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 : Ngôn Ngữ Anh

Sinh viên   : Nguyễn Đức Dương

Giảng viên hướng dẫn: ThS.Nguyễn Thị Thu Huyền

HẢI PHÒNG 07– 2020

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TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢN LÝ VÀ CÔNG NGHỆ HẢI PHÒNG

COMMON ERRORS IN ENGLISH SPEAKING LESSONS OF SECOND YEAR ENGLISH MAJOR AT HP TECHNOLOGY & MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY

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NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

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Tên đề tài: Common errors in English speaking lessons of second year

English major students at Haiphong Technology & Management University.

NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI

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

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

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3. **Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp**

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CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên   : Nguyễn Thị Thu Huyền

Học hàm, học vị   : Thạc sĩ

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

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year English major students at Haiphong Technology & Management

University.

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày 30 tháng 03 năm 2020

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày 30 tháng 06 năm 2020

   Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN   Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN
   Sinh viên   *Giảng viên hướng dẫn*

Hải Phòng, ngày 01 tháng 07 năm 2020
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1. **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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Được bảo vệ ☐   Không được bảo vệ   ☐   Điểm hướng dẫn   ☐

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

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1. Phần nhận xét của giáo viên chấm phản biện

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viênchấm phản biện

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Giảng viênchấm phản biện
(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

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Thank you very much!

Hai Phong, June 2020

Nguyen Duc Duong

PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

English has become the international language used in business, technological and academic communication. This trend of English globalization, as a worldwide phenomenon, makes it necessary to communicate with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and in a variety of settings. Nowadays, the majority of English users can be found in countries where the language is employed as a foreign or second language. Effective use of English as a second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL) in oral communication is, without a doubt, one of the most common, but also highly complex activities people need to learn for their interpersonal communication.

There are 4 basic skills in learning English: Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing. These skills are relative and supporting each other. Each of them has its own importance in learning English but speaking skill is regarded as one of the most important skills.

`However, it is not easy for all students to be good at speaking skill. English-majors in Haiphong T&M University have to overcome many difficulties like lack of practicing environment, fear of mistakes, old teaching method from high school in their studying speaking. In high school, they mainly focus on learning writing and reading, maybe a little of listening or speaking. However, English communication which requires much speaking and listening becomes more important in future.

This study will research the reality of studying speaking skill of second year English-majors at Haiphong T&M University and provide them some solutions to improve their speaking skill. I do this study to show some errors and how to fix them in order to increase their chances to get brighter future. I really hope this study could help second-year English majors in particular and our English majors in general to improve their speaking skill.

2. Aims of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate the difficulties and errors when the second year English majors learn speaking as well as to give some suggestions

to improve their speaking skill. Expectation is that this study can truly help them improve their speaking skill and be confident to communicate to foreigners in English.

3. Scope of the study

This study carried out based on the data collection from 40 second year English majors of Haiphong T&M University. After one year studying English at University, some students still cannot deal with these errors. Some difficulties and errors are pointed out but they still are some common difficulties and errors they could face when learning speaking English.

4. Method of study

To carry out this study, I applied qualitative and quantitative method; I started with my process in learning English speaking skill when I was second year student and broaden to second year English-majors with their learning speaking skill. The data of survey will help to find out the difficulties and errors that they face during their learning speaking process. Not only from their experiences, but also from mine, I broaden the survey and make in detail to suggest appropriate solutions to help them learn speaking more effectively. To understand deeper this study, I also search more information and evidences from friends, books and Internet about speaking skill for my survey questionnaire. An important part of this study refers to ideas from Mrs. Nguyen Thi Thu Huyen who has been helping me to complete this study.

5. Design of the study

This study consists in three parts:

Part 1: Introduction:

In this part, I introduce rationale, the aim of the study, the scope of the study, the method of the study and the design of the study.

Part 2: Development:

Firstly, this study introduces about English speaking skill and its definition. Then, it points out some difficulties and errors that students will face when they learn English speaking.

Next chapter mainly focuses on survey questionnaire by second year English majors at Haiphong T&M University. It contains survey-questionnaire, data analysis as well as discussion.

Last chapter includes solutions and recommendation for second year English-majors to improve their speaking skill in the future.

Part 3: Conclusion

In this part, some limitations and suggestions for further research are stated.

PART 2: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review the literature review relevant to the issues under the study. The theoretical background includes five sections: section one is about the definition of speaking, section two deals with the significances of speaking, section three shows the difficulties faced by students, section four reviews some common errors in speaking and section five is the conclusion of this chapter.

1.2 Speaking skill
1.2.1 Definition of speaking skill

Many researchers around the world have taken their attention and concern to definitions of speaking. There are some definitions on speaking presented in language methodology. Bums & Joyce (1997) defines that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving information. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participant themselves, their collective experience, the physical environment and the purpose of speaking.

Nunan and David (2001) say that speaking in a second language involves the developments of the particular type of communication skill. It has an important part in history of language teaching, and two past decades has it begun to emerge as a branch of teaching, learning, and testing its own right, rarely focusing on the production of spoken discourse.

Another definition of speaking is that "Speaking" is the delivery of language through mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, like lungs, vocal tract, vocal chords, tongue, teeth and lips. Speaking has two forms: formal and informal. Formal speaking is used in business or academy situation, or when meeting someone for the first time. Informal speaking is typically used with family, friends or people you have known before. *(http://www.englishclub.com/speaking/what-is-speaking.htm)*.

4

There forms relationship when someone speaks to other person. The relationship is reflected and built through the communication. Wilson (1983:5) expanded this by stating "speaking as development of the relationship between speaker and listener. In addition, speaking determines which logical linguistic, psychological and physical rules should be applied in a given communicate situation". To show the purpose of the communication, the speakers need to express exactly what they are going to speak to other.

In the field of action, speaking is the action of: conveying information or expressing one's feelings in speech, the activity of delivering speeches, communicating in a specified language, conveying meaning as though in words.

(http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/speaking).

Furthermore, speaking is the use of language to communicate with other (Fulcher, 2003:23). It means that this activity involves two or more people in whom the participants are both listeners and speakers having to react whatever they hear and make their contribution a high speed, so each participants have intention or a set of intention that he wants.

From those theories, it can be concluded that speaking skill is related to communication. Speaking is a skill to use language appropriately to express someone's idea, opinions, or feeling in order to give or get information and knowledge from other people who do communication.

1.2.2 The significance of speaking

According to Ishrat Aamer Qureshi (2006), language is a tool for communication. We communicate each other, to express our idea, to know other's ideas as well. Communication takes place, where there is speech. Without speech we cannot communicate with one another. The importance of speaking skills hence is enormous for the learner of any language. Without speech, a language is reduced to a mere script. The use of language is an activity which takes place within the confines of our community. We use language in variety situations. Any gap in communication results in misunderstanding and problems.

For a smooth running any system, the speaker of a language need to be especially and purposefully trained in the skill of speaking.

In order to become a well-rounded communicator one needs to be proficient in each of the four language skills viz., listening , speaking, reading and writing, but the ability to speak skillfully, provides the speaker with several distinct advantages. The capacity to express one's thoughts, opinions and feelings, in the form of words put together in a meaningful way, provides the speaker with these advantages. The joy of sharing one's ideas with others is immense. When we speak to others we come to have a better understanding of our own selves, as Robert Frost once said: ''I am a writer of books in retrospect, I talk in order to understand, I teach in order to learn.'' Undoubtedly, the clarity in speech reflects clear thinking.

An effective speaker can gain the attention of the audience and hold it till the completion of his message. Speaking skills are important for career success, but certainly not limited to one's professional aspirations. Speaking skills can also enhance one's personal life.

1.2.3 Stages of speaking

According to Brown (2007), a perfect teaching speaking lesson has to follow three following stages

1.2.3.1 Pre-speaking

Pre-speaking begins before students actually speak. Pre-speaking activities help students to involve thought, reflection to the conversation then provide opportunities for students to plan and organize the speaking.

Purpose of pre-speaking is choosing the topic, determining purpose, audience and format.

1.2.3.2 While-speaking

While-speaking helps students to interact with each other. Student has been acquired knowledge and experience to have confidence to speak in public. Purposes of while-speaking are to express feeling, ideas; to tell stories;

1.2.3.3 Post-speaking

Post-speaking stage is a time for reflection and setting goals. Following speaking experiences, both formal and informal, it is important to have students reflect up their performance.

1.3 Difficulties in speaking

1.3.1 Ineffective learning method

When it comes in speaking, student might confront a variety of difficulties. The first difficulty I want to mention is ineffective learning method. When you want to do something, you have to learn it first but you have to learn it right. Students learn wrong method would effect to their speaking skill in the end because they already fail when they start. Learning speaking skill is a process that they have to do it right from beginning to the end because it would cause a lot of error in their future.

1.3.2 Lack of practicing environment

It is very difficult for students to learn speaking without practicing environment. Students only learn theory at school but they need to practice more and especially speaking. When they practice at school or public, other people might think the students want to show off because they use English in public. That would make students feel unconfident about their skill so they can't improve their speaking.

1.3.3 Fear of error

One of difficulties every students will face in future is the fear, especially is fear of error. At class, students fear of speaking wrong, their teacher would be mad or disappoint, their classmates would laugh at it. The fear becomes bigger and bigger day by day and students lose their confident in the end. As the result, students would stop practicing in speaking activities. Students wonder if they say it is right or wrong, they won't speak it out loud or even hide it from other so they never know the answer. Therefore, it is important for student to consider that making error is not a bad thing, it's about learning from it and improve the skill.

1.3.4 Lack of motivation

Motivation is much needed in doing everything, including in learning something. In learning language, a learner needs motivation because it will help him or her in trying and developing his or her understanding new language. With motivation, student wants to succeed. So, without it, he or she will certainly fail to make the necessary effort. Unmotivated students will give up easily when not instantly successful. So to get instantly success, unmotivated students often choose easy challenge. Motivated students always choose difficult challenge to improve their skill. They also are independence, unlike unmotivated students, they always depend on better students or teachers and never learn by themselves.

1.3.5 Interference by the indirect expression in Vietnamese

People in Vietnam can slowly get to the point by mention another point (Mark & Diep, 2005). English, on the other hand, reflects a low-context culture in which words signify the truth (Gayle, Mahmoud & Waguid, 2002). Vietnamese dislike the directness because they want to avoid pain and offence. Unlike Vietnamese, Americans prefer to go straight to the point. In short, directness is dominant in English, indirectness is dominant in Vietnamese.

When students have a conversation with an English-native speaker, they are still affected by the indirectness. It will make the listeners getting bored because the length of the conversation, especially the foreigners. So, getting straight to the point of the conversation is important if students speak to foreigners.

1.4 Common errors in speaking

1.4.1 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is central to English teaching because without sufficient vocabulary, students cannot understand others or express their own ideas. Wilkins (1972) wrote that "… while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". And vocabulary is common difficult when English major students speak English. It is not about how many words or structure they have, it depends on how much they remember

and how to use them and which situation they use those words and structures. Learning vocabulary takes time because it is a number of knowledge to remember and students have to repeat learning those words and structures to remember.

1.4.2 Pronunciation

Sometimes it does not matter if your vocabulary and grammar is correct, it is matter of your pronunciation. Proper pronunciation of English word is important to improve your English speaking skills. This is because of the different sounds that are stressed in different languages. This is definitely challenge English major student will face of when learning speaking. I listed several common errors in English pronunciation.

1.4.2.1 Ending sound

First error in pronunciation is ending sound. The fact that half of English major forget to pronoun ending sound or do not know how to speak ending sound correctly. In English, consonants are even more important than vowels. It is why many non-English native speakers usually have this error. They forget how to pronoun ending sound and do not know how to speak it clearly, as the result, grammar error as well as misunderstanding is made.

` Most of students often cannot speak correctly the ending sound: /s/, /iz/, /z/, /d/, /ed/ because all of them do not remember the rule of ending sound pronunciation. Almost the English major students do not know whether pronoun /s/ or /z/ in case adding "s" or "es" at the end of the word or confuse between /d/ and /ed/ in past verbs.

1.4.2.2 Stress

Beside of ending sound, word stress is also a common error that English major student often make when speaking English. When you speak with English native people, even it sound very correctly to you, still English-native speaker don't understand what you said. In this situation, you could have word stress error. In fact, a lot of English major students do not care about word stress or stress the sound in wrong place, therefore, they speak like robots and boring. As I mention above, speaking is the way you express your thought, feeling or

opinion. If you express it in boring way, no one wants to hear you or receive the information you express. In addition, placing wrong word stress can lead to misunderstanding in conversation.

From my point of view, there are two main errors in word stress of English major students. First error is that students do not have word stress when speaking English. All syllables are at the same weight so listeners, especially English native speaker, can be boring and do not want to hear. The second error is they placing stress in wrong syllable. The main reason of these errors is the students do not remember the rule of word stress in English and it prevents them improving their speaking skill.

1.4.2.3 Sound connection

One of the differences between Vietnamese and English is the sound connection. In Vietnamese, each word is pronounced clearly and having no connection between words. On another hand, in English, this happens quite often in speaking. Sound connection means the ending syllable of the previous word is connected to the beginning syllable of the next word. When the native speaker speak fast, non-native speaker hardly to hear or understand. This difference affects to the students quite a lot. Almost English major students get used to speak in Vietnamese way, mean speaking every word clearly and having no connection between words. As the result, it leads to big error in future. Having connection between words helps your conversation with native speaker faster and it will be easier to understand.

1.4.2.4 Mispronunciation

One of popular error that almost non-native speakers often make is mispronunciation. According to Richard Nordquist mentioned in Thoughco magazine, mispronunciation is defined as the habit or the act of non-standard, faulty, and unconventional pronunciation of the word. Similar to above error in English pronunciation, mispronunciations can lead to misunderstanding and native-speakers do not what do you want to express. In Vietnam, students often pronoun as their habit and do not care whether they pronoun true or fail. In fact, there are several main mispronunciation errors that often occur when our students speak English. The first error is about the silent sound in English.

Different from Vietnamese, English has a lot of words has silent syllables in words. For instance, the word "honest", syllable /h/ is silent and it is pronounced as /ˈänist/. Besides, there are several words that Vietnamese students often mispronounce such as "island" is pronounced as //ˈaɪ.s.lənd/ despite the true pronunciation is /ˈaɪ.lənd/. The second is that students often mispronounce a single letter. First is "women". There are lots of people pronounce it the same as the singular form" woman". The next word is "meter", Vietnamese students often pronounce as /ˈme.tər/ while the true pronunciation is /ˈmiː.tər/ .There are several cases that students usually pronounce with too many syllables such as "clothes". A lot of Vietnamese students often adding a syllable /iz/ at the end of the word, however, this word just has 1 syllable and is pronounced as /kləʊðz/. From the above analysis we can find out that mispronunciation is a common error that English major students often face in communication.

1.4.3 Intonation

Intonation is considered as the music of language which raises or falls of your voice when you speak. Similar to word stress error, students in English major usually forget applying intonation when speaking English. Moreover, errors in using intonation while speaking can lead to misunderstand even you pronounce and use grammar correctly. Intonation can change the meaning of a sentence.

There are cases whether intonation become important in speaking English. Similar to other languages, English native-speaker often pays attention to intonation when asking question. In case of using yes, no question, native-speaker often raises intonation at the end of the sentence. On other hands, they often use a falling intonation at the end of other question such as Wh-questions. In case of making statements, it is very important to fall intonation at the end of sentence. Besides, when native speaker wants to present list things, they use rising intonation for all item until the final items which uses a falling intonation. Next, feeling like happiness, excitement, fright and annoyance usually use a rising intonation. Boredom, sarcasm and disinterest often use a falling intonation. Native speaker often raises the intonation on a specific word when they want to emphasize their importance. When speaker wants to contrast

among things, they often use rise intonation as well as place the stress on the word used to be show the contrast. In fact, a lot of English major students are not fully aware to the important of intonation in communication with native speakers. They often sound every word at the same stress without pay attention to intonation.

1.4.4 Grammar

Hetrakul (1995) said that grammar is also very important for students when learning speaking skills. If they want to master English, it is necessary for them to use grammar appropriately so that they can produce meaningful sentences. Grammar considers as the first step in learning any language besides the pronunciation. In fact, English education in Vietnam focus on grammar rather than others English speaking. However, many students still don't know how to use those grammars and which case to use them. This problem could lead to many other errors.

As professional Jack C. Richard, grammar is divided into two dimensions which focus on how to use grammatical system to create a sentence, and how to use grammatical system in the process of creating spoken as well as written text. In Vietnam, most of students are taught a lot of grammar and vocabulary to server entrance high school or university exam. In fact, they are really good at writing essay because of many years learning grammar and vocabulary but speaking is use more often than essay. You have to use English to communicate with lectures or native-English lecture. Furthermore, good at grammar does not mean you are good at speaking. They can write an essay with many kinds of grammar and vocabulary but when they speak, they only use basic grammar. This is one of problems when learning speaking English.

1.4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, in this chapter, I focus on the theoretical background in term of speaking including definition, stages and the importance of speaking; the difficulties faced by students as well as some common errors in learning speaking skill. In the next chapter, there is a data analysis of the survey questionnaire by 40 English major students to find out students' opinion, their difficulties as well as their common error in speaking lesson.

CHAPTER 2: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

2.1 Purpose and participants of the survey questionnaire

The participants were 40 sophomores from 2 classes of English Department at HP T&M University. They already had one year studying at university, so they had opportunities to take speaking lessons. However, speaking is a difficult lesson for students to learn, so after one year learning speaking, students still cannot avoid errors and get trouble when learning English. But on the other hand, after one year learning speaking, they have raised their awareness of learning English, especially speaking skill and realized how important it is in real life and their future job.

This stage is very important for second year students because if they wasted one year without motivated and training speaking, they would have trouble in learning speaking in second year. However, they still have chances to correct the errors and improve speaking skill by themselves.

Survey questionnaire is designed for three purposes:

- To know the students' attitude toward learning speaking skill
- To find out difficulties and errors faced by the second-year English majors in term of speaking skill
- To have suggestions and motivate students themselves to improve speaking skill

2.1.1 Design of the questionnaire

In this study, there are 10 questions included to ask students about their difficulties and errors when learning speaking and some activities they do to improve their skill.

For question 1, students were asked about their length of time they study English. Questions 2 to 4 are about their attitude to the speaking skill and the frequency they speak English. Questions 5 to 8, students were asked about their difficulties and errors they often faced with. Question 9 and 10 are about their activities they often do to improve speaking skill.

2.2 Data and analysis

In this survey, I used data to analyze the result of questionnaire. After conducting survey on all 40 participants, I summarized all results into table and chart form. Each chart and table shows the number of students who chose the suitable answer in each questionnaire.

Question 1: How long have you learned English?
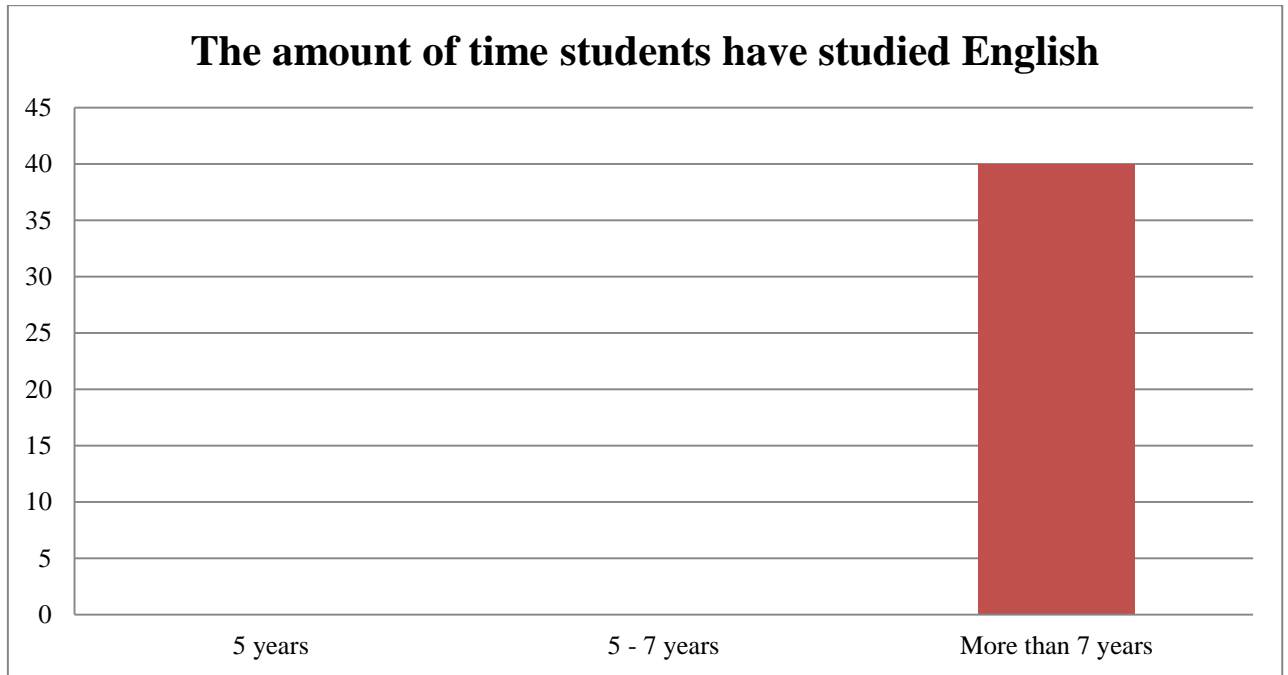
Figure 1: The amount of time students have studied English

This chart above indicates the length of time learning English of 40 English major students. On looking at the table, the number students who have learned English for more than 8 years take the highest proportion with 100 percentages of students have learned English for more than 7 years compared to 5 years and 5 to 7 years. None students learning English from 5 to 7 was shared at all. From the data, we can see that all of our students have studied English for quite a long time, mainly from primary to secondary and high school levels.

Question 2: Which skill do you like most?

Students' language skill preference

Speaking	45%
Listening	25%
Reading	15%
Writing	15%
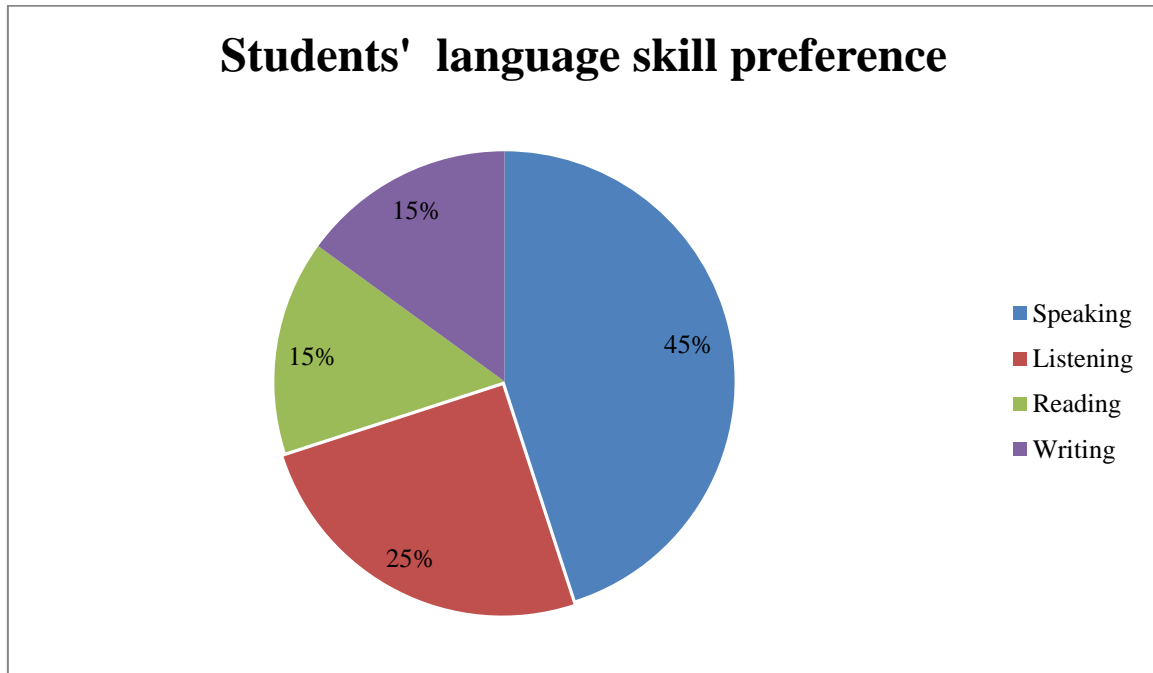
Figure 2: Students' language skill preference

Purpose of this question is to ask students to show their most favorite skill. These are 4 basic skills that students have studied before. The four skills of language learning are a set of four capabilities that allow an individual to comprehend and produce spoken language for proper and effective interpersonal communication. According to the ability and interest of each person, there are different attitudes to favorite language skills.

Based on the chart, our students are quite interested in learning speaking, which occupies the highest percentage of four skills with 45% in comparison with listening 25%. Surprisingly, reading and writing share the same result 15%.

In conclusion, students tend to focus on, and desire to improve communication skills like speaking and listening rather than reading and writing skill.

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Question 3: In your opinion, how important speaking skill is?

How important speaking skill is
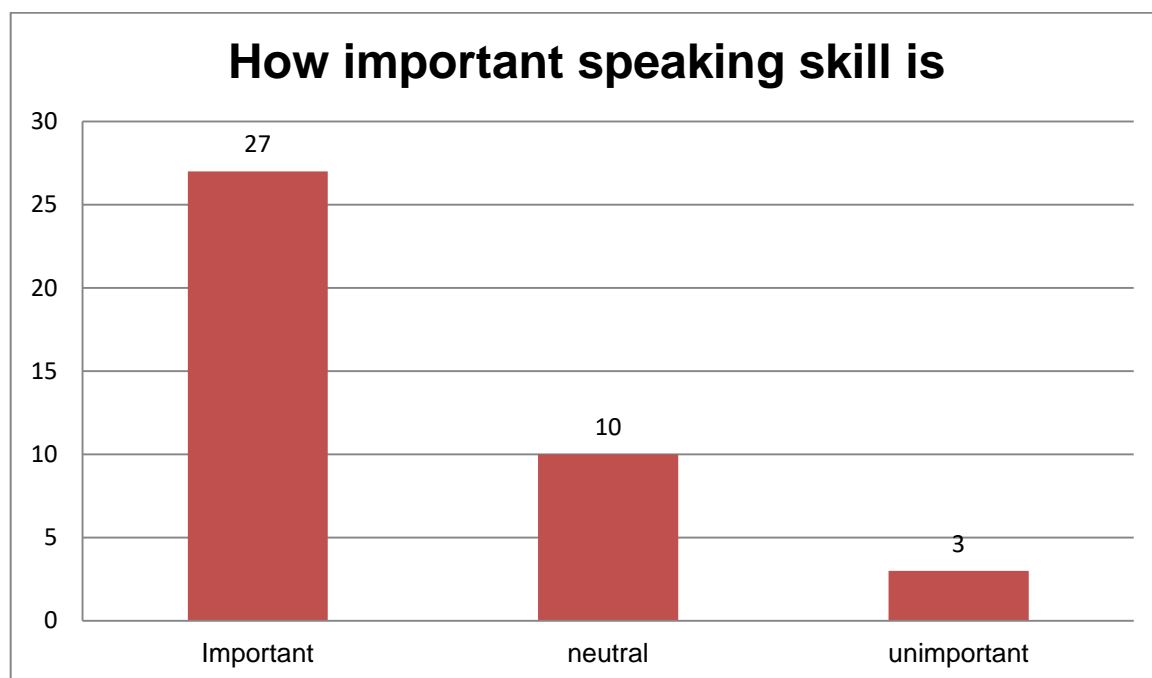
Figure 3: Students' opinion on the importance of speaking

Chart 3 points out the students' opinion about the importance of speaking. As the result, most of students agree that speaking is an important skill. 27 students think that speaking is the most productive skill in real life and their future jobs. They all supported this attitude to importance of speaking skill and the effect of speaking skill in real life is undeniable. After many years studying English, they realize the importance of speaking and pay more attention to this skill than other skills.

Meanwhile, a few students seem like not put too much attention to the speaking skill with 10 of 40 students said that they are neutral with speaking. They think that speaking is one of many skills and it doesn't make any special with them. Only 3 of 40 students think speaking is unimportant. Explain to this fact, students themselves remained the idea that speaking is not necessary with their future jobs.

This question helps us to show that there are some different points of view about the role of speaking.

Question 4: How often do you speak English outside school?

How often do you speak English outside school?
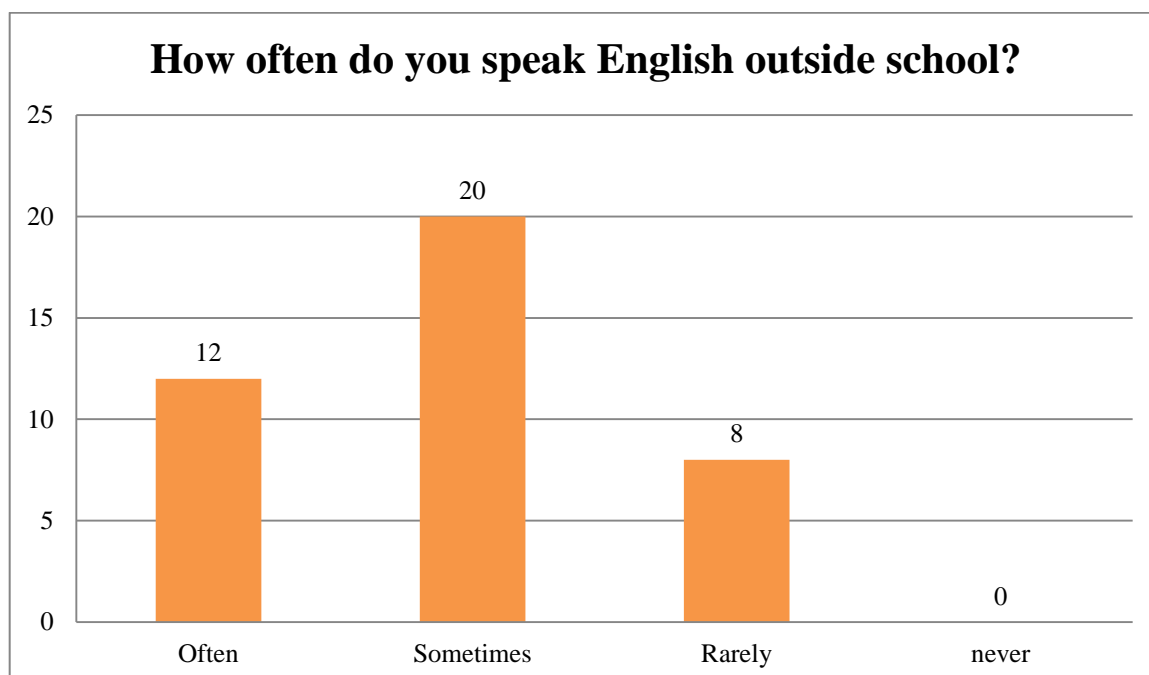
Figure 4: Students' speaking frequency outside school

This chart illustrates the frequency of the habit speaking English of students. First of all, many of them confirm that they did not have many opportunities to speak English outside class. The percentage of students speaking English "sometimes" is the highest with 50% corresponding 20 students. This could be the result of limitation of speaking environment outside the school.

Meanwhile, 8 students who speaks English rarely outside the school confirm that they hardly to speak with other in English. This group of students occupies 20% of 40 students.

We still can see some students still feel hardly or impossible to speak English apart from at school. They said that it was difficult for them to overcome their shyness. As I have mentioned above, the shyness is one of difficulties that prevents students from improving their speaking skill. But gladly, none of students never speak English outside the school.

On the other hand, there are 12 students speaking English regularly apart from class. All of these students feel quite confident when speaking with

lectures or English-native speakers even they have made friend with foreigners before.

The result of this question points out that many students still are quite passive and not confident in their speaking skill.

Question 5: How often do you have problems when speaking English?
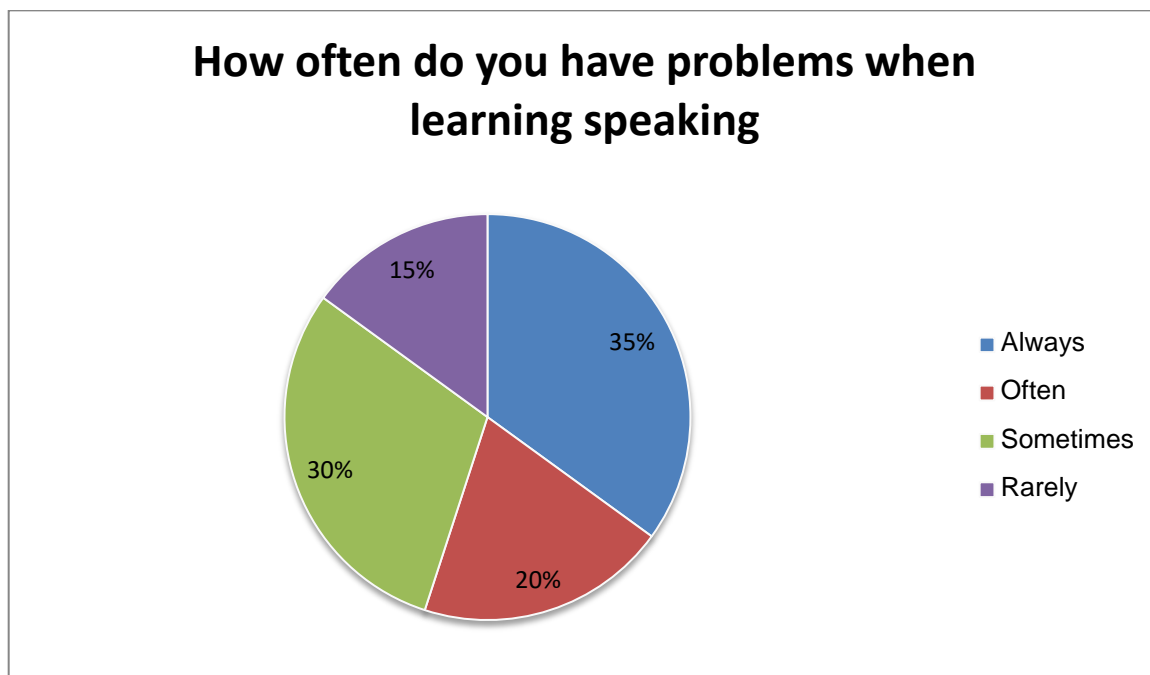
Figure 5: Frequency of students' having problem

Statistics from chart 5 point out the frequency of students' having problem when they speaking English. They all agree that they have at least two or three errors when speak English. This result is understandable because the focus on learning speaking skill separately is quite new with them and they have just studied for a year so having errors is unavoidable.

14 students always have problem in speaking. The percentage of this group is the highest in 4 options with 35%. These students feel shy and unconfident when speaking English at class because they think they have too many errors. Speaking level of second year requires knowledge and practicing.
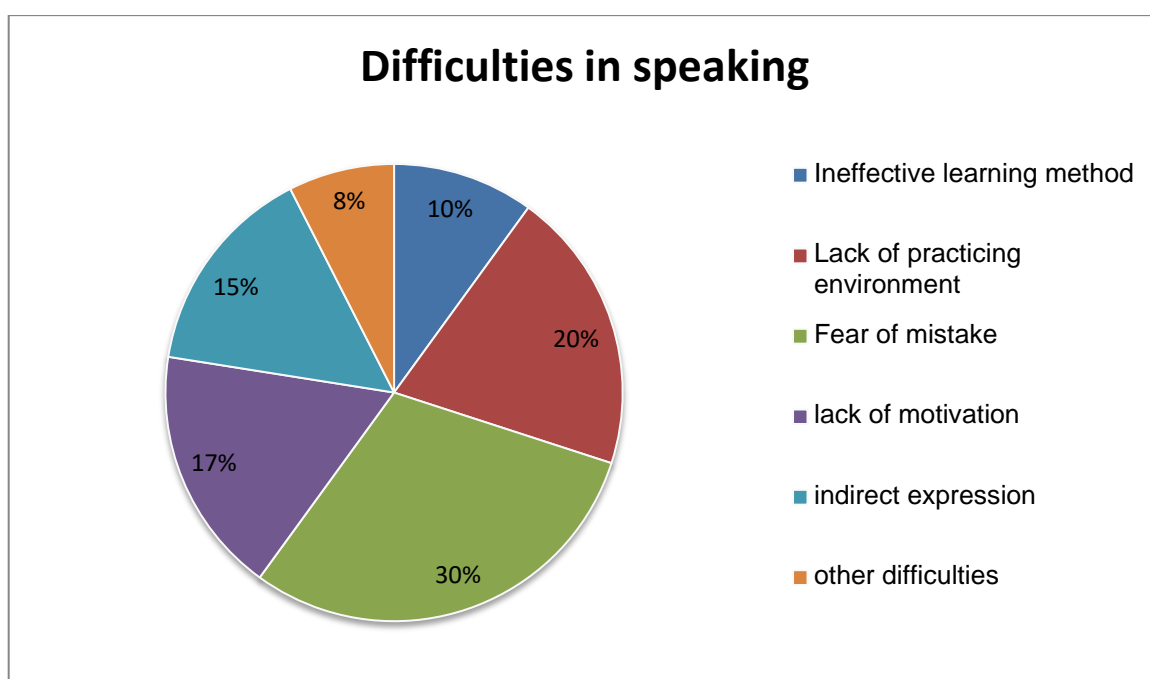
The number of students "often" and "sometimes" occupies 50% of 40 students. They know that they having many errors in speaking but they started to fix it day by day. They begin gaining confident to speak with lectures and

lectures help them improving speaking. These students need to go practice outside more to gain experience and confidence to speak more.

On the other hand, 6 students feel that they rarely meet errors when speaking English. Those students had practiced a lot and already had experience when speaking with foreigners. They believe that they can speak to foreigners fluently.

The result of this chart points out students' frequency having problem when speaking English and many of them still have some problems and they need to practice more even they are at home.

Question 6: What difficulties do you often face up with in speaking?

Difficulties in speaking

- Ineffective learning method
- Lack of practicing environment
- Fear of mistake
- lack of motivation
- indirect expression
- other difficulties

Figure 6: Students' difficulties in speaking English

The purpose of this question is to find out some difficulties students often meet when speaking. On looking at the chart, without much effort, observe the fact students consider the psychological barriers are the main difficulty in speaking with the percentage about 30% of students. The fear of making errors, shyness, anxiety and lack of confidence, plus 17% of students have no motivation in speaking, all above actors prevent students in speaking English. It is possibly attributed to the fact that the psychological barriers are the greatest

difficulty that students need to overcome to learning speaking English more effectively.

From the data in the chart, we can see that students also meet the difficulty of lacking of environment factor. The environment here is outside class, it means that students have a few opportunities to practice speaking English, especially speaking with native speakers. It is considered as a limitation that prevents students improving language communication through daily conversation with foreigners. In occupies 20% of students.

Some students think they learned speaking in ineffective ways. They got used to studying only at school. Especially speaking, it's difficult for lecture to give them homework. But only 10% of students think they have an ineffective method. This could be the result of passive learning at school and at home.

8% of students think they have other problems but mainly they have personal reasons like doing part time job, lack practicing time at home, or not having systematic textbooks for speaking.

In general, there are certain difficulties that each student faces when they learn speaking, however a high percentage of difficulty mostly comes from their subjective factors.

Question 7: What errors in speaking you often meet?
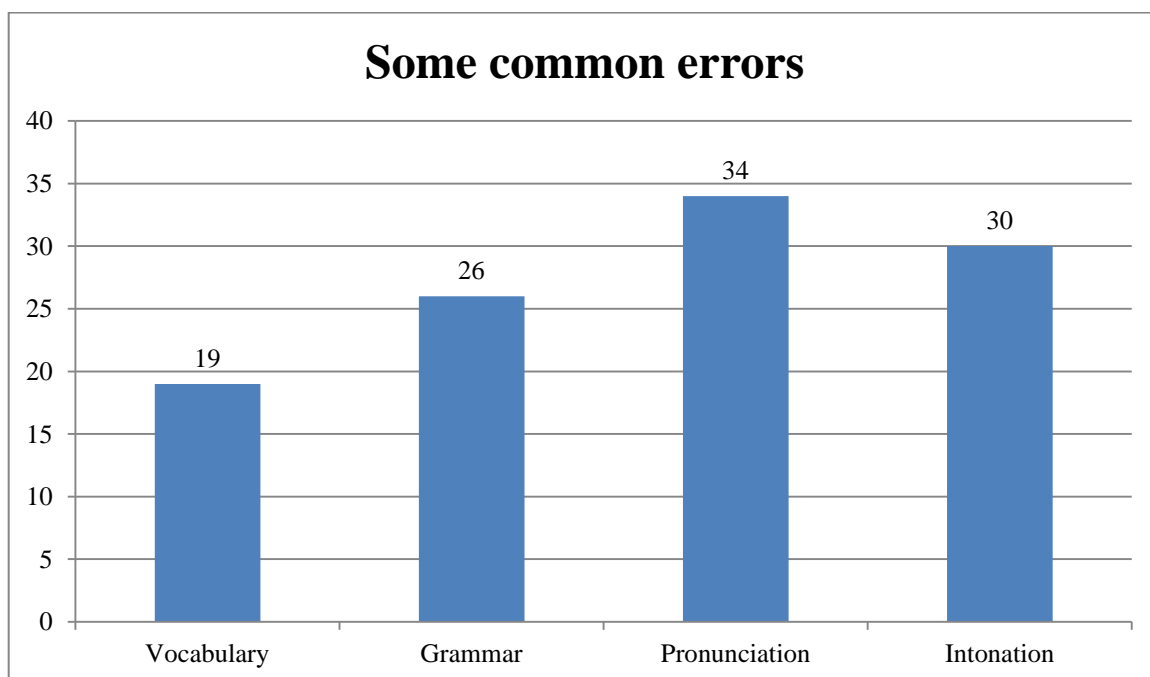

Figure 7: Some errors made by students

Purpose of chart 7 focuses on some common errors related to speaking that students often meet when they speak English. Without much effort, we can see that students get some troubles with pronunciation. 85% of students often have pronunciation error, taking the highest percentage. To improve pronunciation, students need to practice frequently because pronunciation take an important role in develop speaking skill. Plus, students do not have place to practice and most of time they only speak at school. When you are not good at pronunciation, it could lead to "intonation" errors that why 29 students feel intonation is hard to improve. They occupy 72.5% of students.

On the other hand, 19 students are quite unconfident with their vocabulary. Vocabulary is a wide topic and it doesn't have any specific topic. So, it is understandable when students always have trouble with new words. It's about 47.5% of students often have trouble when they met new vocabulary.

26 students think they often speak with wrong grammar. Many students are really good at writing essay with good use of grammars but when they speak, they only use simple sentences. It is the result of studying too much theory and without practicing. 65% of students think that it's hard for them to apply some grammars in speaking.

Pronunciation takes the highest percentage and I want to go in detail this error. I make another chart for students.

Question 8: In pronunciation, which errors do you often meet?
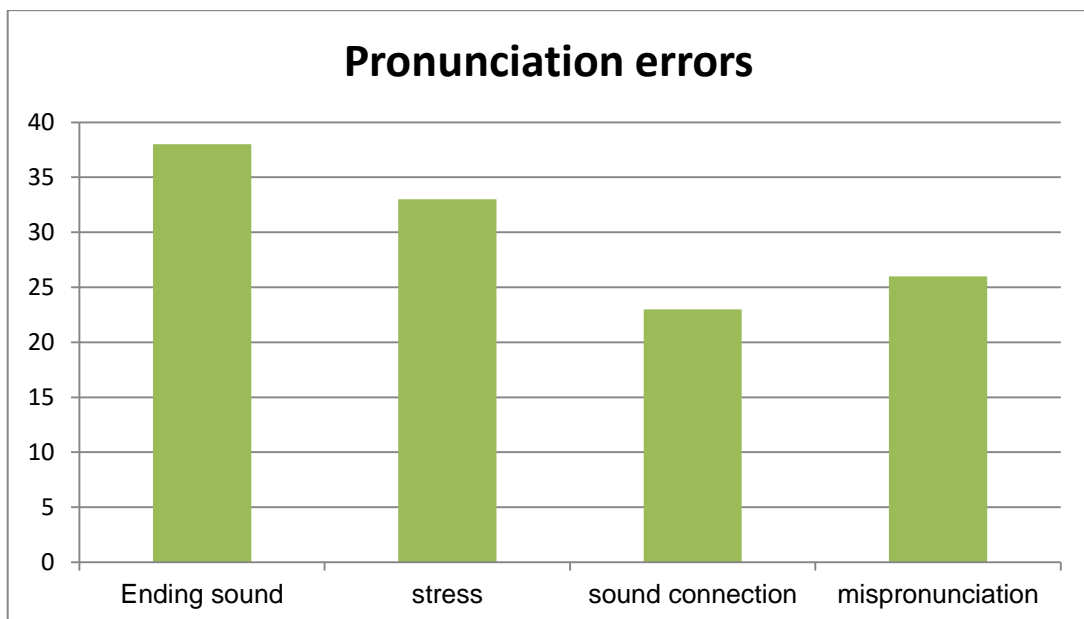
Figure 8: Some pronunciation errors students often face with

This chart reveals some pronunciation errors that students would face with when they learn speaking, especially pronunciation. As you can see, most of students have trouble with the ending sound. It occupies 90% of students. They agree that the ending sound is not easy and it takes time to remember. Many students said it's difficult to remember which case pronouns /s/ or /z/; /ed/ /d/ or /iz/. In high school, some teachers did not teach the pronouncing ending sounds in detail and many students keep saying all ending sound in one way /s/ or /ed/.

According to what stated in the table, 33 students said that stress also quite hard because there are too many rules of stress to remember . All of them consider stress is one of the hardest errors and to speak English influentially with stress is not easy. They do not often mind placing the stress correctly until studying at university environment. 82.5% of students often speak without stress.
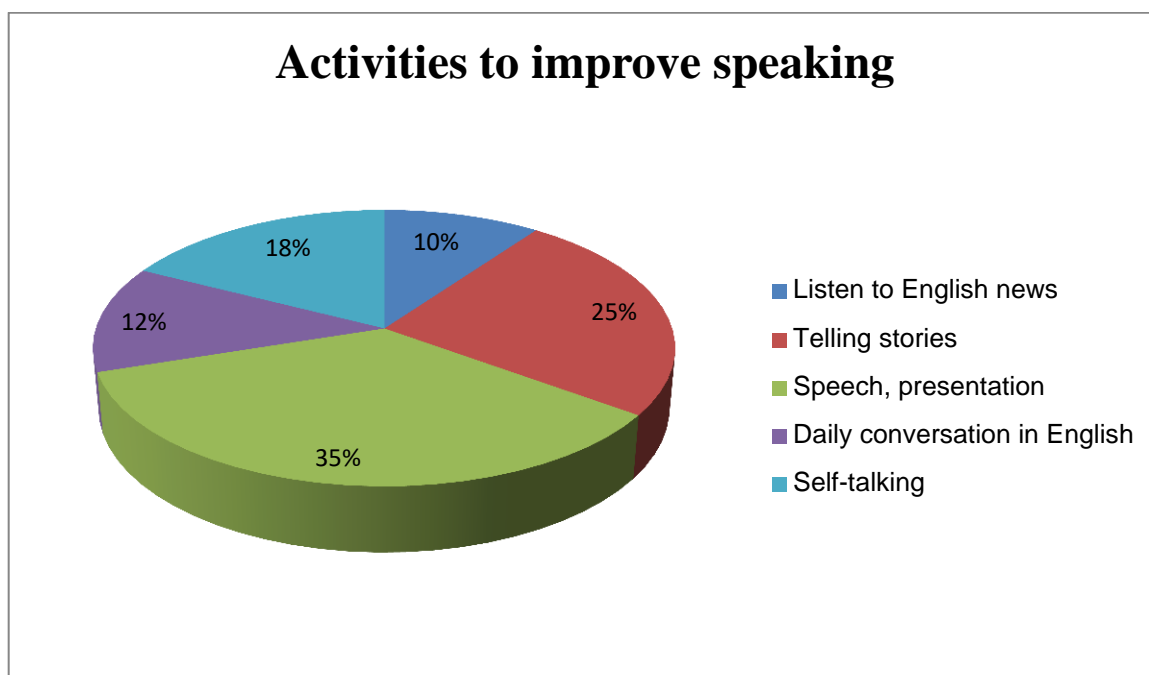
Sound connection is very popular in speaking English because it helps speaker can communicate faster. On the other hand, there is no sound connection in Vietnamese so many students get used to speak without it. It's up to 24 students often speak English with no sound connection between words.

Some students say that they often mispronounce words, especially when they meet new words. When speaking with new topic, they often pronounce wrong or they don't know how to pronounce it so they often adding "aah" or "umm" sound when they speak. 26 students confirm that they often meet these situations when they speak.

Lastly, it's not easy to pronounce right or speak fluently, but students can improve it day by day, you just need to take baby steps first. Your speaking skill will improve if you study hard and practice frequently.

Question 9: What activities do you practice to improve speaking skill?

Activities to improve speaking

- 10%
- 18%
- 12%
- 35%
- 25%

Legend:
- ■ Listen to English news
- ■ Telling stories
- ■ Speech, presentation
- ■ Daily conversation in English
- ■ Self-talking

Figure 9: Students' activities to improve speaking

Chart 9 reveals the surveyed students' activities to improve speaking skill. On looking the chart, one third students think that speech and presentation are really effective in improving speaking. Not only improve their grammar and vocabulary, presentation helps them to gain more confident among class members. It occupies 35% of students. Beside of speech, telling stories is one of favorite activities. Funny stories help students relaxing after the lesson and making friends closer. It also helps students to overcome their fear of error or fear of standing in front of people.

The result given in the chart also validates that there is 10% of students prefer listening to English news, especially on website like: BBC news or USA today. These activities encourage students to improve both listening and speaking skill. They find it easy to "copy" following the news.

12% of students said that daily conversation with lecture or friends can develop speaking skills and confidence. Most of students shy to speak English in front of people, but if they have a daily conversation, they can overcome it and they can speak English more natural.

From what has been gathered, we can see that 18% of students think self-talking is very effective in speaking. Some those students explained that this activity is absolutely encouraged because they can motivate themselves to speak without the fear of making error or being shamed.

According to what stated in the chart, students expect more activities in school in order to help them reach high effectiveness in speaking English lessons.

Question 10: How do you motivate yourself to speak English outside school?
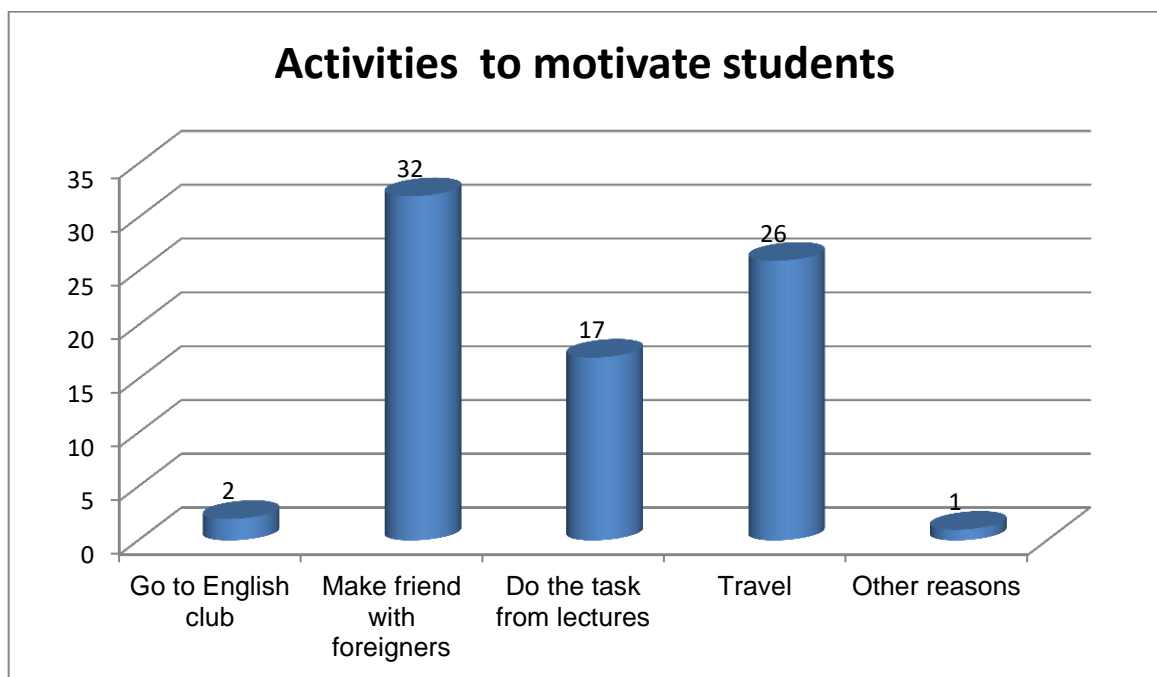
Figure 10: Some activities to motivate students to speak English

Question 10 aims at exploiting the students' ideas about activities motivating them to speak English instead of at class. Based on available data, it can be clearly seen that students love to make friend with foreigners. 32 students want to hang out with foreigners. They can practice their English with foreigners when they become friends. Speaking with foreigners can improve students' speaking skill, and even it will be easier if they become your friends. Speak to your friends is more natural than speak to a stranger.

17 students think that some tasks from the lecture are really effective. Instead of giving homework, lecturers give students some tasks that students

have to go to public and speak English. They think that it is difficult for them to speak in public, but going in group and helping each other make the tasks easier. The tasks require teamwork and confidence when speaking in public.

Meanwhile, 26 students choose to go to travel as an enjoyably motivating activity. They think that when they go abroad, they have more chances to speak with English native speaker. When you travel, you can both practice and have fun at the same time, without pressure of doing tasks or homework like they do at school. You can acquire more knowledge than speaking skill.

Only 2 students want to join English club. English club is a good environment for students to practicing English skills. However, only a few students have motivation in joining English club. Besides, there is a fact that the English club now is quite less active than before.

1 student has another way to improve English speaking instead of the above activities because he already has plan to study abroad in future and get experiences to improve his communication skill, which is an advantage to get acquainted with the new living environment.

2.3 Conclusion

After conducting the survey, it goes without saying that, speaking skill is chosen to be the most crucial skill by the students; however, students still are passive and not self- conscious in speaking practice that cannot create the good habit of speaking English. Moreover, in the process of learning speaking English, English majors at HPU face up with lots of difficulties including psychological barrier, lack of environment, pronunciation, grammar and the lack of motivation. However, they know their weakness and have their own solutions to fix it and improve speaking skill. Next chapter suggests some techniques and solutions for them to develop the skill.

Chapter 3: Solutions to improve speaking

This chapter is going to suggest some effective methods and activities after analyzing the survey for students to improve their speaking skill. Almost students in survey agree that they are facing with difficulties when learning speaking like ineffective learning method, lack of practicing environment, fear of errors or lack of motivation. Therefore, methods and activities are adopted with from the aspect of a learner's experiences. If students practice those methods or do some activities frequently, hopefully their speaking skill will be improved in future.

After many years learning English, some students still keep the old way to learn English. They get used to learn English like they were at high school, even they already study at university for a year. So changing the way learning English is important, especially speaking skill. Not only at school, but they also need to change the way they study at home because it's hard for teacher to give them homework when this skill need practices more than just theory. There are some recommends for them to get used to and to improve their speaking skill.

3.1 Change your attitude to speaking skill

Before students want to change the way they learn speaking, they need to start to change their attitude first. As the result of Question 2 and Question 3, only about half of students are interested in speaking and consider it is an important skill. Meanwhile, the others still consider this skill is not that important. This is a wrong point of view about speaking. So they need to change their attitude when they learn speaking

3.1.1 Be confident

As a problem mentioned above, shyness and fear of error prevent students to improve their speaking skill. Are you shy to speak English? Are you tongue-tied? Cat got your tongue? These idioms refer to what happens when you want to speak but just can't get your tongue around the words. Here are some techniques for students to overcome their shyness.

- **Practice out loud**

The only way to improve is to practice. Use English frequently and out loud. Some students practice silently – having conversation in their head. But you need to get your mouth using word, your ear hearing sound. You can do it anytime in private or with your friends.

- **Plan ahead and warm up**

Before you have a conversation or a speech in English, think about what you need to say. Practice a few phrase. Get used to the sound. Then you will be prepared when you need to speak.

3.1.2 Motivate yourself

Motivation plays an important role in success and failure in learning a second language, especially in speaking classes. Motivated students are likely to learn more effectively and even more quickly than students who are less motivated. In a particular learning situation, students who are less motived are likely to lose their attention, misbehave and cause discipline problems. On the contrary, students are more highly motivated will participate actively and pay more attention to a certain learning task or activity.

- **Be encouraged**

Many students have a negative view of their speaking skills. They always say to themselves or thinking like: "My speaking skill is full of errors" or "I'm afraid of speaking". So if you tend to have a low opinion of your speaking skill, try to eliminate negative thoughts by focusing on what you can do, not you can't do. If you find it difficult to learn speaking, try something easier first. You can start with speaking some common sentences first or try to read out loud some words in English books. When you keep doing this, you will find out that

speaking is not that difficult and maybe you have some fun with it. This small success can help encourage you and lead you to a bigger success. On the other hand, if you keep your negative thought like "speaking is a hard subject" or "I feel shy to speak in front of people", you never could learn speaking skill.

- **Make learning enjoyable**

You don't have to study the exact the same way every time. Try to have some variation, to keep things interesting. For example, you do a lot of grammar exercise or keep speaking old topics. The next day, you should do something different – listening to podcast or news, join an English club with your friends or maybe watching film can make your speaking skill improve. All of these things will be beneficial to your speaking skill, and having variation prevents you from getting bored.

To make this more interesting, you can play some games with your friends, especially the game that could improve your speaking skill. Some games help students more than improving speaking skill, they also encourage students and make the lesson more enjoyable.

3.2 Participate in practicing environment

Every theory would be useless if students fear to join all the activities at school or at home. All activities at school or at home support students' speaking skill so it will be wasted if students abandon them. Therefore, I recommend some activities that would be useful for students to improve their English skill, especially speaking.

3.2.1 Join English club

If you want to participate in a club that familiar to you, you should join English club held up by Mrs. Lien, the Dean of Foreign Language Department. In spite of being in a learning setting, this club has a lighter tone in term of implementing lessons through first-hand interactions with other students. The atmosphere is less formal compared to school classrooms.

English club is more of a healthy playground for students. It lets students interact with other who share common hobbies and interest. It also lets them

build relationships with peers inside or outside the club. The club is done on both weekday and weekends; it serves as a fresh outlet for students to socialize with other students.

The club always welcomes new members to enjoy their sessions so they focus more on making the atmosphere of the club. Club activities further encourage the participants and communication between old and new members. They are also consistent in holding meeting and sessions. These meeting help students have better social relationship skills that they can use outside the club. In club, students won't feel discouraged when committing errors since they know other members and lectures are there to help them improve through feedback sessions.

### 3.2.2 Group discussion and presentation

These methods are highly recommended for the following reasons. Firstly, it creates an environment for students to engage in the discussion according to own interests. Just imagine, a period lasts for a period and students have to listen to lecture all the times, it might be very boring and students tend not to be keen on the lecturer's lesson. Secondly, standing in front of people makes students more confident and they have to face their shyness con overcome it.

However, when students have chances to exchange their individual opinions to their classmates, it totally changes the atmosphere at the class. Moreover, in terms of exchanging opinions, students have to communicate with

their partners to reach the final answer. Therefore, speaking skill might be improved because dialogues among students are made during the discussion.

3.2.3 Develop listening skill
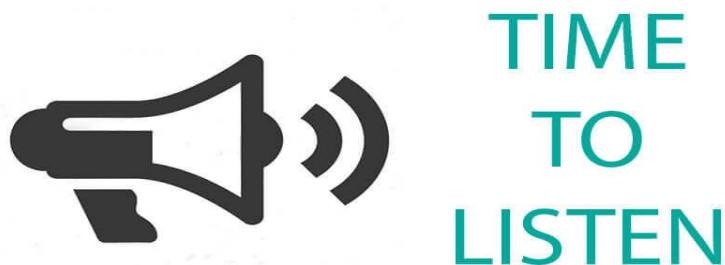
There is a close relationship between listening skills and speaking skill. Listening is regarded as one of the most crucial tools to improve not only language competence but also speaking skills. Listening skills can be such an effective way to promote speaking skills.

First of all, you should listen to your favorite context and topics. It is very difficult to concentrate on listening the long presentation which has topic you are not interested. Therefore, practice listening to topic you keen on is highly recommended. There is huge listening source with various topics available for sophomore. If you interested in entertainment programs, you can watch the several reality show such as Master Chef, Next top model, Got talent, The Voice or Shark Tank. If you want to listen to daily news, CNN, BBC, VOA is useful website for you. In addition, in case of keening on something funny and entertaining, you should find. Besides, there are some highly appreciated websites for practicing listening skill.

In addition, choosing the listening resource suitable to your English level is very important although all most beginners forget such things. There is various listening source which is designed suitable to each level. If students try to listening to the pod cast, presentation, etc. which is too hard for them, students just understand 40% of content that makes them feel bored and disappointed. To determine the English level, students can take several English test such as TOEIC, IELTS, TOEFL in order to find suitable listening source to practice.

3.2.4 Using apps

Your phone is your newest English conversation buddy. You don't even need someone to call. All you need are powerful English speaking apps to learn perfect pronunciation, natural rhythms and everything else to talk confidently.

How using apps benefits English learners?

- **Freedom to learn anywhere you are, anytime you want:**

You can learn on your own time and create a program that fits your needs. For instance, you can practice in bed before sleep using these apps. Or you could practice while you travel and watch that otherwise boring time on the plane flying by as you learn.

You can clearly learn English this way with a book, too, but with an app you don't need to carry anything other than your favorite device.

- **Increased productivity:**

An English speaking app is always with you. Sometimes, you waste time while waiting for an appointment or on your commute, but by using an app you'll have the chance to invest that time in a more productive way: reviewing, learning and playing.

- **Fun and motivation:**

Yes, you can learn while having fun. These apps let you play games and complete exercises while learning the language.

Plus, with an element of fun, English apps will help you stay motivated to keep practicing. Many of them will also track your learning progress, which can further boost motivation.

3.3 Support from university

To develop speaking skill, not only students have to study by themselves, they also need support from university. Some of events before were held by English majors with the help of university. All students still hope that our school will organize more cooperative programs and events in the future or develop the teaching methods to improve the learning environment.

3.3.1 A systematic speaking textbook

English skills requires a lot of practicing. When studying other skills like reading or writing, we have course books from the first semester to the sixth one. The main advantage that we can think about the use of textbook is that they contribute to structure the contents of the class and they can serve as a guide for both teachers and students and positively contribute to the learning of a subject. However, with listening skill, there still hasn't been a systematic textbook, which can prevent students much from improve speaking skill. Lecturers only has some papers with random topics and gives to students. They have to speak follow those topics. If we have a systematic textbook, it would be helpful for students to practice more than speaking some random topics. Before speaking fluently, they have to study how to speak correctly first. Many second year English majors still have trouble in pronunciation and intonation practicing. Moreover, with speaking textbook, teacher can be easier in teaching, giving homework to students.

3.3.2 English speaking lessons with English native volunteer teachers

All students respond that speaking lessons with native volunteer teachers motivate them a lot. They support the students to improve speaking skill and

they are so friendly that students can be easier to make friend with them. Most of volunteers are quite young, so they are easy to be close with students and they even share their feeling, their experiences. However, English majors have had fewer speaking classes with English volunteers in recent two years. They really hope that our university continue to cooperate with international programs so that students have more opportunities to have speaking lessons with English native speakers.

PART 3: CONCLUSION

1. Summary

In conclusion, this graduation paper is conducted to investigate the learning situation at Hai Phong Technology & Management in Language Department and to find out students' difficulties as well as common errors particularly in terms of speaking skill. Then methods and strategies might be suggested to solve student's problems and motivate them to speak. The aim, scope and reason study was presented in chapter 1 for introduction part. Then some theoretical definitions such as: definition of speaking, some difficulties in speaking English and some common errors were put in chapter 2. Especially, in order to expose student's difficulties to learn English in general and speaking skill 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 chapter 3. In this graduation paper, due to the researcher's limitation of time, knowledge and other factors, it can cover the scope to improve speaking skill only. Hopefully, in the next research I can broaden my knowledge to deal with many further problems related not only to speaking skills but also other skills such as pronunciation, listening. Finally, I hope that my graduation paper might be somehow an encouragement for anyone interested in speaking skills.

2. Limitations and suggestions of the further study

A considerable effort has been made to find out the techniques which can be used to help the second year English majors in speaking English at Haiphong T&M University. However, due to limited time and ability, there are a number of related areas which the researcher cannot cover in the study. First, subjects of the study are only the small number of students at Haiphong T&M University. Second, the researcher merely concentrates on studying students" techniques in speaking skill; do not focus on some related skills such as speaking, writing and listening. Furthermore, in the English language teaching and learning in general, the above suggested techniques are only small part which should be creatively and flexibly applied in each class. With the above limitations, I hope the further research on the topic might include more students and extend to the other skills of English to help students learn English better.

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APPENDIX

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey questionnaire is designed for my research into "Common errors in speaking lesson of second year English major students at HP T&M University". Your assistance in completing the following items is highly appreciated. You can be confident that this survey questionnaire is for research purpose only and you will not be identified in any discussion of the data.

Please tick (V) and fill in where appropriate

1/ How long have you learned English?

- ☐ 5 years
- ☐ 5-7 years
- ☐ More than 7 years

2/ Which skills do you like most?

- ☐ Speaking
- ☐ Listening
- ☐ Reading
- ☐ Writing

3/ In your opinion, how important speaking skill is?

- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unimportant

4/ How often do you speak English in other lesson apart from speaking lesson?

- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

5/ How often do you have problems in your speaking skill?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely

6/ What difficulties do you often face up with in speaking?

- ☐ Ineffective learning method

☐ Lack of practicing environment

☐ Fear of error

☐ Lack of motivation

☐ Interference of indirect expression in Vietnamese

☐ Others:

....

7/ What errors in speaking do you often meet?

☐ Vocabulary

☐ Grammar

☐ Pronunciation (Ending sound, stress….)

☐ Intonation

8/ In pronunciation, which errors do you often meet?

☐ Ending sound

☐ Stress

☐ Sound-connecting

☐ Mispronunciation

9/ What kind of activities do you practice to improve speaking skill?

☐ Listen to English news

☐ Telling stories

☐ Speech, presentation

☐ Daily conversation with lecture or friends

10/ How do you motivate yourself to speak English outside school?

☐ Go to English club

☐ Make friends with foreigners

☐ Do the task from your lectures

☐ Travel

☐ Other ways:

....

Thank you very much for your cooperation!