BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO

TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢN LÝ VÀ CÔNG NGHỆ HẢI PHÒNG

ISO 9001:2015

KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH: NGÔN NGỮ ANH

Sinh viên   : Nguyễn Xuân Minh

Giảng viên hướng dẫn: ThS. Bùi Thị Mai Anh

HẢI PHÒNG 01– 2021

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TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢN LÝ VÀ CÔNG NGHỆ HẢI PHÒNG

EFFECTIVE METHODS TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILL FOR ENGLISH MAJOR FRESHMEN AT HAI PHONG 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: Effective methods to improve speaking skill for English major freshmen at Hai Phong 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**

   Công ty TNHH Thương mại và Vận tải Du lịch Trường Lực

CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên   : Bùi Thị Mai Anh

Học hàm, học vị : Thạc sĩ

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

Nội dung hướng dẫn: Effective methods to improve speaking skill for English major freshmen at Hai Phong Technology & Management University.

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày 12 tháng 10 năm 2020

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày 31 tháng 12 năm 2020

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN   Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

   Sinh viên   *Giảng viên hướng dẫn*

Hải Phòng, ngày … tháng … năm ……
TRƯỞNG KHOA

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN HƯỚNG DẪN TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên giảng viên: Bùi Thị Mai Anh

Đơn vị công tác: Khoa ngôn ngữ – Đại học Quản lý & Công nghệ Hải Phòng

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Nội dung hướng dẫn: Effective methods to improve speaking skill for

English major freshmen at Hai Phong Technology & Management

University.

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)

QC20-B18

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN CHẤM PHẢN BIỆN

Họ và tên giảng viên: ....

Đơn vị công tác: ....

Họ và tên sinh viên: Nguyễn Xuân Minh   Chuyên ngành: Ngôn ngữ Anh

Đề tài tốt nghiệp: Effective methods to improve speaking skill for

English major freshmen at Hai Phong Technology & Management

University.

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 viênchấm phản biện

Được bảo vệ ☐   Không được bảo vệ ☐   Điểm phản biện ☐

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

QC20-B19   **Giảng viên chấm phản biện**

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With deepest gratitude, I would like to send to all the teachers in the Foreign Language Department – Hai Phong Technology & Management University who have conveyed valuable knowledge to us during our time at school. Thanks to the guidance and instructions of the teachers, my graduation report can complete well.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mrs. Bui Thi Mai Anh, M.A. for directly helping, caring and guiding me this graduation report.

Secondly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Tran Thi Ngoc Lien, the Dean of Foreign Language Department and all the teachers at Hai Phong Technology & Management University for the precious and useful lessons in my study process that helped me a lot during graduation time.

I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to my family and my friends who always encourage and inspire me to complete this graduation report.

Thank you very much!

Haiphong, December 2020

Nguyen Xuan Minh

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

HPU	Hai Phong Technology & Management University	Đại Học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng
FFL	Faculty of Foreign Languages	Khoa Ngoại ngữ

LIST OF FIGURES & TABLES

PART A: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

Speaking is considered an important English skill and essential to human communication. People around the world mostly use English to communicate nowadays. Being capable of speaking English, we can talk with anyone without any difficulty. Moreover, learning to speak English is a good way to upgrade yourself so you can assimilate into a new era of globalization.

However, it is not easy for all students to be good at speaking. English major students at Haiphong Management & Technology University, especially freshmen, have to overcome many difficulties in learning and practicing English speaking skill. At high school, they generally focus on learning reading and writing, maybe a little of listening and speaking. Learning environment from high school with repetitive and boring lessons, without exciting activities prevent students from practicing and improving English. They don't get effective results in learning speaking in university because lack of practicing environment, fear of mistakes and old teaching method from high school. Meanwhile, English communication, which requires much speaking, is getting more and more important in the future.

In the hope of finding out the difficulties of speaking that English major freshmen normally get, a study entitled: "Effective methods to improve speaking skill for English major freshmen at Hai Phong Technology & Management University" has been created because of all above mentioned reasons. This study will research the reality of studying speaking of English major freshmen at Hai Phong Technology & Management University and provide them some effective methods to improve their speaking skill. I really hope this study could help English major freshmen in general and our English major in particular to improve their speaking skill.

2. Aims of the study

The aim of this study is to find out common difficulties that English major freshmen face when they study English speaking at Hai Phong Technology & Management University in order to give them some effective methods to improve their speaking skill. I really hope that this study can truly help them improve their speaking skill and be confident to communicate with foreigners in English.

3. Research questions

3.1. What are the difficulties that English major freshmen at HPU faced in improving speaking skill?

3.2. What are some effective methods to improve their English speaking skill?

4. Scope of the study

The study is about effective methods to improve speaking skill for English major freshmen at Hai Phong Technology & Management University. Because of the limitations of time and knowledge, the lack of reference material, this study cannot cover the whole category of speaking skill. Furthermore, the study cannot touch upon all the students at Hai Phong Technology & Management University. It is confined to English major freshmen only.

5. Methods of the study

Qualitative method was applied to carry out this study. Data of the survey will help to find out difficulties that English major freshmen face during their studying speaking process. The survey was broaden and make in detail from their experiences to suggest appropriate methods to help them learn speaking more effectively. Information and evidences from friends, books and Internet about speaking skill were searched for my survey questionnaire to understand this study deeper. An important part of this study refers to ideas from Mrs. Bui Thi Mai Anh who has been helping me to complete this study.

6. Organization of the study

The study includes three main parts, as follows:

Part A: Introduction

- Rationale

- Aims of the study

- Research questions

- Scope of the study

- Methods of the study

- Organization of the study

Part B: Development

- Literature Review

- Methodology

- Findings and discussion

Part C: Conclusion

- Summary of the study

- Limitations of the study

- Suggestions for further study

PART B: DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 1: Literature Review

1. Speaking skill

1.1. Definition of speaking

There are a lot of definitions of the word "speaking" that have been suggested by the researchers in language learning. In Webster New World Dictionary, speaking is to say words orally, to communicate as by talking, to make a request, and to make a speech (Nunan, 1995).

According to Chaney (1998), speaking is the process of making and sharing meaning by using verbal and non-verbal symbols in different contexts. Brown (1994) and Burns and Joyce (1997) defined speaking as an interactive process of making meaning that includes producing, receiving, and processing information.

Bygate (1987) defined speaking as the production of auditory signals to produce different verbal responses in listeners. It is regarded as combining sounds systematically to form meaningful sentences. Florez (1999) and Abd El Fattah Torky (2006) defined speaking as a two–way process including a true communication of opinions, information, or emotions. This top-down view regards the spoken texts as the collaboration between two or more people in the shared time and the shared context.

To sum up, all of definitions are given with a view to clarifying the nature of the speaking skill which is necessary in the process of acquiring a native language or a foreign one.

1.2. *Types of speaking*

According to the study of the Indian linguist Ms. Trupti Shinde, there are 3 kinds of speaking situations in which we find ourselves:

- Interactive

- Partially interactive

- Non-interactive

• Interactive speaking situations include face-to-face conversations and telephone calls, in which we are alternately speaking and listening, and in which we have a chance to ask for clarification, repetition, or slower speech from our conversation partner.

• Some speaking situations are partially interactive, such as when giving a speech to a live audience, where the convention is that the audience does not interrupt the speech. The speaker nevertheless can see the audience and judge from the expressions on their faces and bodies language whether or not he or she is being understood.

• Few speaking situations may be totally non-interactive, such as when recording a speech for a radio broadcast.

1.3. *The important of speaking skill*

Humans are programmed to speak before they learn to read and write. In any given circumstances, human beings spend much more time interacting orally with language rather than using it in its written form. Speaking is the most important skill because it is one of the abilities that are needed to perform a conversation. English speaking is not an easy task because speakers should

know many significant components like pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency,

and comprehension. Learners should have enough English speaking ability in order to communicate easily and effectively with other people. Rivers (1987) studied the use of language outside the classroom situation and understood that speaking is used twice as much as reading and writing combined. According to Brown (1994), speaking and listening are learners' language tools.

Efrizal (2012) expressed that speaking is of great significance for the people interaction where they speak everywhere and every day. Speaking is the way of communicating ideas and messages orally. If we want to encourage students to communicate in English, we should use the language in real communication and ask them to do the same process.

Rodgers (2001) stated that in the traditional methods, the speaking skill was ignored in the classrooms where the emphasis was on reading and writing skills. For example, in The Grammar-Translation method, reading and writing were the important skills and speaking and listening skills were not of great significance. According to Ur (2000), of all the four language skills called speaking, listening, reading, and writing, speaking is the most important one that is very necessary for the effective communication.

The significance of speaking is indicated with the integration of the other language skills. Speaking helps learners develop their vocabulary and grammar skills and then better their writing skill. Students can express their emotions, ideas; tell stories; request; talk, discuss, and show the various functions of language. Speaking is of vital importance outside the classroom. Therefore, language speakers have more opportunities to find jobs in different organizations and companies. These statements have been supported by Baker and Westrup (2003) who said that learners who speak English very well can have greater chance for better education, finding good jobs, and getting promotion.

Previous researches approve that people cannot learn a language without many opportunities for meaningful repetition. Oral language interactions and the opportunity to produce the language in meaningful tasks provide the practice that is very important to internalizing the language. Asher (2003) supports the idea that very soon after teachers model the language, learners like to imitate what have been said. Krashen (1988) examined the relation between speaking and listening skills. He stated that when students speak, their speaking provides evidence that they have acquired the language. This idea led some teachers to jump quickly from speaking teaching to reading and writing teaching.

2. Difficulties in learning speaking skill
2.1. Difficulties in speaking English of English major freshmen at HPU

After conducting interviews to the participants, I found that they have faced similar difficulties in speaking English in terms of pronouncing English words and vocabulary mastery. These following findings below are the difficulties in speaking by English major freshmen at Hai Phong Technology & Management University.

Difficulties in pronouncing English words: The first finding is that they had difficulties in pronouncing English words. The participants got difficulties in pronouncing English words during speaking English activities. The problem which is often faced by the students in speaking is about pronunciation. They felt difficult to pronounce certain words. In English, pronunciation and spelling are different. For example," o" sometimes could be pronounced "ɑ" like in "on" and "a" just like in "our". Therefore, the students did not easily recognize the pronunciation.

Lack of vocabulary mastery: All of the participants that the researcher interviewed was lack of vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary is an essential part of speaking. Due to lack of vocabulary, students cannot express their ideas in sentences. It was proven by their statements that lack of vocabulary is one of the difficulties faced by all participants. Based on Shahzadi (2014), the students

could not also express themselves well or adequately because they lack adequate and appropriate vocabulary. Although the students had slightly different experiences in speaking, they told that lack of vocabulary made them being scary.

Low self-confidence: One of the difficulties commonly faced by students was having low self-confidence.It proved that lack of confidence became one of the difficulties in speaking. Low self-confidence was a crucial factor that affected students' difficulties because confidence could support students to reach their goals (Gruber, 2010). This also supported by Shahzadi (2014), the students feel fearful to speak English in front of other people because they lack of confidence. Fear and worry are a part feeling that are similar. Being fearful refers to "frightened or worried about something".

Difficulties in grammar use: This difficulty was faced by almost participants. There are two participants who had difficulties in grammar use especially in direct or spontaneous time. Participant one stated "for example, when I forgot one of my speeches, I replaced it with my own words that are not in line with the grammar. It was added by participant one who stated "practically, I did not know whether my grammar was wrong or right". Moreover, it was followed by participant two who asserted that "speaking is spontaneous, and it makes me confused (in using grammar)". It was in line with Shatz and Wilkinson (2010) who stated that there are some of the common grammar problems faced by English language learners such as the misuse of preposition, articles, past tense, and the third person singular. Based on the difficulties in grammar use, both participants faced the same problem of grammar using, but the case they faced was different.

2.2 Factors affecting students' English speaking

Learners' speaking performance are influenced by factors like performance conditions, affective factors, listening skill, and feedback during speaking tasks (Tuan & Mai, 2015).

The first factor is pertinent to performance conditions. Learners carry out a speaking activity under different conditions. Performance conditions impact speaking performance and these conditions involve time pressure, planning, the quality of performance, and the amount of support (Nation & Newton, 2009).

The second factor is related to affective ones. Oxford (1990) said that one of the important factors in learning a language is the affective side of students. According to Krashen (1988), a lot of affective variables have been connected to second language acquisition and motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety were the three main types that have been investigated by many researchers.

Speaking ability is the third factor. Doff (1998) says that learners cannot improve their speaking ability unless they develop listening ability. Learners should comprehend what is uttered to them in order to have a successful dialogue. Shumin (1997) represented that when students talk, the other students answer through the speaking process. Speakers have the role of both listeners and speakers. It can be concluded that students are not able to reply if they cannot comprehend what is told. That is to say, listening is very closely related to speaking.

Topical knowledge is the fourth factor. Bachman and Palmer (1996) defined it as the knowledge structures in long-term memory. That is, topical knowledge is the speakers' knowledge of related topical information. It enables students to apply language with respect to the world in which they live. Bachman and Palmer (1996) assert that topical knowledge has a great impact on the learners' speaking performance.

The fifth factor is related to the feedback during speaking activities. A lot of learners expect their teachers to give them the necessary feedback on their speaking performance. According to Harmer (1991), the decisions that instructors adopt towards their learners' performance depend on the stages of the lesson, the tasks, and the kinds of mistakes they make. Harmer (1991) also continued that if instructors directly correct their students' problems, the flow of

the dialogue and the aim of the speaking task will be spoiled. Baker and Westrup (2003) supported the above statement and said that if learners always make mistakes, they will be demotivated and afraid of talking. It has been suggested that instructors should always correct their learners' mistakes positively and give them more support and persuasion while speaking.

According to Mahripah (2014), learners' speaking skill is affected by some linguistic components of language like phonology, syntax, vocabulary, and semantics and psychological factors such as motivation and personality. Phonology is a difficult aspect of language learning for learners. As we know, English is not a phonetic language. That is, pronunciation of English words are not similar to their spellings. Words with similar spellings are sometimes pronounced differently because of their surrounding contexts like tenses and phonemes that come after them. This can cause a lot of problems for non-native speakers of English and they sometimes get confused in producing the English words.

Learners should have the knowledge of words and sentences. They should comprehend how words are divided into different sounds and how sentences are stressed in specific ways. Grammatical competence can help speakers apply and perceive the structure of English language correctly that leads to their fluency (Latha, 2012). Native speakers say what they want without having any problems because they are familiar with the language. If they have problems in expressing some concepts, they try to use other ways of telling those things. They may make certain mistakes syntactically but these mistakes do not change the meaning of the sentences they want to express and this doesn't create serious problems for the listeners to comprehend them. But the mistakes non-native speakers commit are those that change the meaning of utterances they want to convey and can create some problems for their understanding (Mahripah, 2014).

Motivation can influence and be influenced by the components of language learning. According to Merisuo-Storm (2007), an integrative and friendly view

towards the people whose language is being learned makes sensitize learners to the audio-lingual aspects of language and making them more sensitive to pronunciation and accent of language. If learners have an unfriendly attitude towards the language, they will not have any substantial improvement in acquiring the different features of language. The above sentences support the view that just communicative competence is not sufficient for learners to improve their speaking skill. Without positive attitudes towards the speaking performance, the aim of speaking will not be obtainable for learners.

The fear of speaking English is pertinent to some personality constructs like anxiety, inhibition, and risk taking. Speaking a language sometimes results in anxiety. Sometimes, extreme anxiety may lead to despondence and a sense of failure in learners (Bashir, Azeem, & Dogar 2011). According to Woodrow (2006), anxiety has a negative effect on the oral performance of English speakers. Adults are very careful not to make any errors in whatever they tell. In their opinion, errors show a kind of unawareness which can hinder them to speak English in front of other people. Speaking anxiety may originate from a classroom condition with the different abilities of language learners. Learners are divided into two groups: strong and weak ones. The strong learners often dominate the slow and weak ones. The weak learners do not usually want to talk in front of the strong ones which lead to their silence during the whole class activity.

Inhibition is a feeling of worry that stops people from telling or performing what they want (Cambridge A. L. Dictionary, 2008). All human beings make a series of defenses to protect the ego. Due to the fact that committing mistakes is a natural process of learning a language, it certainly causes potential threats to one's ego. These threats disappoint the learners to talk in English and prefer to be silent rather than being criticized in front of a large number of people (Brown, 1994). Risk-taking is pertinent to inhibition and self-respect. Learners who have a low self-respect tend to stop taking a risk of committing mistakes in

their speaking tasks which resulting in the inhibition to the betterment of their speaking skill (Mahripah, 2014).

Chapter 2: Methodology

1. Participants

The research was undertaken with the participation of students in Faculty of Foreign Language. The subjects of the study were 25 English major freshmen from K24 at Hai Phong Technology & Management University. A large numbers of them have learnt English for 7 years (4 years at secondary school and 3 years at high school). However, their English backgrounds are quite similar because most of them come from different rural areas in the North and under being influence of curriculum of English for high schools students in the past, students did not have many chances to practice English skills. Thus, when entering HPU, their English levels were limited and they have to face up with many difficulties in studying.

2. Data collection instruments

The survey questionnaires for students consist of 9 questions and were delivered to 25 first-year students of K24 at Faculty of Foreign Languages, Hai Phong Technology & Management to find information. Among 9 questions, the first part are designed for finding out the students' attitudes towards rewriting English sentences; questions from part II mainly seek for the current techniques of teaching and learning in speaking English sentences for English major freshmen at Hai Phong Technology & Management University. Before asking the learners to do the survey questionnaire, the researcher briefly stated the purpose and significance of the study and clarified any misunderstanding about the survey questions. In the end, there were 25 students participating in giving responses to the survey questionnaire.

3. Data collection procedure

An interview is carried out with 3 students in 1 classes of K24 in Faculty of Foreign Languages at Hai Phong Technology & Management University. All of them agree to help the researcher helpfully and comfortably. This aim to collect students' ideas about the factors affecting the English speaking skill and suggestions to improve it.

After the interview, the researcher based on the interview results to analyze the data. The interview results will be recorded carefully. The interview data analysis will be presented with the collected data from the questionnaire in each part.

The data collection in the study is derived from students who are in the major at Faculty of Foreign Languages. To collect information about the issues of learning English speaking skill of first year English major students at Hai Phong Technology & Management University, first of all, 25 survey questionnaires were delivered to students. In addition, three other students were also invited for the interview.

4. Data analysis methods

When the data collection was accomplished, the data analysis was initiated. The results of survey questionnaires revealed students' techniques they use in speaking skill.

There are 25 survey questionnaires delivered to the learners. The data are analyzed in this part of the study in the below tables and charts which show the responses for the questions in the questionnaires. Besides, the first question of

the questionnaires bring a result that according to students' opinion, speaking skill is very difficult.

Chapter 3: Findings and discussion

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

1. *Difficulties of English major freshmen in speaking classes at HPU*

The answer was found after the researcher analyzed the results of the following 8 charts:

Chart 1: The students' assessment of learning the speaking skill

In your opinion, English speaking skill is

- very difficult — 16%
- difficult — 68%
- normal — 12%
- easy — 4%
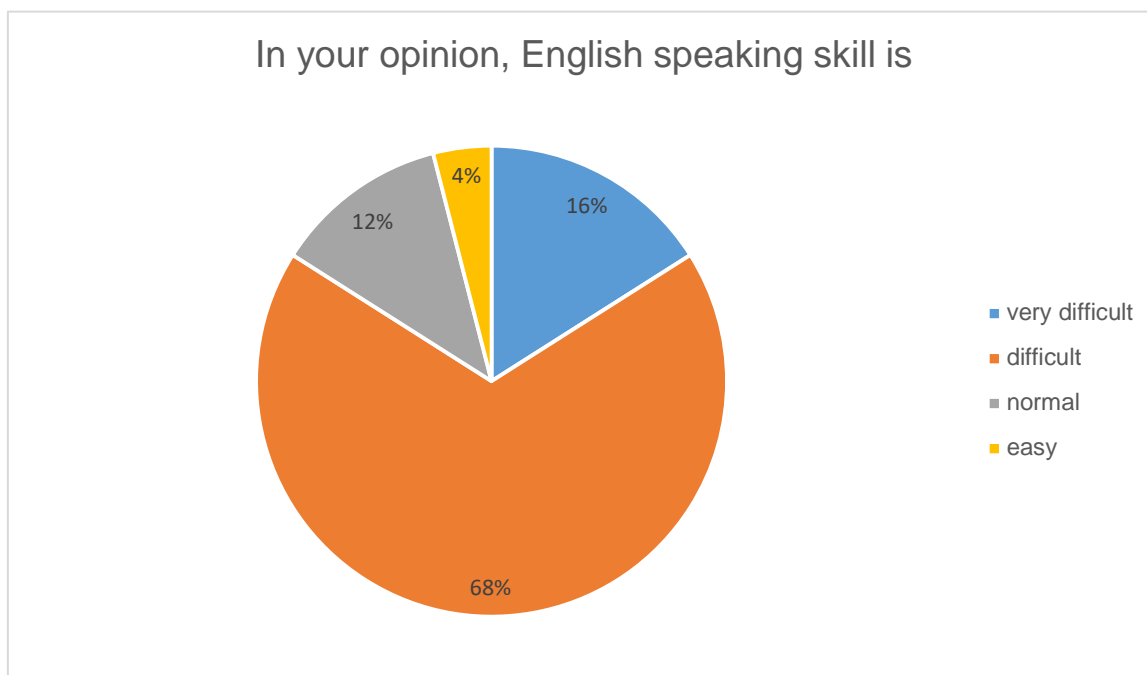
It can be seen obviously in the chart that the speaking skill is a difficult skill to learn. 68% of the learners suppose that speaking is difficult. For the students, learning English speaking skill is really a problem. Moreover, the number of learners who agree that learning the speaking skill is very difficult

took 16%. It is the same as the number of the learners who find learning speaking normal (12%) or easy (4%). In fact, as what can be seen by the observation, the learners who confirm that it is easy to learn the speaking skill are the best students. In short, the survey proves the assumption about the difficulty of learning English speaking.

Below is the result when the author asks three students the same question in the interview.

Table: The interview results of students' assessment in English speaking skill

Question 1: What do you think of the difficulty of English speaking skill?	Numbers (%)
A. Very difficult	2 (67%)
B. Difficult	1 (33%)
C. Normal	0 (0%)
D. Easy	0 (0%)

Statistics provided in Table 1 show the interview result of students' assessment in English speaking skill. Two students think that the rewriting English sentences is very difficult, and only 1 students (33%) say that rewriting English sentences is difficult. Almost students think that the rewriting English sentence is a challenging subject to them.

Chart 2: The students' interest in learning speaking skill
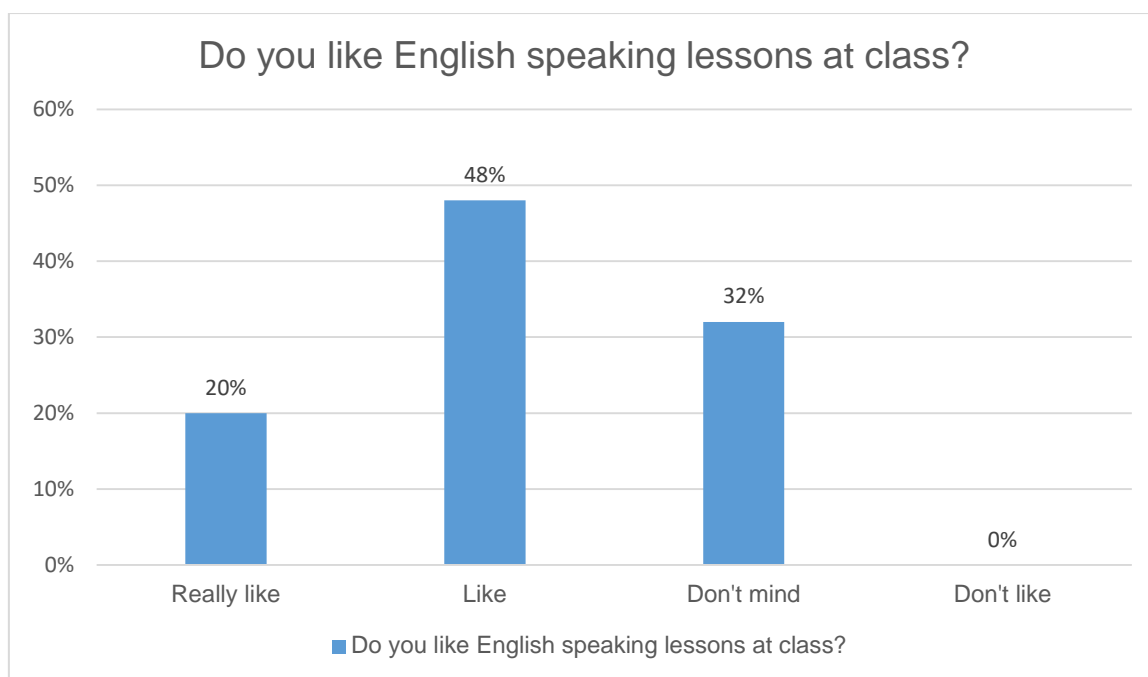
The column chart shows a surprising result which is very contrary to the author's subjective assumption. Normally, the difficulties bore the learners. However, the survey indicates the contrast. In spite of the difficulties of learning the speaking skill, 20% of the learners really like this skill and 48% of them like it. Speaking is not as boring as many people thought. As it can be seen, in the English class, learning speaking is interesting. No one dislikes it. About 32% of the learners do not mind learning this skill. For them, learning speaking might be neither interesting nor boring depends on each lesson. In conclusion, English speaking is a favorite subject of students in spite of the fact that most of them find it difficult.

To research more clearly the opinion of students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, HPU, the third question in the questionnaire is designed to find out their assessment on the importance of speaking.

*__Chart 3: Students' attitudes towards the importance of English speaking skill__*
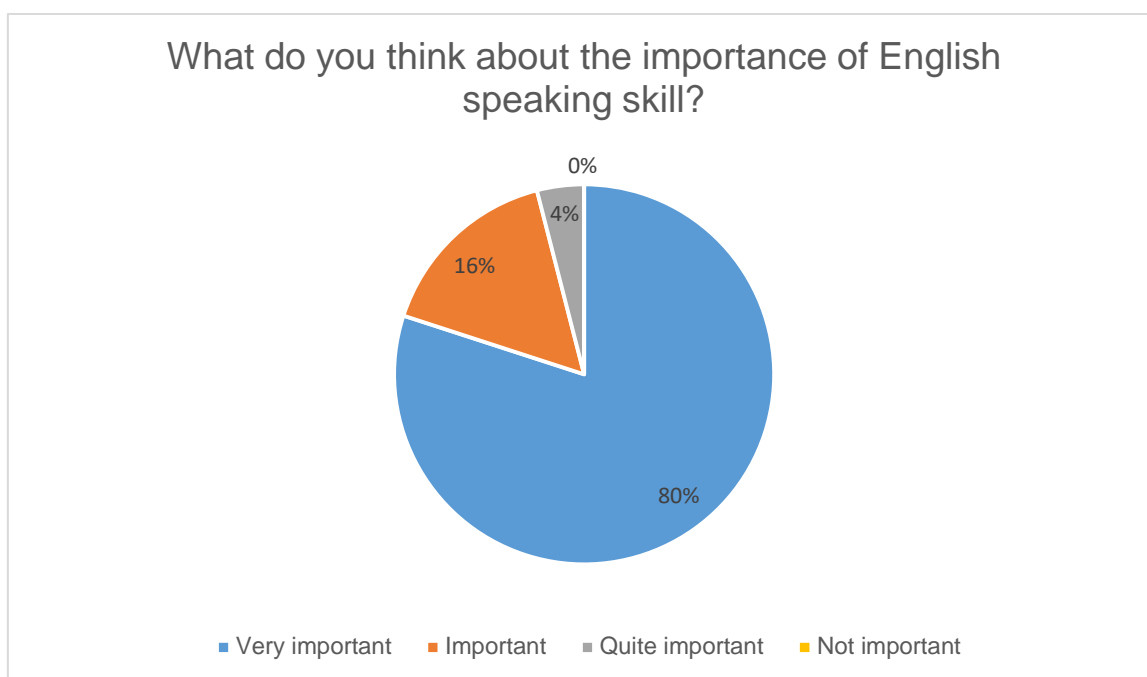
It can be seen clearly from the chart above, most of the students agree that learning speaking skill is very important as well as very important is 80%. Meanwhile, there are only 4% of them reckoning that it is quite important. This chart shows that most of students at Faculty of Foreign Languages, HPU claim that English speaking skill has an important role in learning English with a lot of fields in life.

In conclusion, speaking skill is one of the most necessary skills to communicate in the real life. In learning a foreign language, it is more and more important to learn this skill.

To have more details about the students' real situation in learning English speaking skill, the fourth question of the questionnaire is designed. The result is shown on the chart below.

Chart 4: The frequency of students having problems in learning English speaking skill
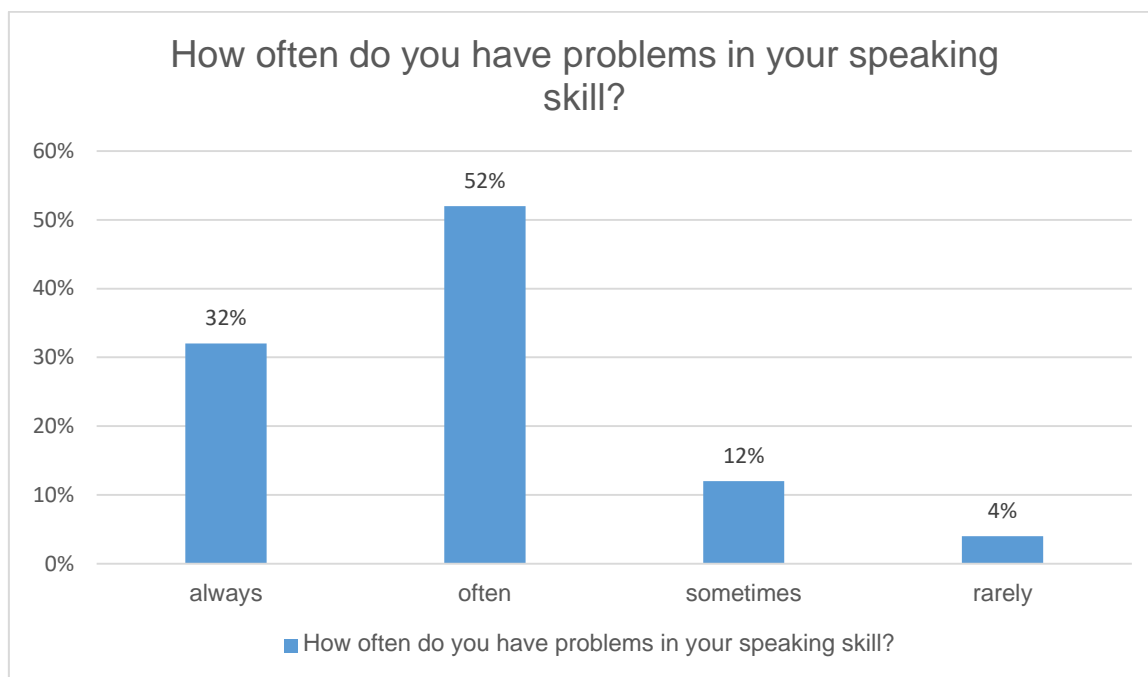
Statistics provided in chart 4 shows the frequency of students' having problem when learning speaking skill. According to the collected data, 52% of the students often have problems and 32% of them always has trouble when speaking; in addition, 12% of the students sometimes have problems and just 4% of them rarely has trouble. To sum up, students always have problems in speaking English and this is a thing that students need repairing.

The question 5 of questionnaire for students mentioned the kinds of speaking text which students expect to practice more. The collected data has shown in the below chart:

Chart 5: Students' interest in extra speaking activities
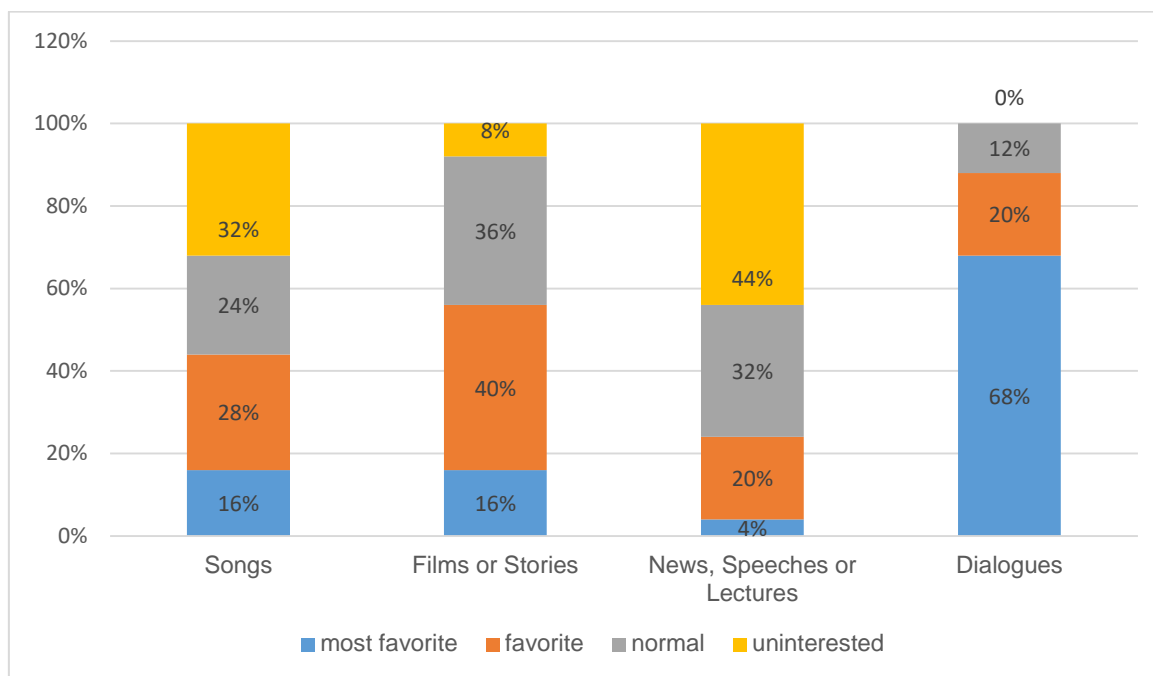
As it can be seen from the above bar chart, most of the students liked learning from the dialogues. Learning from the dialogues are the most favorite activities of 68% of the students. None of them are not interested in this kind of speaking text. In contrast to the dialogues, learning from the news, speeches or lectures bored the most students (44%). As a consequence, 4% of them finds interested in these kinds of monologue. Besides, learning from the songs seems interesting. But, it is surprising when only 16% of the learners love them. Moreover, 32% of them are not excited about the songs. Watching films or learning from the stories is selected because 40% of them suppose those are their favorite activities and 16% affirm those are their most favorite activities. Additionally, 36% of them think those activities normal. In conclusion, most of the students like learning from the dialogues, conversations and interviews.

To find the techniques to improve speaking skill for English major freshmen at HPU, the researcher want to find out the reasons which make it difficult to learn English speaking. The sixth question in the questionnaires is designed for researching this thing. Below is the chart of the difficulties in students' speaking.

Chart 6: Difficulties in students' speaking
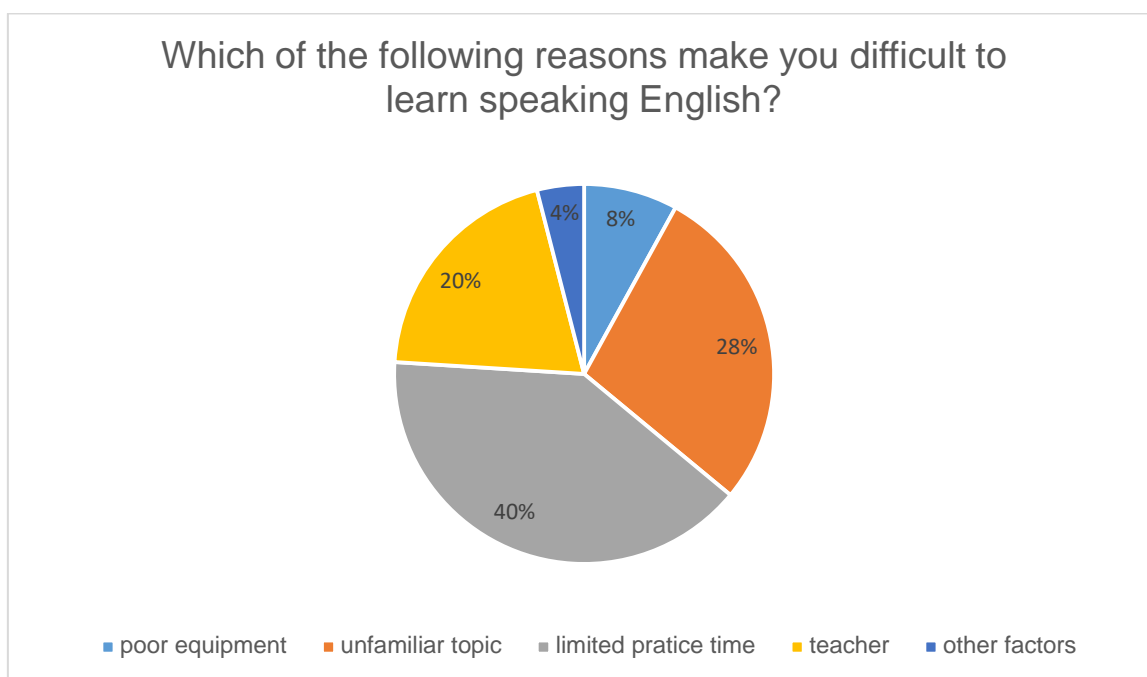
The chart shows that the poor equipment is not a big problem. Only 8% of the learners think that poor equipmets made it difficult for them to listen. There are 7 of the 25 students (28%) chose the factor unfamiliar topic. The largest number of the students (40%) find that the main reason for the difficulties in speaking is the limited time of practicing at class. Besides, 21% of learners think that the teachers talk too fast. Except those factors, 2% of the learners also point some other factors affecting their speaking such as their background knowledge and pronunciation practice.

To find out the factors have influence on the interested in English speaking skill, the seventh question of questionnaire is mentioned. The researcher gives 4 factors that influence in this skill for students.

*Chart 7: Factors motivating students' learning the speaking skill*
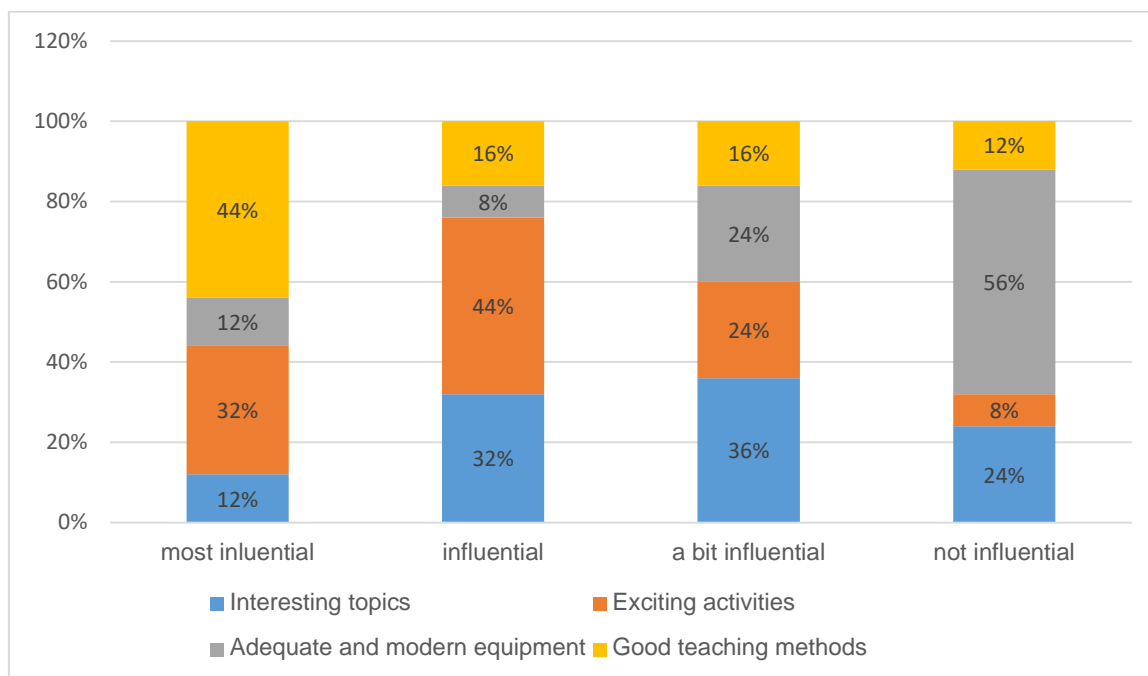
It is easy to see from the above chart that the most influential factor to the students' motivation is the good teaching methods. 44% of the students affirm that. 16% of them think they are influential. Teaching method is the first element that all the teachers should notice in teaching any skills, not only for the speaking skill. The next factor that many students find interested is the speaking activities. 32% of the learners admit the exciting activities motivate them a lot to learn better. Furthermore, 44% supposes that they are influential. A small number (8%) of the students think activities do not effect much. Meanwhile, 12% of the students rank the interesting speaking topics the most influential factor, and 32% agrees they are influential. However, 36% insist that topics had a bit influence. Also, 24% says the topics don't effect their speaking. The least influential factor of four is the equipment. Adequate and modern equipment are assessed that it does not have any effect on the learners' learning the speaking

skill by 56% of the learners. It is an amazing number due to the need of the equipment.

This part shows the difficulties and problems that students are suffering through English oral communications inside the classroom

Chart 8: Difficulties in speaking of English major freshmen in speaking classes at HPU
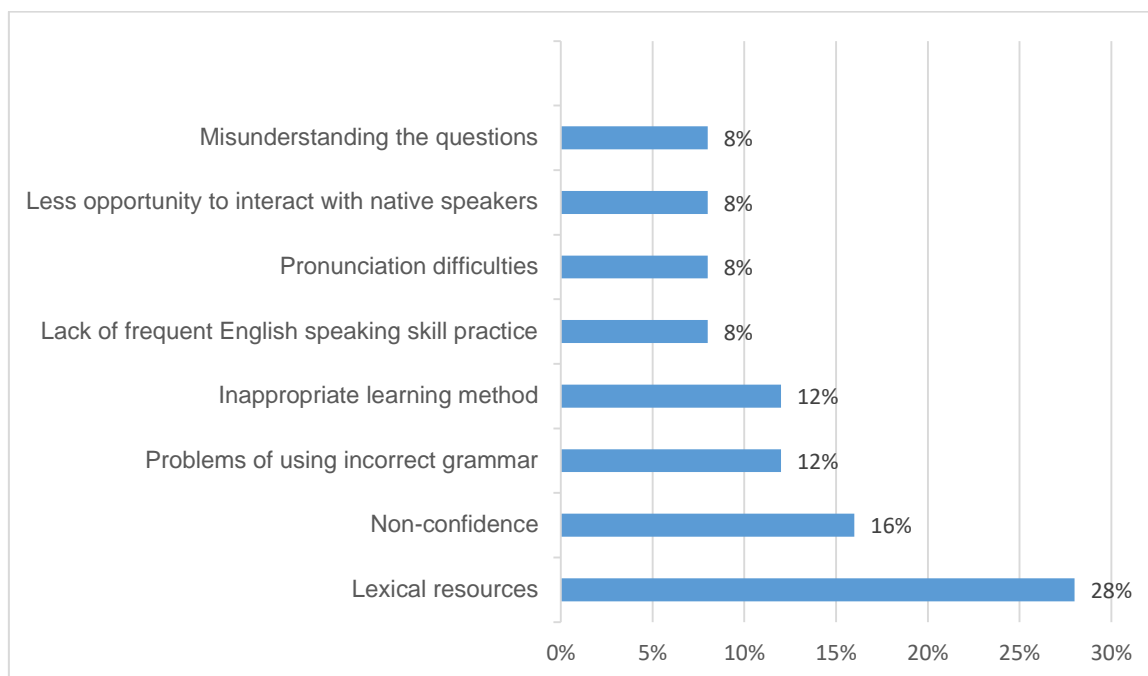
- *Lexical resources*

This problem has occupied top of the results according to students' answers. Students have difficulties in memorizing vocabularies and English terms. On the other hands, most of the students also have problems in applying derivation rules. 7 out of 25 students (28%), mentions that they have suffered of limited amount of vocabulary inside the classroom. An evidence of that is as follows: Student number one said," When I try to make a conversation with another, problem of a limited vocabulary put difficulties in my way".

- *Confusion, worry, embarrassment, shyness and non-confidence*

This difficulty presented results less than the first one, as these problems led the students to unsatisfied performance through the oral communication. 4 out of 25 participants (16%), mentions that they have

suffered confusion, worry, embarrassment, shyness and non-confidence inside the classroom. An evidence of that is as follows: One student said, "Sometimes, I feel confused, because I feel afraid of using wrong words".

- *Problems of using incorrect grammar*

Many students have erroneous usage of English grammar and incorrectly utilizing structures of sentence during the conversation, for example using verb forms that doesn't match either the subjects or tense, or missing verbs when using the sentence. 3 out of 25 students (12%), mentioned that they have suffered from problems of using incorrect grammar inside the classroom. An evidence of that is as follows: Student number four said, "I suffered from weakness of using English language rules".

- *Inappropriate learning method*

This point obviously was noticed among students. Many of the students don't give attention to their study and follow a correct way, hence, this neglect makes them unable to perform English speaking skills effectively inside the classroom, 3 out of 25 participants (12%), mentioned that they have suffered limitation of following their study. An example of that is as follows: Student number thirteen said, "I do not follow my study, if I don't have examinations".

- *Lack of frequent English speaking practice*

This factor showed results less than the previous ones. Less frequent of students' practice short conversations among themselves and this leads them to be in low level of speaking skill, 2 participants out of 25 participants (8%), mentioned that they have suffered of limitation of the daily practice of conversation. An example of that is as follows: Student number eight said, "I have weaknesses because I don't practice English daily".

- *Pronunciation difficulties*

The results of pronunciation difficulties seemed to be less than previously mentioned problems, 2 students out of 25 students (8%) mentioned that they have suffered of pronunciation problems. An evidence of that is as follows: Student number fifteen said, "I have a problem in pronunciation of some words".

- *Less opportunity to interact with English native speakers*

This issue was different from others problem due to difficulties in meeting with native speakers, 2 out of 25 students (8%), mentioned that they face a problem with less interaction with native speakers. An evidence of that is as follows: Student number five said, "I face difficulties in speaking skill, because I don't have another English speaker to communicate with".

- *Misunderstanding the questions*

The results of this matter showed that students were facing difficulties in their understanding of the questions from the lecture, such trouble makes students confused and put them in the wrong track, and then their answers will be wrong, so their level of fluency in oral communication skills will be low. 2 out of 25 participants (8%) mentioned that they has a problem in misunderstanding the questions. An example of that is as follows: Participant number eighteenth said, "I did not understand the question in whole meaning".

2. Methods

To know what the students have done to improve the difficulties they encounter in learning English speaking skills, the researchers came up with a few suggestions for student selection.

This part presented the effective methods for problems that students are suffering from English oral communications inside the classroom.

Chart 9: How can HPU students overcome the weakness in speaking skill? (table)

	Effective Methods	Numbers	Percentage
1	Self-talk	9	36%
2	Participate in public speaking events	7	28%
3	Using apps	2	8%
4	Think in English	2	8%
5	Retell a story in English	2	8%
6	Focusing on Pronunciation	1	4%
7	Build English speaking confidence	1	4%
8	Expand your vocabulary	1	4%

The number of students who selected these methods ranges from 1 (expand your vocabulary) to 9 (self-talk). The percentages were range from 4% to 36%, as follows:

- ***Self-talk***

The results showed that self-talk was the perfect approach that students must follow to overcome their problems regarding speaking skill. This method took the top chart. 9 students out of 25 (36%) mentioned that they used this method incessantly to overcome these problems. An evidence of that is as follow: Participant number eleven said, "When you talk to yourself in English, you will exceed this weakness.

- ***Participate in public speaking events***

There are places where you can come and mingle with like-minded people and practice speaking English. 7 out of 25 participants (28%) mentioned that they have solutions through participating in public speaking events. An example of that is as follows: Participant number two said, "We should participate in public speaking events to gain more confidence and improve our speaking skill".

- ***Use apps***

Students indicated that using apps decrease their problems. 2 students out of 25 students, (8%) mentioned that they have strategies to overcome the weakness through communication with native speakers online. An example of that is as follows: Participant number eight said, "We should try to speak with native people, at least via messages".

- ***Think in English***

If you already think in English, it takes less time to produce or respond in everyday conversations. 2 out of 25 students (8%) mentioned that they have ways to overcome the weakness through thinking in English. An example of that is as follows: Participant number one said, "We should develop the conversation skills by thinking in English".

- ***Retell a story in English***

Take the challenge a step further by retelling a story. You retrace other people's line of thoughts in your own words. 2 out of 25 students (8%) mentioned that they have selected this method to overcome the problems. An example of that is as follows: Participant number three said, "Retelling a story in English is an interesting methods, it helps us to overcome this weakness".

- ***Focus on pronunciation***

Correct pronunciation of words or structure was some of students' responses to make a good conversation. The results presented, 1 out of 25 students (4%) mentioned that she has focused on her pronunciation to overcome the problems. An example of that is as follows: Participant number eighteen said, "We must focus on right ways to pronounce words".

- ***Build English speaking confidence***

One of the biggest barriers to developing English speaking skills is confidence. 1 out of 25 students (4%) mentioned that he tried speaking English with strangers to overcome the weakness. An example of that is as follows: Participant number thirteen said, "We should use English in our daily conversations".

- ***Expand your vocabulary***

The results showed that students must have a large amount of vocabulary to overcome the problems through the speaking skills. According to the results, 1 out of 25 students (4%) mentioned that she learns new words everyday to overcome the weakness. An example of that is as follows: That participant said, "Students should focus on improving their vocabulary".

3. Findings and discussions

3.1. Difficulties of English major freshmen in speaking classes at HPU

According to the results, the factors that cause problems and weakness of English major freshmen at HPU in improving speaking skill were:

- Lexical resources
- Non-confidence
- Inappropriate learning method
- Lack of frequent English speaking practice
- Pronunciation difficulties
- Less opportunity to interact with English native speaker
- Using incorrect grammar
- Misunderstanding the questions

Besides, the researcher thinks that the reasons of students' weakness during oral conversations were lack of conversations in English. Using Vietnamese inside the classroom also was a key reason that caused such problems.

3.2. Methods to improve speaking skill of English major freshmen at HPU

The results showed that there are many effective methods to improve speaking skills for English major freshmen at HPU. According to the second question which is "What are some effective methods to improve their English speaking skill?", the majority of participants' responses focused on:

- **Self-talk:**

Talk to yourself in English loudly. It can be anything from a suggestion like, "Shall we go get a glass of water?" or a reminder, "I need to do a load of laundry today". Alternatively, pick up a book and read a couple of pages out loud. This exercise might slow down your reading, but it will speed up your speaking skills. You can also record yourself, listen to the recording and watch

out for any wrong pronunciations. If it is possible, ask for feedback from a native speaker.

- **Participate in public speaking events**

Big universities, theaters and culture societies organize events like open debates, spoken word readings and improvised storytelling gatherings. These are places where you can come and mingle with like-minded people and practice speaking English. Many cities are now hosting talks where you can register to participate and share your innovative ideas. Check the events page of your local university to see if there are any available. It might be a nerve-racking experience, but it would be great for your English!

- **Use apps**

Another option is to use an app to talk to native speakers online, in the comfort of your own home. Some popular apps are HelloTalk and Tandem. Basically, you register for an account, introduce yourself, your native language and your hobbies. The app will find you some matches—the people who speak English and want to practice the language you know well. All you need to do is to press a few buttons and start talking.

- **Think in English**

If you already think in English, it takes less time to produce or respond in everyday conversations. No translation needed! A good way to start rethinking is to keep a diary where you express your daily thoughts in English. It does not have to be perfect, it is more about getting out thoughts in English with less and less effort.

- **Retell a story in English**

Take the challenge a step further by retelling a story. You retrace other people's line of thoughts in your own words. I would start with a familiar story from your culture. Your translation needs to convey not only the meaning of

words but all rhetorical and cultural nuances. Alternatively, you can choose different words to retell a simple story in English. Start from the basics, reading something like a fairy tale or a fable. Either way will be beneficial to your English communication skills.

- **Focus on pronunciation**

You might know a lot of words, but if you fail to say them correctly, you will not be understood. That seems like a waste of the time spent on remembering words, right? When using online dictionaries such as Macmillan and Merriam-Webster, make use of the little speaker symbol to check the pronunciation of any word that you are not sure about. There are English pronunciation tutorials on YouTube or podcasts like English Pronunciation Pod or American English Pronunciation to teach you the many aspects of American English pronunciation. Learning proper English pronunciation is essential for excelling in conversations with English speakers and even in situations in school or at work.

- **Build English speaking confidence**

One of the biggest barriers to developing English speaking skills is confidence. It is certainly something that all language learners have difficulty with and one of the best ways to overcome this is to get out there and practice. If you think you've got what it takes, then get out there and practice English with strangers! By communicating with strangers in Engish, you'll be able to focus on a sometimes forgotten component of language learning: confidence! After a while, you'll completely rid yourself of any English speaking fear building a strong foundation in the language.

- **Expand your vocabulary**

Gleaning new words day in, day out is a good way to widen your vocabulary. Commit to a suitable target: it can be three daily words or it can be ten daily words. Even if you only have time to learn one new word per day, it is

still worth trying. By learning one word every day, after one year you will have learned 365 new English words. Write the number down to remind yourself frequently. Some good resources for words are the news, songs and TV shows, depending on your daily habits. If you love listening to music, pay attention to the lyrics and take note of the words you do not know. Songs often contain a lot of useful vocabulary, phrases and expressions, therefore, they are great for learning English.

PART C: CONCLUSION

This chapter will deal with a summary of the major findings, limitations of the study and some suggestions for further studies.

1. *Summary of the study*

To reach what the author aims at this study; the study is divided into four chapters with their own purpose. The first chapter briefly covers the theories related to the study. The second chapter presents the overview on situation of learning English speaking skill at FFL, HPU. The third chapter presents the research methodology and author's findings of the approach to speaking at FFL through the questionnaires and interview. This chapter also helps the author find the answers for two research questions that stated in the introduction. The last chapter is some recommendations and suggestions to improve English speaking skill at HPU.

2. *Limitations of the study*

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

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

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

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

In addition, the techniques suggested in this research are selected from different reliable but limited sources. In spite of the mentioned limitations, I hope that this exploratory research will contribute to the better situation of teaching and learning English speaking skill at FFL, HPU.

3. *Suggestions for further study*

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

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

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APPENDIX

This survey questionnaire is designed for my graduation paper named: "Effective methods to improve speaking skill for English major freshmen at Hai Phong Technology & Management University". To answer these questions, please circle the letter next to your choice, ticking of the items in a checklist or expressing your idea in the blanks. All your personal information as well as your answers will be kept confidential and not be used for other purposes.

Thanks for your help!

I.   Your opinion on studying speaking skill

1. In your opinion, English speaking skill is ………………..
   A. Very difficult
   B. Difficult
   C. Quite difficult
   D. Not difficult

2. Do you like English speaking lessons at class?
   A. I really like it
   B. I like it
   C. I don't mind
   D. I don't like it

3. What do you think about the importance of English speaking skill?
   A. Very important
   B. Important
   C. Quite important
   D. Not important
   E. Others………………………………….

4. How often do you have problems in your speaking skill?
   A. Always
   B. Often
   C. Sometimes

D. Rarely

E. Others………………………………….

5. What kind of speaking texts do you expect to practice more? (Put the tick in your choice)

Kinds of speaking texts	Uninterested	Normal	Favorite	Most favorite
A. Songs				
B. Films or stories				
C. News, speeches or lectures				
D. Dialogues: conversations, interviews,…				

II. The causes affecting English speaking skill

6. Which of the following reasons make it difficult for you to learn English speaking?

A. Poor equipment

B. Unfamiliar topics

C. Limited practice time at class

D. Teacher

E. Others……………………………

7. What makes you interested in learning English speaking skill the most?

Items	Most influential	Infuential	A bit influential	Not influential
A. Interesting topic				
B. Exciting activities				
C. Adequate modern equipment				
D. Good teaching methods				

8. What are the weaknesses for students in speaking skill?

	Weaknesses	
1	Lexical resources	
2	Confusion, worry, embarrassment, shyness and non-confidence	
3	Problems of using incorrect grammar	
4	Inappropriate learning method	
5	Lack of frequent English speaking practice	
6	Ponunciation difficulties	
7	Less opportunity to interact with English native speakers	
8	Misunderstanding the questions	

III.   Effective methods to improve English speaking skill

Number 1-8 from the most to the least effective methods

	Effective methods	Number
1	Self-talk	
2	Participate in public speaking events	
3	Using apps	
4	Think in English	
5	Retell a story in English	
6	Focusing on Pronunciation	
7	Build English speaking confidence	
8	Expand your vocabulary	

Thank you very much for your cooperation!