

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

HAI PHONG PRIVATE UNIVERSITY



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# RESEARCH PAPER

**A STUDY ON TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE  
THE FIRST YEAR ENGLISH MAJORS'  
SPEAKING SKILL AT HPU**

**Name: Phung Thi Son**

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SECTOR: ENGLISH

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HAI PHONG, 2013

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*Hai Phong, August, 2013.*

*Phung Thi Son*

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

HPU: Haiphong Private University

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English language teaching

CLT: Communicative language teaching

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## **PART I: INTRODUCTION**

The current study begins with this introductory part, which describes the rationale to the study and presents the aims of the study. It also discusses the scope of the study, the method of the study and provides the design of the study.

### **1. Rationale**

Nowadays, with the development of the international relationship among countries, learning English, especially learning English speaking is playing a more and more important role in the world. People use English for communication and discussion for the world forum and in different aspects of life. In Vietnam, English speaking is also very essential for work place. Thus, learning English speaking has become more important than ever.

However, there are still some problems today about the teaching and learning English speaking, particularly at Hai Phong Private University (HPU), there is a fact that the English Majors at HPU, 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. 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.

Obviously, it is high time teachers chose the appropriate teaching methods to solve the problem. This study will explore the reality of teaching and learning 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.

In order to help the students at HPU, especially the first year English majors at HPU improve their English speaking skill, the author of the study carries on this study with the title: “A study on techniques to improve the first year English majors’ speaking skill at HPU”. The study is expected to help the students of Foreign Languages Department at HPU, especially the first year English majors at HPU improve their English speaking in order to get a brighter future.

## **2. Aims of the study**

The aim of this study is finding out appropriate techniques for students to improve their speaking skill in which the study focuses on finding the reality of the first year English majors’ learning English speaking and giving them the suggestions for better communication. The author wants to change the students’ attitude on speaking English and let them find English speaking more interesting. The expectation is that the first year English majors at HPU can consider speaking English as their favorite activity.

## **3. Scopes of the study**

The present study focuses on improving the first year English majors’ speaking skill at HPU. In fact, there are lots of various techniques to study English communication. It requires much of time and effort. However, due to the limitation of time, resources and knowledge of mine as well as some other conditions, this study was carried out to find out the reality of teaching English speaking for the first year English majors and the effectiveness of HPU teaching method as well as offering some techniques to help the English majors at HPU enhance their speaking skill. Thus, the result of study is limited only to those students participating in this study and these findings may impact the

generalization to the larger population of all students and they can also be the references for anyone who wants to practice English speaking.

#### **4. Methods of the study:**

To complete this study, a variety of methods have been employed:

- Concerned materials including reference books on teaching methodology have been carefully studied and analyzed.

- A survey questionnaire was conducted to the first year English majors at HPU to gather information and evidence for the study.

- In addition, to make the data collected more reliable and authentic, qualitative method was applied with two instruments: an informal interview and observation.

All the comments, remarks, recommendations and conclusion provided in the study were based on the data analysis of the study.

#### **5. Designs 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, The study** consists of three chapters:

*Chapter 1, Literature review*, presents a review of related literature that provides the definition of speaking and the problems in teaching and learning speaking, approaches to the teaching of speaking, the roles of the teacher in different stages of teaching speaking and the main factors affecting students' English speaking.

*Chapter 2, The study on learning and teaching English speaking skill*, focuses on English learning and teaching environment at HPU, the survey in which the objectives of the survey, the subjects, and the methods of the study are

studied. Chapter 2 also studies on the findings and data analysis , the findings and discussion of findings as well as the recommending for improving students' learning English speaking in class.

*Chapter 3, Some suggested techniques in teaching English speaking skill for the first year English majors at HPU.*

**Part III, Conclusions** in teaching speaking English through techniques are made; some limitations and suggestions for further research are stated. The last are references, the appendixes that include all the documents relating to the study.

## **PART II: THE STUDY**

### **Chapter 1: Literature review**

The aim of this chapter is to review the literature relevant to the issues under study. The literature review consists of six sections: section one deals with the definition of speaking, section two focuses on the significance of speaking, section three reviews the theoretical background of the problems in teaching and learning speaking, section four mentions about the approaches to the teaching of speaking, section five presents the roles of the teacher in different stages of teaching speaking and the last section is about the main factors affecting students' English speaking.

#### **1. Definition of Speaking:**

Definitions of speaking have been taken a lot of attention and concern from different researchers. There are several definitions on speaking presented in language learning methodology.

Bums & Joyce (1997) define that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participant themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment and the purpose for speaking.

Another definition of speaking is that "Speaking" is the delivery of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal chords, tongue, teeth and lips. Speaking includes two forms: formal and informal. Informal speaking is typically used with family and friends, or people you know well. Formal speaking occurs in business or academic situations, or when meeting people for the first time (<http://www.englishclub.com/speaking/what-is-speaking.htm>).

Besides, Nunan and Carter (2001) develop the idea that speaking in a

second language involves the developments of a particular type of communication skill. It has occupied a special position in the history of language teaching, and only in the last two decades has it begun to emerge as a branch of teaching, learning and testing in its own right, rarely focusing on the production of spoken discourse.

In the field of action, speaking is the action of: conveying information or expressing one's feelings in speech, the activity of delivering speeches, communicating in a specified language, conveying meaning as though in words ( <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/speaking>).

Furthermore, there is also another definition of speaking is that "Speaking and the art of communication are a productive skill". Good speaking skill is the act of generating words that can be understood by listeners. ([http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What is the definition of speaking skills](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_the_definition_of_speaking_skills)).

Brown (1994) also shares the opinions that speaking ability is integrated closely to writing, reading, and listening. So, in language teaching, it is of great importance to emphasize the interrelationship of skill.

From the above definitions and explanations of speaking in second language and foreign language studies, the definition of speaking in this study is summarized as the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a various context to express ideas, opinions, or feelings to others by using words or sounds of articulation in order to inform, to persuade, and to entertain that can be learnt by using some teaching learning methodologies.

## **2. The significance of speaking**

Zaremba (2006) indicates that while reading and listening are considered to be the two receptive skills in language learning and use, writing and speaking are the other two productive skills necessary to be integrated in the development

of effective communication. Of all the four macro English skills, speaking seems to be the most important skill required for communication.

Zaremba (2006) also explains that speaking skill or communication skill are usually placed ahead of work experience, motivation, and academic credentials as criteria for new recruitment for employment. Students who study English as a foreign language (EFL) usually have limited opportunities to speak English outside the classroom. This might be one reason for teachers to provide more situations and activities for students to strengthen their speaking competence. Speaking for special communication usually occurs in contexts where speaking performance is conducted for an audience in differing circumstances.

The principles of public speaking are also intertwined with the development of speaking for special communication. When a speech involving an audience is taken into consideration, the act of speaking is considered to be more complicated than general everyday conversation and a number of other skills are therefore included in the speaking delivery process, e.g. choosing topics, organizing thoughts, tailoring the message, and adapting to listener feedback.

### **3. The problems in teaching and learning English speaking**

It is a commonly recognized the fact that achieving proficiency in foreign language speaking in classroom conditions is not an easy task. Even advanced learners often finish a language course with the conviction that they are not sufficiently prepared for speaking beyond the classroom.

This difficulty results basically from the character and inadequate frequency of speaking opportunities in the classroom in comparison to the abundance of natural varieties and genres of oral communication. In fact, selecting the most appropriate types of spoken discourse for classroom practice

in a particular language course is a very hard decision which, unfortunately, hardly ever reflects the natural occurrence and distribution of communicative situations.

Other problems that are commonly observed in the language classroom are related to individual learners' personalities and attitudes to the learning process and learning speaking in particular. They can be shown as the inhibition which is the fear of making mistakes, losing face, criticism or shyness. The second thing is that learners have problems with finding ideas to speak, formulating opinions or relevant comments. The third one is the low or uneven participation and this is often caused by the tendency of some learners to dominate in the group. The last one is about the mother-tongue use which is particularly common in less disciplined or less motivated classes, learners find it easier or more natural to express themselves in their native language (Ur 1995: 121).

In addition, as many teachers' observations indicate, the above situations occur in language classrooms regardless of the level of proficiency or the number of students in the group. Moreover, every learner enters any learning and communicative environment with his or her entire personality additionally shaped by their prior learning and communicative experiences, both positive and negative. This individual dimension is particularly noticeable among older and more advanced learners who often have a good insight into the nature of their individual difficulties, an accurate assessment of the skills they have already developed and, consequently, clearly defined needs.

( <https://repozytorium.amu.edu.pl/jspui/bitstream/10593/1680/1/Aleksandrzak.pdf> )

The fact is that English is used for communication among people in the world. As an international language, it is necessary for us to learn it. But we know that studying English as a foreign language is not easy. Therefore, the students should be taught English from elementary level. English skills are

divided into four skills. They cannot be separated each other. So, in teaching and learning process the four skills must be taught in integration. In the process, it is possible that many problems rise in every skill and need the attention to give the solution for it.

Finally, the non linguistic problems are limited reference, limited time in practicing English, less frequency in studying English, never have partner in practicing English, never have chance to speak English with native speaker, simply shame and there is no habit in practicing English. In coping with the problems there are no significant different ways, these are asking to friend or teacher, opening the dictionary, practicing with partners, reviewing the lesson at home, and trying to always be active in speaking activities (<http://www.researchgate.net>).

#### **4. Approaches to the teaching of speaking**

##### ***4.1 The Grammar- translation Method***

In the Grammar- translation method, students are taught to analyze grammar and to translate from one language to another. The Grammar translation method, therefore, does not really prepare students to speak English, and it is not entirely appropriate for students who want to improve their speaking skills. This method is not consistent with the goals of increasing English learners' fluency, oral production, or communicative competence. In grammar- translation lessons, speaking consists largely of reading translations aloud or doing grammar exercises orally. There are few opportunities for expressing original thoughts or personal needs and feeling in English. (Bailey, 2005)

##### ***4.2 The Direct Method and Audiolingualism***

The Direct method focused on 'everyday vocabulary and sentences' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986) and lessons were conducted entirely in the target language. The Direct Method emphasized speaking in that 'new teaching points

were introduced orally' rather in writing. Also, lessons emphasized speaking and listening, which were practiced 'in a carefully graded progression organized around question and answer exchanges between teachers and students' (cited in Bailey, 2005)

The Direct Method strongly influenced the development of the Audiolingual Method. Nunan (2003) points out that in Audiolingualism, speaking is taught by having students repeat sentences and recite memorized dialogues from the textbook. Repetition drills- a hallmark of the Audiolingual Method- are designed to familiarize students with the sounds and structural patterns of the language. Lessons followed the sequence of presentation, practice, and production. (cited in Bailey, 2005).

#### ***4.3 Communicative Language Teaching Method***

Because the Grammar translation method, the Direct method and Audiolingualism 'did not lead to fluent and effective communication in real- life situations', the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) evoked. The goal of language teaching in the light of CLT is to develop communicative competence. In CLT classroom, learners are encouraged to contribute as much as they gain, and learn in an independent way. CLT favors interaction among small numbers of learners with a purpose to maximize the time each learner learns and uses languages, shares information and negotiates meaning. Though interaction learners' experience can be modified, many kinds of learning strategies made aware and applied, and especially classrooms move away from teacher-centeredness to learner- centeredness, which is an essential element to raise learners' motivation in language learning. CLT features more interaction- based activities, such as role- plays and information gap tasks. Pair work and group work are typical organizational features of interaction- based lessons in CLT.

In summary, among some approaches of the language teaching methods mentioned above, CLT is the most appropriate way to teach students to communicate.

## **5. The role of the teacher in different stages of teaching speaking**

Byrne, D (1986) stated three stages of teaching speaking: the presentation stage, the practice stage and the production one. In each stage, the role of the teacher is different.

### ***5.1 The role of the teacher at the presentation stage***

At the presentation stage, the teacher is considered an informant role. The teacher introduces something new to be learned and present it in such a way that the meaning of the new language is as clear and memorable as possible. The students listen and try to understand. At this point of the lesson, the teacher is at the centre of the stage. Therefore, teacher's time spending should be sensible so that the students get enough time to practice themselves.

### ***5.2 The role of the teacher at the practice stage***

At the practice stage, it is the students' turn to do most of the talking while teacher's main task is to devise and provide the maximum amount of practice, which must the same time be both meaningful and memorable. The teacher's role, then, is completely different from that at the presentation one. The teacher is like the skilful conductor of an orchestra, giving each of the performers a chance to participate and monitoring their performance to see that it is satisfactory.

### ***5.3 The role of the teacher at the production stage***

At the final stage, the production one, the teacher takes on the role of manager and guide. Students are given opportunities to use language freely. Sometimes students can make mistakes at this stage, but mistakes are

unimportant. The more important is that students have chance to use language as they wish, to try to express their own ideas. Moreover, they become aware that they have learnt something useful to them personally, and are encouraged to go on learning. However, students will probably seem to the teacher to lurch backwards and forwards rather than make steady progress. It will not be so easy for the teacher to measure students' performance as it was at the practice stage, nor is there any easy recipe for success. So, what is needed is flexibility, tolerance, patience on teacher's part- and, above all, an understanding of the learners' difficulties.

To sum up, the teacher through speaking lesson should work as a motivator. His/ her roles closely relate to the three stages of learning. Whatever teacher is doing in the classroom, his/ her ability to motivate the students, to arouse their interest and involve them in what they are doing, will be crucial. Therefore, some key factors of teacher's role are teacher's own performance- the mastery of teaching skills, which depend on teacher's careful preparation; teacher's selection, and presentation of topics and activities, and, of course, teacher's own personality, which, in language teaching, must be flexible enough to allow the teacher to be both authoritative and friendly at the same time.

## **6. Main factors affecting students' English speaking**

### ***6.1 Psychological factor***

#### ***6.1.1 Fear of Mistake***

Robby (2010) argued that the fear of mistake becomes one of the main factors of students' speaking in English in the classroom. With respect to the fear of making mistake issue, and 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. 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.

### ***6.1.2 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.

### ***6.1.3 Anxiety***

Anxiety is a feeling of tension, apprehension and nervousness associated with the situation of learning a foreign language (Horwitz et al cited in Nascente, 2001). Further Nascente writes that, among other affective variables, anxiety stands out as one of the main blocking factors for effective language learning. In other words, anxiety influences students in learning language. Therefore, paying attention to this factor of learning should also be taken into consideration. The fact that anxiety plays an important role in students' learning is also shared by other researchers like Horwitz (1991). He believes that anxiety about speaking a certain language can affect students' performance. It can

influence the quality of oral language production and make individuals appear less fluent than they really are. This explanation suggests that teachers should make an attempt to create a learning atmosphere which gives students more comfortable situations in their learning activity.

#### ***6.1.4 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, 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. Therefore, teacher should create a comfortable atmosphere in which learners are encouraged to talk in English and are praised for talking.

#### ***6.1.5 Lack of Motivation***

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.

## ***6.2 Vocabulary***

Learning vocabulary is very important for the students who learn English as a foreign language. That is why everybody who learns English or a certain language should know the words. Rich vocabulary can support them in speaking when they are communicating to people can write and translate the meaning of words when they definite English. If they do not know the meaning of words, they will not be able to speak, write and translate anything in English.

## ***6.3 Pronunciation***

It is quite common for non-native speakers of English to mispronounce English words. This can lead to misunderstand or even some more serious consequences. What we should do is to try our best to learn more and practice more to improve our pronunciation.

## ***6.4 Accent***

Everyone has an accent. Accent usually reflects the place where a person comes from. Accent is also one of the main reasons why people have a hard time understanding each other, and thus many people strive to change their accent. There is a fact that people hardly can get rid of their accent. They just can actually change their accent a bit by studying another accent and imitating it.

## ***6.5 Listening Comprehension***

Listening comprehension is a very basic skill one must have in order to be a good English speaker. However, many of students try to improve their English speaking skill without practicing their English listening comprehension skills.

Most of them spend a lot of time on studying grammar and vocabulary but they can not hear when talking with foreigners.

### ***6.6 Organization of Ideas***

Every speech should be made in order. This makes the speech not only more scientific but also easier to understand. A person who can arrange a good order can make the shortest and most emotional speech. No one wants to talk with a person if they have to listen stressfully but do not understand what the speaker mean.

### ***6.7 The Cultural factor***

The cultural conflict is a crucial factor influencing one's oral English, including the religion, the oral speaking habit, the privacy problem and festivals. For example, foreigners do not like to be asked some private questions such as "where are you going?" or "How old are you?". These questions are not boring but private to foreigners. However, Vietnamese people cannot avoid asking such kind of questions. Due to the culture differences sometimes the foreigners become angry while the Vietnamese begin to feel so bad and decide to stop learning English to avoid any trouble. Culture is the carrier of one country, which can not disappear gradually, so what people need to do is to adapt themselves to such kind of new culture and environment. Paying attention to the cultural difference, one can avoid making mistakes in their life.

### ***6.8 The Rooted Habit of "Inert"***

"Inert" here means "inactiveness" in the class. In the traditional teaching class, the teacher likes to ask students questions and the students should hand up to answer. However, when being asked, most of students lower down their heads and pretend not to hear what the teacher said. Therefore, they always miss

this chance to stand up and say something in English, which is a better way to practice English. When groups of student are chosen to discuss something, they often reject it. Such kind of shyness has been rooted in the students' heart for a long time. What students need to do is to change their shyness and try to accept new challenges bravely in their life, which is an important factor affecting their mental quality to speak perfect English.

### ***6.9 The Lack of Target Language Learning Environment***

If a person stays in the foreign countries, he or she will practice their oral English in a short time, maybe just several months. That is why a majority of college students choose to study abroad. However, domestic students cannot own this perfect target language learning environment, which is an important factor affecting their oral English. In class, English teachers are mostly native Vietnamese speakers who have they can hardly speak as standard as native foreigners so students cannot learn a Standard English.

## **Chapter 2:**

### **The study on learning and teaching English speaking skill**

#### **1.The reality of learning and teaching English speaking skill at Hai Phong Private University**

##### ***1.1. The teaching staff***

The teaching staff of HPU in general and the Foreign Language Department in particular have high professional level and high sense of responsibility. All the lecturers of Foreign Languages Department are not only well- qualified, responsible but also very enthusiastic. Furthermore, they have modern professional teaching style, they understand the students and they are very friendly. Talking to the students and sharing their experience help both teachers and students understand one another deeply and enhance the quality of the lectures. One more considerable point is attending of foreign lecturers in English classes. Students have chance to practice with the native speakers so that they can speak English well if they know how to take those opportunities.

##### ***1.2 The researcher***

The study was carried out by a student who has been the last year student at HPU. She is very interested in learning English and always tries to find out the most suitable learning method which can help herself to learn better. So, the researcher here keeps thinking to make this study applicable to make learning more interesting.

##### ***1.3 The students***

A total of 37 students in the class NA1601 who are in the first year of English Department at HPU are selected for this study. Some of the evidences are unfortunately showing that many of the students who have just finished high schools are really passive in their learning process. They appear to be used to

listening to the lectures and writing down what the teachers read aloud or copying what is written on the board. Particularly, for English majors a big number of them are really reluctant in their learning English speaking proven by the fact that they only focus on trying to understand words and grammar structures in the given text book. Consequently, a number of students cannot speak English fluently. Therefore, a question raised here is what we should do now to inspire in students the interests and motivation to improve their English speaking learning.

Follows are the advantages and disadvantages of the first year English majors at HPU:

- Advantages:

- students can receive constant help and support of the school and the lecturers in Foreign Language Department.
- They have chance to study in a modern studying environment which have been equipped with modern facilities.
- They can practice directly with the foreigners in class.

- Disadvantages:

- The students' background knowledge is not uneven.
- A big number of students are lisp.
- Students focus too much on grammar and forget the importance of speaking skill.
- Some of them are so shy and lack of confidence and they try to avoid speaking in front of the class.

#### ***1.4 The textbook***

The material for English speaking in the first year English majors is the “Speaking Extra” textbook. It is designed following communicative approach. The content of the new textbook is arranged according to themes and each unit mentions one theme relating to everyday life, which is very useful and practical to

students' needs for example: the family, food and drink, describing people or daily activities....For speaking skill, its aim is to develop students' speaking competence beginning with a range of the specific information to a complete theme. In short, the English textbook has proved to be realistic, relevant and appropriate to the context of teaching and learning English.

### ***1.5 English teaching and learning condition at Hai Phong Private University***

The students' classrooms have been equipped with projectors, camera, air - conditioners, computers with internet connection and wireless internet connection. The teachers often use projectors to make English lessons more interesting and effective. Besides, the school library is an "electronic library system", which has been equipped with many modern high speed computers, over 7000 books, more than 16000 electronic documents Elib and electronic documents ProQuest. This is really a big advantage for students' learning.

In addition, there are many activities outside classrooms held by teachers and students for fostering English speaking learning and encouraging students to express their abilities. These useful activities often attract students to participate in such as: e.g: English Olympic, Halloween's Day, Christmas's Day,...in which students can both play and exchange knowledge in English so they can learn more.

Furthermore, students have many opportunities to talk and study with foreigners who are GAP teachers from different countries like England, Australia,... This is a good chance for them to improve their English speaking skill. It can be said that the learning conditions at HPU are good enough and convenient for students to study English effectively.

## **2. The survey questionnaires**

Nunan (1992) points out that “A questionnaire is an instrument for the collection of data, usually in written form, consisting of open and closed questions and other probes requiring a response from subjects”. Richards et.al (1994) also defines questionnaires as an effective way of collecting information about “affective dimensions of teaching and learning, such as beliefs, attitudes, motivation, and preferences, and enable a teacher to collect a large amount of information relatively quickly”. In addition, having the same idea with Richards, Seliger and Shohany (1995) also state that questionnaire is an attractive means of collecting data on phenomena, which are not easily observed, such as motivation, attitude, language learning strategy use, etc.

### ***2.1 The design of the survey questionnaires***

In this study, questionnaires are selected as the important data collection instrument because it provides the data and information about the learning English speaking skill of the first year English majors at HPU. Its aim is to do research on students’ attitudes and expectations about studying English speaking skill. The questionnaires including 8 questions as follows:

Question 1 gives information on students’ English learning time. The author wants to have further understanding about students’ bonding time with English. Basing on this understanding, the author can get right information and give appropriate method to them.

Question 2 is about the students’ attitude on learning English speaking skill. Not every student learns speaking English because of their love to it. By understanding exactly how they love speaking English the author can have some more methods to strengthen their passion on studying English speaking.

Question 3 gets information on how students think about the importance of English speaking. The researcher wants to know about students' opinions on this matter.

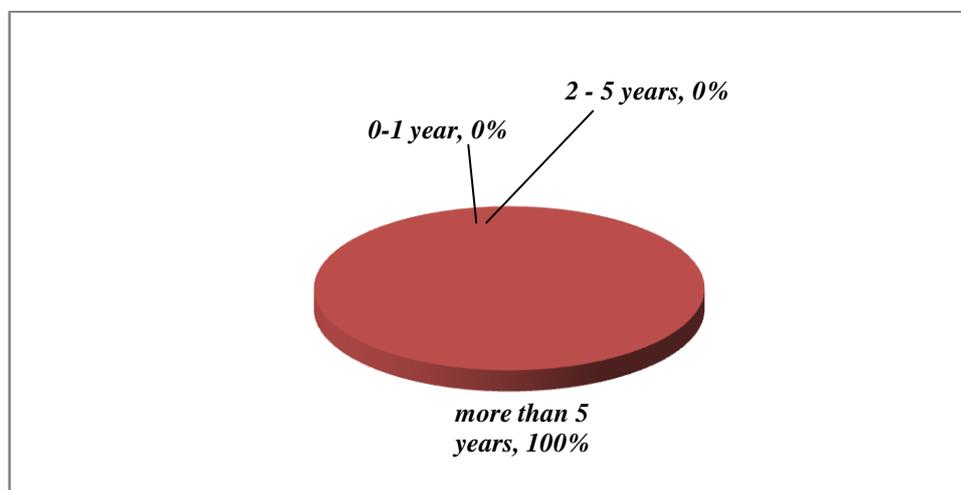
Questions 4 and 5 are about how often they speak English in the class time and how they think about English speaking lessons. These can bring more specific information and help the author have a better look into students' ideas on English speaking lessons as well as their frequency of speaking English.

Question 6 is about some techniques used in teaching and learning speaking English and how effective those methods are. This can bring more specific information and help the study become more valid and reliable.

The questions 7 and 8 are about the students' opinions on the current teaching method and their expectations which can help teachers to satisfy their students' requirements and make them love speaking English more as well as enhance students' English speaking skill.

## ***2.2 The data analysis***

### ***2.2.1 The result from the students' English learning time***

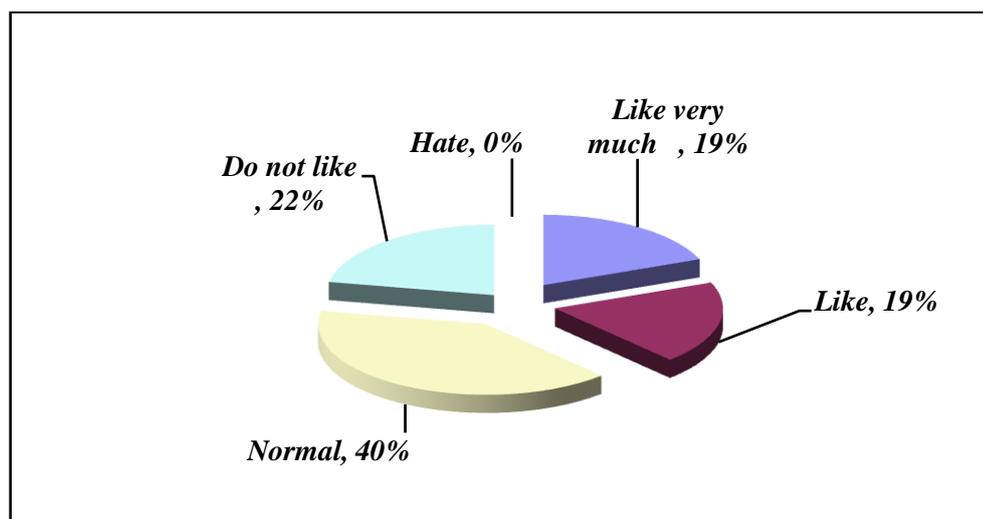


*Chart 1: Students' English learning time*

Chart 1 shows that 100% of students responded that they had learnt English for more than 5 years which is quite a long time for each student and this is proved that learning English has become a very important task and a

great concern of everyone and attracts a great number of students. Moreover, it is a compulsory subject in most of schools from primary schools to universities as well. Thus, they are fully aware of the fact that English is really important and necessary for them.

## ***2.2 The result from students' attitude toward learning English speaking***



*Chart 2: Students' attitude toward learning English speaking*

The chart above reveals that 38% of students (19%: Like very much; 19%: Like) have very good attitude toward learning English speaking. This result is not surprising and this proved that they are surely aware of how English is interesting and important to them. However, the number of students who do not like learning English are still at the high rate because it occupied 22% or we can say in another way that nearly one fourth of the students do not pay attention to learning English and there are about 40% of students find learning English speaking normal. So how to make the leaning process interesting to attract these students is a concerned problem.

### 2.2.3 The result from students' perceived importance of English speaking

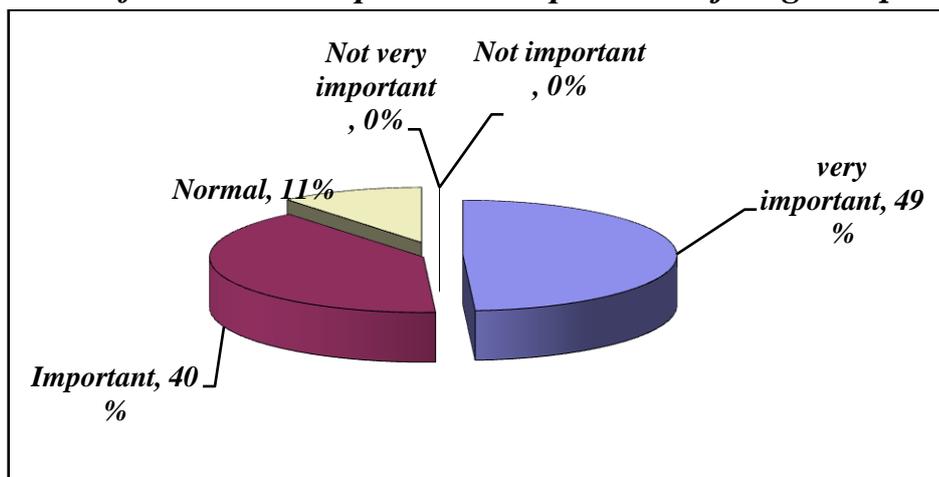


Chart 3: Students' perceived importance of English speaking

As can be seen from chart 3, the high percentage of the respondents (49%) considered speaking skill very important to them while 11% stated it was normal. 40% of the respondents mentioned speaking was important. In general, most of students were aware of the importance of speaking English in their studying. However, some of them did not admit this. Thus, the teacher's role is to find ways to change the students' attitude toward English speaking so they can take part in the learning in the class more actively.

### 2.2.4 The result from students' frequency of speaking English in class time

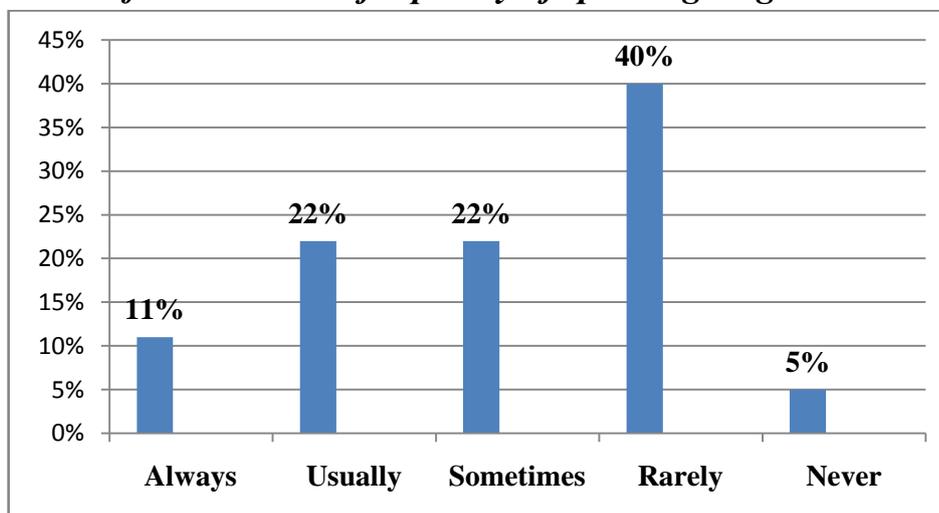
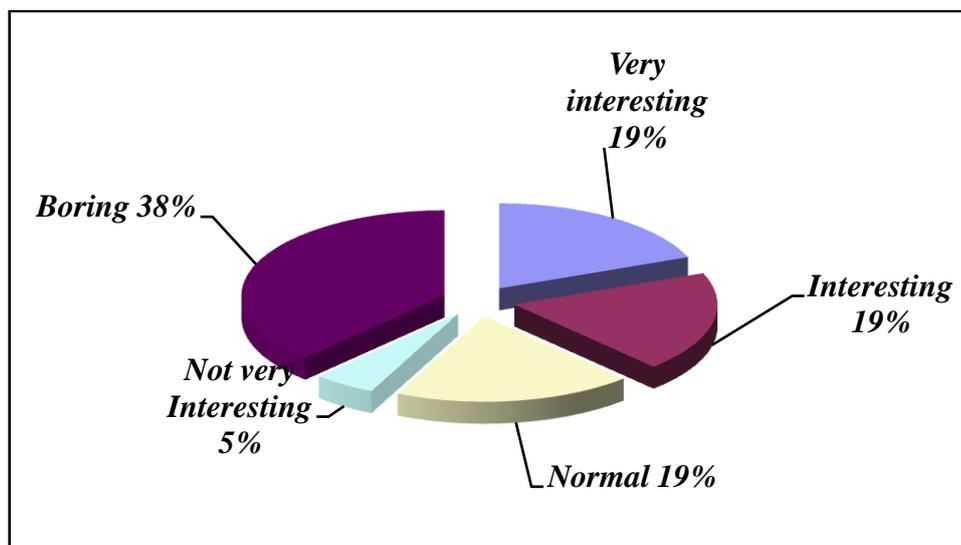


Chart 4: Students' frequency of speaking English in class time

The frequency of speaking English in class time also shows how much effort students wanted to master it. Chart 4 represents that only 11% of the respondents spoke English willingly whereas 40% spoke it rarely and 5% never spoke except from the teacher's requests. Also, 22% of them said that they sometimes spoke English.

### 2.2.5 The result from students' impression on the English lessons



*Chart 5: Students' impression on the English lessons*

Chart 5 reveals that the majority of the students are not interested in learning speaking in the class. 38% of the students had low interest. Not many students (19%) thought that the classroom activities were very interesting and a small number of students said that they are interesting or very interesting.

This result strengthens the researcher's assumption that a large number of students felt bored with English lessons because the classroom activities were not very interesting. These activities did not really raise interest for students. For them, they learnt English because of the pressure from outside such as requirement of the teachers and parents, the need for the exam... not because of their willingness. The low percentage of the respondents (19%) affirmed their interest while the students with little interest were much higher.

### 2.2.6 The result from activities used by teachers and students' preferences

Table 6 . Activities applied by the teachers and students' preferences

Techniques	The techniques applied by the teachers (responded by the students)		No of Students enjoyed the techniques	
	No of Students	Percentage	No of Students	Percentage
Pair work and group work	37	100%	32	86.5%
Role play	7	19%	27	73%
Interview	7	19%	32	86.5%
Games	15	40.5%	37	100%
Free discussion and problem solving	37	100%	8	22%
Completing dialogue practice	37	100%	15	40.5%
Making up sentences orally	37	100%	7	19%
Question and answer exchanges	37	100%	29	78.4%
Picture description	7	19%	32	86.5%
Topic based discussion	37	100%	20	54%
Project- based learning	37	100%	25	68%
Record and replay to correct	4	10.8%	30	81%
Story telling	7	19	34	91.2%
Visual aids (pictures, maps, music, handouts)	20	54%	34	91.2%
Rearrangement	4	10.8%	20	54%
Others				

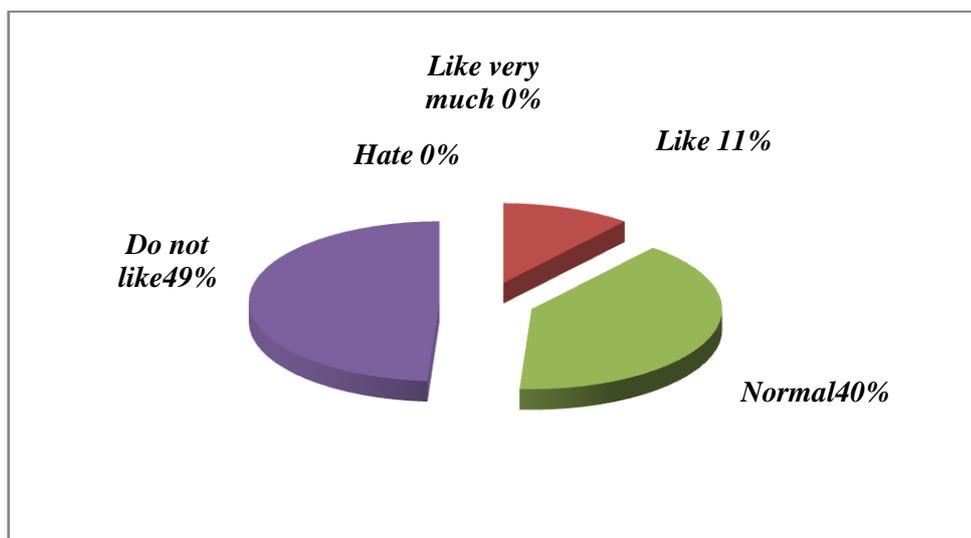
As can be seen from table 6, the activities preferred by most students were “Record and replay to correct” activities (81%), storytelling (91.2%), Visual aids (pictures, maps, music, handouts) (91.2%), role play (73%), pair work and group work(86.5%), Interview (86.5%) and games (100%) . Also from table 6, most students stated that their teacher also often provided them with visual aids, topic based discussion, pair work and group work, completing dialogue practice, making up sentences orally, question and answer exchanges.

It is very obvious that “record and replay to correct” and games were enjoyed by most students (81% and 100% respectively). Students answered that they really enjoyed games in speaking lessons because taking part in games helped them reduce stress and motivate them to get involved in the tasks. However, only 40.5% of the students claimed their teacher used games in speaking lesson. The reasons why teachers rarely used games and “record and replay to correct” in speaking lesson were that games needed time-consuming and were not profitable. Not only games but also visual aids such as pictures, maps, music and handouts caught up the interest of 91,2% of the students meanwhile only 54% of the students reported that the teachers used them. In fact, when being asked about games and visual aids in speaking lesson, all interviewees supposed that visual aids and games strongly attracted their intension, involvement, interest and motivation in learning. Picture description, interview and role play were enjoyed many students (86.5%, 86.5%, 73%, respectively). Nevertheless, only 19% of the students remarked teachers often used in the speaking lesson. Rearrangement were fond of by over half of the students (54%), yet it was rarely used by teachers (10.8%). Free discussion and problem solving, and project- based learning and were often used by teachers for the reasons that they provided students with good chances to express their own ideas, made them more self- confident and required them to think deeply. Yet these activities were rarely enjoyed by students (22%) because most of them

lacked vocabulary of English and social knowledge. Besides, they usually felt not self- confident enough to interview their classmates, for examples.

In short, there were some speaking activities that were preferred by students and teachers also often used such as visual aids, project- based, pair work and group work, question and answer exchanges. However, there was still a gap between the ways the teachers had done to motivate students and how the students enjoyed as mentioned above. Teachers, thus, should realize and analyze students' needs in order to guide and teach them in the suitable way.

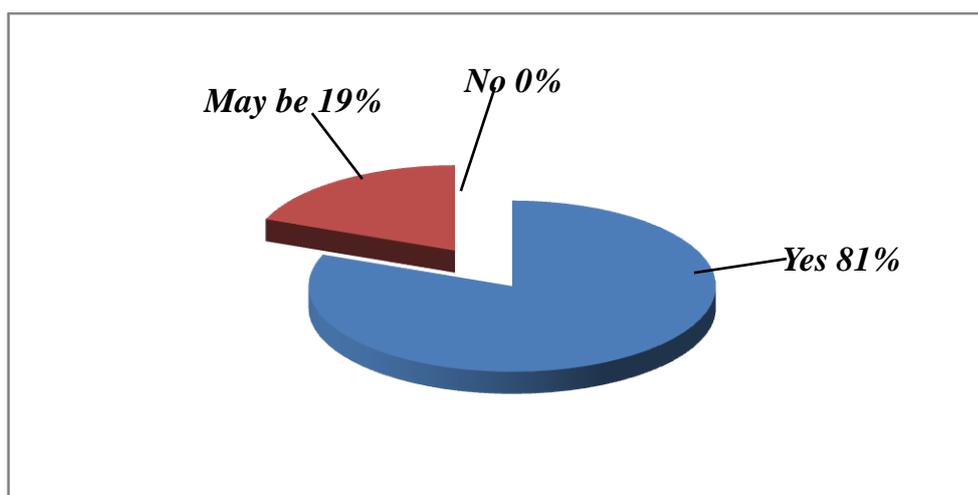
### ***2.2.7 The result from students' opinions on the current teaching method***



*Chart 7: The result from students' opinions on the current teaching method*

The number of students who do not like the current methods is different. 89% of students think the current methods are not satisfied (49%: Do not like; 40%: Normal). And the number of student agrees with the current methods is only 11%.

### 2.2.8 The result from students' expectations on the extra techniques



*Chart 8: The result from students' expectations*

Look at the chart above with the question: “Do you want to have more activities to learn English speaking more effectively?”. 81% of students said “Yes” while 19% of them say “May be”. To demand another teaching methods does not mean they dislike their teachers’ ones, but it means students hope to have new ways to learn English better. So, I think, applying more activities in teaching English speaking for students is very necessary, especially for the first year English major students. Students will like English periods more and teachers will feel more relaxed in each lesson.

### 3. Findings and discussions of findings

As the survey was answered by only 37 students, the result cannot reflect the whole situation of teaching and learning English speaking at HPU However, it is partially useful to give some suggestions on using interesting techniques.

All of the students (100%) have been learning English for over 5 years. This is an advantage of the teachers in teaching because the time of learning is long enough for the students to attain a certain level of English. Many of them agree that they like learning English speaking.

It means that teachers will have many advantages in teaching. Most of them (89%) also admit the importance and the necessity of learning English speaking. Moreover, they all think that learning English speaking is an essential part of learning English, and learning speaking is an indispensable part of learning a language. This means the students are seriously learning English speaking with a full understanding of their importance and necessity.

However, many of them do not like their English lessons (38%) and this requires teachers to find out appropriate techniques for teaching speaking in order to satisfy their students. Furthermore, only 11% of them admitted that they always speak English in the class while 40% of others responded they rarely do it. So teacher should find appropriate methods to manage the frequency of students' speaking in the class. Besides, studying English speaking skill through games help them obtain the knowledge more rapidly and exciting.

In addition, working in pair and in group as well as learning through visual aids especially storytelling, picture description, interviews and role play creates a pleasant atmosphere in class most of the students like these techniques. It is also a good opportunity for them to work in collaborative learning environment. The result of the questionnaire shows that teacher rarely use Re-arrangement and "Record and replay to correct pronunciation" for learning which are really interesting to students. So that teachers should add more effective English teaching techniques.

## Chapter 3

### **Recommendations for improving the students' English speaking in the class**

Encouraging students to speak in class is the great concern of all the teachers at HPU. Following the researcher introduces some ways with the hope that it will help students to speak English.

#### **1. Change students' attitude and awareness on learning English speaking.**

Firstly, the teachers should know their students' interest and expectation in learning English. There has been a gap between teacher's teaching methods and students' expectation such as the activities teachers preferred to apply but students did not like, the topic teachers enjoyed to talk about but it was not fond of by many students. Teachers, therefore, should investigate what students want to see that whether their teaching methods and knowledge they applied are suitable with students or not.

Secondly, most students learn English because of the school requirement and their aims in the future, not for their own enjoyment. So teachers should require them to complete the obligatory learning tasks in order that they can get high results in their test and examination. Besides, teachers can insert English culture and custom in the speaking lessons, rouse students' love to English through listening English songs and watching English films. And even for some students, teachers should discuss with them about how each task helps them to achieve their goal for their future. They, besides, should help them to set their goal such as the goal of a week or a semester. For other better students, teachers can give them various activities, tasks and materials to increase their interest level. Providing them with reference materials and some websites in English on the Internet is a good way to encourage their love to English.

Thirdly, self-confidence determines the amount of effort and time students will spend and the persistence they will display in the process of learning, so it is important for teachers to increase students' self-confidence in learning speaking English. Teachers should make students believe that speaking English competence is changeable and controllable as long as they exert enough effort in learning. Also, teachers should provide some experiences of success regularly to students and emphasize what students can do rather than cannot do. Besides, teachers' encouragement at the right time can enhance students' confidence to and reduce their anxiety in speaking. Making use of learners' strengths, furthermore, is what teachers should concern. They should let students with different strengths work together in order that they can take advantages from partners'. For examples, the more confident students can work with the less ones or the students with academic strengths can work with the ones with interesting life experiences.

## **2. Make English speaking lessons more interesting.**

### ***2.1. Varying speaking activities***

Teachers should stimulate students' speaking by providing them with a variety of speaking activities. Firstly, pair work and group work are thought to be very useful in speaking lessons. Using pair work and group work helps teachers reduce boredom and tiredness among students. In the large size classes, establishing routines for pair work and group work activities will help teachers be easy to control and motivate students. Each student has an opportunity to take part in the lesson and can be corrected mistakes by other group members or partners. In multi- level classes, when working in groups or pairs, students can share ideas and structures with others. The less proficient students can get support from the more advanced ones. Besides, teachers can help some students get out of the silence in class by assigning roles to them or having them choose

their management responsibilities when they work in groups. The roles that students keep can be the timekeeper, the note-taker and someone who will report back to the entire class at the end of the group work. Assigning different roles to all of the students in groups can help teachers encourage the quieter students and provide all students opportunities for balanced interaction and talking turn. Moreover, for impulsive and reflective learners, working in groups or pairs will be very effective. The reflective have time to plan their speaking ideas and think carefully before they speak. They then feel very self-confident. The impulsive, in contrast, have time to focus on the accuracy of their responses, they then can check mistakes and get feedback from others.

Secondly, making full use of games and visual aids is what the teachers should concern. Games help learners reduce stress, which are truly beneficial to teachers in motivating students. The teachers can use games in any stages of the speaking lesson, however, it is thought that games bring the most beneficial if it is used in the warm-up stage. Visual aids such as music, pictures, and maps are believed to create enjoyable and motivating learning atmosphere, stimulate and sustain students' interest, attention during the lesson. Visual aids, therefore, should be exploited in any stages of the lesson, too. Also, discussion, storytelling, interview, picture description, games, ... should be introduced to the students so that they are not fed up with the same activities they have to do everyday.

### ***2.1.1. Use music and songs***

Music and songs are effective in the classroom because it is easy for music to get stuck in ones' head. Think of the things you learned as a child just through song. Additionally, it gives the class a fun way to remember or recall sometimes tedious information, creating a more engaging and fun environment for learning topics and concepts that are generally hard.

The music and songs can be used during memorization activities. As a means of participation to learn new words or short concepts. Remembering lists, rules, and the like. This is a fantastic way to memorize the alphabet, periodic table, states, countries, etc...The expected outcome is that students will more easily remember large amounts of important information. Students will be involved in the introduction of new material in a fun and interesting way. This is especially beneficial for younger students.

- For example:

Listen to the song and fill in the blanks:

### ***You Have Made A Difference***

***By: Brian Asselin & Eric Disero***

This song is for those who (1).....us today  
Who always lend a (2)..... to help show us the way  
This song is for those who see their students through  
The tough times in their lives to that  
we say thank you  
You have made a difference  
You have (3)..... our mind  
You have changed the world  
One child at a time  
You have always been there. In  
everything you do  
I hope that you're as (4)..... of me  
as I am proud of you



This song is for those who heard the (5)..... cries  
Who stepped in to (6)..... the tears from the children's eyes

For those who gave us a safe place to grow  
A safe place to call our home. Forever we will know that  
You have made a difference  
You have shaped our mind  
You have changed the world  
One child at a time  
You have always been there. In  
everything you do  
I hope that you're as proud of me  
as I am proud of you



This song is for those who taught us right from wrong  
Who taught us much more than their (7).....  
To help our minds grow strong  
This song is for those who (8)..... us through and through  
So that we can make a life. For that we say thank you  
You have made a difference  
You have shaped our mind  
You have changed the world  
One child at a time  
You have always been there  
In everything you do  
I hope that you're as proud of me as I am proud of you

As I look back on my life, into the (9)..... within my reach  
I hope I can change a life of those that I teach  
I can make a difference. All I do is try  
Try to see a different world (10)..... the children's eyes

And I will always be there, in everything I do

I hope that you're as proud of me as I am proud of you

Teacher asks students fill in the blanks of that song. After 1-2 times listening to the song, students must complete filling missing words. Then teacher replay the song and correct students' mistakes.

Answer: (1) *inspire*, (2) *helping hand*, (3) *shaped*, (4) *proud*, (5) *silent*, (6) *wipe*, (7) *craft*, (8) *guide*, (9) *path*, (10) *through*.

### **2.1.2. Role Play**

Role play is a method for exploring the issues involved in complex social situations. The purpose of role play is educative rather than therapeutic and the situations examined are common to all. Family scenes, school situations and playground incidents provide opportunities for interaction and group discussion. Role play enables participants to deepen prior experience and to translate it into characters for the plot. In this way the participants are able to adopt roles hither to alien to them, and to try what it feels like to be on the other side for once. The main benefit of role play from the point of view of language teaching is that it enables a flow of language to be produced that might be otherwise difficult or impossible to create. Role play can also help recreate the language students used in different situation, the sort of language students are likely to need outside the classroom. By simulating reality, role play allows students to prepare and practice for possible future situations.



- Ideas for role play could be obtained from situations that teachers and learners experience in their own lives, from books, television programmes and movies or from their daily interactions with other people at school/ university or in the work place.

- After choosing a context for a role play, the next step to follow is to provide ideas on how this situation may develop.

- It is important to take into consideration the learners' level of language proficiency when using and implementing role play activities in the FL classroom. Assuming a role is an essential element in drama, role taking is so flexible that when applied in education, it will suit all personalities and teaching circumstances.

- Broadly speaking role-play involves being an imaginary person usually in a hypothetical situation and sometimes in a real one. Role play is considered as a class activity which gives the students the opportunities to practice the language aspects of role-behaviour, the actual role they may need outside the classroom.

We can come up with the conclusion that role-play is thus an activity which requires a person to take on a role that is real or imaginary. It involves spontaneous interaction of participants as they attempt to complete a task. There are many types of role play. Dramatic plays, story dramatization and sociodrama, seminar style presentation, debates and interview. They range from beginners, role play for weaker students to advanced role play for the more proficient students. Different types of role play demand different approaches, that require students to talk in the classroom performing different role and tasks.

### **2.1.3. Simulation**

A simulation activity is one where the learners discuss a problem within a defined setting. In simulation activities, the students are either playing themselves or someone else. Simulation activities are also interaction activities with



various categories of dialogues. One category would be social formulas and dialogues such as greeting, parting, introductions, compliments, and complaints. Simulation exercises can teach students how to function in a social situation with the appropriate social niceties:

For example:

- ❖ Students could practice how to turn down a request for a date or a party.
- ❖ Students learn how to cope with shopping, buying a ticket at a bus stop etc.

A clear line cannot be drawn between role play and simulation. These two drama activities overlap. In language teaching the differences between role play and simulation are not that important.

The function of a simulation is to give participants the opportunity to practice taking on specific roles and improvising within specific situations on the assumption that with practice the participants will play their roles more effectively when situations involving similar skills occur in real life. A simulation activity provides a specific situation within which students can practice various communication skills like asserting oneself, expressing opinions, convincing others, arguing eliciting opinions, group-problems-solving, analyzing situations and so on.

In addition to above techniques, I would like to supply some more techniques with the strong hope that those techniques can help both the teachers and students feel more comfortable in English speaking classes. After all of those, I want the students to break their fear, shyness and anxiousness when studying in a new environment. The students should try their best as well as help each other to gain progress in studying speaking English.

#### ***2.1.4. Games***

A good game always makes learning English easier. Games help to bring the class together and make the classroom a place of fun and laughter. English speaking is fraught with problems and difficulties for the student, and playing games can help students over learning blocks so that something they found hard work can become a source of enjoyment. Whether the class plays quiet games on their own or lively team games

##### ***2.1.4.1. Game1: Describing jobs***

- Aims: improve the ability of guessing and expressing language in actions.
- Number of players: all the students in the class.
- Time limit: 7-10 minutes.
- How to play:

The teacher divides the class into two teams. Each team selects 5 members to be the representatives. Then the two teams are required to stand on the podium. A small box is available in the teacher's hand containing the pieces of paper written the jobs which are explained in English.

The first representative of team A now draws a piece of paper, read it and try to express it in action (without any word). All members of team A have to answer for their representative know what that job is in 30 seconds. Then the representative will respond to the teacher. The teacher will give final answer to

decide whether it is right or wrong. Next is the team B's turn to play in the same way. Each correct answer will get 1 point. After the game finished, the teacher summarizes points of two teams. And the team which has more points will be the winner.

- For example:

The representative of team A caught up the phrase "A person who always solves the traffic jams." Then he will describe in action such as moving his hands as doing guidelines for the pedestrians or whistling to order vehicles to stop ... In 30 seconds or earlier, other members of the team who are sitting will discuss whether it is: "Policeman / Policewoman" and say the result to their representative. The last task is that the representative informs the teacher the results as follows: "A person who always solves the traffic jams is a policeman / policewoman". The teacher will decide whether the results are right or wrong and give students points.

- Note:
  - ✓ Use a little bit sticky in explaining sentence to make it more difficult for the sitting people to speculate.
  - ✓ The representative will collect and select results of his teammate to avoid that the representative says the different result from the crowd's results or does not describe his actions for the crowd but gives himself answers.
  - ✓ Encourage discussion but in the shortest time.
  - ✓ If the information is leaked before and during the game, the representative has to choose other career.
  - ✓ Absolutely, the representative cannot express in words, sounds. While this team is describing the action the other team cannot do hinder action, interfere or say the answer. If the other team still does forbidden actions, the teacher should take one point of them after 3 times.
  - ✓ The teacher makes the final decision so the teacher should be flexible in

how to deal with the same answers or close meaning answers

- ✓ When Team A responds a wrong answer, the teacher should say: "Please give a loud applause for winner who answer correctly... one hundred percentage of billion " or other creations to make joy and surprise for games .

#### **2.1.4.2. Game 2: Who is the treasure keeper?**

- Aims: improve the ability of speaking English, guessing, quick asking and answering.
- Number of players: all the class.
- Time limit: 15 minutes.
- How to play:



The teacher selects one student (to be the detective) to go out of the class and another student inside classroom to keep a treasure (a small candy pack or a pen bag for example). Then, the detective comes in the class and speaks loud 5 description sentences in English in order to detect the one who keeps the treasure. If the detective speaks a correct description, all of the class should clap their hands. When the detective speaks a wrong sentence, all the students should shake their heads and shout out "Oh!".

If the detective finds the treasure keeper, he can get the treasure and the treasure keeper has to be the detective. If the detective cannot find that treasure, the holder can keep it and the detective has to come back to his sit. To continue the game, teachers selected pair of detectives to play. The teacher can continue the game with the same technique until using up all treasures.

- For example: the detective can give 5 descriptive sentences:

She is a girl

(all of the class shake their heads)

He wears a pair of glasses	(all of the class clap their hands)
He sits in my left hand	(all of the class shake their heads)
He wears a T- shirt	(all of the class clap their hands)
His T- shirt is bright	(all of the class shake their heads)

After asking five questions, the detective keeps speculation that the treasure holder is a boy, wearing glasses, sitting on the right side where he is standing and wearing a dark colored T- shirt. Ultimately, he will guess one member who in accordance with the above criteria.

- Note:
  - ✓ The question always be confirmed with a content, do not use ambiguous sentences, negative sentences or questions, have a choice "... or ...".
  - ✓ Encourage the unique questions that exclusive to high speculation.
  - ✓ If the information is leaked before or during the game, the game should be restarted.

#### ***2.1.4.3. Game 3: Communication Games***

Learning to communicate in English includes practicing pronunciation as well as vocabulary. Making learning fun and introducing a bit of competition in the classroom stimulates a student's imagination, and playing on a team helps to remove any individual pressure on shy or nervous students. Whisper is played with two or more teams in the classroom. Whisper a word or short sentence to the first student in each of the teams. The students whisper the word along the line until the last student says the word aloud. Give both teams the same word. The team that gets the pronunciation closest to correct wins the round. Have the students who speak go to the beginning of the line for later rounds so that all students get a turn to speak aloud.

#### ***2.1.4. 4. Game 4: Spelling Games***



Spelling games help with English by teaching vocabulary, reading and speaking aloud. A spelling relay is an active, lively game played in teams. Start the game by dividing the classroom board into columns, one for each team. Write the name of each team above the column, then give each team member a marker or chalk to write on the board. The teacher says a word, then members of the teams take turns running to the board and writing one letter. The team that completes the word the fastest, with the correct spelling, wins the round.

#### ***2.1.4.5. Game 5: Classroom Game***

Classroom games help teachers to reinforce previous lessons and introduce new ones. Students often reveal misconceptions in the course of game play. Correcting one child often helps several others in a classroom come to a clear understanding of the mistake. Host a game show called "Speaking Parts" to identify parts of speech, using groups or individual players. Say a sentence that contains speech parts you have taught in class. Ask a student to identify each word by part of speech. Ring a bell for each correctly identified word. Snap a ruler or pointer on a desk if the contestant makes a mistake and move on to the next team or player. Award one point for every right answer. Use the game to introduce a new lesson by including a sentence that contains a new speech part.

#### ***2.1.4.6. Game 6: Bingo'***



Bingo is a useful learning tool because you can vary the difficulty level based on your class. For example, you can use bingo boards that have words on them in place of the usual letters and numbers, or you can find boards with pictures

corresponding to words you wish to teach. You can also create your own bingo game using themes personalized to your own lesson plans. To encourage participation, have students take turns picking a card and calling out its items.

#### ***2.1.4.7. Game 7: Pictionary***



Using Pictionary, students draw a picture on the board while others guess what it is. You can give out two types of points---one for knowing the vocabulary word and another for using it in a sentence. Make the game easier by specifying the category, such as "food,"

or showing students a flash card of a word and having them draw a corresponding picture.



### ***2.1.5. Repeat and Re-phrase***

The repeat and re-phrase technique is effective in classrooms because a student may know various vocabulary words and now know the ones that the teacher is using. By using this technique the teacher exposes the student to new vocabulary that can be associated with the old to acquire a meaning. The student benefit by both the repetition, as the source of learning new vocabulary, and the use of old vocabulary to form a re-phrased question in order to acquire a new and better understanding of the English language.

This technique can be used during oral instruction given to the class or an individual student. It can also be applied during question and answer time in class, and is optimal for such a use as it provides students with an opportunity to better understand the question and answer it without help.

The repeat and re-phrase strategy is used in the classroom to promote, achieve, or ensure, understanding of a given topic, standard, or question. For example: if a student doesn't understand the question "what is the meaning of an adjective?" Then the teacher can respond by either repeating, and/or if understanding is still not reached, re-phrasing the question to promote the student's application of knowledge. The question could be re-phrased as: "What does an adjective do?" This also helps with future questions as the student will better understand the meaning of the posed question.

Additionally, the repeat and re-phrase can be used to question for understanding by re-phrasing a sentence to check if the student properly understood the meaning of a particular word or concept. For example: "The girl avoided the water." Used to teach the vocabulary term "avoid."

Questioning for understanding could be phrased as: "If she avoided the water, then she isn't wet." The teacher can ask whether this is correct or not and the students can better understand what the term means and its uses.

## ***2.2. Combining the textbook and relevant materials***

The textbook is considered suitable, reasonable, authentic in content and up-date in information, added materials for teaching and learning is surely necessary. Teachers should deliver handouts or some photocopied papers beside the textbook to make the lesson more interesting. Added to that, teachers should require students to find out some related information on the Internet or from English newspapers such as Sunflower, Vietnam News..., and English books before each speaking lesson to make sure that all students get familiar with the topic of the lesson. Teachers, also, can introduce some good students to listen to VOA special English or BBC on FM channel on the radio in order that students can practice English listening as well as get more information for speaking.

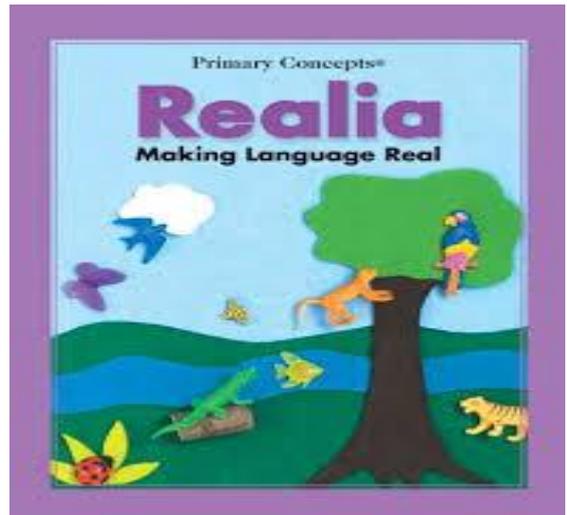
## ***2.3. Use visual aides, realia, maps, pictures, multimedia***

Visual aides and the like are effective in that they can provide students with a better grasp of the concept than any other word. "This is the object that matches the word." No matter what level the student is, they can understand the relationship between the two and easily grasp the new word or concept. In addition, these sorts of techniques spice up the classroom and keep things interesting. It is easy for a language class to become dull with repetition and writing. But, by implementing the use of various visual and audio aides the class can remain focused, but also entertained.



These strategic examples can be used as an introduction to vocabulary terms, concepts, teaching places (names/locations), teaching specific behaviors

(cultural). Additionally, teaching parts of speech can be done using these media as visual aides for actions, colors, etc. Multimedia can also be used to show language in practical use, dialog, or visual or audio to materials read. Audio samples can also be used in teaching sounds of letters or words. The learning outcome of



this is that students will gain a better understanding of materials presented, and it can provide a second way of learning (visually). Students also have examples of the materials presented and a visual to put to the word.

### **2.3.1. Audio- recorder**

One way to practice speaking under time pressure is called **4-3-2**

This includes the following steps:

1) Find a text (e.g. a newspaper article). Read it and make notes, on a separate piece of paper, of the main points. Put the article away, but keep your notes.



2) Record yourself giving an oral summary based on your notes. Allow yourself **four** minutes.

3) Replay and listen; monitor your performance - are there any words you need to look at again in the article? Do you need to check their pronunciation (sound and stress) in the dictionary? If so, do that.

4) Rewind. Make a second recording, but this time give yourself only **three** minutes.

5) Repeat Step 3.

6) Make a final recording, summarizing the text in **two** minutes.

### 2.3.2 *Shadowing*

We can use the techniques called “Shadowing”, we can practice speaking English at home by ourselves. ***Shadowing is say what we hear as soon as we hear it.***

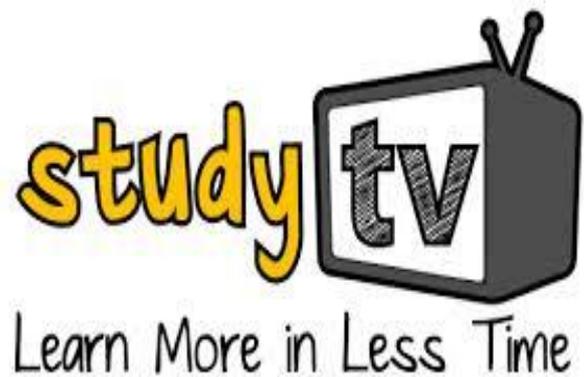
First you listen to your CD as many times as you can, then take your book and read it: at this time you can use your dictionary to learn words or slang. Then go back and listen to CD and repeat the CD at the same time. Shadowing means shadow the CD, that is to speak with and copy the CD. We should listen carefully to pronunciation, rhythm and tone and copying those things closely as we can, make our voice sound as close to the speaker on the CD as we can.

You have to start speaking the minute the speaking starts. Your first sound will be a mistake, it almost always is. You will adjust quickly and start to make sounds much more like the speaking you are Shadowing. And of course your English speaking will be much better step by step.

### 2.3.3. *TV and Video*

TV and video enable you to exploit the visual element that is essential in face-to-face communication. One way to use the visual dimension of conversation is to watch TV programmes involving a group of people in discussion. Look

out for things such as the ways in which the speakers indicate that they want to speak next, or are about to finish what they are saying. Recognising these 'turn-taking' signals will help you to participate in English conversations.



## ***2. 4. Recognizing the potential value of available facilities of the school and the Internet***

The lessons without assistance from facilities sometimes lead to boringness. Because of this, teachers should take full advantages of the available facilities of the school and overcome obstacles and difficulties with teaching speaking in poor facility environment. For examples, through a cassette player, teachers can motivate students with some songs or pieces of news in the warm-up stage; or through a projector, teachers can make the lesson more interesting and attractive with lively pictures and video clips. Because school have language labs and can provide students with using Internet at school library, teachers can help students with useful Website addresses for learning.

First, teachers let students find interesting authentic materials on the Internet, in the form of news, weather reports, songs in English, blogs, sport reports and so on. These texts consist of varied grammatical structures and wide-ranging vocabulary, which the students can hear or read in context. Teachers, then, can check up again by giving students tasks based on finding particular information on the Internet.

Besides, there are now many Websites that teach students about speaking eachers can introduce to students and encourage them find the usefulness of these sources and train themselves. Furthermore, encouraging students to chat, especially take part in voiced chat, with foreigners is a good way. Through chatting with foreigners, students can converse with English learners or teachers, try to understand another's pronunciation and what they say. Students, therefore, can improve both their English knowledge and speaking skill.

### **3. Change the learning atmosphere in the class.**

#### ***3.1. Setting up a co-operative atmosphere in class***

A tense classroom atmosphere arouses students' anxiety that hinders students' motivation and effectiveness in learning speaking English while a co-operative classroom atmosphere facilitates students to express their opinions, develop their strengths, reduce their weakness and makes students not feel embarrassed when they make mistakes. Teachers, thus, should build a warm environment in which teachers and students have a close relationship.

Teachers not only play the role of the facilitator of students' learning, the manager of classroom activities, the advisor to answer students' questions and to control their performance but also work as the 'co-communicator' to engage in the communicative activities along with the students. Students, on the other hand, are not the passive listeners but the active helpers to other classmates and the timely contributors with useful ideas to teacher's teaching methods.

For example, teachers can use ***“Cooperative Groups, Peer Coaching”*** in order to set up a co-operative atmosphere in class:



This technique optimizes personalized student learning time as each student can get personalized attention even if it is not given by the teacher. This is also helpful when the teacher is not suppose to be the focus of activities and instead can move from table to table and help as needed. It creates a community setting and gets students into helping each other and learning from each other. Cooperative groups work because there are many ways to break students into groups that allow them personally catered lessons on their level.

Placing students in cooperative groups or using peer coaching is especially helpful in an ELL classroom where students are or can be at mixed levels of learning English. When this is the case it is best to place them in groups that are chosen by the teacher in a manner that places higher level students with lower level ones. In this way the higher level student is learning, practicing, and perfecting techniques through teaching; and the lower level student is acquiring new knowledge and receiving help from a peer. This can also be used to place higher level students together to work on an assignment while the lower level students stay with the teacher to learn new information. In this way the teacher is able to optimize learning by providing new information to both levels without actually having to make one or the other sit through information that is either below or above their learning level.

The learning outcome of this strategy is that students are able to take in more information at one time while developing relationships and community amongst themselves. Additionally, by using this technique students will learn from each other. Many times, youths are more prone to hear out their peers over adults. Naturally, this caters to those thoughts and allows students to take in the needed knowledge, but in a way that is more entertaining. Working in groups also provides the teacher with many new lesson options to keep the classroom engaging and motivating.

### ***3.2.Change the way of correcting students***

A successful lesson must maintain the interaction between teachers and students. In addition, it requires the interaction among students in the class. Whether students are excited to contribute to the lesson, study with lively enthusiasm, willingly absorb what the teachers are conveying or not? The answers for these secrets sometimes locate in some simple activities. They are

positive and constructive comments for students in the teaching process. So, in which way the teachers' comments become as effective as desired?

At first, teachers should make comments in detail but not generic descriptions. Comment should be as specific as possible. Teachers should not use language of appreciation. What instructors should do is analyzing students' wording, spelling or carelessness in the misspelling.

This will help students to recognize the mistakes and weaknesses of themselves and their friends. In particular, you need to create focal points on the errors which



can be repaired. Are you the instructor in class, right? So you can completely control them to get the desired responses. The students will realize that they should learn more new words and practice speaking more, participate more actively to contribute into lessons.

Secondly, teachers should remember “Never impose on their students”. Making negative evaluations not only cannot bring you beneficial responds but also arouses counterproductive reactions. When the students are worried, feared and ashamed, they cannot acquire what teachers want to communicate anymore. Even though your English speaking classes can become a nightmare for them.

In addition, lecturers should not put excessive pressure on students. The effective methods to solve the issues are more necessary than taunts, criticisms. The most important goal is not just to help students learn all new words, remember how to use prepositions but also to enhance their English speaking ability. So, teachers should learn to keep patience. Please give positive and

constructive comments. Teachers' efforts will be rewarded by students' progress!

Students can continue to make negative comments compared with teachers' comments. It is nice! It is the moment when students are involved in what teachers are talking. Sometimes teachers can make out the answers which are not entirely correct by purpose. This trick can help teachers test the students' ability to focus. Sometimes teachers can be surprised by the students' unpredictable ability as well as knowledge of students. They can absolutely make reasonable answers to teachers' issues.

It is very important that teachers should not turn class into a debate with students. Let's crank up the classroom atmosphere with valuable comments. The lessons will be more interesting with other students' participant. Students always want to win each other and to gain greater appreciation. All you should do now is try to promote this activity later.

The last thing I want to remind teachers is to remark students in the right time and with the appropriate level. Of course, this should base on accurate analysis and evaluation. By using this technique appropriately, teachers can completely convince the students.

### ***3.3. Re-arrange tables and decorate classroom***



In fact, many students are too shy to speak in English while they are attending English speaking classes. The first thing we should do is to identify the root causes of the problem in order to solve it.

If the causes related to culture (Vietnamese students often feel shy when talking to the public and they also actually feel embarrassed to talk in English in front of others), teachers can help students break down cultural barriers by creating a special environment in the style of British culture. This can make speaking English become a common practice. It is not expensive at all. Both teachers and students can make the class room different from the other classrooms by arranging tables and chairs in the classroom in a different way (arranged in a U shape instead of rows of desks lined up before. etc ...). Besides, teachers and learners can also decorate the room with the promotional poster in English.

### ***3.4. Managing speaking turns in class***

Some students in class are often hesitant or anxious about speaking the target language, some others usually tend to dominate classroom interaction. These students may speak a great deal because of personality traits, cultural issues, or any combination of these factors. Teachers, therefore, should balance students' speaking turns to get students' 'fair share' of the talk time. Firstly, teachers should lengthen their wait- time for students. The hesitant learners then have time to think carefully, and make sure that their answers are correct. They will feel confident to speak out.

Secondly, teachers should improve their questioning technique. She gives questions and randomly asks any students in class. By this way, teachers require students to think and answer the questions immediately, so they can make hesitant students be ready to speak and limit dominant students' talking time. Besides, teachers should assign responsibilities such as note- takers, scorekeepers... to students when they work in groups. Some hesitant learners have to be appointed to speak. This way helps teachers reject students'

hesitance, anxiety and laziness and create the chance for all students to participate in the lesson.

Teachers, furthermore, should accept a variety of students' answers. Some students often feel anxious and being derided if their answers are not accepted by teachers. Negative comments from teachers can demotivate them and decrease their participation in the classroom. Teacher's praise at the right time is often useful. It encourages students' enthusiasm and engrossment in learning and makes students be more confident in their own ability.

## **PART III: CONCLUSION**

### **1. Conclusion**

In conclusion, teaching English speaking through appropriate techniques for the 1<sup>st</sup> year English major students is very important. Basing on exploring the reality of current teaching and learning English in HPU of the 1st year English major students I have already had a look into their attitudes toward learning English speaking. After the process of completing this research paper, I would like to give some suggestions to support the 1st year English major students to make progress in learning English with the hope that this research paper will contribute some effective techniques to study English speaking skill.

In fact, Vietnamese students in common and students of HPU in particular are better at grammar than speaking skills. Especially some of English majors at HPU cannot communicate in English. In such a considerable situation, I decided to carry out this study. Besides using survey questionnaire as the major data collection instrument, I also used the observation and informal interview as extra instruments to make this study more reliable and valid.

The major aim of the study is to find appropriate techniques to help the first year English majors at HPU improve their speaking skill. In addition, with the hope that the teachers and students in Foreign Language Department of HPU will love speaking English more when teaching and studying.

To sum up, the study is the author's sincere thanks to HPU and my beloved teachers in Foreign Language Department here. All I want is to help the later English major student generations improve their speaking skill in order to help them to gain success in the future more easily.

## **2. Limitations and suggestions for further study**

A considerable effort has been made to find out the techniques which can be used to help the first year English majors in speaking English at HPU. However, due to limited time and ability, there are a number of related areas which the researcher cannot cover in the study. First, subjects of the study are only the small number of student at HPU.

Second, the researcher merely concentrates on studying students' techniques in speaking skill, do not focus on some related skills such as speaking, writing and listening. Furthermore, in the English language teaching and learning in general, the above suggested techniques are only small part which should be creatively and flexibly applied in each class.

With above limitations, I hope the further research on the topic might include more students and extend to the other skills of English to help students learn English better.

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# APPENDIX 1.1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

(ENGLISH VERSION)

Dear students,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to know about your attitude towards to your current learning English speaking. Its ultimate purpose is to improve your English speaking skill. Please do give your own opinions frankly!

Please, tick the answer that best described your ideas and add final comments at the bottom of the sheet if you wish .We need your frank opinions about the English lessons to make them more relevant and interesting, as well as to meet your needs .We thank you for your cooperation!

1.How long have you been learning English?

- 0-1 year                       2 - 5 years                       more than 5 years

2. Do you like learning English speaking, in general?

- Like very much                       Like                       Normal  
 Do not like                       Hate

3. In your opinion, how important is English speaking skill?

- Very important                       Important                       Normal  
 Not very important                       Not important

4. How often do you speak English in English class time?

- Always                       Usually                       sometimes  
 rarely                       never

5. What do you think about your English speaking lessons?

- Very interesting     Interesting                       Normal  
 Not very interesting                       Boring

6. In speaking lesson, which of the following activities does your teacher often use to teach you and which do you feel enjoyable?

Techniques	The techniques applied by the teachers (responded by the students)		No of Students enjoyed the techniques	
	No of Students	Percentage	No of Students	Percentage
Pair work and group work				
Role play				
Interview				
Games				
Free discussion and problem solving				
Completing dialogue practice				
Making up sentences orally				
Question and answer exchanges				
Picture description				
Topic based discussion				
Project- based learning				
Record and replay to correct pronunciation				
Story telling				
Visual aids (pictures, maps, music, handouts)				
Rearrangement				
Others				

7. Do you feel excited about the current method?

- Like very much                       Like                       Normal  
 Do not like                       Hate

8. Do you want to have more activities to learn English speaking more effectively?

Yes

May be

No

**Your comments:**

***Thank you for your co-operation!***

## APPENDIX 1.2 : QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

(VIETNAMESE VERSION)

Các bạn thân mến,

Hãy điền vào bảng câu hỏi này và gửi lại cho chúng tôi. Chúng tôi cần những ý kiến thẳng thắn của các bạn về các giờ học tiếng Anh trên lớp để làm chúng ngày càng thú vị và phù hợp hơn cũng như để hiểu được mong muốn của các bạn. Rất cảm ơn sự hợp tác của các bạn!

Hãy đánh dấu vào câu trả lời miêu tả đúng nhất ý kiến của bạn và viết thêm một vài bình luận của bạn ở dưới.

1. Bạn đã học tiếng Anh được bao lâu?

- 0-1 năm                       2 - 5 năm                       Hơn 5 năm

2. Nhìn chung bạn có thích nói tiếng Anh không?

- Rất thích                       thích                       Bình thường  
 Không thích                       ghét

3. Theo quan điểm của bạn, kỹ năng nói tiếng Anh có quan trọng không?

- Rất quan trọng                       quan trọng                       Bình thường  
 Không quan trọng lắm                       Không quan trọng

4. Trong những giờ học nói tiếng Anh bạn có chăm chỉ luyện tập không?

- Luôn luôn                       Thường xuyên                       thỉnh thoảng                       Gần như không  
 Không bao giờ

5. Bạn nghĩ sao về những tiết học nói tiếng Anh hiện nay?

- Rất thú vị                       Thú vị                       Bình thường  
 Chẳng thú vị mấy                       Nhàm chán

6. Trong những giờ học nói tiếng Anh giảng viên của bạn có thường xuyên áp dụng những phương pháp sau hay không? Trong số đó bạn thích những phương pháp nào?

Tên phương pháp	Các phương pháp được giảng viên áp dụng (theo phản hồi của sinh viên)		Sự yêu thích của sinh viên với các phương pháp	
	Số Lượng	%	Số Lượng	%
Làm việc theo cặp hoặc theo nhóm				
Đóng kịch				
Phỏng vấn				
Chơi trò chơi				
Thảo luận tự do và cùng tìm ra giải pháp				
Hoàn thành hội thoại				
Tạo dựng câu nói				
Hỏi và trả lời câu hỏi				
Mô tả tranh				
Thảo luận theo chủ đề				
Học theo dự án				
Ghi âm và phát lại để sửa lỗi				
Kể chuyện				
Học trực quan( tranh ảnh, phim,..)				
Sắp xếp lại theo trật tự đúng				
Những phương pháp khác				

7. Bạn có thấy thích thú với những phương pháp hiện tại hay không?

- Rất thích     
 thích     
 Bình thường     
 Không thích     
 Ghét

8. Bạn có muốn có thêm những hoạt động khác trong giờ học nói hay không?

Có       Có thể       Không

**Ý kiến đóng góp của sinh viên:**

*Một lần nữa xin chân thành cảm ơn sự hợp tác của các bạn!*

## APPENDIX 1.3 : CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLISTS

**1. Aims:** .....

**2. Setting:** .....

- Time allowance: .....

- Class: .....

- Unit: .....

### **Observation**

<b>Aspects observed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Students' motivation on the speaking lessons	
Students' attitude towards speaking activities	
Students' involvement in the speaking activities	
Students' reactions to teacher's techniques	
Students' preferences for teacher's techniques	
Students' interaction with each other while completing the tasks	
How the teacher deals with noise and silence in class	

**Overall comments:**

## APPENDIX 1.4 : INFORMAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why do you want to learn speaking English?
2. Is speaking English very important for your future? Why?
3. Do you often prepare lessons before class?
4. Does your teacher often encourage you to speak English in class?
5. Which of the following activities do you like your teacher use in your speaking lesson and why?
  - Completing dialogue practice
  - Role play
  - Interview
  - Games
  - Free discussion and problem solving
  - Making up sentences orally
  - Question and answer exchanges
  - Picture description
  - Project- based learning
  - Story telling
  - Rearrangement
  - Visual aids (pictures, maps, music, handouts)
  - Others
6. Which of following activities do you like most in a speaking lesson and why?
  - Working individually
  - Working in pairs
  - Working in groups
7. What should your teacher do to motivate you to speak?