SOME COMMON ERRORS IN ENGLISH SPEAKING CLASS OF ENGLISH MAJORED FRESHMEN AT TAY DO UNIVERSITY, VIETNAM

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Abstract:

In the 21st century, speaking is considered to be one of the most important skills for language learners. However, it is so difficult for students to master this skill. It is so difficult for students to master this skill because they encounter in some common mistakes when speaking in class. Therefore, the purpose of this research aimed at finding out common errors in English speaking class of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University. Specifically, this study is done to figure out whether English majored freshmen at Tay Do University encounter regularly with some mistakes while speaking English in class. In this study, a questionnaire embraced 28 questions, including questions and statements which were used as the main instruments to collect the data. The participants in this study were 91 English majored freshmen in the 3 classes of English 14A, 14B, 14C at Tay Do University. The results of the study pointed out that the English-majored freshmen had some common errors and difficulties with vocabulary, pronunciation, psychology in English speaking class. It is hoped that this research can be helpful for both the English-majored freshmen and other non-majored English students at Tay Do University to realize their common errors in the process of improving and developing their speaking skill.

Keywords: common errors, English speaking class, English majored freshmen

1. Introduction

This chapter is an introduction to the current research. It presents in detail: (1) rationale of the research, (2) significance of the research, and (3) the organization of the research.

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1.1 Rationale

Nowadays, English has been the international language for such a long time, according to Wikipedia *"English has developed over a period time of 1.400 years"* the priority of English in lives and social development cannot be denied. In a book- A History of the English Language, David Crystal (2005) stated that *"out of 360 people, about 330 speak English as their mother tongue".* According to student blog reveals that more than a quarter of the world's population speaks English that means that about 1.6 billion people understand, listen and speak English.

English currently plays an important role in connecting people from many countries around the world in a variety of fields such as tourism, education, industry, business, trade, sport, game, entertainment and so on. *"A research proved that in internet, more than 80% of the sites use English as the medium language while 20% of the rest use the other languages such as Indonesian, Chinese, and the other It indicates that if people do not learn English as their second language, they will only acquire less than 20% of the new knowledge, for nowadays new knowledge is mostly shared through the internet"* (Alfitri, 2012).

It cannot be denied that English brings us ample benefits and advantages. People from Europe, Africa or Asia can speak English, so we can communicate with them in English instead of learning their own difficult language. That is the reason why speaking English is often believed to be one of the most important subjects that we should not miss, as (Brown, Burns and Joyce,1997) stated that *"Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information".*

Moreover, speaking English fluently is easy to make friends with foreigners and share valuable information. Moreover, it not only helps us get a lot of knowledge, but also become a confident person in English communication. Another advantage of English speaking is its ability to use it for employment opportunities and students with English proficiency will have more chances to get better jobs. If the learners are ever required to speak, interview or present at conferences or other events. Active employers are crazy about choosing wonderful candidates with excellent English speaking abilities because they can interact easily with colleagues and customers around the world with realistic English skills, so university students would expect to get good jobs in many foreign companies.

However, many students get troubles to express their ideas such as lack of vocabulary, poor grammatical structure, psychological impact, habits of using mother tongue, incorrect pronunciation. When students pronounce English words incorrectly, the listeners can still understand but not very well. However, it is hard to accept for English major freshmen students when they pronounce English unwell. Even some students avoid talking to others but the more English learners fear mistakes, the less fluently they will speak. When studying at University, students may not realize the importance of speaking, until they will graduate from University and start looking for a job; then they realize that most of the companies nowadays require basic or fluent English speaking skills.

As above mentioned, this research was made to conduct deeply the reasons of common problems in English speaking class and find out some suggestions to help English majored students at get a better speaking skill. Consequently, this study on *"Some common errors in English speaking class of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University"* is also expected to provide an overview of common obstacles or errors in speaking of the English-majored freshmen at Tay Do University well as well as help them overcome their obstacles themselves.

1.2 Research aims
The main purpose of this research shows some common errors in English speaking class of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University. The findings from this study will then provide insight into the importance of each student in the process of speaking English in the classroom. More importantly, some methods that help and support students to speak English well can be found by the researcher.

1.3 Research questions
The research was done to answer these two questions:
1) What are some common errors that English majored freshmen at Tay Do University often encounter when studying speaking English?
2) How do the students overcome some mistakes in speaking English?

1.4 Significance of the research
This research is conducted with the purpose of finding out some common errors that English major students at Tay Do University often encounter when studying speaking English class. Particularly, the thesis would be a useful reference with the possible solutions which would help English majored students to minimize their mistakes. After that, they can correct and find out effective methods to enhance their speaking skill as well as never meet those troubles again.

1.5 The organization of the research
The research contains five main chapters:

Chapter 1: *Introduction* provides the rationale, significance and organization of this research.

Chapter 2: *Literature review* defines and reviews the definition of speaking, the common errors in English speaking, and the previous studies.

Chapter 3: *Research methodology* presents the methods that are employed in the thesis, including the research aim, research question, research participants, and research procedure.

Chapter 4: *Result and discussion question* shows the results collected from the questionnaire in order to figure out the common difficulties that are troubling the participants when speaking English in class.

Chapter 5: *Conclusion* gives the conclusion, implications, limitations, recommendations and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature review

Chapter 2 presents the definitions and the importance in speaking. Besides, it also figures out some common errors in English speaking class of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University. The related previous studies are also stated in this chapter.

2.1 Definitions of speaking and its importance
2.1.1 Definitions of speaking
Speaking has been variously defined. The following definitions are selected because they are typical and meaningful in contents.

First and foremost, Quianthy (1990) stated that **"***speaking as the process of transmitting ideas and information orally in variety of situations"*. From a different point of view, Chaney (1998) emphasizes *"speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of context"*. Chaney in Leong and Ahmadi (2017) also shared the same idea *"speaking is known as making and sharing meaning process using verbal and non-verbal symbol with different context"*. These two definitions have similar contents because it is a combination of verbal and body language.

Harmer (2007) said that *"speaking is the ability to speak fluently and presupposes not only knowledge of language features, but also the ability to process information and language 'on the spot'"*. The researcher cannot be denied responding quickly while speaking because it can make a conversation lively.

Next, in the Oxford Dictionary (2018), there is a speaking definition *"speaking is the action of conveying information or expressing one's feelings in speech"*. Besides, (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997) declared that *"Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking"*. This description is quite complete but in my point of view, comprehension also is the one components of speaking.

By other way, Nunan (2006) found out *"speaking as the use of language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called as fluency"*. The researcher concludes that speaking is the ability to produce the language and share their ideas. Therefore, speaking plays a key role in communication. It is also as a tool to impart the information to audiences.

Moreover, Brown (2004) also claimed that *"speaking is a productive skill that can be directly and empirically observed; those observations are invariably colored by the accuracy and fluency"*. It is also said that *"Speaking is the activity to express thought and feeling orally"* (Djiwandono, as cited in Munir, 2005). In my opinion, speaking is the ability to express language in words, is a kind of ability that is expressed through oral language to convey information and to express ideas and emotions accurately, vividly, and convincingly.

Tarigan (1990) indicated that "*speaking the capability in pronouncing sound or word to express or convey though, idea, feeling, opinion and wish. Based on the meaning above, the researcher concludes that speaking is capability to utter the articulation of sound to express or to deliver thought, opinion and wish to the other person*". Despite all the given definitions, there is also definition of speaking given by Hornby (1995, p. 37) "*speaking mean to make use of words in an ordinary voice. So, teaching speaking is giving instruction to a person in order to communicate*". According to Harmer (2007, p. 343) asserted that "*speaking is a complex skill because at least it is concerned with components of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and comprehension*". In short, speaking skills are determined by 3 factors: phonation, articulation and pronunciation.

Tarigan (1990, p. 3-4) stated that "*speaking is a language skill that is developed in child life, which is preceded by listening skill, and at that period speaking skill is learned. It means that speaking is the basic language. The goal of teaching speaking skills is to communicate efficiency*". Besides that, "*Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. The information can be shared using both verbal and non-verbal communication in a variety of contexts in which it occurs based on the participants themselves, the collective experiences, the physical environment and the purpose for speaking*". (Hadijah, 2014). It seems to me that speaking is an action that creates sound, we can say that "*speaking means talking or expressing one's thoughts and feelings in the spoken language to say often implies conveying information*". It can range from an informal comment to an academic presentation to an official address.

Zhang (2009) argued that "*speaking remains the most difficult skill to master for the majority of English learners, and they are still incompetent in communicating orally in English*". Honestly, not only does the author find it hard to speak English but I also think the same way, which is why I understand and sympathize with people who are learning English.

Last but not least, "*Speaking is the active use of language to express meaning, and for young learners, the spoken language is the medium through which a new language is encountered, understood, practiced, and learnt. Rather than oral skills being simply one aspect of learning language, the spoken form in the young*" (Samira, 2014). As far as I am concerned, any age can speak fluently in a language. Not only can young people learn quickly but old learners can keep with up the studying process. Besides, I agree with the author's point of view is "*practice makes perfect*" instead of considering speaking English as only a tough subject. I used to know about a quote of Fran Lebowitz "*Think before you speak. Read before you think*". For a smooth running of any languages skills, language speakers need to practice and be trained in a long process.

2.1.2 The importance of speaking English
Nowadays, English is seen as a powerful assistant to help people discover, exploit, and connect everything. Speaking English is seen as the key to opening a wonderful world for us by the effects of it as follows:

The integration of the world together with the penetration of foreign companies into Vietnam market, the importance of English is even more evident. If the students

speak English, it will be very easy for them to arrange to work with foreign partners in international fields and very easy to advance in their career. In addition, for those who have not yet worked, English will show a huge part of their ability and intelligence, which will help they easily get a good job with an extremely high salary.

The university teenagers will have a great advantage when attending to job interviews in English. To master this foreign language, they have to try harder and harder. In short, English is not only a foreign language ability that they've got, but this is also one of their remarkable achievements.

The importance of speaking English is also reflected in their relationships. Having the ability to speak English well, the learners will not be inferior when facing with a foreigner; they can talk confidently with foreigners instead of expressing it with reserved attitude.

Of course, knowing English will help the students talk, make friends with others, colleagues, teachers who are foreigners. Because English is spoken in most countries in the world, so not only can they make friends with the English and the American but they can also make friends with the Chinese, the Korean, and the Japanese.

In addition, speaking English will help English learners connect with other people who love using English. Students will be able to meet friends who share the same passion but live in the same country.

English appears a lot in everyday life: on the product packaging, the names of famous corporations. It can be said that this language is ingrained in every aspect of the developed life. Therefore, speaking English is extremely necessary for the students to understand modern communication, read labels, and use of foreign products, make the most use of tools such as Google, Facebook, and Grab. As the saying goes, *"Learning English will make life more luxurious"*.

If university students have a dream like going abroad to study or work, then English must be indispensable because that is the basic thing that helps them to communicate abroad. If students have good English background knowledge, they will be very successful and able to solve problems more easily.

For example, many young people study abroad in Europe with good qualifications and especially with very good English, so they are recruited to be managers or high-ranking positions at the company, or they can work for foreign corporations abroad because their qualifications satisfies the needs of those companies.

2.2 Some common errors in speaking English

Clearly, anyone who learns a new language also makes mistakes. Even if the students are not happy, we have to accept that as a part of life. In learning English as a foreign language, it is not easy to be a great learner in four basic skills, especially speaking skill. Kavin Hetrakul (1995) said that "*they use English more frequent only inside the class and less frequent outside the class. Whereas students' have limited time to learn English in class, and they still do not have enough encouragement to practice English outside the class in order to get familiar with English"*. As I mentioned before, English majored freshmen at Tay Do University

have already faced some mistakes. Through this study the researcher would like to discuss some specific issues that most students face through their ability to communicate.

2.2.1 The influence of mother tongue on speaking English

Most new language learners are influenced by their mother tongue in most situations. Mother tongue is one of the basic mistakes that all students make when practicing speaking skills in class because most students were born in Vietnam.

In fact, both English and Vietnamese use the Latin script, but the speech is not the same; there are many other differences between English and Vietnamese.

Firstly, Vietnamese is a monophonic language. Monophonic language means each Vietnamese word is a syllable, a language, a complete block in pronunciation.

For example:

"Tôi là một học sinh."

They will say each word clearly like *"Tôi" "là" "một" "học" "sinh"*.

Secondly, English is a polyphonic language. This means that many words in English are not made up of one syllable, but from many syllables.

For example:

"I am a student. / aɪ æm ə ˈstjuːdnt/"

The two example sentences above have the same meaning but in Vietnamese sentences, each word is a separate syllable, the noun "student" is also spoken and separated into two completely separate words, "student" and "birth". In the English example, "student" is a single word and is spoken as two separate ˈtiˈ syllables that are joined together.

To sum up, many people have the habit of speaking English like speaking Vietnamese, meaning that for English words with many syllables, they are also broken down into separate sounds, all stemming from this difference. The most common reason is translation or interference from the mother tongue.

Generally speaking, vocabulary errors are caused by differences in the sound system and symbols between the native language and English, leading to similar thoughts and responses in the native language when speaking a second language. Before speaking, students sometimes translate Vietnamese into English in their heads, and native speakers do not clearly understand what the students mean when communicating, which leads to errors and misunderstandings. Therefore, the evidence of the influence of mother tongue on English is very obvious. This manifest in different cultural forms also makes it difficult for students to connect. Especially, when the students do not understand or know the answer they tend to say *"Uh, Oh, Ah"* to extend the time for replying.

The learning environment is a cause that hinders the development of students' speaking skills when there are too few opportunities to practice. Especially, in the Vietnamese community, people use Vietnamese as their main language, so students cannot communicate in English in daily life. Therefore, they have to speak Vietnamese with their family and relatives after leaving their class in school. Students do not want to be rejected by the people around them, so they use their native language in everyday conversations. That leads to many students being unable to communicate in English well outside classrooms without classmates or teachers on Saturdays or Sundays. When students do not have a good environment to practice, they make many important things easily forgotten.

For example, a teacher asks:

"How to become a successful person?"

The student responds:

"Firstly, we need a 'Đam mê'. It means very powerful feeling, for example love, want or other emotion".

The students cannot remember the word "*Passion*" We need to clarify in other ways to ensure that native speakers know what they mean and then use dictionaries to search for the words they need. This takes a lot of time and the number of listeners will not be involved too much.

To sum up, living in a mother tongue environment is very difficult for the English learners to remember how to speak and practice English speaking skills well.

2.2.2 Vocabulary

There are many people reporting that the English language includes more than a million words. In fact, during a project that required to look at words in digitized books, researchers from Harvard University and Google estimated a total of 1,022,000 words in 2010, and that the number will increase by several thousand per year. Currently, English has about 171,476 to around 470,000 words being used. Therefore, with poor vocabulary, many students cannot express their ideas easily.

Although there are many students who start learning English from primary school to college or university, their vocabulary is still relatively little. At university, the students are taught basics English while speaking in real life, native speakers tend to use slang, idioms, and phrasal verbs. In fact, the first year English majors still have a lot of limitations in communication when speaking English only with simple words. In English speaking class, lack of vocabulary is another cause of difficulty which makes speaking boring and ineffective.

For instance, the student says:

"I am happy"

The native speaker says:

"I am on cloud nine"

It confuses the students too much in using correct vocabulary in speaking. According to Schewertly (2012) indicated that *"choosing appropriate vocabulary is an important aspect of any presentation. Lacking of knowledge vocabulary will become a challenge to choose the correct words. If the words used to be not in rules, they will make a misunderstanding to the audiences"*. After this statement, one more common mistake listed is that the students often use vocabulary that is not right in the context.

For example:

"The children are innocent."

But the word "naive" has the same meaning, so there are a lot of students who get confused about which words to be used properly as both synonyms while one word has a positive meaning, and the other has a negative meaning. If it is used wrong, it will easily cause native speakers to misunderstand. Learning vocabulary is a principal part of studying a foreign language as it impedes effective communication with minimal vocabulary.

Another common mistake that students often make when speaking English is not paying attention to word stress, phrase stress (rhythm) and not using intonation when they speak. Vietnamese is a tonal language, meaning that each word will have a mark to distinguish it from other words such as "be", "bé", "bẻ". Meanwhile, English is a language without tone. When speaking, students need to use rhythm or intonation to express our meaning, attitude, and emotions. Misuse or omission without the rhythm/intonation can cause the listener to misunderstand what he or she means. And it will make it difficult for us to hear what others say.

Some cases of error or lack of stress change the meaning of words that the students intend to use such as "present" has 2 ways of stressing. If the stress falls on the first syllable / ˈprezənt /, then the "present" will be understood as an adjective (present), or a noun (gift). Conversely, the stress falls on the second syllable / priˈzent / then the word will be interpreted as a verb (introducing, presenting). In short, vocabulary factor is also one of the weaknesses of students in speaking English.

2.2.3 Pronunciation

Pronunciation gives the students lots of trouble in speaking English in class, many students feel that standardized English pronunciation is the most difficult skill in speaking because pronunciation is more complicated than listening or repeating. Since

pronunciation is a part of speaking. It is hard for students to pronounce some difficult letters correctly such as /p/, /t/, /s/, /ʃ/, etc.

Many students / s / and / ʃ / are confused with each other, but especially we often use / s / instead of / ʃ / (when it is the initial sound), such as: "shoe" will become "sue", sometimes students want to pronounce "Pen", but it turns into "Ben". It took nearly a week to pronounce correctly. If the leaners notice, they will find that this pronunciation error is common among people in the South. Vietnamese does not make any distinction between voiced and unvoiced sounds. Therefore, many Vietnamese students have difficulties in wanting to pronounce English correctly as native speakers because of their previous habits of pronunciation. That is what makes pronunciation in the English language so challenging that they carry their first language speech habits with them. One more thing to forget about the last syllable of an obvious mistake is that when speaking English, they often forget the final consonant sound. This is quite understandable because in Vietnamese, we do not pronounce the final consonant. 'ignoring' or 'swallowing' the final consonants will cause a lot of misunderstanding. Because omitting the last syllable or mispronouncing the last sound in English both renders listener misunderstand or hard to understand.

For example, some words, such as *light, life, like…*

Besides that, wrong pronunciation at the end is also very dangerous. A lot of students have the habit of adding /s/ arbitrarily at the end of each word, which makes foreigners unable to understand. Furthermore, in speaking English, the students can create their sentence into a completely different meaning because of their standardized pronunciation. In particular, there are many words with the same pronunciation as the meaning which are completely different.

For example: *meet and meat, right and write, hi and high.*

That is the reason why the students are confused about words with similar pronunciation.

2.2.4 Psychology
2.2.4.1 Shyness
The most difficult problem of most English majored freshmen at Tay Do University is that they are afraid to speak and to communicate in English because of shyness. According to Wikipedia, "*Shyness (also called diffidence) is the [feeling](#) of [apprehension](#), [lack of](#) [comfort](#), or [awkwardness](#) especially when a person is around other people. This commonly occurs in new situations or with unfamiliar people. Shyness can be a characteristic of people who have low [self-esteem](#). Stronger forms of shyness are usually referred to as [social anxiety](#) or [social](#) [phobia](#)*". It shows that many students suffer when they are required to speak in English class because they fear of negative reactions, being laughed at, lack of ability, lack of self-confidence, lack of motivation, humiliation, criticism, or rejection, especially in the class of speaking, when mentioning learning foreign languages, these people usually feel uncomfortable, unpleasant, restless, and difficult to control themselves.

Gebhard (2000) said that *"shyness could be a source of problem in students' learning activities in the classroom especially in the class of speaking"*. In addition, Baldwin (2011) stated that *"speaking in front of people is one of the more common phobias that students encounter and feeling of shyness makes their mind go blank or that they will forget what to say"*. The outcome of this study proved that speaking before people is one of the most common phobias students experience. It will make them feel nervous, leave their minds blank, or cause them forget what to say. As the students claim, their failure to demonstrate their speaking capacity is often strongly affected by their sense of shyness. Earlier it was stated that there are certain psychological factors that hinder students from practicing their speaking in English class. In other words, shyness plays a significant part in speaking the student's success.

2.2.4.2 Fear of mistake

Today, people all over the world are trying to find ways to improve their English. Not everyone who learns English tries so hard to become successful, but a lot of the learners have left it halfway despite their average level. The main reason is fears of making mistake. Fear of fault is one of the major factors in the inability of learners to speak English in classroom. Besides that, some students want to become language perfectionist, so they can easily blame themselves when they speak something wrong in front of others. This fear begins with low self-esteem or poor understanding of the listener. People who encounter this type of fear cannot utter. In this case, they only speak alone and practice by themselves.

The main reason for fear of mistake is that *"students are afraid of looking foolish in front of other people and they are concerned about how other will see them"* (Kurtus, 2001). The students worried that their friends will laugh at them and receive negative evaluations from their peers if they make mistake in speaking English. In some other cases, they also worry about how they will sound, and are scared of sounding silly and so on.

2.2.4.3 Lack of motivation

As English learners, we still find it difficult to communicate or use this language fluently. Many students wish to speak English fluently. They set themselves great goals and feel very determined to conquer English. But after only 1 month, 1 week, 1 day or just sitting at the desk for 30 minutes, they feel discouraged and completely lose motivation to continue to learn because of lacking motivation. Songsiri (2007) stressed that *"motivation is a key to students' learning success"*. Motivation is very important for learners to finish their projects, but the students cannot keep motivation as long as they want. Students often give up easily when they don't see immediate benefits.

Nunan (1999) stated that *"motivation is important to notice in that it can affect students' reluctance to speak in English. "In this sense, motivation is a key consideration in determining the preparedness of learners to communicate"*. Zua (2008) also said that *"motivation is an inner energy"*. The author states that motivation will improve their study value no matter what happened. In several studies it has been shown that students with a strong motivation to

succeed will continue in learning and achieve higher scores than those with weaker motivation for success. However, many students do not apply motivation successfully in speaking English. It leads them to feel sad, to have no ambition to talk, as well as to develop their skills.

2.2.4.4 Lack of confidence

Lack of confidence is issue facing most English learners in Vietnam. In addition, the communication environment at schools in Vietnam is often not focused. Practice in class is very tiny, leading to many students forming a psychology of lack of confidence, fear of being wrong, fear of English communication. Every time they speak English, they are ashamed, afraid of making mistakes while speaking, and ridiculed by the opposite person.

It is widely recognized that many students frequently lose trust when they know that their partners have not heard them, or when they do not understand the speakers.

However, many students feel uncomfortable when speaking in class because of the cause of these stressful and anxious conditions, biological factors such as genetics, and external factors such as habitat and result.

According to Chen (2010) said that *"the main cause of students' confidence is their low ability in speaking English. In this case, as they add, many students think that their English is bad and feel that they cannot speak English well"*. This suggests that encouragement becomes a vital thing in order to build the students' confidence. Inspiring students and showing that they can interact well in English therefore plays a part in the students' learning progress. Lacking confidence in speaking one language will impact students' performance. It may affect the level of production of the oral language and make people's ability to speak not as smooth as in reality.

2.3 The previous research papers

There are many researchers carrying out the earlier studies about common errors in English speaking class.

Suzan Hammad Rafada, Abeer Madini (2017) – the author of the thesis "*Major Causes of Saudi Learners' Speaking Anxiety in EFL Classrooms*". The participants of this study included 126 ELI Saudi female students studying their foundation year at King Abdul Aziz University and the ages range from 18 to 20 years old. To achieve the goal, it used a mixed-method approach. Two instruments were used for collecting data, a semi-structured interview with 10 students and an online based questionnaire with 116 students. The quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, and the qualitative data were thematically analyzed. Finally, after collecting and analyzing data, the researcher realized that the main causes of speaking anxiety were: lack of vocabulary, the weak educational system at schools, test anxiety, and peer anxiety. Therefore, this work aims to investigate the key causes of speech distress experienced by Saudi EFL learners in their language classrooms.

Khong My Huong (2018) also performed a thesis about "*How to help first year English majors at Hai Phong University avoid common mistakes in speaking lessons*". The participants were 48 freshmen from 3 English-major classes of Hai Phong private University. They are freshmen; it means that their chances of learning English are not as many as those of students in second or third years. The investigator applied quantitative techniques of data to analyze the result of questionnaire. After that she summarized all the results into table and chart form. Each chart and each table shows the number of students who chose the suitable answer in each questionnaire. The purpose of this study is to recognize features and characteristics of speaking skills, some of the errors, and students' difficulties when learning speaking skills. All in all, this graduation paper is conducted to investigate the learning situation at Hai Phong Private University in Language Department and to find out student's difficulties as well as common mistakes particularly in terms of speaking skill. Then it could be suggested approaches and techniques to solve the student's problems and inspire them to talk.

Nguyen Thi Tra My (2019) carried out "*A Study on Common pronunciation Mistakes of The Third Year English Major Students at Hai Phong Private University and Some Suggested Solutions*". The research tools included using questionnaires, conducting interviews to observe directly and taking video clips. The objects were the third-year English major students at Hai Phong Private University. The aim of the study was to help English learners, the third year English major students at Haiphong Private University realize some common errors when they speak English including some difficult consonants, ending sounds, intonation, and stress errors and to give them some ideas how to cope with this problem. The result of this study answered that some common pronunciation mistakes that the third year major students in Haiphong Private University have to solve. The researcher paid much attention to four issues including some difficult consonants, ending sounds, intonation, and stress errors and hopes that this study will be a useful and hopeful for every student who wants to speak English well.

Pradya Afisa, Sheila Yolanda (2015) "*The students' difficulties in speaking at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Sine in 2014/2015 academic year*". The subject of this research is the English teacher and the tenth-grade students. The tools of collecting data were class-observation, recording, and interview. The data are taken from the subject of the research in the form of teaching learning process, interview and recording. The purpose of this study was described the students' difficulties in speaking English at SMA Negeri 1 Sine. Finally, the researcher found out that the students difficulties in speaking English were that the students' low vocabulary mastery resulting from their limited knowledge of meaning vocabulary had led them difficulties in understanding the conversation. The students had difficulty in pronouncing certain words because English words are different in pronunciation and writing. The students were still confused in arranging words. They were often afraid of speaking English because they were worried of making mistakes. They were unconfident and nervous when the teachers asked them and the quantity of the students in learning speaking English and students' psychological factors.

Samar Diaaba (2016) explored that "*Role of Faulty Instructional Methods in Libyan EFL Learners' Speaking Difficulties*". The participants of this study included 125 students, from Sebha University and the instruments were the questionnaires and interviews which were structured to obtain knowledge about the learning process of the participants, the manner in which they were taught English, and the challenges of communicating. Data were analyzed using SPSS and content analysis. This paper aimed to investigate the Libyan EFL learners speaking difficulties and the factors underlying this problem. The researcher also showed that insufficient exposure to the target language and frequent use of Arabic, inside and outside the classroom, were the main factors contributing to the Libyan EFL learners speaking difficulties. Besides that, other contributing factors were lack of speaking experience and the teachers' overemphasis on precision at the cost of fluency.

3. Research methodology

The methodology is presented in this chapter to show how this research was carried out. First of all, this chapter is begun by some hypotheses. Then, it mentions the research design and the participants. This thesis is followed by research instrument with the result of the questionnaire in details.

3.1 Hypotheses

According to the literature review in Chapter 2 and research questions, it was hypothesized that English majored students at Tay Do University often encounter errors in English speaking class such as lack of vocabulary, poor grammar knowledge, etc.

3.2 Research design

In order to answer the research questions, this survey research was carried out at Tay Do University. The participants were English-majored freshmen at Tay Do University. The reliability and validity of the research results was based on the instrument. It was analyzed using the quantitative approach. By replying to the questionnaires, participants would support real information. Then, the data from questionnaire will be analyzed to get the final result for discussion.

3.3 Participants

The participants of this study were 90 English-majored freshmen who studied in three different classes of English Linguistic 14A, 14B, and 14C at Tay Do University. There were both females and males selected randomly. Most of them were at the age of 19. The others were from 20 years old to 24 years old. Their English level was the immediate. They came from different areas, both rural and urban ones. They spoke Vietnamese as their mother tongue and English as a foreign language. In addition, they have learned English for 7 years since high schools and 1 year at Tay Do University. The participants have been learning English as their major in four terms and improving the skills in learning English,

especially speaking subject. Students have been given the questionnaires in order to get information about some common errors in English speaking class.

3.4 Instruments

To achieve the goals of the thesis, the instrument of this research were questionnaire and statements. These instruments were very helpful in collecting essential information from student; the research instrument was completely based on information gained from theories related to issues in chapter two. The questionnaire is executed to show us the student's thoughts about some common errors in English speaking class. Besides, the statements for student were used to compare the information in the question to get more extra information.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used as the most effective instrument because the large amounts of information could be collected from a huge number of people in a short period of time. In addition, the outcomes of the questionnaires can be quickly and easily quantified by the use of the software package. The survey questionnaire is designed for 3 main purposes: To know the students' attitude for speaking English skills. To find out the challenges students face in terms of English language skills. To have the best ideas for solving the problems with the student.

The questionnaire embraced 8 questions and 20 statements. Part one consisted of 8 questions (numbered from one to eight) which required the students' background of learning English. The participants were required to choose the most appropriate answer. Especially for question 8, students were advised to give their specific answers. Besides, part two was 20 statements (numbered from 9 to 28) illustrated in a table with the 5-degree Likert-type scale including strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. Students could tick on the relevant column next to each statement. In general, the questionnaire was classified into the following sections:

Questions/ Statements	Summary of the question's/ Statement's content
a. Question 1 to 8	- Student's background of learning speaking
b. Question 9 to 13	- Student's problems in mother tongue
c. Question 14 to 18	- Difficulties about vocabulary
d. Question 19 to 23	- Student's problems in pronunciation
e. Question 24 to 28	- Problems of psychology

3.5 Procedures

In this part, the process of doing this study was presented. The research lasted about 12 weeks and it was divided into 4 steps. All the activities of conducting the study were listed in the following table:

Duration: 20 weeks	Activities
Stage 1: The first four weeks	- Meeting the supervisor and choosing a suitable topic. - Researching references and materials to support the research. - Making the outline of the research. - Designing the questionnaire. - Writing chapter 1.
Stage 2: From the 5th week to 9th week	- Writing chapter 2. - Contacting and asking the teacher for the permission to deliver the questionnaire. - Delivering the questionnaire to students to collect the data.
Stage 3: From the 10th week to 17th week	- Writing chapter 3 and chapter 4 - Analyzing the data collected from questionnaire. - Making the outline of chapter 4
Stage 4: The last three weeks	- Completing the research by writing chapter 4. - Writing chapter 5. - Editing and completing the research

4. Results and Discussion

The results of the questionnaire are shown in this chapter. The final results are drawn from analyzing the data collected from 91 English majored students in chapter 3.

4.1 Results of the questionnaire

After analyzing the information in the questionnaire, the researcher got some results about student's common errors in English speaking class of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University which include 5 main parts such as, student's background of learning speaking, student's problems in mother tongue, difficulties about vocabulary, student's problems in pronunciation, problems of psychology.

4.2 Discussion

Figure 1: Students' year of learning English
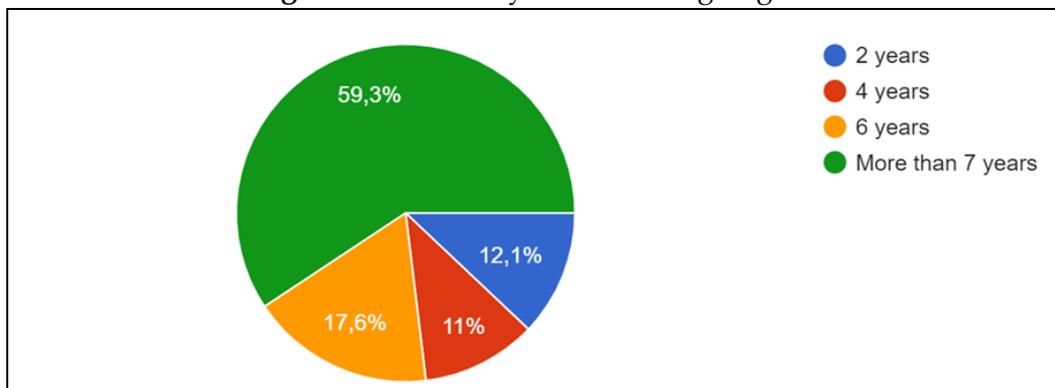
Results are statistically shown from the chart above.

The graph illustrated that the number of students who have been studying English over seven years accounted for nearly 60%, and 12.1% of the students have only studied English for two years. It means that a small minority of students does not have the standard of English when they enter Tay Do University, so the fact that they choose English as their major is truly a big challenge. They don't keep up with the pace of studying with the others in their class. Therefore, English majored students studying English for over 7 years comprised 59.3%, which means they can communicate English well if they know their obstacles. Regarding the remaining students who have only started learning English for 2 years, it will take them a long time and great efforts to keep up with the pace of learning and to improve their English speaking skills.

Figure 2: The importance of learning speaking English
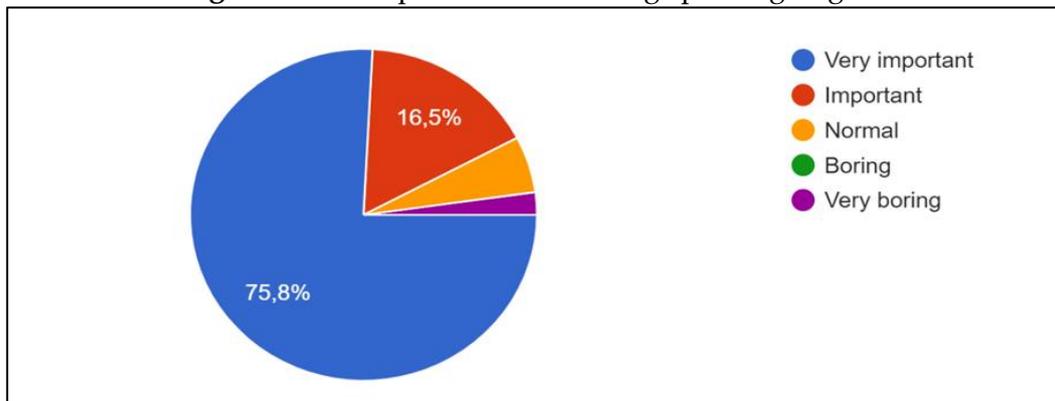
The chart demonstrates that the majority of students always care about the importance of learning English, especially speaking skill. As can be seen from the data, 75.8% of the students think English is very important. There was growing tendency to concern the significance of speaking English. Only more than 5 percent of the students get bored with speaking class. The remainders who show no attitude toward speaking is more than 16 percent.

Generally speaking, most of students consider that learning speaking English is essential. This is a very positive thing for the students involved in this paper.

**Figure 3:** Student's English speaking proficiency
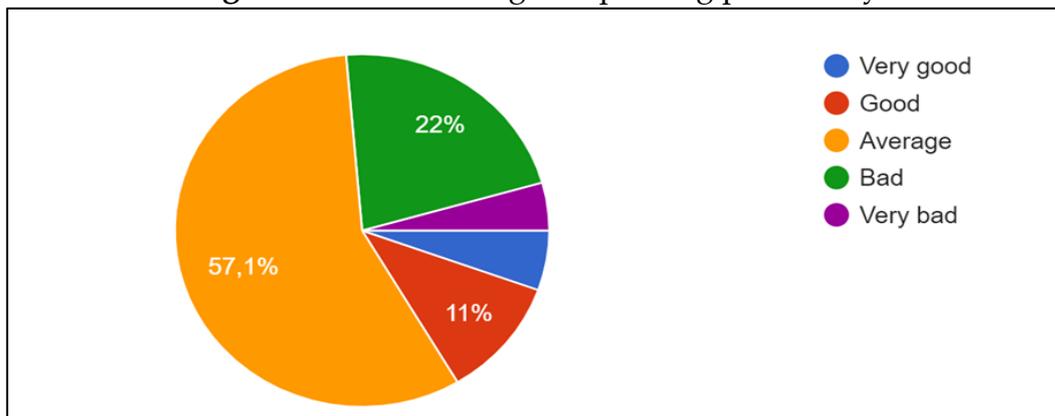
English speaking proficiency is one of students' demands. However, to be competent in speaking English, students need a long process. If they only worry much about their low skill in English but do not try hard, they cannot be good English communicators. More than 80 percent of the students feel that their speaking skills are only average. There were only 5.5% of the students who are excellent and quite confident with their fluency. Remarkably, the most proportion of students is average and unwell at English acquisition. The survey result shows that the students having difficulty in speaking English who are often poor in speaking skill.

Figure 4: Students' practicing-time on speaking per week
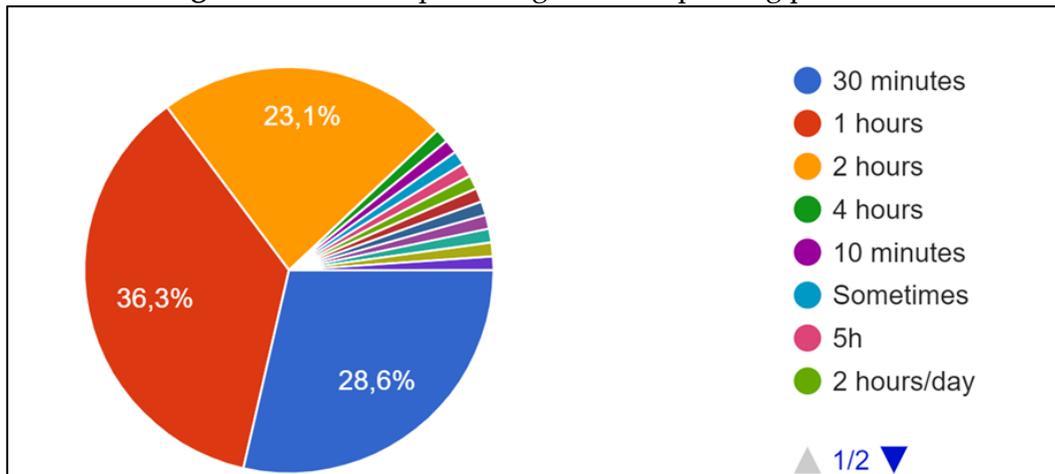
According to random statistics, only 23.1 percent of the students spend two hours a week practicing speaking English. From the pie chart, we can see from the data that all the students almost spend very little time practicing speaking English, which will impede the students' ability to speak well. It is nearly 90 percent of the students who are not interested in practicing speaking every day. They are lazy when mentioning in practicing speaking English daily.

Figure 5: Some common mistakes in English speaking
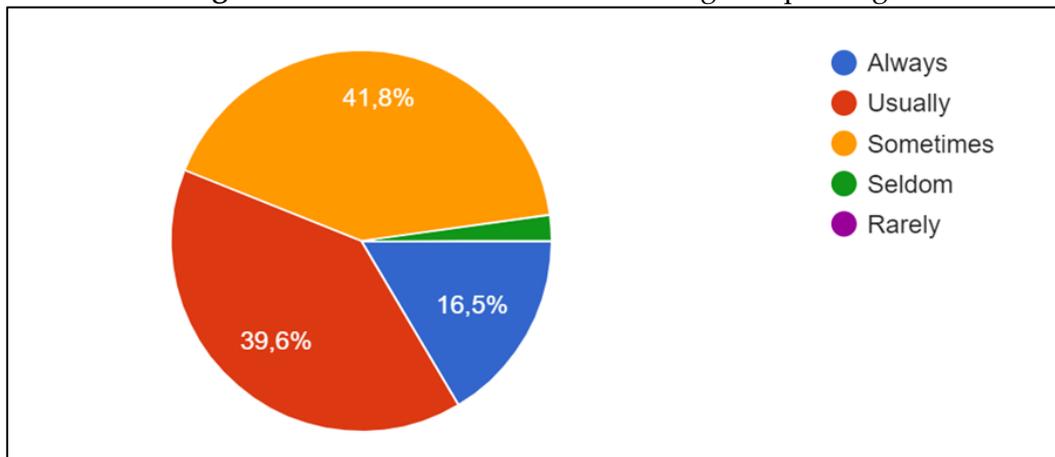
In short, as can be seen from the Figure 4, the students' attitude towards English practicing was declared fairly clearly. More than 10 percent of the students care much about their English improvement by practicing day by day.

When discussing the common mistakes in English speaking class, the proportion from the chart reflects the reality in English speaking class. All the students almost admit that they always, sometimes, or usually make mistakes when speaking English in class. Especially, 56.1 percent of the students admit or realize their mistakes while speaking. No one claims that they have never made errors, or seldom made mistakes in the English speaking class.

This data describes that the regular mistakes made by the first-year students in the English-speaking class is obvious. This means that the students having difficulties in the speaking process do not know how to correct it and overcome their challenges.

Figure 6: Communicating with people who speak a different language
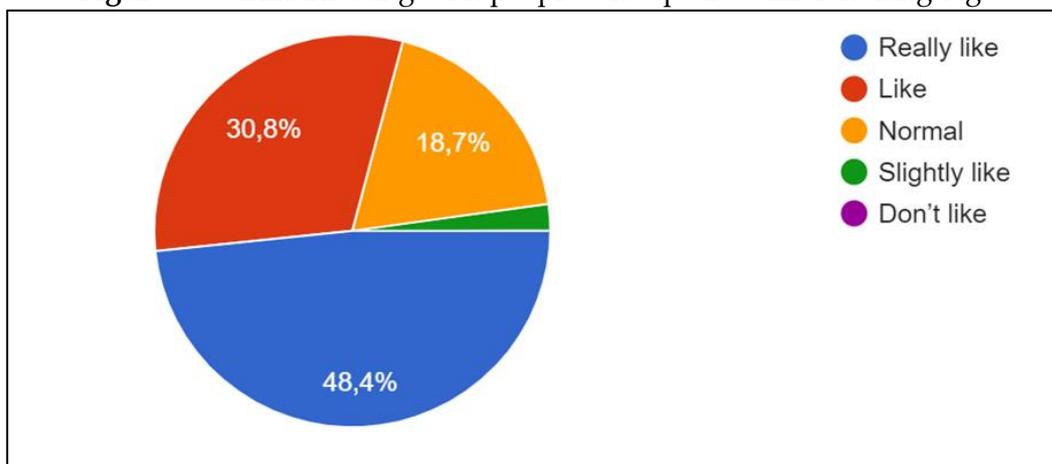
Communication or conversation with foreigners is one of the common interests of English majored students at Tay Do University. This number reaches more than 80%. None of the students dislikes communicating with foreigners. The remaining students who do not enjoy communicating with native speakers or foreigners fall on the group learning English for two years. That explains they still like talking to native speakers or foreigners, but they do not have enough English ability, so they are unconfident in communicating with foreigners. Most students are interested in talking to foreigners, which also contributes to the importance of speaking. This will help students find their exact problems that they encounter when speaking English, which will help them gain more confidence to communicate with foreigners.

Figure 7: Learning English with English speaking clubs
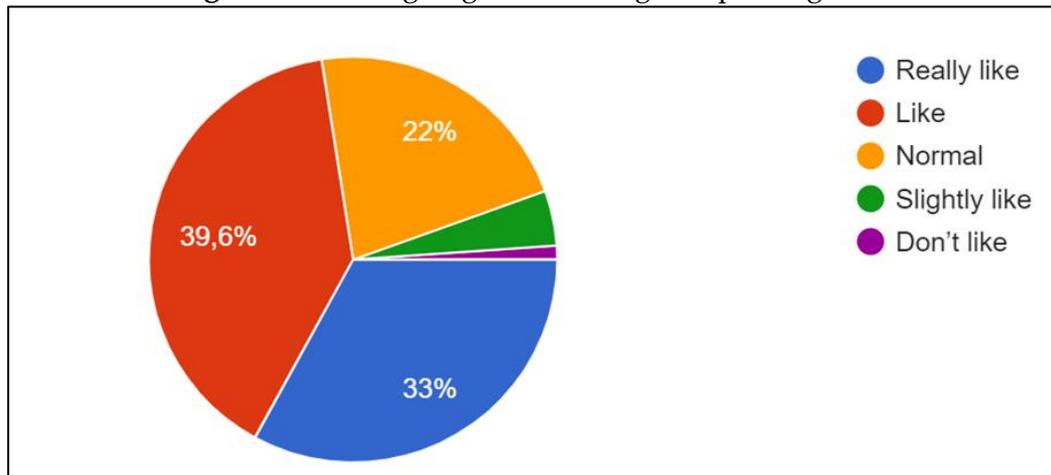
All of the English students seem to be attracted to English speaking clubs (ESC) for many reasons. They attend ECS to make friends, to improve their speaking skill, or to be fun. However, with the majority of students really like and like attending English clubs, it is calculated with 72.6%. Very few students are not interested in joining English speaking clubs. It takes only 5.4%. The students involved in English-speaking events from which students also participate in English-speaking clubs. However, English speaking is not a regular activity at school, so that can also be an obstacle for students who want to join ESC.

To English freshmen at Tay Do University, the English speaking class is one of the challenging classes because students do not have the habit of speaking at high school. Consequently, after entering university, they are afraid when speaking in front of their classmates. There are many problems in English speaking classes, but the most common mistakes students usually make in speaking are mother tongue interference, vocabulary, pronunciation, and psychology

Through the table 1 listed in the survey, most of the students have confided their difficulties in speaking English, especially about vocabulary and pronunciation. Besides that, the students also make some common mistakes such as linking word, mother tongue, and psychology.

Table 1: The influence of mother tongue on speaking English

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Mother Tongue					
9. I usually use the words Um, Ah, oh... When speaking English in class.	9.9%	11%	23.1%	50.5%	5.5%
10. I have often translated Vietnamese into English in mind before speaking.	5.5%	8.8%	18.7%	50.5%	16.5%
11. I speak English in class, but sometimes add a few Vietnamese words.	8.8%	17.5%	26.4%	40.7%	6.6%

| 12. Sometimes, I don't really understand what native speakers mean. | 7.7% | 4.4% | 17.6% | 53.8% | 16.5% |
| 13. I love to speak with Vietnamese more than foreigners. Because of Vietnamese accent easily to hear. | 14.2% | 24.2% | 34.1% | 18.7% | 8.8% |

As can be seen from the question 9 to question 13 in the table, it is easily seen that English majored freshmen faced many difficulties in speaking, especially the influence of mother tongue on speaking English. Through the statistical analysis, the number of the students who have problems in mother tongue is very magnificent. Students who do not understand native speakers are the most influential factor in the English speaking process of university students because up to 53.8% of the students agree to this. More than 50% of the students often use the words "*Um, Ah, oh, so on*" when speaking English in class and they have often translated Vietnamese into English in mind before speaking. 40.7% of the students agree that they speak English in class, but sometimes add a few Vietnamese words. However, they love to speak to the Vietnamese more than foreigners. Because when they feel unsure of something, Vietnamese accent is easier to be heard more than English one. Due to 24.2% of students disagree and 34.1% of students are not affected this idea much. To sum up, most of the students still find that the mother tongue has an influence on their English speaking skills. Besides, vocabulary is one of the key factors in speaking process.

Table 2: Students' vocabulary problem in speaking English

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Vocabulary					
14. Poor vocabulary, I cannot express my ideas easily.	6.6%	4.1%	20.9%	49.7%	18.7%
15. I rarely use slang, idioms, and phrasal verbs.	7.6%	7.7%	33%	48.4%	3.3%
16. Mistakes in word stress are a common cause of misunderstanding When I speak English	7.7%	6.6%	22%	59.3%	4.4%
17. I am lacking of vocabularies while I study speaking in class.	5.5%	4.3%	30.8%	46.2%	13.2%
18. I often use vocabulary that is not in the right context.	5.4%	20.9%	25.3%	42.9%	5.5%

Through the results listed above, the researcher finds that the vocabulary has an influence on the English speaking process of students with over 60 percent of students, with 59.3% of agreement, and 4.4% of strong agreement. I suppose mistakes in word stress are the most common cause of misunderstandings when students speak English. Poor vocabulary is the second barrier to the English speaking process of students (49.7%).

Other barriers are rarely using slang, idioms, phrasal verbs (48.4% agree) and not having sufficient vocabulary to communicate (46.2% agree).

The last obstacle is the use of vocabulary in the wrong context (42.9%). If mother tongue interference and vocabulary are two essential issues in learning speaking process, pronunciation is also very important in speaking. If students do not often care much about their pronunciation, they can achieve their high goal in English communication. When students cannot pronounce the words well, the listeners will never catch up their ideas.

Therefore, the communication or conversation will fail completely. The below table will show some data to prove the pronunciation problems.

Table 3: Students' pronunciation problem in speaking English

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Pronunciation					
19. It is not easy for me to pronoun correctly some difficult letters Ex: /p/, /t/….	8.8%	18.7%	25.2%	42.9%	4.4%
20. Because of my past pronunciation habits, I usually make mistakes in pronunciation	9.9%	8.8%	15.4%	56%	9.9%
21. I usually add "s" to the end of words or structures.	5.4%	33%	27.5%	28.6%	5.5%
22. Sometimes, I am omissible of final consonants	4.3%	8.8%	40.7%	44%	2.2%
23. I was confused between words with similar pronunciation.	2.1%	9.9%	29.7%	47.3%	11%

From the information shown in this table, the results of the statistics show that there are many differences in students' pronunciation; participants agree that they usually make mistakes in pronunciation. Up to 56% of the students said that they were confused about words with similar pronunciation because of their past pronunciation habits. Sometimes, they miss out the final consonants and it is not easy for them to pronounce some difficult letters correctly, and this is also considered as one of the obstacles for students. However, usually adding "s" to the end of words or structures, students who disagree are both routine and errors which often cause them to speak English while speaking, as evidenced by 33% of the students who deny this, but some of the students are also hindered by adding "s" at the end of the negative 28.6%, In general, it does not matter too much to add the final consonant.

Table 4: Students' psychology problem in speaking English

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Psychology					
24. I am a perfectionist so I blame myself when speaking something wrong.	11%	11%	34%	39.6%	4.4%
25. I am afraid of making mistakes and lacking in confidence in front of my classmates.	5.5%	7.7%	26.4%	53.8%	6.6%
26. It is hard to react quickly when speaking in class. Because I rarely communicate English in crowded places.	7.6%	7.7%	29.7%	47.3%	7.7%
27. I'm afraid of being criticized or laughed at by my friends because I do not speak English smoothly.	9.9%	16.4%	31.9%	35.2%	6.6%
28. I always wait until I have enough knowledge to be ready to communicate.	11%	9.9%	28.5%	42.9%	7.7%

Psychology in English speaking class is also one of the mentioned factors that students are often encountered. From the information shown in this table, the data collected shows that psychological factors affect students' ability to speak English, students are afraid of making mistakes and lacking in confidence in front of my classmates. All the participants almost agree that psychology is one of the biggest obstacles when speaking English (53.8 % agree). A large number of students feel that they cannot react fast when talking in class because they rarely communicate in English in crowded places. They always wait until they have enough knowledge to communicate. That also makes student feel confused (42.9% agree). Besides, 39.6% of the students are perfectionists, so they blame themselves for saying something wrong. Very few students feel afraid of being criticized or laughed at by their friends because they do not speak English smoothly with 35.2% agree. Through the data results, it is found that the psychological problems of self-fear, lack of self-confidence, as well as factors such as being affected by friends make it difficult for students to speak English.

After collecting information about the problems that often occur in thesis speaking through the questionnaire. The researcher analyzed and calculated data of 20 statements. From the table, it is easy to see that English majored freshmen faced many difficulties in speaking. There are four biggest influences that students should concern. First is the influence of mother tongue on speaking English. Second is students' vocabulary problem in speaking English. Third is students' pronunciation problem in speaking English. And the last one is students' psychology problem in speaking English. However, the most influential factor is that students' vocabulary problem in speaking English because the percentage of the students having difficulty dominated the highest proportion. Next, students' pronunciation problem in speaking English and students' psychology problem

in speaking English have a second influence; the influence of mother tongue on speaking English is the least influential element. In general, four factors have great impacts on the English language learners of the first-year students majoring in English at Tay Do University.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter includes conclusion, implications, limitations, and some recommendations for further research.

5.1 Conclusion

After conducting this research by analyzing the important information collected from the freshmen, the researcher finally figured out some common errors in the English speaking class of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University. Those factors were difficulties about mother tongue, vocabulary, pronunciation, and psychology.

This study was completed in 12 weeks. There were 91 English majored students of three classes including English linguistic 14A, 14B, and 14C at Tay Do University. The instrument using in this thesis was a survey questionnaire. The data from the survey questionnaires were statistically analyzed by the google form.

The results of the study also clearly show that students also have difficulty speaking. But most of the students consider that English speaking skill is truly necessary for study and life, so this research will be helpful for students. By doing this, this article will help the participants to recognize the errors and know how to fix them.

5.2 Implications

Through the research results, the researcher realized that it was not easy for Vietnamese students to speak English fluently, especially for first-year English-speaking majors. The speaking skill must be taken more seriously.

Therefore, I would like to suggest some implications for correcting and learning speaking skill for English majored students at Tay Do University as the following ideas.

- Self-practice: Students can practice speaking on a specific topic, or writing a questionnaire and practice answering it.
- Increase vocabulary: University students can talk about many different topics.
- Try and learn many useful new words in many contexts: Using a large dictionary is an effective way to increase vocabulary.
- Take time to listen more: Listen while reading the text with eyes and then read aloud.
- Try to imitate the pronunciation when listening in the lesson.
- Sing along to favorite English songs that helps the learner speak English fluently.

As a result, not only could students widen their knowledge but they could also make their voice become more natural when speaking with foreigners. Besides, they should search for videos related to the speaking teaching on YouTube so that they could

learn strategies and then apply these ways for practicing when communicating in English. These suggestions would be very useful and essential for students in their speaking learning process.

5.3 Limitations

Although being enthusiastically instructed and supported by the supervisor, family and friends, there are still some limitations in this study that may affect the final results. This is the first time the researcher has conducted such a real study. Because of limited time and knowledge, mistakes in the course are unavoidable.

Firstly, the limitation of this research was the size of the study. The number of the participants who joined in the research was limited with namely 91 students, just only three classes because of the Coronavirus disease (Covid-19). Therefore, the object of the study is that the students could not study at school and they switched to online learning. Their absence from school interferes with the data collection process. Therefore, I had to switch to an online questionnaire. This took a lot of time. Therefore, the results of the research were as unstable as predicted.

Secondly, due to the limited time, the research was only completed within sixteen weeks for all the chapters. Moreover, this is the first time the researcher has carried out a thesis and this topic was too new to do it as quickly as possible.

Finally, the researcher met some problems in finding reference materials because of very few studies related to speaking. Especially during the epidemic period, all activities must be halted and closed, such as libraries, bookstores, etc. so information sources are limited. However, the researcher strongly hopes that the study, in its scope, is able to contribute its usefulness to the English majored students at Tay Do University as well as non-English majored students as well.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the limitations mentioned above, it will be better if the further research focuses on a larger scale with students from many different courses so that the results could be more diversified, practical, and reliable.

In addition, as the researcher already completed the work of investigating the common errors in English speaking class of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University, hopefully in the near future, other researchers are going to conduct research to figure out other mistakes as well as solutions to minimize students' obstacles as much as possible.

Besides that, some recommended books for the students to research on speaking skill. Practice makes perfect. That is the reason why the students should find out some kinds of books to help them have more understanding about this field. There are some suggested books below which can be helpful for students including *Speak now, let's talk*.

Conflicts of Interest Statement

The authors whose names are listed immediately below certify that they have no conflicts of interest, authorship, and disclosures in publication. They confirm that this work is original and has not been published elsewhere, nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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