

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



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NGÀNH: NGÔN NGỮ ANH-NHẬT

Sinh viên : BÙI THỊ THÙY TRANG
Giảng viên hướng dẫn: TH.S NGUYỄN THỊ HUYỀN

HẢI PHÒNG - 2019

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
HAIPHONG MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY**

**DIFFICULTIES IN COMMUNICATION OF THE 1ST
ENGLISH MAJORS AT HAIPHONG MANAGEMENT AND
TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY**

GRADUATON PAPER

MAJOR: ENGLISH - JAPANESE

**Student
Supervisor**

**: BUI THI THUY TRANG
: NGUYEN THI HUYEN, MA**

HẢI PHÒNG - 2019

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TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢN LÝ VÀ CÔNG NGHỆ HẢI PHÒNG**

NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

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Tên đề tài: *Difficulties in communication of the 1st English majors at HPU*

NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI

1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp (về lý luận, thực tiễn, các số liệu cần tính toán và các bản vẽ).

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2. Các số liệu cần thiết để thiết kế, tính toán.

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CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Người hướng dẫn thứ nhất:

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Cơ quan công tác:.....

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Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Sinh viên

Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Người hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày tháng.....năm 20..

Hiệu trưởng

GS.TS.NGUT *Trần Hữu Nghị*

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

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN HƯỚNG DẪN TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên giảng viên:

Đơn vị công tác:

Họ và tên sinh viên: Chuyên ngành:

Nội dung hướng dẫn:

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

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Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

Giảng viên hướng dẫn

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

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

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIÁO VIÊN CHĂM PHẢN BIỆN

Họ và tên giảng viên:

Đơn vị công tác:

Họ và tên sinh viên: Chuyên ngành:

Đề tài tốt nghiệp:

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1. Phần nhận xét của giáo viên chăm phản biện

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2. Những mặt còn hạn chế

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viên chăm phản biện

Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

Giảng viên chăm phản biện

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

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Haiphong, June, 2019

Student

Bui Thi Thuy Trang

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

Nowadays, English seems to be a general language in the world. A great deal of countries use English like the second language besides their mother tongue. In fact, English is the native language of more than 350 million people and it is spoken more than any other language. It is the international language of different fields such as business, politics, science, technology, banking, tourism and others. Vietnam's government has long realized importance of English and it has been a compulsory subject at varying levels for several decades. However, learning English to communicate is still a great challenge to Vietnam's students. Being a developing country, there are more and more people having chosen Vietnam as their destination, using English fluently to gain opportunities is becoming more important than ever.

For several years at university, I realize that despite being English major students, it is difficult for us to communicate with others. It might be because we spend a lot of time to study grammar, writing, reading without practice of conversation. Thus, we can't listen and respond to others while directly talking. There is a fact that this problem mainly occurs in 1st year students of English major, particularly at HPU. The reason for that is they don't have chance to practice frequently in upper schools. In a general educational program, the speaking and listening ability in English of Vietnam students has been minimal since students have little chance to practice speaking English in or outside the classroom. Students respond to the teacher only when called upon and the learning atmosphere is individualistic. Moreover, learning English in Vietnam is a rote memorization of new words and sentence structure on paper.

Therefore, I conduct a study on " Difficulties in communication of 1st year English majors at HPU" with an expectation to help the students of Foreign Languages Department at HPU, especially the first year English majors at HPU improve their English communications in order to get a brighter future.

2. Aims of the study

The aim of this study is finding out the main problems for students to improve their communication skill in which the study focuses on the reality of the first year English majors' difficulties in English speaking and giving them the suggestions for better communication.

3. Scopes of the study

- The subjects of this research are limited to first year students majoring in English program, at Haiphong Management and Technology University. 23 students will be involved in of this survey.

- The instrument for the survey is a self- administered questionnaire. The participants are asked to answer the questionnaire by themselves. The questionnaire consists of both closed-ended and opened-ended questions.

4. Design of the study

The study include three main parts as follow:

Part 1: Introduction: includes the rationale to the study. It also includes the aims of the study, the research questions, and the scope of the study. Next the design of the study is also presented

Part 2: Development

The first are the definitions regarding communication, types of communication, and the difficulties which students faced when communicating.

The next chapter focuses on the survey questionnaire by the first year English majors at Haiphong Private University about attitude to English communication which contains the survey questions, design and method, data analysis as well as the finding and discussion.

The last chapter provides the solutions and recommendations given to the first-years students in HPU to improve the English communicating ability.

Part 3: Conclusion: in this part, some limitations and suggestions for further research are stated.

PART 2: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. What is communication?

Definitions of communication have been taken a lot of attention and concern from different researchers. There are several definitions on communications presented in language learning methodology. The communication consists in the transmission of a message through a channel (the air, cell phone, printed or audiovisual media), between an issuing entity and another receiver.

The key to effective communication is that the process is successful, that is, that the message is transmitted and understood clearly by the recipient, without misinterpretation or omission of information. Language (verbal, written or gestural), in any of its forms, is the most common mechanism to transmit ideas between two or more people.

All communications, intentional or not, have some kind of repercussion in the receiver of the information. If the message is understood in its entirety, the effect is usually the desired one.

Communication is a complex process oriented towards the action of informing, generating the understanding in the counterpart and inducing some type of response on the part of the receiver.

Those versed in communication have a fairly broad perception of the subject, based on their experience. Five definitions of communication are presented by some experts in the field:

Alberto Martínez de Velasco and Abraham Nosnik:

" Communication can be defined as a process by means of which a person is in contact with another through a message, and expects the latter of a response, be an opinion, activity or behavior "-Alberto Martínez (1988)

"In other words, communication is a way to establish contact with others through ideas, facts, thoughts and behaviors, looking for a reaction to the statement that has been sent "- Abraham Nosnik (1988)

According to both Mexican authors, the intention of the issuer is to modify or reinforce the behavior of the person receiving the communication. That is, the act of communicating is carried out to receive something in return.

Fernando González Rey (1995) "It is a process of social interaction, through signs and sign systems, product of human activities. Men in the communication process express their needs, aspirations, criteria, emotions, etc."

María del Socorro Fonseca (2000) "To communicate is to come to share something of ourselves. It is a specific rational and emotional quality of man that arises from the need to get in touch with others, exchanging ideas that acquire meaning or meaning according to common previous experiences"

It is very difficult to define the term 'Communication` in a simple way. Different scholars defined communication in different ways. Every communication involves (at least) one sender, a message and a recipient. This may sound simple, but communication is actually a very complex subject.

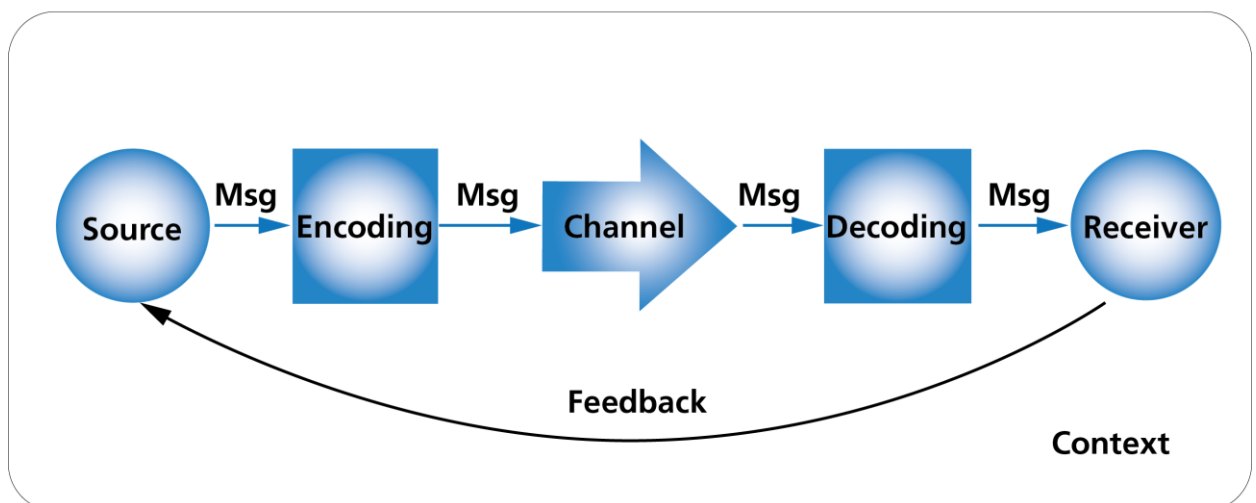
The transmission of the message from sender to recipient can be affected by a huge range of things. These include our emotions, the cultural situation, the medium used to communicate, and even our location. The complexity is why good communication skills are considered so desirable by employers around the world: accurate, effective and unambiguous communication is actually extremely hard.

According to Oxford dictionary "Communication, n. The imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium. ...The successful conveying or sharing of ideas and feelings."

As this definition makes clear, communication is more than simply the transmission of information. The term requires an element of success in transmitting or imparting a message, whether information, ideas, or emotions.

A communication therefore has three parts: the sender, the message, and the recipient. The sender 'encodes' the message, usually in a mixture of words and non-verbal communication. It is transmitted in some way (for example, in speech or writing), and the recipient 'decodes' it.

The Communication Process



Courtesy of Mindtools

Of course, there may be more than one recipient, and the complexity of communication means that each one may receive a slightly different message. Two people may read very different things into the choice of words and/or body language. It is also possible that neither of them will have quite the same understanding as the sender.

In face-to-face communication, the roles of the sender and recipient are not distinct. The two roles will pass back and forwards between two people talking. Both parties communicate with each other, even if in very subtle ways

such as through eye-contact (or lack of) and general body language. In written communication, however, the sender and recipient are more distinct.

2. Categories of Communication:

There are wide ranges of ways in which we communicate and more than one may be occurring at any given time. The different categories of communication include:

2.1. Spoken or Verbal Communication, which includes face-to-face, telephone, radio or television and other media. Verbal communication can also be called as Oral communication. In very simple terms, any communication that happens orally between people is known as verbal communication. The objective of such communications is to ensure that people understand whatever you want to convey. Because of its very nature, verbal communications is more quick and precise than email communication. Nowadays, Verbal communication is an important aspect and is looked as a key strength in an individual.

2.2 Non-Verbal Communication, covering body language, gestures, how we dress or act, where we stand, and even our scent. There are many subtle ways that we communicate (perhaps even unintentionally) with others. For example, the tone of voice can give clues to mood or emotional state, whilst hand signals or gestures can add to a spoken message.

2.3 Written Communication: which includes letters, e-mails, social media, books, magazines, the Internet and other media? Until recent times, a relatively small number of writers and publishers were very powerful when it came to communicating the written word. Today, we can all write and publish our ideas online, which have led to an explosion of information and communication possibilities.

2.4 Visualizations: is the transmission of information and ideas using symbols and imagery. Visual communication is believed to be the type that people rely on most, and it includes signs, graphic designs, films, typography, and countless other examples.

3. Significance of verbal communication

Verbal communication is the use of words to share information with other people. It can therefore include both spoken and written communication. However, many people use the term to describe only spoken communication. The verbal element of communication is all about the words that you choose, and how they are heard and interpreted.

Communication is a two-way process. Communication is about passing information from one person to another. This means that both the sending and the receiving of the message are equally important. Verbal communication therefore requires both a speaker (or writer) to transmit the message and a listener (or reader) to make sense of the message.

Verbal communication refers to the use of sounds and language to relay a message. It serves as a vehicle for expressing desires, ideas and concepts and is vital to the processes of learning and teaching. In combination with nonverbal forms of communication, verbal communication acts as the primary tool for expression between two or more people.

Interpersonal communication and public speaking are the two basic types of verbal communication. Whereas public speaking involves one or more people delivering a message to a group, interpersonal communication generally refers to a two-way exchange that involves both talking and listening.

According to Robert M. Krauss, professor of psychology at Columbia University, signs and symbols are the major signals that make up verbal

communication. Words act as symbols, and signs are secondary products of the underlying message and include things like tone of voice, blushing and facial expressions.

Verbal communication has many purposes, but its main function is relaying a message to one or more recipients. It encompasses everything from simple one-syllable sounds to complex discussions and relies on both language and emotion to produce the desired effect. Verbal communication can be used to inform, inquire, argue and discuss topics of all kinds. It is vital to teaching and learning, as well as forming bonds and building relationships with other people.

4. Advantages of Spoken Communication

There is high level of understanding and transparency in oral communication as it is interpersonal.

Quick and Fast

The biggest advantage of oral communication is that it is very quick in the sense that one does not have to go through the lengthy process of communicating through formal channels as one can convey the message directly to the person for whom it is intended and get the result instantly.

Flexibility

Another benefit of oral communication is that it is very flexible because superior can alter the oral order easily according to the feedback of their subordinates but when it comes to written communication altering the written order is a tough and time-consuming task.

No chance of Misunderstanding

Another advantage of oral communication is that chances of misunderstanding are very less as one can clear his or her doubts instantly from

the person who is giving the orders or instructions and therefore the communication will be more effective in achieving the desired task.

Ideal for Groups

If one wants to communicate information to a large number of people than oral communication is the only option as one cannot give communication in writing to each and every person of the group.

5. Relevant skills for spoken communication

There are a large number of verbal communication skills. As having remained above, communication has three parts: the sender, the message, and the recipient, listening and speaking are the main way to implement this process for basic spoken communication.

Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. Listening is the key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated.

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. It plays an important role in sending a message and replying when direct communication. It affects the transmission of your message, and how it is received and understood by your audience.

Besides two skills above, there many other necessary skills serving for communication process such as non-verbal, grammar, vocabulary, organization of ideas, pronunciation and so on.

6. General difficulties in English communication

Vietnam's traditional teaching and learning methods approach wrongly compared to natural law. In schools from middle school to university, we often focus on learning Vocabulary, Structure and Grammar principles but not focusing on Listening and Speaking skills. This approach is only suitable for the purpose of passing end-of-term exams, grade transfer or graduation exams in class, but will not help you to communicate in English in real-life situations.

According to scientific studies, the process of learning any language needs to follow the natural rules of Listening - Speaking - Reading - Writing. We can easily visualize this rule when looking at how a child learns to speak. At first, the child was in a state of complete hearing, the brain received new sounds from people around. Going through a long time, the child will practice imitating and repeating his words or being heard babbling and in the correct pronunciation and intonation of the word. This is similar to reading and writing skills, after the child recognizes all familiar sounds and words, it develops the ability to read text and after the accumulation of vocabulary, how to use sentences will advance to the ability to write at will. However, in the past, the teaching and learning process in Vietnam's education system mostly focused on forging 2 Reading and Writing skills for students and students and making it difficult for them to face two Listening and Speaking skills. The main difficulties in English communication faced by students are

- *Limited sentence structure and vocabulary*

Many students find it difficult to learn communicative English because of the limited vocabulary and sentence structure. Although according to the survey results, there are many people who started to learn English from elementary school, but until college, the vocabulary and sentence structure are still relatively small. One thing we can easily see is that with the way of learning to

record the vocabulary and structure many times that we often do, it is not effective for memorizing and communicating.

- ***Listening and pronunciation***

The structure of English includes both vowels, consonants, accents and intonation. The difficulty that students often encounter is not to click on stress, speak without intonation. This hinders much in learning English for communication. When listening to a native speaker pronouncing it correctly, you cannot recognize it when you normally memorize the word in a completely different way. And conversely, when you express the native speakers, you don't understand what you're trying to say.

- ***Psychology factors***

Psychology factors create a huge barrier in the process of improving your English communication skills. It often comes from a fear of being wrong, afraid of making mistakes, a weak hearing ability that makes you shy, timid, and hesitant when speaking English. However, this is a problem that comes from the self-mentality, the knower is the one who opens the button, and you should be more comfortable and positive in your thinking. When communication becomes haunting, learning English for communication will become more remote.

- ***No reaction in English***

This is a common problem for students as well as communicative English learners. When communicating, as well as writing articles, you often think in Vietnamese before translating into English. This forms a bad habit that prevents you from reflecting English well. You always have to spend time translating and cannot remember good vocabulary. In addition, the translation phase makes the conversation disconnected and shows your lack of confidence and professionalism while communicating.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1 The reality of learning and teaching English for the first year English major students at HPU

2.1.1 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.

2.1.2 The students

The research was undertaken with the participation of students in Faculty of Foreign Language. They age from 18. The subjects of the study were 23 first-year students in ED from K22 when they were in the first semester of their academic year at HPU. A large numbers of them have learnt English for 7 years (4 years at secondary school and 3 years at high school). However, their English backgrounds are quite similar because most of them come from different rural areas in the North and under being influence of curriculum of English for high schools students in the past, students did not have many chances to practice English skills. They have not considered English as an important subject, only focus on grammar mechanically to pass the exam, moreover they are very passive in class, just stand up and take part in class activities when teachers call their names. After a semester entering university and access to new teaching methods, this situation continues with the majority of students. Thus, their

English levels were limited and they have to face up with many difficulties in studying, especially in their speaking. 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.

2.2. The questionnaire

The questionnaires were designed both for students because the researcher finds them easy to summarize and analyze the collected data. Questionnaires for students consist of 12 questions which are specified in the three research questions. Therefore, the survey questionnaires for students were delivered to 25 first-year students of K21 at Faculty of Foreign Languages, HPU to find information for the three research questions.

The survey questionnaire is designed for 3 main purposes:

- Question 1-5, students were asked to illustrate their background information.
- Question 6, 7 is for their attitude for the importance of communication.
- Question 8-12 are about the difficulties faced by students and suggested solutions for them in term of communication.

2.3 Research methods

To guarantee the reliability and the validity of the samples, the questionnaires for learners were directly distributed for learners of K22 during their break time in the class and collected right away. That meant these learners could pay most attention to answer the questions related to what they had just experienced. Before asking the learners to do the survey questionnaire, the researcher briefly stated the purpose and significance of the study and clarified any misunderstanding about the survey questions. Beside the written

instructions on the handout, oral the instructions and explanations in Vietnamese were presented to avoid any ambiguity. In the end, there were 23 students participating in giving responses to the survey questionnaire.

To collect information about the issues of English communication of first year English major students at HPU, first of all, 25 copies of survey questionnaires were handed out to students.

When the data collection was accomplished, the data analysis was initiated. The results of survey questionnaires revealed students' techniques they use in communication most 30 copies of the questionnaire delivered to the learners. The data are analyzed in this part of the study in the below tables and charts which show the responses for the questions in the questionnaires.

CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To complete this part of the study, the researcher analyzed the data based on questionnaires and then made conclusions. The figures are given through charts.

3.1. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

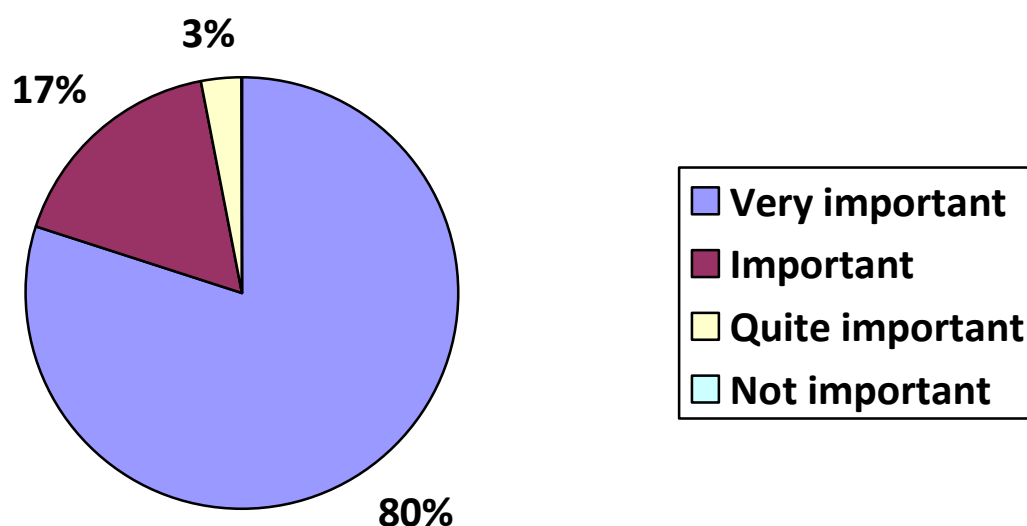
Chart 1. General Background of the Respondents

General background		Frequently	Percentage
Gender	Female	8	35%
	Male	15	65%
	Total	23	100%
Experiences of learning English	4-6 years	3	13%
	7-10 years	15	65%
	>= 10 years	5	22%
	Total	23	100%
Have you ever had any speaking tests?	No	21	90%
	Yes	2	10%
	Total	23	100%
Have you ever had English communication course?	No	20	87%
	Yes	3	13%
	Total	23	100%
How often do you communicate with foreigners?	1-2 times/ week	8	35%
	3-4 times/ week	13	55%
	More than 4 times/ week	2	10%
	Total	23	100%

From table 1 it can be assumed that most of the respondents were female (65%) whereas the rest were male (35%). Refer to the experiences of the respondents, most of them were 7-10 years (75%). (22%) of the respondents

were more than 10 years, and only (13%) of the total respondents studied English for 4-6 years. It is stated clearly that most of the students had never take speaking examination before (90%). Only 10% of them had taken it with the results of 6-7 points. The report also identified that 87% of the respondents had never have English communication course. Refer to the frequency of communicating English with foreigners, 55% of the respondent had chances to talk to foreigners 3-4 times a week. 35% of the respondents talk to foreigners 1-2 times a week and 10% of respondents have chances up to more than 4 times a week.

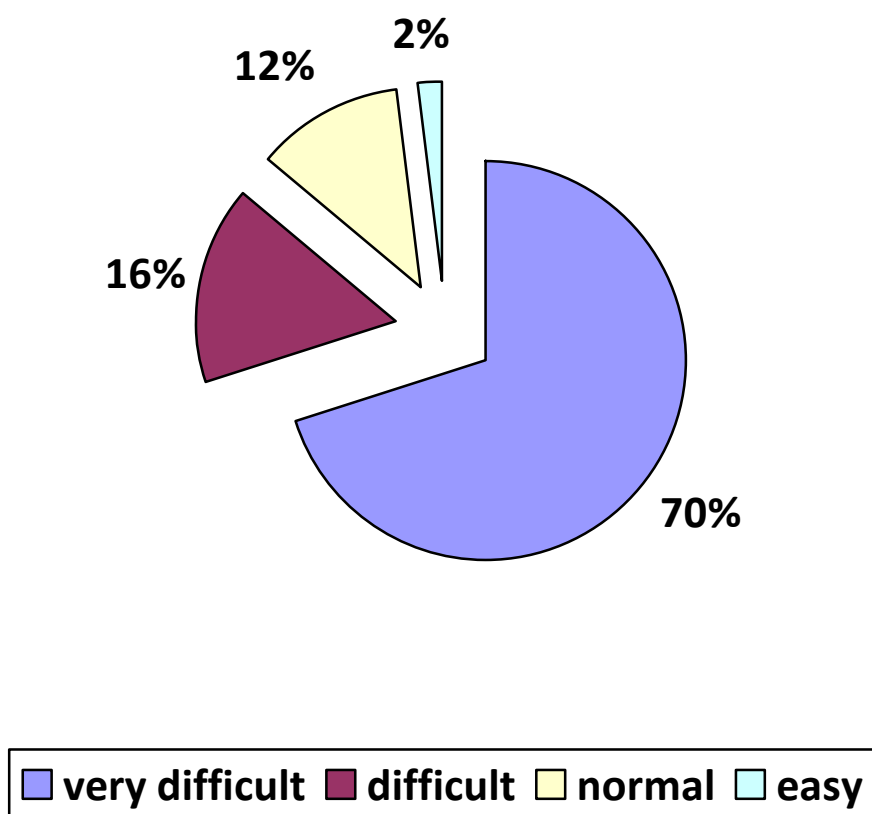
Chart 2: Students' attitudes towards the importance of communication



It can be seen clearly from the pie chart 1, most of the students agree that communication in English is very important as well as very important is 80%. Meanwhile, there are only 3% of them reckoning that it is quite important. This chart shows that most of students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, HPU claim that English communication has an important role in learning English with a lot of fields in life.

In conclusion, communication is necessary the real life. In learning a foreign language, it is more and more important to learn.

Chart 3: The students' assessment of using English to communicate

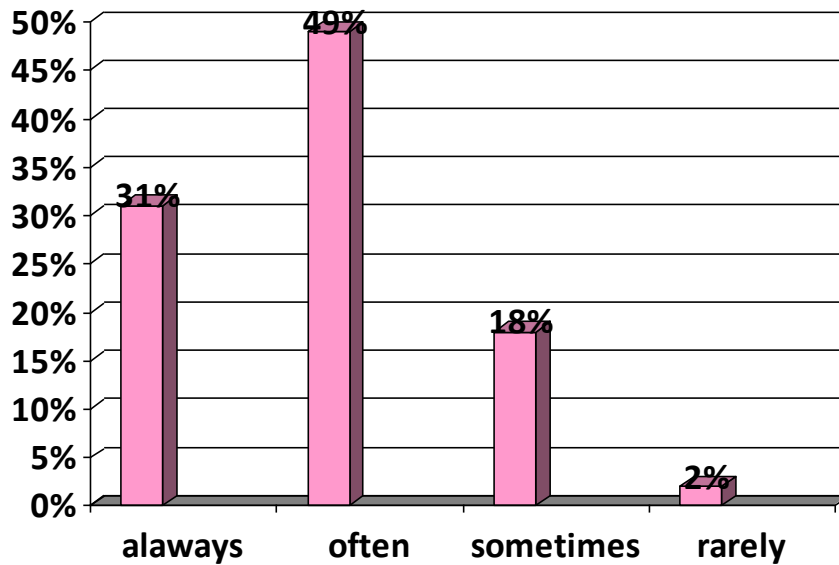


It can be seen obviously in the chart that the communication is difficult. 70% of the learners suppose that communication is difficult. For the students, learning from English and learning this skill is really a problem.

Moreover, the number of learners who agree that learning the speaking skill is very difficult took 16%. It is the same as the number of the learners who find learning speaking normal (12%) or easy (2%). In fact, as what can be seen by

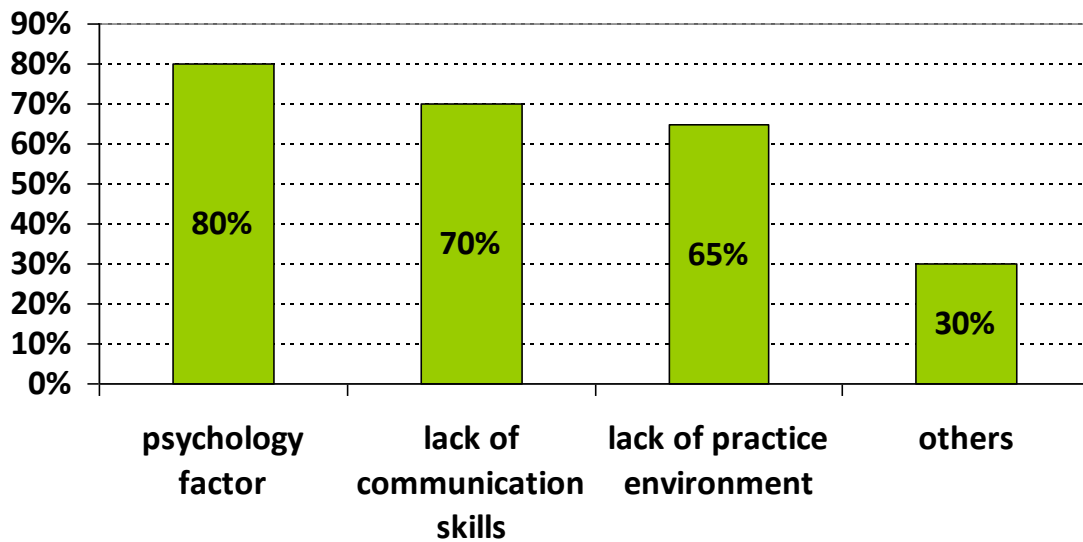
the observation, the learners who confirm that it is easy to learn the speaking skill are the best students. In short, the survey proves the assumption about the difficulty of learning from English and learning it.

Chart 4: The frequently of student having problems when communicating in English



Statistics provided in Chart 4 shows the frequency of students' having problem when using English to communication. According to the collected data, 49% students who are very often and 31% of them always has trouble; in addition, 18% sometimes makes this and just 2% rarely. To sum up, students always have problems in English communication and this is a thing that students need repairing.

Chart 5: Difficulties faced by the 1st year students in communication at HPU



This chart reveals the main problems faced by students when they directly talking with others. As the finding, 80% of students are affected by psychology which has highest rate. Lack of communication skills ranked the second in the result chart with 70%. Lack of practice environment is also quite high with 65%. And problems come from other factors is 30%. These are problems need to be solved.

- Psychology factors:

Chart 7: The main psychology factors affect students' communication

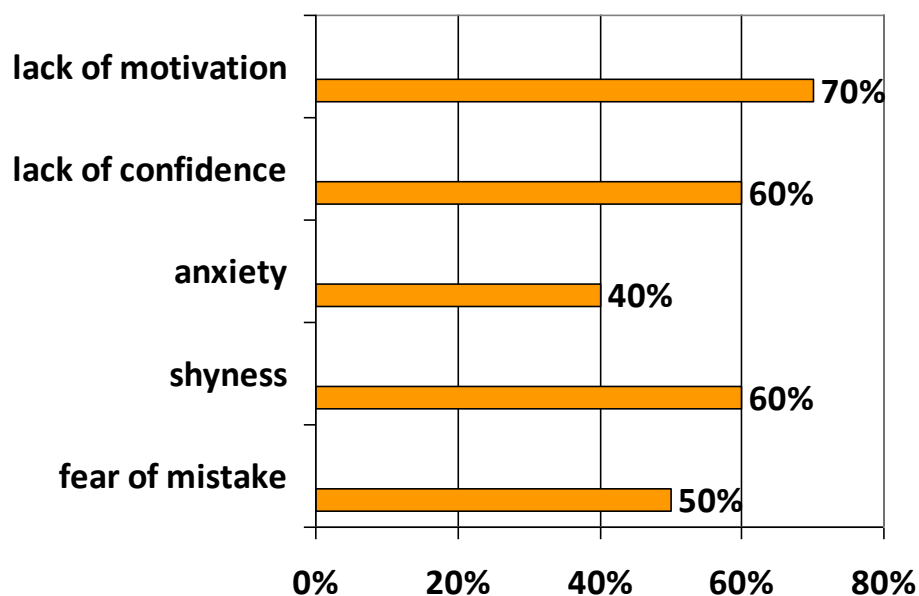


Table is to find out the psychology factors directly influencing on students' communication. It is a surprising result cause of lack of motivation get highest rate at 70%. There is 60% of students said that they are shy and not confident in themselves; moreover 40% of them has anxiety feeling when English talking. Fear of mistake comes from fear of being laughed at by other students or being criticized by the teacher is the problem of 50% student. It is obvious that psychological factors become important and influential elements which give a great impact on how to promote students' communication.

- *Fear of Mistakes*

Robby (2010) argued that the fear of mistake becomes one of the main factors of students' practice 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.

- *Shyness*

Shyness is an emotional thing that many students suffer from at some time when they are required to use English in the 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.

- *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.

- *Lack of Confidence*

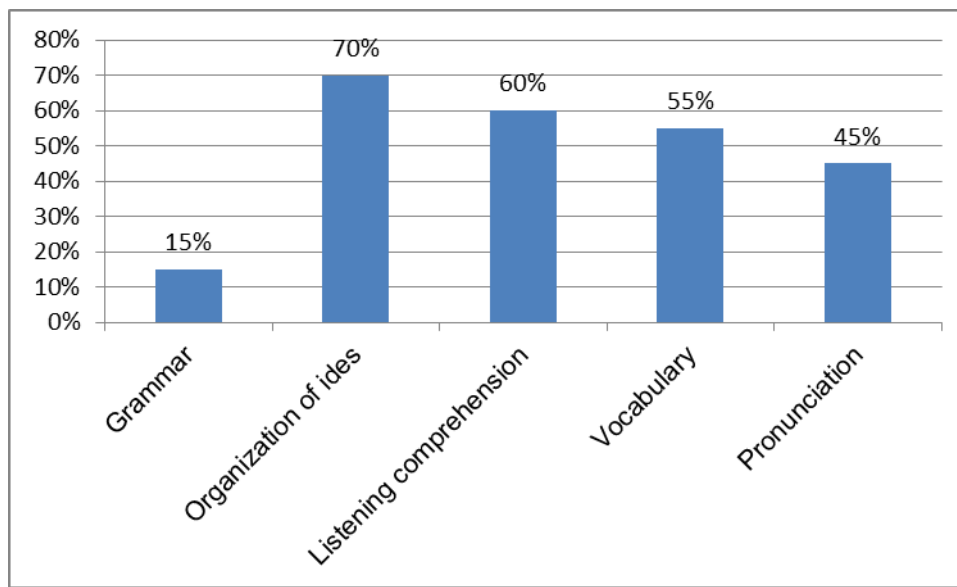
It is commonly understood that students' lack of confidence usually occurs when students realize that their conversation partners have not understood them or when they do not understand other speakers. In this situation, they would rather keep silent while others do talking showing that the students 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.

- *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.

- Lack of communication skills

Chart 8: Communication skills lacked by student



As it can be seen from the above bar chart, 15% of students get difficulties in English grammar when they speaking, but 70% of them said they can't talk with others because of slowly responding and reason is having no skill of organization of ideas, students are unable to structure their ideas and meanings in a coherent way; in additional, weakness of listening comprehension (60%) also affects their reaction on directly conversation cause it is difficult for them to understand at first time of listening. Poor vocabulary (55%) and wrong pronunciation (45%) partly make their partner misunderstand and conversation can't be extended. So that effective communication much depends on these skills and improving them is necessary.

- *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.

- *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.

- *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 cannot hear when talking with foreigners.

- *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.

- *Grammar*

Grammar, regardless of the country or the language is the infrastructure for communication. When a message is drop with the appropriate grammar, it's easy to recognize the ambition and meaning of that message. In order to

communicate, a learner should know the grammar of the language. It is crucial to be able to express yourself.

- *Lack of practice environment*

The main reason of lack of environment is that the students are learning English in Vietnam, a country without using English daily. 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.

- *Other factors:*

- *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.

- *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 cannot 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.

- *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.

In conclusion, the 1st English majors are facing to a lot of difficulties in English communication, especially speaking skills. There are many factors affecting them and how to overcome them to become better is necessary. The chart below includes some solutions applied by HPU students to deal with difficulties they get in learning process. They might be help 1st English majors overcome their problems.

Table 9: How can HPU students overcome the weakness in speaking skill?

	Kinds of Overcomes the Weakness	Percentage
1	Watching movies, TV shows and Video	43%
2	Listening English	30%
3	Reading e-books, articles, magazines	20%
4	Speaking English to yourself	21%
5	Speaking with friends	13%
7	Chat English anywhere	13%
8	Work in group	8%
9	Take part in English club	20%
10	Get a part-time job involving communicating with foreigners	34%

As this table, a part of students have been implementing a number of solutions to improve their skills. However, most of them are still not proactive in finding appropriate measures for themselves. Watching movies, TV shows and Video, Listening English, Get a part-time job involving communicating with foreigners are carried out most with more than 30% of students. The other ways are done with smaller amount.

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. Major difficulties in speaking English of first-year English majors at HPU

The results have shown that the communication difficulties faced students at HPU according to question which dealt with the factors that cause problems and weakness of HPU in communication were: psychology factors, limited amount of vocabulary, problems of using incorrect grammar, lack of organization of ideas, etc. The researcher thinks that the reasons of students' weakness during oral conversations were limited practice English and inappropriate curriculums in upper school that caused such problems. In addition, students still lack initiative in learning and do not know how to create their own English environment.

3.2.2. Major solutions to improve the speaking competence of first-year English majors at HPU

In the term of psychology factors, it much depend on teachers' encourage. Teachers should create a comfortable atmosphere in classroom, organize activities to motivate and help students be more proactive and able to get rid of their fear. Besides learning English inside the classroom and teachers' help, self-learning plays an important role to improve English in generally and communication skills in practically. Students should strive to be more active in their learning, find appropriate solutions for themselves to improve the lack of skills such as spending time reading book to upgrade vocabulary, get better pronunciation through listening, etc. Moreover, create yourself an English learning environment so that you can quickly progress like joining an English club or doing part time in a place having foreigners and so on.

CHAPTER 4: SOME SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

After analyzing the survey and find out student's common difficulties in communication. Almost students in the survey agree that they are facing with the difficulties when directly talking with others such as psychology factors, lack of environment, communication skills and so on. Therefore, methods and activities are adopted with the author's experience. Some suggested solutions are mention below with an expectation to help the 1st English majors soon become better.

4.1. Suggestions for teachers

As the survey find out, psychology factors has great influence on students' communication, especially 1st students because they hardly had chance to practice it before. So how to overcome psychology factors is necessary and the best way might be come from their teacher who can directly help them in learning process.

- *Creating the comfortable speaking environment*

Positive attitude

Teachers should have a positive attitude towards learners' mistakes as it is inevitable and very practical during the study. Thanks to them teachers identify the types of errors learners often make to know what is needed, something that lacks to adjust lessons' content and teaching method more suitable

Take the initiative

Teachers should take the initiative to find out the main causes of each type of error to take measures for the appropriate fix. Besides, teachers just should fix certain errors, depending on the purpose of that day's lesson

Create conditions for learners

Teachers should create conditions for learners to detect and correct errors. You can see this as an opportunity for students to self-identify errors and correct them as soon as they know mistakes. Through error detection, correction, the independence, autonomy and creativity of students in the English study are increased.

- ***Encourage students to speak***

Encourage student interaction

A teacher should aim to create a comfortable atmosphere where students are not afraid to speak and enjoy communicating with him/her and their fellow students.

Make speaking activities communicative

The aim of communication activities is to encourage purposeful and meaningful interaction between students. Communicative tasks are designed so that students have a reason or a purpose for speaking: they are bridging information or finding out about the opinion gap; they are asking for or giving real information or finding out about the opinions of their fellow students. Not only are these activities which mirror real – life interaction. Even quite controlled activities can be made communicative if the students are talking about real events and opinions. In free activities students have to listen and respond in real time without knowing what is about come next and successful communication is of greater priority than complete grammatical accuracy.

Plan speaking activities carefully

Speaking activities need to be very carefully structured at first, especially at lower level, so that the students have few demands on them. It is often difficult for students to come up with ideas at the same time as having to cope

with the language. They need something to speak about such as a picture; or a purpose – like performing a role play from a context of a reading text. As they become used to doing controlled and guided activities students become surer of themselves and more adventurous so that free activities can be attempted. Free activities, however, still need careful planning if they are not to fall flat. Carefully set up tasks (role play, picture description, debate, problem solving, ranking tasks, etc...) provide a reason, purpose and guidelines within which students can speak more freely.

4.2. Suggestions for students

Besides teacher's help, self-learning play an important role to improve English in general and communication in particular.

- *Watching movies, TV shows and Video*



Watching movie helps you improve your speaking and listening skills most effectively. If you are a beginner to learn English this way, or have Listening skills, you can turn on the subtitles, watch and read the lines of the actors.

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 programs 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.

Recognizing these 'turntaking' signals will help you to participate in English conversations.

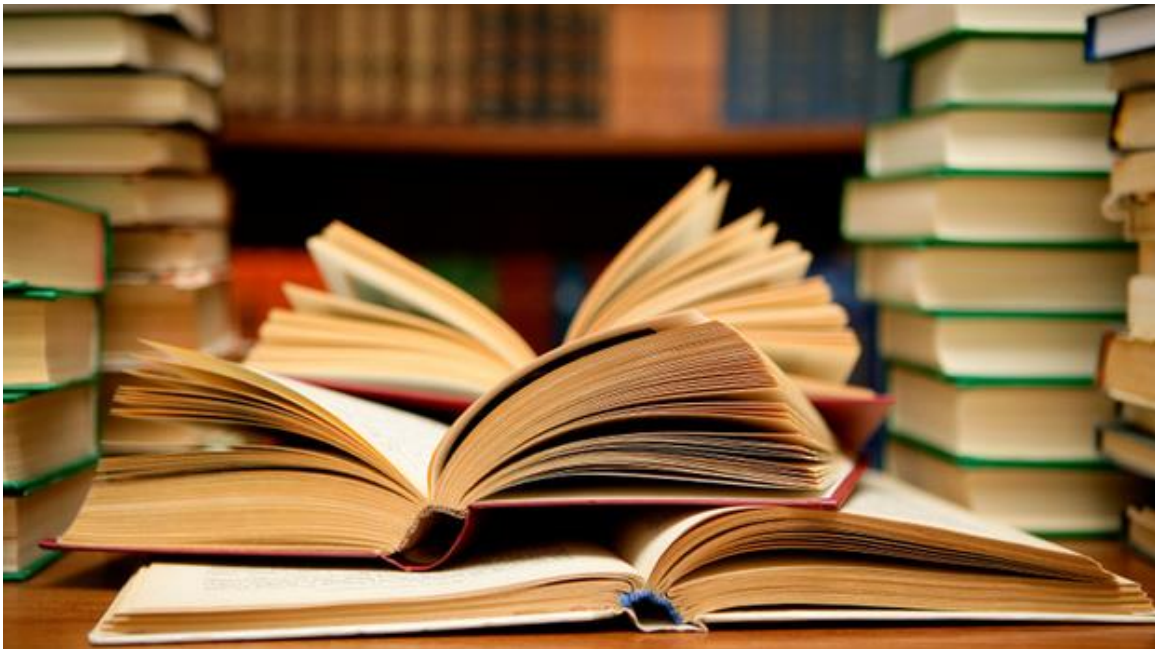
- ***Listening English***

Listening to the English radio or to the songs, or English news _the situation is similar to the previous one, learners train their listening skills, comprehension skills and learn new vocabulary in the



same time. They can even keep a notebook they will fill in with some interesting words they heard. More they listen, more they speak.

- ***Read e-books, articles, magazines every day***



Reading (Reading) is as important as Listening Skills (Listening) when learning English. If watching movies, TV shows, etc. helps you improve your listening skills, reading e-books, articles, and magazines has great effect on reading skills. Read the topics you love, note the words below the vocabulary that you find confusing, guess the meaning and look up the dictionary. Remember, for this to be done every day, it will be effective!

- ***Speaking English to yourself***

Self-talking is considered as one of the most effective ways that the researcher has been doing during college time to practice English. As a problem mentioned above that the number of students in each class are quite crowded so there might be not enough time to have opportunities to practice their oral skills.

As this result, those students only can practice at home but finding a partner to practice with is one more issue. In this case, self-talking seems effective and easy to make. Besides, for some shy or unconfident speakers, this strategy is absolutely encouraged because when they can motivate themselves to speak without the fear of making mistake or being 49 shame. Then it might raise their awareness to learn English constantly and successfully. Interestingly, as a statistic has shown that 93% professors use self-talk when learning the second language and this strategy received many positive feedbacks from professors.

The step to practice this method is simple that you can speak anything you like to yourself freely. When learners practice self-talk it might help them acquire fluency.



- ***Speak with friends***

They said that they would not be so stressed and would be able to learn to express themselves more easily. During that time, you would lose barrier that kept them

from using English. Moreover, together with their friends, they can correct their mistakes. After all, every people learn on their mistakes. You will make the same mistake twice, but from the third time you will use the correct from. It will be more effective if they speak English with their friends from other countries.

- ***Chat English anywhere***

English is the international language, so anywhere you can use them. Chat in English wherever you go, which can be a domestic tourist destination, or anywhere when you travel...

- ***Work in group***

Work group and pair group Pair work or group activities are very effective methods. It helps students feel more confident in communication. Students can talk to their friend about the given topic in a relaxed manner. And if there are any mistakes, other people would be willing to comment and correct immediately. Thus students will have time to prepare for a perfect presentation and avoid making grammatical errors.



- ***Take part in English club***

An English Club is a place for language learners to use English in a casual setting. Practicing your skills in the classroom is important, but it is not like real life. In the classroom, you often focus on one skill and one item (for example: grammar - future tense). After learning the rules your teacher gives you time to practice using the item. Will you remember how to use your skills next week, or next year? In an English Club, you get a chance to practice many different skills in a setting that is more like real life. Though your English teacher understands your English, your English Club friends will require you to speak more clearly and listen more carefully.

- ***Get a part-time job involving communicating with foreigners***

This is a good chance for students. They can both be financially independent and gain more experience in their life, especially in English communication. They have to use English to deal with daily situations that helps them become familiar with reaction in English as well as much improving their English skills

- ***Applicability of internet in learning English***

Nowadays, internet has a great influence on our life. As for the 1st year English major, Internet can help them study English speaking effectively. Every time, students can learn directly through online websites which teach English, especially speaking skill. It is very convenient for them to study new word, pronunciation, the presentation skill through the interesting topic... This is a very interesting techniques. Through internet, students can download many documents related to English speaking to improve their speaking skill.

PART III: CONCLUSION

1. Summary

In conclusion, this graduation paper is conducted to investigate the learning situation at Haiphong Management and Technology University in Language Department and to find out student's difficulties as well as common mistakes particularly in terms of communication. Then methods and strategies might be suggested to solve student's problems and motivate them.

The aim, scope and reason study was presented in part 1 for introduction part. Then some theoretical definitions such as: definition of communication, some difficulties in English communication and some common mistakes were put in part 2. Especially, in order to expose student's difficulties to learn English in general and communication in particular, a survey was carried out and analyzed to find the best efficient strategies with the hope of encouraging students to have suitable methods to learn. Therefore, some suggestions to help students practice at home as well as at class were recommended in part 3.

2. Limitations of the study

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

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

Secondly, due to the limitation of scope of the study, the researcher only focuses on the first-year students in Faculty of Foreign Language which account for a small number of students at FFL, HPU. Therefore, the result of the study

can't be generalized. Besides, the researcher could not cover all the aspects of difficulties.

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

In spite of the mentioned limitations, I hope that this exploratory research will contribute to the better situation of teaching and learning English speaking skill at FFL, HPU.

3. Suggestions for the further study

Because of the limitation, this study could not cover all of aspects of the study. Besides, the study only focuses on difficulties for only first-year students at FFL in order to help them improve their speaking skill. Moreover, for the further studies, to get better results, the researcher should invite more participants and the data collection method with further study with senior English majors at HPU. Together with using survey questionnaires and interviews, observation is also necessary to get more persuasive conclusions.

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

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APPENDIX

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey questionnaire is designed for my graduation paper namely: “A study on difficulties in communication of the 1st English majors at HPU” in completing these questions, please choose the answer by tick into the letter next to your choice, ticking off the items in a checklist or expressing your idea in the blanks. All your personal information as well as your answers will be kept confidential and not be used for the other purposes.

Thanks for your help!

Question 1: Your gender:

- Male
- Female

Question 2: Experiences of learning English

- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 10 years

Question 3: Have you ever had any speaking tests?

- Yes
- No

Question 4: Have you ever had English communication course?

- Yes
- No

Question 5: How often do you communicate with foreigners?

- 1-2 times/ week
- 3-4 times/ week
- More than 4 times/week

Question 6: What do you think about the importance of English communication?

- Very important

- Important
- Quite important
- Not important

Question 7: In your opinion, English communication is...

- Very difficult
- Difficult
- Quite difficult
- Not difficult

Question 8: How often do you have problems in communication?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely

Question 9: What are main problems you get when communicating with others?

- Psychological factors
- Lack of communication skills
- Lack of practice environment
- Others:

Question 10: Which psychological factors affect you?

- Fear of mistake
- Shyness
- Anxiety
- Lack of confidence
- Lack of motivation

Question 11: Which aspects of learning English are you not really good at

- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Pronunciation
- Organization of ideas
- Listening comprehension

Question 12: What have you done to improve your speaking?

1	Watching movies, TV shows and Video	
2	Listening English	
3	Reading e-books, articles, magazines	
4	Speaking English to yourself	
5	Speaking with friends	
7	Chat English anywhere	
8	Work in group	
9	Take part in English club	
10	Get a part-time job involving communicating with foreigners	