BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO

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

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# KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

**NGÀNH : TIẾNG ANH THƯƠNG MẠI**

**Sinh viên : Phạm Thị Quỳnh**

**HẢI PHÒNG – 2025**

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

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# A STUDY ON COMMON MISTAKES IN LEARNING VOCABULARY MADE BY THE FIRST YEAR NON-ENGLISH MAJORS AT HAI PHONG MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY AND SOME SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

**KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY**

**NGÀNH: TIẾNG ANH THƯƠNG MẠI**

**Sinh viên         : Phạm Thị Quỳnh**

**Giảng viên hướng dẫn: ThS. Nguyễn Thị Phương Thu**

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# NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Sinh viên: Phạm Thị Quỳnh          Mã SV: 2012752002

Lớp        : NA2401T

Ngành    : Tiếng Anh Thương Mại

Tên đề tài: A study on common mistakes in learning vocabulary made by the first year non-English majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology  University and some suggested solutions

# NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI

1. **Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp**

   - Tổng quan về vai trò của từ vựng trong việc học tiếng anh,đặc biệt đối với sinh viên không chuyên ngữ.

   - Tìm hiểu thực trạng học từ vựng của sinh viên năm nhất không chuyên ngành tiếng Anh tại Trường Đại học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng.

   - Phân tích các lỗi phổ biến mà sinh viên mắc phải khi học từ vựng.

   - Đề xuất 1 số giải pháp giúp sinh viên cải thiện việc học từ vựng tốt hơn,phù hợp với năng lực và đặc điểm của sinh viên không chuyên.

   - Đánh giá tính khả thi và hiệu quả của các giải pháp đề xuất.

2. **Các tài liệu, số liệu cần thiết**

   \*Tài liệu :

   - Tài liệu ,sách và giáo trình về phương pháp giảng dạy và học từ vựng tiếng Anh.

   - Các tài liệu nghiên cứu trước đây liên quan đến lỗi học từ vựng của sinh viên không chuyên ngành tiếng Anh.

   - Các bài báo khoa học,tạp chí chuyên ngành giảng dạy tiếng Anh liên quan đến từ vựng và lỗi ngôn ngữ.

   \*Số liệu:

   - Số liệu khảo sát được lấy từ 40 sinh viên năm nhất không chuyên ngành tiếng Anh.

-Phương pháp khảo sát:khảo sát dữ liệu bằng bảng câu hỏi và kết hợp phỏng vấn 3 sinh viên để lấy ý kiến thêm về đề xuất chiến lược học từ vựng hiệu quả.

## 3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp

Công ty TNHH Xây dựng nhân lực St.John Paul II

# CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

**Họ và tên**     : Nguyễn Thị Phương Thu

**Học hàm, học vị**   : Thạc Sĩ

**Cơ quan công tác**  : Trường Đại học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng

**Nội dung hướng dẫn**: A study on common mistakes in learning vocabulary made by the first year non-English majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology University and some suggested solutions

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày 17 tháng 02 năm 2025

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày 10 tháng 5 năm 2025

  Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN     Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

    *Sinh viên*        *Giảng viên hướng dẫn*

   Phạm Thị Quỳnh     ThS. Nguyễn Thị Phương Thu

*Hải Phòng, ngày...tháng...năm 2025*

## XÁC NHẬN CỦA KHOA

## PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN HƯỚNG DẪN TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên giảng viên:    Nguyễn Thị Phương Thu

Đơn vị công tác:    Trường Đại Học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng.

Họ và tên sinh viên:    Phạm Thị Quỳnh -Chuyên ngành:Tiếng Anh Thương Mại

Nội dung hướng dẫn:    A study on common mistakes in learning vocabulary made by the first year non-English majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology University and some suggested solutions

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

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

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**3.  Ý kiến của giảng viên hướng dẫn tốt nghiệp**

Được bảo vệ ☐    Không được bảo vệ ☐    Điểm hướng dẫn ☐

*Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm ......*
**Giảng viên hướng dẫn**
*(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)*

## PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN CHẤM PHẢN BIỆN

Họ và tên giảng viên: ..................................................................................

Đơn vị công tác:       Trường Đại Học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng.

Họ và tên sinh viên:      Phạm Thị Quỳnh - Chuyên ngành: Tiếng Anh Thương Mại

Đề tài tốt nghiệp:       A study on common mistakes in learning vocabulary made by the first year non-English majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology University and some suggested solutions

**1. Phần nhận xét của giáo viên chấm phản biện**

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**2. Những mặt còn hạn chế**

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**3. Ý kiến của giảng viên chấm phản biện**

Được bảo vệ ☐      Không được bảo vệ ☐      Điểm hướng dẫn ☐

*Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm ......*

**Giảng viên chấm phản biện**

*(Ký và ghi rõ tên)*

# Abstract

According to Wilkins, without grammar, very little information is conveyed, but without vocabulary, nothing is conveyed. The above quote shows the primary importance of vocabulary in learning a language. Although it is a small cell, it is a key factor in forming learners' language skills.

Vocabulary is extremely important because it provides conversational input without properly understanding the input, learning simply cannot progress. With rich capital vocabulary, learners themselves will develop communication, essay writing, and speaking skills. Moreover, thanks to the abundance of vocabulary, learners can understand other people's ideas as well as express themselves clearly and concisely. In addition, without vocabulary, no communication can be achieved. Language learners, especially those who learn English as a foreign language in a non-native setting find it difficult to practice speaking English because of the lack of vocabulary. This small study helps find out the common mistakes that first-year non-English at Hai Phong Management and Technology University students make in learning vocabulary and suggests some solutions to help students learn vocabulary effectively. I hope that my research would bring students some recommendations for their vocabulary.

# Acknowledgement

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my teacher Mrs. Nguyễn Thị Phương Thu, M.A. for her enthusiastic help, dedicated guidance, and step-by-step companionship throughout the process of making my thesis. Without her active help, this graduation paper would not have been completed.

Secondly, I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the teachers of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Hai Phong University of Management and Technology teachers for their valuable lectures and guidance during the four years of study, which helped me a lot in completing his research.

Next, a special thank you to all the first-year non-English majors for their enthusiasm in completing the survey questionnaire.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for always being there for me and encouraging me throughout the time I was doing this research.

Hai Phong, June, 2025

Phạm Thị Quỳnh

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# PART I: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Rationale

Vocabulary is a very important key to helping us communicate with people around us. A person with a rich and rich vocabulary can express their personal opinions well and succeed in communication. Without vocabulary, no matter how good ideas we have, grammar or body language cannot convey, and understanding the other person is also a difficult thing. Learning English vocabulary is also the focus of language teaching and it is also very important for language learners.

During my 4 years of studying at the school, still feel that I still have difficulty learning vocabulary when I want to speak, I can't remember a word, and it seems that I can't say it out loud and I'm not sure how to use them. I found myself having a lot of problems with vocabulary and making a lot of mistakes along the way. I realized I practiced them too little.

I think non-English major students at Hai Phong Management and Technology University also encounter common mistakes like me, with the desire to find solutions to help students improve their vocabulary. To improve students' English proficiency, the research "A study on common mistakes in learning vocabulary made by the first-year non-English majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology of University and some suggested solutions" was carried out with the hope of improving students' English proficiency. As well as helping students realize their mistakes so that learning vocabulary is more effective. As a result, learning vocabulary is no longer an obstacle for them.

## 1.2 Aims of the Study

Most students learn vocabulary but cannot apply it in speaking or writing. We just stopped at the level of recognizing them, but we can not own them to use in communication. Therefore,  we face a lot of difficulties. For these reasons, this study aims to point out common mistakes in learning English vocabulary of first-year students and propose solutions to help students realize their

mistakes. From there, they are able to make the best use of their own ability to learn and use their own vocabulary.

## 1.3 Methods of the Study

The study will be conducted using qualitative methods. The

study includes survey questionnaires for the first year non-English at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology. After getting the results, the researcher will use charts for presenting the collected data.

## 1.4 Scope of the Study

The subject of this research is limited to the first-year program, at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology. Forty students will be the sample of this survey. The tool for the survey was a self-administered questionnaire. Participants were asked to answer the questionnaire themselves. The questionnaire includes both closed and open questions.

## 1.5 The organization of the study

The study includes : 3 Parts mainly organized as follows:

*PART I: Introduction deals with* :Rational, Aims of the study, Scope of the study,Methods of the study, The organization of the study.

*PART II: Development*

*Chapter 1:* Literature review: Which mentions The Definition of Vocabulary,Roles of Vocabulary ,Vocabulary learning strategies, Kinds of Vocabulary, Teaching and Learning English Vocabulary, Common mistakes in learning Vocabulary,Review of previous studies related to common mistakes in learning Vocabulary.

*Chapter 2:* Research methodology:Includes Introduction,the researcher,Participants,Resources and materials, Instruments for collecting data, Data collection procedure,Conclusion.

*Chapter 3*: Findings and Discussion of the Study

*Chapter 4*: Some suggest solutions

*PART III: Conclusion*: provides Overview of the study, Limitation of the study, Suggestions for the further study.

# PART II: DEVELOPMENT

## Chapter 1: Literature review

### 1.1 Definitions of Vocabulary

According to Richards (2002:255), vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. In addition, Richards and Schmidt (2002:580) state that vocabulary is a set of lexemes, including single words, compound words, and idioms. Those definitions show that vocabulary is the first element that English learners should learn in order to master English well besides the other English components and skills. The vocabulary of language always changes and grows. As life becomes more complex, people devise or borrow new words to describe man's activities. No one knows the exact number of words in the English vocabulary today. From the interpretation above, we can conclude that vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency that consists of a set of lexemes, including single words, compound words, and idioms; provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, read, listen, and write; and has similarities with the term "lexis" and "lexicon". In language learning, vocabulary takes place in building language proficiency. The objective of vocabulary mastery is to make the students have good language proficiency in the language skills. It depends on the quality and quantity of the vocabulary that they have mastered. The richer the vocabulary that can be mastered by the students, they will get the better skill that can be reached in using language.

Harmer (1991: 158) summarizes that knowing a word (vocabulary) means knowing about its meaning, word use, word formation, and word grammar.

Word meaning is also governed by metaphors and idioms, e.g., the word hiss refers to the noise of a snake and to someone's threat to others. In collocation,

a word goes with each other, such as headache, earache, and so on. In addition, style and register are applied by differentiating the language to be used by someone either in a formal or informal context, for example, hello (formal) and hi (informal). Moreover, word formation may also create word meanings by seeing them in their grammatical contexts. It means that we look at how the suffixes and the prefixes work (im-, or in-) such as in imperfect and perfect, inappropriate and appropriate. The last is about word grammar which is employed by distinguishing the use of words based on the use of certain grammatical patterns such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.

For example :

| My sister | went to | Berlin | last week. |
|-----------|---------|--------|------------|
| N | V | Adv | Adv |

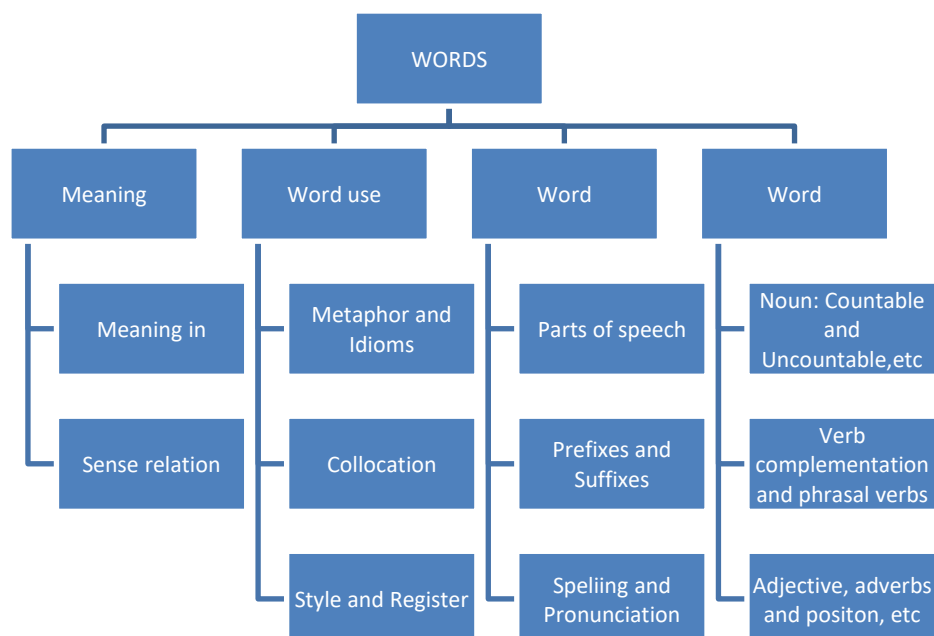The chart can be seen in Figure 1 on the following page.

Figure 1: Knowing a word

Learning vocabulary is not only learning about the words or new vocabulary but also about how to use the vocabulary in correct usage. What is meant by the meaning of a word, is determined by the context where it is formed and also determined by its relation to other words. The word book sometimes means the kind of thing you read from, but it can also mean a number of other things. The example of the second context is vegetables which have general meaning whereas carrot is more specific.

Furthermore, Hammer (1991:151-161) says that teaching vocabulary is clearly more than just presenting new words. This may, of course, have its place but there are other issues too. However, not all vocabulary can be learned through interaction and discovery techniques. This statement implies that learning vocabulary cannot always be done through interaction and discovery techniques for beginners. The reason is that, in doing such as technique, the learners are demanded to have an adequate number of vocabularies. It means that the students need to memorize and recall many vocabularies that have been mastered before.

## 1.2 Roles of Vocabulary

In today's globalized world, English plays an increasingly important role in both education and professional development. For first-year university students-especially those who are not majoring in English-building a basic and appropriate vocabulary is essential. Vocabulary is not only the foundation of language learning but also directly impacts academic performance, communication ability, and future career opportunities.

- Foundation for Developing Language Skills

Vocabulary is the basic "material" for constructing language. Whether learning listening, speaking, reading, or writing skills, learners need a certain amount of vocabulary to understand and use the language effectively. For instance, when

attending lectures in English or watching academic videos, students need vocabulary to comprehend the content. Similarly, to write essays or answer questions, they must know how to use words correctly. Without sufficient vocabulary, learners struggle to receive and express information.

- Support for Learning Specialized Subjects

Even for students who do not major in English, many academic resources such as textbooks, scientific articles, or lecture slides are written in English. This is especially true in fields such as information technology, engineering, economics, and medicine, where much of the terminology and literature is in English. Having a basic academic vocabulary helps students read and understand materials more easily, leading to better knowledge acquisition. Additionally, knowing subject-specific terms enables students to seek out international resources and stay up to date with developments in their field.

- Improved Communication and Integration

Vocabulary also plays a critical role in communication. First-year students often participate in extracurricular activities, clubs, exchange programs, or collaborate with international peers. In these situations, having a good range of vocabulary allows them to speak confidently, ask questions, and express their ideas clearly. This not only helps expand their network but also enhances soft skills and intercultural integration in an academic environment.

- Preparation for Exams and Career Opportunities

Vocabulary is essential for English proficiency tests such as TOEIC, IELTS, or university exit exams. These exams often assess reading comprehension, essay writing, and speaking skills—all of which require a strong vocabulary. Moreover, when applying for jobs, writing a CV, or attending interviews, candidates with good English skills have a clear advantage. A strong

vocabulary enables them to communicate professionally and make a good impression on potential employers.

- Developing Thinking and Self-Learning Skills

Learning vocabulary is not just about memorizing individual words; it also involves understanding word usage in context, recognizing synonyms and antonyms, and expanding vocabulary through reading and listening. This process helps students develop effective self-learning strategies. With sufficient vocabulary, students can read English materials, follow academic videos, and research information without relying on translations. This leads to more independent and flexible learning and helps them adapt to modern educational environments.

## 1.3 Vocabulary learning strategies

Vocabulary is one of the language aspects which should be learned. Learning it is important because in order to be able to speak, write, and listen learners have to know vocabulary first. A person is said to know a word if they can recognize its meaning when they see it (Cameron, 2001: 75). It means that in learning vocabulary learners have to know the meaning of it and also understand and can use it in sentence context.

According to John (2000: 16), vocabulary is knowledge of knowing the meanings of words, and therefore the purpose of a vocabulary test is to find out whether the learners can match each word with a synonym, a dictionary – tape definition, or an equivalent word in their own language. In learning vocabulary automatically they have to know the meaning of words themselves and can use it in sentences.

In brief, vocabulary mastery can be defined as a number of vocabulary (words) in a language that contains information about its meaning, form, and usage in the context of communication. It is the basic knowledge that students should

master first before mastering English. As Chen and Li (2009) acknowledge, vocabulary learning is a principal issue for English learning because it comprises the basic building blocks of English sentences.

Vocabulary mastery is not a spontaneous process that is easy to be done. The process of vocabulary mastery begins when someone is still an infant. Basically, the baby's first language comes from the mother tongue. They will master the vocabulary through the simple words by listening to the words which are uttered by someone else. It is known that English vocabulary learning cannot run successfully without English ability (English skills) because both of them are very important in the English teaching and learning process.

The students cannot do well in comprehension without a large vocabulary, for the passages and questions involve a range of words much wider than that of daily conversation.

To make the discussion clearer, Harmer's opinion can be added. In his book, Harmer (2001: 16) says that there are some aspects that have to be discussed in vocabulary, namely: word meaning (synonym, antonym, connotation, and denotation), extending word use such as idioms, word combination or collocation, and the grammar of words which comprises noun, verb, adjective, and adverb.

## 1.4 Kinds of Vocabulary

According to Nation (2001), there are two kinds of vocabulary. They are perceptive and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary refers to the words that native speakers and foreign learners recognize and understand but hardly ever use, it is used passively in either listening or reading. Productive vocabulary is utilized actively either in speaking or writing. One's listening vocabulary is generally larger than his speaking vocabulary while his reading

vocabulary is relatively larger than his writing vocabulary. Therefore it can be concluded that vocabulary can be presented in four units. They are reading vocabulary, listening, and vocabulary, speaking vocabulary, and writing vocabulary. Reading vocabulary consists of the word found by people when they are reading. While listening vocabulary is the words that people hear and understand when they are talking to others or listening to radio and television. Speaking vocabulary includes the words people used in their daily life and conversation. The last writing vocabulary that consists of the word people use in writing essays, reports, letter, etc.

In relation to kinds of vocabulary, Nation (2001) states that there are four kinds of vocabulary in the text:

| 1 | High frequency words. These words are almost 80% of running words in the text. |
|---|---|
| 2 | Academic words. Typically, these words make up about 9% of the running words in the text. |
| 3 | Technical words. These words make up about 5% of the running words of the text. |
| 4 | Low frequency words. These ar the words of moderate frequency that did not manage to get into the high frequency list. They make up over 5% of the words in an academic text. |

## 1.5 Teaching and Learning English Vocabulary

## 1.5.1 Teaching  English Vocabulary

The teaching of vocabulary is not easy to do. Some people think that vocabulary teaching only wastes the time because vocabulary number is unlimited. The English teachers had better teach English vocabulary first than other aspect of this language, such as grammar, speaking, reading and writing. If students know more vocabulary, it will be easy for them to learn another aspect of English language.

Vocabulary is a central of English language acquisition, as according to Celce and Murcia (2001. p: 285) vocabulary learning is a central to language acquisition whether the language is first, second, or foreign.

According to Hornby (1995. p: 125), "teaching"  is defined  as giving instruction to somebody"s knowledge, skill, etc. Based on that explanation, teaching vocabulary is an activity where the teacher gives the students knowledge about vocabulary and how to use  it  in daily life.

Harmer (2001: 155) gives the wide explanation about some technique for teaching vocabulary that is summarized as  follows:

| 1. | Demonstration | The teacher demonstrates the language where he/she wants  the  students to study by offering them  there  in action. |
| 1. | Explanation | The teacher explains the construction of language in diagram, using textbook, using board or OHP. |
| 2. | Discovery | The students can be encouraged to understand new language form by discovering them in a test or by looking at |

| | | grammatical evidence in order to work out a grammar rule. |
|---|---|---|
| 3. | Check Question | The teacher can check question to see if students have understood the meaning and use in the text or paragraph |
| 4. | Presentation | The teacher shows the things and does not present words to students, for example, picture, video and also use the mime, action, and gesture to present the words. |

## 1.5.2 Learning English Vocabulary

Vocabulary mastery is an important thing in order to master four major skills such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening. According to Wilkins as stated in Thornbury (2002), "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed."

Moreover, learning vocabulary of foreign language presents the learner with several challenges. As stated in Harmer (2002: 2), the challenges are making the correct connections, understanding the foreign language between the form and the meaning of words, and discriminating the meanings of closely related words.

Learning vocabulary needs a process. In order to make an effective process, the learner should be in the effective condition of acquiring vocabulary mastery. Further, Thornbury (2002: 2) states that the condition should help learners to acquire a critical mass of words to use in both understanding and producing language. Moreover, it will enable them to remember word over time and be able to recall them readily. In addition, it can develop strategies for coping with

gaps in word, including coping with unknown words, or unfamiliar uses of unknown words.

## 1.6 Common mistakes in learning vocabulary

### 1.6.1 Not paying enough attention to pronunciation

Pronunciation is the core foundation of language development,many people often think that only learning to communicate needs to focus on the pronunciation of words. However, in fact, even if you memorize English vocabulary, correct pronunciation will make you remember words longer. The phonetic transcription of the word makes up the reading of the word, if you understand the reading of the word, you will hear other people speak and understand what the speaker is saying. You need to standardize pronunciation right from the start of learning English, to avoid mispronunciation, "Vietnamese" English will make you remember the wrong reading, making it difficult to learn English in the long run.

What will you gain if you understand tens of thousands of words and have profound knowledge of grammar, but when you open your mouth, no one will understand what you are saying? So pay attention to the pronunciation of native speakers, observe their mouth shape, and practice training each sound clearly.

### 1.6.2 Learning vocabulary without purpose

We often make the mistake of learning that we will write down all the words we don't know when we read an article or watch a movie in our notebooks and translate the meaning into Vietnamese. We don't care if the word is used a lot or will never be used. The worse we don't even know how to use that word.

We do not define our vocabulary learning goals to find useful, common words and can manipulate them so that we can remember them longer.

We need to have a goal in learning words, we don't need a large vocabulary but we need the right vocabulary.

### 1.6.3  Not learning words in the context of a sentence

One of the common methods of learning English vocabulary that many of us have used is to learn individual words without context.

We scribble down each word and memorize the meaning of each new word, and then forget it. We are trying to memorize a list of words that are barely related to each other. Have you ever read a text, found every word easy and understood, but couldn't understand what the passage was saying?

Learning words off of lists is not an effective way to increase your understanding of English vocabulary nor a good way to start being able to use those words in your own speaking.

Being able to memorize a long list of single words does not mean that you can always know how to use them in a way that makes sense. It's because to convey your thoughts in a daily conversation, you must learn the way native speakers speak, which means you have to combine individual words in the right order, use the right grammar, and of course, if you only study vocabulary off lists, you won't be likely to know how to do that. Some words have many different meanings. The best way to get through all of the meanings is to learn them in their context. When you learn phrases in context instead of studying single words, you can know the meaning of the word in that sentence.

### 1.6.4  Learn words only through Reading skills, not Speaking skills

We are affected by the passive way of learning in the school years from Elementary to High School when we only learn by reading with our eyes and writing, we spend very little time on listening and speaking practice. The teacher also does not ask us to read new words aloud or read aloud the passages. So we take shape a fear of communication in our mind and add to the lack of environment to communicate. So when we speak English, we can't pop out the words that we have written down because we are used to processing information slowly by translating. Therefore when communicating, our brains

can't process the information to recall the way pronunciation is to pop those words out. The reason is that when we learn vocabulary, we just put them down in our notebooks but forget to read them aloud with frequency many times. Uttering words out loud help combines both auditory and kinesthetic stimuli.

If you repeat a phrase or a word combination containing the new English word by speaking it out loud, you're imprinting that word into your mind and your speech-producing organs.

It means that every time you open your mouth to say that word, you'll just say it instead of 'reading it from your visual memory'!

### 1.6.5  Learning new words without reviewing them

We tend to spend 3-4 hours a day studying hard when we are excited and motivated. Then the next day we may be busy with work, or lose interest, we will again neglect that vocabulary list for a week, even a month. At that time, we still don't remember the word, we quickly forget it and throw it somewhere. We have the habit of always wanting new and difficult things, but even simple words we do not know how to use and use them proficiently. We keep learning new words from new words, but we never review them and the vicious cycle keeps repeating and we never have a solid knowledge base. We need to have a review plan to put them in long-term memory.

Now, let's look at the way our memory actually works. Then we'll understand why this is not the most effective way of learning new words.

German psychologist Herman Ebbinghaus is the author of the well-known Forgetting Curve which demonstrates perfectly how our memory works. Let's say we would memorize 100 new words on a given day (just like when we had to learn vocabulary for a test in school). After just 18 minutes, we would only retain 55 of the words! As you can see in the picture, the curve keeps going

down so the next day we would remember 40 words. After a week, we are only left with 30 of them.



How many %
we remember

Time
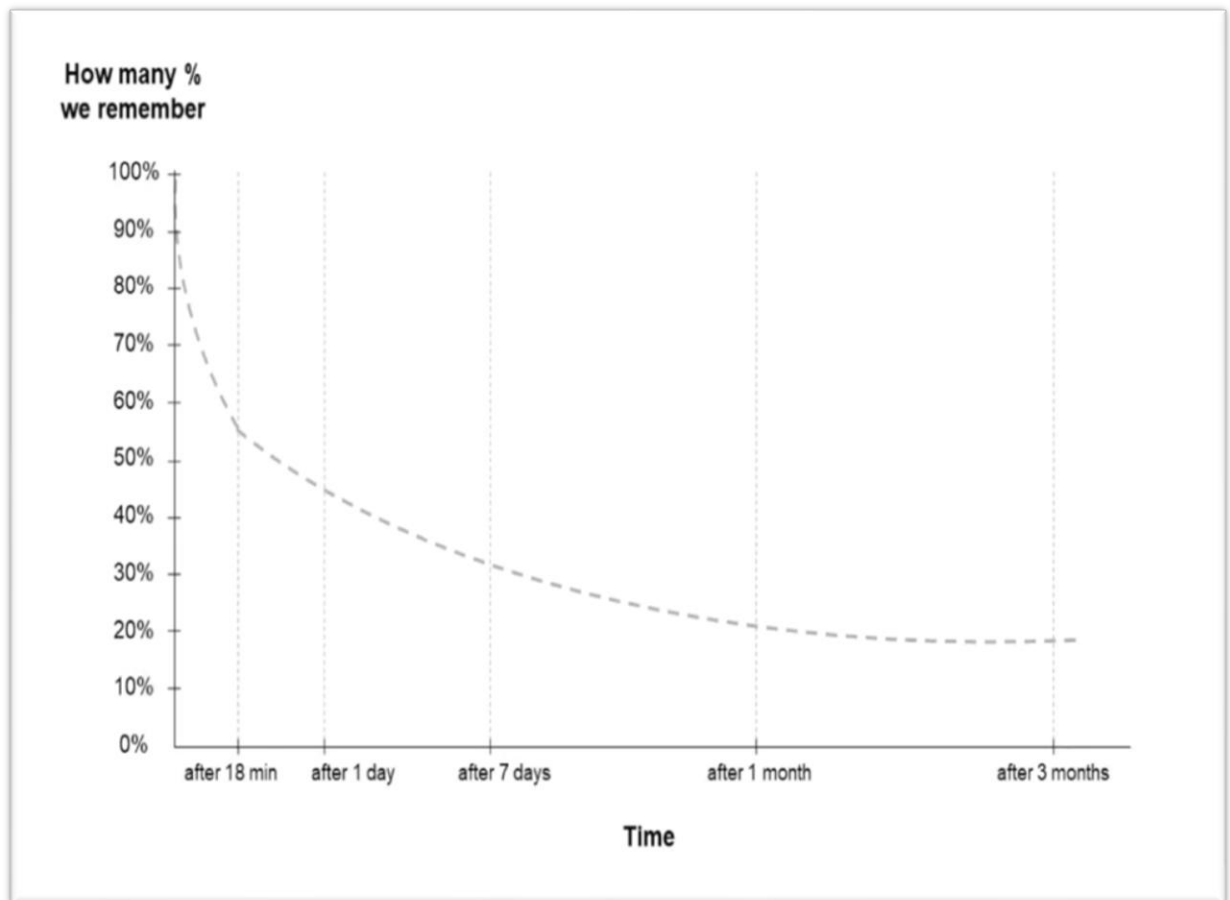
However, **we can easily slow down the Forgetting Curve by simply reviewing the words**, for example after 18 minutes (you can see it in the picture in blue). So now we're able to remember not just 55, but about 70 words the next day.

## How many % we remember
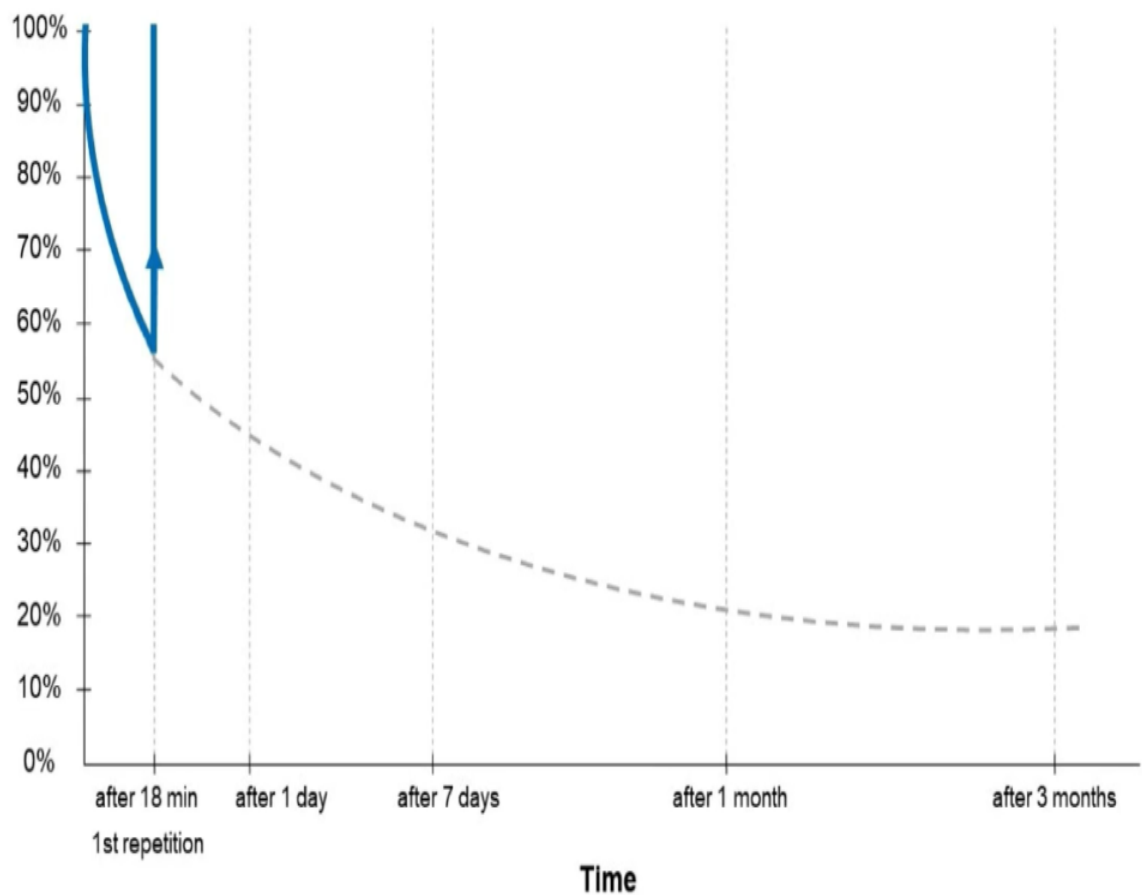


And let's say we're going to repeat the same words again the next day. After one week, we're going to remember about 80% of the words instead of only 30%. That's quite a difference, right?

**How many %
we remember**

100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

after 18 min | after 1 day | after 7 days | after 1 month | after 3 months
1st repetition | 2nd repetition
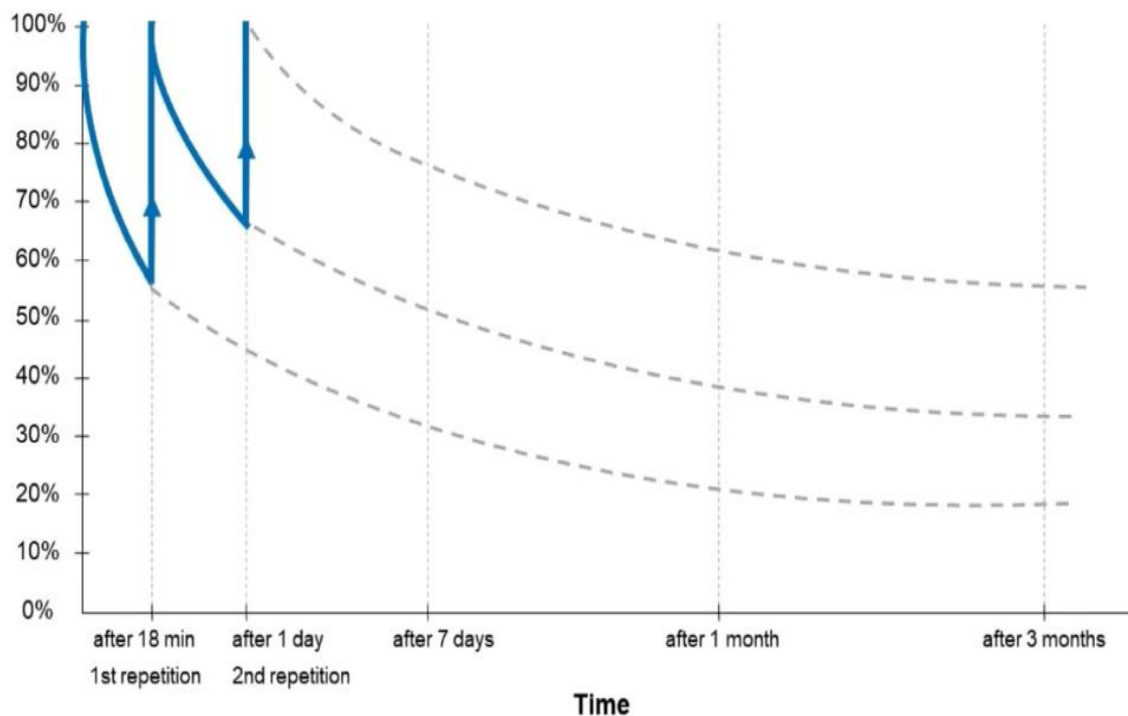
**Time**

When we try to memorize new vocabulary in one sitting without going back to the words over time and revising them, we only remember them for a very short period of time. So the key to making the new words truly stick is to repeat and review them also known as the Spaced Repetition System.

The idea of spaced repetition is to space out your repetitions, or review sessions, so that you are not trying to cram all the knowledge into your brain at once. There are plenty of effective learning methods that are based on the spaced repetition system such as flashcards, both paper and digital, as well the Goldlist Method. This system ensures that the information remains fresh in your mind.

### 1.6.6 Learning too many words at once

Understanding the importance of vocabulary, many learners often set goals and try to learn as many vocabulary words in as short a time as possible (Example: Learn 30 new words in a day). However, this method can backfire for the following reasons:

The cramming, forcing the brain to learn too many words at once can make learners stressed, psychologically pressured, and scared when learning vocabulary.

Learning many words at once can give learners a temporary effect, that is, learners can remember those words in 1 day, 2 days, or 1 week. However, it is difficult for learners to memorize all the daily vocabulary for a long period of time (6 months or 1 year).

This can lead to the result that learners take time to learn, but after a while, some of the learned words often do not remember the meaning, and do not remember how to write or use.

## 1.6.7 Just learning the meaning without knowing the usage

Many learners when learning vocabulary often only focus on learning the meaning and spelling of words. However, learners do not know that there is another equally important part that is the usage and type of words of the vocabulary. Knowing the type of word (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, ...) and how to use it (where the word is usually placed in a sentence, what type of word it can go with, ...) helps people learn to use vocabulary correctly and thus, learners' sentences/sentences make sense and are grammatically correct.

Example: In the sentence: 'It was the most outstanding new building constructed in Paris for two generations

Learners want to learn 3 words: outstanding, construct and generation. In addition to learning the meaning of words, learners should learn more about word types and usage:

✓   Outstanding

Meaning: Prominent, remarkable

Word type: Adjective

Usually before the complement of a noun or after the verb to be to indicate the characteristics of the subject

Read more: Adjectives, adjective classification, usage and examples

✓    Construct

Meaning: Construction

Word Type: Verb

Can be used after the subject, after the relative pronoun or after another verb to indicate the activity of an object in the sentence.

✓    Generation

Meaning: Generation

Word type: Noun (countable)

Can stand as subject, object or unit in a sentence.

## 1.6.8  Testing yourself from the foreign language to your mother tongue

Another mistake that for most of us has been ingrained in our brains since our school years. Testing yourself from the language you're learning to your mother language will only improve your passive vocabulary. By passive vocabulary I mean the words you can understand when you read them or hear them. This will make you feel like you know all the words because you can understand them.

However, when you flip it and start testing yourself from your mother language to your target language, you're going to work on your active vocabulary – meaning the words you can actually use in real life. So make sure you use this way of testing even though it might be harder, to begin with.

## 1.7 Review of previous studies related to common mistakes in learning vocabulary

- Pronunciation and Stress Errors

One of the basic mistakes that non-English major students often encounter is related to pronunciation. English contains many phonemes and syllables that are unfamiliar to Vietnamese learners. **Liu (2011)** pointed out that first-year students face significant difficulties in pronouncing English words with phonemes that do not exist in Vietnamese, especially sounds like /θ/, /ʃ/, /z/, and words with complex stress patterns. This not only affects their ability to communicate effectively but also reduces their confidence in participating in academic activities and real-life conversations.

Moreover, stress errors are another frequent issue. In English, word stress can impact the meaning of words and their use in sentences, while Vietnamese does not have a clear stress system. **Nguyen (2018)** emphasized that first-year students often make mistakes in identifying the correct stress, which leads to mispronunciations of multisyllabic words and, consequently, misunderstandings in communication.

- Incorrect Word Usage in Context

Another common mistake is that students often use vocabulary incorrectly in different contexts. According to **Zhao (2015)**, many students, especially when learning vocabulary, particularly words with multiple meanings, do not pay enough attention to the context in which the word is used, resulting in improper or inaccurate word choices. For example, the words "bored" and "boring" are similar in meaning but are used differently in various contexts. This demonstrates a lack of understanding of word usage in the appropriate context, which is a key issue in improving vocabulary learning for non-English majors.

- Collocation Errors

Collocation refers to the natural pairing of words, and it is one of the most crucial yet often overlooked aspects of vocabulary learning. Studies such as **Nguyen (2017)** show that first-year non-English major students frequently struggle with collocations. Collocations are word combinations that do not directly translate from the native language, and non-English majors tend to use incorrect combinations. For instance, in English, we say "make a decision," but this structure does not have a direct equivalent in Vietnamese. Not understanding the correct use of collocations leads students to use phrases inaccurately, reducing the fluency and correctness of their communication.

- Lack of Proactive Learning of Vocabulary

Another major cause of mistakes in vocabulary learning is the lack of proactive learning strategies. **Bui (2019)** pointed out that many students do not systematically and actively engage in learning vocabulary. Instead, they tend to learn words passively through lesson content without focusing on review and applying the words in real-life situations. This leads to an inability to use the vocabulary they have learned flexibly and effectively in academic and everyday conversations.

Students also fail to adopt effective vocabulary learning techniques, such as using flashcards, learning words in context, or applying new vocabulary in speaking and writing. The absence of these strategies results in less efficient retention and use of vocabulary.

- Grammatical and Sentence Structure Errors

Grammatical errors are another important factor influencing vocabulary use among first-year students. **Pham (2018)** found that many students make mistakes when combining vocabulary with complex grammatical structures.

Using words incorrectly within a grammatical context can lead to ungrammatical or unclear sentences. For example, students may struggle with verb tense usage or combining vocabulary with prepositions in more complex sentence structures, causing confusion and misunderstanding in communication.

- Influence of the Native Language

The native language plays a crucial role in vocabulary learning. **Tran (2020)** pointed out that similarities and differences between Vietnamese and English can affect how students learn and use vocabulary. For example, there are many words in Vietnamese that are similar in meaning to English words but are used differently or do not have direct equivalents. Learning vocabulary through direct translation from Vietnamese to English often results in misinterpretation or inappropriate word choices. This can create difficulty in mastering English vocabulary accurately, as students tend to rely too heavily on their native language.

- Lack of Knowledge about Effective Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Finally, research by **Huynh (2016)** showed that many non-English major students lack knowledge about effective vocabulary learning strategies. Without a systematic approach or specific learning techniques, students find it difficult to retain and use vocabulary long-term. Strategies such as learning vocabulary in context, studying vocabulary by themes, or using spaced repetition methods are crucial for effective vocabulary acquisition, but many students fail to apply these methods.

# CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 2.1 Introduction

Among research methods, survey research is one of the most important and useful areas of measurement in applied social research. Survey research is simply a systematic investigation conducted through a survey. In other words, it is a type of research conducted by administering surveys to respondents. Surveys have served as a great way to sample opinions and find out what people think about different contexts and situations. Applying this to research means you can gather information directly from people affected by specific contexts. One of the strongest arguments for survey research is that it helps writers collect the most authentic data sets in a systematic investigation. Survey research is a portal to collect specific information directly from identified respondents.

Based on the advantages of survey research, the writer decided to use a survey questionnaire as a main technique along with other methods to collect information for the graduate paper. In this chapter, the writer describes the context of the research (students and their background, resources, and materials), resources and materials, data collection tools, data collection procedures, and integration consistent with the study.

## 2.2 Researcher

The research was conducted by a student who is in his final year of school Hai Phong University of Management and Technology. She always tries to find the most suitable vocabulary learning method that can help all students learn better. Therefore, the researcher has learned the common mistakes when learning vocabulary and proposed some solutions to help the academy learn vocabulary effectively and remember it longer. The research applies the following criteria: easy to learn, easy to find, interesting, and effective. The author can take some more measures to strengthen students' passion for listening, make students love learning vocabulary, and can be applied in the future.

## 2.3 Participants

The study was carried out with the participation of forty students of Hai Phong University of Management and Technology. They are between the ages of 19 and 21. Most of them have studied English for seven years (4 years in middle school and 3 years in high school). However, their English background is quite similar because they almost come from different rural areas in the North and are influenced by the English teaching program for high school students. Previously, students did not have many opportunities to practice their English skills. Therefore, their English proficiency is still limited and they face many difficulties in learning.

## 2.4 Resources and Materials

To conduct this research effectively, a variety of resources and materials were utilized to collect and analyze data regarding vocabulary learning mistakes among first-year non-English majors at Hai Phong Management and Technology University. These include:

2.4.1 Primary Resources

- Questionnaires: A structured questionnaire was designed and distributed to a sample of first-year non-English major students. The questionnaire included both multiple-choice and open-ended questions aimed at identifying common vocabulary learning habits, difficulties, and mistakes.
- Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected students and English lecturers to gain deeper insights into the challenges students face and teaching strategies currently employed.
- Classroom Observations: Several English language classes were observed to examine student behavior, vocabulary learning practices, and common errors made during lessons.

2.4.2 Secondary Resources

- Textbooks and Course Materials: English language textbooks and vocabulary workbooks used in the university's curriculum were analyzed to understand the types of vocabulary students are exposed to.
- Previous Studies and Academic Journals: Literature on vocabulary acquisition, common ESL learner errors, and strategies for vocabulary instruction were reviewed to support the theoretical framework and to compare with findings from this study.
- Online Tools and Dictionaries: Digital tools such as electronic dictionaries, vocabulary learning apps (e.g., Quizlet, Duolingo), and language learning websites were reviewed to assess their role and effectiveness in vocabulary acquisition.

These resources and materials provided a comprehensive basis for understanding the current state of vocabulary learning and the nature of errors made by students, allowing the researcher to propose relevant and practical solutions.

## 2.5 Instruments for collecting data

To get the desired data, the data was collected through data questionnaire so that they could find out the difficulties encountered by students in learning vocabulary.

## 2.6 Data collection procedure

The Students were given a survey questionnaire by the researcher after the class period ended. Students will ticked the questions they find true with the difficulties they encountered in the process of learning vocabulary. In addition, individual interviews were conducted to explore the attitudes and perspectives of the participants.

## 2.7 Conclusion

This chapter describes the method of surveying students by using a questionnaire to answer the research questions mentioned in the first chapter. On the basis of the mentioned subjects, the outstanding findings serving the research questions will be realized and presented in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

## 3.1 The design of the survey questionnaires

The survey questionnaire is given to students to study the reality of learning English vocabulary at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology. Students were asked to tick the most suitable answers which correspond with their opinions. The questionnaire includes 10 questions as follows:

**Question 1**  What is your major?

**Question 2**  How many years have you studied English?

**Question 3**  How do you rate your current English vocabulary level?

**Question 4**  How do you usually learn new English vocabulary?

**Question 5**  How often do you review vocabulary after learning it?

**Question 6** Which vocabulary mistakes do you often make?

**Question 7**  In which skill do you make the most vocabulary mistakes?

**Question 8** Why do you think you make these mistakes?

**Question 9** Do you think your current method of learning vocabulary is effective?

**Question 10** What support do you need to improve your vocabulary?

## 3.2 Data analysis

### 3.2.1 The result from the students' English learning time

**Student's English learning time**



100%

■ 0-3 years     ■ 3-7 years     ■ more than 7 years
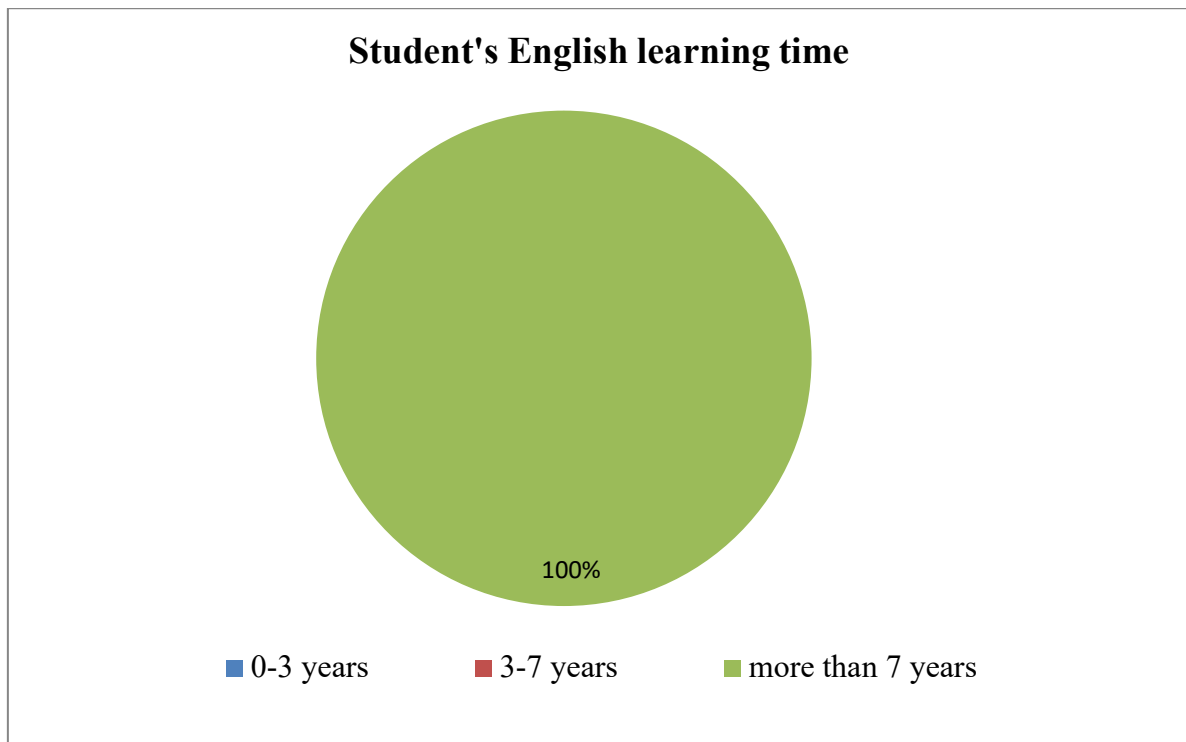
**Chart 1: Student's English learning time**

The chart above shows that 100% of the respondents have studied English for more than 7 years. That's quite a long time for students, which proves that learning English has become very important. The fact that most students are exposed to English at an early age shows the importance and necessity of English when the English program is taught from primary school. Moreover, it is a compulsory subject in most schools from elementary to university. Therefore, they are aware that English is really important and learn it as a second language.

**3.2.2 The results of students having problems in learning vocabulary**

**Student's problems when learning English vocabulary**

0
5
25
70

■ Often    ■ Sometimes    ■ Rarely    ■ Never
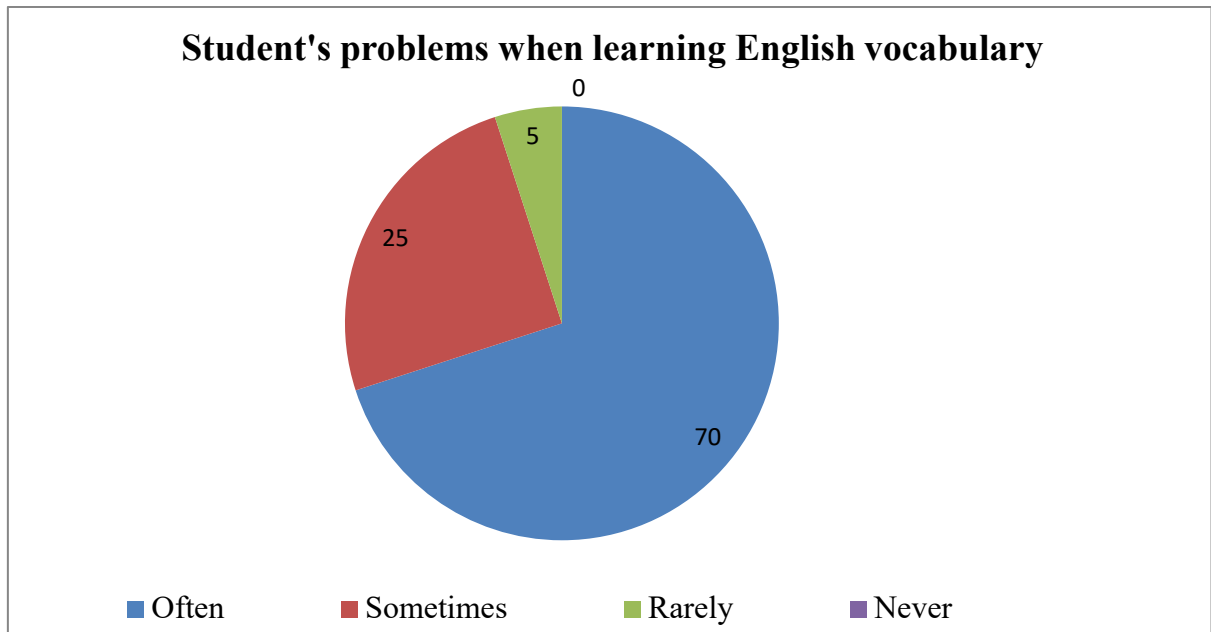
**Chart 2 : Student's problems when learning English vocabulary**

The chart above shows that most students have difficulty in learning English vocabulary. From the chart, we see that a large number of students accounting for 70% of students often have problems in learning vocabulary, nearly 3 times higher than the number of students with occasional problems (25%). This shows that it is urgent to help students realize their mistakes in the learning process and take measures to improve. Only a small number of students rarely have problems, accounting for 5%, 5 times lower than occasional problems.
It can be seen that learning vocabulary is still a challenge for students and no one has never had difficulty with them when there is a rate of (0%).

### 3.2.3 The results on the frequency of students learning new words.
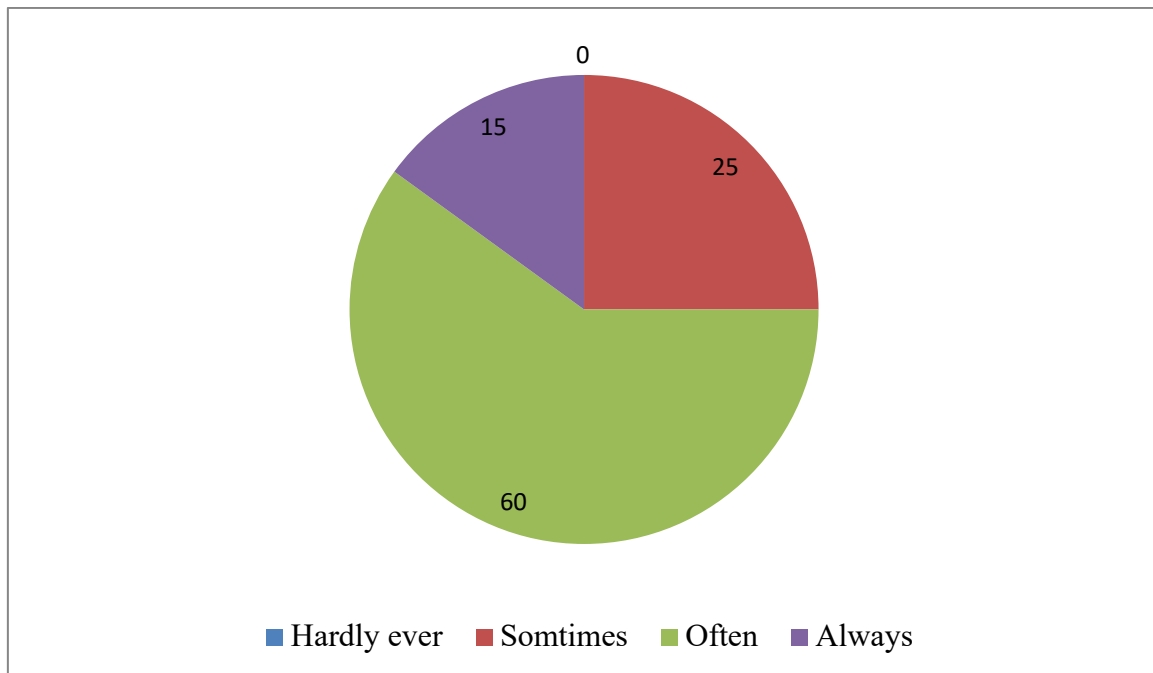


**Chart 3 :Student's learning new words frequency**

Looking at the chart, we can see that the percentage of students who often learn new words is the highest proportion at 60%, this number accounts for more than half of the total surveyed students, showing that students pay great attention to learning new words. The second highest with 25% is the percentage of students who only learn new words occasionally, which is almost half lower than the percentage of students who learn them regularly. While the percentage of students who always learn new words is the lowest at 15%, which is four times lower than students who regularly learn vocabulary. There is no choice for rarely learning new words at 0%.

### 3.2.4. The results of the student's vocabulary learning time per day.



**Student's daily vocabulary study time**

5
15
25
55

■ 15 minutes   ■ 30 minutes   ■ 1 hour   ■ more than an hour
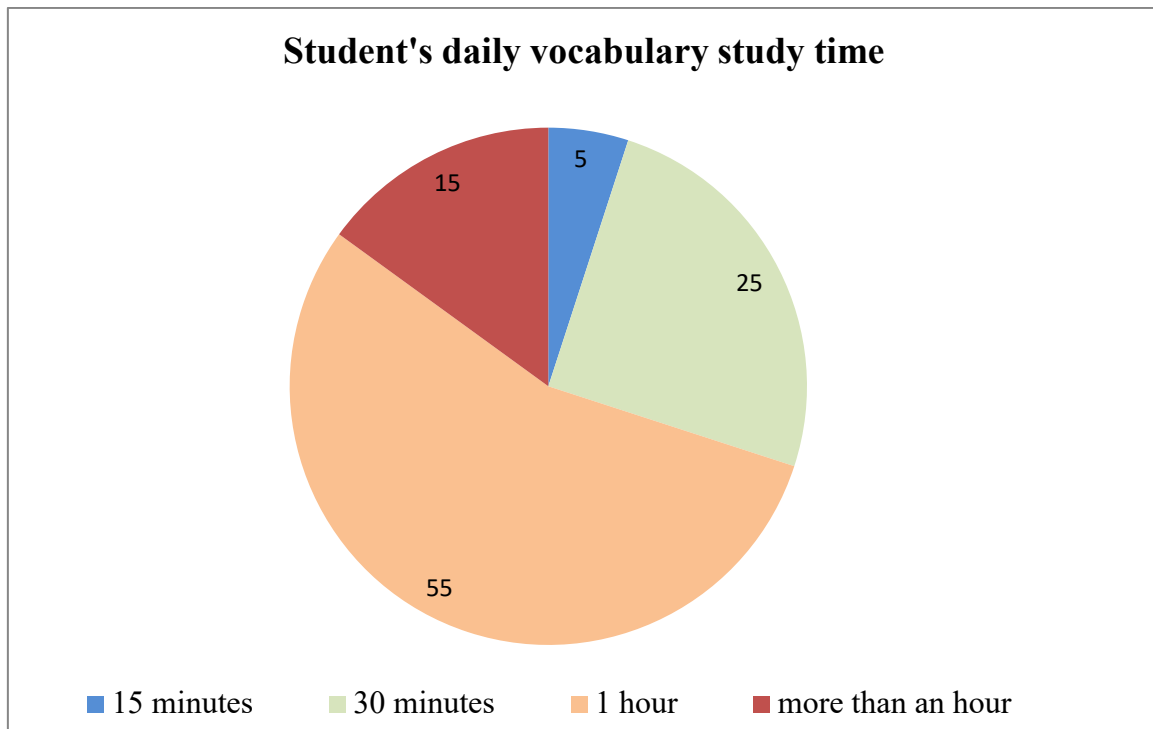
**Chart 4 : Student's daily vocabulary study time**

Through the chart, it can be seen that the percentage of students who spend an hour a day studying is the largest proportion with 55%, accounting for more than half. Ranked second with a quarter of students spending 30 minutes a day learning vocabulary, this figure is approximately half of the students spending 1-hour learning vocabulary and 10% higher than students spending more than 1 hour with less than a fifth(15%). The percentage of students who spend 15 minutes studying is the lowest, making up 5%.

**3.2.5 The results on the main problems in students' English learning.**

**The main problem in students' English learning**
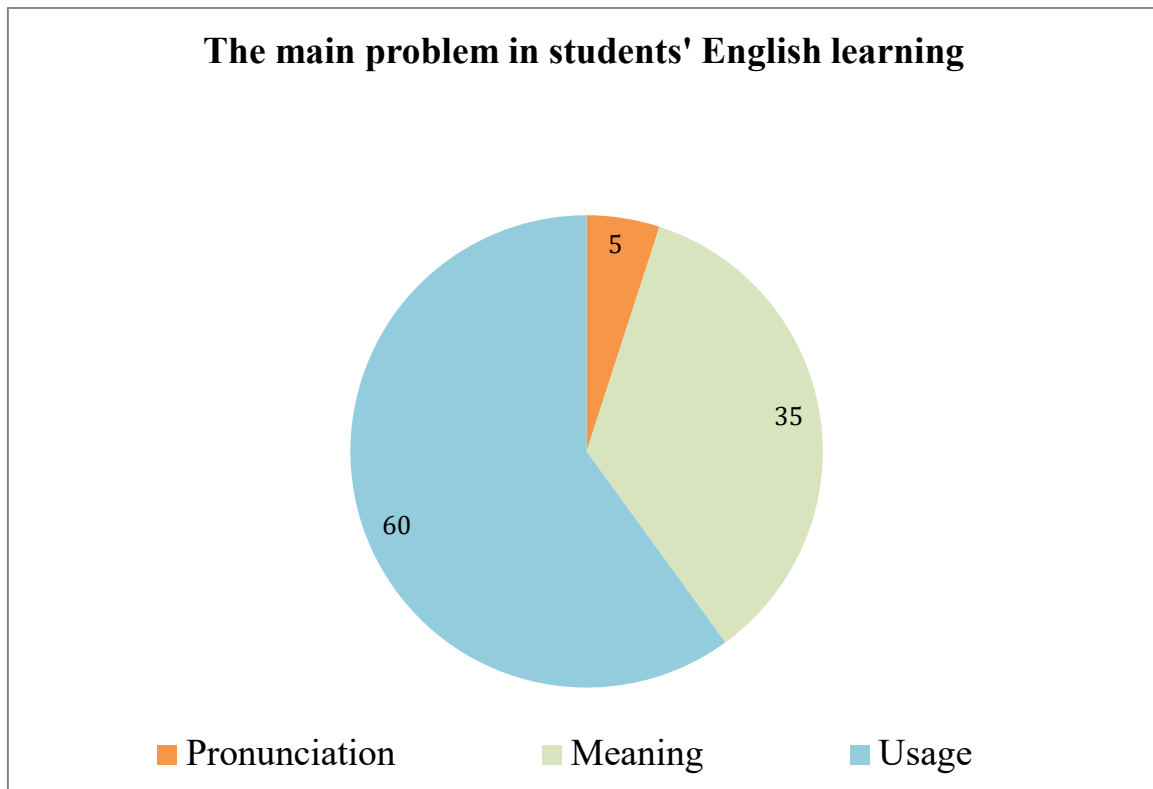


**Chart 5 : The main problem in students' English learning.**

The results from the graph show that the biggest problem for students is usage. The number of students with problems is the usage with the highest percentage of 60%, while the meaning is more than a third (35%) and approximately more than half of the percentage of students having problems with usage. The remaining small fraction is 5% of students who have difficulties with pronunciation and this figure is lower than seven times compare with problems with meaning.

**3.2.6 The results on how students learn vocabulary.**



**Student's ways of learning vocabulary**

| Category | Value |
|---|---|
| Other | 2 |
| Make sentence with a new word | 10 |
| Pronounce the word | 15 |
| Translation from English to Vietnamese | 30 |
| Learn by heart | 43 |
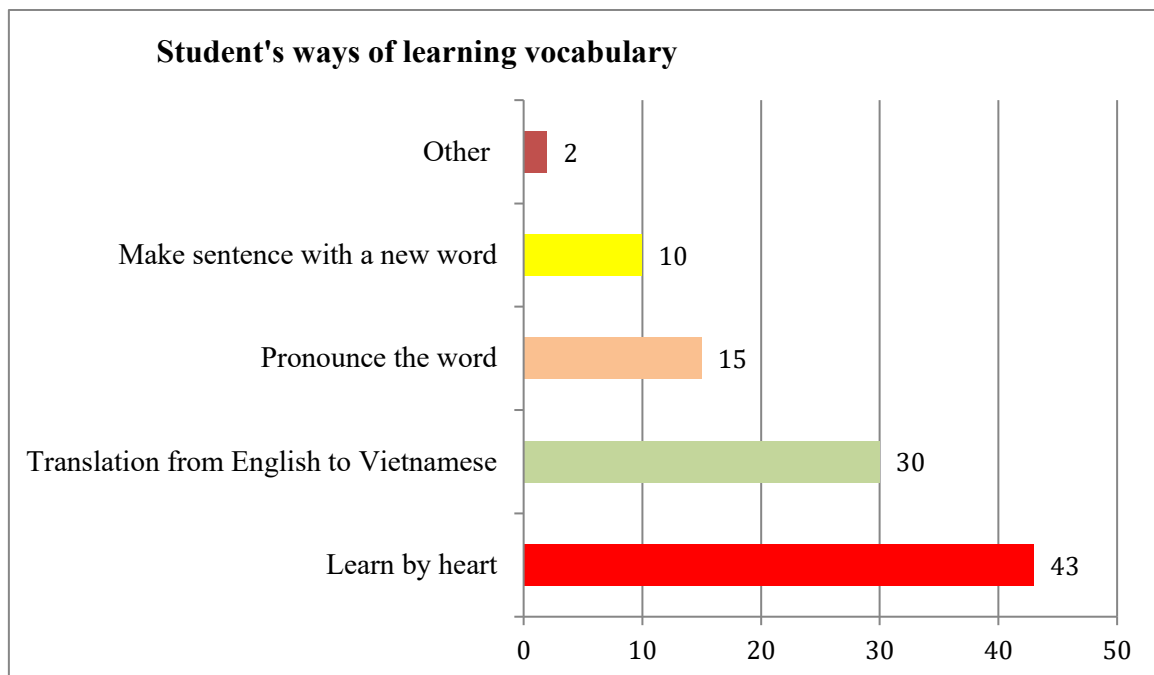
**Chart 6 : Student's ways of learning vocabulary**

One of the popular ways for students to learn vocabulary is to try to memorize them all by heart, this learning method is applied by 45% of students, accounting for the largest percentage. However, this is a rather time-consuming and inefficient way because the brain will also forget when they are not repeated.

Translating from English to Vietnamese is also the second most popular way for students when up to 30 percent choose this way. This habit makes the information transmission process much slower. This is the opposite of the method that is encouraged to think in English. This method is twice as high as learning to pronounce the word (15%), and 3 times higher than forming a sentence from a new word. The remaining 2% choose to study in another way.

**3.2.7 The results on the frequency of students' vocabulary review.**

**Vocabulary review frequency of students**

| Frequency | Value |
|-----------|-------|
| Rarely | 55 |
| Sometimes | 25 |
| Usually | 15 |
| Always | 5 |
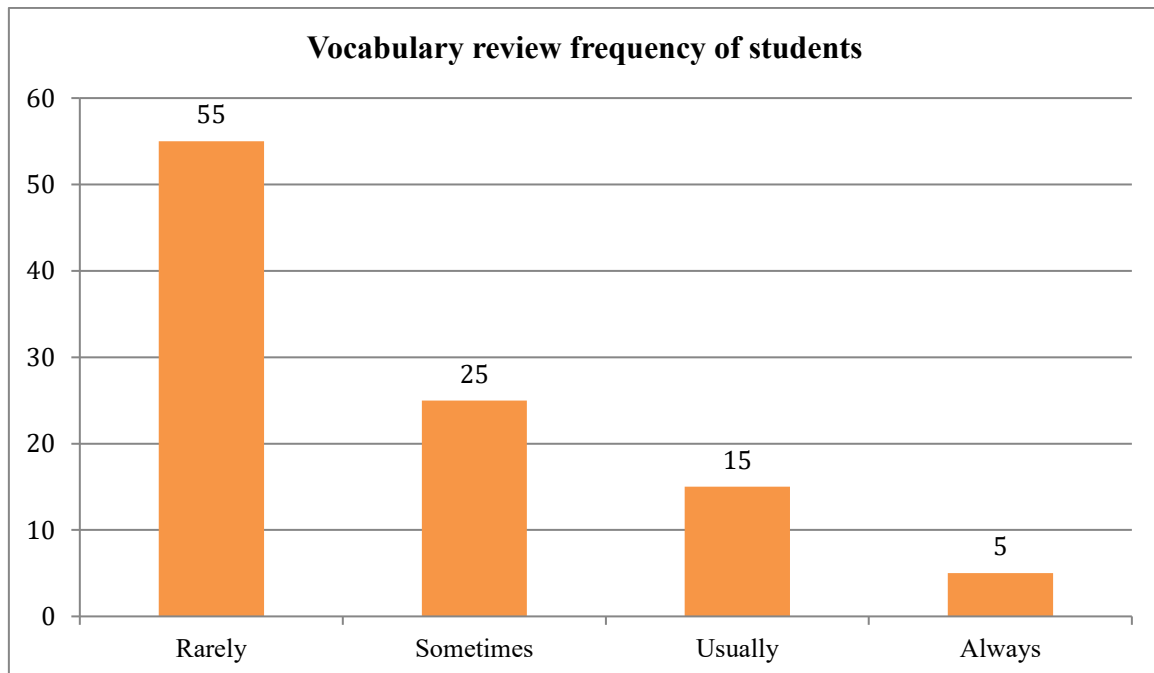
**Chart 7 : Vocabulary review frequency of students**

From the chart, it shows that the percentage of students who rarely review vocabulary is the highest with more than half 55%, this is also one of the main reasons why we learn many words but can't remember them. The number of students who occasionally review vocabulary accounts for the second highest percentage, approximately half of the number of students who do not almost review words. The remaining 20% of students who regularly reread accounted for 15% and 5% belonged to students who always revise.

**3.2.8 The results of the survey that students often learn vocabulary with someone or alone.**
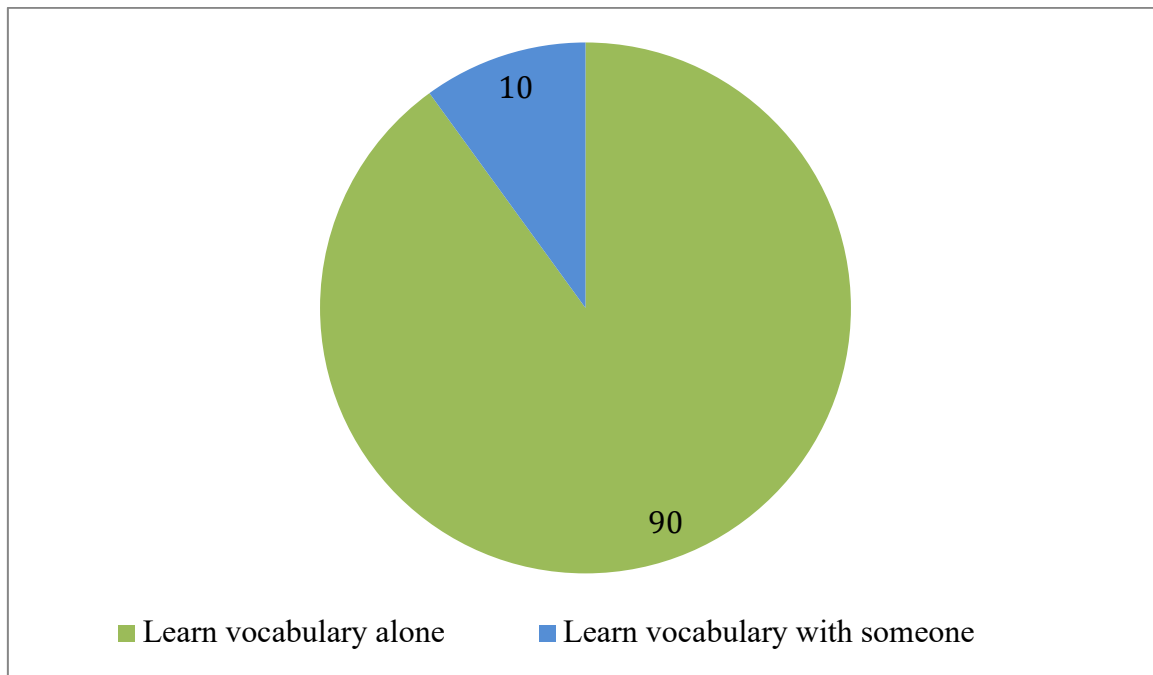


**Chart 8 :Student's often learn vocabulary with someone or alone**

The given pie chart shows there is a significant difference between the number of students having a tendency to learn vocabulary alone and with someone when a large proportion of students (90%) like to learn alone while only 10% choose to learn vocabulary with someone.

This also shows a limitation in the use of communication skills in the way students learn. Learning with friends can be a fun way as we can watch and discuss episodes together that can help us practice vocabulary contained in conversational contexts.

**3.2.9 The results on students' habit of doing vocabulary exercises.**



20

80

■ Yes    ■ No
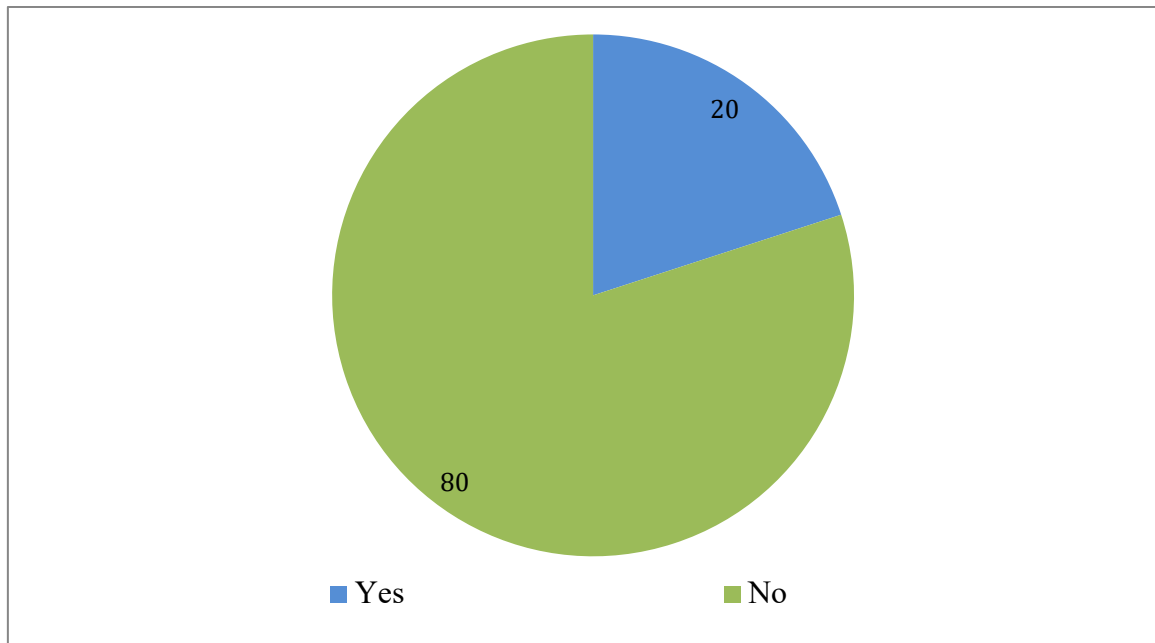
**Chart 9 : Students' habit of doing vocabulary exercises**

The graph shows that students who do not regularly do vocabulary exercises account for a very large percentage of 80%, this figure is 4 times higher than students who often do vocabulary exercises (20%). That is also the reason why we learn many words but do not know how to use them, their location, and the type of words. Doing vocabulary exercises helps us remember the spelling of words and master the usage of words.

## 3.2.10 The result of the way learning that students want to learn in the future.

**Ways to learn English students want to learn in the future.**
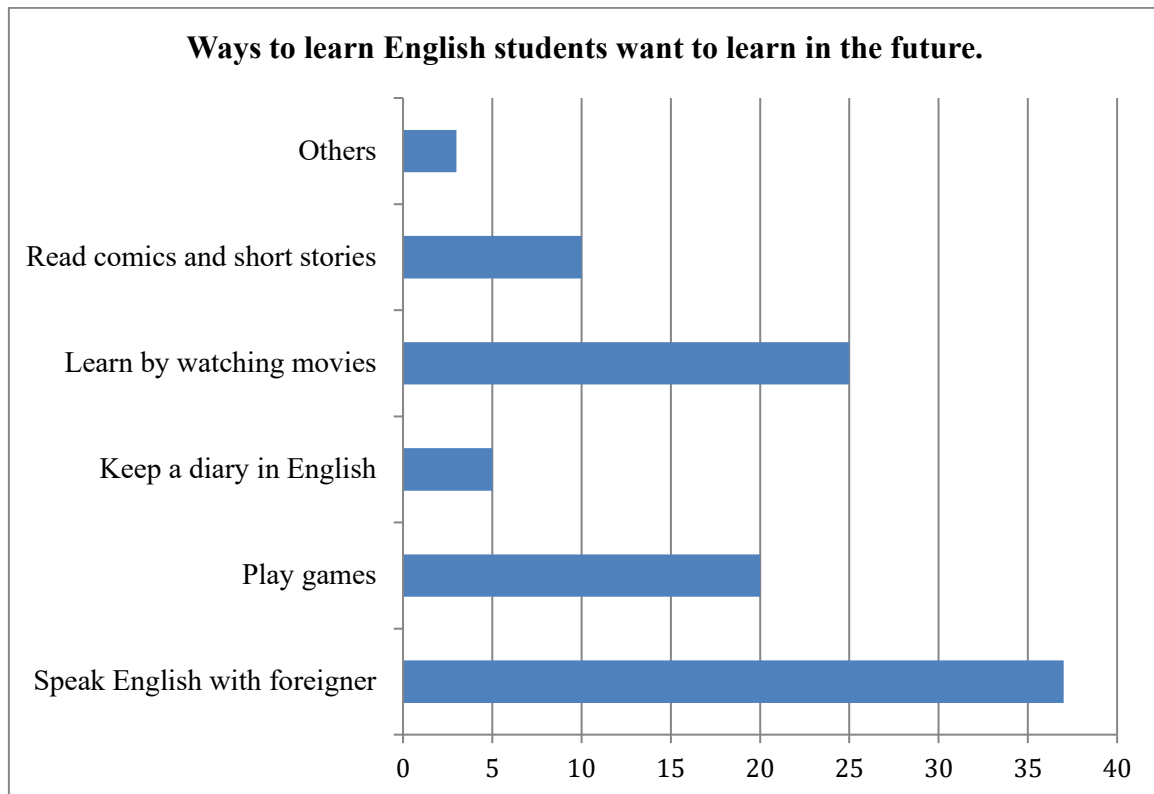


**Chart 10 :Ways to learn English students want to learn in the future**

The chart shows that learning to talk with foreigners is the most chosen way by students with 37%, showing that students want an environment to communicate and practice reflexes. Rank the second highest by watching movies with 25% student votes. Learning in this way helps us relax but still can practice speaking skills according to the Shadowing method. While the rate of wanting to learn by playing games is 20%, this figure is more than double that of reading comics and short stories (10%). Keeping a diary in English accounts for only 5%, the rest belongs to other ways of learning.

## 3.3 Discussions of the Findings of the Study

The survey results were answered by 40 non-English majors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology. 100% of the students who responded had studied English for more than 7 years and this was convenient for teachers when students were exposed to the very basics of English. But they still have difficulty learning vocabulary when 70% of students often have problems. It proves that although in learning English for a long time, students have not found an effective way to learn vocabulary. Besides still 5% of students rarely have problems, maybe they have difficulty in memorizing Vocabulary.

When asked about the frequency of learning new words, 75% of students answered that they often learn new words, which shows that students understand the importance of vocabulary when no one rarely learns new words. But this may also be the mistake that students make when they often learn new words without reviewing the old ones. Along with being aware of the need to learn vocabulary actively, the survey showed that 70% of students spend at least 1 hour a day studying, showing that a large number of students maintain the habit of daily vocabulary learning, this is a good sign when they are amateur students. Only a small number of students (5%) spend 15 minutes learning vocabulary.

Research results show that more than half of students have major problems with usage (60%), which shows that we do not have a deep understanding and mastery of the words we learn, a not small percentage when The meaning of words is also a big problem for students when this number is close to one a third of the total number of students surveyed. Going deeper, it can be seen that students are still learning in the traditional way when nearly half of the students (45%) memorize new words and 30% choose to translate from English to Vietnamese. Only 10% of students apply new words to practice by making sentences. Besides, students' vocabulary review is still limited when up to 55%

of students rarely review while the number of students who regularly and always revise, is 15% and 5% respectively. In addition, it can be seen that students often learn vocabulary alone when this rate is up to 90%, which shows that the slower a student's vocabulary improvement is, the more vocabulary learning with others can help them recognize. make mistakes in their learning. Next, students are also not enthusiastic about doing exercises when the percentage of students who often do exercises is only 20%, not practicing vocabulary exercises regularly will not help students know how to interact much with other subjects. post format to be able to understand how to use it and avoid mistakes. Although they face many difficulties when learning vocabulary, it can be seen from the survey that they want to improve their vocabulary through the learning methods that they want to learn in the future when 37% choose to talk with other people. abroad, 25% and 20% of students want to learn vocabulary by watching movies and playing games.

# CHAPTER 4 : SOME SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE LEARNING VOCABULARY FOR THE FIRST-YEAR NON-ENGLISH MAJORS AT HAI PHONG UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

## 4.1 For Students

In order to enhance vocabulary learning, it is essential for students to actively engage in strategies that will help them retain, understand, and use new vocabulary effectively. The following suggestions are tailored for first-year non-English majors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology to improve their vocabulary acquisition:

### 4.1.1  Reading and Listening actively

**Reading widely:** Students should make a habit of reading a variety of texts, including newspapers, magazines, academic articles, and novels. Exposure to diverse vocabulary in context helps students grasp the meaning of words more easily and strengthens their ability to remember and use new terms.

**Listening to English media:** Engaging with English media such as podcasts, news reports, movies, and songs can also be beneficial. This helps students hear words in natural contexts, improving both their listening skills and vocabulary acquisition.

### 4.1.2 Using Vocabulary Journals

**Keeping a vocabulary journal:** Students should maintain a personal vocabulary notebook where they can jot down new words they encounter during class, while reading, or from listening activities. For each word, they should write the definition, an example sentence, and any synonyms or antonyms. Reviewing these journals regularly will help reinforce their understanding and recall of the words.

**Thematic word lists:** Organizing vocabulary into themes or topics (e.g., business vocabulary, environmental terms, daily life phrases) can make learning more structured and provide better context for understanding how certain words are used in specific situations.

### 4.1.3 Active Usage of New Vocabulary

**Using words in context:** Students should aim to use newly learned vocabulary in both speaking and writing exercises. This could be through class discussions, debates, or writing short essays. The more students actively use the vocabulary in practical situations, the more likely they are to retain it.

**Peer interaction:** Engaging with classmates in group activities or study sessions can encourage students to use new vocabulary in a supportive and interactive environment. Peer feedback is also a valuable tool for improving vocabulary usage.

### 4.1.4 Implementing Mnemonics and Visualization

**Mnemonics:** Creating memorable associations between new words and their meanings can help students recall vocabulary more easily. For example, associating a word with a mental image, a personal experience, or a rhyme can make the word stick in their memory.

**Visualization techniques:** Students can benefit from visualizing the meaning of words by connecting them to pictures, diagrams, or mind maps. This technique can help create a mental framework that links the word to its meaning and usage, improving retention.

### 4.1.5 Learning Word Families and Collocations

**Word families:** Focusing on word families (e.g., act, action, active, activity) can help students learn several related words at once. Understanding how a

root word changes with different prefixes and suffixes gives students a broader vocabulary base.

**Collocations:** Encouraging students to learn common word combinations (collocations) is another effective strategy. For example, knowing that we say "strong coffee" but not "powerful coffee" can help students sound more natural in their speech and writing.

### 4.1.6 Using Technology and Online Resources

**Vocabulary learning apps and websites:** There are many apps and websites designed specifically to help students improve their vocabulary. Tools like Anki, Quizlet, or Memrise allow students to practice new words through flashcards, quizzes, and spaced repetition, which can enhance memory retention.

**Online dictionaries and thesauruses:** Encouraging students to use online dictionaries such as Cambridge, Oxford, or Merriam-Webster can help them not only understand the meanings of new words but also hear correct pronunciations and explore synonyms and antonyms.

### 4.1.7 Reviewing and Practicing regularly

**Spaced repetition:** Students should regularly review the vocabulary they have learned over time. Spaced repetition techniques, where words are revisited at increasing intervals, can be highly effective in ensuring long-term retention.

**Self-assessment and reflection:** Regular self-assessment through quizzes, vocabulary tests, or informal conversations with peers can help students gauge their progress and identify areas that need improvement.

## 4.2 For Teachers

Teachers play a crucial role in guiding students to effectively acquire and use new vocabulary. The following suggestions are aimed at instructors at Hai Phong University of Management and Technology to help enhance vocabulary learning for first-year non-English majors:

### 4.2.1 Creating a Vocabulary-Rich Classroom Environment

**Exposure to new words:** Teachers should incorporate a wide range of vocabulary into lessons and encourage its use across different contexts. By exposing students to new words in various forms—written, spoken, and contextualized—students will gradually build a stronger vocabulary base.

**Word of the day/week:** Introduce a "word of the day" or "word of the week" in class. Teachers can select a word and display it on the board, along with its definition, pronunciation, and example sentences. Throughout the week, students can use this word in their speaking and writing assignments. This can be a fun and engaging way to continuously expose students to new vocabulary.

### 4.2.2 Encouraging Active Participation

**Interactive activities:** Teachers should design classroom activities that actively engage students with new vocabulary. Activities such as role-plays, debates, discussions, and group presentations give students the opportunity to use vocabulary in real-world contexts. This fosters deeper understanding and encourages them to use vocabulary dynamically.

**Task-based learning:** Use task-based language learning, where students complete real-world tasks (e.g., preparing a report, conducting a survey) using new vocabulary. This method encourages students to use the language naturally while developing their vocabulary.

### 4.2.3 Teaching Vocabulary in Context

**Contextualized learning:** Teaching vocabulary in context is one of the most effective ways for students to learn and retain words. Rather than just teaching isolated words, teachers should focus on phrases, sentences, and situations in which the vocabulary is used. This will help students understand not only the meaning but also the nuances of word choice and usage.

**Collocations and chunks:** Teachers should introduce common collocations (e.g., "make an effort," "take part in") and fixed phrases or chunks (e.g., "I believe that," "I agree with") that are frequently used in spoken and written language. These groups of words are easier for students to remember and use correctly in conversation or writing.

### 4.2.4 Implementing Vocabulary-Rich Materials

**Supplementary materials:** Teachers can enhance their lessons by using supplementary materials like authentic texts (newspapers, websites, podcasts, etc.), as well as visual aids like infographics, diagrams, or videos. These materials provide a rich source of vocabulary and show how language is used in various contexts, making learning more engaging.

**Vocabulary-focused exercises:** In addition to traditional grammar and reading exercises, teachers should include vocabulary-focused tasks like fill-in-the-blanks, matching exercises, or word association games. These exercises help reinforce word meaning, spelling, and pronunciation in a fun and interactive way.

### 4.2.5 Encouraging Independent Learning

**Promote self-directed learning:** Encourage students to take responsibility for their own vocabulary learning. Teachers can guide students in using online

resources such as dictionary apps, vocabulary-building websites, or spaced repetition systems like Anki. Teachers can also assign tasks that require students to independently find and learn new words.

**Guide students in using vocabulary notebooks:** In addition to promoting vocabulary journals for students, teachers can suggest specific methods for using the journals effectively. For example, encouraging students to organize words alphabetically, thematically, or by frequency of use can help improve recall and retention.

### 4.2.6 Providing Feedback and Correction

**Constructive feedback:** Teachers should give students regular feedback on their vocabulary use, both in written and spoken form. When students make mistakes, teachers can gently correct them and provide alternatives that would sound more natural. This helps students improve their vocabulary and understand the nuances of word choice.

**Encouraging self-reflection:** Teachers can incorporate self-assessment tools like quizzes or reflective journaling to help students monitor their vocabulary progress. By encouraging students to assess their own vocabulary strengths and weaknesses, teachers foster independent learning and help students take ownership of their learning journey.

### 4.2.7 Using Technology and Digital Tools

**Incorporate digital tools for vocabulary learning:** Teachers should integrate technology into their lessons. Using digital flashcards, vocabulary-building apps (such as Quizlet), or platforms for collaborative learning (like Google Classroom) can make vocabulary learning more interactive and engaging. Teachers can set up quizzes or games that allow students to practice new words in a fun and competitive way.

**Interactive online activities:** Organize online challenges or group tasks where students can work together to learn vocabulary, such as collaborative word maps, online discussions, or creating shared vocabulary glossaries. These activities not only help students learn new words but also promote communication and teamwork.

### 4.2.8 Motivating Students to Learn

**Gamification:** Gamifying vocabulary learning can make it more exciting and less monotonous. Teachers can create games like word bingo, crossword puzzles, or vocabulary races where students compete in groups or individually to recall and use new words. Rewarding progress and achievements can further motivate students to learn and use new vocabulary.

**Real-world relevance:** Teachers should regularly emphasize the real-world applications of the vocabulary students are learning. By showing how words are used in real-life situations (e.g., in the workplace, social settings, or media), teachers can motivate students by helping them see the value of expanding their vocabulary.

### 4.2.9 Differentiating Instructions

**Catering to different learning styles:** Not all students learn the same way, so it is important for teachers to vary their methods of teaching vocabulary. Some students may benefit from visual aids, others from hands-on activities, while some may learn best through auditory input. Teachers should try to address the diverse learning preferences in their classrooms by using a mix of techniques.

**Scaffold learning:** Teachers can scaffold vocabulary learning by providing students with easier tasks first and gradually increasing the complexity. For example, introducing high-frequency words before moving on to more

specialized vocabulary ensures that students build a strong foundation before tackling advanced terms.

# PART 3: CONCLUSION

## 1. Overview of the study

To reach what the author aimed in this study, from facing a lot of difficulties in learning vocabulary along with a deep awareness that it is necessary to change old habits in learning vocabulary. The author decided to conduct the research with the desire to find out the common mistakes that students make in learning vocabulary as well as suggest some solutions to improve their vocabulary. The study consists of three main parts. Part I introduces the research work. It introduces the reader to basic information about the reason for doing this thesis, how to do it, and the purpose of doing it. Part II is the development part of the thesis consisting of 4 chapters. The first chapter provides the reader with an overview of the theoretical foundation on which this research is based. These include definitions of vocabulary , roles of vocabulary, vocabulary learning strategies, kinds of vocabulary ..., review of previous studies related to common mistakes in learning vocabulary, and common mistakes when learning vocabulary by students. The next chapter introduces the method applied in the thesis. This is an action study with definitions and procedures. The techniques used in this essay such as data collection and data analysis can be found here. Based on the literature, the survey questionnaire is designed for students, and using the data analysis method, the results are found and presented in chapter three. Chapter 4 proposes survey-based solutions to help students learn vocabulary more effectively. The last part is the summary of the previous parts and chapters. It is also the part the concluding marks are drawn out and pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research are presented.

## 2  Limitations of the study.

Although the study has certain strong points such as collection methods, and 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 shortcomings. First of all, due to the limited time, and experience to some extent, the researcher could not conduct other methods such as classroom observation, and interviews which can make the obtained results more reliable. Due to limited time, researchers could not experiment with the proposed solutions to learn vocabulary with research participants to verify and find a highly effective method. Furthermore, the techniques proposed in this study were selected from various limited but reliable sources. Overcoming the above limitation, the results that the topic brings will be more practical and more applicable. Despite the limitations mentioned, I hope that this exploratory study will contribute to improving the English vocabulary learning situation of non-English major students of Hai Phong University of Management and Technology.

**3.Suggestions for the further study.**

Because of the limitation, this study could not cover all aspects of the study. Besides, the study only focuses on common mistakes and some suggested solutions for first-year non-English majors to help them improve their vocabulary. Moreover, for further studies, to get better results, the researcher should invite more participants, and the data collection method along with experimenting with the above suggestions with students so that learning vocabulary is no longer an obstacle. All in all, despite the study, can avoid to the limitation, the research has been completed under the guidance of the supervisor and self-effort. With the above limitations, I hope there will be more in-depth research on effective learning English vocabulary methods to help Vietnamese students overcome the challenges of learning English more easily.

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# APPENDIX: STUDENTS' SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS
## (ENGLISH VERSION)

Dear friends,

I need to find out how you guys learn vocabulary. Please tick the answer that best describes your ideas and add a final comment at the bottom of the sheet if you want.

Thank you for your cooperation!

------------------------------------------------------ -------------------------------------

**1. What is your major?**

☐ **Business Administration**

☐ **Information Technology**

☐ **Accounting**

☐ **Tourism/Hospitality**

☐ **Other: _____**

**2. How many years have you studied English?**

☐ **Less than 5 years**

☐ **5–8 years**

☐ **More than 8 years**

**3. How do you rate your current English vocabulary level?**

☐ **Poor**

☐ **Fair**

☐ **Good**

☐ **Excellent**

**4. How do you usually learn new English vocabulary? (Tick all that apply)**

☐ **Write words in a notebook**

☐ **Use Vietnamese translation**

☐ **Use flashcards/apps (Quizlet, Anki...)**

☐ **Learn through reading/listening**

☐ **Watch English videos**

☐ **Memorize word lists**

☐ **Other: _____**

**5. How often do you review vocabulary after learning it?**

☐ **Every day**

☐ **Once a week**

☐ **Rarely**

☐ **Never**

**6. Which vocabulary mistakes do you often make? (Tick all that apply)**

☐ **Spelling mistakes**

☐ **Wrong word forms (e.g., beauty → beautiful)**

☐ **Using the wrong word in context**

☐ **Wrong collocations (e.g., do a decision)**

☐ **Literal translation from Vietnamese**

☐ **Forgetting words quickly**

**7. In which skill do you make the most vocabulary mistakes?**

☐ **Speaking**

☐ **Writing**

☐ **Reading**

☐ **Listening**

**8.      Why do you think you make these mistakes? (Choose up to 2)**

☐ **Memorize words without context**

☐ **Rely on translation**

☐ **Don't use vocabulary often**

☐ **No correction from teachers**

☐ **Forget quickly**

☐ **Other: _____**

**9.      Do you think your current method of learning vocabulary is effective?**

☐ **Yes**

☐ **No**

☐ **Not sure**

**10.     What support do you need to improve your vocabulary?**

☐ **Vocabulary apps/games**

☐ **More class activities**

☐ **Teacher feedback**

☐ **Group learning**

☐ **Video lessons**

☐ **Other: _____**

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

## (VIETNAMESE VERSION)

Bạn thân mến,

Tôi cần tìm hiểu xem các bạn học từ vựng như thế nào. Vui lòng đánh dấu vào câu trả lời mô tả đúng nhất ý tưởng của bạn và thêm nhận xét cuối cùng ở cuối trang nếu bạn muốn.

Cảm ơn bạn đã hợp tác của bạn!

---------------------------------------------------- ----------------------------------

1. Chuyên ngành của bạn là gì?

☐ Quản trị kinh doanh

☐ Công nghệ thông tin

☐ Kế toán

☐ Du lịch/Khách sạn

☐ Khác: _____

2. Bạn đã học tiếng Anh bao nhiêu năm?

☐ Dưới 5 năm

☐ 5–8 năm

☐ Trên 8 năm

3. Bạn đánh giá trình độ vốn từ vựng tiếng Anh hiện tại của mình như thế nào?

☐ Kém

☐ Trung bình

☐ Tốt

☐ Xuất sắc

4. Bạn thường học từ vựng tiếng Anh mới như thế nào? (Đánh dấu tất cả các ô phù hợp)

☐ Viết từ vào sổ tay

☐ Sử dụng bản dịch tiếng Việt

☐ Sử dụng thẻ ghi nhớ/ứng dụng (Quizlet, Anki...)

☐ Học thông qua đọc/nghe

☐ Xem video tiếng Anh

☐ Ghi nhớ danh sách từ

☐ Khác: _____

5. Bạn ôn lại từ vựng bao lâu một lần sau khi học xong?

☐ Hàng ngày

☐ Một tuần một lần

☐ Hiếm khi

☐ Không bao giờ

6. Bạn thường mắc lỗi từ vựng nào? (Đánh dấu tất cả những lỗi đúng)

☐ Lỗi chính tả

☐ Sai dạng từ (ví dụ: beauty → beautiful)

☐ Sử dụng sai từ trong ngữ cảnh

☐ Sai cụm từ (ví dụ: do a decision)

☐ Dịch theo nghĩa đen từ tiếng Việt

☐ Quên từ nhanh

7. Bạn mắc lỗi từ vựng nhiều nhất ở kỹ năng nào?

☐ Nói

☐ Viết

☐ Đọc

☐ Nghe

8. Bạn nghĩ tại sao mình mắc những lỗi này? (Chọn tối đa 2)

☐ Ghi nhớ từ mà không có ngữ cảnh

☐ Dựa vào bản dịch

☐ Không sử dụng từ vựng thường xuyên

☐ Không được giáo viên sửa

☐ Quên nhanh

☐ Khác: _____

9. Bạn có nghĩ phương pháp học từ vựng hiện tại của mình có hiệu quả không?

☐ Có

☐ Không

☐ Không chắc

10. Bạn cần hỗ trợ gì để cải thiện vốn từ vựng của mình?

☐ Ứng dụng/trò chơi từ vựng

☐ Thêm hoạt động lớp học

☐ Phản hồi của giáo viên

☐ Học nhóm

☐ Bài học video

☐ Khác: _____