

Some Effective Ways to Improve Speaking Skill of English Majored Freshmen at Tay Do University in Viet Nam

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ABSTRACT: *It is undeniable that speaking skill is very important in learning English. It is a tool to help students find good jobs in the future, especially to work for a foreign company. However, the process of learning and practicing speaking English is not easy, students still get a lot of difficulties. This research was carried out to study some effective ways to improve speaking skill. The participants were eighty-six English majored freshmen of English classes at Tay Do University. Questionnaire was delivered to collect problems. This was a quantitative and qualitative research. The results showed that enriching vocabulary, taking part in an English club, spending more time to practise, working in group, talking to foreigner and enlarging knowledge about culture were the major ways. Basing on these, English learners could find out suitable learning ways to improve their speaking skill. The results of this study may also be useful for those who are interested in this field.*

KEY WORD: speaking, English majored freshmen, university

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English has been considered very important in every field of each society as diplomacy, business, aviation, education, science, technology and etc. Because of its globalization, English has become the crucial medium in communication. English has become very popular in Vietnam since there have been many English-speaking people coming to Vietnam not only to do business with Vietnamese people but also to get to know about the people, the cultures. Specially, with the open-door policy, many foreigners have been attracted by Vietnam. Therefore, English has become the major medium of communication between the Vietnamese and the foreigners. Vietnamese people need to be able to communicate in English successfully and effectively. The lacking of communicative ability in oral and other language skills in using English can put Vietnamese regionally and internationally in an inferior position both in politics and economics.

The communicative approach in language teaching has become more and more predominant in recent years all over the world. At the threshold of the 21st century, English is used either as a first or second language by millions of people and is one of the main or official languages in every continent of the world. In Vietnam this approach has been used popularly especially speaking skill. To teach speaking

skill to learners, many classroom teaching techniques such as pair work, group work, role play, English club, talking to foreigners and etc.

Speaking skill consists of short, fragmentary utterance, in a range of pronunciation. There is often a great deal of repetition and overlap between one speaker and another and speakers usually use non-specific references. Brown (1994) defined that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. When participating in communicative activities, the speaker should choose the correct vocabulary to describe the things they want to say about, to rephrase or to emphasize words to clarify the description to produce the expected pattern of specific discourse situations.

At TDU, English is a compulsory subject for English major and non-major, every student knows that it will be important for their future jobs. Among the four languages skills, most students think that speaking is the most important in the first year of studying. To make speaking successfully, they must have a good ability of English especially communicating orally in it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of skill

In the past, a skill has been likened to a job and the learned capacity or talent to carry out pre-determined results often with the minimum outlay of time, energy, or both. Skills can be classified in two main types: domain-general and domain-specific. For example, in the domain of studying, some general skills would include teamwork, individual work, self-motivation, and others, whereas domain-specific skills would be useful only for a certain subject.

Skills in language often depend on numerous variables. "Skill is different from knowledge provided. A fundamental difference is that while both can be understood and memorized, only a skill can be imitated and practiced." (Bygate, 1987). It is undeniable that knowledge of the language is not enough for language learners, they need skills. Students observe, practice, and then gradually gain the skills to succeed. The more students practice the more successful they are.

Definition of speaking skill

There are a lot of definitions for speaking, for example, "Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information." (Burns & Joyce, 1997) or according to Revell (1979), "Speaking is an exchange process between people, of knowledge, of information, of information, of ideas, of options, of feeling, so there must be concept, ideas, in the fellow speakers of what they are going to say." In short, speaking can be understood as an action of making vocal sounds, it is also defined as expressing a person's thought and feelings in spoken language.

In addition, speaking is "an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information." (Brown, 1994). 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. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. Speaking requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (linguistic competence), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (sociolinguistic competence). A good speaker synthesizes these skills and knowledge to succeed in a given speech act. Speaking skill also plays the key role in foreign language learning and teaching.

The position of speaking skill in English language learning

It seems clear that speaking is the key component to English language learning. Teachers and students are aware of the role of speaking in English language learning. In fact, different skills have certain roles, but the almost aim is to use spoken language to communicate with others.

First, speaking is to enable learners to communicate in the target language. Besides, communication is a basic demand for everyone, so if students want to communicate students should learn how to speak. For the increasing demands for joining in a lot of fields in life, not only domestically but also overseas, learners need to be able to communicate well as they ask for information to serve their different purposes.

Second, one of the objectives in teaching language is to prepare learners to be able to use the language. They must be aware that speech maintains a higher position than other skills. Martin Bygate (1987) said that, "Speaking is a medium through which much language is learnt, and which for many is particularly conducive for learning." This means that there are a lot of emphases put on the importance of speaking skills. When speaking skills are mastered, other skills like listening, writing, and reading which can be effectively achieved.

In sum, speaking skill which plays a vital part in the teaching and learning of English requires the efforts of both the teachers and the students to gain a mastery of it. Bygate (1987) proved that speaking not only requires linguistic but also socio-cultural competence, which asks speakers to understand what, when, why, and in which way to speak. In order to speak English fluently, apart from a limited amount of grammar and vocabulary, teachers must be aware of the contribution of other factors involved in speaking such as culture, pronunciation and etc.

Factors affecting on speaking skill

There are two most important reasons why speaking should be taught in the classroom. The first reason is speaking is a good source of motivation for students. Nunan (1991) pointed out, "Success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the target language." Students who have ability to speak English eligibly, they want to speak English; they know how to express themselves in English. Thus, they always speak when possible. But for those who cannot speak English well, they do not want to speak any word. Therefore, there are many factors affecting on speaking skill well as vocabulary, culture, pronunciation and psychological obstacles.

Vocabulary

The term vocabulary has been defined quite differently according to its various aspects such as criteria, features and functions. According to Ur, (1996: 60), vocabulary can be defined as “the words we teach in the foreign language. However, a new item of vocabulary may be more than a single word: a compound of two or three words or multi word idioms.” It is words that sounds and meanings interlock to allow us to communicate with one another, and it is word that we arrange together to make sentences, conversation and discourse of all kinds.

Chastain (1988) stated that, “The lack of needed vocabulary is the most common cause of students’ inability to say what they want to say during communication activities.” In other word, a word does not merely have a meaning; it probably has many different meanings in different contexts. Learners are often confused about choosing suitable words in certain context. Overall, learners meet difficulty in identifying a word.

Vocabulary is very important for students who learn English as a foreign language. That is why students who learn English or a certain language should know the words. The mastery of vocabulary can support them in speaking when they are communicating to people. If they do not know the meaning of words, they will not be able to speak English. Moreover, learning vocabulary is one of the first steps of learning a second language.

Background knowledge

Besides some difficulties about vocabulary students also meet difficulty in lack of background knowledge. Background knowledge is the main element to have a good listening skill. Learners will not speak well if they get unfamiliar topic. Background knowledge consists of many aspects in real life such as culture, society, economy, and so on. Therefore, background knowledge plays a significant role in language learning as well as speaking.

Lack of background knowledge is an obstacle during the learning process. Anderson and Lynch (2000) mentioned that, “Lack of social-cultural, factual and contextual knowledge of the target language can also present an obstacle to comprehension because language is used to express culture.” The marriage between language and culture is indivisible. In fact, background knowledge includes knowledge of the target culture, knowledge of current affairs, arts, politics and literature. Culture provides land for language to develop and in contrast, language operates to serve the culture. For this reason, it is necessary for learners to have knowledge of culture background of language that they are learning.

Pronunciation

A reasonable pronunciation is important when a learner’s general aim is to talk intelligibly to others in another language. In fact, pronunciation plays a critical role for learners who want to master in both listening and speaking. If learners are good at pronouncing words, they will be proficient in listening. Yates (2001) expressed that, “Pronunciation relates to the generation of sounds that are used to form meaning.” With the same point, Hismanoglu (2016) stated that, “Pronunciation is significant as it is a section of successful oral production or communicative competence.”

In addition, pronunciation involves in accent and intonation. Intonation is the rhythm how one's voice rises and falls at a certain point of the sentence. Brazil et al (1980) argued that, "Intonation in English might also convey a speaker's involvement in a conversation as well as a desire to take turn of talk or leave the conversation. Intonation is a significant feature in English." In communication, when the speakers have different intonations, the listeners will confuse because different intonations make a same sentence have various meaning. In addition, "The reason lies often in difference of stress and intonation sufficiently large to spoil comprehension.", Boyle (1984). It is not surprised that if the speakers change their intonation, the listeners often misunderstand the meaning of the sentence. Therefore, learners should learn how to control their intonation correctly to avoid misunderstanding.

Students can be expected to do well in the pronunciation of English if the pronunciation class is taken out of isolation and becomes an integral part of the oral communication class. The goal of pronunciation should be changed from the attainment of perfect pronunciation to the more realistic goals of developing functional intelligibility, communicability, increased self-confidence, the development of speech monitoring abilities and speech modification strategies for use beyond the classroom. The overall aim of these goals is for the learner to develop spoken English that is easy to understand, serves the learner's individual needs, and allows a positive image of himself as a speaker of a foreign language. The learner needs to develop awareness and monitoring skills that will allow learning opportunities outside the classroom environment.

Psychological obstacles

According to Wheelless (1975), "The fear of misinterpreting, inadequately processing, and/or not being able to adjust psychologically to messages sent by others." Students cannot neglect the existence of being afraid and have a great tension when they think of a foreign language. Moreover, anxiety makes up nervous and afraid; thus makes to poor performance. The feelings of fear and nervousness are closely connected to the cognitive side of anxiety, which is worry. Eysenck (1979) suggested that, "Worry wastes energy that should be used for memory and processing on a type of thinking which in no way facilitates the task at hand." Sometimes, learners forget what they want to say because of nervousness.

One of the limitation reasons that may challenge Vietnamese to speaking English well is that they are afraid of making mistakes while communicating. Making mistakes is a natural part of learning English and they are only bad if students allow them to be, and if students do not learn by them. It does not matter if student's vocabulary is limited. It does not matter if their pronunciation is not flawless and it certainly does not matter if their grammar is not perfect.

What matter is that students adopt a bold attitude and open their mouth and speak if students really do want to improve their speaking English fluency. In addition, many Vietnamese students face the common problem that although they spent six or seven years studying English at school, they cannot pronounce an English sentence correctly, and they are not confident enough to communicate in the language. Besides some students understand English grammar very well, and even score high marks in examinations, but their communication skills are very poor and they are often too shy to even attempt to strike up a conversation.

In short, there are many factors which effect on speaking skill but there are four main factors which are vocabulary, background knowledge, pronunciation and psychological obstacles. When students are lacking of vocabulary, they do not how to show their feeling, thinking, ideas and etc. Besides, if students pronounce wrong words the listener cannot understand what students say and lacking of background knowledge is also one of the reasons makes students get difficulties in speaking skill. Moreover, psychological obstacles are very important in speaking skill. Many English students speak badly not because they lack vocabulary or understanding, but because they are nervous, worried, and afraid of appearing foolish. Therefore, students must train themselves. In addition to studying English vocabulary, pronunciation, culture, students must also study their own psychology.

RESEARCH AIM, RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS

Research aim

To develop students' speaking skill at TDU, teachers have made a lot of efforts to motivate students to participate in speaking class effectively. This study aimed at investigating the reality of some effective ways to improve speaking skill of the first year students. It intended to investigate the attitudes of students towards the importance of speaking skill, some ways to improve speaking skill effectively and the benefits which students could learn from these ways. Then some suggestions were made for the further study.

Research question

This study was implemented to find the effective ways to improve speaking skill for English majored Freshmen at TDU. There were many ways but this research only focused on some useful ways. The aim of the study was to answer the following research questions:

1. Which ways do students do to improve speaking skill?
2. What benefits can students learn from these ways?

Hypothesis

Through the literature review and the research questions, it was hypothesized that English majored freshmen would be aware of their English speaking skill. In addition, they could recognize the factors that influence on their speaking ability and would have suitable ways to improve it.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design

In order to get information to fulfil the aims of the study. The questionnaire was severd for the investigation of students' attitudes and some effective ways to improve speaking skill. The survey questionnaire is one of the most effective instruments for collecting data in social science. A questionnaire is essentially a structured technique for collecting primary data. It is generally a series of written questions for which the respondents have to provide the answers. If a questionnaire is well designed, it will motivate the respondents to give accurate and complete information; it provides

reliable and relevant data in return. A questionnaire serves as an inductive method with the aim to formulate new theory, where open-ended questions are used to explore a substantive area.

Participants

In order to get the data for study about the effective ways to improve speaking skill for English majored Freshmen at Tay Do University, there are eighty-six students at Tay Do University. Most of them are at the age from 18 to 19. Their time length of learning English is a little bit different, because participants' background of learning English is the same, but students spend time to practise English speaking skill is not the same. Most of them started learning English at grade six.

At Tay Do university, students studied four periods (each period lasts 50 minutes) a week and there were more than 30 students in a class. Therefore, students do not have more chances to practise speaking skill. Most of students were taught from the primary school and some of them had learned English in language centres, private tuitions, etc. Thus, these students had more chances to practise and their speaking skill was better. From this, the participants had unequal level when learning speaking skill because of the differences among their ability background of learning English.

Instrument

The instrument used in this study was questionnaire. The survey questionnaire is one of the most effective instruments for collecting data in social science. Advantages of using questionnaire are: less pressure on respondents, not under pressure of interview bias and analysis of answer is straightforward. The survey questionnaire was used as the main sources to fulfil the aims. The questionnaire was designed to investigate the students' opinion about some ways to improve speaking skill and the benefits which students could learn from these ways. Clear instructions were given when the questionnaire was administered.

The questionnaire for students which included 18 questions written only in English, was administered to eighty-six students. The questionnaire included students' background, the attitude toward English subject, the difficulties in learning speaking and some ways to improve speaking skill. The following table was a short description of the questionnaire.

Table 1: The gist of questionnaire

Question/Statement	Summary of the question's/statement's content
From 1 to 6	Students' background
Question 7	Student's problems in speaking skill
From 8 to 20	Some suggestion ways to improve speaking skill

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Students' background

Students' opinion about the importance of learning English

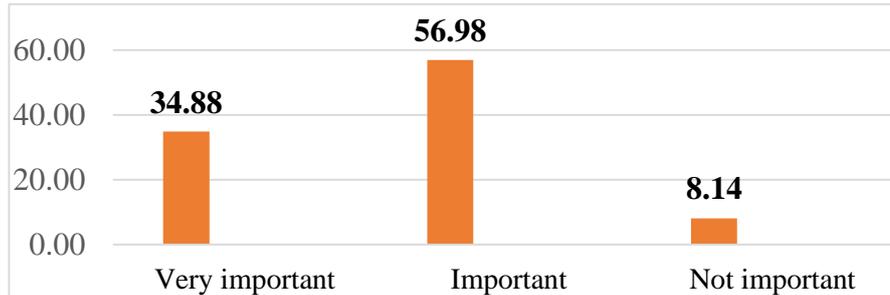


Figure 1: The importance of learning English

People need to communicate with others to share their feeling, emotions, information and etc. Thus, speaking skill plays an important role in communication. Fortunately, most of students know the important of speaking skill in English but a few students do not. In figure 1, we could see that 34.88% thought learning English was very important. Besides, 56.98% considered learning English was important. This means that learners' awareness of learning English has been increased. English will be the language that people use to communicate with other people in the world. While 8.14% chose it was not important. Maybe they thought that other languages as French or Chinese were more dominant than English.

Students' favourite skills

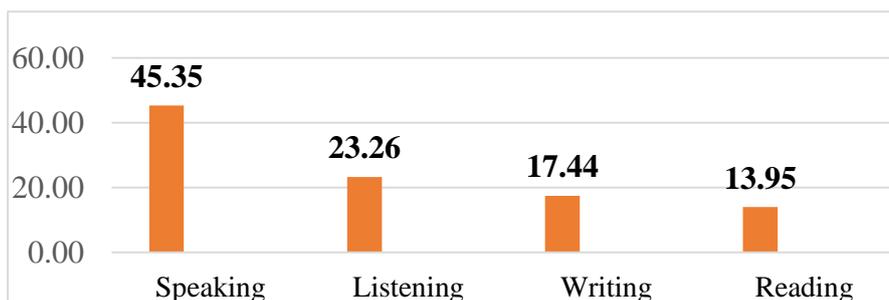


Figure 2: The skills that students like

Freshmen know that learning English is very important, because it can help them have a good job with high salary and it is easy to communicate with foreigners in other countries. To communicate directly with others, speaking skill is the best way. That is the reason why 45.35% loved speaking. Follow speaking skill was listening skill (23.26%). Whereas writing skill was only 17.44% and reading skill was 13.95%.

Students' self-evaluation on speaking ability

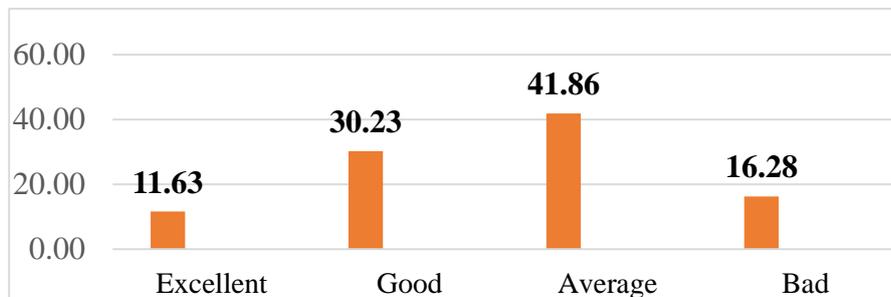


Figure 3: Students' self-evaluation on speaking ability

Look at figure 3, we could see that most of students evaluated their speaking skill at the average (41.86%) and 16.28% said they were bad at it. The number of them said that speaking skill was excellent (11.63%) and 30.23% of remainders said that they were good at speaking skill. From this, it could be understood that most of the students had problems with their speaking skill. When observing in speaking class, it was too hard for students to speak English. Most of students spoke Vietnamese instead of English. Whenever teacher made a question, there was very few students raised their hand to answer.

Students' interests in learning speaking

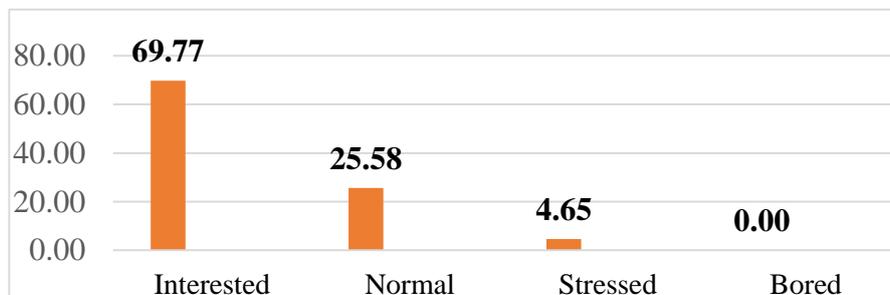


Figure 4: Students' feeling when learning speaking

The statistics in figure 4 above showed that most the students felt interested when they learnt speaking in class (69.77%). Besides, the number of them said that it was normal (25.58%) and stressed was 4.657%. It was surprised that there was no student who felt bored. From this, we could guess that the method teachers used to teach in class was very effectively.

Students' self-studying speaking

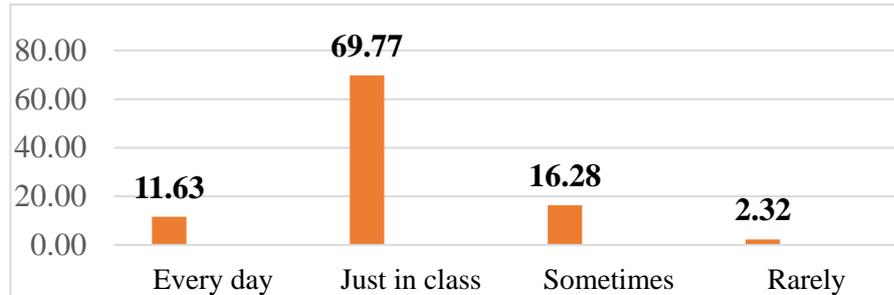


Figure 5: Students' self-practice speaking

Apart from learning speaking in class, practising speaking outside plays an important role in improving speaking skill. However, when being asked about practising English speaking skill, all of students asked (69.77%) said that they only practise English speaking in class. 16.28% sometimes practised speaking and 11.63% practised it every day. Only 2.32% of freshmen rarely practised. In short, most of students only practise English speaking skill in class and spend a little time on practising outside.

Students' frequency of encountering obstacles in speaking

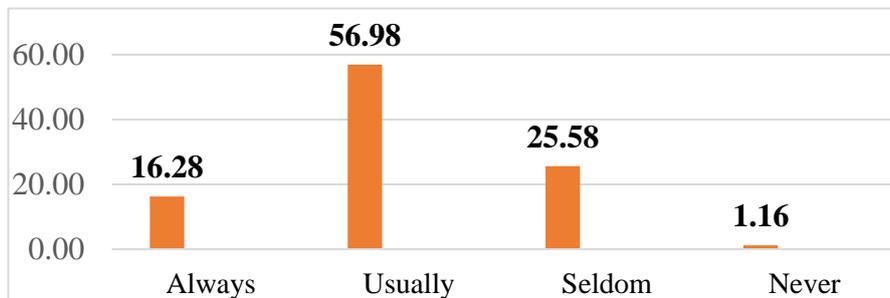


Figure 6: Students' frequency of encountering obstacles

In figure 6, it was not difficult to see that most of students (56.98%) answered that they usually had problems with speaking. Besides, 16.28% said that they always had difficulties. 25.58% seldom had problems and only 1.16% was never. It could be concluded that speaking was a hard subject to students.

Student's problems in speaking

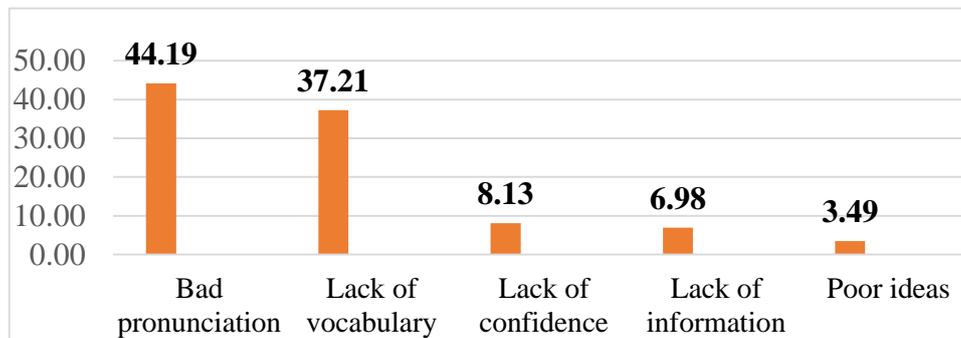


Figure 7: Student's problems in speaking

When learning speaking skill, there were many factors affecting on it. Regarding to figure 7, only 3.49% of the students reported that they had poor idea and the number of the students (6.98%) who were lack of information. 8.13% said that lacking of confidence was their problems. Bad pronunciation and lack of vocabulary were pretty high with 44.19% and 37.21% respectively. In brief, vocabulary and pronunciation are big problems with students, lacking of information and confidence may be a small element in speaking skill. If they practise more and more, they will be confident and have more information in speaking.

The ways students improve speaking skill and benefits they get from these ways

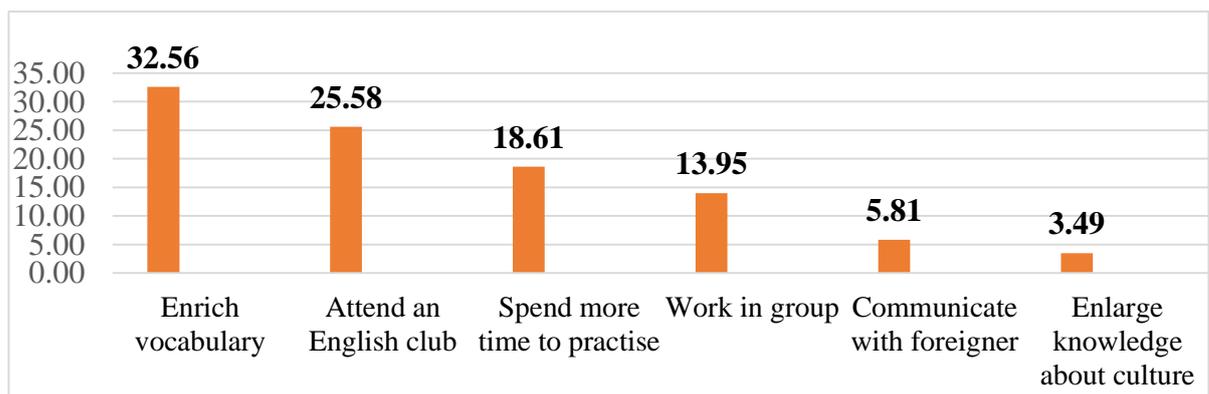


Figure 8: The ways students improve speaking

There are many ways which students thought they could help them to improve speaking skill effectively. Throughout figure 8 above, most of students chose enriching vocabulary (32,9%), taking part in an English club (25.58%) and spending more time to practise was 18.61%. Besides, there were a few students thought that working in group, communicating with foreigners and enlarging knowledge

about culture could help to improve their speaking skill too. Then, six ways above would be analysed and discussed clearly. Besides, finding the benefits which students could learn from these ways also added.

Enrich vocabulary

In figure 8, the number of participants enriching vocabulary to improve speaking made up 32.56% (the highest percentage). Students said that using textbook and reading newspaper, magazines could help them to improve vocabulary. Besides, learning vocabulary by watching English movie seemed to be a good way, because students could not only learning vocabulary but also relaxing and learning the culture, street language, gesture, tone and etc.

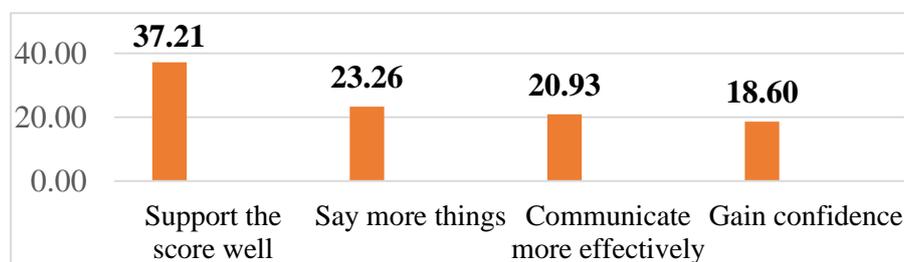


Figure 9: The benefits from enlarging vocabulary

Enriching vocabulary bought students many advantages. 37.21% admitted that when they had enough vocabulary to speak they could get high scores. Vocabulary also helped them say more things (23.26%), then they communicated more effectively (20.93%) and spoke more confidently (18.60%).

Attend an English club

In figure 8, 25.58% freshmen thought that attending an English speaking club was the effective way. English club is established from some people who love English. There are many people in an English club, they speak English in many different voices. Students can learn from the way they pronounce a word, or their voice and intonation. Besides, English club always makes many games for members to relax as well as to learn. Students can also learn vocabulary, culture and etc. from these games. In addition, the participants are people from all kinds of classes that give students chances to speak in many fields.

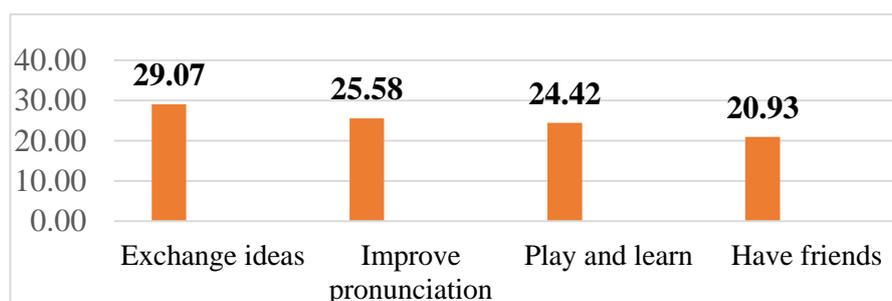


Figure 10: The benefits from attending an English club

There were many benefits which students could learn from attending an English club. 29.07% said that they could have more opportunities to exchange ideas, 25.58% said that joining an English club helped them improve pronunciation, voice and intonation. 24.42% said that it had many games to learn and play. In addition, English club had many members, it was easy for members to make friends together (20.93%).

Spend more time to practise

In figure 8, only 18.61% spent more time to practise English speaking skill. Most of students practised speaking skill in class and spent little time on practising outside. Practising English speaking outside played an important role in improving speaking skill because time was limited in class, there was only 50 minutes every period and there were about 30 students in class. There were not many chances for students to practise speaking. Then, practising outside the class gave students more chances to get idea, confidence and etc.

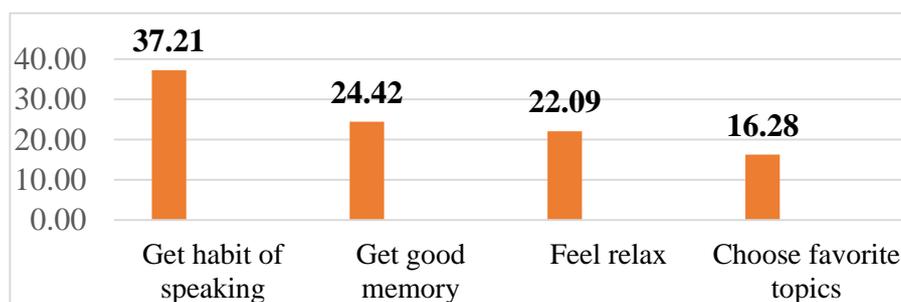


Figure 11: The benefits from spending more time to practise

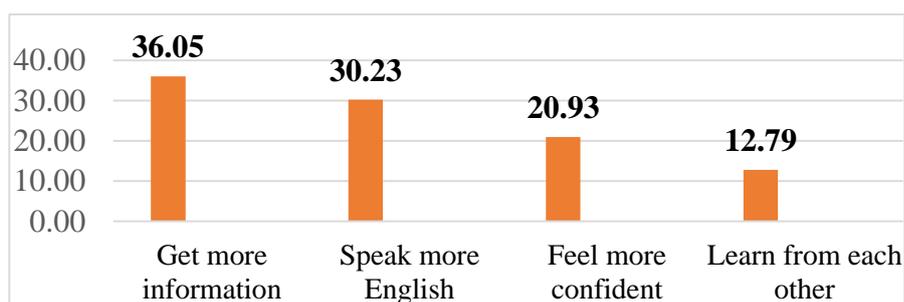
Practising speaking, students could listen to the words of an English-language that they liked. Then repeat the words as many times as possible until they become automatic. It was the best way to get habit of speaking (37.21%) and it was good for students' memory (24.42%). Above all, students were not afraid to speak. In addition, students without the pressure from the teachers and the scores could feel relax (22.09%) and they could choose the partners or the topics they liked to talk about (16.28%).

Work in group

In figure 8, 13.95% approved that working in group was a chance for improving speaking. There were many members in a group that helped students get more information about topics. Moreover, speaking

English in group was easier than speaking in front of many people. When carrying out group work, students were more independent, they could conduct or design the tasks, together. Students as the group members interacted as well as helped each other to overcome difficulties.

Figure 12: The benefits from working in group



It could be clearly seen that students working in group thought that they could get more information (36.05%) and they could also have chances to speak more English (30.23%). Besides, the number of students who felt more confidence was 20.93%. In addition, they learnt from each other (12.79%) to solve the problems together to get group work successfully.

Communicate with foreigners

In figure 8, 5.81% considered talking to foreigners was one of the ways to get better speaking. Perhaps, communicating with foreigners helped students learn pronunciation, intonation and voice, which was easy to remember since there were some words students learnt but did not use them frequently, they would forget them. In addition, when students pronounced wrong words, foreigners could help them corrected these mistakes. Moreover, when communicating with foreigners, they told their life, country and etc. Therefore, students could know foreigner's culture as well as their country. Besides, when communicating with foreigner many times made students feel more confident.

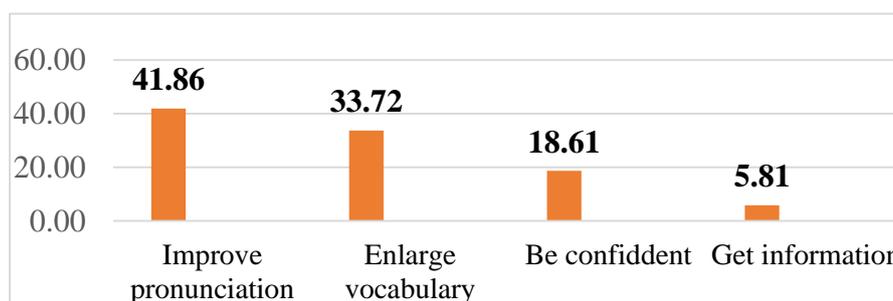


Figure 13: The benefits from talking to foreigners

It could be seen that most of students talking to foreigners to improve their speaking skill since their pronunciation, voice, and intonation would be improved (41.86%). In addition, enlarging vocabulary made up 33.72% and communicating with foreigner made them feel more self-confident (18,61%). The remainders said that getting more information from foreigner was 5.81%.

Enlarge knowledge about culture

In figure 8, only 3.49%, the lowest percentage of students chose enlarging knowledge about culture to improve speaking skill. Actually, students did not recognize the role of cultural factor in English. Students needed to understand that language could not be translated word-for-word. Some words that depended of different cultures carried various meanings in different situations and contexts. In addition, students also obtained nonverbal language, like gestures, which played an important role in communication and implied different meanings in different languages. Students should read book, newspaper, magazine to get more knowledge of culture.

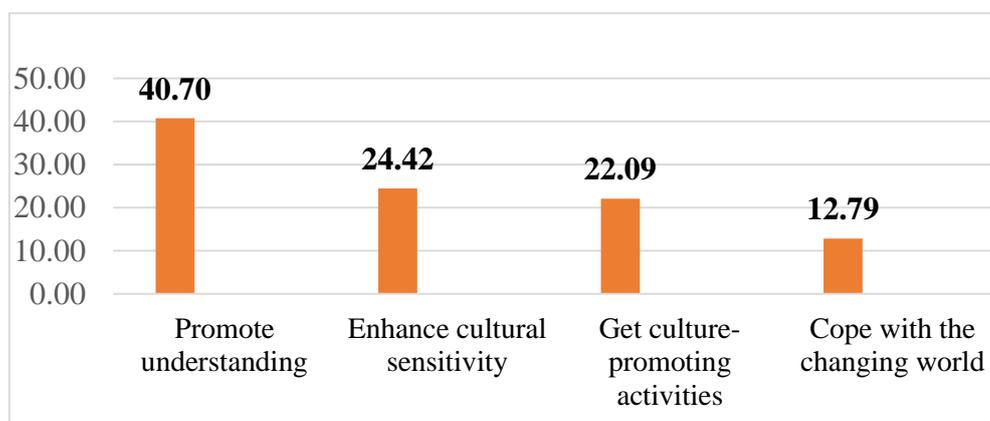


Figure 14: The benefits from enlarging knowledge about culture

It could be clearly seen that providing enough cultural knowledge could help students promote understanding (40.70%). The second benefits from enlarging knowledge about culture was enhancing cultural sensitivity (24.42%). The others were getting promoting activities (22.09%) and coping with the changing world (12.79%).

Summary

To sum up, freshmen majored in English sometimes were passive or speechless in speaking class. In fact, students usually faced some factors that made them hard to speak up. It caused by bad pronunciation (44.19%), lack of vocabulary (37.21%), lack of confidence (8.13%) and others (10.47%). These made students doubt to say what they wanted to convey. To overcome these problems, there are six ways which could help students improve speaking skill effectively as enriching vocabulary (32,9%), taking part in an English club (25.58%) and spending more time to practise (18.61%). Besides, working in group, talking to foreigner and enlarging knowledge about culture could help to improve speaking skill.

Firstly, enlarging vocabulary is one of the effective ways to improve speaking skill because vocabulary is the cornerstone of English skills. Without large vocabulary, even the best understanding of English grammar will not allow students to speak English well. Vocabulary is a list or collection of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined. If students lack of vocabulary in

speaking, they cannot speak fluently or even they cannot speak out what they want to say. Students should read more text book, newspapers, magazine and etc., playing word games, puzzles, and looking up words in the dictionary; they are all good ways to learn new words.

Secondly, attending an English club seems to be very effectively in learning speaking English. English club is a community of people who have the same interests in English, they create an environment not only to practice English, but also a place where members meet and relax. English club offers an environment for members to learn and to give members the opportunity to practice some skills such as communication reflection, presentation skills, ability to argue in public, so on. English club can create the environment for all students to promote their abilities in the process of learning, self-study, self-expression, and teamwork abilities.

Thirdly, practising speaking English outside the classroom is good to improve speaking skill. Students can enlarge knowledge about words of an English-language that they like. They can listen and sing English music; listen to one of their favourite actors on video and repeat one or two sentences that they like and do it until it becomes automatic. These are good for students' memory that they need for English. Above all, students can choose partners or topics they are interested in that they can speak freely and become automatic speaking.

Next, working in group may be the effective way to improve speaking skill. Clearly, group work can increase students talking time, which increases speaking skill. In other word, group work helps to improve communication. Students who have little chance to talk to each other now can share ideas, become close in the short time and above all solve the common problem assigned. Besides, working in groups helps students to produce greater output. Simply because of the number of people involved, each member with different experience, knowledge, points of view and values, a larger number and variety of ideas can be given.

In addition, communicating with foreigners is a chance for students to get better speaking. It helps students more active and confident. Instead of exposure to English through books and text books, students may be exposed to authentic English language when they communicate with foreigners. Through learning activities, such as organizing games, meetings, and etc., students will learn more about British and American culture. In addition, using English slang in a way that students have hardly been taught in the curriculum. Moreover, talking to foreigners, students will have to use English frequently, this is a chance for gradual improvement of their own skill strips.

Finally, enlarging knowledge about culture to improve speaking skill is also a good way. There are universal cultures that can exist in every community. There are two cultures which create a big difference: Oriental culture (Vietnam) and Western culture (England). Each nation has its own characteristics of geography, history, physical life, etc. which are reflected in the language clearly, especially in vocabulary of each ethnic group. Each country has its things, events, phenomena and concepts related to its own cultural background. There are words about the customs of marriage and religion, creed that extremely strange to Westerners. Therefore, to improve speaking, students should get knowledge about culture.

In conclusion, speaking skill is an important skill since the purpose of learning English is able to communicate with foreigners. Good English communication helps students easily access to new trends and technologies of the world. Thanks to enriching vocabulary, taking part in an English club, spending more time to practise, working in group, talking to foreigner and enlarging knowledge about culture, freshmen's speaking can be improved effectively.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

This research has showed knowledge, attitudes, feelings, and the current ways English major freshmen study speaking skill. There are many ways to improve speaking skill but students have to find their problems as lacking of vocabulary, poor idea, bad pronunciation, lacking of confident and etc. Throughout the study, it can be seen that there are some ways effectively to improve speaking skill for students. They are enriching vocabulary, taking part in an English club, practising speaking English outside the classroom.

Learners' attention and awareness are always important to decide their win or lose in study speaking skill. Students should speak as often and as much as possible; this is the best way to learn English. There is nothing better than conversation to help students improve speaking skill. The best way to do this is to be in an English speaking environment. Take an English course in an English language school. Besides, students also get into the habit of thinking in English, do not translate from Vietnamese into English, it will slow students down. This might sound a little strange and embarrassing at first, but students can record their talking and listen to their own pronunciation, talking speed and the flow of speaking. It will give students a great chance to improve speaking.

Suggestion for further study

There are many other ways that have not been mentioned in this study. Further research proposal should focus on some difficulties which students face in speaking skill and find the suitable methods to overcome of other participants as English-Majored Sophomores or English Majored Juniors. Besides, further researchers should study about the ways to improve listening, then all helps students become master in communication.

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