chance to see the actual listening and hearing of a native speaker.

**B. Pictures:** The learners listen to the teacher or recording and choose the picture or order the pictures as they are mentioned.

**C. Diagrams, Maps:** The same technique may be used in using diagrams and maps or family trees etc.

**D. Stories, Films and TV Programs:** They may be used as no-response activities if they are not too long to make the students feel bored or lose concentration. These exercises are applied using the short responses of learners whose levels are elementary or not enough for full communication. The exercises which can be performed during the listening course may be true/ false exercises.

These exercises help the learners to make the connection between speaking and listening and link the two skills by both listening and responding.

#### **4.8.1 Listening and Making Long Responses**

In these types of exercises, learners are expected to relate to the general sense of a whole sequence of utterances. Predictions; students are asked to guess the meaning or to guess what is going to happen next, filling gaps; this exercise may be done by filling the gaps in a dialogue or text during the listening activity, summarizing; learners are asked to summarize what they have understood from the listening.

#### **4.8.2 Listening as a Basis for Study and Discussion**

The first exercise type in this activity is problem-solving, where the students discuss the listening activity individually or in groups. The text is short and students are given the chance to listen two or more times to be able to discuss the problem mentioned in the listening text. The second one is jigsaw listening, in which the students are given half parts of the whole listening activity and after listening they join together and come to a conclusion or catch the general idea of the activity. In this listening activity the learners need more than one tape-recorder and cassettes or another solution may be taking the students into the listening activity group by group; after one group listens, the other comes in and while they are listening the first group is outside the class. The third one is commonly used exercise type; involving complementary texts where the students complete some information on a chart or in a dialogue. The last one is interpretative listening in which the students try to make some interpretations about the speakers' personalities, their relationships.

#### 4.9 The Summary of the Results

It was found that there were items regarding English listening problems that the students rated at a high level of problem. The listening problem that the students rated as the most difficult was to understand speakers with regional accents, such as Thai and an American or British accent. The first most difficult listening problem was to understand a speaker who speaks unfamiliar words, the second difficult was to understand after hearing the unfamiliar topics. The third and fourth most difficult listening problems were to understand listeners no have be recognizing and concentration. The fifth most difficult listening problems was to understand listening as student noises while speaking the teacher. The sixth and seven listening problems were difficulty understanding English who speaks too quickly and varieties accents. The eighth most difficult listening problems was to understand speaker who use the colloquial words. The ninth and tenth listening problems were difficult understanding English speaker who use the long listening text and the linking words. The eleventh and twelfth most difficult listening problems were a difficulty understanding English because of ungrammatical sentences and getting nervous and worried when failing to understand what speaker saying.

## Chapter V

### Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestion

This chapter discussed the results of the study and related them to previous studies. The questions of the study are discussed fully. The objective of the study is 1) to study the problems of English listening improvement of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics, academic year 2015/17. 2) To investigate the causes of students' perception of English listening improvement. 3) To propose how to overcome the difficulties of English listening improvement. As a consequence of the study related with 59 questionnaires and interviewing people will improve their English improvement. At the end of this chapter, an overall mean of discussion and suggestion for the further study. It drew conclusions based on the findings. Moreover, the researcher wrote conclusions for lectures.

The purpose of this study is to help learners to have more confidence and listening improvement. That can really help them to have proficiency and fluently to be listening English with foreigners and gain better opportunities in their purposes. To purpose the ways to improve English improvement of the second year students 2015/2017 will be useful for learners are ameliorated those who demand to improve English improvement, they should know the result of their English listening levels regain and towards in listening as much as active learning techniques for them to learn quickly or creating exercises, envisage the problems in the Faculty of Humanities at MCU.

#### 5.1 Conclusion

##### 5.1.1 Objective of the Study

This study is a mixed research method with qualitative method and quantitative method used for research design. To collect data from English articles, thesis, journal, internet, textbooks, documents, and academic books of English

language, which are very important resources in MCU. To be choose 30 students of the second year in 2015/2017. The format of the questionnaires is making to develop English listening improvement by using questions; to survey of the students in year of 2015/2017 Thai program in linguistics at MCU. The respondent of this study consists of 30 second year students of the Faculty of Humanities of MCU;

Part One: is General information, consisting of 30 second year students. They are between 20-40 years old, the majority of students have experienced of listening English more than two subjects in each semester.

Part Two: The results of the problems of English listening improvement of the 59 questionnaires that specify their problems of Thai program in linguistics in academic year 2015/2017 at MCU.

The results of study of the problems of English listening improvement and finding out the ways to improve English listening for 30 second year students at MCU revealed that the learners need to improve their English listening from the questionnaires. Then, it showed the problems of second year students toward their attitude in listening English continually.

### **5.1.2 General Information the Respondents**

The Master of Arts linguistics in Thai program in MCU stated various factors that cause problems in listening. This statement attempted to investigate the English listening problems among MCU students. All of these listening tasks are given here to suggest to both students and the teachers some alternative techniques which may enhance the current curriculum. It is important here to apply these tasks at the appropriate level with the appropriate students. The researcher has also an important role in planning and knowing the task because the wrong type of exercise may discourage the students. MCU classrooms need more practice than theory. As stated by Krashen only comprehensible input is necessary and makes sense if the purpose of language education is to make learners acquire the kind of language that they need to express themselves. So by improving the comprehensible syllabus for students, education can serve to the purpose.

The participants of this research are consisted of 30 students, from second-year 2015/17 academic in Humanities faculty. The data from the questionnaires were analysed to identify English listening problems as well as the causes of these problems among students at MCU. The study of students the problems of English listening improvement of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics at Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Lamsai sub-district, Wangnoi District, Ayutthaya Province, Thailand, academic years 2015/17. The conclusions relate directly to the research objectives (1) to study the problems of English listening improvement of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics academic year 2015/17. (2) to investigate the causes of students' perception and misinterpreting in English listening improvement. (3) to propose suggestions about how to overcome the barriers and difficulties of English listening improvement while doing their practice and during the classroom.

### **5.1.3 Based on the findings related to the major question**

In regard to the second year Master of Arts students in linguistics academic year 2015/17 encounter in listening improvement, the following were the findings of the study.

The highest percentages of students refer the difficulties they encounter in listening comprehension to the following reasons. For example, noises around can be a major factor that would cause difficulty in listening comprehension. Other reasons are listening excerpts that are of unfamiliar topics, and the ones that have unfamiliar vocabulary and complex grammatical structure. Moreover, students think that poor quality recordings can be a major hindrance for listening comprehension. Of course, students believe that enjoying the listening exercise can help in comprehension and vice versa. These are the difficulties that students face in listening comprehension the most. In fact, these were the statements that took very high effect degree.

Moreover, pronunciation of vocabulary matters. Sometimes students do not recognize what is said because they are not familiar with the pronunciation of some words. Similarly, students could know the pronunciation while listening but

cannot guess and realize what these words are. Furthermore, students are unable to infer meaning of some words while listening. As a result, they stop listening and trying to understand the rest of the listening text. Additionally, not being able to recognize and understand words lead students to feel afraid and then to stop listening. Moreover, students agreed that natural speech full of hesitation and pauses; not seeing the body language of the speaker and not being able to repeat what the speaker says; not pausing enough while speaking are all difficulties they encounter in listening improvement. Furthermore, it is not easy for students to answer WH questions based on what they listen. This means that it is difficult for them to listen and take notes in the same time to provide proper answer for WH questions.

## **5.2 Discussion with Students and Teacher, Teaching and Classroom**

As teachers usually assign pair work and group work in classroom for presentation, students can only practice with students with similar levels of English proficiency. This problem is exacerbated if students have to work with students with a lower level of English proficiency. This can also lead to students with higher English proficiency becoming frustrated that they are unable to communicate with learners at a similar or a higher level and that their ability to improve their speaking ability through peer practice will be impaired.

Classroom learning the participants detailed concerns about the limitations and frustrations of their studying situation. Many participants' written evidence showed that during their practicum experiences, many were worried about 'how' and 'what to get'. Some of the participants wrote about their concerns of 'choosing the correct methodology and techniques that were appropriate' while others wrote about the need to use newer and creative ways of learning. As learning involved many instructional skills, it could be an arduous task even for inexperienced students, it was therefore not surprising that students who were just beginning to get a taste of actual classroom situation would be anxious about handling learning methods and strategies. Many participants documented concerns about their own learning activities and performances.

Another concern that appeared to impede students was the lack of time to complete the curriculum. It would seem that the students gained confidence if greater support was given by their teachers. Student Learning Aspects of student learning were participants' concerns for their students' understanding of the subject matter and the concerns for their students' personal growth and moral development. Participants questioned whether they had made an impact in the lives of their students. Fuller and Boun (1975) suggested that teachers who had more concerns for their students more than about themselves have reached a level they called 'impact concerns'.<sup>45</sup> Teachers at this level were more concerned about the needs of their students and the effect of their teaching/learning process upon their students' achievement. They questioned whether their students were getting the preparation to be successful in their lives. Some of the participants detailed concerns for their students' understanding and their developmental needs.

### **5.2.1 Problems of English listening improvement of the second-year Master of Arts students in linguistics, academic year 2015/17.**

Listening comes from the emergence of the human being. It has always been a crucial part of interaction. It is not just hearing the other side but though the message having an agreement or giving the right response with the help of grammatical knowledge. While listening understanding the speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary, and grasping his meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously. This question has many problems in getting the intended meaning. The students failed their listening tests. This means that the listening is actually an obstacle to students. In fact, to possess a good listening skill, it takes times and effort. However, students seem to spend very little time on practicing anywhere. Therefore, Listening is a key to effective working relationships among students and teacher and between management and staff.

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<sup>45</sup> Fuller, **Becoming a teacher**, (F.F., & Boun, O.H. Press, 1975), In K. Ryan (Ed.), **Teacher Education: Seventy-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education**, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 25-52.

Listening skills also impact a company's interaction with customers and other businesses. To improve your listening skills, give the other person your full attention and maintain eye contact. When she is done speaking, rephrase her remarks and ask whether you understand her correctly. Continue to ask questions to gain a better understanding of her statements.

The second-year Master of Arts students in 2015 Academic-year reported English listening problems at high level. The students agreed that it was difficult to understand a speaker with a regional accent, such as Thai and an American. They also had difficulty understand a speaker with poor pronunciation. They are difficult to get nervous and worried if they did not understand what a speaker was saying. They were unable to catch every word, found that it difficult to understand a native speaker speaking at a normal pace. It was difficult to understand of grammatical rules. They stopped listening when they filed to understand what a speaker was saying English. The MCU students experienced difficulty understand every words when they listened to English speech, their limited vocabulary made it difficult for them to understand spoken language, and if they did not understand what a speaker was saying, they found it difficult to concentrate.

This study reveals that the listener was also the factor that cause listening problem. Sometimes the respondents cannot understand the text from the first listening. Hasan also studied other factors that affect the listening comprehension such as the difficulty to understand the text from the first listening the difficulty to answer questions after listening.

Moreover, the participants reported that it was difficult for them to understand a speaker with a regional accent, such as Thai, an American and British accent. It can be assumed that listening to speakers with a variety of national and regional accents was difficult for these students. Listening may encounter a wide variety accents among native speakers and this may cause misunderstandings as the students find it difficult to comprehend the message and respond correctly or effectively. Many English language learners claim that the greatest difficulty they experienced with listening comprehension was the inability to control the speed of

the speaker. That is true as the second most difficult problem reported by the students was a failure to understand when the speaker spoke too quickly. It is impossible for the listener to control the speed of the voice a speaker from an uncontrolled source. Being difficult English learners to understand a message well, speakers speak too quickly. When listeners, especially English learners, try to catch every word, they miss other parts and cannot grasp the main idea of what they have been listening to.

### **5.2.2 The current situation of teaching in English about listening improvement while doing their practice and during the classroom**

The listening problem that the students rated as the most difficult was listening English with correct pronunciation. The second most difficult listening problem was unfamiliar words, slang and idiom, unfamiliar topic, grammatical rules and native speaker's culture knowledge. Third most difficult listening problem was frustration with practicing English with students whose English ability was below theirs. Others listening problem is experienced by these MCU students were fear of people laughing at them in the classroom because of the mistakes they may make while replying, which indicates a low level of confidence among these students regarding their English ability.

The problem that these students rated as the most difficult, listening English with correct communication is a common experience for students in the classroom. The students in 2015 and 2017 academic year should be taught by native speakers in order to get authentic English listening. However, there are many students who have limited to practice listening with a native English speaker and with radio and TV. Unless students have the opportunity to hear a native speaker, they will be unable to get authentic English listening power.

The second most difficult problem was listening English as authentically as fluently as a native speaker, another common experience among students in 2015 academic year. All English learners wish to understand English as fluently as a native speaker, and depending on their background, attitude and motivation, they may achieve this goal. If a student has a good attitude, a high level of motivation and enjoys learning English, their performance is likely to improve. On the other hand, students who have poor attitude, low level of motivation and do

not enjoy learning English have low probability of success or improvement. The latter type of students may feel the listening English power as fluently as a native speaker is beyond them.

The third most common problem of English listening were frustrated by students who have to practice English with students whose English skills are below theirs in the classroom where the students have different level of English ability.

The fourth most common English listening problem was experienced by shy students who lacked confidence in their listening skills in the classroom. Therefore, many of the participants had inhibitions about listening English that impaired their ability to understand English effectively. These students worried too much about making mistakes and had a fear that people would laugh at them if they failed to understand English correct. Due to the fact that they may have had bad experiences learning English in the classroom, they may have been laughed at by their peers because of their poor English. As a result, these students found it difficult to improve their English because of their own fears and inhibitions about listening English in the classroom.

The fifth most common English listening problem, understanding the linking words and sound in English language, is a significant problem for the students in 2015 second-year in MCU. These problems are caused by the inability of the listener to accurately differentiate the linking word and sound in English language. The students are aware that they should pay attention in linking words and sound of each word, but a lack of practice may be the cause of this problem.

The final problem is another typical experience of students in the fear of being laughed at for making mistakes to be shy or inhibited to listening English. This anxiety may lead the students who are shy and inhibited worry more about their ability to use the language effectively. If they are too shy, they may not take the necessary risks that are required to practice their listening English and ultimately to enhance their listening English ability. On the other hand, that trait can lead to a failure to make progress in listening English.

### **5.3. Suggestions**

#### **5.3.1 General Suggestion for Further Studies**

5.3.1.1 This research of mine has finished finding the common problem which the students in second-year 2015/17 studying at MCU. Based on the fact and figure, a number of strategies are also suggested to help them with better listening. To confirm what have been written above and my ideas about the solution to improve the listening skill of the students, I conclude with these ideas: Firstly to the students, they should spend much more time on practicing. They should listen to variety of topics in order to get familiar with them. Hence, the background knowledge will be enriched as well as the skill. In addition, the students should know to apply suitable strategies to each kind of listening text in order to get the best result.

5.3.1.2 The skill of students will not be improved the best without teachers. Teachers play such a significant in building up their skill. By each lesson, the teachers show his students the ways in each stage of listening comprehension. Generally, there are three stages: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening. Furthermore, the teachers will advise their students with the syllabus they can self-study at any place. In short, this research of mine does not focus on how teachers carry out their lesson but it is a chance to understand more about the student's problems. Now that students have vented their feelings, they have cooled off enough to begin problem solving. This is an important skill for all students to learn. Not only does it help in conflict resolution, but it is useful for any decision making.

It is important for students to take their concerns seriously; you will listen to them can handle problem solving on their own. As students learn to recognize and express feelings appropriately, listen to others' feelings and solve problems as they arise, they will feel more confident and grow both emotionally and socially.

For teachers, teachers should build and maintain a good relationship with students. It is somewhat difficult to build a relationship that is friendly as well as involves retaining a level of respect. Teachers, who succeed in building and maintain such a relationship with students, also become able to have better control over classroom. Here are some tips which can be followed to improve relationship between students and teacher.

### 5.3.2 The Suggestion of the Further Studies

This research of mine has finished finding the common problem which the students in second-year 2015/17 studying at MCU. Based on the fact and figure, a number of strategies are also suggested to help them with better listening. To confirm what have been written above and my ideas about the solution to improve the listening skill of the students, I conclude with these ideas: Firstly to the students, they should spend much more time on practicing. They should listen to variety of topics in order to get familiar with them. Hence, the background knowledge will be enriched as well as the skill. In addition, the students should know to apply suitable strategies to each kind of listening text in order to get the best result.

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