TEACHING ENGLISH TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN VIETNAM:

STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPETENCE AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

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STATEMENT OF CANDIDATE

This thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree at any other university or institution.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another author except where due reference is made.

An approval for the research has been obtained from the Macquarie University Ethics Committee. The protocol number is: 5201600784

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the differences in English listening competence of urban and rural high school students in Northern Vietnam. English listening competence is critical to young people's employabibity in contexts where English is used. It is affected by a number of factors in the teaching and learning process, such as learners' background, and social and pedagogical factors (Field, 2010; Goh, 1999). This mixed-methods case study was conducted in English classes in two high schools, in urban and rural regions of Vietnam. Both student and teacher data were collected through administering a listening test and questionnaire for students, plus a questionnaire and follow-up interviews to explore teachers' perceptions. The collected data then was analyzed by thematic coding and constant comparative method. The results reveal a remarkable divergence in listening competence between students in the two contexts. Three groups of factors interfere with students' achievement in their English listening skills. These are teacher factors (teacher beliefs and frustration), school factors (exposure time), and social factors (career orientation, perception of the value of English, and learning conditions). The study draws some conclusions for pedagogy and teacher development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (English)

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

L2:   Second Language

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Annually, after the National General Examination, Vietnamese newspapers contribute their voices to analyzing the phenomenon of students' low scores in all exam subjects (Gia Dinh Viet Nam News, 2016; Sai Gon Giai Phong Online, 2016; Vietnamnet, 2016). In particular, in the era of international integration, considerable attention has been paid to the study of English at school (Zing News, 2016). It is reported that, in 2016, the average score of Vietnamese students in their National General Examination in English was 3.48 above 10, the lowest average score among all the exam subjects (Sai Gon Giai Phong Online, 2016). This has highlighted problems in Vietnamese students' English competence, and brought into question the effectiveness of the Vietnamese Government's project entitled, 'Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages in the National Education System, Period 2008 – 2020', into which has been invested more than 450 million US dollars. This government project aims to create significant changes in the teaching and learning of foreign languages in Vietnam (in particular, English). Firstly, it has highlighted the importance of "English and other languages" in the national education system. It also sets new standards for not only teachers but also students. In detail, by 2020, students graduating from primary school, lower secondary school and upper secondary school are expected to achieve certain levels of competence: using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Appendix B), these levels are A1, A2 and B1, respectively (Vietnam Government, 2008). However, in comparison to the students' scores in 2016, these goals appear to be distant in terms of their achievement.

As a teacher of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at a university in the capital of Vietnam, the researcher has noted the differences in English competence between

students originating from different regions, especially in communicative skills such as speaking and listening. This phenomenon has been the concern of some previous studies (Bui & Intaraprasert, 2012; Le & Barnard, 2009). However, this regional divergence appears to be ignored in the project of the government, as the policy does not include any priorities for teachers or students in less advantaged areas. This raises questions of equity in education between rural and urban students, and the consequent exclusion of rural students from employment opportunities due to their lower English levels.

1.1. Aims of the study

In consideration of this problematic context discussed above, the present study aims to investigate the differences in listening competence between rural and urban students, and to explore the expectations, beliefs and attitudes of teachers in these two regions. It suggests some approaches to create equal opportunity in Vietnam EFL, based on the analysis of the data.

In order to achieve these goals, two research questions are proposed:

Research Question 1: How are students' English listening competences different in two upper secondary schools situated in rural and urban areas in Vietnam?

Research Question 2: What are teachers' perceptions of students' performance in English in the two case study schools in Vietnam?

1.2. Significance of the study

While it is a case study, the study provides empirical data related to students' English listening competence in rural and urban upper secondary schools, and investigates the

causes of the difference in outcomes between these two groups of students. The researcher also aims to focus attention on teachers' beliefs, which directly affect student outcomes (Borg, 2003). More importantly, the research can also be considered as the background not only for teachers to improve their profession but for policymakers to narrow the gap between these two groups of participants, to achieve equity in education and opportunity. To provide an understanding of the study's context, a brief overview of education in Vietnam is offered next.

1.3. Context of the study: Education in Vietnam

Before turning to the detailed contents of the study, a description of education in Vietnam is provided to highlight the context in which the study is set.

As a country that has suffered continuous wars, Vietnamese education has been through distinct periods of history. According to Ministry of Education and Training (2014), Vietnamese education can be divided into five periods: before the invasion of France in 1858, from 1858 to 1945, from 1945 to 1975, from 1975 to 1986, and from 1986 up to the present.

Early Vietnamese education was affected heavily by Chinese education and the influence of Confucianism, where education was only for men and elite classes who would serve the King and the country. In 1858, the French colonized Vietnam, and Confucian ideology was replaced by French-Vietnamese education to train civil servants to serve the new government (Q. K. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2008).

On September 2nd, 1945, Ho Chi Minh declared the independence of Vietnam. The government had to combat the illiteracy of most of the population as well as combat the French army. With the determination of erasing illiteracy to make a strong country,

the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam held various classes from day to night and made primary education compulsory for everyone. However, the division of the country into the North and the South caused distinctions in education between these two parts, with a Soviet model of education in the North and an American model of education in the South (Le, 2011).

On April 30th, 1975, Vietnam was reunified, and the South changed its education to match the national education system in the North (Behr, 2005). However, as the result of the war, an economic crisis arose, inhibiting the development of education.

Consequently, in 1986, the Vietnamese government decided to implement an economic liberalization policy. Correspondingly, education was also reformed. Currently, the Vietnamese national education system is divided into three levels, comprising Early Childhood, General Education, and Higher Education. With the perspective that the development of a country must start with its education, annually Vietnam spends a remarkable amount of money on education. For example, from 2009 to 2013, about 12 to 16 per cent of the total expenditure of Vietnam was for education, which comes only second after the expenditure on development investment (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2013). However, this amount of funding is not equal among cities and provinces due to the differences in general funding of regions from the government, and the differences in allocating funding among regions. For instance, in 2013, Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi received about 1.7 billion and 2.5 billion US dollars, respectively, for their general expenditure, which are much higher than other regions in the country (Vietnam Ministry of Finance, 2013). In detail, in 2013, Hanoi spent 15.8% of its budget on education and training (Hanoi Statistics Office, 2013), whereas Vinh Phuc Province, a less developed area, spent only about 10.1% of its

budget on education from a total of about 800 million US dollars (Vinh Phuc Statistics Office, 2013). These differences in the distribution of the budget may be one of the causes of possible divergence in education between rural and urban parts of Vietnam.

1.4. Structure of the study

The study is divided into six chapters: introduction, literature review, research methodology, findings, discussion, and conclusion.

The first chapter clarifies the rationale of the study, provides the educational and social context in which it is set, establishes the goals the researcher needs to achieve, and recognizes the significance of the study.

In Chapter 2, the literature review discusses the theoretical framework the study is based on. This is sociocultural theory, with its two constructs: mediation, and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). These constructs will be analyzed to show their relationship with two issues in EFL: student motivation, and teacher beliefs. After critically investigating the literature on student motivation and teacher beliefs, a discussion of teaching and learning English in Vietnam is offered. As this study focuses on students' listening competence, the pedagogy of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and listening comprehension is analyzed. Afterwards, studies on EFL teaching and learning in rural and urban areas are compared and contrasted, revealing the gap in the literature that this exploration intends to fill.

Chapter 3 focuses on describing the methodology the study is employing in order to achieve the research aims. The participants and instruments used to collect and analyze the data are described in depth. This part also describes the strategies for assuring reliability and validity of the study.

Chapter 4, Findings, presents an analysis of the collected data. With data collected from a test and questionnaire for students, and a questionnaire and interview for teachers, this chapter is presented in three sections, dedicated to each type of data.

In Chapter 5, the findings of the study are viewed from a broader stance with reference to its theoretical framework. This chapter is organized based on the responses to the two research questions; and then, from the theoretical perspective, implications of the study are discussed.

The Conclusion chapter reviews the study's aim, summarizes the literature review, and highlights the methodology. It also summarizes the critical findings of the study in light of the theoretical framework, and then draws conclusions. Finally, after contributions and limitations of the study are clarified, suggestions for further research are offered.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This study investigates possible differences in English listening competence between rural and urban high school students. To provide the study with an informed background and to build on previous research, a review of the literature is necessary. This chapter discusses the theoretical framework that informs the study. The review then introduces the teaching and learning of English in Vietnam and its curriculum, and identifies some fundamental problems, to help readers have a clearer understanding of the Vietnamese context. Due to this study's focus on listening competence, the theory of CLT and listening comprehension will be reviewed, with the problems existing in Vietnam. Differences in outcomes in Vietnamese rural and urban schools are the first and foremost evidence to prove the educational distance between the two contexts, thus studies in this area are taken into consideration. Finally, gaps in the research will be clarified to show the necessity and significance of the study. The conceptual understanding and sequence of the literature review is shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Structure of the literature review
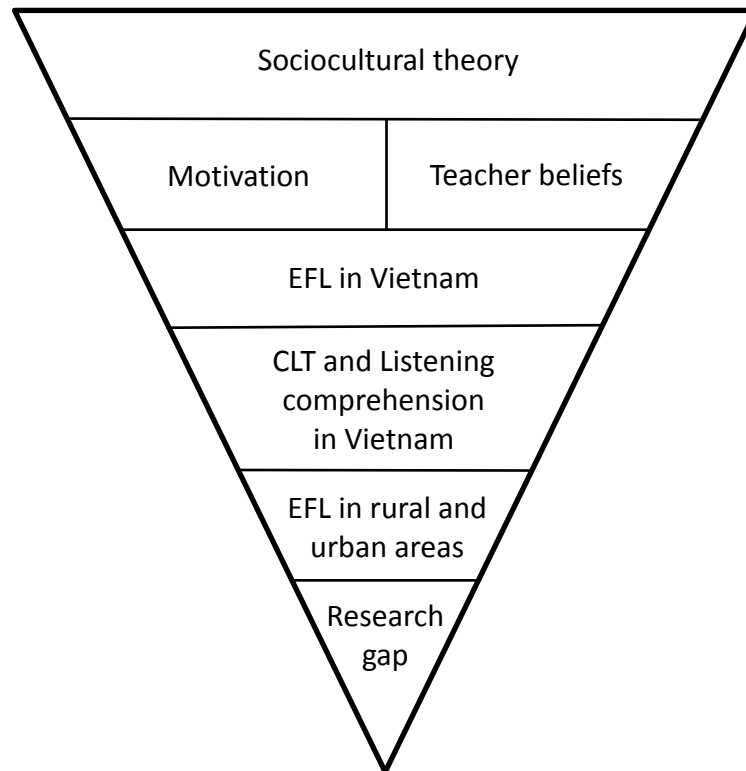
2.1. Theoretical framework

2.1.1. The sociocultural theory

In order to find out the differences in English listening competence between rural and urban students at high school, school settings as well as socio-economic factors are taken into consideration. Therefore, this study is conducted in the light of sociocultural theory, originating from the work of Vygotsky (1978), which concerns developmental processes in relation to social and cultural settings (Lantolf, 2000). It is noteworthy that this sociocultural theory is not just a theory of social and cultural activities of human beings. More importantly, it concerns the development of human minds set in a context (Thorne, 2005). This is reflected most clearly in the concepts of mediation and ZPD.

Firstly, mediation refers to the fact that human beings interact with the surrounding environment thanks to the use of signs and tools (Vygotsky, 1978). Thorne (2005) explains Vygotsky's notion of mediation as human's control over their own behaviour by using and creating artifacts. This process is of great importance "in the construct of activity and generation of high mental process" (Donato & McCormick, 1994, p. 456). Lantolf (2004) adds that the process by which human beings use their tools to control the world in turn affects their activities and then their own minds. As languages are one of the human artifacts (Lantolf, 2000), classroom language learning and learning strategies are the activities of a process of mediation in a community setting (Donato & McCormick, 1994). In other words, it is understood that mediation operates in the relationship between the learner and the learning context, that is, the community. Thus, it is of conceptual relevance to the present study. In addition, with its effect on human minds (learners' thoughts/beliefs in a learning context) in the process of interacting with the world (the process of knowledge acquisition), mediation is believed to have close relationship with learners' motivation.

The second key term in Vygotsky's theory is ZPD. ZPD is the distance between the level of development achieved by individuals themselves and the one achieved through the help of other people (Vygotsky, 1978). Related to this definition, debates on its real meaning have arisen, with some misunderstanding evidence. For example, some scholars have pointed out the resemblance between ZPD and the notion of scaffolding, which is the temporary assistance that teachers provide their students to complete a task so that they can do it alone in the future (Chaiklin, 2003; Gibbons, 2002). However, that is not the true meaning of ZPD, as the latter is not about completing any task but focuses on the developmental process of the learners, with the

quality and changes in quality of assistance, to achieve their full potential in the future (Lantolf, 2000). With this explanation, the role of teacher beliefs and teacher practice are emphasized in the cognitive process of learners. Furthermore, it has established that successful ZPD supports achievement and sense of mastery in learners. This sense of mastery supports student motivation.

2.1.2. Student motivation

In exploring why some learners are successful in their second language acquisition while others are not, Gardner (1960) was one of the first to highlight the importance of motivation and attitudes in second language learning. He considers that, in addition to aptitude, second language proficiency is determined by learners' attitude and motivation. However, he does not present a definition of motivation because of its complexity (Gardner, 1960, 2007). In spite of admitting the complexity of motivation, other scholars have proposed various understandings of it. Motivation can be seen as a state in which potential competences are stimulated, weaknesses are hampered, and consequently the owner achieves his/her goals. This view sees motivation as a guarantee of success (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981). However, Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) argue that, although motivation is a factor that influences people's actions as a way of fulfilling their wishes and desires, it does not guarantee the success of their actions. Despite disagreements in conceptualizing motivation, researchers have reached widespread consensus on the nature of motivation. Motivation determines "the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it, the effort expended on it" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 8). With this feature, motivation presents a crucial role in second language acquisition, as it affects the methods that learners employ in their learning, the frequency with which they use the target language, and the capacity that they

demonstrate in acquiring the language, and as a result, their outcomes (Oxford & Shearin, 1994).

R. M. Ryan and Deci (2000) distinguish two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Whereas intrinsic motivation refers to behaviors performed because of learners' interest or enjoyment, extrinsic motivation involves behaviors controlled by results such as good grades, rewards or punishments (R. M. Ryan & Deci, 2000). Compared to Gardner's distinction, these two types of motivation are quite similar to the integrative versus instrumental orientation (Gardner, 1960, 2007). However, it is noteworthy that the integrative outlook in Gardner's studies refers much more to the interest of learners in the community of the target language. Although Gardner (1960) emphasizes that the integrative orientation or 'integrativeness' can guarantee long-term motivation, which benefits second language acquisition, Dörnyei (2009) proposes reconceptualizing this notion by connecting it with 'L2 motivational self system'. He considers that the desire to integrate into the community of the target language is not enough to achieve the success in second language acquisition, because many second language learning activities take place at school, where learners lack contact with the users of the target language. Instead, three components of the L2 motivational self system, ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience, may work better in second language acquisition. In other words, when learners have the vision of a successful L2 user (ideal L2 self), they will understand what characteristics they need (ought-to L2 self) to achieve that goal based on their own learning context (L2 learning experience). However Dörnyei (2009) notes that this framework may not be effective if learners are young, such as primary or lower

secondary students, or in remote situations, because their vision of the ideal self is not consistent enough (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 38).

In relation to the impact of the learning experience on second language learning, Gardner (2007) categorizes motivation into two groups: language learning motivation and classroom learning motivation. Whereas language learning motivation refers to the willingness of an individual in second language study, classroom learning motivation involves all factors in the learning environment, such as teachers, peers, facilities or materials. He also presents cultural and educational contexts that may result in classroom learning motivation, especially in language learning, as languages are not only a school subject but also an embodiment of culture (Gardner, 2007).

Setting the present study in the light of motivation theories, the differences in learning context between rural and urban schools may cause distinctions in students' levels of motivation, especially in second language learning. Consequently, this may affect student outcomes. Furthermore, as this study focuses on upper secondary students who have a moderately stable vision of their ideal self, Dörnyei's L2 self system may be a reasonable solution if motivation is the cause of possible disparities.

As teacher beliefs are reflected in their classroom practices, which affect student motivation (Gardner, 2007), it is necessary to explore the literature on teacher beliefs to obtain a better understanding of the research issue.

2.1.3. Teacher beliefs

It has been demonstrated that teacher beliefs are a "strong predictor" of what occurs in the classroom (Haukås, 2016, p. 3). In 1996, Richardson (1996) defines "belief" as "a proposition that is accepted as true by the individual holding the belief" (Richardson,

1996, p. 106). Borg (2003) adds that beliefs are the background for actions that people regard as the truth. He also considers teacher beliefs to be one of the representatives of teacher cognition – "what teachers know, believe and think" (Borg, 2003, p. 81) . Van den Berg, Sleegers, and Geijsel (2001) explain the reasons why teachers hold these kinds of beliefs: to adapt to the changing situation (Van den Berg et al., 2001). Based on these definitions, the present study regards teacher beliefs as mental activities, like thoughts, opinions, cognitions or perceptions, which are true from holders' perspectives.

Teacher beliefs possess three prominent features, being: "contextualized", "interactive and reflective" and "inclusive concepts" (Zheng, 2015, p. 17). The first feature means that teacher beliefs are affected by contextual factors. This can be the school environment where teachers work (Borg, 2003), physical and technical problems, low salaries (Le & Barnard, 2009), insufficient teaching materials, lack of professional development programs, or poorly motivated students (Wang & Du, 2016). The 'interactive and reflective' feature of teacher beliefs refers to the relationships between teacher beliefs and classroom practices. That is, teachers reflect their beliefs through activities in the classroom, and experiences gained from their classroom have influence on their beliefs (Hampton, 1994). The last feature of teacher beliefs is advocated by many scholars (Borg, 2003; Richardson, 1996; Van den Berg et al., 2001; Zheng, 2015). To clarify what teacher beliefs are exactly, these scholars refer to other mental activities such as opinions, propositions, thoughts, cognitions, and attitudes. With these explanations, teacher beliefs are "inclusive concepts" (Zheng, 2015, p. 17).

Teacher beliefs present important roles in classroom practice. As teacher beliefs are 'interactive' and 'reflective', they are responsible for shaping classroom practices (Buehl & Beck, 2015; Evans, Luft, Czerniak, & Pea, 2014). Aliakbari and Heidarzadi's (2015) study of 227 Iranian EFL teachers reveals that there exists a strong relationship between these teacher beliefs and classroom practices. In detail, teachers with a master's degree reflect their beliefs in their classroom practices much more than those with associate's and bachelor's degrees. Thus, to reduce the conflicts between teacher beliefs and classroom practices, the researchers suggest increasing teachers' level of education (Aliakbari & Heidarzadi, 2015).

Another role of teacher beliefs is that teacher beliefs have the capacity for predicting student outcomes based on their performance. In 2016, Finnish researchers conducted a study on the role of teacher beliefs and parent beliefs in children's self-concept development, in which self-concept can be understood as their perceptions of their own abilities. Significantly, the study reports that teacher beliefs but not parent beliefs influence first-grade students' self-concept ability. More importantly, it also emphasizes the capacity for prediction of teacher beliefs, as teachers can provide exact predictions of their high–performing students' self-concept abilities (Pesu, Viljaranta, & Aunola, 2016).

In addition to the above roles, teacher beliefs are the tools teachers use to "adapt to a changing environment" (Bender, Schaper, Caspersen, Margaritis, & Hubwieser, 2016, p. 1958). Although some scholars do not clarify the relationship between teacher beliefs and context (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; Jamalzadeh & Shahsavar, 2015), others find that teacher beliefs are affected by "need to survive and adapt to the local teaching cultures" (Mak, 2011, p. 63). For example, Moloney and Xu (2015)

discovered three groups of beliefs from nine teachers of Chinese as a foreign language in the Australian context. These groups comprise teachers who maintain their traditional Chinese education theory, teachers who reject their Chinese education theory and accept Australian beliefs, and teachers who combine pedagogical beliefs from these two countries (Moloney & Xu, 2015). Another instance is Levin and Wadmany's (2006) study on the teacher beliefs and practices in the technology-based classroom. Their three-year experiment in a technology-rich learning environment shows positive changes in teacher beliefs and classroom practices (Levin & Wadmany, 2006). These studies prove that a strong relationship exists between context and teacher beliefs.

This tight link between teacher beliefs and context suggests that differences in working condition between rural and urban teachers may lead to different teacher beliefs, which then may result in different classroom practices and student outcomes.

2.2. Teaching and learning English in Vietnam

The process of teaching English in Vietnam can be divided into two major periods, before 1986, and after 1986, as this time was a historical moment in Vietnam with the shift from a centrally planned to a socialist-oriented market economy under the state management, which created remarkable changes in foreign language teaching in Vietnam (Hoang, 2010).

Before 1986, four foreign languages were taught in Vietnam: French, Russian, Chinese, and English. After the shift in the national economy in 1986, English gradually replaced Russian in Vietnamese education due to the investment of foreign countries and the role of English in the international market. Currently, a new project

focusing on the development of foreign languages in the national education system is funded, up to 450 million dollars, by the Vietnamese government. This has led to foreign languages becoming one of three compulsory subjects that students need to take in their National General Examination. Students can choose one of six languages to take in their exam: English, Russian, French, Chinese, German, and Japanese; and in 2016, English is chosen by more than 90% of students in most of the cities and provinces (Dan Tri News, 2016; Tien Phong News, 2016).

At present, according to the standard curriculum of Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training for upper-secondary schools (Ministry of Education and Training, 2009), students at these schools have to spend about 80 hours studying English in each school year (37 weeks). After three years of high school, they are expected to achieve B1 level of English in the approved language proficiency framework of Ministry of Education and Training, which borrows the criteria of each level from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Vietnam Government, 2008). Although the expectation for high school students' English proficiency is quite reasonable, there a number of problems need to be solved. These include inadequate pre-teacher training process (T. M. H. Nguyen & Hudson, 2010), poor infrastructure and facilities, lack of links between teaching and learning programmes among all levels, and teachers' limited linguistic competence (H. C. Nguyen, 2008). In addition, the contradiction between the form of the exam (emphasis on grammar) and the requirement of the government project (emphasis on communication) can be considered as the main cause of students' weak EFL performance. In detail, despite stating in the project that students have to achieve the approved level for four linguistic skills, reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Vietnam Government, 2008),

Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training does not include listening and speaking in examinations. Another contradiction in this area occurs between the number of students with a 'pass score' English and the rule of the project. In 2016, nearly 90% of the students have a poor score for the test, with average score being 3.3 over a band score of 10, as the 'pass score' is 5 (Gia Dinh Viet Nam News, 2016; Vietnamnet, 2016; VOV News, 2016). However, despite stating that high school students must achieve B1 level after their graduation in the project, Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training does not take any action with low-scoring students. Thus, with no consequences, there is little motivation for students to strive for a higher level of English.

2.3. Communicative language teaching (CLT) and listening comprehension in Vietnam

In the 1970s, traditional language teaching approaches, which focus on grammatical competence and vocabulary only, received much criticism. Such criticisms included that, to achieve communicative purposes, other skills of language than vocabulary and grammar need to be acquired, such as giving directions, asking for advice, and making requests. Consequently, communicative competence and then the CLT approach appeared as a solution to existing problems (Richards, 2005).

However, there have been debates on the nature of CLT. According to Canale and Swain (1980), CLT is an approach in which learners need to acquire communicative functions such as apologizing, describing, inviting, suggesting and so on, with the appropriate use of grammatical forms. This definition lies in the 'weak' version of CLT, in which linguistic functions, grammar, and learners' experience have similar

roles in language acquisition; whereas the "strong" version emphasizes the importance of learners' experience (Littlewood, 1981). Also directed by the 'weak' version of CLT, Vietnamese educators have been implementing CLT since the 1990s, with the focus being on the four skills of English as well as the role of students in classroom (H. H. Pham, 2005). However, this application of CLT is faced with many hindrances. Bock (2000), when reporting on implementing communicative theory in Vietnam, lists three groups of difficulties. These groups include difficulties from educational system ("lack of conducive facilities, large class size, multi-level classes"), teachers ("feelings of inadequacy, lack of training in CLT, the inability to assess communicative competence"), and students ("lack of motivation for communicative competence, resistance to class participation, using Vietnamese during group work, low English proficiency") (Bock, 2000, pp. 25 - 26).

Listening competence is the process of getting information through auditory sources then decoding it to understand speakers' messages (Rubin, 1990). Among the four language skills, listening competence is of great importance, for it "provides input for the learner", and "without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin" (Nunan, 2002, p. 239). Having similar opinions on the importance of listening, Vandergrift (1999) and Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) consider listening as a key skill that helps EFL learners to acquire language. However, to achieve proficiency in listening, learners have to overcome a number of problems: firstly, linguistic problems, namely vocabulary, prior knowledge, speech rate, type of input, and speaker's accent (Goh, 1999); and secondly, social considerations such as motivation (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998), teachers' belief (Riley, 2009), and socio-economic differences (Burstall, 1975). Among these above factors, Chiang and Dunkel (1992),

and Sadighi and Zare (2006) emphasize the impact of prior knowledge in students' listening outcomes. They argue that the second language learners' familiarity with the topics appearing in the tests may affect the results of the tests. Therefore, to receive comprehensive evaluation of students' listening competence, both "passage-dependent" and "passage-independent" information should be tested (Chiang & Dunkel, 1992). As knowledge is affected by socio-economic factors (Betts, Reuben, & Danenberg, 2000), the differences between rural and urban areas is believed to have impact on students' listening competence.

Listening comprehension research in Vietnam is insufficient, as most of the existing studies focus on discovering strategies to improve students' listening competence. For instance, Phuong (2013) suggests using computer-based activities as a treatment for students' listening competence. In the meantime, Mai, Ngoc, and Thao (2014) propose application of schema to listening activities. However, despite acknowledging that listening is a difficult skill to both EFL students and teachers, these studies do not analyse any possible problems students may have in learning listening skills. Those problems are clarified by H. C. Nguyen (2008). He points out serious shortages of facilities, such as the rate of 1229 students to one visual-audio equipment, and the average number of tapes and discs in each school as 7.69 tapes/discs for one school. Besides this, the focus of examinations on linguistics knowledge, but not on communicative skills (especially listening), is a cause of the weak communicative skills of Vietnam secondary students (H. C. Nguyen, 2008). Other noteworthy problems relating to students' listening skills are "teaching methods and traditional culture factors", which leads to students' inflexibility in applying strategies to their English listening learning (Ngo, 2015). This requires the changes in teachers'

awareness, and knowledge of listening comprehension – an important factor in students' listening process (Ngo, 2015).

2.4. Studies of teaching and learning EFL in rural and urban areas

Teaching and learning EFL in rural and urban areas has been investigated in a number of contexts globally. Firstly, in Canada, Randhawa and Michayluk (1975) conducted a study on the differences in learning environment between rural and urban schools, with the participation of ninety-six classrooms from grade eight to grade eleven. After using the Learning Environment Inventory developed by Anderson (1971) and the Primary Mental Abilities Test, Randhawa and Michayluk (1975) provide a number of differences between these two areas. In detail, in urban areas, students have superior material resources, challenging courses, and show satisfaction with their learning situation; whereas their rural counterparts reveal their dissatisfaction with their disorganized learning environment, although they are more unified than those in the city. These findings are confirmed in research by Lamb (2012) on young adolescents' motivation to learn English in urban and rural settings. In three different parts of Indonesia, a metropolitan city, a provincial town, and a rural district, using a questionnaire to collect students' views and a C-test to measure their proficiency of English, he discovers that students' mastery of English depends on the location of their schools (Lamb, 2012). That is, students in the city have much more advantage than their counterparts in rural regions, and consequently, they are more motivated to study, despite the positive attitudes and hopes of their rural counterparts. This is also confirmed by a report on schools in California, USA. This report concludes that the schools with more economically disadvantaged students receive fewer teaching resources and advanced courses. This inequality is believed to lead to the difference in

students' achievement among schools (Betts et al., 2000). In Bangladesh, rural and urban divergence also appears in the demand for private supplementary tutoring in English with a higher percentage of urban students receiving this out-of-school activity. As private tutoring affects students' academic achievement, this phenomenon is believed to increase academic disparities between rural and urban areas (Mahmud & Bray, 2017).

In Vietnam, there have also been various studies on the distinctions between rural and urban areas in education. The first to be mentioned is the work of Fesselmeyer and Le (2010). When doing research on the rural-urban expenditure gap in Vietnam, they also show the statistics of educational distinction between these two areas. In 1998, there were 10.6 % of rural people with no education, whereas in the city, the figure was 5.9%. Moreover, about 12.3% of rural people attended high school in comparison with 25.2 % of urban people. These statistics prove the existence of the distance in education between these two regions.

To have a clearer understanding of this distance, Behr (2005) compares three primary schools in the centre of Can Tho Province and three others 30 to 60 kilometers distant from the centre, to find out the differences in schooling practice and their influence on individual schools and students. By observations, survey questionnaires and interviews, she identifies the differences between rural and urban primary schools deriving from level of financial funding. In Vietnam, if a school needs additional funds, the school calls upon parents to donate funds. Socioeconomic factors impact urban and rural parents' ability to contribute: the income of parents in urban areas is higher than the income of those in the countryside, which has resulted in other distinctions such as in facilities, student care, and educational opportunities.

Although these two studies point out the differences or the gap between urban and rural areas, they have not mentioned the difference in teaching and learning English. T. T. T. Nguyen (2012), however, has studied the implications of English language policies for rural primary schools of Vietnam. The author observes that delay in the application of the government policies in rural primary schools (two 40-minute periods a week rather than four teaching periods per week in urban areas) is an issue of equity in education, as the policies have been applied widely in major cities and provinces. As the explanation for this result, she points out the lack of qualified teachers and facilities, and parents' low expectations and belief in the rural schools.

At upper secondary school level, Le and Barnard (2009) conducted a study on the implementation of curricular innovation in a rural high school of Northern Vietnam. They clarify six issues affecting students' language proficiency: "learner-centered teaching and time pressure", "use of Vietnamese", "lack of motivation to communicate", "washback effect of examinations", "lack of appropriate resources", and "professional competence" (Le & Barnard, 2009, pp. 26 - 29). In addition to these limitations, in his study on the determinants and impacts of private tutoring classes in Vietnam, Dang (2007) points out that differences in income partially causes students' poor academic performance in rural areas.

The economic involvement is also confirmed by C. Pham (2016). Analyzing restropective data from 92 students from rural areas, he discovers that rural students do not focus on learning English as a subject at high school. In addition, parental encouragement and financial investment are believed to lead to different levels of motivation among these rural students. More importantly, despite not comparing rural and urban students directly, he asserts that rural students' EFL learning is hindered "by

challenges in their learning conditions and lack of social support aand language affordances" (C. Pham, 2016, p. 15). Directly comparing rural and urban students, Bui and Intaraprasert (2012) investigate the relationship between genders, high school background, and communication in English strategies, in rural and urban schools. They discover that students in rural areas are interested in using translation strategies when they have communication breakdowns. In comparison with rural students, their counterparts in urban schools try to use more complicated English language strategies due to their higher proficiency of language (especially speaking and listening skills). This study, however, does not give detailed investigation of English language proficiency.

2.5. The gap in the research

Although learning and teaching of English in rural and urban areas in Vietnam has been investigated in the literature, there appears to be little work that has investigated high school students' language proficiency (especially in listening skills). In addition, after analyzing the above studies, it can be seen that one of the root causes of the difference between rural and urban students' language proficiency lies in teachers' attitudes and beliefs (Ngo, 2015). As one of the factors formulating classroom practice, teachers' belief play a crucial role in language teaching and learning (Borg, 2011; Nespor, 1987). However, there has been limited attention paid to teachers' perceptions in these studies. Therefore, the present study aims to address this gap in the literature. It is only with detailed evidence of the linguistic outcomes and student performance, and understanding of the multiple factors involved, that we can address social equity issues in English language education in Vietnam. Similarly, with

empirical evidence, we can proceed to make curriculum and pedagogy recommendations to improve the teaching and learning of English in Vietnam.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has summarized issues related to the research problem, including theoretical framework, teaching and learning English in Vietnam, CLT and listening comprehension in Vietnam, and studies on rural and urban schools in Vietnam; and it has identified a significant gap in the research. Within Section 2.1, addressing the theoretical framework, the close relationships between second language learning and sociocultural theory, student motivation, teacher beliefs have been affirmed. Section 2.2 gave descriptions of teaching and learning English in Vietnam, and also analyzed conflicts in its educational system. Next, with the provision of background information of CLT and listening comprehension, Section 2.3 highlighted problems in teaching and learning EFL listening comprehension in the Vietnamese context. Finally, in Section 2.4, a gap in the literature was found by analyzing studies related to urban and rural schools in Vietnam. To sum up, through the above sections, this review stresses the urgent need for detailed evidence of the differences in linguistic outcomes (especially listening comprehension) between rural and urban high school students in Vietnam.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aims of the project were twofold: firstly, to identify in two participant groups any difference in language achievement (EFL listening skills in particular); and secondly, to understand more deeply the reasons for this difference in outcomes. To highlight these aims, this chapter discusses the research design, with reference to Crotty's (1998) theory of a research process. The chapter also describes the data collection, research instruments, and data analysis. Overall, this case study collected data from test, questionnaire, and semi-structured interview. The data was analyzed through SPSS, thematic coding, and constant comparative method. A number of strategies were also employed to increase the reliability and validity of the exploration.

3.1. Research design

The design of this study is based on Crotty's (1998) four levels of a research process, which are epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods (Crotty, 1998).

In terms of epistemology, the research is viewed from the perspective of a constructivist paradigm, in which "humans construct their understanding of reality and scaffold their learning as they go along" (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010, p. 26). Accordingly, this construction of knowledge is built by our mental activities and shaped by context in each individual (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In addition, with the research aim of "understanding" and "reconstruction", constructivism recognizes the importance of the participant voice in comparison with the researcher voice, in finding truth (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 166). This relationship between researchers and participants is reflected most obviously in the involvement of the participants in the

present study, as they not only provided data for the study but gave feedback to help the researcher to assure reliability and validity of the study as well. More importantly, constructivism is a suitable research paradigm as this study strives for the goal of discovering any possible difference in achievement in learning of English with regard to diversity in learners' learning context.

From this epistemology, the theoretical perspective of this study is constructed through the intersection of sociocultural theory with studies of motivation and teacher beliefs. Related to the aims of the study, two constructs of the sociocultural theory are employed, that is, mediation and ZPD. Mediation refers to the relationship between human beings and their surrounding environment through the use of tools (including languages). ZPD focuses on the effect of schooling (teachers in particular) upon the learners' development (Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2015). In second language learning, these two concepts involve focus on the impact of learning context and teachers on students' performance. Teacher beliefs are reflected in their classroom practices (Hampton, 1994). The characteristics of a learning context may effect students' motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013; Gardner, 2007). Thus, the comprehensive framework for this study is exploring teacher beliefs and students' motivation in the light of sociocultural theory.

In terms of methodology, this study is designed using mixed methods of data collection. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), mixed methods research is "the class of research where the research mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). In the scope of a case study exploring the differences in language acquisition of urban and rural students at high

schools in Vietnam, this study gathered data relating to students' language performance using the A2 level test developed by Cambridge University Press, then followed by a questionnaire for students. To investigate teachers' perceptions, a questionnaire with open-ended questions, and a follow-up semi-structured interview by phone, were used. The use of mixed methods has been advocated by scholars in many fields (Creswell, 2013); and especially in applied linguistics, mixed methods research is a good choice to have "multi-level analysis of complex issues", "improved validity" and "multiple audiences" (Dörnyei, 2007, pp. 45-46). Moreover, as a combination of qualitative and quantitative data, mixed methods research is believed to promote the strengths of the two approaches (Driscoll, Appiah-Yeboah, Salib, & Rupert, 2007). Applying a mixed methods approach to this study was expected to provide not only a reliable evidence of difference in student outcomes but an understanding of any distinction in learning context that can be considered the cause of the issue.

Finally, case study is chosen to be the research design for this study. Yin (1994) affirms that case study method is suitable "when 'how' or 'why' research questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (Yin, 1994, p. 1). With the broader objectives to investigate the equity of educational opportunity, this case study poses two research questions:

Research question 1: How are students' English listening competences different in two upper secondary schools situated in rural and urban areas in Vietnam?

Research question 2: What are teachers' perceptions of students' performance in English in the two case study schools in Vietnam?

As mentioned above, the main goal of this study is to explore how and why students in rural and urban high schools in Vietnam reach different levels of EFL listening competence. With this research question, the factors, 'how', 'why', and 'real life context', are concerned. Therefore, case study is an appropriate method to assure the validity and reliability of the research.

The methodology of this study is summarized in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Four levels of the research process

Epistemology: Constructivism

Theoretical perspective: Sociocultual theory
- Motivation - Teacher beliefs

Methodology: Mixed methods

Methods: Case study with
listening test data,
interview data,
survey data
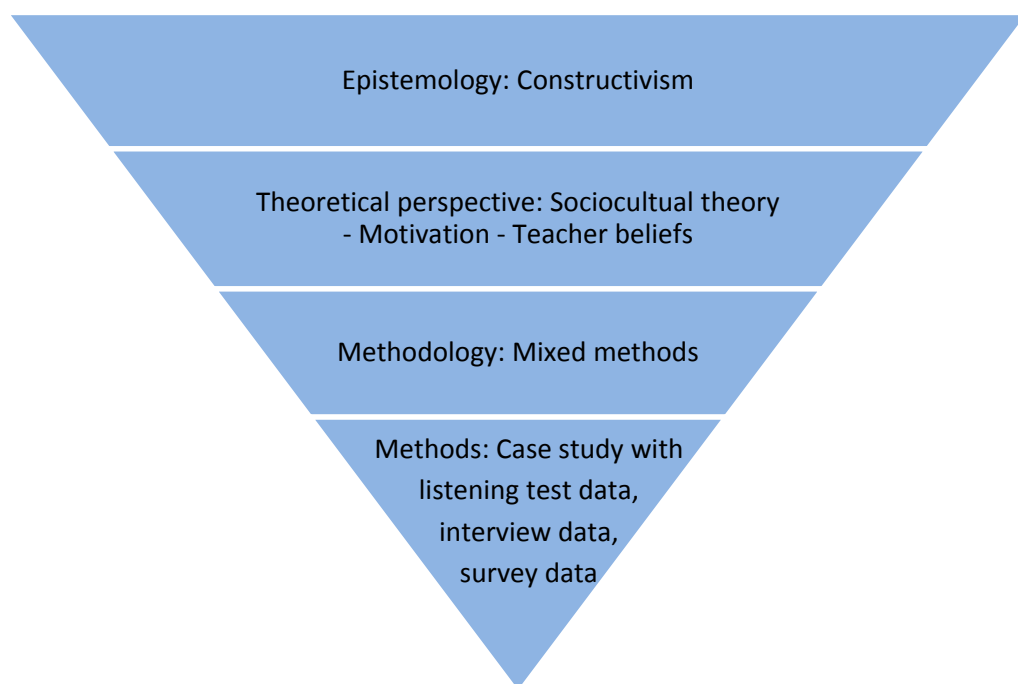
Before a detailed description of the methodology is provided, the reason for collecting only data of listening skills must be clarified. Firstly, although playing "a key role in facilitating language learning" (Vandergrift, 1999, p. 168), in Vietnam, listening and speaking are, in fact, not tested in the National General Examination. Thus, the researcher is interested in whether the failure of the exam system to attach value to

listening skills has any influence on teacher beliefs and on teaching and learning activities in the classroom. In addition, based on previous studies (Bui & Intaraprasert, 2012; Le & Barnard, 2009), listening and speaking have been identified as an area in which there may be differences between urban and rural schools. However, speaking is not a suitable choice for reasons of convenience, as the researcher is not located in Vietnam. Under this circumstance, listening is suitable because the data can be easily collected from an established listening test, by an intermediary, in a short period of time.

3.2. Data collection

3.2.1. Participants

Participants in this study come from two different upper secondary schools. The two schools were chosen, based on purposive sampling, due to their appropriateness of location and similar ranks in the national education system.

The urban school is from the centre of Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. The urban high school has 110 staff members with 42 classes. This high school was established in 1960, and English has become a subject in its curriculum since 1986. This school follows the standard curriculum of Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training for upper-secondary schools (Ministry of Education and Training, 2009), which means that their students have to spend about 80 hours studying English in each school year (37 weeks) In this school, two English classes, with a total of 74 eleven-form students (38 males, 36 females), and their EFL teachers were invited to participate in the study. These classes were chosen because they are at the middle in the school rank, and have equal population of male and female students. The age of these students ranges from

16 to 17. These students all come from the nearby neighborhood, and have been studying English since their sixth form.

The rural school is from a village in a district of Vinh Phuc, a province 60 kilometers from Hanoi. With only 24 classes and 70 teachers and administrative staff, this school is smaller than the urban school. This school was established in 2002, and English has been taught since this time. Like the urban school, this school also follows the standard curriculum of Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training for upper-secondary schools (Ministry of Education and Training, 2009), and their students also spend about 80 hours studying English in each school year (37 weeks). Participants from this school were two English classes, with a total of 64 students (29 males, 35 females), and their EFL teachers. These English classes were also chosen because they are at the middle in the school rank, and they have equal population of male and female students. The age of these students also ranges from 16 to 17. Like their counterparts from the urban high school, these students originate from the nearby community and have been studying English since their sixth form.

Due to the fact that students in twelfth form are busy with their national test and tenth-form students are the newcomers at school, the eleventh-form students are considered the most appropriate participants for the study.

3.2.2. Instruments

3.2.2.1. Listening test

In order to gather data for students' listening competence performance, a test for A2 level in the CEFR was used (Appendix F). According to Vietnam Government (2008), students are required to achieve level B1 or B2 of a second language such as English,

when they finish their twelfth form. However, because the students participating in this study are in the eleventh form, and after consulting with the teachers in the study as well as their real tests at class, the test for A2 level was chosen. The test is taken from a published test package of Cambridge University Press, which Vietnamese teachers and educators often use as the model for their examination. The test consists of 25 questions divided into five parts. This test lasts about 30 minutes, not including eight minutes of transferring the answers to the answer sheet.

3.2.2.2. Questionnaire

Questionnaire is a popular data collection instrument due to its benefits in time, effort and finance in a research process (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009). As a questionnaire is suitable to collect data related to facts, behaviors and attitudes (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009), it was considered reasonable to employ a questionnaire to collect data from more than 130 students to discover the facts of their learning as well as their views on second language learning (listening in particular). It is also an appropriate method to obtain initial data from teachers on their classroom practices and their beliefs.

3.2.2.2.1. Questionnaire for students

To understand more about students' attitudes about learning English in general and about their listening skills, as well as to find an explanation for students' performance in the test, a questionnaire was delivered to the students after they finished the test (Appendix G). This questionnaire was handed to the students by an intermediary, so that the students could feel free to participate and answer the questionnaire. This 10-minute questionnaire consists of 15 multiple choice questions, and its contents are related to students' background, listening skills and English study. The questions in the

questionnaire closely focus on exploring the two research questions; and with reference to the theoretical framework of sociocultural theory, motivation and teacher beliefs, these questions were informed by tests used in studies on motivation, second language classroom practices, and listening skills (Ehrman, Leaver, & Oxford, 2003; O'Malley, Chamot, & Küpper, 1989; Sawir, 2005).

3.2.2.2.2. Questionnaire for teachers

Parallel to delivering a questionnaire to the students, a questionnaire was also constructed and handed to the teachers by the intermediary to elicit teacher reflection on student performance, attitudes and motivation (Appendix H). There are 16 open-ended questions in the questionnaire, which is divided into three main parts: background information, listening skills, and English study. With open-ended questions, teachers can have the opportunity to write on all of the matters that they need to share about their teaching English and listening skills. This 30-minute questionnaire also seeks to elicit teachers' reflection on conditions in their rural or urban school as well as the challenges they face. The construction of the questions was informed by similar studies on teachers' beliefs (Le, 2011; Pesu et al., 2016; Ramazani, 2014) and partly informed by theoretical issues discussed in the literature review.

3.2.2.3. Follow-up phone interview

This study employs the semi-structured interview as a sequential and valuable instrument to gain greater depth of perceptions (Appendix I). This instrument has been used in many studies on teacher beliefs (Bender et al., 2016; Borg, 2011; Wang & Du, 2016) because it can help the interviewer understand what participants think, believe

and experience (Briggs, 1986). Therefore, in order to clarify teachers' perceptions of the differences between rural and urban students in their learning English and English listening skills, after analyzing data from the test and the questionnaires, follow-up semi-structured interviews were made by phone with the teachers to further clarify the matters they had written in the questionnaire. These interviews were conducted in Vietnamese; and as a sequential activity, interview questions were designed in response to issues that had arisen in the questionnaire. The design of the questions was informed by similar studies on teachers' beliefs (Borg, 2011; Le, 2011) and by the methodology literature. These interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and translated into English.

3.3. Data analysis

3.3.1. Data from listening test scores

After the students completed their listening test, their answer sheets were marked and the scores were entered into SPSS software, which helped the researcher calculate the frequency of each score, minimum and maximum score, and means of the data. To have insight into the differences between urban and rural high school students' listening competence performance, these figures were compared.

3.3.2. Data from students' questionnaires, teachers' questionnaires and interviews

The collected data from students' questionnaires were entered into SPSS to calculate the frequency of each element. This kind of data was then compared using Barbour's (2008) constant comparative method, to find the differences in the students' English study and English listening learning. The constant comparative method can be

understood as a "constantly comparing and contrasting" process in which participants' background and context are taken into consideration (Barbour, 2008, p. 218).

The responses of teachers to the questionnaire and interview were translated, transcribed, and then categorized into themes using thematic coding (Appendix J). This thematic coding process is actually to identify topics from gathered data, especially when the data is text (G. W. Ryan & Bernard, 2000). In the present study, qualitative data collected from teachers are in the form of sentences or paragraphs. Thematic coding is efficient in organizing and analysing this kind of data. The themes in this study emerge from teachers' responses to their questionnaire and interview, including exposure time, learning conditions, negative examination effect, career orientation, perception of value of English, student motivation, and teacher frustration. After finding these themes, Barbour's constant comparative method was used. As the goal of the research, comparisons between students' listening competence performance in two schools, and their teachers' perspectives, are the best way to find the differences; therefore, the constant comparative method is considered effective for this aim.

A summary of data collection and analysis is represented by Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Summary of research instruments

Data Collection	Participants	Data analysis	Answered Research Questions
Listening Test level A2 from Cambridge	Students from four English classes (74	Comparing numerical data	*Research question 1:* How are students' English listening competences

University Press (30 minutes)	urban students and		different in two upper secondary schools situtated
Questionnaire for students (Multiple choice – 10 minutes)	64 rural students)	Constant comparative method	in rural and urban areas in Vietnam?
Questionnaire for teachers (Open-ended questions – 30 minutes)	04 EFL teachers	• Thematic coding • Constant comparative method	*Research question 2:* What are teachers' perceptions of students' performance in English in the two case study schools in Vietnam?
Follow-up phone interview (recorded - 15 minutes)			

3.4. Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to the consistency of research outcomes with regard to the research context (Kirk & Miller, 1986); whereas validity is the plausibility, credibility, trustworthiness and defensibility of a study (Johnson, 1997). A variety of strategies were employed to increase reliability and validity of the research. Firstly, in the data collection process, instruments were used based on similar studies related to the issues emerging in the literature review. In addition, although in a school context, participants' choices can be affected by variables such as time, the similarity of

schools in terms of students' age, curriculum and pedagogy can assure the reliability of the study (Nunan, 1992). In addition, as "perfect validity, on the other hand, would assure perfect reliability" (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p. 21), promoting validity of the study through the use of triangulation, participant feedback and reflexivity also guarantees the reliability of the study.

3.4.1. Triangulation

Triangulation is defined as "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon" (Denzin, 1978, p. 291). Used in many periods of a research process, triangulation can be divided into data triangulation, methods triangulation, investigator triangulation, and theory triangulation (Johnson, 1997). Within the present study, methods triangulation and data triangulation are applied. In terms of data, both qualitative and quantitative data were used. These include tests and questionnaires for students, and questionnaires and follow-up interviews for teachers. With regard to data analysis methods, thematic coding and constant comparative method were employed.

3.4.2. Participants' feedback

In addition to triangulation, teachers' feedback was also used to promote validity of the study. In detail, at the beginning of the study, the researcher discussed with the participating teachers about test levels for their eleventh-form students to find the most suitable test for them. In addition, after transcribing and translating the teachers' responses to the questionnaire and interview, the researcher sent the English version of their responses to the teachers so that they could confirm the accuracy of their translated transcripts. More importantly, after initial data was analyzed, the four

teachers in the study were contacted again to provide some explanation for their answers as well as descriptions of the class during the test day.

3.4.3. Researcher role and bias

The researcher is an EFL teacher in Vietnam with personal professional knowledge of the field. In addition, as a former student from a rural area, she has some understanding of the difference between urban and rural areas. This motivated her to conduct the research, not only to clarify her understanding but to narrow the gap in opportunities for students, if such exists. However, as a researcher, she acknowledges her influence in constructing the data analysis and interpretation of the study (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). In addition, to avoid researcher bias, reflexivity is a choice of the researcher. Guillemin and Gillam (2004) explain that: "Reflexivity involves critical reflection of how the researcher constructs knowledge from the research process—what sorts of factors influence the researcher's construction of knowledge and how these influences are revealed in the planning, conduct, and writing up of the research" (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004, p. 275).

3.5. Ethical considerations

This study focuses on the differences in listening competence between rural and urban students, and teachers' perceptions of the case. This means that the study involves human beings, which requires the approval of the Ethics Committee of the researcher's university (Appendix A). This exploration was thus supervised and approved by the Ethics Committee of Macquarie University. As the basic requirement when applying for the approval of the Ethics Committee, the researcher obtained permission from the Management Boards of the two schools to conduct her study there. Moreover, because

the participants of the study were under 18 years of age, in addition to gaining consent from teachers and students through consent forms, the study also obtained the full agreement of students' parents (Appendix C, D, E). Importantly, all of the participants were informed that they are able to withdraw at any time of the study. The names of the schools, and the identities of the participants were guaranteed to be kept confidential by using pseudonyms. All the information gathered in the study was clarified to be used only for research purposes, and it is kept securely and confidentially in a password-protected computer.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the research design chosen to achieve best outcome in this investigation. A mixed methods approach has been detailed. In terms of data collection, this case study used an A2-level listening test, questionnaire for students, and questionnaire and interview for teachers. To analyze the collected data, SPSS, thematic coding and constant comparative method were applied. In order to guarantee the validity of the study, various strategies such as triangulation, teachers' feedback, and reflexivity were employed. Results of this process will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This section presents the answers to the research questions through data collected from the listening test and the questionnaire for students, and the questionnaire and semi-structured interview for teachers. To find the differences between rural and urban students in listening competence in particular and learning English in general, both sets of students' test scores and responses to the questionnaire have been analyzed and compared, in Sections 4.1 and 4.2. Data gathered from teachers' interviews and questionnaires have been organized into two separate parts: rural (Section 4.3.1) and urban teachers (Section 4.3.2). Due to the fact that the interviews for teachers is based on their responses to the questionnaire, data from interviews and questionnaires will be grouped into themes based on thematic coding (G. W. Ryan & Bernard, 2000).

4.1. Students' test scores

To find the answer to Research Question 1, "How are students' English listening competences different in two upper secondary schools situated in rural and urban areas in Vietnam?", the researcher used an A2 listening test for students in both areas, and their results of the test are shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Rural and Urban Test Scores
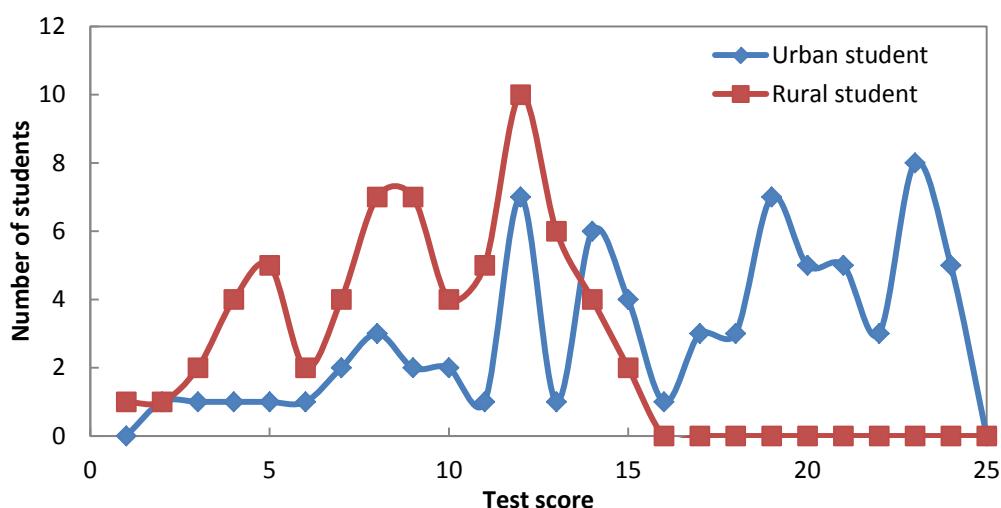
It can be seen from this chart that the test scores of the urban students range between 2 and 24, whereas the rural students' test scores vary from 1 to 15. Moreover, as 17 is the minimum score that students need to qualify at A2 level (Cambridge English Language Test, 2015) (Appendix K), it is obvious that none of the 64 rural students achieved the A2 level in English listening. At the city school, 59.8% of the students got A2 and B1 levels for their listening test. The difference in these two groups can be seen more clearly in Tables 4.1 and 4.2.

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics of the Rural Students' Test Scores

	Number of Students	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Test scores	64	1.00	15.00	9.1875
Valid Number	64			

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics of the Urban Students' Test Scores

	Number of Students	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Test scores	73	2.00	24.00	16.1233
Valid Number	73			

With 64 rural students achieving from 1 to 15 above 25, their mean of test scores is about 9. In comparison, the mean of 73 urban students' test scores is about 16, nearly twice as much as that of their counterparts. This data proves that the urban students score better at English listening than the rural students.

4.2. Students' questionnaires

The differences between the rural and urban students are also presented in their responses to the questionnaire.

The first difference is the number of students taking part in the survey. Whereas in the city, all of the students taking part in the test agreed to continue to answer the questionnaire (N=74, including one more student who was absent in the test), only 50% of rural students gave consent to take part in the survey (N=32). This suggests a lack of interest or motivation in the rural students. Moreover, as reported by the intermediary, most of male students at the rural schools did not want to take part in answering the questionnaire, although it was delivered to them in a Vietnamese

version. This may suggest that the male students have lower interest in English than do the female students. The ratio of male and female students taking part in the survey is shown Tables 4.3 and 4.4.

Table 4.3: Gender of the Urban Students

	Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	38	51.4	51.4	51.4
	Female	36	48.6	48.6	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.4: Gender of the Rural Students

	Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	7	21.9	21.9	21.9
	Female	25	78.1	78.1	100.0
	Total	32	100.0	100.0	100.0

Although there exist differences in their learning of English, the rural and urban students share some common features. From the data gained, most of the students are from 16 to 17, and have been studying English for many years (from 2 to 15 years). About 75.7% of the urban students, and 100% of the rural students have been studying English for at least 7 years. Interestingly, while in the city, there are about 24.3% of students studying English for 2 to 6 years, in the country, this number is 0. This means that some of the urban students have had shorter exposure. This may due to the fact

that some junior secondary schools offer French in their second language teaching. However, even with shorter exposure, the urban students have stronger outcomes than the students in the rural school.

Another similarity between these rural and urban students lies in their perception of their EFL competence. When answering Question 6 about their level of English, 40.6 %, 43.8 %, 15.6 % of the rural students chose elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate as their English level respectively. These numbers in the urban school are 41.9 %, 39.2 % and 18.9 % respectively. No students in these two schools considered themselves as an advanced learner. However, this only reflects what students evaluate subjectively their EFL level, but not based on any international tests like IELTS, TOEFL or TOEIC. The collected data from Question 5 in the questionnaire reveal only 6.8 % of the urban students have taken IELTS, whereas in the rural school, the number is zero.

In addition, there exists a high percentage of rural and urban students understanding the necessity of learning English as well as the importance of English listening skills. Data collected from question 8, and 14 are shown in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Students' awareness of English and listening skills
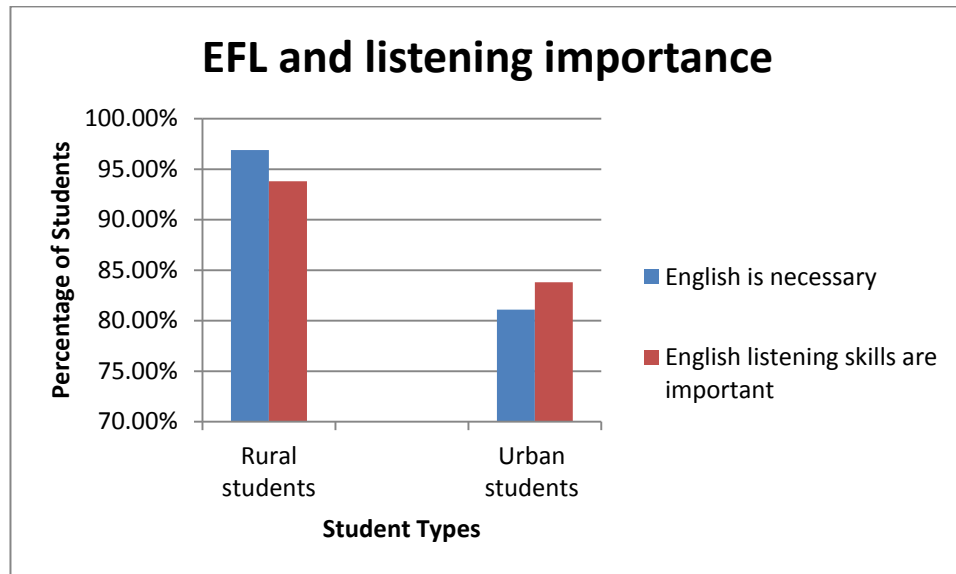
From this above figure, it can be seen that more rural students understand the importance of English and English listening skills than their urban counterparts. More importantly, collected data from question 12 in the questionnaire reveal the percentage of the rural students like learning English is higher (96.9 % of the rural students in comparison with 82.4% of the urban students).

However, despite their awareness, and interest, the rural and urban students encounter similar difficulties in learning English listening skills (Answers to Question 11 in the questionnaire). Most of the students in both contexts agreed that intonation, speaking speed, and vocabulary are their main obstacles. Some students noted that speakers' accent and language structures hinder their listening. Remarkably, the students in both contexts reported that they have similar frequency in using English (Answers to Question 4 in the Questionnaire). However, with the difference in their test scores and low scores in both schools, there are doubts about the quality of their listening time.

Despite the above similar points, in relation to motivation for learning English, the rural students who participated in answering the questionnaire appear to have had more positive motivation.

As can be seen from the bar chart in Figure 4.3., answering Question 13 in the questionnaire, nearly 90% of rural students in the survey chose to learn English because it can help them have a good job in the future; and only a small number of students think that learning English is easy.

Figure 4.3: Students' reasons to study English
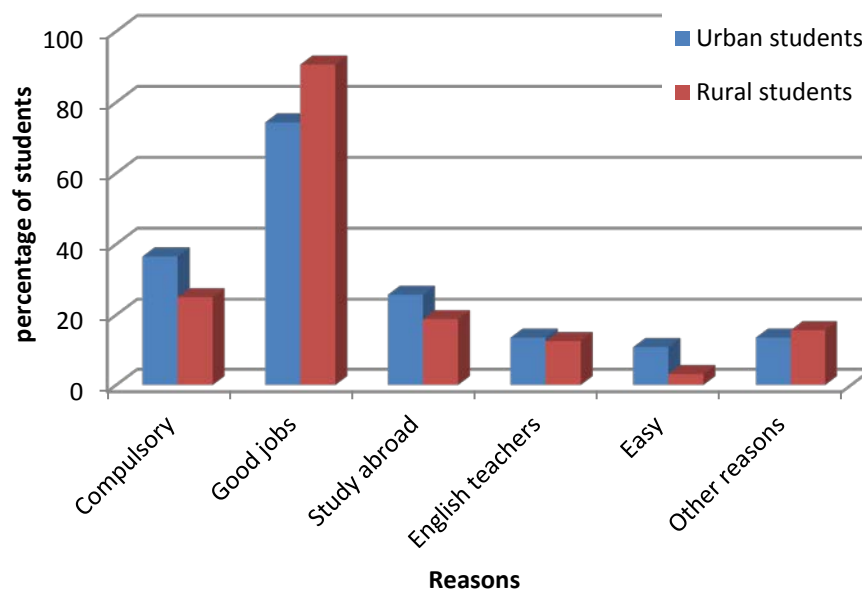
This fact is supported by the languages they chose to study as shown in Figure 4.4 (Answers to Question 15 in the questionnaire).

Figure 4.4: Students' choice of languages to study
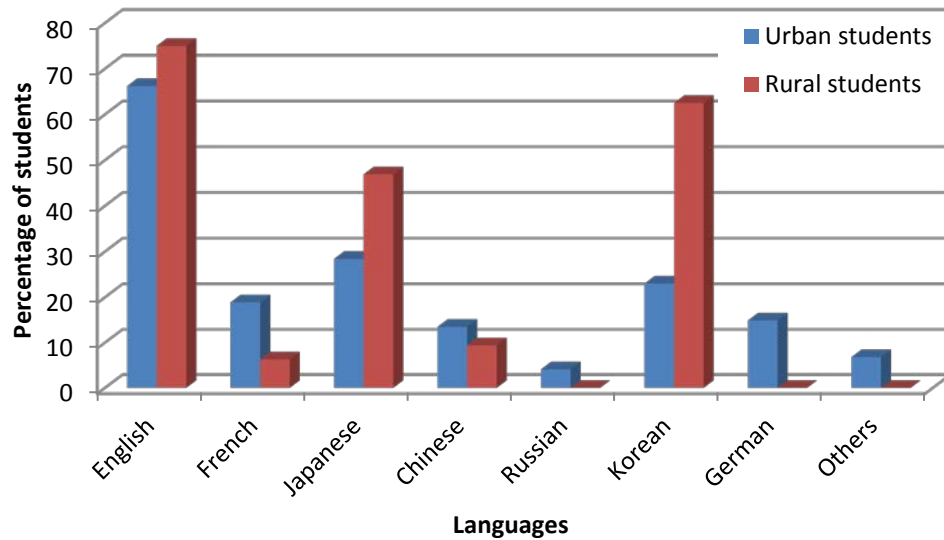
The number of the rural students who want to study English, Japanese and Korean is higher than for the other languages. This number can be explained by the effect of jobs due to the development of foreign investments in Vietnam, especially in this rural region.

The two above figures reveal a contradiction. Although the rural students who agreed to participate in answering the questionnaire had better scores on motivation than did urban students, their performances in the listening test were worse. So why do urban students have a better listening ability than their friends in rural areas if it is not due to their period of studying English, their motivation and their use of language? Is it due to their learning strategies, which are represented in the chart Figure 4.5 (Answers to Question 7 in the questionnaire).

Figure 4.5: Students' means of English listening study
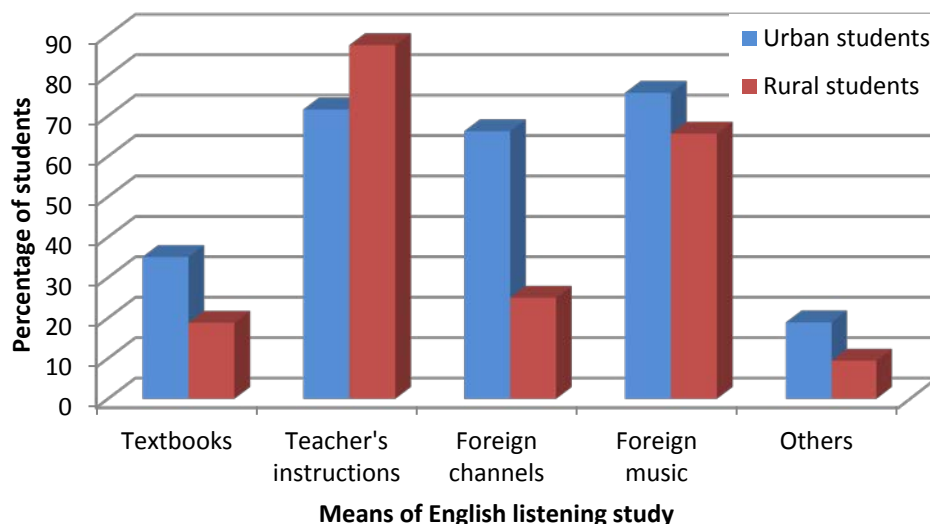
As can be seen in Figure 4.5, in the city, the students chose to study from foreign channels such as HBO, Star Movies, Disney Channel, National Geographic, or Discovery Channel. Their counterparts in the countryside depended on traditional means such as text books and teachers. This difference is confirmed by students' answers to question 9 and 10 in the questionnaire. While the percentage of the urban students listen to English songs/ movies or use electronic devices to study English everyday is 68.9% and 36.5 % respectively, these numbers in the rural school decrease to 37.5% and 15.6 % respectively. In fact, the socioeconomic difference between rural and urban areas is believed to involve in this divergence (Betts et al., 2000). With their dependence on traditional resources, the achievement of the rural students is believed to be affected heavily by their teachers' beliefs, which will be discussed next.

4.3. Teachers' questionnaire and interview.

To have a deep understanding of the subject of the study, a demographic summary is provided. This study is conducted on four English teachers, one male and three females. They are between the ages of 26 to 33, and have at least 4 years of teaching

experience. Two of the urban teachers have a master's degree, whereas the rural teachers have bachelor's degrees. In order to be convenient for comparison, this part is categorized into two sections: data from rural teachers, and for urban teachers. The interview of the study was semi-structured, which means that some of the questions had been designed before data collection and some were constructed based on the responses of the teachers to the questionnaire. Therefore, the content of each part will be organized based on the themes emerging from the teachers' questionnaires and interviews.

4.3.1. Rural teachers

The two rural teachers were interviewed separately. Remarkably, these two teachers shared some common ideas in their responses, which will be reported through the following emerged themes: exposure time, learning conditions, negative examination effect, career orientation, perception of value of English, student motivation, and teacher frustration.

4.3.1.1. Exposure time

When asked about the actual time of students' listening, both of the rural teachers provided a surprising fact: rural students just spend about 20 minutes listening in a week, and sometimes it is 40 minutes over three weeks. One of them explained that what the teachers do is based on the curriculum of Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training for English. According to this curriculum, students have three periods of English each week, and each unit in the text book, with five sections, comprising listening, reading, writing, speaking and language focus (mainly grammar and structures), must be completed in five periods. This means that it often takes teachers

three weeks to deliver the content of two units, and as a result, students only have two forty-five-minute periods of listening. With each listening lesson, teachers spend time for pre-, during- and post-listening activities. Thus, the actual time students spend on listening is only up to 20 minutes in a week (Rural Teacher 2, Extract 1). To some extent, this small amount of listening time explains the lower scores that rural students achieve in their listening test.

4.3.1.2. Learning conditions

Learning conditions were considered to be factors affecting students' English listening and EFL learning and teaching in general, by both rural teachers. These include family's income, parents' awareness and background, and English centres that are founded by educational institutions or educators to provide English tutoring to students.

Family income is believed to contribute to increasing the distance between rural and urban students. Higher family incomes in the city allow students to take part in English courses in English centres. Therefore, although having the same curriculum, urban students have more opportunity to improve their English competence than have rural students (Rural Teacher 1, Extract 3).

In addition to family income, parents' awareness and background have a huge influence on their children's English study. Most of the parents in rural areas do not understand the important role of learning English, whereas parents in the city are more knowledgeable, so students in the city will receive better support from their parents in second language acquisition. Rural Teacher 1 explained:

"… For example, parents in the city have better economic conditions, they have good jobs so they have knowledge and they understand the important role of English, so they will affect their children so that their children have to take part in, learn and understand it, whereas in rural areas, for example their children can learn grammar very well but parents don't know the importance and they don't understand, don't have influence in their children's learning, so students have to find the way. When they have to do by themselves, with inactive ones, certainly they won't find the way. It is the condition which certainly is worse than urban students'." (Rural Teacher 1, Extract 5)

The other teacher also pointed out that the importance of English in city parents' awareness can be seen from the fact that, at early ages such as three to five years old, urban children are sent to English centres. This idea is similar to the data gathered from students' questionnaires, as many students in the urban school stated that they have been studying English for up to 15 years.

The availability of English centres and private tutors in the city is another factor affecting students' listening competence. Whereas in rural areas there are not many English centres or private tutors, in the city they have developed so quickly that letting children go to English centres or hiring a tutor has become a movement (Rural Teacher 2, Extract 14). Dang (2007) shares the same view of this phenomenon in Vietnam. He asserts that the development of tutoring in the city has significant influence on students' performance, which may lead to the educational distance between rural and urban areas (Dang, 2007).

In addition to the above factors, large class size, mixed-level classes and poor facilities are also considered to prevent the development of teaching and learning English in

rural areas. Each English class consists of 30 to 40 students, and their level of English is different. Moreover, they do not have a specialized room for learning English. Therefore, implementing innovative methodology in such context is a challenge for rural teachers (Rural Teacher 2, Extract 7).

4.3.1.3. Negative examination effect

Examinations and school expectations are believed to have put pressure on both of the rural teachers. When answering the question about their expectations of their students in learning English, both teachers hoped that their students could pass their examination. This is the first and foremost goal in their teaching. Besides this, the gap between curriculum and examination is also a problem for these teachers, as Rural Participant 2 stated about her difficulties in applying innovative methodology to her teaching:

"Interviewer: Do you apply what you learn from the courses to your teaching?

Rural Teacher 2: Just a part. First, they concern most about games, strategies and things to motivate students, make students like English more. But what they focus is communicative methodology to implement communicative function of English, which is only a small part of what we teach at school. Speaking is a very small part. In the period, it has the same amount of time like listening. Even in the examination, it only has one or two questions related to communicative function. We have to teach to follow the examination. Focus on getting high marks for our students. Most of the time. There is no agreement between knowledge and the examination for students."

(Rural Teacher 2, Extract 6)

This judgment is similar to the findings of Le and Barnard's (2009) study on the application of an innovative curriculum to teaching and learning English, which called this kind of effect the 'washback effect of examination'.

4.3.1.4. Career orientation

Students in rural areas do not receive as good career orientation as do those in urban areas. This is a problem that both Rural Participants 1 and 2 raised in their responses. Whereas city students are oriented by their knowledgeable parents and provided basic understanding of their future jobs through social contacts, students in the countryside are limited in their familiar settings without parents' guidance (Rural Teacher 1, Extract 11). In addition, unemployment makes it difficult for teachers to orient their students in their choice of future jobs. It is a fact that, despite their efforts in studying, many students still cannot find a job after leaving school, whereas their poor parents have to pay a large amount of money for tuition fees. This leads to the meaninglessness in teachers' orientation, when they cannot guarantee a bright future for their students as they guide their students in choosing a job (Rural Teacher 2, Extract 16).

4.3.1.5. Perception of the value of English

As noted in the analysis of students' questionnaires, most students from rural areas have been studying English for eight to nine years. With this period of time, it is assumed that these students achieve proficiency in English use. Therefore, their low listening scores can be seen as the failure of education. As Rural Participant 2 explained, rural people's perception of the value of English affects their students' competences. This is the perception of teachers at rural primary schools who provide

students with basic knowledge of English. They themselves do not see the importance of their roles, and present this view in their classroom practices. Consequently, this affects students' background knowledge, which they need before entering high school:

*"**Interviewer:** As I know from your students' responses in the questionnaire, they have been learning English for a long time, haven't they?*

*"**Rural Teacher 2:** For a long time. Since grade 3. Most of the students now follow 10-year English curriculum. They learn English for a long time and English curriculum here is concentric curriculum. Most of the topics haven't changed much from elementary, lower to upper high school. The curriculum is like a spiral. Maybe you will ask why students are not good when they spend a long time studying. The reason as many of my students share with me is that they don't have background knowledge and they are scared. I find out that teachers at elementary school do not highly appreciate English. It's just what I guess but I don't assert. So when students come with us in upper secondary school, we have to rush. Upper secondary school is not the same like elementary. Now students at grade 10 or 11 still read "we" like "where", and they don't know how to put the verbs in present simple or past simple. So what should I teach them? It is the reason why I say students do not have background."*

(Rural Teacher 2, Extract 10).

It is also the view of rural students' parents who lack understanding of the role of English in integrating society. Thus they do not provide enough investment for their children:

*"**I:** Does it mean that parents don't like?*

RT1: *It means that parents are not aware of the importance of students' access to English. In the city, parents are more caring…"*

<div align="right">

(Rural Teacher 1, Extract 4)

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4.3.1.6. Student motivation

When students do not have good conditions to study, they have to be autonomous learners. To be an independent learner, students need strong motivation. However, student motivation becomes another problem for rural EFL teachers, as many of their students lack it. When asked about the number of students having interest in learning English, these two teachers agreed that only a very small number of their students liked learning English:

"Rural Teacher 2: Just 20% like English very much. But there are not many students having passion of learning English. Very few students like so much that they can self-study and teachers do not need to ask them to do. Even I haven't met any case like that in all my school. Even teachers have to put pressures on students in the team of Best Students. They are not volunteers."

<div align="right">

(Interview 2 – Extract 3)

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More interestingly, one of these teachers claimed that just a few of her students needed to study English, and these are the ones who need the high score in English for their university entrance score. However, a noteworthy point from examinations is that they only focus on reading and grammar, but not on communicative skills such as listening and speaking.

With these two judgments, it is obvious that rural students do not have strong motivation for learning English, which is necessary to achieve success in their language acquisition (Dörnyei, 1998).

4.3.1.7. Teachers' frustration

In addition to challenges in teaching caused by lack of facilities, teaching materials and large class size, teacher professional development courses appear to be one of the factors demotivating the rural teachers. In detail, these teacher professional development courses cannot achieve sufficient effectiveness, because they are in contrast to teachers' existing practice and theory. Instead, they create pressure on teachers, as they are put in a dilemma: will they apply the new methodology as they are trained, to motivate their students, or will they continue traditional methodology to help students pass their examination?

"Interviewer: So those programs just motivate teachers but not have any effect on students, do they?

Rural Participant 2: They don't have effect as expected. In fact they make us difficult. Honestly, I can apply what I have learned to motivate my students but the effects are not as expected. Students may like more but the effect on their language is not as expected because conditions in Vietnam are limited to organize games in a teaching period.… Of course this problem can be solved by many ways but teachers will have to work hard and besides, the condition is not good."

<div align="right">

(Rural Teacher 2, Extract 7)

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4.3.1.8. Summary

To sum up, from rural teachers' perspectives, rural students are not as good at communicative skills, namely listening and speaking, as those in the city. This is due to factors including low exposure time, poor learning conditions, negative examination effect, challenging career orientation, limited perceptions of English value, weak motivation, and teacher frustration. To have better understanding of the differences between students in rural and urban contexts, it is necessary to take urban teachers' beliefs into account.

4.3.2. Urban teachers

Urban teachers' responses to interview and questionnaire reveal differences in teaching and learning English as a second language in general and listening in particular. These differences are grouped into themes: exposure time, learning conditions, examination effect, and student motivation. The fact that many other factors that were mentioned by the rural teachers were not found in the responses of the urban teachers suggests that teachers in rural areas are suffering more severe problems in their teaching of English.

4.3.2.1. Exposure time

In relation to the listening time, students in urban areas spend about 60 to 70 minutes listening per week, about three times higher than those in the countryside. In addition, although they share the same curriculum with their counterparts in rural areas, they have one more period each week delivered by foreign teachers who are hired by their school to help them speak and listen better (Urban Participant, Extract 12). This

amount of time explains the differences in listening competence compared with rural students.

4.3.2.2. Learning conditions

As explained by two urban teachers, learning conditions refers to family and school investment, modern lifestyles, and English centres.

Similar to the ideas of rural teachers, both urban teachers agreed that, in the city, students are supported better by their family:

"Urban Participant 2: … in urban areas parents invest for students to learn listening and speaking from their early ages." (Urban Teacher, Extract 9)

Students in urban areas have a more positive learning environment. For example, they have more opportunity to contact with foreigners.

In addition, the school also emphasizes the importance of learning English by inviting English native teachers to classes. This creates opportunities for students to improve their communicative skills. Furthermore, as one teacher explained:

"Active city lifestyles also contribute to promoting students' second language acquisition. Not only do they make students more active but open students' mind, and as a result, they benefit students' English learning." (Urban Teacher 1, Extract 19)

Like rural teachers, urban teachers emphasized the significant role of English centres in improving students' language competences. These students started to learn English at English centres when they were small. On the contrary, in rural areas, professional English centres are in deficit (Urban Teacher 2, Extract 9).

4.3.2.3. Negative examination effect

Examinations are also considered to affect students' learning of English negatively and positively.

Urban Teacher 1 said:

"The exam mark is one aspect to evaluate the level and the effort of students. However, to some extent, it can cause stress to students because they will try more in grammar but not all 4 skills: reading, speaking, listening and writing. Everything has two sides. Without examinations, students do not have more motivation to study, particularly with high school students."

(Urban Teacher 1, Extract 7)

The negative effect of examinations is confirmed by Urban Teacher 2, as she asserted that her students are affected so much by examination that they do not spend time listening and speaking, despite her efforts.

However, fortunately, examination is not the teaching goal of the urban teachers as it is for their rural counterparts. Being asked about what they expect from their students' learning of English, both of the city teachers emphasized the importance of students' interest.

Urban Teacher 2 said:

"I want my students … to be really interested with this subject … feel that this subject will bring them something new and even know more about the culture of the language that they are learning … not just learning to get qualified marks for the exams only".

(Urban Teacher 2, Extract 1)

Analyzing their responses, the cause of teachers' comfortable status is due to the fact that their students have more choices than students have in rural areas. Many students in the urban school are reported to intend to study abroad, instead of trying to pass their National Examination. In addition, it is undeniable that the urban teachers are aware of the importance of student motivation in language acquisition, which is discussed next.

4.3.2.4. Student motivation

In regard to student motivation, the urban teachers believed that success in English learning is assured by students' interest. The urban teacher 1 said that what she is trying to do most of her teaching time is to inspire her students. She believed that this provided her students with a liking for learning English, and then they can become autonomous learners and achieve complete mastery of it. This opinion is advocated by the urban teacher 2. However, this teacher put emphasis on English use in life, which teachers need to clarify to motivate their students.

Urban Teacher 1 said:

"The only problem is let them aware of learning, then increase their interest in English classes and talk about the meaning of learning English, the permanent application of learning English. Since then students will volunteer in trying by some ways to improve their English. It is what we should do and pay attention to. That's it. As English learners, we understand that learning English should start mainly from ourselves, not from other factors which can help or affect us."

(Urban Teacher 1, Extract 20)

4.3.2.5. Summary

Findings from urban teachers' questionnaires and interviews show similar perceptions of urban and rural students' differences in learning English. However, they also reveal the distance in listening time or education investment between these two areas. Significantly, pressures that rural teachers have to endure appear to be alarming, which educational administrative staff should take into account to achieve equality in education between the city and the countryside.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the analysis of data collected from students' listening tests and questionnaires, and teachers' questionnaires and interviews. From students' listening test scores, it is clear that students' academic performance in the rural school is worse than urban students' academic performance. Based on students' responses to the questionnaire and teachers' answers to the questionnaire and interview, many causes emerge. These are differences in exposure time, learning conditions, teacher beliefs of examination, career orientation, student motivation, and teachers' frustration. Among these factors, the findings reveal the imbalance in educational investment between these two contexts. A deeper analysis and discussion follows in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter offers an analysis of the findings that were presented in the previous chapter in relation to the two research questions. In addition to discussing the results, this chapter compares data collected from both teachers and students, to find a triangulated in-depth understanding of the issue. The findings will also be linked with the results of previous studies, as well as seen in the light of sociocultural theory, motivation and teacher beliefs.

5.1. Research Question 1: "How are students' English listening competences different in two upper secondary schools situated in rural and urban areas in Vietnam?"

This research question is answered through the students' test scores and responses to the questionnaire. The data collected is compared between two groups of participants: the students in the rural school and the students in the urban school. The data shows differences not only in listening competences but also in their learning of English.

First and foremost, based on the students' test scores, it is clear that the students in the city achieve a higher level of competence in English listening than their counterparts in the countryside. This result accords closely with the assumption of this study as well as the findings of other studies in the field. Gobel, Thang, Sidhu, Oon, and Chan (2013) and Mohd-Asraf (2004) report a similar finding when comparing rural and urban students' proficiency of English in Malaysia. In Vietnam, Bui and Intaraprasert (2012) emphasize that their higher proficiency in English listening and speaking provides urban students with more complicated strategies of communication. In these studies, the differences in learning environment between these two contexts are

blamed for the divergence in students' levels of English. However, that only 13 students among a total of 137 students in two schools may be classed as 'independent user' of English based on their B1 level of English listening (Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2015), despite their long period of studying English (83% students in both areas have been studying English for at least 7 years), raises an open question about the quality of English education in Vietnam.

Related to the outcomes of the test, the methods in which the students study English listening have been analyzed and compared. The collected data reveal the differences in the students' resources used to learn English listening skills. Whereas the rural students are familiar with traditional resources of learning such as teachers' instructions, textbooks and music, their counterparts in the urban school have access to more innovative resources. For example, they get frequent access to foreign channels from English speaking countries such as the United States of America or the United Kingdom. Interestingly, some students noted that they practice their English listening by watching YouTube or subscribing to foreign services on the Internet such as BBC Learning English. This difference shows that the students in the urban area are more active in their learning than are the students in the rural area, as they themselves find resources to improve their learning. Some studies blame the lack of facilities in rural areas for hampering students' learning (Le & Barnard, 2009; T. T. T. Nguyen, 2012). However, from the information gathered from the interviews of the teachers, the rural students can easily access Internet resources due to the technology innovation. It may be, rather, that the urban students may be more active than their counterparts in English learning. Related to this active learning, Gobel et al. (2013) highlight that this characteristic may lead to urban students' higher proficiency of English.

Another cause of difference in the students' test scores may lie in student motivation. The rural students appear to be less motivated than the city students, for example, only half of the rural students continued to take part in answering the questionnaire of the study. Furthermore, in comparison to the rural teachers' affirmation that few of their students like English, the rural students appeared not to demonstrate strong motivation in English acquisition. This result accords with the study of Gardner (2007) on the effects of learning contexts on motivation. He names two different contexts that may cause a difference in the level of learners' motivation: cultural context (social factors) and educational context (school factors) (Gardner, 2007). In terms of social factors, the students in this study learn English at school only and do not have any contact with an English-speaking community. Thus, they do not have any desire for integrating into such a community, which means that they present a lack of integrative motivation – a necessary factor for their long-term English learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). This is also demonstrated by Hayes (2010), as he clarifies that rural people's lack of motivation due to their limited contact with English-speaking community leads to poor English competence. In addition, the data from the interview reveal that the rural parents have less effect on students' motivation than do the city parents. This matches what Lamb (2012) found in his study of motivation. He highlights that rural parents' lack of knowledge of the value of English could limit the control of parents over their children's motivation.

However, limited access to English community and lack of parent support may not be the main causes of the rural students' low motivation. The greater cause may derive from the ideal L2 self of the rural students (Dörnyei, 2009). As the rural teachers said, the rural students do not know what kind of job they may do in the future and what

that job requires. Consequently, these students do not understand the necessity of English in their future job. In the light of the L2 self system (Dörnyei, 2009), the rural students cannot imagine their future image of using English as a second language (ideal L2 self), thus they do not know what qualities they need to become advanced users (ought-to L2 self). As a result, they are not motivated to study English. With this view, the application of the 'L2 self' system in explicit pedagogy and classroom discourse for improving students' English competence in rural areas may be a remedy. Lamb (2012) also applied this approach to his study on motivation between rural and urban lower secondary students. Because of the failures he observes in investigating the participants' ideal self and ought-to L2 self, he suggests creating a satisfactory learning environment to enhance motivation (Lamb, 2012). Concerning the participants of the present study, who are mature enough to have a stable ideal self, and their less advantaged learning environment, the L2 self system may be a practical approach to be employed.

5.2. Research Question 2: What are teachers' perceptions of students' performance in English in the two case study schools in Vietnam?

This research question is answered by the analysis of themes emerging from teachers' responses to the questionnaire and interview. In each theme, perceptions of teachers in the rural and urban school are compared in reference to other related studies in the literature. These themes are categorized into three areas: Teacher factors, school factors, and social factors. These are similar to Dörnyei's (1994) identification of the three locii of activity in second language motivation: language level, learner level, and learning situation.

5.2.1. Teacher and school factors

5.2.1.1. Teacher's frustration

Teachers' frustration is an issue emerging from the rural teachers' responses. Although the effectiveness of teacher training programs has been proved by many scholars, the data collected from the rural teachers' interviews show an opposite aspect. On the one hand, teacher training programs provide teachers with innovative teaching methodology and, to some extent, change their beliefs (Borg, 2011; Richards, Gallo, & Renandya, 2001; Teng, 2016). On the other hand, as reported by the two rural teachers, these programs put pressure on their shoulders, as they have to choose between applying new methodology to promote their students' communicative skills, or maintaining their grammatical teaching approach to help students pass their examination. Even when they decide to combine these two choices, struggles against limitations in time, facilities and learning environment still make them exhausted. This frustration is also identified by Le and Barnard (2009), as they present a number of challenges that teachers have to face in implementing innovation in the syllabus: traditional teaching methods, limited time, instruction language, students' poor motivation, negative examination effect, poor teaching and learning facilities, and teachers' limited quality. The situation also takes place in the Hayes (2010) study on teachers' work in Thailand. Hayes points out the ineffectiveness of curriculum reforms at classroom level, and suggests understanding teachers' working conditions before applying innovation.

5.2.1.2. Teacher beliefs: Choice between Examination Success and Successful EFL communicators

Le and Barnard (2009) discover that the focus on grammar and vocabulary in the examination hinders innovation in CLT in Vietnam. The rural teachers in the present study also reported this negative effect. Although the teachers were aware of the importance of communicative skills such as listening and speaking in their students' success in communication, they cannot change their traditional teaching methods because of examination pressure. This is shown most obviously in their modest expectation for their students, to pass the examination, as well as in their grammar-focused classroom practices (Le, 2011). Compared to the urban teachers, the rural teachers appeared to more comfortable with their teaching, as their ultimate goal is to help their students find the interest in their learning of English and become autonomous learners. This view represents the sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2000). Firstly, in terms of mediation, the urban teachers considered English as a tool of communication that people need in order to integrate into the changing world, and they tried to use their teaching activities (learning context) to change their students' minds for learning English. This fits the theory of mediation, as classroom language learning and learning strategies are the products of a process of mediation in a community setting (Donato & McCormick, 1994). Lantolf (2004) also asserts that not only do humans use tools to interact with the world but the process of mediation affects human minds as well. Secondly, the urban teachers emphasized the importance of learners' interest. They believed that, if learners like English, they can achieve high proficiency in English. Therefore, they try to facilitate their students to become interested in English learning and so become autonomous learners. These urban teachers can be

seen to be enacting a ZPD, as they not only are trying to narrow the distance between students' learning with guidance and students' learning on their own but also are aware that 'teacher' role in education can be performed by other influences in the learning context.

5.2.1.3. Exposure time

Previous studies on the learning of English show that limited time is one of the obstacles that hinder the progress in teaching and learning English as a second language (Asraf & Ahmad, 2003; Nunan, 2003) . Similar to those studies, all of the teachers in the present research in both regions asserted that the difference in exposure time leads to the difference in students' listening outcomes. In detail, whereas the students at the rural school only have 40 minutes each three weeks, the city students, in addition to their same listening time at school as the rural students, spend 45 minutes more each week communicating with foreign teachers and have chance to access to English listening from English centres. These numbers appear not to have changed since the Nunan (2003) study. With such limited time, it is too difficult for rural students to develop great listening competence. Moreover, this amount of time is also a problem to teachers in both contexts, as they are hampered from implementing innovative strategies in their classroom(Le & Barnard, 2009).

5.2.2. Social factors

5.2.2.1. Learning conditions

Learning conditions include a number of factors related to students' learning environment, such as class size, facilities (Le & Barnard, 2009), private tutoring (Dang, 2007), social context, and school settings (Gardner, 2007). In the scope of the

present study, the teachers in the rural and urban contexts shared the same view on the effects of learning conditions in students' performances. In addition to familiar factors such as class size or facilities, these teachers also listed particular factors related to learning conditions, which are family income, parents' background and awareness, and English centres.

The gap in economy between rural and urban areas is believed to affect directly the education of these two contexts (Fesselmeyer & Le, 2010). All the teachers in the present study strongly held this belief. Higher incomes of urban families enabled their children to participate extra-curricular activities such as private tutoring provided by their schools or English centres (Dang, 2007), or simply to get access to more qualified learning resources (T. M. H. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2007). T. M. H. Nguyen and Nguyen (2007) explain the case with primary students. Primary students are compulsorily to study English from grade three nationwide based on the availability of each school. Because the price of textbooks from prestigious publishers is very expensive, schools need support from parents (T. M. H. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2007). In this circumstance, it is clear that city schools are in a more advantageous position than rural schools. Consequently, the disparities between rural and urban students are unavoidable (Nunan, 2003).

C. Pham (2016, pp. 11-12) claims that "parental involvement and expectations", "family values", and "role models from successful family members and social others" demonstrate a significant impact on the level of student motivation. In the present study, the role of parents' background and awareness is emphasized by the teachers in both contexts. Whereas parents in the city, with their better jobs, have more opportunities to understand the modern world, parents in the country are believed to be

not as knowledgeable. Therefore, the rural parents do not see the importance of EFL for their children's future. This leads to parents' lack of encouragement and support. This finding is similar to that in the study by Lamb (2012), as he saw no positive effect of parents on students' motivation, because of their limited knowledge of English. With the similar case in Bangladesh, Mahmud and Bray (2017) asserted rural parents' commitment to agricultural sectors discourages them from supporting their children's English learning.

The influence of English centres on the learning of English can be considered as one of the key findings from the present exploration. The data from the teachers' interviews reveal some similarities between this study and other explorations on tutoring. Firstly, it is a reality that attending these centres in the countryside is not as common as in the city (Lamb, 2012). As stated by the teachers in both the rural and urban schools, city parents tend to send their children to English centres at an early age. It is also a fact that these activities have a remarkable influence on students' academic performance, because all of the teachers in this research said that urban students' learning of English at English centres leads to their better listening scores compared to rural students. This fits with the results of Lamb (2012), as he finds a slight difference in English proficiency scores and motivation between the students attending and those students not attending private English classes. However, the rural teachers' perceptions in the present study reinforce the findings of Dang (2007) that the impacts of these tutoring activities can be more powerful at higher levels of education based on the rural and urban students' listening test scores.

5.2.2.2. The 'future L2 self': Career orientation

Career orientation plays an important role in students' second language choice (Oxford, 1989). Both of the rural teachers in the present study asserted that poor career orientation leads to their students' limited achievement in English. In the city, students are provided with knowledge of different professions by their parents and the surrounding community, to make a decision on their future jobs. Thus, they consider English as a requirement for their future job. Meanwhile, in the rural region, students lack these sources of help due to the limitation in their parents' background knowledge and their familiar living settings. More importantly, the increasing rate of unemployment also prevents teachers from guiding students in choosing a career. Far beyond effects of career orientation on students' learning, the main cause lies in students' motivation in reference to the L2 self system of Dörnyei (2009), which has been analyzed above.

5.2.2.3. Perception of the value of English

Lamb (2012) and Hayes (2010) point out that rural people do not understand the importance of English, as they seldom use it in their daily lives. The data from the present study also suggest the limited value placed on English in the rural area. The teachers reported that they have difficulty in asking for help from the families because the parents doubt the significant role of English in their children's future. In the city, the case is completely the opposite, as the parents see the importance of English, and sending children to English centres thus has become popular (Lamb, 2012). This contrast suggests the difference in students' motivation in second language learning between these two settings. In addition, as noted by the rural teachers, the perceptions of rural primary teachers may be one of the causes of rural and urban disparities in

English proficiency. T. M. H. Nguyen and Nguyen (2007) explain that many primary English teachers are not trained to teach English to children from the ages of five to ten. This leads to the fact that many teachers still focus on grammar when teaching to children. More importantly, the role of primary English teachers in promoting students' English proficiency is not identified by both the government and themselves (Saito, Tsukui, & Tanaka, 2008). This perspective causes rural students' limited background knowledge in learning English, which is a disadvantage in their future study.

5.3. Conclusion and Implications

This chapter has provided a thorough analysis of the findings gained from the students' test scores and questionnaires, and the teachers' questionnaires and interviews. This chapter has also made detailed comparison between its findings and those of previous studies in the literature. More importantly, to guarantee the triangulation of the study, data from teachers and students have been compared. As the perspective framework of the study, insights from sociocultural theory, and studies of motivation and teacher beliefs, have informed this discussion.

This study reveals an application of the sociocultural theory to second language teaching in the city. In the study, the teachers express the perspective that language is a means of communication that people use to change their surrounding world, and that human minds can be affected by the context. From this viewpoint, the teachers used their teaching activities to try to inspire their students so that they can become autonomous learners of English in the future. This perception matches the concept of mediation. As languages are one of the tools people use in the process of mediation

(Lantolf, 2000), and the activities of this process are language teaching and learning activities (Donato & McCormick, 1994). These activities are believed to have influence on human minds (Lantolf, 2004), or in other words, they affect student motivation (Gardner, 2007). In addition to mediation, in this study, the teachers believe that learning success is guaranteed by developing learner autonomy. This means that the 'teacher' role in supporting growth in ZPD may be taken by other influences, such as English centres, online resources and partners. Moreover, the collected data reveal the participation of a series of factors contributing to higher outcomes of the urban students. These include the support from their family, their teachers, their school, and the society. Setting these factors under the light of ZPD, defined as the distance between the level of development achieved with the assistance of other people, and the potential level of development achieved by individuals themselves (Vygotsky, 1978), it is clear that the urban students receive much more ZPD assistance. Meanwhile, the rural students do not and are limited only to teacher – ZPD. This explains the difference in outcomes between the rural and urban students. As sociocultural theory concerns the effect of context on human minds (Lantolf, 2004), student motivation and teacher beliefs are believed to be involved in the difference in outcomes between the two groups of students.

Student motivation is the factor that covers most of the themes emerging from the data collected. It is clear that students in rural areas have less powerful motivation than have their city counterparts. Although some rural students demonstrate their desire for English mastery, their learning context demotivates them (Gardner, 2007). In addition, their lower achievement in comparison with their urban counterparts is due to their less powerful sense of an ideal L2 self, which is necessary in their long term learning

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of English as a requirement of future jobs (Dörnyei, 2009). Based on this analysis, the present study suggests that the approach of the Dörnyei (2009) L2 self system, with its three elements of ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience, should be developed and offered in teacher professional development.

Teacher beliefs have demonstrated a significant role in students' English competences. Zheng (2015) asserts that teacher beliefs are 'contextualized', that is, contextual factors have influence on teacher beliefs. These factors include school environment (Borg, 2003), physical and technical problems, low salaries (Le & Barnard, 2009), insufficient teaching materials, lack of professional development programs, and poorly motivated students (Wang & Du, 2016). This confirms the existence of the difference in beliefs between the rural and urban teachers. In addition, as teacher beliefs and classroom practices have an interactive relationship (Hampton, 1994; Zheng, 2015), the differences in teacher beliefs between the rural and urban teachers are considered to directly affect their students' outcomes. In detail, just as the urban teachers believed that language serves communicative purposes and success in learning may be achieved by students' autonomy, the city students show a higher proficiency of English listening. Meanwhile, as the rural teachers emphasize passing examinations, focusing on grammar and vocabulary, the rural students demonstrate a low level of English listening. More importantly, as teacher beliefs have the capacity for predicting student outcomes based on their performance (Pesu et al., 2016), the necessity for professional development directed at teacher beliefs in rural areas, to narrow the educational distance between the two settings, is highlighted.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This chapter firstly presents a summary of the purpose of the study, the literature review it is based on, and the methodology the study applies to collecting and analyzing data. A synthesis of the findings is then provided. Based on these findings, main conclusions are drawn as to teacher beliefs and motivation. Contributions and limitations of the study are also discussed as the basis for further research.

6.1. Overview of purpose

This study was driven by the phenomenon of students' low scores in their National General Examination (Sai Gon Giai Phong Online, 2016) and personal experience of the researcher in her teaching English to students from various communities. This study focused on establishing differences in English competence (Bui & Intaraprasert, 2012; Lamb, 2012; Le & Barnard, 2009), especially in English listening skills, between two groups, of rural and urban students, from statistical evidence. In addition, the causes of the differences were sought through investigating teachers' perceptions. Based on the findings, some approaches are recommended, to create equal opportunity in Vietnam EFL.

These purposes are represented in detail in the following research questions:

Research Question 1: How are students' English listening competences different in two upper secondary schools situated in rural and urban areas in Vietnam?

Research Question 2: What are teachers' perceptions of students' performance in English in the two case study schools in Vietnam?

6.2. Overview of literature review

The literature review of this study was constructed in six layers. Firstly, the theoretical framework that this study is based on is sociocultural theory, with emphasis on two constructs: mediation, and ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). It is necessary to note that this sociocultural theory does not emphasize social and cultural activities of human beings. Instead, it concerns the development of human minds within a particular social context (Thorne, 2005). The first construct of sociocultural theory is mediation, which refers to human beings using artifacts to control their surrounding environment. This process, in return, affects their activities and then their own minds (Lantolf, 2004). The influence of context on their minds is closely involved with motivation, one aspect of the second layer. Another aspect of the second layer lies in teacher beliefs. As stated above, sociocultural theory includes the notion of ZPD, which is the distance between the competence acquired with the help of other people, and the competence an individual acquires on his own (Lantolf, 2000). In other words, ZPD involves the effect of schooling (in particular, teachers) in students' achievement. With that meaning, ZPD is clearly presented by teacher beliefs. Accordingly, the second layer of the literature review investigated studies of teacher beliefs and motivation. This layer offers two important ideas. Firstly, teacher beliefs are reflected in classroom practices, thus they directly affect students' achievement (Borg, 2003). Secondly, students' achievement can be assured if they have three factors of motivation: the future ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and their learning experiences. Put simply, this theory of motivation means that students can succeed in L2 learning when they have the image of an ideal L2 user. This image will let students know about characteristics they need to possess,

and then together with their own learning context, this ought-to L2 self will help them to achieve the goal of becoming the future ideal self (Dörnyei, 2009).

The third and fourth sections of the literature review discussed studies regarding teaching and learning English in Vietnam, the pedagogy of CLT, and the significance of listening comprehension. These two sections pointed out some weaknesses in Vietnam EFL. These include an inadequate pre-teacher training process (T. M. H. Nguyen & Hudson, 2010), poor infrastructure and facilities, lack of links between teaching and learning programmes across school levels, and teachers' limited linguistic and pedagogic competence (H. C. Nguyen, 2008). In addition, the disagreement between the form of examination and the goals that students need to achieve in second language learning is an important matter in Vietnam EFL. Whereas the Ministry of Education and Training policy requires students to excel in four English skills, the examination does not contain listening and speaking, which leads to the school focus on teaching of reading and writing only. Moreover, although the new project of Vietnam Ministry of Education sets a new requirement for English proficiency of learners, students can still pass their National General Examination with very low scores in English.

Studies related to urban and rural schools in Vietnam are taken into account in the fifth part of the literature review. These studies highlight the differences in learning context between rural and urban students, and the divergence in their motivation (Lamb, 2012; Randhawa & Michayluk, 1975) and achievement. From these studies, a gap in the literature was identified: It is noteworthy that there has been little work on listening competence, despite its important role. In addition, this review notes that previous

studies have not provided detailed statistics on the differences, which leads to the necessity for conducting the present study.

6.3. Review of Methodology

The Research Methodology chapter presented the research process of this study (Crotty, 1998). This study is viewed from the constructivist perspective, which considers that human beings acquire knowledge and use their own minds and prior experience to construct knowledge (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010, p. 26). This view also emphasizes the interactive relationship between the researcher and the objects of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This is represented in the study by the researcher's acknowledgement of her personal background in the context. She used this background knowledge, together with participants' data, to interpret the data and construct findings. The second element of the research process lies in the theoretical perspective, including sociocultural theory with its two presentations: teacher beliefs and motivation. This case study then applied a mixed methods approach. The data collection instruments were the use of an A2 listening test composed by Cambridge University Press and questionnaire for students, and questionnaire and recorded follow-up semi-structured interview for teachers. The choice of the test was based on its suitability to the framework of Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training, as well as recommendation of Vietnam EFL teachers. The construction of questionnaires and interview questions was informed by the theory of motivation, teacher beliefs, and other related studies (Borg, 2011; Ehrman et al., 2003; Le, 2011; O'Malley et al., 1989; Pesu et al., 2016; Ramazani, 2014; Sawir, 2005). This data collection process was conducted in two upper secondary schools in Northern Vietnam, with the participation of 138 students and four teachers of English.

The data collected were analyzed depending on their type. The students' A2 listening test answers were marked and compared to the band score of Cambridge University Press. This band score is popular for EFL teachers in Vietnam. The students' responses to their questionnaire were entered and analyzed using SPSS. The teachers' responses to the questionnaire and interviewed were transcribed and translated. They then were ordered into themes using thematic coding. The gathered data were organized into two categories, urban students and teachers, versus rural students and teachers, which were finally analyzed using constant comparative method.

The reliability and validity of the study were assured by the use of reliable research instruments, which were applied to related studies. They were also strengthened by various strategies such as triangulation, teachers' feedback, and flexibility.

6.4. Summary of the findings

The findings of the study answered the two research questions.

Research Question 1: How are students' English listening competences different in two upper secondary schools situated in rural and urban areas in Vietnam?

Their test scores reveal that the urban students possess a higher level of English listening than do the rural students.

Research Question 2: What are teachers' perceptions of students' performance in English in the two case study schools in Vietnam?

Together with the students' responses to the questionnaire, the teachers' answers to their questionnaire and interview reveal the causes of the difference in students' listening outcomes. This is the result of three groups of factors: social factors (learning

conditions, career orientation, perception of value of English), school factors (exposure time), and teacher factors (teacher frustration, teacher beliefs). The relationship of these factors is represented in Figure 6.4.

Figure 6.1: The relationship among factors affecting student outcomes
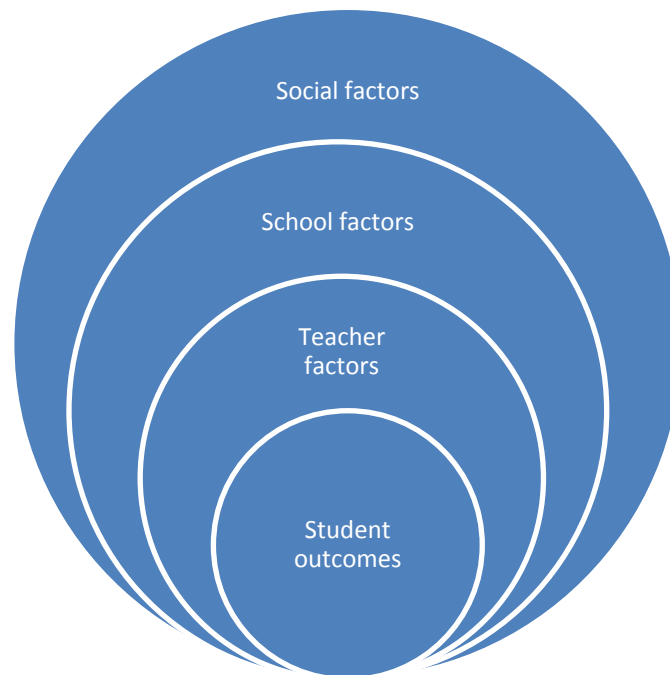
From this above diagram, we see sociocultural theory in action. We see that classroom language learning and learning strategies are activities of a process of mediation in a community setting (Donato & McCormick, 1994), and that mediation operates in the relationship between the learner and the learning context, that is, the community. In regard to ZPD, this is the distance between the level of development achieved by individuals themselves and the one achieved through the help of other people (Vygotsky, 1978). Setting ZPD in the urban context, the students are supported to achieve their better outcomes by the assistance of their parents, teachers, schools and society. Meanwhile, the group of rural students lacks this ZPD assistance.

In addition, from a closer view, many of these above concrete factors are shaped and affected by larger factors of teacher beliefs and student motivation. As can be seen, the

teachers' frustration is evident in teacher beliefs in which the teachers express their negative attitudes to innovation. Similarly, exposure time, learning conditions, career orientation, and perception of the value of English contribute their roles to constructing the different levels of students' motivation. To be specific, the urban students are motivated to study English and English listening skills by their school, which allows higher exposure time, their family, and their community, with better infrastructure and financial support, adequate career orientation, and higher awareness of the role of English. Rural students, however, lack these factors to promote their study. Therefore, it is not surprising that the rural students are left behind.

From these above findings, some conclusions as to motivation and teacher beliefs are drawn, which can serve as the basis to achieve the third goal of the study: to suggest some approaches to create equal opportunity in Vietnam EFL.

6.5. Conclusions

6.5.1. Conclusions as to motivation

The findings of the study reveal that the urban students have stronger motivation to learning English than their rural counterparts. This matches the findings of other studies (Lamb, 2012; Randhawa & Michayluk, 1975). The present study also suggests that the difference in motivation between students in these two contexts is affected by career orientation, perception of the value of English, and learning conditions. With reference to the L2-self system of Dörnyei (2009), rural students show a less powerful sense of a future ideal L2 self to equip themselves with necessary characteristics or goals based on their learning conditions. Therefore, increasing rural high school students' motivation through applying aspects of Dörnyei's (2009) L2 motivational

self system, in explicit classroom discourse around future goals, may serve as a reasonable solution to the issue. Pedagogical strategies towards this approach need to be developed and offered in teacher professional development.

6.5.2. Conclusions as to teacher beliefs

The collected data from the study highlight the differences in the teacher beliefs, which directly affect student outcomes. The urban teachers believe that students only master the second language when they are interested, and what teachers do is just to help them acquire the language on their own. Furthermore, they also understand the importance of communicative skills such as speaking and listening. Meanwhile, the rural teachers focus on the examination, and as a result, reading and writing are emphasized. They also hold a belief that students only master a second language when they are provided with good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary by EFL teachers. Consequently, the rural students demonstrate a lower level of English listening. This highlights the necessity of reshaping rural teachers' beliefs, with beliefs towards the value of communicative skills, and the importance of building positive student motivation. This approach should be explicitly addressed in professional development courses and materials.

6.6. Contributions and limitations of the study

With these above findings, to the best knowledge of the researcher, the present study is the first research providing clear evidence of a Vietnamese urban and rural distinction in learning English, especially in listening skills. Although this case study was conducted at only two schools in Northern Vietnam, its application can be extended to similar contexts. In terms of theoretical contribution, this study is considered to

particularly highlight the effects of motivation and teacher beliefs on teaching and learning EFL in the Vietnam context. More importantly, with those effects, the necessity of changing teacher beliefs about context and achievement, and applying Dörnyei's (2009) motivational self system, is emphasized as the possible approach that educators should consider.

Despite the above contributions, there exist some limitations in this study. Firstly, the narrow scope of the study may hinder the exploration of factors affecting the urban and rural student distinction. To be specific, the number of four teachers in just two schools in Northern Vietnam may be inadequate to present a complete picture of the issue. In addition, in spite of discussing the difference in listening skills, it is difficult to separate the factors involving listening skills from learning and teaching English. It is thus insufficient to draw a conclusion of English study in Vietnam. A future exploration of differences in all four skills of English may serve as a suggestion to address this limitation and to examine the context in more depth.

6.7. Further research

Based on the findings, the limitations of the study, and with reference to the review of literature, some suggestions for further research are offered.

Firstly, as the rural teachers stated, their students present a lack of background knowledge although they have studied English since primary school. This is due to the quality of EFL primary teachers as well as their own perception of the value of English. This suggests the need for an exploration of EFL teacher beliefs at primary school level.

Secondly, urban access to EFL coaching centres is considered to be one of the main factors affecting differences in students' achievement in the two contexts. However, in the research literature, there has been little attention paid to the role of EFL coaching centres in Vietnam. An investigation of the effect of these centres may offer researchers much information and new perspectives on Vietnam EFL.

Finally, as mentioned above, the geographical scope of the study (Northern Vietnam) is narrow, which may affect the findings. Thus, extending the participation to Central and Southern Vietnam may provide more significant results. Discovering differences in all four linguistic competences between rural and urban students should be also considered, in order to offer a complete picture of the contemporary scene of Vietnam EFL. This will open up an informed research discussion of equality of opportunity in EFL employment and careers for young people in Vietnam.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICS APPROVAL

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Research)

Research Office
Research Hub, Building C5C East
Macquarie University
NSW 2109 Australia
T: +61 (2) 9850 4459
http://www.research.mq.edu.a
u/ ABN 90 952 801 237

MACQUARIE University
SYDNEY·AUSTRALIA

2 December 2016

Dear Dr Moloney

Reference No: 5201600784

Title: *Teaching English to Rural and Urban Areas in Vietnam: Students' Listening Competence and Teachers' Perceptions*

Thank you for submitting the above application for ethical and scientific review. Your application was considered by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC (Human Sciences & Humanities)).

I am pleased to advise that <u>ethical and scientific approval</u> has been granted for this project to be conducted by:

• Macquarie University

This research meets the requirements set out in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007 – Updated May 2015) (the *National Statement*).

Standard Conditions of Approval:

1. Continuing compliance with the requirements of the *National Statement,* which is available at the following website:

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/book/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research

2. This approval is valid for five (5) years, subject to the submission of annual reports. Please submit your reports on the anniversary of the approval for this protocol.

3. All adverse events, including events which might affect the continued ethical and scientific acceptability of the project, must be reported to the HREC within 72 hours.

4. Proposed changes to the protocol and associated documents must be submitted to the
Committee   for   approval   before
implementation.

It is the responsibility of the Chief investigator to retain a copy of all documentation related to this project and to forward a copy of this approval letter to all personnel listed on the project.

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Should you have any queries regarding your project, please contact the Ethics Secretariat on
9850 4194 or by email ethics.secretariat@mq.edu.au

The HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities) Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedures are available from the Research Office website at:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics

The HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities) wishes you every success in your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Karolyn White
Director, Research Ethics & Integrity,
Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee (Human Sciences and Humanities)

This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007) and the *CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice.*

Details of this approval are as follows:

Approval Date: 2 December 2016

The following documentation has been reviewed and approved by the HREC (Human Sciences & Humanities):

Documents reviewed	Version no.	Date
Macquarie University Ethics Application Form		Revised application received 30/11/2016
Macquarie University Appendix B: Research to be Undertaken Outside Australia		Received 7/11/2016
Response addressing the issues raised by the HREC		Received 30/11/2016 & 02/12/2016
Participant Information and Consent Form: Teachers – Vietnamese version	1	7/11/2016
Participant Information and Consent Form: Teachers – English version	1	7/11/2016
Participant Information and Consent Form: Parents – Vietnamese version	1	7/11/2016
Participant Information and Consent Form: Parents – English version	1	7/11/2016
Participant Information and Consent Form – Students: Vietnamese version	1	7/11/2016
Participant Information and Consent Form – Students: English version	1	7/11/2016
Listening test	1	7/11/2016
Questionnaire for Teachers: Vietnamese version	1	7/11/2016
Questionnaire for Teachers: English version	1	7/11/2016
Questions for Teacher Interview: Vietnamese version	1	7/11/2016
Questions for Teacher Interview: English version	1	7/11/2016
Questionnaire for Students: Vietnamese version	1	7/11/2016
Questionnaire for Students: English version	1	7/1/2016

*If the document has no version date listed one will be created for you. Please ensure the footer of these documents are updated to include this version date to ensure ongoing version control.

APPENDIX B: COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES (CEFR - ENGLISH)

Proficient user	
C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, restricting arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/ herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself effectively and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent user	
B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/ her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic user	
A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/ her background, immediate environment and matters of immediate need.
A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/ she lives, people he/ she knows and things he/ she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Source: Council of Europe (2001)
(https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf)

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM (TEACHER - VIETNAMESE AND ENGLISH VERSION)

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Faculty of Human Sciences
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Email: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au

MACQUARIE University
SYDNEY·AUSTRALIA

Chief Investigator's / Supervisor's Name & Title: **Dr Robyn Moloney**

Participant Information and Consent Form (Teachers)

Name of Project: *Teaching English to Students in Rural and Urban Areas in Vietnam: Students' Listening Competence and Teachers' Perceptions*

You are invited to participate in a study of urban and rural students' listening competence and teachers' perceptions. The purpose of the study is to find out any difference in student English achievement (listening skills) in rural and urban schools in Vietnam.

The study is being conducted by **Ms Hong Van Bui** to meet the requirements of Master of Research Year 2 under the supervision of **Dr Robyn Moloney** (tel: +61 4 3189 6039/ email address: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au) of the Department of Educational Studies.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to (a) complete 30-minute questionnaire with open-ended questions, (b) have a follow-up interview on phone which takes about 15 minutes (Your phone number: _____). The questionnaire and interview focus only on research matters and some teaching and learning background information. You will have no exposure to any kind of risk when taking part in this study and will be given a small gift.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential, except as required by law. No individual will be identified in any

publication of the results. There are only two people who have the right to access the data: Ms Hong Van Bui and her supervisor, Dr Robyn Moloney. The data will not be used in any way outside the project. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to you on request by email.

□ Yes, I would like to receive a summary of the results of this study. My email address is _____

□ No, I would not like to receive a summary of the results of this study.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

I, *(teacher's name)* have read *(or, where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understand the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's Name: _____

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Investigator's Name: _____
(Block letters)

Investigator's Signature: _____ ___Date: _____

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics & Integrity (telephone (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

(INVESTIGATOR'S [OR PARTICIPANT'S] COPY)

Khoa Nghiên cứu giáo dục
Khoa khoa học Xã hội và Nhân văn
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Email: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au

Nghiên cứu trưởng/ Tên người hướng dẫn và học vị: **Tiến sĩ Robyn Moloney**

Mẫu chấp thuận và thông tin dành cho người tham gia (Giáo viên)

Tên đề tài: ***Dạy tiếng Anh ở nông thôn và thành thị Việt Nam: Khả năng nghe của học sinh và nhận thức của giáo viên***

Kính mời anh /chị tham gia vào đề tài nghiên cứu về khả năng nghe của học sinh nông thôn và thành thị và nhận thức của giáo viên. Mục đích của nghiên cứu này là để tìm hiểu những khác biệt trong khả năng học tiếng Anh (cụ thể là kĩ năng nghe) giữa các trường nông thôn và thành thị ở Việt Nam.

Nghiên cứu này được thực hiện bởi cô **Bùi Hồng Vân** để hoàn thành yêu cầu của khoá Thạc sỹ nghiên cứu năm hai dưới sự hướng dẫn của Tiến sĩ **Robyn Moloney** (Điện thoại: +61 4 3189 6039/ email: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au) thuộc khoa Nghiên cứu giáo dục.

Nếu anh/ chị quyết định tham gia vào đề tài nghiên cứu này, anh/chị sẽ được yêu cầu (a) trả lời câu hỏi trong phiếu điều tra kéo dài khoảng 30 phút, (b) trả lời câu hỏi phỏng vấn qua điện thoại trong khoảng 15 phút (Số điện thoại của bạn: _____). Phiếu điều tra và nội dung phỏng vấn chỉ tập trung vào vấn đề nghiên cứu và một số thông tin nền về kinh nghiệm dạy và học tiếng Anh vì vậy anh/chị sẽ không phải tiếp cận với bất kể rủi ro nào và sẽ được nhận một món quà nhỏ khi tham gia vào đề tài nghiên cứu này.

Bất kể thông tin hay chi tiết cá nhân được thu thập trong nghiên cứu này đều sẽ được bảo mật ngoại trừ trường hợp luật pháp yêu cầu. Không một cá nhân nào bị nhận dạng trong bất cứ xuất bản nào của kết quả nghiên cứu. Chỉ có hai người có quyền truy cập những dữ liệu nói trên là cô Bùi Hồng Vân và người hướng dẫn là Tiến sĩ Robyn Moloney. Tóm tắt của kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ được gửi cho anh/chị nếu anh/chị yêu cầu:

□ Có, tôi muốn nhận bản tóm tắt của kết quả nghiên cứu.

Địa chỉ email của tôi là: _____

□ Không, tôi không muốn nhận bản tóm tắt của kết quả nghiên cứu

Việc tham gia vào nghiên cứu này là hoàn toàn tự nguyện: anh/chị không bị bắt buộc phải tham gia và nếu anh/chị quyết định tham gia vào nghiên cứu thì cũng có thể tự do rút lui bất cứ lúc nào anh/chị muốn mà không cần phải đưa ra lý do hay phải chịu bất kì một hậu quả gì.

Tôi, _____ (*tên người tham gia*) đã đọc và hiểu thông tin bên trên và tất cả những câu hỏi tôi muốn hỏi cũng đã được trả lời thoả đáng. Tôi đồng ý tham gia vào nghiên cứu này và hiểu rằng tôi có thể rút lui khỏi nghiên cứu này bất kể lúc nào mà không có bất kì hậu quả gì. Tôi được đưa một bản sao của phiếu này để giữ.

Tên người tham gia: _____ (Viết chữ in hoa)

Chữ kí của người tham gia: _____ Ngày: _____

Tên người nghiên cứu: _____(Viết chữ in hoa)

Chữ kí của người nghiên cứu: _____ Ngày: _____

Khía cạnh đạo đức của nghiên cứu này được thông qua bởi Uỷ ban Đạo đức Nghiên cứu con Người của trường đại học Macquarie. Nếu anh/chị có bất kể phàn nàn hoặc thắc mắc gì về khía cạnh đạo đức của sự tham gia của anh/chị trong nghiên cứu này, bạn có thể liên hệ Uỷ ban thông qua Giám đốc, Đạo đức và toàn vẹn trong nghiên cứu (sđt: (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au) . Bất kể phàn nàn nào của anh/chị cũng sẽ được xử lý bảo mật và điều tra kĩ càng, và anh/chị sẽ được thông báo về kết quả.

(BẢN SAO CỦA NGƯỜI NGHIÊN CỨU
[HOẶC CỦA NGƯỜI THAM GIA]

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM (PARENT - VIETNAMESE AND ENGLISH VERSION)

Department of Educational Studies
Faculty of Human Sciences
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY   NSW   2109
Phone: +61 (0) 2 9850 8605
Email: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au

Chief Investigator's / Supervisor's Name & Title: **Dr Robyn Moloney**

Participant Information and Consent Form (Parents)

Name of Project: ***Teaching English to Students in Rural and Urban Areas in Vietnam: Students' Listening Competence and Teachers' Perceptions***

You are invited to give consent for your child/ward to participate in a study of urban and rural students' listening competence and teachers' perceptions. The purpose of the study is to find out any difference in student English achievement (listening skills) in rural and urban schools in Vietnam.

The study is being conducted by **Ms Hong Van Bui** to meet the requirements of Master of Research Year 2 under the supervision of **Dr Robyn Moloney** (tel: +61 4 3189 6039/ email address: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au) of the Department of Educational Studies.

If you give consent for your child/ward to participate, he/she will be asked to (a) take a 30-minute listening test, (b) complete a short questionnaire which takes about 10 minutes and focuses only on research matters and some learning background information. Your child/ward will have no exposure to any kind of risk when taking part in this study and will be given a small gift.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential, except as required by law. No individual will be identified in any publication of the results. There are only two people who have the right to access

the data: Ms Hong Van Bui and her supervisor, Dr Robyn Moloney. The data will not be used in any way outside the project. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to you on request by email.

□ Yes, I would like to receive a summary of the results of this study. My email address is _____

□ No, I would not like to receive a summary of the results of this study.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and if you decide to give consent, you are free to withdraw your child/ward at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

I, _____ *(parent's name)* _____ have read *(or, where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understand the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree for my child/ward to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw him/her from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____
(Block letters)

Parent's Signature: _____Date: _____

Investigator's Name: _____
(Block letters)

Investigator's Signature: _____ ___Date:_____

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics & Integrity (telephone (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

(INVESTIGATOR'S [OR PARTICIPANT'S] COPY)

Khoa Nghiên cứu giáo dục
Khoa khoa học Xã hội và Nhân văn
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Nghiên cứu trưởng/ Tên người hướng dẫn và học vị: **Tiến sĩ Robyn Moloney**

Mẫu chấp thuận và thông tin dành cho người tham gia (Phụ huynh)

Tên đề tài: ***Dạy tiếng Anh ở nông thôn và thành thị Việt Nam: Khả năng nghe của học sinh và nhận thức của giáo viên***

Kính mời các bậc phụ huynh cho phép con em mình tham gia vào đề tài nghiên cứu về khả năng nghe của học sinh nông thôn và thành thị và nhận thức của giáo viên. Mục đích của nghiên cứu này là để tìm hiểu những khác biệt trong khả năng học tiếng Anh (cụ thể là kĩ năng nghe) giữa các trường nông thôn và thành thị ở Việt Nam.

Nghiên cứu này được thực hiện bởi cô **Bùi Hồng Vân** để hoàn thành yêu cầu của khoá Thạc sỹ nghiên cứu năm hai dưới sự hướng dẫn của Tiến sĩ **Robyn Moloney** (Điện thoại: +61 4 3189 6039/ email: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au) thuộc khoa Nghiên cứu giáo dục.

Nếu các anh/chị đồng ý cho con em mình tham gia vào đề tài nghiên cứu này, con em các anh chị sẽ được yêu cầu (a) làm một bài kiểm tra nghe kéo dài khoảng 30 phút, (b) trả lời câu hỏi trong phiếu điều tra kéo dài khoảng 10 phút. Phiếu điều tra này chỉ tập trung vào vấn đề nghiên cứu và một số thông tin nền về kinh nghiệm học tiếng Anh vì vậy con em của các anh chị sẽ không phải tiếp cận với bất kể rủi ro nào và sẽ được nhận một món quà nhỏ khi tham gia vào đề tài nghiên cứu này.

Bất kể thông tin hay chi tiết cá nhân được thu thập trong nghiên cứu này đều sẽ được bảo mật ngoại trừ trường hợp luật pháp yêu cầu. Không một cá nhân nào bị nhận dạng trong bất cứ xuất bản nào của kết quả nghiên cứu. Chỉ có hai người có quyền truy cập những dữ liệu nói trên là cô Bùi Hồng Vân và người hướng dẫn là Tiến sĩ Robyn Moloney. Tóm tắt của kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ được gửi cho các anh/chị nếu các anh/chị yêu cầu:

□ Có, tôi muốn nhận bản tóm tắt của kết quả nghiên cứu.

Địa chỉ email của tôi là: _____

□ Không, tôi không muốn nhận bản tóm tắt của kết quả nghiên cứu

Việc tham gia vào nghiên cứu này là hoàn toàn tự nguyện: các anh/chị không bị bắt buộc phải tham gia và nếu các anh/chị quyết định tham gia vào nghiên cứu thì cũng có thể tự do cho con em mình rút lui bất cứ lúc nào các anh/chị muốn mà không cần phải đưa ra lý do hay phải chịu bất kì một hậu quả gì._____

Tôi, _____ (*tên phụ huynh*) đã đọc và hiểu thông tin bên trên và tất cả những câu hỏi tôi muốn hỏi cũng đã được trả lời thoả đáng. Tôi đồng ý cho con tôi/người chịu sự giám hộ của tôi tham gia vào nghiên cứu này và hiểu rằng tôi có thể rút con tôi/ người chịu giám hộ của tôi khỏi nghiên cứu này bất kể lúc nào mà không có bất kì hậu quả gì. Tôi được đưa một bản sao của phiếu này để giữ.

Tên người tham gia: _____ (Viết chữ in hoa)

Tên phụ huynh: _____ (Viết chữ in hoa)

Chữ kí của phụ huynh: _____ Ngày: _____

Tên người nghiên cứu: _____(Viết chữ in hoa)

Chữ kí của người nghiên cứu: _____ Ngày: _____

Khía cạnh đạo đức của nghiên cứu này được thông qua bởi Uỷ ban Đạo đức Nghiên cứu con Người của trường đại học Macquarie. Nếu anh chị có bất kể phàn nàn hoặc thắc mắc gì về khía cạnh đạo đức của sự tham gia của bạn trong nghiên cứu này, anh chị có thể liên hệ Uỷ ban thông qua Giám đốc, Đạo đức và toàn vẹn trong nghiên cứu (sđt: (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au) . Bất kể phàn nàn nào của anh chị cũng sẽ được xử lý bảo mật và điều tra kĩ càng, và bạn sẽ được thông báo về kết quả.

**(BẢN SAO CỦA NGƯỜI NGHIÊN CỨU
[HOẶC CỦA NGƯỜI THAM GIA]**

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM (STUDENT - VIETNAMESE AND ENGLISH VERSION)

Department of Educational Studies
Faculty of Human Sciences
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY   NSW   2109
Phone: +61 (0) 2 9850 8605
Email: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au

Chief Investigator's / Supervisor's Name & Title: **Dr Robyn Moloney**

Participant Information and Consent Form (Students)

Name of Project: ***Teaching English to Students in Rural and Urban Areas in Vietnam: Students' Listening Competence and Teachers' Perceptions***

You are invited to participate in a study of urban and rural students' listening competence and teachers' perceptions. The purpose of the study is to find out any difference in student English achievement (listening skills) in rural and urban schools in Vietnam.

The study is being conducted by **Ms Hong Van Bui** to meet the requirements of Master of Research Year 2 under the supervision of **Dr Robyn Moloney** (tel: +61 4 3189 6039/ email address: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au) of the Department of Educational Studies.

If you give consent to participate, you will be asked to (a) take a 30-minute listening test, (b) complete a short questionnaire which takes about 10 minutes and focuses only on your learning background. You will have no exposure to any kind of risk when taking part in this study and you will be given a small gift.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential, except as required by law. No individual will be identified in any publication of the results. There are only two people who have the right to access the data: Ms Hong Van Bui and her supervisor, Dr Robyn Moloney. The data will

not be used in any way outside the project. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to you on request by email.

□ Yes, I would like to receive a summary of the results of this study. My email address is _____

□ No, I would not like to receive a summary of the results of this study.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

_____

I, *(student's name)* have read *(or, where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understand the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's Name:_____

Participant's Signature: _____Date:_____

Investigator's Name:_____

(Block letters)

Investigator's Signature: _____ ___Date:_____

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics & Integrity (telephone (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

(INVESTIGATOR'S [OR PARTICIPANT'S] COPY)

Khoa Nghiên cứu giáo dục
Khoa khoa học Xã hội và Nhân văn
ĐẠI HỌC MACQUARIE   NSW   2109
Điện thoại: +61 (0) 2 9850 8605
Fax: +61 (0)x xxxx xxxx
Email: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au

Nghiên cứu trưởng/ Tên người hướng dẫn và học vị: **Tiến sĩ Robyn Moloney**

Mẫu chấp thuận và thông tin dành cho người tham gia (Học sinh)

Tên đề tài: *Dạy tiếng Anh ở nông thôn và thành thị Việt Nam: Khả năng nghe của học sinh và nhận thức của giáo viên*

Kính mời các bạn tham gia vào đề tài nghiên cứu về khả năng nghe của học sinh nông thôn và thành thị và nhận thức của giáo viên. Mục đích của nghiên cứu này là để tìm hiểu những khác biệt trong khả năng học tiếng Anh (cụ thể là kĩ năng nghe) giữa các trường nông thôn và thành thị ở Việt Nam.

Nghiên cứu này được thực hiện bởi cô **Bùi Hồng Vân** để hoàn thành yêu cầu của khoá Thạc sỹ nghiên cứu năm hai dưới sự hướng dẫn của Tiến sĩ **Robyn Moloney** (Điện thoại: +61 4 3189 6039/ email: robyn.moloney@mq.edu.au) thuộc khoa Nghiên cứu giáo dục.

Nếu các bạn quyết định tham gia vào đề tài nghiên cứu này, các bạn sẽ được yêu cầu (a) làm một bài kiểm tra nghe kéo dài khoảng 30 phút, (b) trả lời câu hỏi trong phiếu điều tra kéo dài khoảng 10 phút. Phiếu điều tra này chỉ tập trung vào một số thông tin nền về kinh nghiệm học tiếng Anh vì vậy các bạn sẽ không phải tiếp cận với bất kể rủi ro nào và sẽ được nhận một món quà nhỏ khi tham gia vào đề tài nghiên cứu này.

Bất kể thông tin hay chi tiết cá nhân được thu thập trong nghiên cứu này đều sẽ được bảo mật ngoại trừ trường hợp luật pháp yêu cầu. Không một cá nhân nào bị nhận dạng trong bất cứ xuất bản nào của kết quả nghiên cứu. Chỉ có hai người có quyền truy cập những dữ liệu nói trên là cô Bùi Hồng Vân và người hướng dẫn là Tiến sĩ Robyn Moloney. Tóm tắt của kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ được gửi cho các bạn nếu các bạn yêu cầu:

□ Có, tôi muốn nhận bản tóm tắt của kết quả nghiên cứu.

Địa chỉ email của tôi là: _____

□ Không, tôi không muốn nhận bản tóm tắt của kết quả nghiên cứu

Việc tham gia vào nghiên cứu này là hoàn toàn tự nguyện: các bạn không bị bắt buộc phải tham gia và nếu các bạn quyết định tham gia vào nghiên cứu thì cũng có thể tự do rút lui bất cứ lúc nào các bạn muốn mà không cần phải đưa ra lý do hay phải chịu bất kì một hậu quả gì.

Tôi, _____ (*tên người tham gia*) đã đọc và hiểu thông tin bên trên và tất cả những câu hỏi tôi muốn hỏi cũng đã được trả lời thoả đáng. Tôi đồng ý tham gia vào nghiên cứu này và hiểu rằng tôi có thể rút lui khỏi nghiên cứu này bất kể lúc nào mà không có bất kì hậu quả gì. Tôi được đưa một bản sao của phiếu này để giữ.

Tên người tham gia: _____ (Viết chữ in hoa)
Chữ kí của người tham gia: _____ Ngày: _____
Tên người nghiên cứu: _____(Viết chữ in hoa)
Chữ kí của người nghiên cứu: _____ Ngày: _____

Khía cạnh đạo đức của nghiên cứu này được thông qua bởi Uỷ ban Đạo đức Nghiên cứu con Người của trường đại học Macquarie. Nếu bạn có bất kể phàn nàn hoặc thắc mắc gì về khía cạnh đạo đức của sự tham gia của bạn trong nghiên cứu này, bạn có thể liên hệ Uỷ ban thông qua Giám đốc, Đạo đức và toàn vẹn trong nghiên cứu (sđt: (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au) . Bất kể phàn nàn nào của bạn cũng sẽ được xử lý bảo mật và điều tra kĩ càng, và bạn sẽ được thông báo về kết quả.

(BẢN SAO CỦA NGƯỜI NGHIÊN CỨU
[HOẶC CỦA NGƯỜI THAM GIA]

LISTENING TEST

Time: ~ 30 minutes

PART 1:

Questions 1 – 5:

You will hear five short conversations.

You will hear each conversation twice.

There is one question for each conversation.

For questions 1-5, put a tick (✓) under the right answer.

Example:

0. How many people were at the meeting?
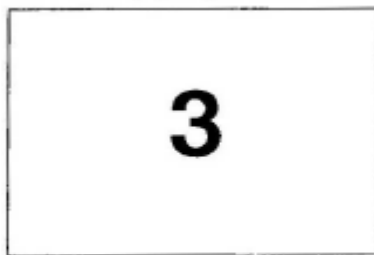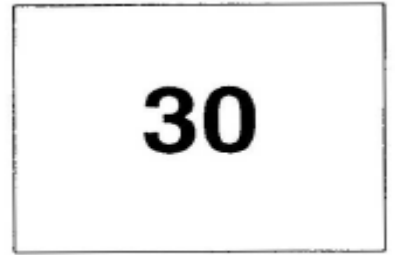
3	13	30
A ☐	B ☐	C ☑

---

1. What music will they have at the party?
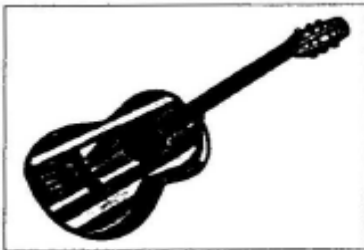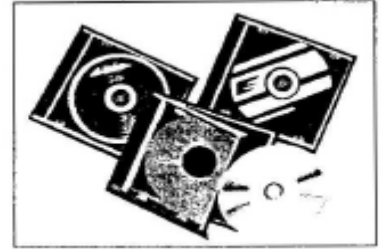
A ☐	B ☐	C ☐

2. When will the man go on holiday?

June	July	August
A ☐	B ☐	C ☐

3. What will the weather be like tomorrow?
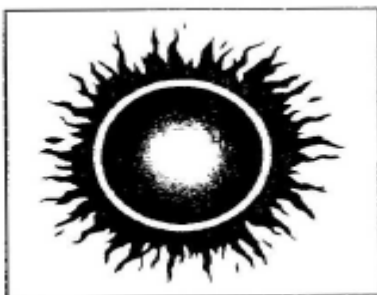
A ☐ B ☐ C ☐

4. What color is Mary's coat?

yellow	blue	brown
A ☐	B ☐	C ☐

5. What did the woman repair?
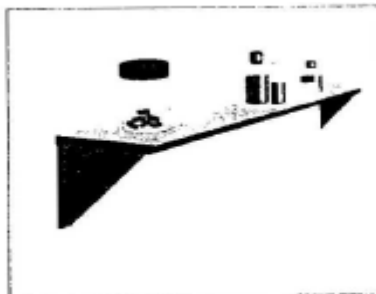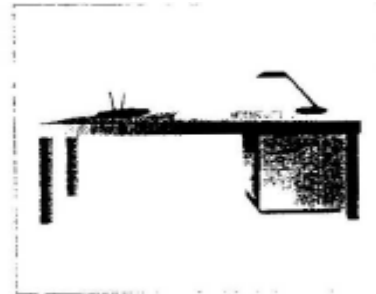
A ☐   B ☐   C ☐

PART 2:

Questions 6 – 10:

Listen to Sarah talking to a friend about her holiday photographs.

What place is each person in?

For questions 6 – 10, write a letter A – H next to each person.

You will hear the conversation twice.

Example:

0. Sarah's mother | E |

People		Places
6. Caroline	☐	A. castle
7. Jack	☐	B. cathedral
8. Sarah	☐	C. hotel
9. Peter	☐	D. Market
10. Sarah's father	☐	E. mountains
		F. museum
		G. restaurant
		H. sea

PART 3:

Questions 11 – 15:

Listen to Sue talking to her friend, Jim, about the new sports centre.

For questions 11 – 15, tick (✓) A, B or C.

You will hear the conversation twice.

Example:

0. The new sports centre is	A. cheap	☐
	B. big	☑
	C. dark	☐

11. Which bus goes to the sports centre?	A. 15	☐
	B. 18	☐
	C. 25	☐
12. From Monday to Saturday, the sports centre is open from	A. 6 a.m.	☐
	B. 7 a.m.	☐
	C. 9 a.m.	☐
13. If Sue goes swimming, she must take	A. soap	☐
	B. a swimming hat	☐
	C. a towel	☐
14. At the sports centre, you can buy	A. sandwiches	☐
	B. fruit	☐
	C. drinks	☐
15. Jim and Sue are going to go to the sports centre next	A. Wednesday	☐
	B. Thursday	☐
	C. Saturday	☐

PART 4:

Question 16 – 20:

You will hear a man making a telephone call.

Listen and complete questions 16 – 20.

You will hear the conversation twice.

MESSAGE

To:	Diana
From:	Ian

Name of hotel:	16	

Address:	17	……………………………..Street

Meeting starts at:	18	

Bring:	19	

Visit factory on:	20	

PART 5:

Questions 21 – 25:

You will hear some information about a zoo.

Listen and complete questions 21 – 25.

You will hear the information twice.

PARK ZOO

Monday – Saturday, open from :   9 a.m.

	to:	21	

Name of nearest station	22	……………………………..Station
Elephant House closed on:	23	…………………………….. May
Shop sells books, postcards and:	24	
Cost of family ticket:	25	£

Source: Cambridge University Press (2006). *Cambridge Key English Test 4 with answers.* 20-26.

- The end -

APPENDIX G: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS
(English and Vietnamese)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Section 1: Background information

1. Gender: Male □   Female □

2. Age: _____

3. How many years have you been learning English as a second language? _____

4. How often do you use English?

□ Everyday   □ Sometimes   □ Seldom   □ Never

5. Have you ever taken any English proficiency test before (TOEIC / TOEFL/ IELTS)?

_____

If yes, what is your total score? _____

6. How would you describe your level of English?

□ Elementary   □ Pre-intermediate   □ Intermediate   □ Advanced

Section 2: English listening skills

7. How do you study English listening skills?

□ Listen to all listening exercises in the textbook.

□ Listen in the classroom under the teacher's guidance

□ Watch foreign channels.

□ Listen to foreign music

□   Other   (Please   specify)
_____

8. What do you think about the role of listening skills in learning English?

□ Very important

□ Somewhat important

□ Not so important

□ Not important at all

9. Do you often listen to English songs/ watch English movies?

□ Everyday   □ Sometimes   □ Seldom   □ Never

10. Have you ever used Internet or electronic devices for your English listening?

□ Everyday   □ Sometimes   □ Seldom   □ Never

11. What is difficult in listening to English?

□ I am not familiar with English accents.

□ The speakers speak too fast.

□ I don't know the words the speakers are using.

□ Other (Please specify) _____

Section 3: The importance of English

12. Do you like learning English?

□ Very much   □ Quite much   □ A little   □ Not at all

13. Why do you study English?

□ Because it's the compulsory in my school.

□ Because I want to get a good job.

□ Because I want to study abroad.

□ Because I like the teacher.

□ Because it is easy

□ Other (Please specify)

14. Do you think studying English is necessary?

□ Very necessary

□ Somewhat necessary

□ Not so necessary

□ Not necessary at all

15. If you could choose, what language would you choose to study?

□ English

□ French

□ Japanese

□ Chinese

□ Russian

□ Korean

□ German

□ Other (Please specify)

- The end -
Thank you for your participation

PHIẾU ĐIỀU TRA DÀNH CHO HỌC SINH

Phần 1: Thông tin nền

1. Giới tính: □ Nam   □ Nữ

2. Tuổi: _____

3. Bạn đã học tiếng Anh trong bao lâu rồi? _____

4. Bạn có thường xuyên sử dụng tiếng Anh không?

□ Hàng ngày   □ Thỉnh thoảng   □ Hiếm khi   □ Không bao giờ

5. Bạn đã từng tham gia kì thi đánh giá năng lực tiếng Anh quốc tế nào chưa (TOEIC / TOEFL/ IELTS)?

_____

Nếu có, tổng điểm của bạn là bao nhiêu? _____

6. Bạn mô tả trình độ tiếng Anh của bạn như thế nào?

□ Sơ cấp   □ Tiền trung cấp   □ Trung cấp   □ Cao cấp

Phần 2: Kĩ năng nghe tiếng Anh

7. Bạn học nghe như thế nào?

□ Nghe tất cả các bài tập nghe trong sách.

□ Nghe ở lớp dưới sự hướng dẫn của thầy cô.

□ Xem các kênh nước ngoài.

□ Nghe nhạc nước ngoài.

□ Khác (Xin làm rõ) _____

8. Bạn nghĩ nghe có vai trò như thế nào trong học tiếng Anh.

□ Rất quan trọng

□ Hơi quan trọng

□ Không quá quan trọng

□ Không quan trọng chút nào

9. Bạn có thường xuyên nghe các bài hát tiếng Anh hoặc xem phim nói tiếng Anh không?

□ Hàng ngày   □ Thỉnh thoảng   □ Hiếm khi   □ Không bao giờ

10. Bạn có thường sử dụng Internet hoặc các thiết bị điện tử để học nghe không?

□ Hàng ngày   □ Thỉnh thoảng   □ Hiếm khi   □ Không bao giờ

11. Khó khăn của bạn trong việc học tiếng Anh là gì?

□ Tôi không quen với ngữ điệu của người nói.

□ Người nói nói quá nhanh.

□ Tôi không biết những từ mà người nói dùng.

□ Khó khăn khác (Xin làm rõ) _____

Phần 3: Tầm quan trọng của tiếng Anh

12. Bạn có thích học tiếng Anh không?

□ Rất thích

□ Hơi thích

□ Thích một chút

□ Không thích chút nào

13. Tại sao bạn học tiếng Anh?

□ Bởi vì đó là môn học bắt buộc.

□ Bởi vì tôi muốn tìm được việc tốt sau này.

□ Bởi vì tôi muốn đi du học.

□ Bởi vì tôi thích thầy/cô dạy tiếng Anh.

□ Bởi vì nó dễ học.

□ Lí do khác (Xin làm rõ) _____

14. Bạn có nghĩ học tiếng Anh là cần thiết không?

□ Rất cần thiết

□ Hơi cần thiết

□ Không quá cần thiết

□ Không cần thiết chút nào

15. Nếu được chọn, bạn sẽ chọn học ngoại ngữ nào?

□ Tiếng Anh

□ Tiếng Pháp

□ Tiếng Nhật

□ Tiếng Trung

□ Tiếng Nga

□ Tiếng Hàn

□ Tiếng Đức

□ Thứ tiếng khác (Xin làm rõ) _____

- Hết -
Cảm ơn sự tham gia của bạn

APPENDIX H: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS
(English and Vietnamese)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Section 1: Background information

1. Gender: Male □   Female □

2. Age: _____

3. How long have you been teaching English as a second language? _____

4. What qualifications do you have? _____

Section 2: Listening skills

5. What aspects of English do you like to teach most? Why?

_____

_____

6. How often do you teach listening skills to your students? Why?

_____

_____

7. How do you think listening skills are important in learning English? Why?

_____

_____

8. How do you teach listening skills to your students?

_____

_____

9. What problems do you have in teaching listening skills?

_____

_____

10. What level of listening skills do you think your students are at?

_____

_____

11. What language skills do you think your students like? Why?

_____

_____

Section 3: English study

12. Why do you think your students study English?

_____

_____

13. What difficulties do your students face in studying English?

_____

_____

14. How do you help your students with their learning English?

_____

_____

15. Compared with students in urban/rural areas, what aspects of language are your students better at?

_____

_____

16. Compared with students in urban/rural areas, what are your students' advantages and disadvantages in learning English?

_____

_____

- The end –
Thank you for your participation

PHIẾU ĐIỀU TRA DÀNH CHO GIÁO VIÊN

Phần 1: Thông tin nền

1. Giới tính: Nam □   Nữ □

2. Tuổi: _____

3. Bạn đã dạy tiếng Anh trong bao lâu rồi? _____

4. Các bằng cấp bạn có là gì? _____

Phần 2: Kĩ năng nghe

5. Bạn thích dạy khía cạnh nào của tiếng Anh nhất? Tại sao?

_____

_____

6. Bạn có thường xuyên cho học sinh của mình học nghe không? Tại sao?

_____

_____

7. Bạn nghĩ kĩ năng nghe quan trọng như thế nào đối với việc học tiếng Anh? Tại sao?

_____

_____

8. Bạn dạy nghe cho học sinh của bạn như thế nào?

_____

_____

9. Các vấn đề bạn gặp phải trong dạy nghe cho học sinh là gì?

_____

_____

10. Bạn nghĩ trình độ nghe của học sinh bạn như thế nào?

_____

_____

11. Bạn nghĩ học sinh của bạn thích kĩ năng ngôn ngữ nào nhất? Tại sao?

_____

_____

Phần 3: Học tiếng Anh

12. Bạn nghĩ tại sao học sinh của bạn học tiếng Anh?

_____

_____

13. Học sinh của bạn gặp khó khăn gì trong việc học tiếng Anh?

_____

_____

14. Bạn giúp học sinh của bạn học tiếng Anh như thế nào?

_____

_____

15. So với học sinh thành thị / nông thôn, học sinh của bạn trội hơn ở khía cạnh ngôn ngữ nào?

_____

_____

16. So với học sinh thành thị / nông thôn, học sinh của bạn có thuận lợi và bất lợi gì trong việc học tiếng Anh?

_____

_____

- Hết -
Cảm ơn sự tham gia của bạn

APPENDIX I: PROPOSED QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER INTERVIEW

1. What do you expect from your students in learning English?

2. What should you do to help your students improve their listening skills and other skills of EFL?

3. Do you think that your students really need to study English? Why (why not)?

4. Do you think there are differences between your students and their counterparts in the city/ countryside? If yes, what are the differences?

5. In your opinion, what are the causes of the differences in EFL between urban and rural students?

6. What should you do to limit the distinction in EFL between urban and rural students?

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview 1:

Extract 1	**Interviewer (I):** Can you tell me the exact amount of time your students spend on listening in 45 minutes in a week that you mention in the questionnaire? What about the quality of listening facilities and materials **Rural Teacher 1 (RT1):** About 20 minutes a week. The quality of CD player is good and the quality of listening materials which follow the content of the textbook is good too. In addition, other materials that teachers can use for listening are stable, good.
Extract 2	**I:** In the questionnaire you state that background knowledge is your students' difficulty. Can you explain this idea? What does background knowledge refer to? **RT1:** It is ability, students' limitation in basic knowledge, knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, skills… of their listening skills. They haven't listened or practiced much. That is background knowledge.
Extract 3	**I:** Can you explain more about learning condition which you mentioned in the questionnaire? **RT1:** First, at rural school, students just follow teachers' plan whereas students in the city have centres. They are one of the factors leading to the fact that listening skills of urban students are better than rural students'. Second, economic conditions also control students' learning. Maybe because of economic conditions, rural students can't take part in foreign language centres so certainly their listening and speaking are much worse than urban students' despite knowledge of many schools… in general in rural areas in many schools

	grammatical knowledge of students are even better than in the city but in terms of skills, theirs are not as good as urban students because urban students have access to listening and speaking more often and actively. That is in terms of conditions. Conditions in general but not facilities. That is economic conditions which control the case that… or because parents' awareness of affecting their children, letting their children take part in English environment is not like in the city.
Extract 4	**I:** Does it mean that parents don't like? **RT1:** It means that parents are not aware of the importance of students' access to English. In the city, parents are more caring. They can afford to send their children to English learning environment like English centres to practice their skills… in fact in these centres, they never have to learn grammar. It's what I mean. That means condition.
Extract 5	**I:** But both rural and urban students have access to technology… **RT1:** Yes, so it is the reason why I say that parents' consciousness, conditions, economic conditions can affect to whether students are active in their online study or not. For example, parents in the city have better economic conditions, they have good jobs so they have knowledge and they understand the important role of English so they will affect their children so that their children have to take part in, learn and understand it whereas in rural areas, for example their children can learn grammar very well but parents don't know the importance and they don't understand, don't have any influence in their children's learning so students have to find the way. When they have to do by themselves, with inactive ones, certainly they won't find the way. It is the condition

	which certainly is worse than urban students'.
Extract 6	**I:** What do you expect from your students' learning English?
	RT1: First as a high school teacher, my goal is that they can pass the exams. For example with compulsory examination like national graduating examination, the scores of students who want to register as D group are quite high, higher so that they are able to pass, compete to study at university. With my school that is normal university. It means that my goal is the examination first. Helping them communicate then improve their skills are the second goal, but not the main goal.
Extract 7	**I:** What do you think you should do to help your students improve their listening and other English skills?
	RT1: It is certain that it must start at their background knowledge. We have to provide them enough grammatical knowledge. From that grammatical knowledge, students have to do constructed -response exercises so that they can enrich their vocabulary. Then, whatever skills they want to learn, they are two basic things so that students can access to skills well. It means that helping students by enough grammatical knowledge, enough word bank so that they can take part in tests, listening exercises or … any exercise based on suitable level of students' vocab.
Extract 8	**I:** Do you think it is necessary for your students to learn English? Why and why not?
	RT1: To be honest, just a few students need to learn. A small number. Very few.
Extract 9	**I:** Who are they?
	RT1: They are students who need English score high enough to register in Group D. The rest is students who only need enough score to graduate. With such multiple choice exercises,

	they only need 3 or 3.5 plus the score of other subjects and their scores at the end of the term, they certainly have enough scores so they don't need to learn. They just learn at the compulsory level. With multiple choice questions, they can do randomly or by some ways they still can get 3.5 or 4 so they don't need to study. Honestly.
Extract 10	**I:** I suppose they will fail if their score is worse than five. **RT1:** No. In the past they would. But now they don't need. Provided that they don't get 0.
Extract 11	**I:** Do you think there are any differences between your students and urban ones? If yes, what are they? **RT1:** Generally what kinds of schools or classes do urban students belong? **I:** They are students from big cities like Hanoi, and their schools are in the same rank as your school. **RT1:** Uhm, in a group of schools, there is no difference in knowledge. Seldom. Because in terms of knowledge, schools in the same rank have the same amount of knowledge. However, in terms of skills, career orientation, certainly urban students have better career orientation, vision because despite their naughtiness, in big cities, students have conditions to contact with many people from many careers so their career orientation, future orientation will be different from rural ones. Rural students just continuously contact with fewer people so obviously their critical thinking of jobs will be worse. It is better future career orientation of urban students which I am talking about.
Extract 12	**I:** From your perspectives, what are the causes of the differences in learning English between rural and urban students?

	RT1: It is career orientation. It means that rural students don't need to study English. It is different from urban ones. Although they are worse at other subjects, they still study English because they have better future and career orientation. Maybe they understand the importance of learning English so even when they don't study for university entrance examination, they still study English … because they understand their future job and it needs English, they will learn English. It's what I refer to when I say career orientation. It means that although they don't study English for university entrance examination, because they want to work in this position and they have contacted with people in that position, they understand that this position requires English, they study English.
Extract 13	**I:** Ok. I got it. The next question: What should you do to narrow the distance in learning English between urban and rural students? **RT1:** This question is too large. But we have to start from the difference. It means that we have the difference in career orientation so we should increase our influence in our students by consulting them, orienting them about their future jobs. Learning English is not only for examination but for future jobs as well. It is the best way to narrow the distance that we think it is the distance. **I:** Thank you very much.

Interview 2:

Extract 1	**Interviewer (I):** From your responses to the questionnaire, can you tell me the exact amount of listening time of your students

	in a week?
	Rural Teacher 2 (RT2): Exactly, students only listen in 20 minutes. Sometimes they don't have 20 minutes of listening because each lesson will be delivered in 5 periods and students only spend one period (45 minutes) listening. In that period, I divide the lesson into three smaller periods: pre, while and post, so the time of listening in fact is 20 minutes but students only have 3 periods of learning English, so sometime in two weeks, I finish 1 unit. Because I spend 3 weeks delivering 2 units, students listen 40 minutes in 3 weeks.
Extract 2	**I:** In their questionnaire, your students consider listening to foreign music as a resource of learning listening. Do you know and exploit this fact into your listening lesson? **RT2:** I let my students listen but because time for learning knowledge in the curriculum is limited, sometimes for relaxing, I let my students listen to English songs to improve their interest in learning English, but not for the big goal like improve their listening skill. My goal is only to make them more interested in learning English. I don't think it is reliable information when my students state that they consider listening to music is a source of learning English because they listen but not for learning English as they state. Besides, foreign music here is not only English music but music from other countries like Korea. They like Korean music very much. They listen to music for relaxing mainly, not for learning English. Relaxing means that they only think about beautiful singers, dancers. If they listen to many English songs, when I ask them, they have to know. But in fact, they don't know any songs. So I know they don't tell the truth.
Extract 3	**I:** From your point of view, how many percentages of your

	students like English?
	RT2: Just 20% like English very much. But there are not many students having passion of learning English. Very few students like so much that they can self-study and teachers do not need to ask them to do. Even I haven't met any case like that in all my school. Even teachers have to put pressure on students in the team of Best Students. They are not volunteers.
Extract 4	**I:** How many teachers in your English group have master degrees?
	RT2: Currently, only one over 8 teachers (6 permanent members and 2 visiting teachers). According to C1 of Vietnam, now my school just has 4 members achieving it. This C1 is based on CEFR. Since 2012, they have evaluated teachers. At the beginning, there were only 40 members achieving C1 over hundreds of high school teachers. It is compulsory that high school teachers achieve C1 and junior secondary teachers achieve B2. In my school, there are 6 permanent English teachers. In my province, there are 130, 140 schools. However, in the first examination, there are only 40 teachers achieving C1. Then they have to train continuously. But since then, there haven't been any examinations like that again.
Extract 5	**I:** Do such programs give you motivation?
	RT2: Yes. Recently, they train us continuously. I don't know about other provinces but in my province, they focus on English. Teachers are the first. Recently I have taken part in training programs continuously, worked with famous lecturers of universities in the country. They also invited British Council to train us about methodology so in general, it's quite good.
Extract 6	**I:** Do you apply what you learn from the courses to your teaching?

	RT2: Just a part. First, they concern most about games, strategies and things to motivate students, make students like English more. But what they focus is communicative methodology to implement communicative function of English which is only a small part of what we teach at school. Speaking is a very small part. In the period, it has the same amount of time like listening. Even in the examination, it only has one or two questions related to communicative function. We have to teach to follow the examination. Focus on getting high marks for our students. Most of the time. There is no agreement between knowledge and the examination for students.
Extract 7	**I:** So those programs just motivate teachers but not have any effect on students, do they? **RT2:** They don't have effect as expected. In fact they make us difficult. Honestly, I can apply what I have learned to motivate my students but the effects are not as expected. Students may like more but the effect on their language is not as expected because conditions in Vietnam are limited to organize games in a teaching period. Organizing games will disturb other neighbor classes because we don't have a specialized room for learning foreign languages. We have to learn in a common area. It is also difficult to organize games for nearly 40 students. If we had about 20 students, it would be easier. Large class size, mixed levels. Because my students have different levels, what suitable for this student may not fit with the other. Of course this problem can be solved by many ways but teachers will have to work hard and besides, the condition is not good. Facilities and many things.
Extract 8	**I:** What do you expect from your students in their learning English and learning listening?

	RT2: Of course I don't expect much. I just want my students to acquire what I teach them. With students who don't have any intention of taking examination, I just want them to pass the exam with average grades. With students who intend to use English like a tool in the future, I hope they remember basic rules so that they won't be confused in more professional environment. I have heard many stories that students can pass the entrance examination into universities with scores 7 or 8 of English, but when they enter their field of study, they cannot speak when they learn English and feel confused when communicating. So I hope if I have capable students, I will try to encourage them so that they won't be confused when they intend to use English as a tool in their future job.
Extract 9	**I:** What do you think you should do to help your students improve their listening skill and other English skills? **RT2:** I think with listening skills, we still remember "Practice makes perfect". It means that only by practicing and then drilling. In the case we cannot let our students listen, we should use other skills to support listening skills such as speaking. If we cannot let them listen to radio, CD player, we should actively speak English to our students so that they are familiar. Listen from their teachers. It is one way I use, simple and possible in the condition I can do with 3 periods of English in a week. 3 periods in a week in a large class, we can't do much. 135 minutes for many skills, large class, low students' background knowledge. It is very difficult.
Extract 10	**I:** As I know from your students' responses in the questionnaire, they have been learning English for a long time, haven't they? **RT2:** For a long time. Since grade 3. Most of the students now

	follow 10-year English curriculum. They learn English for a long time and English curriculum here is concentric curriculum. Most of the topics haven't changed much from elementary, lower to upper high school. The curriculum is like a spiral. Maybe you will ask why students are not good when they spend a long time studying. The reason as many of my students share with me is that they don't have background knowledge and they are scared. I find out that teachers at elementary school do not highly appreciate English. It's just what I guess but I don't assert. So when students come with us in upper secondary school, we have to rush. Upper secondary school is not the same like elementary. Now students at grade 10 or 11 still read "we" like "where", and they don't know how to put the verbs in present simple or past simple. So what should I teach them? It is the reason why I say students do not have background.
Extract 11	**I:** Do you think it is necessary for your students to study English? **RT2:** Of course it is necessary. Because we are integrating and Vietnam is aiming at, I don't know whether it is the theory or not, that English won't be a foreign language but a second language. So we can't say we won't study, can we? Follow the society's trend. We integrate so certainly we need learn foreign languages. In the future, students are international citizens and work for companies so certainly they need foreign language. We cannot say English is not important. Extremely important.
Extract 12	**I:** Do you think there are any differences between your students and urban students? **RT2:** Yes, there are. They are different because as I know, urban students from their elementary schools or even

	kindergartens from 3 to 5 years old, their parents intend to let them study English. They study in English centers whereas rural students' family finance is not good.
Extract 13	**I:** Can you give this difference a name? **RT2:** Differences in environment and living condition. Living condition here is family's income. Urban family has higher income than in the countryside. Better income. Second, learning environment there is different. They are racing in the learning. Here there isn't any race like that. The next difference is parents' orientation. Most of the parents in the city are the peole who have a job, they have different visions from urban parents. In the countryside, there are poor parents who don't have any thoughts of sending their children to centres. Besides, if the parents who have better incomes, I am not sure that they orient their children to ways of acquiring knowledge. They don't appreciate learning in general and learning English in particular. Especially, now there are so many unemployed people. They talk directly to the teachers that there is no use learning.
Extract 14	**I:** What are the causes? **RT2:** Objectively it is due to society's trend. In the city everyone do that. If we don't let our children go to school, we are like fish out of place. Second, in the city, parents are at work most of the time. So sometimes they let their children go to learning centres because they want to have somewhere just to look after their children but by chance their children have access to a more professional learning environment than in the countryside. In rural areas, seldom can we find an English centre. Even there aren't. There aren't any professional English centres. Very few. Whereas in the city there are many. Or

	tutors. In the countryside, we don't have tutors. In the city, when the children learn badly, they invite tutors.
Extract 15	**I:** But the development of information technology can help rural students… **RT2:** I understand what you mean. But to rural students, going to school and self-studying means different. In the countryside, there are not many families having computers. In my class, about five above 36 families have computers.
Extract 16	**I:** What about smart phones? **RT2:** They have smart phones. But the attraction of the internet is different. In the city, children were familiar with it when they are small. They are familiar so they are not attracted. But rural students and even adults can't help surfing Facebook or finding information in the internet. They are attracted. Besides, learning is more boring than entertaining. Rural students are not supervised by their parents when using smart phone so learning from it is difficult. Second, although applications are popular, students use their phone most for communicating with their friends, surfing Facebook, and surfing websites, not for learning. In the city, parents pay attention to supervising their children and their children have enough. But I think in the city they don't study much from the computer. They still go to language centers despite facilities they have at home. The centres are open because now students don't have self-study skills. Their passion of knowledge is not as much as ours in the past. In the past we learn to combat the poverty but now the children have everything. Of course there are poor families, but studying is not the only way to combat difficulties. It can be the best way but not the only way. It is very difficult for us to give professional orientation to our

	students because there is so much unemployment. Students graduating from university can't find a job so it is so difficult for students and for us to tell our students to learn. Now students lack passion. If we say that learning is one way to change their life but in fact there is no difference and parents have to pay an amount of money, they won't. For the past few years, the situation is very bad.
Extract 17	**I:** What do you think you should do to narrow the distance? **RT2:** I think maybe teachers play a significant role in narrowing the distance in learning English between rural and urban students. So the teachers need to improve our profession, apply various learning methods for our students so that they are not confused and their vision in learning English will be widened. I myself often use two languages in my classroom, communicate in English with my students and apply methods, strategies to motivate my students. Sometimes I let my students watch movies, organize games or clubs to motivate them so that they can self-study. If they like they will self-study because we can't teach them all. To be honest, there are not many differences in scores between urban and rural students, but rural students' skills are not as good as their friends'. The scores in the examination are not different much because the content of the exam focus most on grammar and reading comprehension. The knowledge acquisition of rural students is not so worse than in the city. But their skills or communicative skills like speaking, listening, writing are worse because they don't have chance to practice or lack confidence and environment to use what they study.

Interview 3:

Extract 1	**Interviewer (I):** How often do your students do listening exercise in a week? **Urban Teacher 1 (UT1):** A lesson is normally divided into 5 parts: 4 skills and one part for language focus. Each unit takes about one week. During that unit, we have a listening period. Besides in other skills such as reading and speaking there are some small tasks for listening.
Extract 2	**I:** How long do students totally listen? **UT1:** The maximum time may be 60 to 70 minutes; normally about 45 minutes.
Extract 3	**I:** Are students interested when listening? Are they good at listening? **UT1:** This is one passive skill so some students are excited but some are not attracted.
Extract 4	**I:** Do you let them listen according to their interests? **UT1:** Further listening exercises are only based on the topic of the unit which can be more developed. For example some topics students prefer can be used to design extra listening tasks such as songs….. that is all…because time of each lesson is limited so it is hard to ask students to do other listening tasks.
Extract 5	**I:** Ok. Let's continue. In question number 13, when I asked "What are your students' difficulties in learning English?", you noted that "the large number of students in the class is the reason why teacher cannot totally observe the whole class". It means that because the class is crowded so teacher cannot take care of each student. Students therefore are not motivated. What do you mean with this explanation? **UT1:** Yes, that is true….yes…. As you know the total number of Vietnamese class is about 40 students. This is the minimum

	class. Especially in high school, the average number of student in each class is 40 ones. In each period with many activities, many students are exciting but some are passive. So teacher cannot pay attention to all 40 students. So it is hard to improve the quality of students in big teams.
Extract 6	**I:** Ok these are some interview questions, which I could not ask you in the questionnaire. What do you expect from your students' English learning? **UT1:** Like other teachers … I always hope that my students find the excitement and happiness in each lesson, especially in English hope that they find the meanings and learning purposes so they can try to study more by themselves.
Extract 7	**I:** How about problem of testing? Is it a part you demand? Do you hope that your students will get high marks for the tests? **UT1:** The exam mark is one aspect to evaluate the level and the effort of students. However, to some extent it can cause the problem of stress to students because they will try more in grammar but not all 4 skills: reading, speaking, listening and writing. Everything has two sides. Without examinations, students do not have more motivation to study, particularly with high school students.
Extract 8	**I:** One more extra question. Do you think that how many percentages of students likes learning English in your own class? **UT1:** The number of students likes learning English is great because with 40 students…. About three forths of students is interested and has excitement in learning English. However the ability of master English depends on the other factors and their own characteristics. English is considered as a subject with a lot of activities and game which make students feel interested

	in each period.
Extract 9	**I:** I am wondering that your students have a long period of learning English as they noted in questionnaire. They have studied for 8 to 9 years. However if mark 5 is considered as the mark students need to pass, nearly 50 percent of students cannot over it. Why is the result of SS' listening test not high though they have a long period of learning, about 8 to 9 years and the test is for A2 level? **UT1:** Honestly speaking ……in my opinions, Vietnamese students focus more on writing and grammar; especially listening and speaking are not strong points of them. As you can see in the questionnaire, some students get very high marks but some get very low marks because some are invested more in learning especially in communicational skill. The others if only study in high school , time for listening about 40-45 minutes a week even a little more time does not guarantee for them to listen well
Extract 10	**I:** Is listening one part of the test; for example, in 45- minute tests? **UT1:** Uhm…. I know…. As I know the other schools start having listening part. However in my school students do not have listening test.
Extract 11	**I:** How about final test? **UT1:** The final test does not have, either. Because in fact the final test is the concentrated test so if let them have listening test, it is hard for teachers to prepare radio, tape and the number of English teacher to observe is not many enough to come to each classroom to let them listen. It is a difficult.
Extract 12	**I:** As you said that some students get high points due to investment. Do you mean that they get investment from family

	or they are in excellent groups?
	UT1: At present, my students are in separated groups. For example in the class some students are really interested in speaking and listening but their grammar is not good. These students asked by teachers said that their family invested money for them to study in the English centres when they were young, so they are familiar with communicating; listening and speaking but they do not pay attention to grammar. Whereas, some are good at grammar but not listening and speaking so their listening and speaking skills are limited. And about excellent groups, they are taught more grammar but not listening and speaking
Extract 13	**I:** Let's continue with question number 2 in questionnaire. What should you do to encourage your Students to improve their listening and other skills?
	UT1: Speaking about the encouragement to my students, generally speaking, I think the only way is bringing happiness and excitement for students in the lessons. As a result, they will be passionate and study more in their own ways. That is the most effective method because if teacher crams students much knowledge , they find hard to enhance….ah….to me… during the lesson I often provide them extra documents to read at home or some films, some foreign songs to help them get more vocabulary.
Extract 14	**I:** Do you think that your students really need to enhance English? Why or why not?
	UT1: In Vietnam, as you know, English is one mean to help students come into the life. So each student understands about the importance of learning English. Besides, except for marks, students also know that in the future English is necessary and it

	is also helpful for their jobs. So in my opinion my students all know about the importance of English.
Extract 15	**I:** Do you think that it is necessary or not to teach your students English? *UT2:* In my opinion English is necessary. It is the popular language so students can widely communicate when abroad or make friends with foreigners in Vietnam. It is also a mean to work so is it necessary.
Extract 16	**I:** Yes but because in my questionnaire, when I ask what language you want to choose study, a large number of students even approximately 50 percent choose other language like French (a little), Korean, Germany. Why? **UT1:** It is a tendency because some of my students would like to go abroad to these countries for further study. So they choose to study one more language such as Germany, Korean, … But all of them are aware that a foreign language can help them succeed in the future.
Extract 17	**I:** Do you think that there are the differences between your students and students in the countryside? What are the differences? **UT1:** I think there are differences between students in the city and students in the countryside. The gap between them is becoming shorter and shorter. Students in the city seem to be more confident in communicating due to the more chances to make friends and communicate with foreigners when they are young so city students have more chances to speak and listen to English so they are more confident in communicating with foreigners.
Extract 18	**I:** You have said more chance to communicate with foreigners is a cause of the difference. Do you think there are any other

	causes? **UT1:** Uhm, one other cause in my opinion is that urban students have chance to contact with more active lifestyles and these lifestyles affect their personalities, for example, they like activities which are very useful in learning especially learning English.
Extract 19	**I:** So it is the living environment, isn't it? **UT1:** Active city lifestyles also contribute to promoting students' second language acquisition. Not only do they make students more active but open students' mind, and as a result, they benefit students' English learning
Extract 20	**I:** I got it. Now the last question, if you taught those rural students or if you had authority like working in educational department, what would you do to narrow the distance in learning English between rural and urban students? **UT1:** In fact, it is not difficult to narrow that distance. Because with the development of the Internet in many places even disadvantaged and remote areas, if students like studying, they can find resources of learning materials by themselves. It is not as difficult as in the past. The only problem is let them aware of learning, then increase their interest in English classes and talk about the meaning of learning English, the permanent application of learning English. Since then students will volunteer in trying by some ways to improve their English. It is what we should do and pay attention to. That's it. As English learners, we understand that learning English should start mainly from ourselves, not from other factors which can help or affect us.

Interview 4:

Extract 1	**Interviewer (I):** What do you expect from your students' English learning? **Urban Participant 2 (UT2):** Ah…, I want my students … to be really interested with this subject … feel that this subject will bring them something new and even know more about the culture of the language that they are learning … not just learning to get qualified marks for the exams only.
Extract 2	**I:** What do you think you should do to help your students improve their English listening skill and other language skills? **UT2:** Ah … I think that…ah… the first is… at lower level class students should expose to basic English listening skill on simple and familiar topic…but when they are at Year 9 or higher they should expose to different and more difficult types of listening skills…or even to some certificates…what I mean is when students get to higher level they need not to listen to general listening but to specific type which let them get closer to international certificate(s)…in order to help them not feel shock when they get to the university where they might learn with a style that is different from which they have at high school level.
Extract 3	**I:** Uh…with you…what do you think you should do? **UT2:** Ah…I think if I have time…ah… can…integrate a bit…for example in some periods like selective periods when there are spare time after doing other activities I can let student practice listening a bit … it is good…but now we do not have chance to do this.
Extract 4	**I:** Do you think that your students need to learn English? Why and why not? **UT2:** I think… surely… they need to learn it because …the globalization is obvious…they need to learn English so that

	they can work in the future and to communicate with people from different countries…that…it is really necessary…because if they do not have English it is really hard for them to integrate.
Extract 5	**I:** The reason why I ask this question is because I found in the questionnaires there are many students who chose other languages rather than English such as Korean, Japanese…Chinese **UT2:** …That's right… some of my students…in fact not many students aims to come to English speaking countries to study…my students are shifting their study-destination to Japan or Korea or German or China … that's …why
Extract 6	**I:** …so with those students do you think they need to study English? **UT2:** I still think they need…because English is an international language…and those who intend to come to non-English speaking countries are inevitable to use English some time…I think that's why…
Extract 7	**I:** Do you think there are any differences between your students and those in rural areas? If yes, what are the differences? **UT2:** I think that…students at schools in urban areas…I think there are great differences between them and those in rural areas…because they have chance to expose to better conditions such as cassettes, CDs…for listening or contact to the society…therefore they have better background in terms of listening and speaking English…yes…like me when I learnt at university…students from rural areas normally had lower scores in comparison with those from urban areas…it was really obvious.

Extract 8	**I:** Ok, in your opinion, what leads to those differences? Is it because of living condition? **UT2:** Yes…I think living condition is an important factor because…for example…living in urban areas…students have more chance to communicate with foreigners…as a result they have better condition to enhance their learning ability…while in rural areas, the economic condition is not good, contact is limited thus they learn English but…they cannot practice it right away.
Extract 9	**I:** However the internet or social network is spreading wildly…most of rural students now are using smart phones… **UT2:** Yes…I mean their learning direction is not clear…there no body who guide them what to learn…sometimes they learn English just for the university entrance exams…they do not focus on listening and speaking…in urban areas parents invest for students to learn listening and speaking from their early ages.
Extract 10	**I:** What do you think you should do…for example if you were a person who works in the Department of Education and Training (DOET) or a teacher in rural area…what do you think you should do to narrow the gap between students in urban and rural areas? **UT2:** Uhm…to narrow the gap…I think…perhaps we should start from improving teachers' quality…if there is a big gap between teachers in urban and rural areas…so from the lower level such as primary schools…students make many mistakes regarding English pronunciation or learning direction… then we should open English centers with foreign teachers in rural areas to create chances for students to expose to foreigners or native speakers or school in rural areas can co-operate with

	English centers which can send foreign teachers to such schools to teach for at least one period per week…or providing CDs for rural areas…for example for the library…improve the quality of the cassette players whose quality now is limited.
Extract 11	**I:** Ok these are some interview questions, which I could not ask you in the questionnaire. Also there are some points in your answers in the questionnaire that I am interested to know more, would it be ok for you to explain more about that? **UT2:** Yes… **I:** For example the question about "how often do you teach listening?" could you tell me how much time are your students are taught listening a week? **UT2:** Uhm…it's about…45minutes…if includes the time with foreigners it is about 90 minutes
Extract 12	**I:** With foreigner…do you mean your school hire foreign teacher? **UT2:** Yes that's true…there are English centers…who send foreign teachers to my school every week. **I:** Are they British? **UT2:** Yes… they are British, American …but normally they are British.
Extract 13	**I:** That means your school hires foreign teacher come to teach one period a week on behalf of the local teacher? **UT2:** No, not on behalf of or replace… normally we officially 4 periods a week for students to learn English, now we have one extra period which is for foreign teacher to be in charge. So in total now they have 5 periods a week
Extract 14	**I:** Is your class a selective class? **UT2:** No, my class is a normal one. It depends on which major they follow for example if they follow major A, they have 4

|	
	periods a week…if they follow major D, they have 5 periods a week.
Extract 15	**I:** Ok…could you please estimate the number of students who study English in your classes? **UT2:** Uhm…about 20% to 30% of the students in my classes who are interested in English …and normally students in Year 10 are more interested in English than those in Year 12.
Extract 16	**I:** Why is it so? **UT2:** Because students in Year 12 are under pressure from several subjects thus they do not have time to pay attention to English listening and speaking. Sometimes, they even refuse to practice (do the sample tests) because they are so tired. **I:** Ok …do you mean they are under the pressure from exam? **UT2:** Yes…yes
Extract 17	**I:** Ok question number 3 could you please tell me the number of teachers who have Mater degree in your English group? How many teachers are there in your English group? **UT2:**…11 teachers… I think about 7 or 8 teachers who have Master degree … it's about 70% to 80%...there are only 3 teachers who do not have Master degree. **I:** Are they elder teachers? **UT2:** Yes …yes…
Extract 18	**I:** Do you participate in the project 2020 of MOET? **UT2:** Yes **I:** Do you have to take the assessment tests and participate in training and re-training course? **UT2:** We all have to learn…with teachers who do not meet the C1 requirement, they have to learn…with those who have already had the C1 certificate, they have to submit it to the MOET.

Extract 19	**I:** Do you know the number of teachers who meet the requirement of C1 in Hanoi? **UT2:** In Hanoi…I am not sure…but as far as I know that number is small…because the requirement is quite high and difficult to get…according to some teachers working in MOET, at the first round the proportion of the teachers who passed the test is low so now they encouraged teachers to try to meet the requirement. **I:** Ok…thank you very much.

Cambridge English

The Cambridge English Scale explained

A guide to converting practice test scores to Cambridge English Scale scores
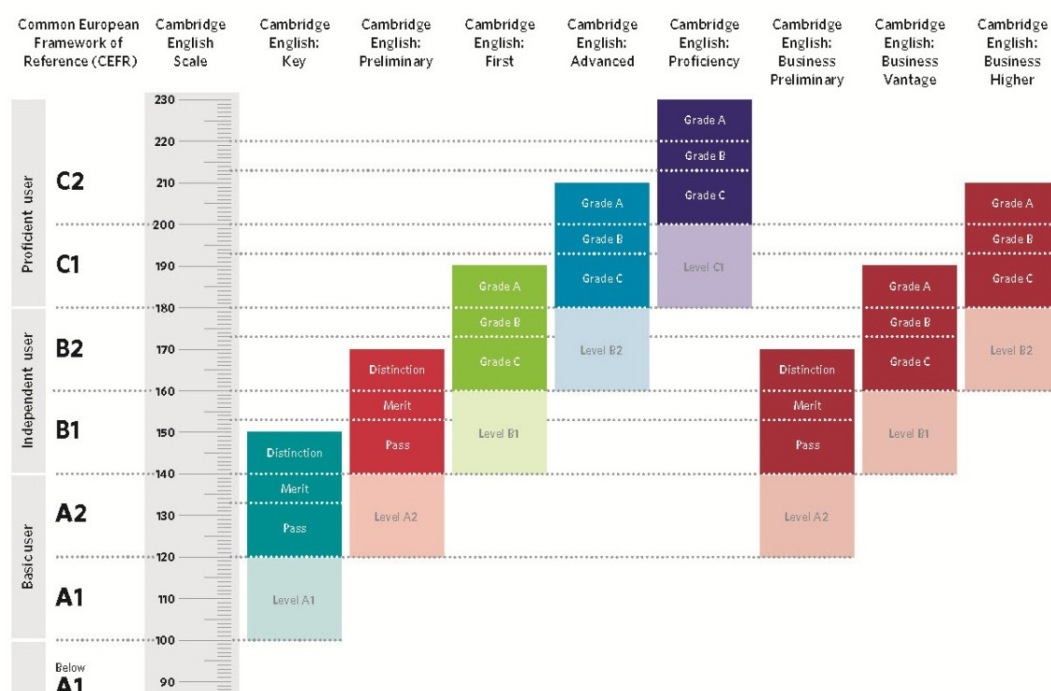
Most Cambridge English exams are now reporting results on the Cambridge English Scale.

For *Cambridge English: First, First for Schools, Advanced* and *Proficiency,* candidates receive an individual score for each of the four skills – reading, writing, listening, speaking – and Use of English. In the live exams, each of the skills and Use of English are equally weighted, and a candidate's overall score is calculated by adding all of the individual scores together and dividing by five (and then rounding to the nearest whole number).

For *Cambridge English: Preliminary, Preliminary for Schools,* and *Cambridge English: Business Certificates (Preliminary, Vantage and Higher),* candidates receive an individual score for the four skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking. In the live exams, each skill is equally weighted, and a candidate's overall score is calculated by adding all of the individual scores together and dividing by four (and then rounding to the nearest whole number).

For *Cambridge English: Key* and *Key for Schools,* candidates receive an individual score for each paper in the exam – Reading and Writing, Listening and Speaking. In the live exams, the Reading and Writing paper tests two skills so the score is doubled. A candidate's overall score is calculated by adding all of the individual scores together and dividing by four (and then rounding to the nearest whole number).

A candidate's grade and CEFR level are based on their performance across the whole test, and there is no requirement to achieve a minimum score in each paper.

The following tables can be used as guidance to help you convert practice test scores to Cambridge English Scale scores.

Please note that these only apply when using official Cambridge English practice tests.

The conversion tables are intended to help you provide an indication of your students' readiness to take the relevant exam. The scores you provide may not always reflect the results the students may achieve in a Cambridge English live exam. They should not be used to try to predict precise scores in the live exam, but can be a useful diagnostic tool, indicating areas of relative strength and weakness.

The scores needed on any given test to achieve the scores on the Cambridge English Scale shown in the tables below will vary due to a number of factors, so scores close to CEFR boundaries need to be reviewed carefully. We recommend that this is approximately three Cambridge English Scale score points above and below the score needed to achieve the level, e.g. 157–163 for Level B2. Students who achieve only slightly higher than the Cambridge English Scale score for a given level on a practice test may not achieve that level in the live exam, and we recommend that they continue working to improve so that they reach the desired level.

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Part of the University of Cambridge

Converting practice test scores to Cambridge English Scale scores

Cambridge English
Key

Cambridge English
Key
for Schools

Reading and Writing

The Reading and Writing paper consists of 9 parts. Correct answers in Parts 1–8 are worth 1 mark each and Part 9 is worth 5 marks. There are 60 possible marks in the Reading and Writing paper.

Practice test score	Cambridge English Scale score	CEFR Level
55	140	Level B1
40	120	Level A2
25	100	Level A1
13	82*	-

*minimum score reported for *Key*

Listening

Correct answers in the Listening paper are worth 1 mark each. There are 25 possible marks in the Listening paper.

Practice test score	Cambridge English Scale score	CEFR Level
23	140	Level B1
17	120	Level A2
11	100	Level A1
6	82*	-

*minimum score reported for *Key*

Speaking

Candidates take the test in pairs, but are assessed on their individual performance by trained examiners certificated to examine at the level. Candidate speaking performances are assessed using scales which are linked to the Common European Framework of Reference. The assessor gives 0–5 marks for each of the following criteria: Grammar and Vocabulary; Pronunciation; and Interactive Communication. Marks for each of these criteria are doubled. The interlocutor gives a mark of 0–5 for Global Achievement. This mark is then multiplied by three. Examiners may award half marks. Marks for all criteria are then combined, meaning there are 45 marks available in the Speaking test.

Practice test score	Cambridge English Scale score	CEFR Level
41	140	Level B1
27	120	Level A2
18	100	Level A1
10	82*	-

*minimum score reported for *Key*