

# COMMON ERRORS IN ENGLISH SPEAKING OF FIRST YEAR ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS AT TAY DO UNIVERSITY

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## ABSTRACT

*Speaking is seen as the most important part of communication skills which contributes to the success of language learners for their studying and career as well as the success of the teaching process of teachers. Moreover, English-majored students, especially the English-majored freshman always want to investigate some common errors in English speaking. Consequently, this research entitled “Common errors in English speaking of first year English major students at Tay Do University.” was conducted to figure out some common errors on speaking skill of the students. The research was undertaken with the participation of English-majored sophomores from two English classes 16A, and 16B at Tay Do University. The main research instrument which was delivered to collect the data was interview. This is qualitative research. The findings of this research were analyzed to point out the positive effects of watching English films on speaking competence (vocabulary, grammatical structures, pronunciation and background knowledge).*

**Keywords:** *speaking, errors.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Rationale

Language impacts the daily lives of members of any race, creed, and region of the world. Language helps express our feelings, desires, and thoughts to the world around us. However, it is difficult to understand a new language while the world has over 200 languages. Thus, people need to choose a language as an international means of communication to exchange information. As a result, English is used popularly for decades and it is getting to become an explosion day by day. In Vietnam, English is applied from primary schools to the university, from the kids to the adults widely. It is also used in several remarkable fields such as commerce, business, tourism, education, medicine, etc, to serve people's demands. Certainly, English now has a strong standing in the world, not only in Vietnam but also in the international, it is one of the most powerful tools for those who want to have a dream job with a suitable salary or keep moving on studying in higher education.

English speaking skill is the most important skill that helps students get better in the process of learning a new language. Among the four key language skills, speaking is seemed to be the most important skill in learning a new language. Brown and Yuke (1983) said that “Speaking is the skill that the students will be judged upon most in the real-life situations”. Moreover, English is the language of getting opportunities for employment and getting success to achieve the desired goals in life. According to Bueno, Madrid, and McLaren (2006: 321), “Speaking is one of the most difficult skills language learners have to face”. Speaking is considered the most important of the four

language skills of English. Even the students learn the language for so many years. To speak English well, the students should try to study and practice regularly. However, English majored freshmen at Tay Do University still face with the difficulties because of four reasons. Firstly, incorrect pronunciation is one of the most common errors in communicating with others. When we talk to other people with wrong pronunciation then it will cause misunderstanding so we have to be careful when pronouncing a word. Secondly, lacking vocabulary is a big problem for them. We do not have enough vocabulary to express their thoughts or opinions. Thirdly, the mistakes in grammar structure are a reason affecting the student's speaking. Finally, background knowledge is also a big obstacle because it also includes content knowledge, academic language, and vocabulary necessary for comprehending content information.

According to those errors, English majored freshmen at Tay Do University have to face up with them all of the time. However, those limits are just the surface of the iceberg, those may lead students to some deeper and harder in the learning process. As a result, we decide to conduct the study "Common errors in English speaking of first year English major students at Tay Do University". We are going to expand and dig deeper to find out more challenges of students which are relevant to four errors above, to see whether there are having multiple obstacles in one errors or not.

### **1.2 Significance of the research**

The research is conducted to help the freshmen majoring English recognize the errors in English speaking. Though the research results, students can realize the errors that they are facing and they can find suitable solutions to improve their English speaking skills.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Definitions of English Speaking**

Communication is an activity of human and spoken language is a good way to express emotions and thinking. The definitions of speaking have been debated by many researchers with different perspectives. It led to a significant amount of definitions describing the term, some of which are mentioned below.

While Chaney (1998) defines "speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbol in a variety of context.", Hornby (1995) says that speaking is making use of words in an ordinary voice, offering words, knowing and being able to use a language expressing one-self in words, and making speech. Similarly, Brown (2004) stated that "speaking is a productive skill that can be directly and empirically observed; those observations are invariably colored by the accuracy and fluency." Azem, M. & Dogar, M. H., (2011) argues that "Speaking is a productive skill in the oral mode. It is like the other skills, is more complicated than it seems at the first and involves more than just pronouncing words." Actually, speaking requires not only pronunciation but also the necessary issues of speaking such as vocabulary, grammar structure and background knowledge. In addition, Grognet A.G, (1997) mentions that "Speaking is one of the skills that have to be mastered by students in learning English. Speaking is an essential tool for communicating". To summarize, speaking is the ability to communicate, express emotions and think verbally through the use of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammatical structures.

Beside, Alonso (2013) considered "Many English teachers claim that the best way to acquire speaking skills is by interacting". And Ismiati (2012) suggested that "Speaking skill is the skill to perform the linguistics knowledge in an actual communication. Thus, by speaking with others we are able to know what kinds of situation are in the world.". Tarigan (1990) also shared "Speaking the capability in pronouncing sound or word to express or convey though, idea, feeling, opinion and wish."

In addition, 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 feel that speaking English is difficult but I also think so, that is why I made this study.

Last but not least, Nunan (2003:55) also shared his viewpoint when stressing that "speaking as the use of language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called as fluency".

In short, it is concluded that speaking is the ability to create the language and share ideas. In a word, speaking English is the ability to appropriately convey verbal information. It not only express clearly in front of others but also express ideals, feelings and thoughts.

#### **2.1.2 The importance of listening comprehension skill**

We cannot deny that listening is important not just in everyday life but also in language learning. In real life, listening has a significant impact on a variety of industries. In other words, it plays a key role which can determine the success or failure of every life aspect such as communication, negotiation, business, etc. This ability "places us in our everyday situations and allows us to sustain meaningful relationships with family, friends, and

coworkers" (Michael P and Deborah B, 1997). People with good listening skills can avoid communication misunderstandings.

Listening comprehension skills require a lot of time. According to Flowerdew (1994, p.10) "Listening text exists in time rather than space". In reading comprehension skills, when we read an English sentence without understanding, we can read it again. But this is not the case in listening comprehension, there are situations that only allow us to listen once and have to understand their meaning immediately.

According to Hamouda (2013) "the person who learns English like a second language (EFL) often have problems with listening comprehension, because schools often pay attention to teaching grammar, reading skills and vocabulary. Technical listening ability is not emphasized in most teaching materials and teachers do not focus on developing skills this skill in the classroom." That has a negative effect on communicating in English in practice.

According to Mendelsohn (1994), listening accounts for 40% to 50% of daily communication activities; while speaking accounts for 25 to 30%; reading is between 11 and 16%; and write only about 9%. So when we cannot understand, we cannot communicate effectively.

The ability to listen is a crucial skill that students should not overlook. They will feel more secure and motivated when learning a spoken subject if they listen properly. So in English communication, listening is also the important skill.

## **2.2 The importance of English Speaking**

According to Ishrat Aamer Qureshi (2006), language is a tool for communication. Perfect communication is not possible for people without using a language. In fact, people cannot achieve their aims if they do not use proper language to communicate. Therefore, there is a need to communicate with others all around the globe. As English is considered the international language spoken all over the world, it is taught in most of schools in Vietnam and concentrated on four skills.

According to Ur (2000), of all the four language skills called listening, speaking, reading, and writing, speaking is the most important one that is very necessary for the effective communication. Brown and Yuke (1983) say, "Speaking is the skill that the students will be judged upon most in real life situations". Speaking is one of the most important skills to be developed and enhanced as means of effective communication. Speaking skill is regarded one of the most difficult aspects of language learning. 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.

Besides, English is a means of communication linking many countries in several areas such as business, diplomacy, economy, politicization and culture. Especially, with the developing of social network, English speaking skill is a useful way to connect people in our society. Thus, it is necessary to have a good speaking skill because of its important functions.

For students learning language, speaking skills are very important for their survival and growth in academic and professional life. In fact, every academic, professional, or business work requires effective speaking skills. Beside, Speaking is considered to be the mostly sought skill for an individual to be accepted competent in a foreign language. Speaking is more than to form grammatically correct sentences; it rather covers broad areas of mechanics, functions, pragmatics and social interaction. Moreover, speaking is one of the job requirements in modern life. It helps students get a good job in the future because they can be asked for presentations, and agreements of contracts. If you have a good speaking skill, you will have more public opportunities in the future. Therefore, speaking skills are very important for students.

In short, English is not only the foreign language ability but this is also one of the remarkable achievements. The importance of speaking English is also reflected in the relationships. If someone has good English speaking skills, they will not be embarrassed when interacting with foreigners, they can speak confidently instead of being reserved. Interestingly, it is a skill most people want to be good at. However, it is also the skill that they are most afraid to practice.

## **2.3 Common errors in English speaking**

### **2.3.1 Lack of Pronunciation**

Pronunciation in the broadest sense is the form in which the basic symbols of a language, segment phonemes or speech sounds, and arrangement in patterns of pitch, loudness, and duration. From Wikipedia "*Pronunciation is the way in which a word or a language is spoken*". This may refer to generally agreed-upon sequences of sounds used in speaking a given word or language in a specific dialect "correct pronunciation" or simply the way a particular individual speaks a word or language. It is what the speaker does and what the listener feels, and so far, evaluation is requested, assessed. It is so basic about the language that it should be considered in any general discussion of the subject. William Strunk, Jr (1935) said that "*If you don't know how to pronounce a word, say it loud!*". Learners find that their mother tongue influences their pronunciation of English. Avery and

Ehrich argued that, "*the native language affects both the ability to produce English sounds and the ability to hear sounds*". This is also a useful piece of advice for someone who is improving your skills, so the role of pronunciation helps you a lot so how difficult it will be if you don't pronounce well.

Pronunciation errors include final sound, word stress and intonation.

### **Final sound**

Vietnamese has no distinction between voiced and voiceless sounds, many Vietnamese students have difficulty speaking English. When speaking English, students also often forget to pronounce the final sounds. This is quite easy to understand because Vietnamese has no final sounds. Final sounds are very important factors while speaking English. There are a lot of words that have nearly the same sound, the final consonant is a key to recognize exactly the words that others are talking about. For example, two words "win" and "wind", both of them have nearly the same phonetic transcription: /win/ and /wind/. If the speakers do not pronounce the final sound /d/ in the word "wind", then the word "wind" will be changed into "win". Besides, if the speakers pronounce the sound /n/ to /ŋ/, the word "win" will be converted "wing". A little error in pronunciation of the final sounds can also cause the listeners to misinterpret the speaker's meaning.

Besides, of students often cannot speak correctly ending sounds in plural form of words: /s/, /z/, /iz/, and in past form of regular verbs: /z/, /d/, /id/ because all of them do not remember the rule of ending sound pronunciation. Almost the English majored students do not know whether pronoun /s/ or /z/ in case adding "-s" or "-es" at the end of the word confuse between /-d/ and /-ed/ in past verbs.

### **Word stress**

Word stress is one of the supra-segmental features of spoken texts (Ladefoged, 1993; Nunan, 1999). According to Ladefoged (1993) and Kreidler (1997), every word in English that has more than one syllable has a prominent stress. The stress pattern of an English word is fixed. The stressed syllable is pronounced with a greater amount of energy and usually louder than unstressed syllables (Ladefoged, 1993; Field, 2004). According to Underhill (1994), some long polysyllabic words can have, in addition to the primary stressed syllable, another syllable that is given stress. This is known as the secondary stressed syllable. The primary stressed syllable is given more force than the secondary stressed syllable.

Ngo, N.B (2001:7) claimed that "Vietnamese is a tonal language in which changes of the pitch level and/or contour signal changes in meaning", He also mentioned that "Vietnamese is syllable-timed language, and English is stress-timed language". Therefore, Vietnamese learners have problems with the timing of stressed words. They often speak English without stress any syllables or stress the wrong position. They speak all parts of the word at almost the same volume. Meanwhile, word stress in English is very diverse. It can appear in any syllable, maybe in the first, the second, the third or even in the fourth syllable of the word. Each stressed position has its own meaning.

In short, word stress is an important element in English that students should remember. Using word stress helps students feel more confident and improve their speaking skill.

### **Intonation**

According to Camille (2018), "If you didn't raise or lower your voice at certain parts of each sentence, you 'd sound like a robot!". There are many definitions of intonation, but it can be understood simply that it is "The sound changes produced by the rise and fall of the voice when speaking" (Cambridge, 2017). But intonation does not exist in isolation. It only makes sense if it is accompanied by three factors: grammar, attitude and discourse. In fact, intonation is the supporting factor for these factors. With intonation, the message that the speaker wants to send will become more clearly, especially attracting listeners. Native speakers always use intonation to be able to easily guess the other's feelings. Intonation is also a testament to English proficiency for English learners, the more intonation they use, the more natural their voice become.

Le (1999) claimed that "The curriculum in their native language from kindergarten to high school did not have any exact standard for Vietnamese intonation so Vietnamese people usually do not know what intonation is exactly, even there are some people who think that Vietnamese language does not have intonation". That is the reason why Vietnamese students begin to focus on improving their speaking skills, they are always confused about using intonation when speaking English, students often speak English with a monotone accent and they do not stress the words. Some of them also have trouble with intonation, they raise their voice in the wrong part of sentence, especially in wh- questions and tag questions. Those errors actually cause a lot of misunderstanding situations in reality.

In short, Intonation is important to master English intonation if students want to sound natural and keep listeners focused on the content that they speak.

Finally, pronunciation is very important in English speaking skills. Mispronouncing or stressing incorrectly can cause the listener to misinterpret the speaker's problem or make the listener not understand the content. The reason is that they apply the Vietnamese pronunciation rules and are influenced by Vietnamese stress, so they stress

each syllable as English is called the language rhythmic stress is measured by the rhythm between syllables. However, English readers often replace a consonant from their native language without moving the mouth in the correct shape to pronounce sounds in English. Lack of vocabulary in pronunciation and not correcting mistakes in pronunciation will be a major obstacle to learning English speaking of first year English major students at Tay Do University.

### 2.3.2 Lack of Grammar knowledge

According to the language, grammar is a set of language elements such as words, phrases, clauses, etc, are arranged by rules and order to form a complete and meaningful sentence. Besides vocabulary, grammatical structure is a very important factor affecting the ability to speak English.

According to Margaret J. Speas (1990);" *One of the first lessons learned by the student of language or linguistics is that there is more to language than a simple vocabulary list. To learn a language, we must also learn its principles of sentence structure, and a linguist who is studying a language will generally be more interested in the structural principles than in the vocabulary per se*". When speaking wrong grammar will make the meaning of the sentence unclear, making the listener not understand and have to guess the meaning themselves. A grammatically correct expression will make the conversation more interesting and exciting.

According to Fredrickson (1997) the problem is that students get confused when they meet many kinds of verbs forms and they associate them with time. They have the idea that verb tenses are always associated with particular times. Many forms of verb tense are sometimes not related to the time as the learners understand. The present simple is not always about the past and present continuous is not always the progressive action. In conclusion, the knowledge of the language makes us to know the meaning of isolated words or sentences or the rules of grammar and use the rules properly.

Besides, students are also confused about how to use correct tense in passive voice. Tense is an important element in passive voice structure. Vietnamese passive voice structures do not depend on tenses like English, students do not have a habit that pays attention to tenses. Students are usually confused about changing forms of verbs while using passive voice structure. They cannot change a verb into its past participle immediately so their conversations are not consecutive. Therefore, remembering the correct tenses can help students complete and meaningful passive sentence.

Therefore, in communication, poor grammar will cause discomfort and bring bad emotions to the opposite person.

### 2.3.3 Lack of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is all words that exist in a particular language or subject, learning vocabulary represents one of the most crucial skills that is necessary for speaking, a robust vocabulary all areas of communication - listening, speaking, reading and writing. Richard Lederer (1938) claimed that "*English language is the most universal language in history, way more than the Latin of Julius Caesar. It's the most powerful language because its vocabulary has a certain critical mass that makes a lingo good for punning.*" Vocabulary is critical to a child's success for these reasons, without having a sufficient vocabulary, speakers cannot communicate effectively or express their ideas in both oral and written forms. Vocabulary helps us to think and learn about the worlds.

Expanding our knowledge of words provides unlimited access to new information. Wilkin in Thorbury (2004) states that "*Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed*". Moreover, the purpose of learning vocabulary should include both keeping in mind words and the ability to use them automatically in a wide range of language contexts when the need arises. Many students have difficulties while speaking English because of the limited vocabulary and sentence structure. Vocabulary is divided in many types of word, including verb, nouns, adjective and so on, that make students cannot remember all of them easily. In English, a word can contain many meanings and depend on the context that we use accordingly, this also makes students feel confused about choosing words to speak in accordance with the context. Although many people are starting to learn English from elementary school, according to the survey results, until university, vocabulary and sentence structure are still relatively small.

Vocabulary errors include word order and lack of vocabulary. Firstly, the wrong word order is one of the most common errors. According to Biber (1999), "*the term word order is most often used to refer to the order of the elements in the clause*". Crystal and David (1980) also stated that "*word order is a term used in grammatical analysis to refer to the sequential arrangement of words in larger linguistic units*". In conclusion, word order refers to the arrangement of words in a sentence. Word order is important in English and it can change the whole meaning of a sentence if students speak wrong word order. The standard word order in English is "Subject + Verb + Object". In English, some sentences can be made up of the same words, but their roles are completely different because students have used the arrangement of words in the sentence to determine the subject and the direct object.

Beside, vocabulary is an important factor in the process of learning to speak English. In fact, according to Jamie (2015), *"There will be numerous embarrassing moments, along with despair at your lack of vocabulary"*. Therefore, poor vocabulary prevents many students from expressing their ideas easily. Students are studied basic English in University, while speaking in real life native speakers tend to use slang, idioms and phrasal verb. In short, the English-majored freshmen also have many problems when speaking English with simple word. Lack of vocabulary is another reason why speaking becomes difficult and ineffective.

In short, vocabulary seems to be the main reason why students feel uncomfortable in expressing ideas, thoughts and feelings when speaking English.

#### **2.3.4 Lack of background knowledge**

Background knowledge is a key component for students to speaking English successfully. Simon (1996) defined that "background knowledge is all knowledge learners have when entering a learning environment that is potentially relevant knowledge". Gebhard (2000) affirmed that "background knowledge related to our real-world experiences and expectations that we have". Background knowledge is a key factor in having a good way of speaking. It covers many aspects such as reading newspapers, news, reading vocabulary, etc. According to Alison Graves "English has become the most popular language in the world after the mother tongue".

Lacking of background knowledge is one of the most important factors affecting fluency in speaking English. It is worthy of admission that finding an exact definition for "knowledge" quite difficult. Because of being an abstract notion, knowledge has a diversity of explanations and definitions, ranging from philosophy, sociology and psychology. Background knowledge is "quite simply what someone already knows about a subject that will help him gain new information." The lack of background knowledge is one of the problems that students have faced. To speak English well, learners need to learn to know many fields because background knowledge helps them get enough ideas in order to express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions. Today, when information technology flourished, it is very easy to find a lot of information on the internet. Instead of wasting much time playing games, listening to music, watching movies, and reading nonsense news, people should update useful knowledge about cultures; in reality, language and culture have a mutual relation. In fact, "Language cannot exist without culture. Culture can be explained as what the society thinks and does, a language is the expression of the ideas of the society" (The American linguist Edward Sapir, 1921, p 60). People not only study about the culture but also learn about other aspects of life, such as animal environment and behavior. Hence, students have to take a variety of knowledge in many fields to apply their knowledge in a speaking context. However, when facing the speaking contexts including these topics, students seem to lack the knowledge to express their ideas or misunderstand what other people expose because these topics consist of many words and phrases that are untimely strange to them.

#### **2.4 Previous studies**

When speaking English, students make many errors. The following related studies will be evidence to support that claim.

The first one that should be mentioned in the research *"Common Errors in Speaking of English-Majored Sophomores at Tay Do University"* was conducted to investigate common errors of English-majored sophomores from English class 14A, 14B and 14C at Tay Do University. The tool of this study was the questionnaire and interview. Research results showed that English-majored sophomores made some common errors about pronunciation (final sounds, word stress, intonation), vocabulary (word order, word choice, lack of vocabulary) and grammar (wrong tense, wrong passive voice, wrong part of speech).

Secondly, the research *"Problems of learning speaking skills encountered by English major students at Ba Ria - Vung Tau University"* was conducted by Huynh Thi Anh Tram in 2020. The study aimed at discovering and analyzing the problems in learning speaking skills faced by English major students at Ba Ria-Vung Tau University. The main research method employed in this study was descriptive analytic method to examine the English major students' problem of learning speaking. The result revealed that the dominant problems these students often encounter were associated with linguistic problems and non-linguistic problems.

Finally, the research entitled *"The difficulties in speaking English of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University"* aims to figure out common difficulties in studying speaking of students majoring in English. The participants of this research are thirty - five students of class Bachelor English 11B, course 2016-2020. The three main instruments of the study are a questionnaire, a test and an interview. They are used to find out the students' difficulties in learning to speak English in terms of linguistics (pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar), background knowledge psychological obstacles, etc. Through this research, students can recognize the factors affecting speaking English so that they can choose and apply appropriate ways to enhance their speaking skill.

In summary, these studies above have found out some common errors and difficulties students faced in their English speaking. From that, the researcher used those data as the basis for conducting this research about errors in learning English speaking.

### 3. SEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research aims

This research was to investigate some common errors in English speaking of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University.

#### 3.2 Research questions

This research was required to answer the following research questions:

1. Do English majored freshmen at Tay Do University have any error in English speaking?
2. What are some common errors in English speaking of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University?

#### 3.3 Research design

The research was to investigate some common errors in speaking English of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University and to help them realize their weaknesses so that they could fix those. Qualitative instrument was used in the research. Ten students were randomly selected to answer the interview questions. The collected information of the instrument was analyzed to show the errors in learning English speaking skill.

#### 3.4 Research participants

The participants of this survey include 10 English majored freshmen were studying at Tay Do University in the same class (English 16). Generally, the participants were between the ages of 18 and 20 years old. They come from different areas, both rural and urban. Moreover, Vietnamese is their mother tongue and English is their foreign language. However, their backgrounds are quite similar because, under the influence of the curriculum of speaking skills in high school in the past, they did not have many chances to practice it. For this reason, when entering Tay Do University, their levels of speaking skill is limited and they have to face up many difficulties in English-speaking as well as learning English. They will be given a questionnaire and small interview to answer some basic questions about English speaking skills to get information about their obstacles and errors they have been facing in speaking skills.

#### 3.5 Research instrument

Interview was used to collect the participants' ideas about some common errors in speaking English. The interview was designed to get some specific and further information from the freshmen and to help them recognize their weaknesses in speaking English skills. It includes 5 questions which focus on two main points. The first one is to find their errors in speaking English skills based on four listed elements. It aims to find which is/are the most common challenge(s) to the freshmen' learning process. The last one is to discover their further obstacles in each of errors. Because the detailed problems of each one could risk extremely serious consequences to their learning process. In the nutshell, the goal of this instrument is to find, understand, and figure out all the errors freshmen majoring in English speaking skills, if they identify all of them in time, then they could save a lot situation.

##### 3.5.3 Data analysis

After the data collection, the researchers analyzed the information from the interview papers explained by using the qualitative analysis method. All the collected data will be compiled and calculated.

##### 3.5.4 Hypothesis

According to the first year students majoring in English at Tay Do University, speaking is one of the difficult skills in learning English. Therefore, based on relevant research questions and interview, it is hypothesized that the first year students majoring in English at Tay Do University have difficulties learning in speaking English relating to pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and background knowledge.

##### 3.5.5 Procedure

This research is conducted in twelve weeks and the process is divided into 3 steps as the following table

Duration (12 weeks)	Activities in study process
Step 1: the 1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> week	- Designing the framework of the research. - Designing the questionnaire and interview.
Step 2: the 4 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> week	- Giving the sophomores a questionnaire and interview them about their difficulties in English speaking skills.
Step 3: the 8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> week	- Analyzing the data collected from the interview. - Completing the paper.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Speaking is a vitally important means of communication. If students want to speak English Fluently, they must try their best to get over some errors while communicating in English. English-major freshmen at Tay Do University have also faced a lot of troubles in speaking related to linguistic elements (pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, background knowledge, and fluency). This research aims to point out the difficulties from speaking English skills.

##### 4.1 Pronunciation

Pronunciation is one of the important elements in English speaking skills for specialized students. But this is also a difficult skill for them, in the learning process, students always have errors with pronunciation such as differences in the Sound Systems of the Two Languages (English and Vietnamese). While in English, the same letter may represent different sounds. Besides, many words contain silent letters which may be at any positions in the word. Vowels three out of seven short English vowels are absent in Vietnamese does not have vowel contrasts (minimal pairs) which means there is not discrimination between the short and long. In Vietnamese, a letter is often represented by the same phoneme. In English, some phonemes seem to be represent by identical letters but different pronunciation Vietnamese in general is spoken with a staccato delivery. Syllables and words are not linked together as in English but are clearly separated from each other. Especially final consonant clusters cause the greatest difficulties for Vietnamese students. This is really a matter to Vietnamese students. Once pronouncing a sentence incorrectly, it will make the listeners not understand what we are saying.

##### 4.2 Grammar

English Grammar is complex, making it difficult to remember, master and use logically. Canale and Swain (1980) suggested that “*communicative competence includes grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence*”. Thus, we can say that grammatical rules are one of the fundamental aspects of speaking skill. Ensuring you use the correct grammar can be tricky, especially when you are in conversation with someone and they are speaking at an alarmingly fast pace. Grammatical competence is an umbrella concept that includes increasing expertise in grammar (morphology, syntax), vocabulary, and mechanics with regard to speaking, the term mechanics refers to basic sounds of letters and syllables, pronunciation of words, intonation, and stress. Without structures, it is difficult to make comprehensible sentences too.

##### 4.3 Vocabulary

Learning vocabulary is a very important part of learning a language. The more words you know, the more you will be able to understand what you hear and read, lack of vocabulary will make students cannot understand the meaning of the words, or do not get other mean of the words in some cases that the words have multiple meanings. Special problems involved in vocabulary understanding, such as polyse, the word’s idiomatic usage, false cognates and distinction between homophones, can also be solved by the context and the dictionary. Remembering vocabulary (Vocabulary learning has largely been construed as a memory problem) seems to be another difficulty for vocabulary learners. One of the biggest problems with vocabulary learning is that what’s ‘learned’ today is often forgotten tomorrow. Here are some suggested methods for reducing the ‘forgetting problem. They also cannot speak confidently when their vocabularies are not enough to provide for differently abundant topics while giving a speech and that could risk what we say be boring and less attractive.

##### 4.4 Background knowledge

According to the study, students probably face difficulties while understanding specific topics if they do not have the wide background knowledge in many fields. Lack of background knowledge will make students limited to enhance knowledge or have a chance to perform. Background knowledge is many such as society, culture, healthy, etc. which make the speakers/listeners may absorb toughly to misunderstand and catch up. It also makes students cannot express their ideas and feeling when they are saying because probably they have enough vocabularies to give a speech but they do not have a clue about the topics. The difficulties that influences the development of background knowledge is our academically oriented experiential base the number of experiences that will directly add to our knowledge of content we encounter in school. The more academically oriented experiences we have, the more opportunities we have to store those experiences as academic background knowledge.

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- [5]. "*Language cannot exist without culture. Culture can be explained as what the society thinks and does, a language is the expression of the ideas of the society*" (The American linguist Edward Sapir, 1921, p 60).
- [6]. Jamie (2015), "*There will be numerous embarrassing moments, along with despair at your lack of vocabulary*".
- [7]. Biber (1999), "*the term word order is most often tused to refer to the order of the elements in the clause*".
- [8]. Crystal and David (1980) "*word order is a term used in grammatical analysis to refer to the sequential arrangement of words in larger linguistic units*".
- [9]. "*The sound changes produced by the rise and fall of the voice when speaking*" (Cambridge, 2017).
- [10]. *Word stress is one of the supra-segmental features of spoken texts* (Ladefoged, 1993; Nunan, 1999).
- [11]. Tarigan (1990) "*Speaking the capability in pronouncing sound or word to express or convey though, idea, feeling, opinion and wish.*".
- [12]. Grognet A.G, (1997) "*Speaking is one of the skills that have to be mastered by students in learning English. Speaking is an essential tool for communicating*".