

**ปัญหาและความต้องการการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษด้านทักษะการฟังและพูด  
ของนักศึกษาจีน มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต**

**A Study of Problems and Needs in Using Listening and Speaking Skills  
of the Chinese Students at Rangsit University**

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**บทคัดย่อ**

การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาปัญหาและความต้องการการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ ด้านทักษะการฟังและพูดของนักศึกษาจีน จากวิทยาลัยนานาชาติ และวิทยาลัยนานาชาติจีน มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต กับนักศึกษาจำนวน 57 คน เป็นกลุ่มตัวอย่างนักศึกษาจากวิทยาลัยนานาชาติจำนวน 24 คนและนักศึกษาจากวิทยาลัยนานาชาติจีนจำนวน 33 คน การศึกษานี้เน้นการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษด้านทักษะการฟังและพูด โดยใช้แบบสอบถามแบบมาตราส่วนประมาณค่า 5 ระดับของลิเคิร์ตสเกล ใช้โปรแกรม SPSS วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลทางสถิติและหาค่าร้อยละ ผลการวิจัยของปัญหาในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษด้านทักษะการฟังและการพูดของนักศึกษาจีนจากวิทยาลัยนานาชาติชั้นปีที่ 3 และชั้นปีที่ 4 มีปัญหาในระดับปานกลาง ในขณะที่ปัญหาด้านทักษะการฟังและการพูดของนักศึกษาวิทยาลัยนานาชาติจีนมีปัญหามากกว่า อย่างไรก็ตาม จากการวิจัยพบว่าปัญหาด้านทักษะการฟังและการพูดของนักศึกษาอยู่ในระดับปานกลางเช่นเดียวกัน ดังนั้นการจัดหลักสูตรทางภาษาเพิ่มเติมให้กับนักศึกษาวิทยาลัยนานาชาติจีนจึงมีความเหมาะสม เนื่องจากนักศึกษาเหล่านี้ศึกษารายวิชาเป็นภาษาจีนและต้องการใช้ทักษะด้านการฟังและพูดให้มีประสิทธิภาพยิ่งขึ้น

**คำสำคัญ:** นักศึกษาจีน ทักษะการฟัง ทักษะการพูด

**Abstract**

The aims of this study were to examine English listening and speaking skills problems and investigate the needs of English listening and speaking skills of Chinese students from the Faculty of International College (IC) and International Chinese College (ICC) at Rangsit University. The subjects were 57 Chinese students. For IC, the number of participants was 24 and the number of participants of ICC was 33. The focus of the research was on listening and speaking skills of the English language. The study instrument was the multiple-choice questionnaire

containing the Likert's five-point scale. The research used quantitative method to analyze empirical data. The data gained were processed using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) and percentages. The results of this English listening skill study indicated that 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year Chinese students of IC showed moderate level of problems. Problems with speaking skill were also at a moderate level. The English listening and speaking skills study indicated that 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year Chinese students of ICC were more problematic. Their problems with listening and speaking skills were at a considerable level. Therefore, it is appropriate to adjust English courses for ICC students because they study courses in Chinese, and hence lack of exposure to English language use. More courses and language activities should be provided.

**Keywords:** Chinese Students, Listening Skill, Speaking Skill

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## 1. Introduction

Rangsit University, which is the private university in Thailand, has the most professional education and laboratories and two affiliated hospitals. In 1995, the school has set up International College to provide a platform on educational opportunities for International exchange students. Since more Chinese people sought their education in Thailand, in 2006, Rangsit University established International Chinese College to adapt to the increasing demand on educational opportunities of Chinese people in Thailand. The International College (IC) includes exchange programs (e.g. 3 years in China and one year in Thailand, 3+1, or the 2+2 program), which allow students to learn English in their own countries and study in any program in Thailand which is taught in English. International Chinese College (ICC), in contrast, provides the educational opportunity for students from China who want to study Chinese business in Thailand for four years, and with additional English language classes. IC students come

from around the world while ICC students are all come from China. The mission of both International College and International Chinese College is to provide accessible, personalized, and high quality educational opportunities for local and international students to ensure that they will develop the necessary academic skills and studies on the basis English skills, especially on listening and speaking skills.

English language becomes the first priority language choice for Chinese students in order to fit in Thai society or even the ASEAN countries. English language, as being the most speaking language in the world, could increase people job opportunities in the future.

Therefore, English language skills are important that give these students advantages on the up-coming ASEAN community because English is used as medium in communication. The beginning of ASEAN community would increase a lot of trades among ASEAN countries, thus Chinese who know

English can gain better opportunities when entering ASEAN community.

English as a second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL) is important for Chinese students studying in Thailand. According to Widdowson (1990), modern language teaching, in particular teaching English as a foreign or second language (EFL/ESL), is based on two fundamental approaches. The first is the communicative approach, with the principal requirement of learning languages for communication. The second is the specialized approach, with the language teaching designed for those whose primary language is not English. Widdowson thought that the communicative approach is more important than the specialized approach. Students who study English as a foreign language (EFL) usually have limited opportunities to speak English outside the classroom and also limited exposure to English speakers or members of the international community. Moreover, Stern (1999) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) stated that in the case of second language acquisition, the language plays an institutional and social role in the community. In other words, it functions as a recognized means of communication (official language) among members who speak other languages as their mother tongue. For example, in Switzerland, different workers in the same office might have different mother tongues (e.g. Italian and French), but they might use English as their official office language. Second language learning and foreign language learning settings may have radical differences in both what is learnt (content) and how it is learnt (learning style). For

example, the English learnt by the above Swiss office workers might be different in content than that learned by your average American, and learnt in a different way.

So, the listening skill and speaking skill are very important for the communication of Chinese students. Listening and speaking are two closely related skills. Listening and speaking are not only important language skills, but also one part of one's communicative ability. Listening and speaking can be characterized as language skills used in vocal messages. According to Grant (1989), listening was important for communication. Without listening, spoken communication would be impossible. Arree (1997) also thought that listening is important to communication because it is related to our daily life. In addition, speaking is an essential communication tool used by humans. Zarembo (2012) stated that, in addition to the two receptive skills of reading and listening, in language learning and use the two productive skills of writing and speaking are necessary to be integrated in the development of effective communication. Of all the four macro English skills, the most important skill required for communication seems to be speaking.

However, there are many factors that affect students learning English listening and speaking skills. And these factors are both from students themselves and the environment. According to Yang (2002), Lv (2001), Liu (2004), and Wang & Zhen (2007: 38), the problems of listening learning include:

(1) Factors affecting students' independent learning.

(2) The language environment and cultural knowledge are not enough. (3) Improper methods of self-study. In addition, Hu (2006) and Wang (2000) also thought the problem in English speaking learning include the factors: (1) Students' self-study factors. (2) Inadequate of English speaking environment and cultural knowledge. (3) Improper way of self-study.

Therefore, the researcher hope that using questionnaire can help find the problems of learning English listening and speaking skills of Chinese students of Rangsit University, and find out the strategies to improve their English language skills.

## 2. Objectives

The objectives of this study were:

1. To investigate the problems of Chinese students at IC and ICC of Rangsit University in developing their English language speaking and listening skills.

2. To investigate the students' needs of Chinese students at IC and ICC of Rangsit University in developing their English language speaking and listening skills.

## 3. Materials and Method

The researcher collected the data through questionnaires, based on 57 Chinese students of International College and International Chinese College at Rangsit University in 2014. For International College (IC), the number of participants is 24. For International Chinese College (ICC), the number of participants is 33. The questionnaire is divided into parts. Part 1 is about the background

information of the respondents. Part 2 is about problems that affect Chinese students' listening and speaking skills and Part 3 is about strategies and university study environment that affect Chinese students' listening and speaking skills.

## 4. Results

Quantitative analysis was employed to measure the ability and the effect of the speaking and the listening skills of the Chinese student in International College and International Chinese College in Rangsit University. Quantitative data was derived from the questionnaire through tables which was then used to provide the research results as the following.

**Table 1** Problems that affect Chinese students' listening skill

College		English Proficiency		
		$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Mean
International College	Year 3	3.08	1.37	Moderate
	Year 4	3.18	1.28	Moderate
International Chinese College	Year 3	3.52	1.09	Considerable
	Year 4	3.59	1.24	Considerable

Table 1 shows the problems that affected Chinese students' listening skill at IC College and ICC College. Listening level of the year 3 students of IC College was moderate ( $\bar{x} = 3.08$ ). Listening level of the year 4 students of IC College holistic was moderate ( $\bar{x} = 3.18$ ). The students could not understand long sentences and could not understand the accents that they heard. Listening level of the year 3 students of ICC College holistic was considerable ( $\bar{x} = 3.52$ ).

The students could not understand long sentences and could not understand the accents that they heard. And listening level of the year 4 students of ICC College was considerable ( $\bar{x} = 3.59$ ). The students were unable to get the main idea.

**Table 2** Problems that affect Chinese students' speaking skill

College		English Proficiency		
		$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Mean
International College	Year 3	2.57	1.2	Slight
	Year 4	2.92	1.23	Moderate
International Chinese College	Year 3	3.62	1.13	considerable
	Year 4	3.35	1.25	Moderate

Table 2 shows the problems that affected Chinese students' speaking skill at IC College and ICC College. Speaking level of the year 3 students of IC College was slight ( $\bar{x} = 2.57$ ). The students had problems when talking with their teachers in English and did not have enough vocabulary. Speaking level of the year 4 students of IC College holistic was moderate ( $\bar{x} = 2.92$ ). Speaking level of the year 3 students of ICC College holistic was considerable ( $\bar{x} = 3.62$ ). And speaking level of the year 4 students of ICC College was moderate ( $\bar{x} = 3.35$ ). The students did not have confidence in their pronunciation and did not have enough vocabulary.

**Table 3** Strategies that affected Chinese students' listening and speaking skills

College		English Proficiency		
		$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Mean
International College	Year 3	3.15	1.29	Moderate
	Year 4	3.1	1.2	Moderate
International Chinese College	Year 3	2.54	1.2	Slight
	Year 4	2.54	1.44	Slight

Table 3 shows the strategies that affected Chinese students' listening and speaking skills at IC College and ICC College. The listening and speaking skills strategies level of the year 3 students of IC College was moderate ( $\bar{x} = 3.15$ ). The students were listening to English songs and watching the English movies in their leisure time. The listening and speaking skills strategies level of the year 4 students of IC College was moderate ( $\bar{x} = 3.1$ ). The strategy used the most was listening to English songs. Listening and speaking skills strategies level of the year 3 students of ICC College holistic was slight ( $\bar{x} = 2.54$ ). And listening and speaking skills strategies level of the year 4 students of ICC College was slight ( $\bar{x} = 2.54$ ). Most of the students listened to English songs and watched English movies in their leisure time.

Most of the IC College's students think that university offers very good study environments. And teacher's teaching strategies are excellent and courses are provided. In addition, students of ICC College think their study environment should change. Mainly include the following: 1. Increase English speaking and listening courses. 2. More activities should be provided. 3. There should be more native speakers of English in the program. 4. Focus on communication in

daily life. 5. Give more times and opportunities for students to practice with each other in class rather than lectures. 6. Improve the teaching materials. Make them simpler but more interesting.

## 5. Discussion

The results showed that listening and speaking skills were mostly at a moderate level and considerable level. The majority of students in this study practiced English by listening to English songs and watching English movies. Students can benefit a lot from learning English listening and speaking skills by watching English movie. According to Zhang (2010), Gao and Li (2012), English movie can cultivate students' English listening and speaking skills as follow: 1) Students can learn the pronunciation from the native speaker when the teachers use English movie as a teaching material. 2) Watching English movies can help students to understand better because they have voices and images 3) Watching English movie is not only motivating student to learn English but also improve student's listening and speaking skills effectively. 4) The original movie can provide students with the real language communication environment. In addition, The English music is also can cultivate students' English listening and speaking skills. According to the survey of Pei (2010), music ability will impact on students' English phonetics learning. The main results are if students with strong phonological competence; their music ability is also strong. And they are more interested in imitation other dialect or foreign languages. Some of the students also practiced

English by communicating with friends using English or talk directly with foreigners. The results concur with the viewpoint of Underwood (1989), who stated that the listener's limited vocabulary was a major problem for listening. If the listener had limited vocabulary, he would fell since it is very difficult to understand the speakers meaning. According to Yang (2002), Lv (2001), Liu (2004), and Wang & Zhen (2007: 38), the problem of listening study was because of the pronunciation of students which was not accurate. They mentioned that mistakes in listening comprehension can be caused by accent, running words together, differences between British and American pronunciation. Thus the researcher's viewpoints were matched with this research result. For International Chinese College students, the problems were lack of vocabulary and also lacking confidence in grammar. According to Lippi-Green (1997), one reason among many for problems in non-native learners with respect to speaking might be a lack of confidence, specifically anxiety about making errors. This viewpoint was similar to one of this research result. In addition, Hu (2006) and Wang (2000) stated that inadequate vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, lack of confidence and poor pronunciation will influence the improvement of English speaking skill. If the student's grammar was poor, then they will speak Chinese-style English. In this way, they will cause many misunderstandings and jokes. These viewpoints support the results.

## 6. Conclusion

The population of this study was fifty-seven students studying year 3 and year 4 from International College and International Chinese College at Rangsit University. In the research, most students were male. In addition; most students come from International Chinese College. Over half of the students were in Year 3 and the rest were in Year 4. The problem that students from Year 3 in International College faced the most was lacking of vocabulary so they couldn't understand English properly. For Year 3 and year 4 students from International Chinese College and year 4 from International College as well, their most listening problem was the accents because they cannot understand the accents of non-native English speakers.

## 7. Acknowledgements

The researcher would like to thank all the teachers in the Graduate Program of English for Professions, Faculty of Liberal Arts. Special thanks are extended to Dr. Thitapa Sinturant whose recommendations, stimulating suggestions, support, and encouragement helped her in all the time of research.

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