

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢN LÝ VÀ CÔNG NGHỆ HẢI PHÒNG**



KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH : NGÔN NGỮ ANH

Sinh viên : Trần Thị Thu Phương

HẢI PHÒNG – 2022

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**Factors affecting speaking skills of first-year English
language students at HPU**

**KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY
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**Sinh viên : Trần Thị Thu Phương
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1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp

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2. Các tài liệu, số liệu cần thiết

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3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp

Trung Tâm Ngoại Ngữ Quốc Tế Ishare

CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

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Hải Phòng, ngày 24 tháng 06 năm 2022

XÁC NHẬN CỦA KHOA

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
Độc lập - Tự do - Hạnh phúc

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN HƯỚNG DẪN TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên giảng viên: Nguyễn Thị Phương Thu
Đơn vị công tác: Khoa Ngoại Ngữ
Họ và tên sinh viên: Trần Thị Thu Phương Chuyên ngành: Ngôn Ngữ Anh
Nội dung hướng dẫn: Factors affecting speaking skills of first-year English language students at HPU.

1. Tinh thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp

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2. Đánh giá chất lượng của đồ án/khóa luận (so với nội dung yêu cầu đã đề ra trong nhiệm vụ Đ.T. T.N trên các mặt lý luận, thực tiễn, tính toán số liệu...)

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viên hướng dẫn tốt nghiệp

Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

Giảng viên hướng dẫn
(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
Độc lập - Tự do - Hạnh phúc

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIÁNG VIÊN CHẤM PHẢN BIỆN

Họ và tên giảng viên:

Đơn vị công tác:

Họ và tên sinh viên: Trần Thị Thu Phương Chuyên ngành: Ngôn Ngữ Anh

Đề tài tốt nghiệp: Factors affecting speaking skills of first-year English language students at HPU

1. Phần nhận xét của giáo viên chấm phản biện

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2. Những mặt còn hạn chế

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viên chấm phản biện

Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

Giảng viên chấm phản biện
(Ký và ghi rõ tên)

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of the most important and seemingly most difficult skills in the IELTS test. Unlike the reading and listening test, speaking comes from our own reflexes, our ideas. Speaking seems to show one's level of English, so this is also an important skill in the IELTS speaking test. The article is about common problems faced by students reviewing speaking skills for IELTS exam and specific solutions to help students dispel fear and conquer speaking skills more effectively.

The research topic was tested on 20 students of English language student at HPU. The data were collected using the researcher's interview questions. The purpose of this study is to help Ielts learners clearly see the problems they often face in IELTS speaking and suggest simple solutions to improve this situation. At that time, speaking is no longer a difficult skill.

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Hai Phong, August 2022

Tran Thi Thu Phuong

PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the study

English is the language of science, of aviation, computers, diplomacy, and tourism. Knowing English increases your chances of getting a good job in a multinational company within your home country or for finding work abroad. It's also the language of international communication, the media and the internet, so learning English is important for social and entertainment as well as work. Being able to speak English is not just about being able to communicate with native English speakers, it is the most common second language in the world. If you want to speak to someone from another country then the chances are that you will both be speaking English to do this. We can understand that study English is really important. English is being taught at every educational level and it has become a compulsory subject in most schools. It is expected that learners must master four language skills: writing, reading, speaking, and listening skill. Speaking is probably the language skill and the productive skill. It could not be separated from listening. When we speak we produce the text and it should be meaningful. In the nature of communication, we can find the speaker, the listener, the message and the feedback. Speaking could not be separated from pronunciation as it encourages learners to learn the English sounds.

At Hai Phong Private University (HPU), there are still some problems today about speaking English, especially the first year English majors at HPU have a poor English speaking skill. They spend a lot of time on learning grammar, writing, reading and seem to ignore speaking or they are not able to speak. The majority of the first year English majors are really passive in their speaking. Furthermore, they feel reluctant to get involved in the speaking

activities in the lessons. Therefore, their English speaking skill is often low and very few of them can communicate in English fluently.

2. Aims of the study

The study aims to explore the factor affecting English speaking of the first year English majors at HPU and suggest some main techniques which include the methods of strengthening the teaching of English speaking to help students enhance their English speaking skill. Only in this way, students who are learning English speaking can learn it well so that they can communicate in English fluently.

3. Scope of the study

Due to the limitation of time, resources and knowledge of the author, this study only focuses on giving out the definition of speaking skill, type of speaking and factors affecting speaking skill of first year English major at HPU. I hope that this study helps them to improve speaking skill at first year English major as well as in others.

4. Methods of the study

To finish this study, I carry out some following methods. The websites and reference books related to speaking, methodology is reviewed to get background knowledge of what speaking is, successful and interesting techniques in teaching speaking. A survey questionnaire was conducted to the first year English majors at HPU. After getting the results, the researcher will use the comments, remarks, recommendations and conclusion provided in the study for presenting the collection data.

5. Design of the study

This study consists of three parts:

Part I: Introduction, includes the rationale to the study. It also includes the aims of the study, the research questions, the scope of the study. Next the design of the study is also presented.

Part II: Development, it consists of three chapters:

Chapter 1: Theoretical Background, presents a review of related literature that provides the definition of speaking, type of speaking and the main factors affecting students English speaking.

Chapter 2: The factors affecting speaking skill of first year English major at HPU and The survey questionnaires

Chapter 3: Finding and discussion: Some suggested techniques in teaching English speaking skill for the first year English majors at HPU.

Part III: Conclusions

PART II: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Definitions of Speaking

Speaking effectively is defined as speaking in such a way that your message is clearly heard and, if possible, acted upon. There are two main elements to speaking effectively: what you say, and how you say it.

What you say means your choice of words. The words you might use when chatting to a friend are likely to be quite different from those used in a formal presentation or interview.

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Its form and meaning are dependent on when it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Language functions (or patterns) that tend to recur in certain discourse situations (e.g., declining an invitation or requesting time off from work), can be identified and charted (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, when a salesperson asks "May I help you?" the expected discourse sequence includes a statement of need, response to the need, offer of appreciation, acknowledgement of the appreciation, and a leave-taking exchange. Speaking requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (linguistic competence), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (sociolinguistic competence). Finally, speech has its own skills, structures, and conventions different from written language (Burns & Joyce, 1997; Carter & McCarthy, 1995; Cohen, 1996). A good speaker

synthesizes this array of skills and knowledge to succeed in a given speech act. Tarigan (1990:3-4) defines that speaking is a language skill that is developed in child life, which is produced by listening skill, and at that period speaking skill is learned.

Based on Competence Based Curriculum speaking is one of the four basic competences that the students should gain well. It has an important role in communication. Speaking can find in spoken cycle especially in Joint Constructionn of Text stage (Department Pendidikan Nasional, 2004). In carrying out speaking, students face some difficulties one of them is about language its self. In fact, most of students get difficulties to speak even though they have a lot of vocabularies and have written them well. The problems are afraid for students to make mistakes.

Speaking is the productive skill. It could not be separated from listening. When we speak we produce the text and it should be meaningful. In the nature of communication, we can find the speaker, the listener, the message and the feedback. Speaking could not be separated from pronunciation as it encourages learners to learn the English sounds.

According to Ladouse (1991) speaking is described as the activity as the ability to express oneself in the situation, or the activity to report acts, or situation in precise words or the ability to converse or to express a sequence of ideas fluently. Furthermore, Tarigan (1990: 8) said that “Berbicara adalah cara untuk berkomunikasi yang berpengaruh hidup kita sehari-hari”. It means that speaking as the way of communication influences our individual life strongly.

From the explanation above, the researcher concludes that speaking is what we say to what we see, feel and think. When we feel something, we want someone can hear us. So, in this process we can call it is an interaction between

two sides. When someone speaks to other person, there will be a relationship. The relationship itself is communication. Furthermore, Wilson (1983:5) defines speaking as development of the relationship between speaker and listener. In addition speaking determining which logical linguistic, psychological a physical rules should be applied in a given communicate situation”. It means that the main objective of speaking is for communication. In order to express effectively, the speaker should know exactly what he/she wants to speak or to communicate, he/she has to be able to evaluate the effects of his/her communication to his/her listener, he/she has to understand any principle that based his speaking either in general or in individual.

Based on the statements above the researcher infers that if someone speaks, he/she should understand what is he/she about. In this section, the writer should develop ideas or build some topics to be talked and to make other responds to what speakers says.

Teachers should monitor learners' speech production to determine what skills and knowledge they already have and what areas need development. Bailey and Savage's New Ways in Teaching Speaking(1994), and Lewis's New Ways in Teaching Adults (1997) offer suggestions for activities that can address different skills.

Speaking lessons can follow the usual pattern of preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, and extension. The teacher can use the preparation step to establish a context for the speaking task (where, when, why, and with whom it will occur) and to initiate awareness of the speaking skill to be targeted (asking for clarification, stressing key words, using reduced forms of words). In presentation, the teacher can provide learners with a preproduction model that furthers learner comprehension and helps them become more attentive observers

of language use. Practice involves learners in reproducing the targeted structure, usually in a controlled or highly supported manner. Evaluation involves directing attention to the skill being examined and asking learners to monitor and assess their own progress. Finally, extension consists of activities that ask learners to use the strategy or skill in a different context or authentic communicative situation, or to integrate use of the new skill or strategy with previously acquired ones (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997; Carter & McCarthy, 1995).

Speaking is key to communication. By considering what good speakers do, what speaking tasks can be used in class, and what specific needs learners report, teachers can help learners improve their speaking and overall oral competency.



1.2. Types of speaking

1.2.1. Ceremonial Speaking

Most people will give some sort of ceremonial speech during their lifetime. These speeches mark special occasions. They are common at weddings, graduations and funerals -- as well as large birthday celebrations and office holiday parties. Ceremonial speaking typically involves a toast and is personal with an intimate emotional connection to people hearing it.

1.2.2. Demonstrative Speaking

Science demonstrations and role playing are types of demonstrative speaking. This type of public speaking requires being able to speak clearly and concisely to describe actions and to perform those actions while speaking. Demonstrative speaking attempts to demonstrate how to do something. It is easier to remember how to do something when we actually see it being done. So this kind of speaking may have or be a part of a demonstration. The idea behind demonstrative speaking is that the audience members leave with the knowledge about how to do something. If you have ever seen a knife salesman in the mall and watched him slice a tomato paper thin, then you have seen demonstrative public speaking.

1.2.3. Informative Speaking

With the way information is spoken, speakers are trying to explain a simple concept to audience members. The goal is to inform the audience about the information being presented. It requires a context that will allow the audience to receive information and make it usable. College lecture courses involve speaking information as well as industry conferences and public officials sharing important information. In this style, information is important. The speaker does not try to make others agree with him or show them how to do something for themselves. Instead he is disseminating important information.

1.2.4. Persuasive Speaking

Persuasive speaking tends to be the most glitzy. Politicians, lawyers and clergy members use persuasive speaking. This type of speaking requires practicing voice inflections and nuances of language that will convince the audience members of a certain viewpoint. The persuasive speaker has a stake in the outcome of the speech. Politicians, for instance, may want votes or a

groundswell of support for a pet project, while lawyers are trying to convince a jury of their position -- and clergy members are trying to win others over to their faith. The persuasive speaker uses emotional appeals and strong language in speeches.

The art of persuasion has developed into a unique field of public speaking.

Traditional persuasion uses a set of techniques that when employed skillfully, will allow the speaker to move the audience to adopt a new thought, idea, concept, or way of doing things. Within this modality of speaking are those who have elevated the art by returning to the roots of rhetorical speaking. This happens by using questions to develop a social dialog with the audience, applying the skillful use of rhetorical questions.

1.3. Functions of Speaking

Speaking is very important, especially in daily communication. A person is recognized that he/ she is educated from the way and what he/ she is speaking. When speaking, someone has to know what to speak and understand the ideas of what he/ she is talking about.

Richards (2008:21) says, “In workshops with teachers and in designing my own materials, I use an expanded three-part version of Brown and Yule’s framework (after Jones, 1996, and Burns, 1998): talk as interaction; talk as transaction; talk as performance. Each of these speech activities is quite distinct in term of function and enquires different teaching approaches.”

1.3.1. Talk as interaction

Talk as interaction refers to what we normally mean by “conversation” and describes interaction that serves a primarily social

function. When people meet, they exchange greetings, engage in small talk, recount recent experiences, and so, on because they wish to be friendly and to establish a comfortable zone of interaction with others. The focus is more on the speakers and how they wish to present themselves to each other than on the message.

1.3.2. Talk as transaction

Talk as transaction refers to situations where the focus is on what is said or done. The message and making oneself understood clearly and accurately is the central focus, rather than participants and how they interact socially with each other.

Burns (1998) distinguishes between two different types of talk as transaction. The first type involves situations where the focus is on giving and receiving information and where the participants focus primarily on what is said or achieved. The second type is transactions that focus on obtaining goods or services, such as checking into hotel or ordering food in a restaurant.

The third type of talk that can usefully be distinguished has been called talk as performance. This refers to public talk, that is, talk that transmits information before an audience, such as classroom presentations, public announcements, and speeches. The focuses are on both message and audience. Speaking has its functions which cover talk as interaction, transaction and performance which have been mentioned above. The functions of speaking show that speaking is not only about producing the language, but it also functions for some different purposes in daily communication.

1.4. Factors affecting speaking skill

There are some problems for speaking skill that teachers can come across in helping students to speak in the classroom. These are inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low participation, and mother-tongue use (Tuan & Mai, 2015).

Inhibition is the first problem that students encounter in class. When they want to say something in the classroom they are sometimes inhibited. They are worried about making mistakes and fearful of criticism. They are ashamed of the other students' attention towards themselves. Little wood (2007) expressed that a language classroom can also create inhibitions and apprehension for the students. The second problem is that learners complain that they cannot remember anything to say and they do not have any motivation to express themselves. This is supported by Rivers (1968) who thinks that learners often have nothing to say probably because their teachers had selected a topic that is not appropriate for them or they do not have enough information about it. Baker and Westrup (2003) also supports the above idea and stated that it is very difficult for learners to answer when their teachers ask them to tell things in a foreign language because they have little opinions about what to say, which vocabulary to apply, or how to use grammar accurately. The third problem in the speaking class is that the participation is very low. In a class with a large number of students, each student will have very little time for talking because just one student talks at a time and the other students try to hear him/her. In the speaking class, some learners dominate the whole class while others talk very little or never speak. The last problem related to the speaking ability is that when some learners share the same mother-tongue, they try to use it in the speaking class because it is very easy for them (Tuan & Mai, 2015).

According to Harmer (1991), there are some reasons why learners use mother-tongue in their speaking classes. The first reason is that when teachers ask their learners to talk about a topic that they do not have enough knowledge, they will try to use their language. The second reason is that the application of mother-tongue is very natural for learners to use. If teachers do not urge their learners to talk in English, learners will automatically use their first language to explain something to their classmates. The final reason refers to the fact that if teachers regularly use their learners' mother language, their learners will feel comfortable to do so in their speaking class. Hyland (1997) investigated learners from eight disciplines at five Hong Kong institutions. The findings of his research indicated that proficiency in English was a significant factor in the academic success of an English environment.

The findings also showed that the learners' language difficulties were related to the productive skills of writing and speaking. Evans and Green (2007) examined the language difficulties experienced by the students at a Hong Kong university. The results of this study represented that the students' difficulties centered on the academic speaking such as: Fear of mistake, Shyness, Lack of confident, motivation, environment, vocabulary and pronunciation.

1.4.1. Fear of mistake

As argued by many theorists, fear of mistake becomes one of the main factors of students' reluctance to speak in English in the classroom (Tsui in Nunan, 1999; Yi Htwe, 2007; Robby, 2010). With respect to the fear of making mistake issue, Aftat, (2008) adds that this fear is linked to the issue of correction and negative evaluation. In addition, this is also much influenced by the students' fear of being laughed at by other students or being criticized by the teacher. As a result, students commonly stop participating in the speaking activity (Hieu,

2011). Therefore, it is important for teachers to convince their students that making mistakes is not a wrong or bad thing because students can learn from their mistakes.



1.4.2. Shyness

Shyness is an emotional thing that many students suffer from at some time when they are required to speak in English class. This indicates that shyness could be a source of problem in students' learning activities in the classroom especially in the class of speaking. Therefore, paying attention on this aspect is also quite important in order to help the students do their best in their speaking performance in the classroom (Gebhard, 2000). In line with this, Baldwin (2011) further explains that speaking in front of people is one of the more common phobias that students encounter and feeling of shyness makes their mind go blank or that they will forget what to say. This theory is also supported by the result of this research in which most students fail to perform the speaking performance at their best. As they say, their inability to show their ability in speaking is also influenced much by their feeling of shyness. In other words, it can be said that shyness plays an important role in speaking performance done by the students.. As a result, they dare to speak in their speaking class. Solving the shyness problem, Chinmoy (2007) suggests that in order to help students to be more confident in their speaking that convince

students to look upon shyness as a thing to overcome and do not fear failure or success. The above solutions to reduce shyness are worth doing. As said by students involved in this study, their feeling of shyness needs to be solved. In this case, they need guidance from Journal of Education and Practice www.iiste.org ISSN 2222-1735 (Paper) ISSN 2222-288X (Online) Vol 3, No 12, 2012 102 their teacher.



1.4.3. Lack of Confidence

It is commonly understood that students' lack of confidence usually occurs when students realize that their conversation partners have not understood them or when they do not understand other speakers. In this situation, they would rather keep silent while others do talking showing that the students are lack of confidence to communicate. In response to this, Tsui cited Nunan (1999) says that student who lack of confidence about themselves and their English necessarily suffer from communication apprehension. This shows that building students' confidence is an important part of teacher's focus of attention. This means that the teacher should also learn from both theories and practical experience on how to build the students' confidence. Causes of Lack of Confidence He and Chen (2010) state the main cause of students' confidence is their low ability in speaking English. In this case, as they add, many students

think that their English is bad and feel that they cannot speak English well. The other cause of students' lack of confidence also deals with the lack of encouragement from the teacher (Brown, 2001). In this context, many teachers do not think that convincing students that they are able to speak English is important. As a result, as Brown adds, students find the learning demotivating rather than motivating. This suggests that encouragement becomes a vital thing in order to build the students' confidence. Therefore, giving students encouragement and showing that they will be able to communicate well in English plays a role in students' success of learning.

1.4.4. Lack of Motivation

It is mentioned in the literature that motivation is a key to students' learning success (Songsiri, 2007). With regard to the issue of motivation in learning, Nunan (1999) stresses that motivation is important to notice in that it can affect students' reluctance to speak in English. In this sense, motivation is a key consideration in determining the preparedness of learners to communicate. Zua (2008) further adds that motivation is an inner energy. She says that no matter what kinds of motivation the learners possess it will enhance their study interest. It has been proven in many studies that students with a strong motivation to succeed can persist in learning and gain better scores than those who have weaker motivation of success showing that building students motivation to learn is urgent for every teacher. Causes of Lack of Motivation With respect to the causes of lack of motivation, Gardner in Nunan (1999) elaborates the causes of the students' lack of motivation e.g. uninspired teaching, boredom, lack of perceived relevance of materials and lack of knowledge about the goals of the instructional program. These four, as he further says, very often become source of students' motivation. Uninspired teaching, for example,

affects students' motivation to learn. In this context, a monotonous teaching, in many cases, reduces the students' motivation due to their feeling of boredom. This shows that paying attention to those four factors is vital. In response to the issue of motivation, Babu (2010) argues that lack of motivation in learning causes students' hesitation to speak English in the classroom. He says that the background of this situation is that students are not motivated by the teachers towards the communication in English. In line with what Babu says, Siegel (2004, in Aftat, 2008) believes that motivation is a product of good teaching. In his further explanation, Aftat emphasizes that to motivate students to learn well and actively communicate in English, teachers should have passion, creativity and interest in their students. In other words, students' motivation is really influenced by the teachers' teaching performance. Therefore, it is important that teachers also show enthusiasm in their teaching performance. Possible Solutions to Overcome Lack of Motivation Aftat (2008) suggests that to encourage students' motivation, teachers should provide constant encouragement and support as well as ask questions that reveal the basis of a students' problems. Doing this becomes very important because encouragement also gives students a feeling of secure and welcome in their learning. Other suggestions to increase students' motivation are shared by Liu and Huang (2010). They say that to overcome students' lack of motivation, teachers can do activities like promoting students' awareness of the importance of English, enhancing students' interest in English, and developing their self-confidence.

1.4.5. Lack of an environment to practice

Environment becomes an important factor to be able to speak English and to keep speaking English as the wise words, "Environment becomes you or you become an environment" or in other words, if you do not change your environment to be better so you will be changed to be bad or good by the

environment. Because environment cannot change itself if no-one change it. So changing the environment to become a place where English is spoken only is compulsory to keep speaking English as a foreign language. In order that, the students and lecturers can apply full English speaking area one another. According to Wyse and Jones (2001: 178), "Pre-school experience of social interaction is a desperately important factor in the child's ongoing language development. The significance of the adults around the child at this time should not be underestimated. It has been acknowledged that they provide a number of important conditions for the child as they: a. Provide access to an environment where talk has high status b. Provide access to competent users of language c. Provide opportunities to engage in talk d. Provide responses which acknowledge the child as a competent language user. (Wray et al, 1989:39) It states that pre-school experience of social interaction is an important factor to develop a child's language where adults are around him speaking each other in order to be acquired speaking skill naturally. It cannot be ignored because first language that is used by most people acquired by listening then imitating and speaking the language when they were babies. Therefore, a child who is still very young at beginning learning a language, it needs to be provided a place to practice his language, to be created a condition where the language is only practiced to stimulate him speaking the language with adults as competent users, and to be provided responses to a child in order to encourage him speaking with other people. It means that language is used in speaking and writing to preserve environment in order to build better relationship among people. So when some people always speak a language which is not used in the area while other people speak another language. It has some reasons depending on people used the language whether people speak a language for keeping a secret, practicing a learned language, keeping identity, or preserving an environment (the conditions

that you live or work in and the way that they influence how you feel or how effective you can work, or in other words, a particular place where you learn a language), etcetera. Therefore that a language is used should be noticed based on the reasons. In that case, speaking English at English study program has some essential reasons consisting of practicing English language learned, keeping English identity, and also preserving English environment. In addition, English as a foreign language should be applied by English students with their lecturers inside and outside the classroom in order to become true English students, to keep their identity distinguishing them from non-English students, and preserving their English language at English study program. Furthermore, Environment identifies some other factors hampering students to apply their spoken English.

1.4.6. Lack of vocabulary and pronunciation

Vocabulary represents one of most important skills necessary for teaching and learning a foreign language. It is the basis for the development of all the other skills: reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking, writing, spelling and pronunciation. Vocabulary is the main tool for the students in their attempt to use English effectively. When confronted with a native English speaker, when watching a movie without subtitle or when listening to a favorite English song, when reading a text or when writing a letter to a friend, students will always need to operate with words. In what follows, the focus of this introductory chapter will be on why vocabulary is important, on what makes words difficult, on the main reasons for which students often forget the words they learn and on some techniques which help them remember the vocabulary. Talking about the importance of vocabulary, the linguist David Wilkins argued that: “without grammar little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” Indeed, people need to use words in order to express themselves

in any language. Most learners, too, acknowledge the importance of vocabulary acquisition. In my experience as a teacher, I noticed the fact that students usually find it difficult to speak English fluently. They usually consider speaking and writing activities exhausting because they keep on using the same expressions and words and very soon their conversation is abruptly interrupted due to missing words. And the main reason for such communication problems is the lack of vocabulary. Other students are confronted with the problem of forgetting the words immediately after the teacher has elicited their meaning or after they have looked them in the dictionary, and this also a cause of the lack of vocabulary. The more words students learn, the easier they memorize them.

In English, like in any other foreign language, some words are easier to learn than others. Easiest of all are the words more or less identical to the students' native language, like, for instance, the word "vocabulary." However, students might be trapped in their confidence with which they memorize such identical words, since English has a list of some problematic words, called "false friends". These false friends are words identical in form to certain Romanian words, but completely different in meaning. An example of this would be "sensible." While many students might confidently translate this word simply "sensibil," they will be astonished to find out that, the Romanian equivalent for "sensible" is in fact "rational," while the English equivalent for "sensibil" is "sensitive." This demonstrates the crucial importance of allotting a special lesson for these false friends and of encouraging students to practise them as often as possible.

Another aspect that makes English vocabulary difficult is the pronunciation of certain words. Research shows that words that are difficult to pronounce are more difficult to learn. Many learners find that words with

clusters of consonants such as “health” or “crisps” are problematic. Length or complexity of the words is another characteristic of the difficulty of English vocabulary. A long word will be more difficult to memorize than a short one. Also, variable stress of words such as “necessary” and “necessity” can add to their difficulty. The meaning of the words is another controversial feature of the English vocabulary. When two words overlap in meaning, students are likely to confuse them. An example in this case would be the difference between “make” and “do.” These words have the same meaning, but are used in different expressions. You “make a decision”, but you “do homework.” Students might find the use of these two words confusing.

In conclusion, vocabulary is the most required skill when learning a foreign language. It is on vocabulary that all the other skills, reading, writing, speaking, and listening are based and developed. This chapter has shown why it is important to learn new words and why English vocabulary is difficult to memorize. Moreover, it dealt with two main reasons for which most of the students permanently forget the words acquired. And finally, it has suggested methods and techniques that help to understand the new vocabulary by using the working memory and to transfer it in the long-term memory.

Good pronunciation should be one of the first things that you learn in English. You can live without advanced vocabulary — you can use simple words to say what you want to say. You can live without advanced grammar — you can use simple grammar structures instead. But there is no such thing as “simplepronunciation”. If you don’t have good pronunciation, you have bad pronunciation. And the consequences of bad pronunciation are tragic. Even if you use correct grammar, people may simply not understand what you want to say.

For example, if you pronounce SLEEP like this, and not like that, or if you pronounce GHOST like this instead of this, native speakers will have serious problems understanding you! In my opinion, you should know how to say English sounds like the EE in SLEEP or the O in GHOST, before you even learn words like SLEEP and GHOST.

Rhythm & Stress: The musicality that guides the way natives speak

Sound Morphing: How native speakers cut and combine their words

Music, Imitation & Mimicry: How you improve your accent by imitating native speakers.

For the majority of intermediate and advanced learners (including most teachers), effective accent reduction training could very well be the single most powerful, direct, and fastest way to improve your fluency. In fact, more and more academic studies are showing miraculous results from its application.

One such example of accent reduction research is a recent Northern Arizona University Study showing that in just 6 weeks of pronunciation training (at a mere 2 hours per week) learners experienced a 48% increase in comprehensibility (the ability for others to understand) compared to a 3% decrease for the control group (the group that did not receive the training) as evaluated by native speakers.

This is just one study, of course, but there are plenty more pointing in this direction. In addition, if you start paying attention to good language learners and if you experiment with your own pronunciation, you'll start to connect the dots.

1.5. Components of Speaking

Among the four skills, speaking skill is a difficult one to assess with precision, because speaking is a complex skill to acquire. Lado (1977) says that four or five components are generally recognized in analysis of speech process as the follows:

1.5.1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the way for students to produce clearer language when they speak. It deals with the phonological process that refers to the component of a grammar made up of the elements and principles that determine how sounds vary and pattern in a language.

1.5.2. Grammar

It is needed for students to arrange a correct sentence in conversation. It is in line with explanation suggested by Heaton (1978) that students' ability to manipulate structure and to distinguish appropriate grammatical from in appropriate ones. The unity of grammar also learns the correct way to gain expertise in a language in oral in oral and written form.

1.5.3. Vocabulary

One cannot conduct communication effectively or express their ideas both oral and written form if they do not have sufficient vocabulary. So, vocabulary means the appropriate diction which is used in communication.

1.5.4. Fluency

Fluency can be defined as the ability to speak fluently and accurately. Fluency include a reasonably fast speed of speaking and only a small number of pauses and “ums” or “errs”. These sign indicate that speakers do not have spent

a lot of time searching for the language items needed to express the message.

1.6. Teaching Speaking

1.6.1. Principles of Teaching Speaking

There are some principles that teachers should comprehend to make the first year students easier to learn English. According to Finocchiaro (1974:18) there are a handful of principles in teaching language through the speaking to the students as follow:

a) Language items should be taught to the students in situations which will clarify their meaning. The essential features of sound, structure, words, and the arrangements of these in the utterances of language should be given clearly.

b) Good pronunciation should be showed to the students correctly, so that they can differentiate each word and the meaning well when they produce the language in their speaking.

c) In addition to the sound system, learners must be taught the structure system of the language. It can be applied by giving numerous examples; learners must be given comprehension into word order, inflection, derivation, and into the other meaningful features in English.

d) The essential of language learning through speaking is improving the ability to ask, answer questions, make statements, and response appropriately. Speaking is different with writing, so the way to response the question will be different too. Finocchiaro (1974:20) states that the way to response a question in speaking is usually simple while writing is using a complete and correct order sentence to response a question.

e) Confirming comprehension of the students. It can be solved by using some steps to teach speaking. First, select the material for intensive “active” presentation. It aims to make students interest to participate in speaking class enthusiastically. Second, grade it according to its complexity. Giving the material from the easiest to the difficult one. Good arrangement is always making students easier to understand. Third, order it according criteria of frequency of use. Fourth, arrange the model utterances in a way which will permit students to observe the repetitive features so that the principal rules can be understood.

f) Learning speaking is not similar with writing. Therefore learn and practice the language through speaking also will be different. In spoken language, we do not only need the competence to master and understand the language, we also need to learn culture, gestures, and the expressions which give added meaning to the words or sentences. An intonation patterns can also show the feeling of the speaker. It maybe expresses some kinds of expression, like as show the anger, happiness, sadness, and etc.

1.6.2. Teacher’s difficulties in Teaching Speaking

Teaching speaking is very essential especially for understanding English in the class. However, there are some obstacles faced by the teacher in teaching speaking which affect the outcomes of teaching learning speaking in the class. In addition, these aspects are became as instrument to be observed. Some of those obstacles can be described as follows:

a) Students do not want to talk or say anything. One of the problems is students feel really shy about talking in front of other students, they suffer from a fear of making mistakes and therefore “losing face” in front of their teacher and their peers. Speaking in front of other people needs courage,

motivation from inside, and outside such as joyful atmosphere in the conversation and interesting topic. Further is because there are students who dominate and almost intimidate. Another reason for student silence may simply be that the classroom activities are boring or pitched at the wrong level.

b) Students keep using their own language. One problem may teacher face is that students use their native language rather than English to perform classroom tasks. This might happen because they want to communicate something important, and so they use language in the best way they know. They have difficulty to say something and because they do not want losing their face in front of their peers, they think that they better use their native language and so others can understand them.

c) It is difficult to handle students in large classroom. If the classroom is big, for example 30 or 40 students in a classroom, it is clearly that the students hardly got a chance to practice the language, and difficult for them to ask and receive individual attention they need. It is hard for the teacher to make contact with students at the back, to keep good discipline, also to organize dynamic and creative teaching and learning sessions.

d) Students are not discipline in classroom. Some students do not pay attention to the lesson given; they just talk with each other and make some noises. Some come and go as they like, as the teacher cannot control them. The problems may be because the students bored with the activities or they feel unable to cope with the task given. They show their frustration by disruptive behavior and loud outbursts.

e) The materials do not fulfill the need of students. Language teachers should attempt to associate the language they are teaching with the situation outside the classroom. When school topics do not relate to students' lives, they may find themselves confuse or bored. Moreover, when students

cannot understand the language instruction, they may become frustrated. The problem is also connected with the students' motivation.

f) Students have low motivation. If students do not learn how to speak or do not get any opportunity to speak in the language classroom they may soon get de-motivated and lose interest in learning. Nevertheless, if the right activities are taught in the right way, speaking classroom can be a lot of fun, raise learner motivation and make the English language classroom a fun and dynamic place to study English. Their motivation is more likely to increase if the students can see how their process of classroom learning achieves the objective, and helps them to accomplish the success.

g) Based on explanation above, it can be concluded that some obstacles faced by teacher in teaching speaking are students do not want to talk or say anything, students keep using their own language, difficult to handle students in large classroom, students are not discipline in classroom, the materials do not fulfill the need of students and students have low motivation to learn English.

1.6.3. The Importance of Teaching Speaking

Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning. The goal of teaching speaking should improve students' communicative skills, because only in that way, students are able to express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance (<http://letsdoit.upol.cz/>).

Qureshi in his article entitled "The Importance of Speaking Skills for EFL Learners" says that communication takes place, where there is speech. Without speech we cannot communicate with one another. The importance of speaking skills hence is enormous for the learners of any language. Without speech, language is reduced to a mere script.

Thornbury (2005: 1) explains that for a long time it was assumed that the

ability to speak fluently followed naturally from the teaching grammar and vocabulary, with a bit of pronunciation thrown in. We know that speaking is much more complex than this and that involves both command of certain skills and several different types of knowledge.

Richards (2008: 19) says that the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign language learners. Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their spoken language proficiency.

The ability to speak fluently presupposes not only a knowledge of language but also the ability to process information and language ‘on the spot’ (Harmer: 2001).

Speaking is of course very important in daily life. This is the most used skill by many people to exchange information. This influences many parts of daily communication so much. For that reason, teaching speaking in the classroom is really important.

1.7. Problems in Speaking

a) The Definition of Errors

Error is defined as: (in the speech or writing of a second or foreign language learner) the use of a linguistic item, (e.g., a word, a grammatical item, a speech act, etc.) in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning, according to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics (Richards, J. Platt, & H. Platt, 1998). An error is a systematic deviation made by learner who are lack of knowledge of the correct rule of the target language. It shows a lack of language competence and it reflects a learner’s current stage of L2 development. Therefore, a learner can hardly self-correct an error.

b) Pronunciation errors

In language learning, making errors is an inevitable part that cannot be avoided. People cannot learn language without first systematically committing errors (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982). In pronunciation, errors are defined as the incompetence in language and incorrect pronunciation that may affect intelligibility in communication (Nguyen, 2007).

The environment is key for a L2 to be acquired effectively as it helps minimize on the impediments that could hamper the successful attainment of reasonable competence in English language. Pronunciation was the most common error instigated by lack of constant practice in speaking English. Students were found making pronunciation errors when reading a loud or when participating in class discussions. The other errors found out included:

b1) Phonological errors where students pronounced words wrongly like ‘acadamia’ instead of ‘academia’, ‘leave’ Vs ‘live’.

b2) Morphological errors where students were found adding morpheme ‘s’ in every word without knowing that not all words form plurals by adding ‘s’. For example, ‘Advices’, ‘furnitures’ instead of ‘advise’ and ‘furniture’. That showed that students suffered faulty overgeneralization and incomplete application of rules as well as not knowing when to apply the rules.

b3) Syntactic errors where students constructed sentences without Agreement and that was attributed to mother tongue influence. For example, one student greeted another saying: ‘How is you?’ The use of ‘is’ makes the sentence to sound like slang language instead the sentence was supposed to be: ‘How are you?’ This showed that students did not conform to English syntactic rules of Subject Verb Agreement. All these errors made the researchers conclude that learners lacked communicative competence in English language.

c) Ending sounds errors

Reviewing results of some studies of errors with consonant sounds, according to Treiman (1989), they can be classified into 6 types:

1. **Cluster reduction.** This is the “deletion of one or more consonants from a target cluster so that only a single consonant occurs at syllable margins” (Grunwell, 1987: 217, as cited in Treiman, 1989)

2. **Cluster Simplification.** The error occurs when one/some elements of a cluster being is/are produced in a different manner from the target phoneme (Grunwell, 1987, as cited in Treiman, 1989).

E.g.: Green: pronounced as [gwin] Bread: pronounced as [bwed]

3. **Epenthesis.** This is the insertion of some vowel (normally a schwa) between cluster elements (Dyson & Paden, 1983, as cited in Treiman, 1989).

4. **Coalescence.** It occurs when the yielded pronunciation contains a new consonant composed of features from the original consonants.

E.g.: Swim pronounced as [fim]

It was explained that because the [+fricative] feature of /s/ co-occurs with the [+labial] feature of /w/, resulting in a labial fricative, [f] (Dyson & Paden, 1983, as cited in Treiman, 1989).

5. **Omitting nasal and liquid sounds.** In consonant clusters consisting of pre-final + final consonants with nasals (/n/, /m/) or liquids (/r/, /l/) as the first element, (/m, n, l, r/ + final consonant), nasals and liquids sounds are often omitted (Treiman, Zukowski, & Richmond-Welty, 1995).

E.g.: went => wet

belt => bet.

6. Phonetically possible spelling. In representing the first consonant of a cluster, spellers tend to spell words in an inaccurate but phonetically plausible ways (Treiman & Bourassa, 2000).

E.g.: trap => chap

It was explained that because “ch” closely resembles the sound of the initial blend tr /tS/. Treiman (1985) explained that this “ch” spelling reflects the release of /t/ in the context.

Again in a research about Chinese-Speaking EFL Learners’ Performances of Processing English Consonant Clusters, Fang-chi Chang (2002) used the same way classification and find out 6 types of errors above all occurred with Chinese learners. The errors he found seemed to be predictable.

d) Grammatical errors

We often hear some sentences like this “I am get up at six in the morning; I am like watching TV; She do the homework yesterday;” . The first two sentences may be spoken by students whose teacher often reminds them that “I” should be followed by “am”. The last sentence might be spoken by students who haven’t understand the simple present tense thoroughly. If these errors don’t get corrected in time, the students will keep them in mind and think they are right. The result will be very terrible. The three short sentences are enough to show us that it is necessary for the students to obey grammar rules when speaking English.

Non-native users of English almost always tussle with all aspects of English (listening, writing, reading and speaking). Many also commit errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. This is because there are aspects of English that make it very confusing and utterly difficult for non-native English learners. For example, in the study of ESL, students have the knowledge of using a

number of adjectives when describing somebody or something. This therefore means that, students ought to be very keen in using these adjectives in their correct order in the sentence; Opinion, Size, Shape, Age, Color, Nationality and finally Material. These errors are particular to the English language, with no clear rules stating when to use the prefix or the suffix forms and mostly due to unfamiliarity with vocabulary.

For example: - Did you buy that shirt white pretty? (Wrong).

- Did you buy that pretty white shirt? (Right).

Wrong use of English articles also lends many speakers of English to use the language erroneously. Bautisa (2011) suggests that:

d1) article a, an is used for a non-specific, singular, count noun.

Example: a cow, an egg.

d2) The is used for specific, singular or plural nouns. Example: The horse did not stir.

Inappropriate use of prepositions, tenses in English as well as repetition are the other common aspects that need to be scrutinized for fluency in speech to be realized.

1.8. Other factors

Other factors affecting the speaking skills of HPU first-year students in English learning English speaking, some students will make problems or errors when they try to utter words, phrases or sentences. Problems or errors in speaking can't correct themselves, therefore it is need explanation. According to Ur (1991:121) and other researches done in a similar field that acquisition of speaking skills in English is influenced by a number of factors.

a) Low participation

The students have low participant when they speak, this mean that they have only very little talking time. This problem is compounded by the tendency of some learners to dominate, while other speaks very little or not at all.

b) Poor listening skills

The central role of listening comprehension in the second/foreign language learning process is now largely accepted. Listening plays an extremely important role in the development of speaking abilities. Usually, one person speaks and the other responds by means of the listening process. In fact, during interaction, every speaker plays a duo role (as a listener and a speaker). If one cannot understand what is said, one is certainly unable to respond. So, speaking is closely interwoven with listening skills.

Research has shown that, there is reciprocity between reading and oral language. DeGelder and Morais (1995) argue that as skills in some aspect of oral language increase, they help development in reading, and as a person improves his reading skills, that improvement seems to enhance further improvement in the spoken language. Syomwene (2013) argues that the meaning of new words is affected by the characteristics associated with spoken Language like presence of hesitation, use of fillers like 'er', 'em', and continuous repetition of phrases. Also emotions associated with spoken language like

annoyance and excitement as expressed in intonation can be difficult to represent in writing except when complemented by phrases like “said excitedly”. This shows that spoken Language has a great impact on listening as well as writing because the listener will not print to describe these emotions explicitly.

In addition, the spoken Language limits the freedom of listener in terms of what to listen to and at what pace. This is so because in spoken Language, the words are spoken once and the listener may or may not hear them all. Therefore, for effective speaking to be said to take place, the listener should be able to grasp and understand all that is said and the spoken word should translate to a written form with a lot of ease. Thus speaking and listening co-exist mutually.

c) Lack of proper vocabulary

Students of English sometimes face the problem of having to search for an appropriate word in order to fit into a particular context (Tarone, 2005). This happens because of lack of exposure to a variety of vocabulary. Baker and Westrup (2003) argue that learners sometimes may have little idea about what to say, may not know the words to use, or may not be sure how to use the grammar. Celce-murcia, Brinton & Goodwin (1996) claim that the acquisition of good pronunciation is commonly held to be the most difficult of all tasks in second language learning. This will eventually lead to failure in communicating fluently in English language, which will again lead to losing of confidence and lack of motivation to speak.

d) Mother tongue use

The students usually use mother tongue in speaking activities, because it is easier, and also they feel less exposed if they are speaking their mother tongue. If they are talking in small groups, it can be quite difficult to get some classes – particularly the less disciplined or motivated ones- to keep to the target

language. Findings in a study conducted in India by Kansakar (1998) on the effect of mother tongue (Indian) on acquisition of a foreign or a second language, indicated that articulation of words, their speech pattern, pitch, and the sound system impacted greatly on the learning of a Foreign Language or Second Language. Therefore, the mismatch between Indian mother tongue and English language in terms of these features earlier mentioned, ends up confusing students. The confusion comes as students are required to first unlearn all the linguistic features in their mother tongue then start to learn the English features for acquisition of English to take place (Kansakar, 1998). In relation to this, students learn to communicate in English while bringing in mother tongue interference which leads to varieties of 'Englishes' and misunderstanding. In the same context, learners tend to do literal mother tongue translations when speaking in English. According to (Baker and Westrup, 2000) making translations into mother tongue as a way of conveying the meaning of new items should be avoided at all costs. In a similar study done in a University in Vietnam, languages used by students while thinking and speaking English were examined. Findings of the study revealed that a substantial number of students thought in Vietnamese language when they were speaking in English. Wenden (2005) observed that designing the spoken word in the local (native) language and then translating it to another language is disastrous students as it affects the acquisition of the target language (English). Mother tongue influence therefore prevents students from acquiring the correct English and increases students' vulnerability to English spoken errors which could be managed through practicing to speak good English in various contexts.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1. Survey Research

When performing a survey analysis, the investigator must determine carefully how the experiment is to be conducted. These include a great deal of steps such as:

- i. Defining the purpose and objective of the study.
- ii. Selecting and defining the target population.
- iii. Choosing and selecting techniques for data gathering.
- iv. A major and good representative (sample) of the population is to be taken.
- v. The process of data gathering (or simply the step of executing the research), where the interviews, questionnaires or any other instrument is used for which the questions are pre designed.
- vi. The questionnaire (if used) is then followed up. The questions asked from the interviewee are answered, evaluated and hence the process of data gathering is completed.
- vii. The data gathered is processed, analyzed, and interpreted, from which the results are concluded and the findings are then generalized.

Following these steps will help researchers understand and build answers from themselves based on the survey data sheet they read.

2.2. The participants

The research was done with 20 first-years English majors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology. Their age is about 19. They have learnt English at least for 7 years. However, their English is not good because of many reasons. In which, two main reasons are local voice and curriculum

influence from high school in the past, so they did not have chances to practise English speaking skill. Therefore, when entering the university, their English levels were limited and they have to deal with many difficulties in studying process.

2.3. Data collection instruments

In order to collect data for the study, a survey questionnaire was chosen because it is a straightforward and familiar tool instrument for gathering information from students and is less time-consuming than other instruments.

The purpose of the survey was to determine how frequently people used speaking learning strategies. It was based on the most common strategies used by students all around the world, and the majority of the items in the questionnaire were chosen because they piqued the students' interest.

The questionnaire has a total of 8 questions with contents: The importance of speaking learning for students, how often they spend time learning speaking and difficulties they face in learning speaking...

In addition, the questionnaire was written in both English and Vietnamese so that the informants could understand and complete all the questions.

2.4. Data collection and procedures

The questionnaire was administered to first-year English language students during their break time, and students had 15 minutes to complete it. The students' participation in the survey process was completely voluntary and they were assured that information would be kept confidential during the survey; they were also asked to give their opinion as honestly as possible, which is critical to the success of this investigation. I also confirmed to them that the study was

conducted for the purpose of surveying their speaking learning strategies in order to improve their own English learning in general and their English speaking learning in particular.

CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data was collected using coded questionnaires for statistical analysis to determine which speaking learning strategies are commonly used and how frequently each strategy is used among first-year English language student. The questions in the questionnaire will be analyzed one by one in their speaking strategy groups by counting its percentage.

In addition, data was collected using multiple choice questions for statistical analysis to identify difficulties in learning speaking and how first-year English language students perceive the importance of English speaking learning.

The questions in the survey are related to the importance and frequency of learning speaking, attitudes and difficulties in learning speaking for students of HPU.

3.1. The importance of learning speaking for first-year English language students

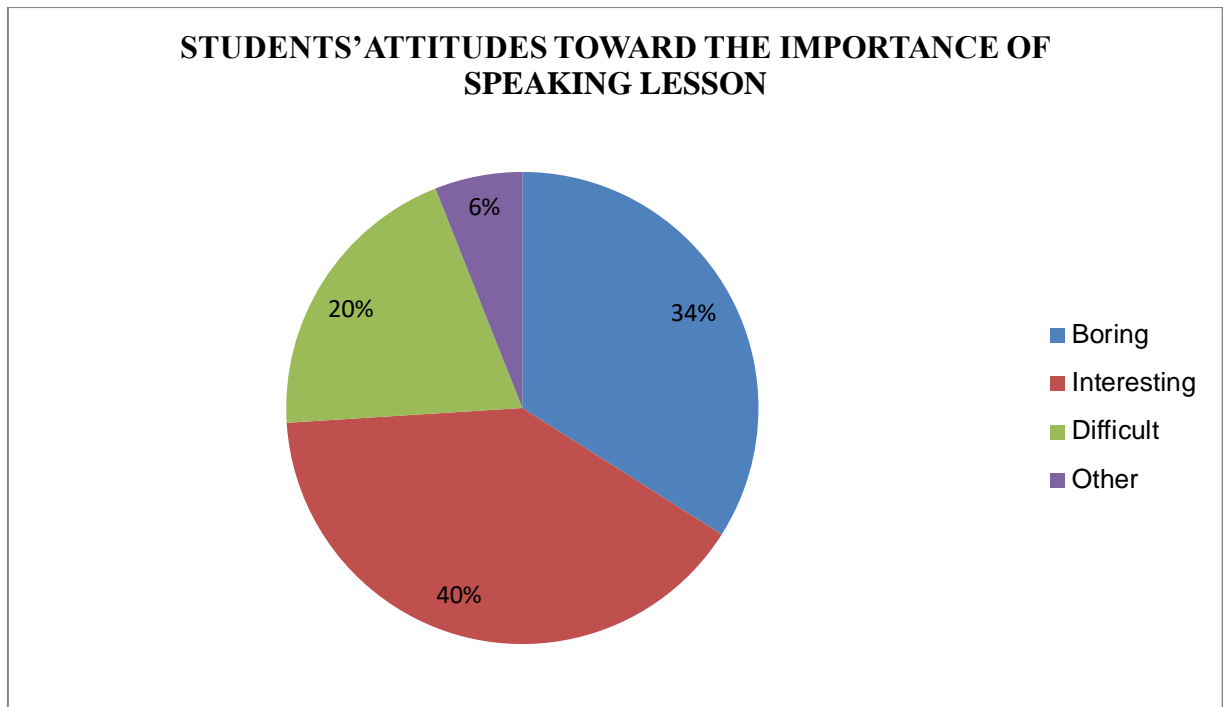


FIGURE 1: STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING LESSON

The pie chart above shows students' thoughts on the English speaking lessons. 34% of students found the speaking lesson boring, about 40% of the students thought the speaking lesson was interesting, 20% thought it was difficult, 6% of the students had a different opinion.

3.2. The frequency of learning the speaking skill of first-year English language students in HPU

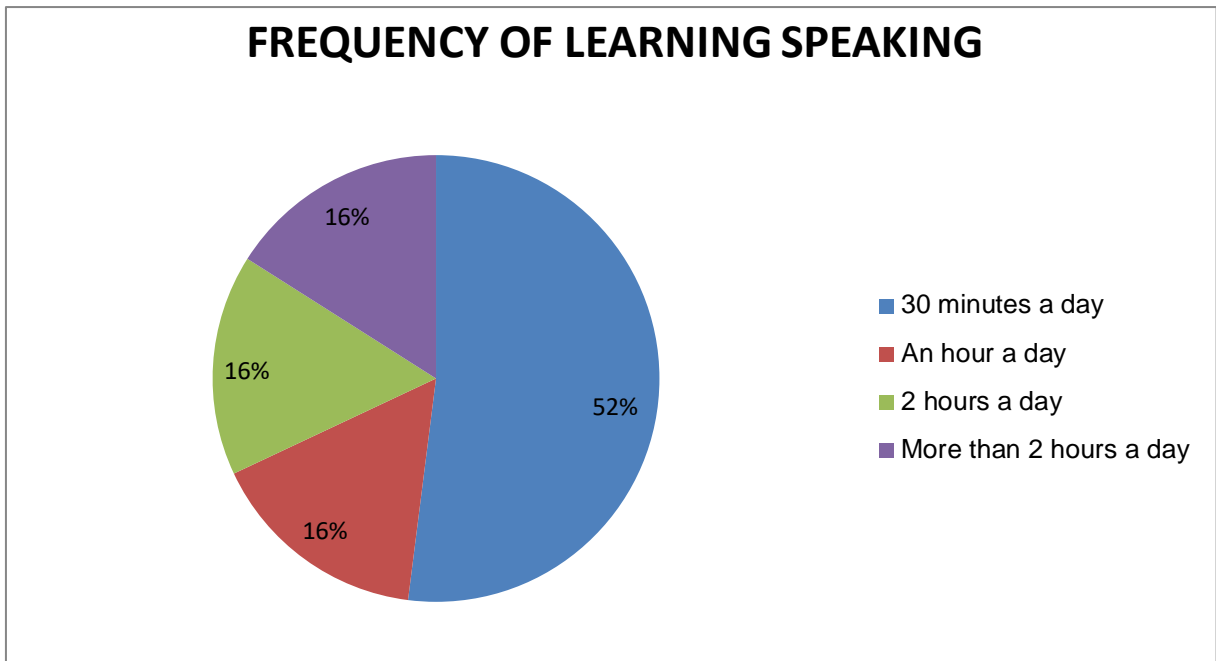


FIGURE 2: FREQUENCY OF LEARNING SPEAKING

It can be clearly seen from the pie chart that students pay very little attention to their daily speaking learning. Half of them only spend 30 minutes on learning to speak every day. The number of students studying from one hour a day to more than one hour is very limited with the same figure at 16%. Spending too little time on learning to speak is the biggest reason that profoundly affects the effectiveness of students' speaking skills.

3.3. Frequency of having problems when learning to speak of first-year English language students in HPU

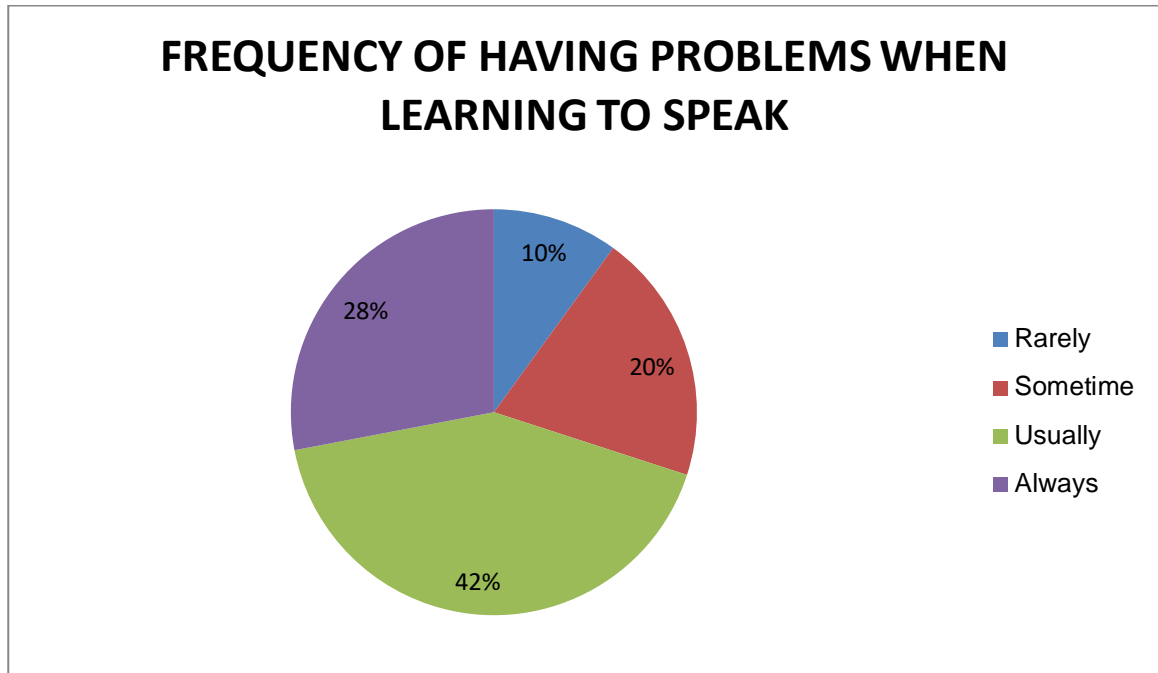


FIGURE 3: FREQUENCY OF HAVING PROBLEMS WHEN LEARNING TO SPEAK

The information in the pie chart shows how often students have difficulty learning speaking skills. According to the collected data, 42% of students often have difficulty and 28% of students always have difficulty speaking, while only 20% sometimes and 10% rarely. In short, students all have problems in speaking English and they need a lot of suggestions to improve their speaking skills. Extra activities are an important factor in improving students' English speaking skills.

3.4. HPU students' feelings when communicating with foreigners

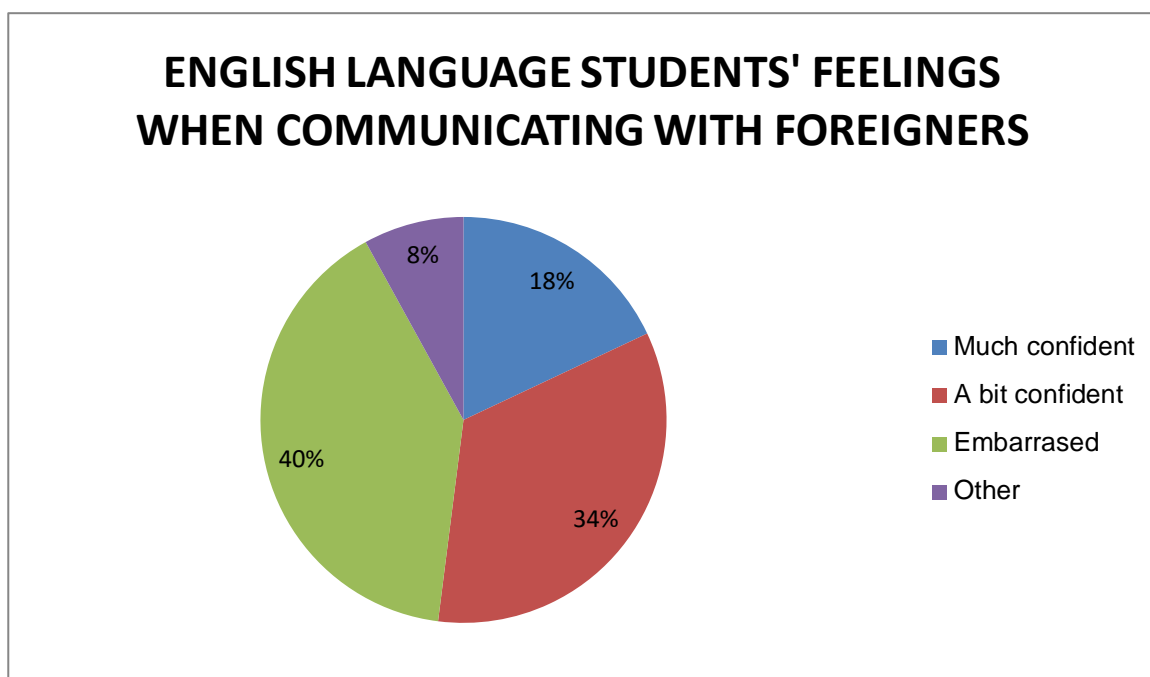


FIGURE 4: FIRST-YEAR ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENTS' FEELINGS WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH FOREIGNERS

From the pie chart, we know that only 18% of students feel much confident when communicating with foreigners. 34% of students said they felt a bit confident. Almost half of them are often embarrassed to communicate with native speakers because they feel that their English vocabulary is not enough to express their ideas, and their pronunciation is not correct, causing misunderstandings for listeners. Obviously, the lack of confidence is a big obstacle that makes it difficult for them to integrate into English conversations.

3.5. Difficulties encountered by first-year English language students in speaking lesson

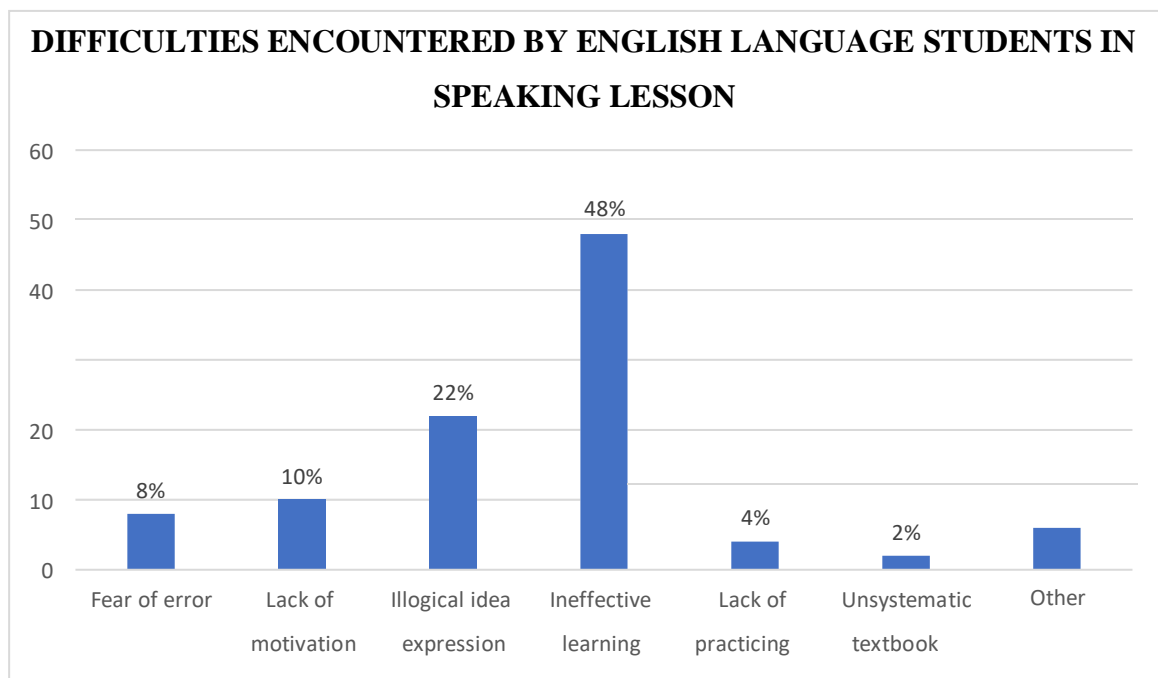


FIGURE 5: DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY FIRST-YEAR ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENTS IN SPEAKING LESSON

Through the chart above, we can see that most students feel that the problem they face in speaking lesson is that they have not found an effective learning method. 22% of students find it difficult to express their ideas through each topic logically and clearly. There are also other reasons why some it is difficult for them to absorb the speaking class, which is fear of error, lack of motivation, lack of practicing environment, unsystematic textbook.

3.6. Problems faced by first-year English language students in speaking lessons

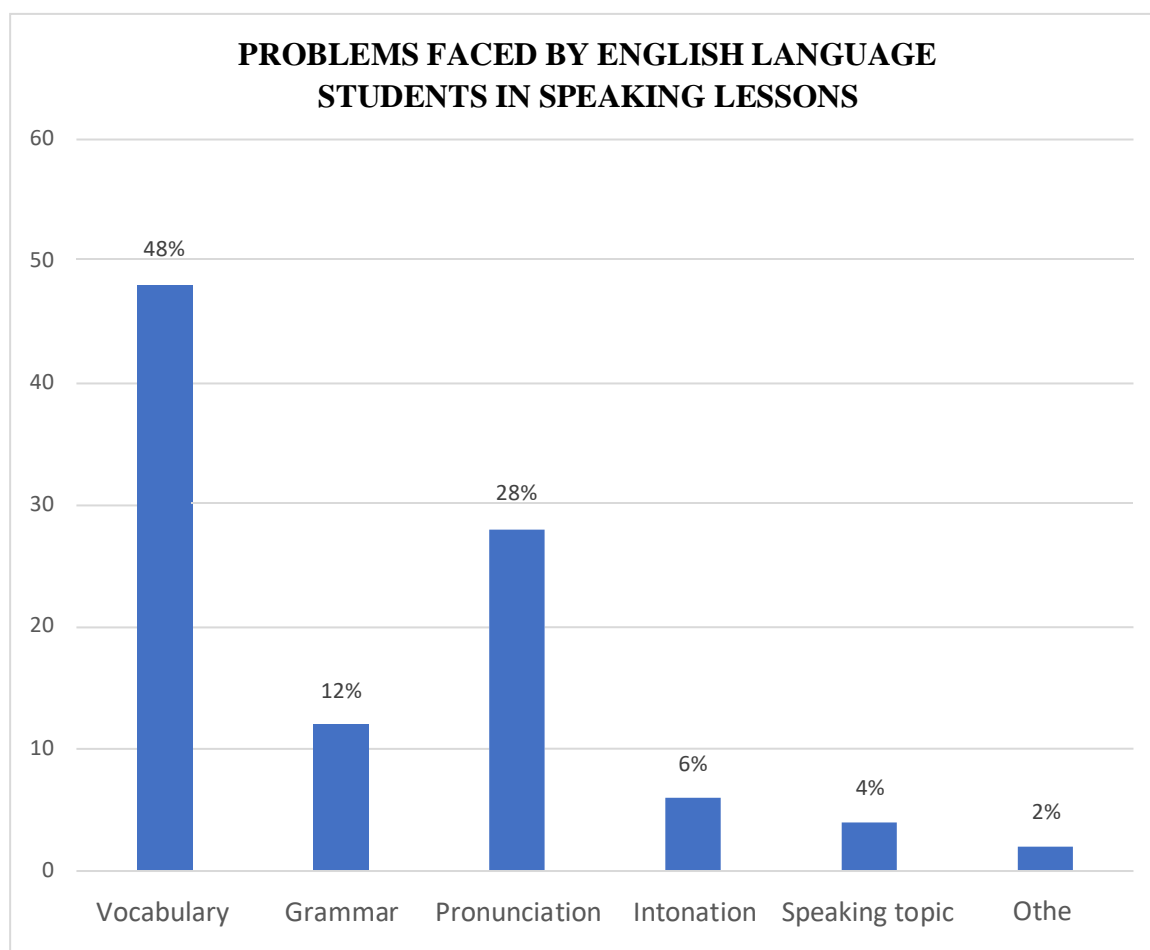


FIGURE 6: PROBLEMS FACED BY FIRST-YEAR ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENTS IN SPEAKING LESSONS

The chart has shown that 48% of students have problems with vocabulary, which makes them difficult in speaking. When students' vocabulary is not enough to express what they want to convey, they cannot complete the speech fluently and give up easily. 28% of students have major problems with their pronunciation, 12% have problems with grammar, and some other students have intonation, speaking topics and other problems.

3.7. The frequency of students exposed to English inside and outside the school through recreational sources

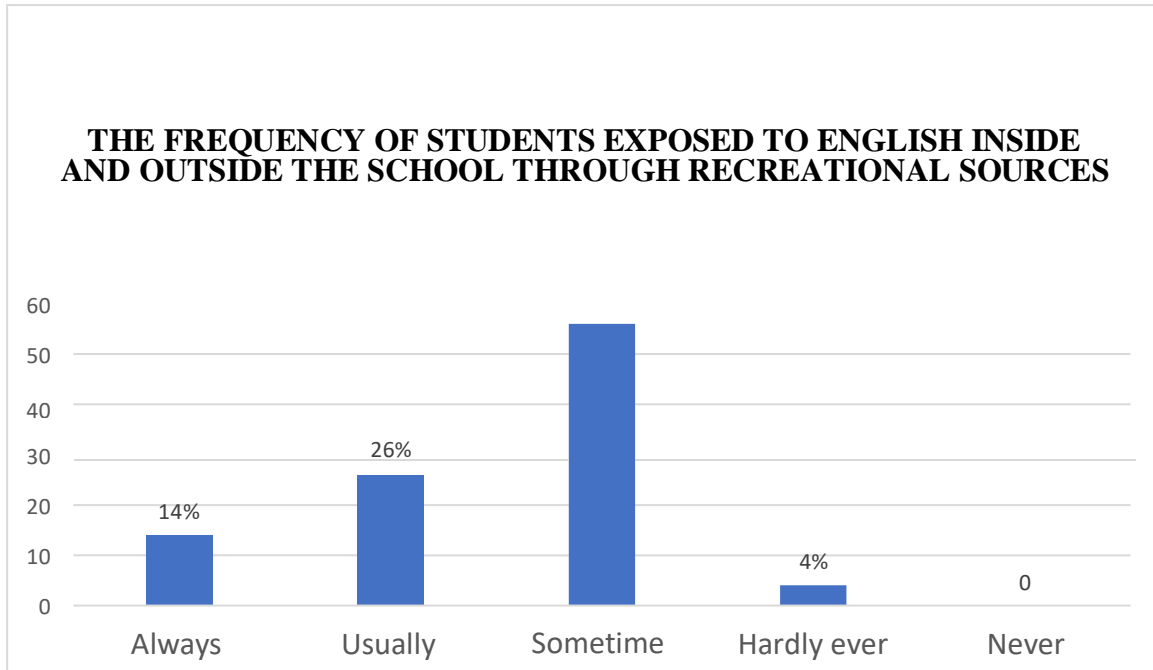


FIGURE 7: THE FREQUENCY OF STUDENTS EXPOSED TO ENGLISH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL THROUGH RECREATIONAL SOURCES

According to the survey results, 56% of students sometimes practice English in different ways, 26% of students usually practice it, 14% of students always and 4% of students hardly never. There is no student who never practices English through sources like foreign TV programs, movies, cartoons, the internet, English music or interacting with English-speaking people. The above resources are all excellent means of entertainment for students to relax after school, and they can use them to have fun and learn together, that's better than ever. That will greatly support students in learning in general and skills in particular.

3.8. Activities students do to prepare for English lessons

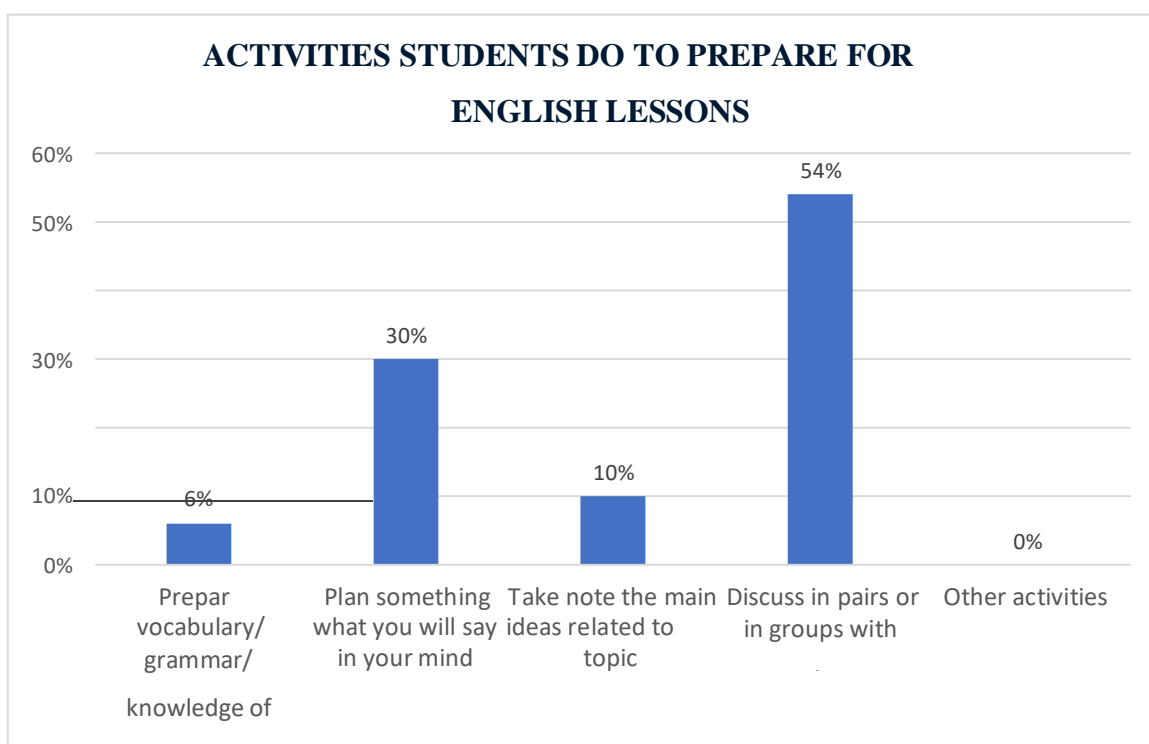


FIGURE 8: ACTIVITIES STUDENTS DO TO PREPARE FOR ENGLISH LESSON

According to the chart, 54% of students will discuss in pairs or groups to support each other during speaking class. In addition, 30% of students will focus on planning something they will say in their heads, 10% take note the main ideas related to the topic and 6% prepare vocabulary/ grammar/ knowledge of the topic presented. One thing is for sure, students who choose for themselves the best way to prepare for a speaking lesson will be able to absorb the knowledge and complete the lesson much better than students who don't. So, if students want to gain confidence and fluency every time they take part in an English class, they can't forget to prepare carefully.

CHAPTER 4: SOME SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ENGLISH SKILL FOR THE FIRST YEAR ENGLISH MAJORS AT HPU

4.1. For students

4.1.1. Goal, target and attitude

a) Goal

First-year English major need to find out for themselves about the purpose and importance of learning to speak, from which they will find appropriate learning methods to improve their ability. If they know why they want to study, setting goals is easy. For example, maybe they want to travel to an English-speaking country, their goal might be to learn "Survival English". Perhaps they already know many useful phrases, but they want to improve their speaking and listening skills. Whatever their goals are, write them down and do that.

b) Target

How long do you need to study to reach your goal? Do you study best at day or night? Do you like to study alone in a quiet place, or with friends and background music? These answers are different for each student. The important thing is to be realistic. Students need to adjust their schedule accordingly. Instead of spending too little time on learning to speak, students should spend at least 3 to 4 hours a day learning to speak using various methods. If students can persist in learning to speak everyday, old knowledge will not be forgotten, moreover, they will absorb a lot of new knowledge to improve their level.

c) Make a commitment

Students need to understand that learning English requires a lot of motivation. No one can take attendance and track them every hour. The most important thing is the self-discipline of the students. If students are sure they are ready to start learning, they should commit to themselves and do their best.

d) Attitude

The things we do best in life are the things we enjoy doing. If students aren't having fun learning English, they are not studying the right way. They can be a serious student who has fun at the same time. Students should make up their own rewards program to give themselves incentives to stay on task.

4.1.2. Learn to speak through the Internet

a) Learn to speak through online websites

Nowadays, the internet has a huge influence on our lives. For the first year English major, the Internet can help them learn to speak English effectively. At any time, students can learn directly through online websites that teach English, especially speaking skills. It is very convenient for them to learn new words, pronunciation, presentation skills through interesting topics... Through the internet, students can download many materials related to English speaking practice to improve their skills.

b) Learn to speak through English songs

The Internet includes a huge of English resources. Students can learn from English songs, English music, even English poems. Students can learn from English lyrics by downloading the lyrics to their phones or computers and listening to the song several times, then reading the lyrics carefully and trying to repeat them on their own. They can find in the lyrics some simple sentence structure, even more special structure. That will help students improve both their speaking and grammar skills.

c) Learn to speak through English movies

Sometimes, students can find some English movies to watch and learn from these movies. They will be relaxed but still be able to learn. These movies

practice on their own, then ask more questions and answers.

c) Students should increase their vocabulary to be able to talk about a variety of topics. Spend more time and patience to improve vocabulary, a good vocabulary background will be very useful in many contexts.

d) Change intonation of voice. Listening to native speakers speak English, students should keep in mind the way they speak and the intonation of the conversation. Listen to understand what is friendly or unfriendly, bored or interested, kind or cruel. Listen to how their intonation affects the message they are conveying, then try to change intonation when speaking.

e) Students should put extra emphasis on the important parts being talked about. English is a rhythmic language, which means that in any sentence, some words are emphasized to show the importance of the message.

f) To improve English speaking skill, students should find a friend to practice learning English with, helping each other to improve. They will be more motivated and not bored.

g) Students should train grammar skills, record it when speaking and try to find grammatical errors. Learn from mistakes and try again.

h) Record while speaking, check volume and speed. When students speak too fast, it will be difficult for others to understand. One difficult thing students should keep in mind in conversations is to stop when asked.



4.1.4. Work in pairs or groups

For learning to speak English, working in pairs or groups is also considered an effective way of learning. The practice of group discussion in parallel with skill development will be really helpful and improve students' English communication ability. If each student participating in the group follows the rules set by the group with the common goal of growing together, they will all achieve their learning goals.

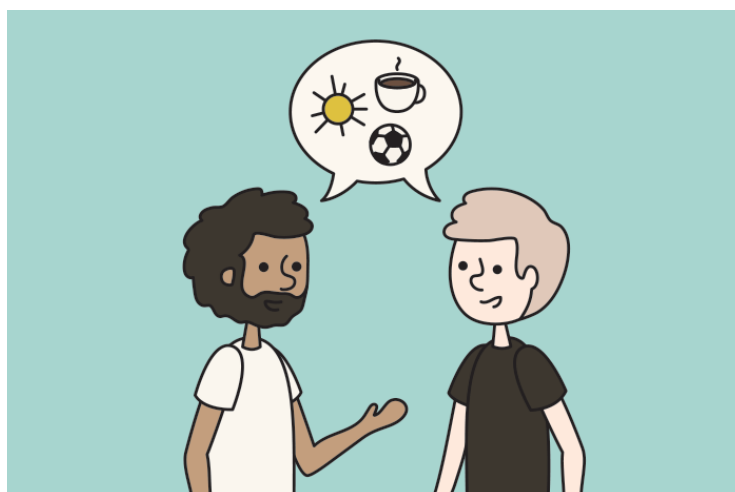
The benefits of learning to speak English in pairs or in groups:

a) Raising awareness and self-discipline for students

Working in pairs or groups allows each member to participate actively and responsibly. Reading comprehension and preparing materials before each lesson according to a certain time limit will create great effects for reviewing old knowledge and absorbing new knowledge, which is very important for learning to speak English. When they are in a group and are responsible for completing assignments with other members, students will be really serious about learning about the topic, brainstorming ideas and discussing to find the best arrangement for each assigned topic.

b) Create opportunities for members to share ideas, solve problems and help each other

Once paired as a pair or a group, members can freely share ideas and advice to each other. They can also solve any problem that is difficult to do alone. Moreover, when explaining a concept to another member, it is also deepening that knowledge into one's own memory. Explaining clearly and fluently in front of a group of people also trains each student to speak in front of a crowd and increases their confidence.



4.1.5. Self – Talking English

Self-talk English is considered to be one of the most effective ways that a lot of students have been doing during their university studies to practice English. It is a common problem that the number of students in each class is quite large, so there may not be enough time for each student to have a chance to practice their speaking skills. Therefore, students can only practice at home but finding a partner to practice with is another problem. In this case, self-talk seems effective and easy to do. Besides, for some students who are shy or lack confidence, this strategy is totally recommended as they can then push themselves to speak without fear of making mistakes or being embarrassed. Talk about anything and everything. Do it in the privacy of their own home. If students can't do this at first, they should try reading out loud until they feel comfortable hearing their own voice in English. Interestingly, a statistic has shown that 93% of professors use self-talk when learning a second language and this strategy has received many positive feedbacks from professors. The practice step of this method is very simple as you are free to say whatever you like to yourself. When learners practice speaking on their own, it can help them achieve great fluency and memorization.



4.1.6. Join the English club

a) Definition

English Club is a gathering of people with the same passion and interest in English. Each English club has its own goals and directions. Here, members can organize appropriate programs of activities, towards the common purpose of the club. The time will be agreed by the members themselves to ensure reasonable for each participating member.

b) Benefits of joining an English club

The English club was created as one of the very effective English learning solutions.

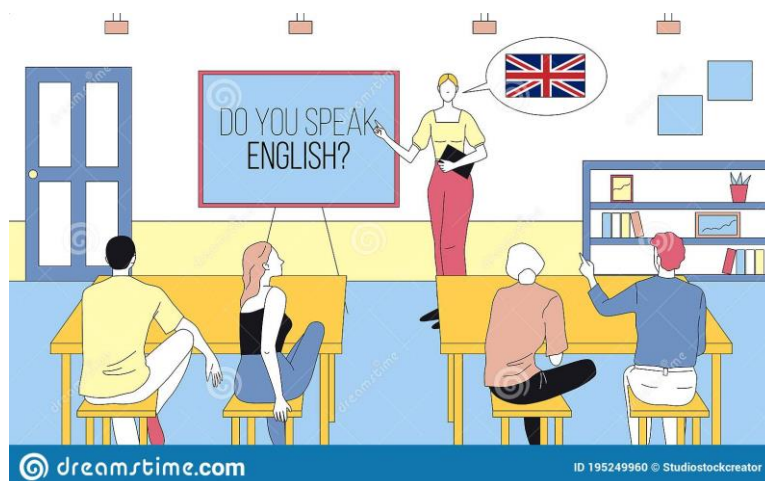
b1) Help members have the opportunity to practice English communication in order to improve each person's listening and speaking ability.

b2) Members will become more confident when they practice at English clubs, which leads to positive friends and relationships. Since then, members not only improve their speaking ability but also give them confidence when communicating in English.

b3) Feel free to come up with creative ideas to help improve everyone's English ability. Here, members will experience using English

together to play games, play plays, debates, presentations, and interviews, helping them to make the most of your knowledge but not under great pressure.

b4) Some clubs have foreign lecturers participating to guide them on pronunciation and grammar in detail, directly correcting mistakes for each person.



4.1.7. Join the online forum on practicing speaking English

Students often learn English speaking by listening to music, watching movies or available English-taught programs. But sometimes they feel that this learning is too passive and have many difficulties if they want to find study materials. So students should try to participate in English speaking forums, the interaction between members, a rich repository of documents and many useful tips will definitely help them conquer this global language.

Benefits of joining an English speaking forum:

a) Free for all users

This is the best advantage of English forums. Your participation here is completely free and free, does not require any fees. Here, learners can download loads of useful materials, participate in free discussions and ask questions to

anyone.

b) Easy and convenient

All users just need a computer or phone connected to the internet can participate. Just a few simple steps to register and you can become a member of the English forum with many benefits in learning English.

c) Plentiful material

If students need to find useful material, the archives shared by members on English speaking forums are a treasure for them. These are all documents shared by predecessors, so they are often highly appreciated for their quality and effectiveness for users. Especially, the structure of the forums is often very reasonable and diverse, making it easy for users to find suitable documents for each specific topic.

d) Friendly learning environment at English speaking forums

Although just a virtual environment, English speaking forums are gathering places for people with the same goal of wanting to learn to speak English better. Therefore, the members here are usually quite friendly and enthusiastic. They exchange with each other like close friends, the interaction in the forum is no less than learning English online. This is very beneficial in practicing English communication for students.



4.1.8. Join in English workshops

English Workshop is a series of activities in meetings and seminars of people with similar interests in the field of English. The purpose of the English workshop is to exchange, share and learn skills, experience and knowledge about English. A workshop is conducted when there are two components that are speakers and participants. Speakers will share, provide knowledge and useful information to guests. English workshops are held for the purpose of discussing and clarifying interesting topics that everyone is interested in.

At Hai Phong University of Management and Technology, English workshops are organized by English department on interesting topics that are always of particular interest and attention from students. Not only helping students relieve stress after class, English workshops also give students a lot of useful knowledge that they need to apply in their studies as well as in the future. With good speakers and always stirring the atmosphere of the workshop, valuable content is easily conveyed to the students. Students not only acquire knowledge for themselves, but also can ask questions to clarify problems and improve the difficulties they are facing in learning English.

Therefore, first year students at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology should actively participate in the department's English workshops as well as off-campus workshops. This will give them not only knowledge about learning English but also valuable lessons that they cannot find in books, helping them to improve and enhance every aspect of themselves.

4.2. For teachers

4.2.1. Teaching methods to improve speaking skill

Speaking is one of the most important skills students can master both for social and studying success. Students use this skill through every English class to make requests, ask questions, receive new information and interact with friends.

However, teachers must be mindful that speaking involves more than simply using words to articulate what we are thinking, and there is more at play than simply asking students to say the words that they know. So teachers have a particularly important role in raising the level of each student.

a) Select appropriate and effective textbook

Teaching textbook is an important part that directly affects the teaching process of each teacher. Teachers should choose the right textbook and bring high performance in each lesson. A good textbook not only makes it easier for teachers to work, but also helps students easily absorb lessons and apply knowledge to the fullest.

b) Encourage conversation

Every speaking lesson gives students a new opportunity to practice language. Some of students might need a little guidance from their teacher to engage in conversations, so teachers should spark interactions whenever they can. Ask questions, rephrase the student's answers and give prompts that encourage conversations to continue.

c) Remind students to speak loudly and articulate clearly

Ask students to feel the muscles used for speech while they are talking and monitor their volume and articulation. Remind them that clear and loud-enough speech is essential for holding the attention of the group, communicating their information and opinions effectively.

d) Explain the subtleties of tone

Remind students how tone of voice, which includes pitch, volume, speed, and rhythm can change the meaning of what they say. Often, it is not what they say, it is how they say, it that can lead to misunderstanding of motives and attitudes. Teacher should ask students to be mindful of tone when they are trying to get a message across, and adjust their volume and pitch accordingly.

e) Create a fun and exciting atmosphere for each class

No one can easily absorb knowledge in a stressful study environment, especially English speaking skills. Therefore, the role of the teacher is to create a pleasant atmosphere and encourage the students to interact naturally in the class. Teachers can also let students come up with a suitable topic, then have them practice in pairs or in groups. This process not only helps students feel more comfortable in class, but also helps each other correct mistakes and complete assignments together.

4.2.2. Teach English pronunciation according to some rules

Teachers should remember that the goal is for the students to pronounce clearly, not to pronounce correctly. Teachers should not spend too much time teaching each student to pronounce individual sounds. A non-native English speaker will rarely speak exactly like a native speaker. Pronunciation must be clear so that listeners can understand and distinguish it from other similar sounds, not exactly like native speakers.

If the teacher pronounces it incorrectly, the students will also pronounce it incorrectly. Teachers should be careful to pronounce individual words and sentences clearly because this is a model activity for students. If the teacher's pronunciation is not good, the most important thing is that the teachers must correct themselves.

Teachers should not let students pronounce the same sound over and over again. Repeating too many times, especially without understanding the meaning, will make the activity boring. Therefore, teachers should not let students repeat separate sounds for a long time, but instead they should let students practice sounds in the context of words (e.g., cat, bat, sat, etc.), then combine them with other words to form sentences with higher meaning ("for example, The cat ate the bat and sat down").

PART III: CONCLUSION

1. Research summary

As a student at Hai Phong University of Technology and Management, from having many difficulties in speaking skills, along with a deep awareness of the importance of learning to speak; The researcher decided to carry out the study in the hope of finding out some factors that influence students' speaking skills during speaking as well as suggesting some ways to improve their speaking skills.

The study consists of three main parts. Part I is the introduction of the study. It introduces readers to background information on why this thesis was completed, how it was conducted, and what it was done for. Part II is the development of the thesis consisting of three chapters. The first chapter provides the reader with an overview of the theoretical underpinnings on which this study is based.

The next chapter presents the research method through survey questionnaires. The last chapter is a number of recommendations and suggestions to improve English speaking skills at Hai Phong University of Technology and Management.

2. Limitations of the study

Although the study has certain strong points such as collection methods, survey questionnaires for students, due to limited time, lack of sources, the researcher's ability and other unexpected factors, it is obvious that the study has got a number of short-comings.

First of all, due to the limited of time, experience to some extent, the researcher could not conduct other methods such as classroom observation which can make the obtained results more reliable.

Secondly, due to the limitation of scope of the study, the researcher only focus on the first-year students in Faculty of Foreign Language which account for a small number of students in foreign languages department Haiphong Management and Technology University. Therefore, the result of the study can't be generalized. Besides, the researcher could not cover all the aspects of difficulties.

In addition, the techniques suggested in this research are selected from different reliable but limited sources.

In spite of the mentioned limitations, I hope that this exploratory research will contribute to the better situation of teaching and learning English speaking skill in in foreign languages department at Haiphong Management and Technology University.

3. Suggestions for further studies

Because of the limitation, this study could not cover all of aspects of the study. Besides, the study only focuses on difficulties and solutions for only first-year students at Haiphong Management and Technology University in order to help them improve their speaking skill. Moreover, for the further studies, to get better results, the researcher should invite more participants and the data collection method. Together with using survey questionnaires and interviews,

observation is also necessary to get more persuasive conclusions.

All in all, although the study cannot avoid to the limitation, the research has been completed under the guiding of the supervisor and self-effort. Any comments and criticism will be highly appreciated for better further study.

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APPENDIX
PRONUNCIATION LEARNING STRATEGIES
(CÁC CHIẾN LƯỢC HỌC NÓI)

Research on English speaking skills of first year Law major, Hai Phong University of Technology and Management. Survey questionnaire was used in this study. Please put a tick the box or write the required answer. You can use English or Vietnamese in your answer.

Question 1: What do you think about speaking lesson? (Bạn nghĩ gì về bài học nói?)

- Boring (Chán)
- Very interesting (Rất thú vị)
- Difficult (Khó)
- Other (Khác):

Question 2: How much time do you spend on studying speaking daily? (Bạn dành bao nhiêu thời gian cho việc học nói hàng ngày?)

- 30 minutes a day (30 Phút 1 ngày)
- An hour a day (1 Giờ 1 ngày)
- 2 hours a day (2 Giờ 1 ngày)
- More than 2 hours a day (Hơn 2 giờ 1 ngày)

Question 3: How often do you have problems in your speaking skill? (Bạn có thường gặp vấn đề trong kỹ năng nói của mình không?)

- Rarely (Hiếm khi)
- Sometimes (Thỉnh thoảng)
- Usually (Thường xuyên)

Question 4: How do you feel when communicating with foreigners? (Bạn cảm thấy thế nào khi giao tiếp với người nước ngoài?)

- Much confident (Tự tin nhiều)
- A bit confident (Có chút tự tin)
- Embarrassed (Xấu hổ)
- Other (Khác):

Question 5: What difficulties do you often face up with in speaking lesson? (Bạn thường gặp khó khăn gì trong bài học nói?)

- Fear of error (Sợ mắc lỗi)
- Lack of motivation (Thiếu động lực)
- Illogical idea expression (Biểu đạt ý tưởng phi logic)
- Ineffective learning method (Phương pháp học không hiệu quả)
- Lack of practicing environment (Thiếu môi trường luyện tập)
- Unsystematic textbook (Sách giáo khoa không hệ thống)
- Other (Khác) :

Question 6: What are the problems facing you in speaking lesson? (Những vấn đề bạn gặp phải trong bài học nói là gì?)

- Vocabulary (Từ vựng)
- Grammar (Ngữ pháp)
- Pronunciation (stress, ending sounds, mispronunciation...) Phát âm
- Intonation (Âm điệu)
- Speaking topics (Chủ đề nói)
- Others (Khác):

Question 7: Do you have a good exposure to English in school as well as out-of-school English class via various sources such as foreign TV programs, movies, cartoons, the internet, English music or interacting with English-speaking people?(Bạn có tiếp xúc tốt với tiếng Anh trong trường cũng như ngoài lớp học tiếng Anh qua nhiều nguồn khác nhau như chương trình TV nước ngoài, phim ảnh, phim hoạt hình, internet, nhạc tiếng Anh hay giao lưu với những người nói tiếng Anh không?)

- Always (Luôn luôn)
- Usually (Thường xuyên)
- Sometimes (Thỉnh thoảng)
- Hardly ever (Gần như không)
- Never (Chưa bao giờ)

Question 8: What activity do you often do to prepare for the speaking lesson?

(Bạn thường làm hoạt động gì để chuẩn bị cho bài học nói?)

- Prepare vocabulary/ grammar/ knowledge of the topic presented (Chuẩn bị từ vựng / ngữ pháp / kiến thức về chủ đề được trình bày)
- Plan something what you will say in your mind (Lập kế hoạch điều gì đó bạn sẽ nói trong đầu)
- Take note the main ideas related to the topic (Ghi chú những ý chính liên quan đến chủ đề)
- Discuss in pairs or in groups with partners (Thảo luận theo cặp hoặc theo nhóm với các đối tác)

Other activities (Hoạt động khác):