FACTORS AND PROBLEMS AFFECTING ENGLISH LISTENING COMPREHENSION SKILLS OF EIC UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT RMUTL TAK, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This quantitative research is to investigate the significant factors and to discover the existing problems affecting English listening comprehension skills of EIC undergraduate students at RMUTL Tak, Thailand.

Method: This is survey research. The participants were 46 students who were the 3rd and 4th year students selected by purposive method. The research instrument was an online questionnaire which was gathered and analyzed by descriptive statistics.

Results and Conclusion: The findings reveal that factors affecting English listening comprehension skills compose of (1) Factors relating to text, (2) Factors relating to linguistic features, (3) Factors relating to speakers, and (4) Factors relating to listeners. The problems affecting English listening comprehension skills compose of (1) Speaker accent, (2) Speaker speed of speaking, (3) New vocabulary and (4) English knowledge of the listeners respectively, and overall, it was found that students had listening comprehension problems at high level ($x = 3.80$, S.D. = 0.763). Furthermore, both the factors and the problems highlighted were crucial information required to remedy and improve the students' English listening comprehension skills.

Research Implications: Therefore, those who want to improve their English listening comprehension should be aware of these factors and problems; however, others factors and problems must be considered when developing English listening comprehension as well. Furthermore, listeners should be aware of all factors and problems that affect their intelligibility and should develop their own listening more or practice listening more for solving the factors and problems exploring in this study, practicing listening to a variety of listening media, such as the news, music, movies, talk shows, speeches or talks: Ted Talks as one of the listening strategy applied, to become accustomed to and learn more about the various accents and speaker speeds and listener can practice their own listening skills further outside the classroom.

Originality/Value: Teachers can use these to solve problems for students to practice listening skills in the classroom, and those who want to practice listening skills can apply these methods or practice themselves to improve their listening skills. Nevertheless, this research still has some weaknesses.

Keywords: English Listening Comprehension Skills, Speaker’s Accent, Speaker’s speed, New Vocabulary, Listener’s knowledge, College Students, Thailand.

RESUMO

Objetivo: Esta pesquisa quantitativa tem como objetivo investigar os fatores significativos e descobrir os problemas existentes que afetam as habilidades de compreensão auditiva em inglês dos alunos de graduação do EIC na RMUTL Tak, Tailândia.

Método: Esta é uma pesquisa de levantamento. Os participantes foram 46 alunos do 3º e 4º ano selecionados por método proposital. O instrumento de pesquisa foi um questionário online que foi coletado e analisado por estatística descritiva.

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Resultados e conclusión: Los resultados revelan que los factores que afectan las habilidades de comprensión auditiva en inglés son compuestos por (1) factores relacionados con el texto, (2) factores relacionados con las características lingüísticas, (3) factores relacionados con los hablantes y (4) factores relacionados con los oyentes. Los problemas que afectan las habilidades de comprensión auditiva en inglés son compuestos por (1) acento del hablante, (2) velocidad de la pronunciación, (3) vocabulario nuevo y (4) conocimiento del inglés de los oyentes, respectivamente, y en general, se encontró que los alumnos tenían comprensión auditiva problemas de alto nivel ($x^2 = 3,80, D.E. = 0,763$). Además, diso, tanto los factores quanto los problemas destacados eran informaciones cruciais necessárias para remediar e mejorar las habilidades de comprensión auditiva do inglês dos alunos.

Implicações de pesquisa: Portanto, aqueles que desejam melhorar sua compreensão auditiva em inglês devem estar cientes desses fatores e problemas; no entanto, outros fatores e problemas também devem ser considerados ao desenvolver a compreensão auditiva do inglês. Além diso, os oyentes devem estar conscientes de todos os factores e problemas que afectam a sua inteligibilidade e devem desenvolver mais a sua própria audição ou praticar mais a audição para resolver os factores e problemas explorados neste estudo, praticando a audição de uma variedade de meios de audición, como as notícias, música, filmes, talk shows, discursos ou palestras: Ted Talks como uma das estratégias de escuta aplicadas, para acostumarse a aprender mais sobre vários sotaques e velocidades do locutor e o ouvinte pode praticar suas próprias habilidades de escuta fora da sala de aula.

Originalidade/Valor: Os professores podem usá-los para resolver problemas para que os alunos pratiquem habilidades auditivas em sala de aula, e aqueles que desejam praticar habilidades auditivas podem aplicar esses métodos ou praticar eles próprios para melhorar suas habilidades auditivas. No entanto, esta investigação ainda apresenta algumas fragilidades.


FACTORES Y PROBLEMAS QUE AFECTAN A LA CAPACIDAD DE COMPRENSIÓN ORAL EN INGLÉS DE LOS ESTUDIANTES UNIVERSITARIOS DE EIC EN RMUTL TAK, TAILANDIA

RESUMEN

Propósito: Esta investigación cuantitativa tiene como objetivo investigar los factores importantes y descubrir los problemas existentes que afectan las habilidades de comprensión auditiva en inglés de los estudiantes universitarios de EIC en RMUTL Tak, Tailandia.

Método: Se trata de una investigación por encuesta. Los participantes fueron 46 estudiantes de 3º y 4º año seleccionados por método intencional. El instrumento de investigación fue un cuestionario en línea que fue recopilado y analizado mediante estadística descriptiva.

Resultados y conclusión: Los hallazgos revelan que los factores que afectan las habilidades de comprensión auditiva en inglés se componen de (1) factores relacionados con el texto, (2) factores relacionados con las características lingüísticas, (3) factores relacionados con los hablantes y (4) factores relacionados con los oyentes. Los problemas que afectan las habilidades de comprensión auditiva en inglés se componen de (1) acento del hablante, (2) velocidad del habla del hablante, (3) vocabulario nuevo y (4) conocimiento del inglés de los oyentes, respectivamente, y en general, se encontró que los estudiantes tenían comprensión auditiva problemas de alto nivel ($x^2 = 3,80, D.E. = 0,763$). Además, tanto los factores como los problemas destacados fueron información crucial necesaria para remediar y mejorar las habilidades de comprensión auditiva en inglés de los estudiantes.

Implicaciones de la investigación: Por lo tanto, quienes quieran mejorar su comprensión auditiva en inglés deben ser conscientes de estos factores y problemas; sin embargo, también se deben considerar otros factores y problemas al desarrollar la comprensión auditiva en inglés. Además, los oyentes deben ser conscientes de todos los factores y problemas que afectan su inteligibilidad y deben desarrollar más su propia escucha o practicar más la escucha para resolver los factores y problemas que se exploran en este estudio, practicando la escucha de una variedad de medios de escucha, como las noticias, música, películas, programas de entrevistas, discursos o charlas: Ted Talks como una de las estrategias de escucha aplicadas, para acostumbrarse y aprender más sobre los distintos acentos y velocidades de los hablantes y el oyente puede practicar sus propias habilidades de escucha fuera del aula.

Originalidad/Valor: Los profesores pueden usarlos para resolver problemas para que los estudiantes practiquen sus habilidades auditivas en el aula, y aquellos que quieran practicar sus habilidades auditivas pueden aplicar estos
métodos o practicar ellos mismos para mejorar sus habilidades auditivas. Sin embargo, esta investigación todavía tiene algunas debilidades.

**Palabras clave:** Habilidades de Comprensión Auditiva en Inglés, Acento del Hablante, Velocidad del Hablante, Nuevo Vocabulario, Conocimiento del Oyente, Estudiantes Universitarios, Tailandia.

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1 INTRODUCTION

In this evolving world, technology allows people from all over the world to connect with others. Therefore, people need to use an international language in order to communicate (Nualsri, 2012). English is widely regarded as an international language that serves as a global communication bridge. In addition, it has a significant role in international contexts where people from various linguistic, cultural, and national backgrounds interact and communicate with one another. Furthermore, the recent development of the internet and online communication has resulted in recent years to the increase of the number of opportunities to use English for international communication (Matsuda, 2012). Additionally, it is also important in other fields such as business, economics, especially in education. English plays a larger role in developing students' potential to be more competent. In terms of a future career path, those with a high proficiency in English always have a better chance than others when applying for jobs. As can be seen, many companies specify applicants' English proficiency in their qualifications. As previously stated, English plays an important role not only in education but also in a variety of other areas, such as working or communicating as global communication, which necessitates the acquisition of fluency in English skills, both productive and receptive.

There are four types of English skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Thus, proficiency in English for communication must include the four skills listed above. To begin, listening is the ability that indicates how the listener understands what the speaker is saying by using prior experience with the ability to distinguish, understand the pronunciation vocabulary, and grammatical structures. Secondly, speaking is the ability to communicate with others, and the speaker must have knowledge of pronunciation and grammar by using socially, culturally, or contextually appropriate words. Third, reading is the interaction between the author and the reader, with perception and understanding as the author and reader's abilities. If you understand the content that the author wishes to convey, it demonstrates that the reader perceives the author.
Finally, writing is the ability to express one's thoughts in words, in grammatically correct sentences (Aydoğan & Akbarov, 2014). As a result, all four skills are required in learning English to be able to communicate and receive messages in a complete and accurate manner.

Listening accounts for 40-50 percent of the time spent; speaking accounts for 25-30 percent of the time spent; reading accounts for 11-16 percent of the time spent; and writing accounts for approximately 9 percent of the time spent (Mendelsohn, 1994). Today, it is difficult to deny that listening skills is important in improving one's speaking ability. Listening isn't just about how people hear words; it's also about how they respond to the person or people with whom they're conversing (Amin, 2011). As a result, improving one's listening ability has been shown to improve one's other language skills such as reading, speaking, and writing (Pearson & Fielding, 1991; Rost, 2011; Yalcinkaya, Muluk, & Ashin, 2009). It can be seen that if some students are struggling with listening comprehension, which may be the cause of students' inability to grasp the main idea, both as a first skill in learning English, and this problem reveals causes and barriers to language skill development.

Needless to say, English is the most widely spoken and written language in the world, so students who are unable to communicate in English, particularly through listening, may be considered unable to understand or communicate both inside and outside the classroom. As a result, this problem has arisen among Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna (RMUTL) Tak students studying English for International Communication (EIC), which is true that some students struggle with their listening skills. When there is a problem with listening, other skills such as speaking, reading, and writing suffer as well. That is why it is critical to conduct research on the factors and problems that affect listening comprehension skill in order to understand the factors and causes of listening problems and to be able to apply them to solve listening problems. As a consequence, the aims of this research are to investigate the factors that affect listening comprehension and to identify the problems that affect listening comprehension in order to improve English listening comprehension skills, with a focus on English for International Communication (EIC) students as representatives of Thai English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners because they have taken at least one listening course. Their experiences with listening courses provide the benefit of influencing factors and problems toward listening comprehension, allowing them to improve their listening comprehension skills both inside and outside the classroom, which are education, work, and daily life.
1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To investigate the significant contributing factors influencing listening comprehension ability of EIC students at RMUTL Tak, Thailand.
2. To discover the existing problems affecting listening comprehension ability of EIC students at RMUTL Tak, Thailand

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study discloses students' perspectives of the factors that influence English listening comprehension and analyze the difficulties in listening comprehension that students of English for International Communication face in their daily lives while learning, practicing, or listening. The outcomes of this study will be beneficial to not only students, but also teachers and others who want to enhance their listening skills. The findings reveal the aspects and issues that affect listening abilities that students should be aware of and address in order to improve their English listening skills in the classroom and in everyday scenarios. Furthermore, this study provides teachers with information and benefits in order for them to be aware of the factors and problems that contribute to their students' listening problems, allowing them to improve and manage appropriate teaching materials and pedagogy, as well as classroom management and environment for the listening course. It can also be used as a guideline for people looking to enhance their listening abilities. Furthermore, the findings and discussions in this study will be beneficial to individuals who desire to undertake research on the barriers to improvement in English listening skills or similar subjects, as well as use them as secondary data for future research.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Listening, according to Rost (2002), is the process of receiving what the speaker actually says, creating meaning through involvement, imagination, and empathy, as well as constructing and representing meaning, negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding. Listeners must be able to decipher the message in order to listen effectively, the ability to make meaning through a variety of strategies and interactive processes, and depending on the communication's objective, the ability to respond to what is stated in a variety of ways. Listening includes
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listening carefully to one's ideas, feelings, and objectives. According to Anderson and Lynch (1988), debate over what constitutes effective listening “understanding 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” (p.6). Underwood (1989) condensed the definition of listening to "the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear" (p. 1). Mendelsohn (1994) points out that, in listening, a competent listener must be able to comprehend the speaker's intentions and in addition to other abilities include processing linguistic forms such as speech speed and fillers, managing listening in an interaction, understanding the entire message provided by the discourse, understanding the message without being able to understand every word, and recognizing different genres. Purdy (1997) defined listening as "the active and dynamic process of attending, perceiving, interpreting, remembering, and responding to the expressed (verbal and nonverbal), needs, concerns, and information offered by other human beings" (p. 8). Listening assists us in comprehending the world around us. This is one of the most important components of successful communication (Rost, 2009). Jafari and Hashim (2015) underlined that listening is a means of receiving comprehensible information and listening takes up more than half of the time students dedicate to learning a foreign language.

Brown and Yule (1983) and Hamouda (2013) stated that individual understanding of what he has heard is referred to as listening comprehension and the ability of the listener to repeat the text, despite the fact that the listener may repeat the sound without understanding it. The term "listening comprehension" has been defined in different approaches. Listening comprehension, according to Rost (2002) and Hamouda (2013), is an interactive process in which listeners participate in the construction of meaning. Through sound discrimination, listeners comprehend the oral information, previous knowledge, grammatical structures, stress and intonation, and the other linguistic or non-linguistic clues (as cited in Pourhosein Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Additionally, Ziane (2011), listening comprehension necessitates a higher focus and concentration and quick comprehension. Many factors should be taken into consideration when listening. It's all about the context, facial emotions, and body language. It is critical for listeners to understand what is being communicated by speakers. When people are engaged in communication, nine percent of their time is spent to writing, sixteen percent reading, thirty percent speaking, and forty-five percent listening, demonstrating the importance of listening in the communication process (Hedge, 2000). According to Doff (1995) Listening
has a substantial impact on the development of speech. That is, we cannot improve our speaking capacity without improving our listening skills. It will be very easy for a learner to listen to the radio, study, watch movies, or speak with foreigners if he has a good listening skill in English. To increase this ability, learners need to have a lot of practice and exposure to English. There is a link between listening to music and learning new things language and its learning. When two students are compared, one lives in a country where the target language is also spoken as a first language and the other is being a resident of a country where English is only spoken in academic settings. The distinction is the first learner is able to absorb English more readily, efficiently, and quickly than the second learner. As a consequence, students require as much English language exposure as feasible. According to Weinrauch & Swanda Jr. (1975), listening is the most crucial type of communication, but it is often neglected; “probably more attention should be directed to the subject of listening. Both students and the businessmen may need to further recognize the importance of this communicative function” (p. 27). Sypher et al (1989) said “even though listening plays an important part in the communication process, it has received comparatively little attention from communication researchers” (p. 293). In addition, it was found that learners also used top-down (the way to understand what is heard by mainly relying on background knowledge or common sense) and metacognitive strategies which are closely related to the learners’ listening ability (Teng, 1998).

2.1 LISTENING DIFFICULTIES

Listeners are exposed to natural spoken language when communicating. In terms of language features, it differs from the written one. (Richards, 2008) furthermore, spoken language is always in real time. Listeners have no control over the rate at which the speakers speak, and they can’t foresee what they’ll hear ahead of time. They must quickly evaluate the meaning of the speech, and as a result, the majority of them struggle with fast speech rates, which often results in muddled pronunciation. Listening as taught in class is not the same as listening in real life. (Rixon, 1986 cited in Abedin, Majlish & Akter, 2009), as a result, hearing issues may arise. Vocabulary and grammatical rules, speech rate, and topic familiarity are the main language and language-related characteristics that influence listening comprehension.

Language acquisition necessitates a thorough understanding of vocabulary and grammar. Grammar frameworks help grasp the group of words in sentences, while vocabulary is utilized to communicate meaning. Both of them, on the other hand, make listening more
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difficult. Furthermore, according to Kijpoonphol's (2008) research, vocabulary, idioms, slang, and abbreviated words can be impediments to listening comprehension. This is in line with Goh's research (1999, cited in Tian, 2002) which looked into the listening challenges of ESL college students in Singapore and discovered that a big amount of unfamiliar vocabulary had a significant impact on high and low proficiency students' listening ability in terms of comprehension blocks. This is consistent with Othman's (2005) findings, which indicated that learners were unable to answer a question after hearing it because they attempted to struggle with unfamiliar terms, causing the process of deciphering the meaning to halt immediately, because it is challenging to understand speech in a short period of time (Green, 2004). L2 listeners must intentionally focus on hearing information in a target language by thinking quickly in order to cope with the fast rate of genuine speech in order to discern the meaning (Buck, 2001). According to Goh’s (2000) study of language learners' listening comprehension issues, two-thirds of the subjects quickly forgot what had been said to them, even though they tended to catch the meaning of words, which could cause them to completely lose comprehension of listening texts, including the main idea. When the texts are interpreted quickly enough, retrieving knowledge about the topic is a conscious process that can be gradually developed into an automated one. Listeners who are familiar with the activities or listening input will take less time to comprehend it and will react to the questions or input more quickly. As a result, the closer the listeners get to the automatic state, the more comprehension and answers they can elicit. Conversely, if the automatic state cannot be reached—if there is failure to get the overall meaning within a certain amount of time, listeners’ responses will be delayed (Buck, 2001).

Other language and language related factors can be generally classified into five major types: linguistic features (e.g. flexible informal and reduced forms, incomplete sentences, simple conjunctions, liaison, elision, blending, assimilation, dialects, idioms, slang, fillers, pauses, hesitations, phonological modification and colloquial words), message characteristics (e.g. academic or non-academic, explicit or implicit, difficulty levels, types of input), speakers (e.g. pronunciation, accent, intonation, redundant utterances, pace, volume, pauses), listeners (e.g. proficiency level, educational and cultural background, prior knowledge, concentration, anxiety, boredom, tiredness, illness), and environment (e.g. physical setting, noise, background noise) (Underwood, 1989). All of these factors can contribute to a difficulty in listening.

Other factors that affect listening comprehension are not related to communication, because Thailand is a monolingual country where English is not widely spoken, most Thai
pupils are not exposed to native English speakers (Kongsom, 2009; Wiriyachitra, n.d.). This is a significant external issue that contributes to Thai students' poor listening abilities. The backwash effect from the university entrance examination is another significant issue to consider, because listening is not part of the entrance exam, it is rarely taught seriously in primary and secondary schools (Matsumoto, 2008).

2.2 FACTORS IN LISTENING

Boyle (1984) divided the components that affect listening comprehension into Characteristics of the Speaker and the Listener. Boyle (1984) divided the characteristics of speakers into four categories: 1) language competence, 2) speaker production; pronunciation, accent, variation, voice, 3) speed of delivery, and 4) prestige and personality of the speaker. The ability of the speakers to communicate in their native or non-native language has an impact on the learner's comprehension. In terms of the spoken feature, numerous aspects of the spoken features of the language, particularly of the speech characteristics of native speakers, can make sound perception difficult. These characteristics include accent and pronunciation. The speed with which information is delivered is another factor that has a significant impact on listening comprehension. If the speaker speaks too quickly, it is difficult for the low-level listeners to understand what is being said. The speaker's popularity and personality may be difficult for listeners to understand what the speaker is saying if the speaker fails to address the above important points that are necessary for comprehension.

Moreover, Rost (2011) also summarized four factors: the medium of the input, the nature of the input, the nature of the evaluation task, and individual listener factors. First, the input media can be a video or audio-only presentation, or a mix of the two with graphic or text enhancement. The second is the nature of the input, which includes dialect, speech rate, duration, background, prepositional density, and redundancy. Third, the assessment task's nature includes the use of visual context, the amount of context provided, the clarity of instructions, the availability of question previews, and different sorts of thinking processes. The final one is individual listener factors, such as memory, curiosity, background knowledge, motivation, and willingness to take the test, are the final considerations. Comprehending what you're listening is a hard process. A variety of factors influence one's understanding of the method. Alderson et al. (2006), Bridley and Slatyer (2002), Kostin (2004), Ying-hui (2006),
Wagner (2010), Rost (2011), and others have synthesized a number of factors that are likely to influence test performance and interpretation.

2.3 PROBLEMS IN LISTENING

Many studies have focused on the various problems and challenges that language learners face when it comes to listening comprehension (Goh, 2000). Underwood (1989) listed the following impediments to listening comprehension:

1. Listeners have no control over the speed at which spoken information is delivered. He says, "Many English language learners believe that the greatest difficulty with listening comprehension is that the listener cannot control how quickly a speaker speaks" (Underwood, 1989, p. 16).
2. In listening skills, listeners cannot always have words repeated to them. This is a severe issue in educational settings. Students do not have control over whether or not to replay a recording or a segment of a recording in the classroom. Teachers decide what to repeat and when to repeat listening passages; yet, it is difficult for teachers to determine whether pupils have absorbed any given element of what they have listened (Underwood, 1989, p. 17).
3. Most listeners have a limited vocabulary. The speaker may use words that the audience is unfamiliar with. Listeners occasionally come across an unfamiliar word, which causes them to pause and consider its meaning, causing them to miss the next part of the speech.
4. Listeners may be blind to the signals that the speaker is shifting from one thought to another. Discourse markings such as "second" or "then" used in formal contexts or lectures are fairly evident to the listener, providing the sense that the speaker is shifting the topic and pauses, gestures, increased loudness, an obvious change in pitch, or various intonation patterns are more ambiguous in informal contexts or spontaneous interactions. These signs are easily missed, especially by inexperienced listeners, and
5. listeners may lack background knowledge. Even if the listener can understand the surface of the text, he or she may have trouble understanding everything. Unless they are familiar with the context and Listeners from different cultures can readily misread nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, nods, gestures, or voice tone. Sixth, listening to a foreign language can be difficult for listeners. Even the tiniest lapse in focus can drastically impede comprehension when it comes to listening comprehension. Conversation is simpler when student is interested in the topic of the listening passage; yet, even if they are interested, students may find listening to be exhausting because it involves a great deal of work to follow...
the meaning. Seventh, learners may have developed specific learning habits, such as the need to comprehend each and every word.

Nguyen Thi Xuyen (2018) investigated “Factors Affecting English Listening Comprehension: Perceptions of English-major Students at HUFI”. Listening skill, especially listening comprehension, plays an important role in the process of learning a foreign language in general, and English language learning in particular. The research associated with learning and teaching English listening skills has been of increasing interest in Vietnam recently. However, research with respect to factors affecting English listening comprehension of English-major students at HUFI is still limited. Therefore, this study is conducted with the aims to investigate listening comprehension problems encountered by first-year English major students at HUFI. Questionnaires and focus-group interviews are used as main instruments to collect data. Among the surveyed factors, the main causes of problems are speaker's fast rate of speech, listener's limited knowledge of English linguistic features such as pronunciation, contractions, accents and discourse markers, listener's lack of listening strategies and concentration, and the effect of noisy classrooms resulted from badly-equipped classrooms. Based on the findings, the study proposes some recommendations for teachers and students to help students develop more effective learning strategies and eventually improve their English listening comprehension.

Thao Quoc Tran and Tham My Duong (2020) explored “Insights into Listening Comprehension Problems: A Case Study in Vietnam. Listening is seen to be the most difficult of the four macro language skills in EFL learning and instruction”. EFL learners have experienced difficulties with English listening comprehension due to a variety of impediments. As a result, the goal of this study was to assess how students and teachers viewed English listening comprehension challenges among Vietnamese high school students. The study involved 368 eleventh grade students who completed a questionnaire and 8 EFL teachers who participated in semi-structured interviewing at a high school in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The results from both the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews indicated that almost all of the eleventh graders at a Vietnamese high school encountered several listening problems in their listening process. First, these high school students faced some perception problems as they could not understand English pronunciation or control the speed of the spoken material.

Asriati, (2017) conducted “Factors Affecting Listening Comprehension Achievement of students”. This study was undertaken at the Muhammadiyah University of Makassar with the goal of identifying the elements that influence students' listening comprehension
achievement and determining which factor is the most important. The focus of this study was on the listener and speaker characteristics that contributed to the issues. This study used a descriptive research method. The population of this research was the third-semester students of English department at the Muhammadiyah University of Makassar. The data collection instrument utilized in this study was a questionnaire, which was then distributed to the sample to be filled out. The findings highlight issues such as an inability to recognize speech and slang, a lack of understanding of abbreviated words, and an inability to respond. Questions that demand a lengthy response finding answers to questions causes a loss of focus and as well as the rate of speaking.

“Factors Affecting College EFL Learners’ Listening Comprehension and Listening Problems” by Janet Yu-gi Chao, (2013). This study revealed that listening comprehension was critical for effective spoken language communication. Comprehending English speech was, nonetheless, a difficult problem for EFL students in Taiwan. The goal of this study was to look into the English listening performance and issues of non-English majors. A total of 75 college students took part in the research. Finally, this analysis relied on sixty-eight reliable data sources. The instruments comprised of a General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) at the intermediate level and a Listening Comprehension Problem Questionnaire (LCPQ). The results revealed that, first and foremost, the majority of the subjects (62 percent) did not achieve the intermediate level passing mark. In addition, all college students highlighted input factor and listener factors as the most frequently encountered listening challenges, such as easily forgetting the content while encountering new terms, extended listening texts, and not understanding which method to employ.

3 METHODOLOGY

This section contains an explanation of the research process which covers research type, research tools, participants, data collection procedures and methods of data analysis. It was a quantitative approach.

3.1 PARTICIPANTS

The data was obtained from the participants conducting a questionnaire in order to investigate the factors and to reveal problems affecting English of International Communication
students’ English listening comprehension skills. The participants in this study were 46 students, the 3rd – 4th students majoring in English of International Communication students as follows: 28 third-year students, and 18 fourth-year students, Department of Liberal Arts, Faculty of Business Administration and Liberal Arts, Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna Tak, Thailand. Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling strategy, was used to select participants for this study in order to answer the research questions and meet the study's objectives. As Patton (1987, 1990) as cited in Johnson and Christensen (2008) indicated that “purposeful sampling is used to describe the same process because individuals or cases those are selected provide the information needed to address the purpose of the research”. The participants were chosen by the researchers with an emphasis on English for International Communication (EIC) students who have taken at least one listening course as well as English courses that include listening skills. According to their previous experiences with listening courses, they will be able to provide the benefit of influencing elements and challenges related to listening comprehension. This provides useful information for increasing listening comprehension skills both inside and outside of the classroom, in areas such as education, work, and everyday life.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the significant contributing factors that influence listening comprehension ability of 3rd - 4th EIC students at RMUTL Tak, Thailand?
2. What are the existing problems that affect listening comprehension ability of 3rd - 4th EIC students at RMUTL Tak, Thailand?

3.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

For this research, researchers created a questionnaire for collecting data from the participants to investigate and explore the factors affecting English of International Communication students’ English listening comprehension skills.

The questionnaire in this study was adapted from “Factors Affecting English Listening Comprehension: Perceptions of English-major Students at HUFI” (Nguyen Thi Xuyen, 2018) which was conducted by using the 5-point Likert scale of rating. The original Likert scale used a series of questions with five response alternatives: (1) strongly approve, (2) approve, (3)
undecided, (4) disapprove, and (5) strongly disapprove (Likert, 1932) which was adapted to this study for rating score and there was one open question about the problems that students encountered while listening to grouping the problems.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This study was quantitative approach. The data was gathered through an online questionnaire as a research tool for this study created was adapted from Nguyen Thi Xuyen (2018). The questionnaire was examined and improved by three English teachers for verifying and analyzing the questionnaire's content validity using the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) approach (Turner & Carlson, 2003), and a result of the questionnaire's content validity, the average Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) for the items in this questionnaire was 1.00. Then, the questionnaires delivered to the 10 students in the trial as the pilot study. The data for the questionnaire's reliability was analyzed using the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951) by using the SPSS program version 16. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.866 in the pilot study, indicating that the questionnaire interpreted by George and Mallery (2003) was good, as shown in table below:

Table 1
The Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient for the reliability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability statistics</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>Items (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.866</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was suitable for the internal consistency according to the table shown in the table 2:

Table 2
Cronbach’s Alpha Score Interpretation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>Internal Consistency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.9≤ α</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.8≤ α &lt; 0.9</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.7≤ α &lt; 0.8</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.6≤ α &lt; 0.7</td>
<td>Questionable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5≤ α &lt; 0.6</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>α &lt; 0.5</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: George and Mallery, 2003
Furthermore, the data in part II was analyzed by using the statistical computer program and Microsoft Excel with descriptive statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) for each item whereas the data in part III was analyzed data using Grounded theory- the open coding to breakdown the data as colored coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1988) from the open-ended question and then using frequency distribution (f) which is descriptive statistics. Thenceforth, the finding of factors and problems with English listening comprehension skill will be interpreted and summarized.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The quantitative data derived from 46 questionnaires which were gathered. Afterward, they were collected and analyzed for the mean or average ($\bar{x}$) and Standard Deviation (S.D.) by using the statistical computer program and Microsoft Excel Program. Consequently, the mean score interpretation according to each item to indicate the factors affecting English of International Communication students’ English listening comprehension skills will be as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Mean Score Interpretation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.21 – 5.00</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.21 – 4.20</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.61 – 3.20</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.81 – 2.60</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 – 1.80</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Moidunny, 2009

Whereas the Grounded theory- the open coding to breakdown the data as colored coding (Strauss & Corbin,1988) and the data was analyzed using a rating score and MS Excel to provide the frequency (f) and calculate the percentage (%) to reveal the problems that English of International Communication students face when listening.
4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RESULTS

4.1.1 Factors affecting English listening comprehension

On an account of answering the research question 1, the factors that affect English listening comprehension can be divided into four main major categories: factors relating to listening to text, factors relating to linguistic features, factors relating to the speakers, and factors relating to listeners. The mean and standard deviation for each of the factors affecting English listening comprehension were shown in Table 4. The mean (\(\bar{x}\)) 1.00–1.80 indicates factors affecting English listening comprehension at a very low level; the mean (\(\bar{x}\)) 1.81-2.60 indicates factors affecting English listening comprehension at a low level; the mean (\(\bar{x}\)) 2.61-3.20 indicates factors affecting English listening comprehension at a medium level; the mean (\(\bar{x}\)) 3.21-4.20 indicates factors affecting English listening comprehension at a high level, and the mean (\(\bar{x}\)) 4.21-5.00 indicates factors affecting English listening comprehension at a very high level (Moidunny, 2009). The finding explores the overall factors affecting highlevel (\(\bar{x} = 3.80, \text{S.D.} = 0.763\)) English listening comprehension.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistic of factors affecting English listening comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Affecting English Listening Comprehension</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factors relating to listening to text</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.724</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors relating to linguistic features</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors relating to speakers</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors relating to listeners</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.726</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.763</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 indicated that mean and standard deviation were classified into four main categories that affected English listening comprehension of 3rd-4th year EIC students, which were factors relating to listening to text, factors relating to linguistic features, factors relating to the speakers, and factors relating to listeners. Each factor had a mean (\(\bar{x}\)) of 3.85, 3.66, 3.94, and 3.76, and a standard deviation (S.D.) of 0.724, 0.809, 0.796, and 0.726, respectively. The average mean of factors affecting English listening comprehension was 3.80 and the average standard deviation of affecting English listening comprehension was 0.763.
Another point worth mentioning is that the findings about the factors that affect English listening comprehension can be divided into four major categories: factors relating to listening to text, factors relating to linguistic features, factors relating to speakers, and factors relating to listeners, which can be exhibited by each factor as follows:

### 4.1.2 Factors relating to listening to text

Table 5 shows the mean and standard deviation for each item's listening to text factors. According to the mean score interpretation (Moidunny, 2009) which was shown in table 3, the factors relating to listening to text were high level ($\bar{x} = 3.85$).

**Table 5**

*Descriptive statistics of factors relating to listening to text*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Affecting English Listening Comprehension</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Factors relating to listening to text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 It is difficult to comprehend listening that contain a large number of unfamiliar words</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.632</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 Difficult grammatical structures</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.765</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3 Unfamiliar topics</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.705</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.4 It's difficult to comprehend the meaning of a lengthy listening text</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.778</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.5 Previous experience and knowledge to comprehend spoken text while listening</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.643</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.6 The listening text difficult to comprehend.</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.826</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.85</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.724</strong></td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noticeable from Table 5 that the total mean score of all the factors relating to listening to text was at a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.85$). Participants responded that the listeners used previous experience and knowledge to comprehend spoken text while listening the most ($\bar{x} = 4.17$). It was followed by listeners finding it difficult to comprehend listening that contained a large number of unfamiliar words ($\bar{x} = 4.00$), followed by It's difficult for listeners to comprehend the meaning of a lengthy listening text ($\bar{x} = 3.80$), The listening comprehension of the listeners was affected by difficult grammatical structures, and when the listener is unfamiliar with the topic, the listeners find it difficult to listen and understand the text being listened to. Both of the above factors had the same mean ($\bar{x} = 3.76$), and the last factor, the listeners found that the incomprehensible text had the least mean ($\bar{x} = 3.63$). The highest standard deviation (S.D.) was 0.826 and the lowest standard deviation (S.D.) was 0.632.
4.1.3 Factors relating to linguistic features

Table 6 exhibited the mean and standard deviation for factors relating to listening to linguistic features in each item. According to the mean score interpretation (Moidunny, 2009) which was shown in table 3, the results represented that the factors related to linguistic features in this study were high level (\(\bar{x} = 3.66\)).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Affecting English Listening Comprehension</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Factors relating to linguistic features</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 Familiar pronunciation but can’t remember the words.</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.806</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 It is difficult to comprehend when speakers use shortened forms of words like wanna, gotta.</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.015</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3 Unfamiliar words put a stop in listening to consider the meaning of the word.</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.687</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.4 Slang and idiomatic terms are difficult for me to comprehend.</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>0.737</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.5 If the phrases are excessively long and complex, it is difficult to follow the sequence of the spoken text.</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 6, factors relating to linguistic features were at a high level (\(\bar{x} = 3.66\)), and for each verse, listeners find that if the phrases are excessively long and complex, they find it difficult to follow the sequence of the spoken text while listening. The highest (\(\bar{x} = 3.93\)) was an average, followed by slang and idiomatic terms that make it difficult for the listener to comprehend what they are listening to (\(\bar{x} = 3.89\)). When listeners come across an unfamiliar word, they stop listening to consider the meaning of the word (\(\bar{x} = 3.80\)). Listeners found the familiar pronunciation. But they can't remember the words (\(\bar{x} = 3.43\)). The lowest mean is that the listeners find it difficult to comprehend when speakers use shortened forms of words like wanna, gotta (\(\bar{x} = 3.29\)). The maximum standard deviation (S.D.) was 1.015 whereas the minimum standard deviation (S.D.) was 0.687.

4.1.4 Factors relating to speakers

Table 7 displayed the mean and standard deviation for factors relating to listening to speakers in each item. According to the mean score interpretation (Moidunny, 2009) which was
shown in table 3, the findings showed that the factors related to speakers in this study were high level ($\bar{x} = 3.94$).

**Table 7**

**Descriptive statistics of factors relating to speakers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Affecting English Listening Comprehension</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Factors relating to speakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 It is difficult to comprehend the meaning of words that aren't pronounced clearly.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.760</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 It is difficult to comprehend natural words that are full of hesitation and pause such as Um, Err.</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.878</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 It is hard to comprehend when speakers speak too quickly.</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>0.706</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4 It is difficult to comprehend when speakers incorporate various accents.</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.94</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.796</strong></td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As presented in Table 7, the factors relating to speakers are all at high level ($\bar{x} = 3.81$). Listeners find it hard to comprehend when speakers speak too quickly, and have the highest average of the factors relating to speakers ($\bar{x} = 4.10$) followed by listeners finding it difficult to comprehend when speakers incorporate various accents ($\bar{x} = 4.04$). Listeners find it difficult to comprehend the meaning of words that aren't pronounced clearly ($\bar{x} = 4.00$). Finally, listeners find it difficult to comprehend natural words that are full of hesitation and pauses, such as "um," which has the lowest meaning ($\bar{x} = 3.63$). The highest standard deviation (S.D.) was 0.878 and the lowest standard deviation (S.D.) was 0.706.

**4.1.5 Factors relating to listeners**

Table 8 indicated display the mean and standard deviation for factors relating to listening to listeners in each item. According to the mean score interpretation (Moidunny, 2009) which was shown in table 3, the results explored that the factors related to speakers in this study were high level ($\bar{x} = 3.76$).
Table 8

Descriptive statistics of factors relating to listeners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Affecting English Listening Comprehension</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Factors related to listeners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 It is difficult to obtain a general comprehension of the spoken text on the first listen.</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 It's difficult to guess what will happen next while listening</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.741</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 It is difficult to remember words or phrases that just listened</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4 It is difficult to listening to English without transcripts.</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.665</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.5 Ability to comprehend is limited due to lack of listening skills and methods</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.789</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.6 It is difficult to respond to questions that require more than a short response such as yes or no</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.765</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.7 It is difficult to comprehend the spoken text because it's not in listeners’ interested topics.</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.785</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.8 Get nervous and worried</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>0.714</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.9 Stop listening because of getting the difficulty to comprehending a listening text.</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.726</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The factors relating to listeners are all at a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.76$), as shown in Table 8. The highest mean was when the listener didn't comprehend the spoken text while listening. The listener got nervous and worried ($\bar{x} = 4.02$). Then, when the listener had difficulty comprehending a listening text, they immediately stopped listening ($\bar{x} = 3.91$). Listening to English without transcripts is difficult for listeners ($\bar{x} = 3.84$). Listeners find it difficult to obtain a general comprehension of the spoken text on the first listen ($\bar{x} = 3.82$). Listeners find it difficult to respond to questions that require more than a short response such as yes or no ($\bar{x} = 3.76$). The listener finds it difficult to comprehend the spoken text because it's not something that the listener is interested in ($\bar{x} = 3.69$). It is difficult for listeners to guess what will happen next while they listen and the listener's ability to comprehend what they are listening to is limited by a lack of listening skills and methods, and the factors affecting listening for both of these are averaged ($\bar{x} = 3.63$). The lowest mean item was that listeners find it difficult to remember words or phrases that they've just listened ($\bar{x} = 3.58$). The highest standard deviation (S.D.) was 0.804 and the lowest standard deviation (S.D.) was 0.607.

4.1.6 Problems affecting listening comprehension

This research found that there were lots of problems which were affected English listening comprehension of 3rd-4th year EIC students while they encountered listening or practicing comprehension. These problems were listed in the following table:
Table 9

Problems that arise when listeners encounter listening or practicing for English listening comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 New words</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Accents</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 The speakers speak too fast.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 The listeners did not understand at all.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 The listeners can listen but they can’t translate.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 The pronunciation of speech is unclear.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Word linking</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Catch words or sentences.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Meditation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Phrases</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Slangs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td><strong>68</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 shows the frequency (f) and percentage (%) of problems that happen when encountering or practicing listening for English listening comprehension. To start with, the outstanding problem which had the highest frequency was the speaker's accent (f = 21, 31%), followed by the speakers’ speed in speaking, which caused the listener to not be able to catch up (f = 15, 22%). The next problems that occurred equally in frequency were that the speaker used new or unfamiliar words and the listeners did not understand at all (f = 10, 15%). The word linking was a rising problem (f = 3, 4%) whereas problems of listening but not being able to translate, the speaker's pronunciation is unclear when speaking and having difficulty grasping words had the same frequency (f = 2, 3%). Lastly, the meditation of the listeners while listening, the listening phrase is too long, and the speaker uses slang, causing the listener were also listening problems with the lowest frequency (f = 1, 1%).

4.2 DISCUSSION

Overall, this study indicates the significant contributing factors influencing the listening comprehension ability of 3rd–4th grade EIC students at RMUTL Tak and the existing problems affecting the listening comprehension ability of 3rd–4th grade EIC students at RMUTL Tak. On the whole, this study found that the significant contributing factors influencing listening comprehension were all at a high level in all factors, which were factors relating to listening to text, factors relating to linguistic features, factors relating to speakers, and factors relating to listeners. On the other hand, there were 11 existing problems arising from the listeners while
they were encountering listening or practicing English listening comprehension that were: new words, accents, the speaker speaks too fast, the listeners did not understand at all, they can listen but they cannot translate, the pronunciation of speech is unclear, the word linking, catching word or sentences, listeners’ meditation, using phrase and using slang, respectively. Regarding the factors and problems raised by the respondents in this study, they were the key points for learners, instructors, or those interested in improving their listening skills to be aware of all of them in order to obtain fruitful results of English competence or English proficiency.

In this day and age, people from all over the world connect with others through many channels of communication, and one such channel is language. As Nualsri (2012) states, people need to use an international language in order to communicate. English is now widely regarded as an international language that serves as a global communication bridge. There are an increasing number of opportunities to use English for international communication (Matsuda, 2012). Because English is the world’s most widely spoken and written language, students who are unable to communicate in English, particularly through listening, may be considered unable to understand or communicate both inside and outside the classroom. It is more crucial in improving students’ potential to be more competent, and it is important not only in education but also in a variety of other areas, such as working or communicating as global communication, which necessitates the acquisition of fluency in English skills, both productive and receptive.

Listening is a receptive skill that students must have in order to understand the message and communicate with others as Weinrauch & Swanda Jr. (1975, p. 27) specified that listening is the most crucial type of communication, but it is often neglected; "probably more attention should be directed to the subject of listening. Students have to be aware of the importance of listening because it plays an important part in the communication process (Sypher et al., 1989, p. 293). Not only listening but also listening comprehension is more essential as well. According to Ziane (2011), it necessitates a higher level of focus and concentration, as well as quick comprehension. When listening, a variety of factors must be considered. It all comes down to context, facial expressions, and body language. It is critical for listeners to comprehend what speakers are saying. Furthermore, when people communicate, they spend 9% of their time writing, 16% reading, 35% speaking, and 45% listening, recognizing the importance of listening in the communication process (Hedge, 2000). It is completely obvious that listening is more important than other skills in communicating with others globally.

As a result, it is worth discussing two interesting points to answer the research questions in this study, which are the significant contributing factors influencing the listening
Factors nd Problems Affecting English Listening Comprehension Skills of EIC Undergraduate Students at RMUTL Tak, Thailand

comprehension ability of 3rd–4th year EIC students at RMUTL Tak and the existing problems affecting the listening comprehension ability of 3rd–4th year EIC students at RMUTL Tak while they are encountering English listening comprehension. With respect to the significant contributing factor, it was the factors relating to speakers that were at a high level. It was the highest ($\bar{x} = 3.94$) of the 4 factors affecting English listening comprehension, which were: (i) factors relating to listening, (ii) factors relating to linguistic feature, (iii) factors relating to speakers and (iv) factors relating to listeners. It indicated that speakers were the most important factor in developing English listening comprehension skills. Another point worth noting was focusing on the factors relating to speakers. The two highest mean scores were 4.10 and 4.00, respectively, for the difficulty of comprehension when speakers speak too quickly and the meaning of words that are not pronounced clearly, including the various accents which led to the difficulty of English listening comprehension and being the obstacles in developing their English listen skills as Alderson et al. (2006), Bridley and Slatyer (2002), Kostin (2004), Ying-hui (2006), Wagner (2010), Rost (2011) comprehending what you're listening is a hard process and it has influence one’s understanding. As a result, the speakers' ability to communicate in their native or non-native language influences the learner's comprehension. In terms of the spoken word, a variety of aspects of the languages spoken features, particularly the speech characteristics of native and non-speakers, can make sound perception difficult. Accent, pronunciation, and so on are examples of these characteristics. Another factor that influences listening comprehension is the rate at which information is delivered. When the speaker speaks too quickly, it is difficult for low-level English students to understand what is being said. According to Boyle (1984), the speaker's popularity and personality. Listeners may struggle to understand what the speaker is saying if the speaker fails to address the above important points that are required for comprehension. Intelligence in general: the intelligence of the speakers influences the listener's comprehension, especially in identifying the topic or main point of the text (Boyle, 1945).

As for the existing problems affecting the listening comprehension ability of 3rd–4th year EIC students at RMUTL Tak, the two highlighted problems that most affected English listening comprehension were the speaker's accent ($f = 21$, 31%) and the speed of speaking—the speaker speaks too fast ($f = 15$, 22%). Accents’ problem may be because the accent of each country is quite different, or different cultures may make it difficult to make the speaker's accent a problem that affects listening comprehension of English. Otherwise, listeners may be unfamiliar with the material. Even if the listener understands the surface of the text, he or she may struggle to
comprehend everything. Listeners from different cultures can easily misinterpret nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, nods, gestures, or voice tone unless they are familiar with the context (Underwood, 1989). Another problem to consider was the speed of speaking. For example, Thai students, especially those who lack practice in their English skills or who have a low proficiency in English, have a problem when the speakers speak too fast. Because they were unable to catch any words or remember words while listening to English comprehension, which led them to lose concentration, according to Asriati (2017) in Factors Affecting Listening Comprehension. The findings explored an inability to recognize speech and slang, a lack of understanding of abbreviated words, and an inability to respond. Questions that demand a lengthy response and finding answers to questions causes a loss of focus as well as the rate of speaking. Therefore, problems encountered during English listening comprehension may be a source of difficulty in developing their English listening comprehension skills, leading them to abandon or disregard the English language.

In conclusion, the findings in this study revealed that the significant contributing factors influencing the listening comprehension ability of 3rd–4th year EIC students at RMUTL Tak and the existing problems affecting the listening comprehension ability of 3rd–4th year EIC students at RMUTL Tak while they were encountering English listening comprehension that came from the speakers, which were the speed of speaking and pronouncing clarity that may come from the accents. So, the ones who need to improve their English listening comprehension should be aware of these factors and problems. However, other factors and problems must also be considered when developing English listening comprehension as well. Additionally, listeners should be aware of all factors and problems that affect their intelligibility and should develop their own listening more or practice listening more. Practice listening to a variety of listening media, such as the news, music, movies, and Ted Talks as one of the listening strategy applied, to become accustomed to and learn more about the various accents and speaker speeds. The more efficient ones used strategies more often as Teng (1998) expressed that learners also used top-down (the way to understand what is heard by mainly relying on background knowledge or common sense) and metacognitive strategies which are closely related to the learners’ listening ability. Consequently, students can practice their own listening skills further outside the classroom and teachers can use these to solve problems for students to practice listening skills in the classroom including those who want to practice listening skills can apply these methods or practice themselves to improve their listening skills.
5 CONCLUSION

The purposes of this study were to examine the significant contributing factors influencing the listening comprehension ability of 3rd - 4th year EIC students who were Thai EFL students at Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna Tak and to discover the existing problems affecting their listening comprehension ability.

1. The findings revealed that the significant factors influencing the listening comprehension ability of 3rd – 4th year EIC students at RMUTL Tak, Thailand composed of 4 factors: (1) Factors relating to listening to text, (2) Factors relating to linguistic features, (3) Factors relating to speakers, and (4) Factors relating to listeners.

2. The existing problems affecting the listening comprehension ability of 3rd – 4th year EIC students at RMUTL Tak while they were encountering English listening comprehension composed of 4 problems: (1) Accents of the speakers, (2) Speaking speed of the speakers, (3) New Vocabulary, and (4) English knowledge of the listeners.

5.1 RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study will help students recognize and seek solutions to improve their English listening skills in the classroom and in everyday situations. Furthermore, this research will provide teachers with information and benefits in order for them to be aware of the factors and problems causing their students' hearing problems in order to improve and manage appropriate teaching materials and pedagogy, including classroom management and environment for the listening course. Additionally, it may serve as a guideline for those who want to improve their listening skills. Finally, the study's findings will benefit individuals' education, work, and everyday communication in the present and future.

Therefore, those who want to improve their English listening comprehension should be aware of these factors and problems; however, others factors and problems must be considered when developing English listening comprehension as well. Furthermore, listeners should be aware of all factors and problems that affect their intelligibility and should develop their own listening more or practice listening more for solving the factors and problems exploring in this study, practicing listening to a variety of listening media, such as the news, music, movies, talk shows, speeches or talks: Ted Talks as one of the listening strategy applied, to become accustomed to and learn more about the various accents and speaker speeds and listener can
practice their own listening skills further outside the classroom. Teachers can use these to solve problems for students to practice listening skills in the classroom, and those who want to practice listening skills can apply these methods or practice themselves to improve their listening skills. Nevertheless, this research still has some weaknesses.

Therefore, others who are interested in conducting further research similar to this study should do so and address the following shortcomings (i) this study examines the factors and problems affecting English listening comprehension in only a small group of participants, consisting of one major. So, the further studies should have more participants who come from other majors or faculties. Not only within the university but also expanding to other schools, universities, and even communities to discover the factors and problems on a large scale that can be representative of the region, city, province, or country where English is a foreign language or a lingua franca, (ii) this study's questionnaire was a quantitative approach that relied solely on the questionnaire. To overcome this weakness, future studies should include research tools such as interviews and observations in order to create a mix method approach that includes the "Triangulation method" for the further study of the article's reliability and validity, and (iii) the further study should compare the results of the study from various groups of participants as a contrastive analysis to make the result concrete and able to develop, encourage, and enhance the skills of those who are interested in improving their English listening comprehension skills.

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