



AN INVESTIGATION INTO DIFFICULTIES IN ENGLISH SPEAKING PROFICIENCY OF NON-ENGLISH MAJORED FRESHMEN AT TRA VINH UNIVERSITY, VIETNAM

Vi Tuong Thi Hua¹,
Thuy Thu Thi Huynh

School of Foreign Languages,
Tra Vinh University,
Vietnam

Abstract:

Speaking skills are identified as an essential and necessary skill in the process of learning foreign languages in general and English in particular. However, not all learners realize the importance of English speaking skills and actively practice them. The study aims to explore difficulties in speaking proficiency of 60 non-English majored freshmen at Tra Vinh University through a questionnaire to collect data surveying learners' opinions. The tool utilized in this study is an eighteen-question questionnaire that focuses on the difficulties of students in learning English speaking. Questions will be distributed to each student to investigate the factors affecting difficulty in speaking English. The survey results showed the students' difficulties in English speaking and proposed some valuable activities to practice after class to improve students' speaking ability.

Keywords: difficulties, freshmen, investigation, non-English majored, speaking proficiency

1. Introduction

In recent years, English has been a mandatory subject in colleges and universities. Most students are admitted to university, they can learn reading, writing, and listening skills rather well. However speaking skills are not good due to a number of reasons, such as linguistic knowledge, inhibition, motivation, mother-tongue use, environment, practice time, and others. Most learners find speaking skills difficult and challenging. According to Vang (2004), roughly 98% of university students are taught English from grade 6 to grade 12 but they cannot use English for essential communication. After multiple years of working with students at university, I find that non-English majored students are quite passive in learning how to speak English. Most of them do not actively participate in

¹ Correspondence: email tuongvitravin@tvu.edu.vn

speaking practice. Definitely, student engagement can be affected by many factors related to learners, teachers and the learning environment. This is a common issue in most universities nowadays.

Linguist Khamkhien A. (2010) said that speaking is considered one of the most important skills for English learners. Bygate (1987) indicated that speaking skill is a reflective skill that helps learners utilize foreign language to express their opinions, thoughts, and feelings with other listeners. Therefore, it can be affirmed that speaking skills help English have its own communication function. Furthermore, speaking skills also contribute to enhancing people's learning of listening skills, helping to increase vocabulary and practice-related skills. That is why multiple Vietnamese students want to learn and practice English a lot to improve their speaking skills and help them study and work better later. However, Vietnamese students still encounter many difficulties in learning English, especially speaking skills when communicating in English, in general, as well as students at Tra Vinh University, in particular.

All non-English majors in this study must take a general English program consisting of 4 courses. Students must take two tests for each course, and each test must be tested on 4 skills directly with the teacher and tested on the computer. However, based on the test results, we found that the majority of students have difficulties in speaking skills, so among the 4 skills tested, speaking skills have the lowest scores. This study motivated the author to conduct a research to understand the factors affecting the difficulties of first-year non-English majors in learning speaking skills at Tra Vinh University through a set of 18 questions and thereby propose some useful activities for practice outside the classroom to improve students' speaking ability, to promote students' engagement in English speaking activities in class.

2. Literature review

2.1 Definition of speaking

The researchers have defined the word of 'speaking' in learning a language. Speaking is the process of interaction that makes meaning, producing, receiving, as well as processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). According to Nunan (1995), speaking is oral speaking words, communicating by speaking, and making requests as well as statements. Speaking is the product of auditory signals producing different verbal responses from listeners. It is accepted that the systematic combination of sounds to make meaningful sentences (Bygate, 1997). According to Chaney (1998), verbal and nonverbal symbols are used to help speakers make and share meaning in different contexts in speaking.

2.2 The factors affecting speaking skills

To help students overcome their speaking difficulties, teachers need to identify the five factors that influence their speaking proficiency: performance conditions, affective factors, listening skill, topical knowledge and feedback in speaking. Performance

conditions is the first factor. Nation and Newton (2009) pointed out that learners conduct speaking activities in various conditions. Performance conditions impact speaking ability, such as time pressure, planning, performance quality and level of support from teachers. Affective factor is the second factor. Oxford (1990) stated that the learner's emotions are considered one of the important factors in language learning. Furthermore, many affective variables are involved in second language acquisition and motivation, self-confidence as well as anxiety are three main types studied by many researchers (Krashen, 1982).

Listening ability is the third factor. Doff (1998) believed that learners are not able to improve their speaking ability if they do not develop listening ability. Learners need to understand what they utter in a dialogue successfully. Shumin (2002) revealed that when students practice speaking and other students find the answer through the process of listening. Speakers need to have both roles: listener and speaker. It is concluded that students are able to answer if they do not understand what is said. That is the reason why speaking and listening skills have a really close relationship. Topical knowledge is the fourth factor.

According to Bachman and Palmer (1996), topical knowledge is considered as a knowledge structure of long-term memory. That is, it is the speaker's knowledge of relevant current information. It allows learners to utilize language in their daily lives. The authors confirmed that topical knowledge has a significant influence on the speaking performance of learners. Feedback is the fifth factor. Many learners expect teachers to provide essential feedback on their speaking performance. Harmer (1991) urged that the decisions teachers make about learners' performance depend on the stages of the lesson, the tasks, and the types of errors they design. He also believed the fluency of dialogue and the purpose of the speech would be destroyed if the teacher directly focused on the student's problem. Baker and Westrup (2003) revealed that learners will lose motivation and hesitate to speak if they are given feedback regularly. It is suggested that learners' errors should be permanently corrected actively, and teachers should give their learners more speaking and persuasion in speaking.

2.3 Problems of speaking

Previous studies have mentioned some speaking problems of learners. Teachers can help students to speak in the classroom. Tuan and Mai (2015) said these problems are inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low participation, and mother-tongue use. Littlewood (2007) indicated that students can be inhibited from a language classroom. Inhibition is the first problem of students in class. Sometimes, students are inhibited from saying something in the classroom. Students are afraid of making mistakes and embarrassed when other classmates laugh at them. Rivers (1968) said that learners do not often have anything to say because they are provided topics unsuitable for their speaking or do not have enough information to speak.

Baker and Westrup (2003) also agreed that it is not easy for learners to respond to their teachers' request to retell events in a foreign language because they do not have

ideas to express, lack vocabulary and have poor grammar. Participation is considered the third issue for students in class. In a large class, students will not have much time to speak and express ideas, and other students will try to keep up with their classmates' speaking. In a speaking class, each student's language knowledge will not be the same, so some outstanding students will have the opportunity to speak. In contrast, others will speak very little or even never be able to express their opinions in front of the class. Speaking ability is the last problem.

Tuan and Mai (2015) shared that in speaking class, some of learners use their mother tongue because it is easy for them to express what they want to say to others. Harmer (1991) expressed that learners often utilize their mother tongue in speaking class. When teachers ask students to talk about an unfamiliar topic, they have little topical knowledge to speak so it is easy for them to utilize their mother tongue. Furthermore, using learners' mother tongue is very natural. If learners lack their teacher's motivation to speak in English, they will immediately utilize their mother tongue to say something to their partners in class.

2.4 Related studies

According to researchers, previous similar studies will contribute to increasing the influencing factors and challenges in learning to speak English. Al-Lawati (1995) conducted an investigation into the difficulties Omani students encounter when speaking English and found that language areas such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and discourse are the most challenging areas. Research results showed that there are very few opportunities for students to practice their speaking skills, especially when the class has many students. Additionally, Lukitasari (2008) conducted a study focusing on students' strategies for overcoming speaking problems in the speaking classroom. Her research was carried out in the first semester at Muhammadiyah Malang University in Indonesia. Research results showed that in speaking class, students encounter a number of speaking problems, including inhibition, having nothing to say, little or uneven participation, and using their mother tongue. Students' speaking ability is unsuitable due to not mastering the three elements of speaking vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Fadi *et al.* (2016) explored a group of 20 ANU students at Ajloun National University, Jordan. They found that speaking skills were as challenging for ANU students as embarrassment; students do not learn to speak correctly at school and have difficulty pronouncing some words.

Bozorgian (2012) investigated the relationship between listening skills and other language skills. The study included 1800 Iranians taking Tehran's International English Language Testing System (IELTS). The findings showed that listening comprehension and language proficiency are strongly correlated.

Dina *et al.* (2013) conducted an investigation of EFL university students' difficulties in speaking skills. The study subjects were 566 students from six Jordanian Public Universities. Research results showed that the most prominent difficulties are communicating in the mother tongue, large classes and lack of speaking time.

Ardiyarso (2013) conducted a study on external factors that prevent students from practicing speaking English at the English department of Satya Wacana Christian University. The participants in this study are 7 SMP Laboratories participating in the English Zone club. The results showed that students did not have any problems with internal factors but had problems with three external factors in language learning such as the relationship between teacher-student and student-student, learning environment and learning style.

Samira (2014) investigated the difficulties faced by teachers and grade 5 students in basic education schools in Oman. Remarkably, these teachers and students had linguistic difficulties, mother tongue use and inhibition. Al Nakhalah (2016) studied the difficulties of English speaking faced by students at Al Quds Open University. The results showed that students had some difficulties in speaking due to a number of reasons such as fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety and lack of confidence.

Mas (2016) studied students' motivation when speaking English at Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik Middle School in an easy-speaking course. Research results showed that student motivation includes the learner's effort to practice English speaking, the learner's interest in practicing English speaking, the learner's attitude toward practicing English speaking, and the learners' desire to practice speaking English.

Noviyenty (2018) conducted a study on learning strategies and techniques for teaching English speaking. 47 3rd year SMAN 1 Curup students were selected, sampling from 8 classes and 7 English teachers. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The results showed that the strategies used by SMAN 1 Curup students in learning to speak English are classified into meta-cognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, social strategies and affective strategies. The teaching techniques of English teachers are role plays, group presentations, group discussions, speech contests, dialogues, direct error correction, group work, debate contests, games and songs.

Nada (2019) researched the preferences as well as perceptions of 60 female EFL pre-intermediate in Saudi Arabia. Students regarding the use of corrective feedback in speaking practice at King Abdulaziz University. The author utilized quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data. The findings indicated that students have a positive attitude towards corrective feedback in speaking activities and strongly agree that teachers providing corrective feedback can assist students in improving their speaking skills. Moreover, the research also showed that students prefer teachers to give immediate corrective feedback.

In summary, when learning speaking skills students encounter many difficulties, including linguistic knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation), listening ability, learning environment, inhibition (fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety and lack of confidence), mother tongue use, large class, lack of time to speak, strategies, motivation, and positive feedback.

3. Methodology

3.1 Factors affecting the difficulties in English speaking proficiency of non-English majored freshmen at Tra Vinh University

3.1.1 Participants, time and research site

This research employed students majoring in Primary Education and Nursing who enrolled in the academic year 2023-2024 at the School of Foreign Languages of Tra Vinh University. At the time of doing the research, all participants were in their first year of the bachelor's program. A total of 60 students, including 45 females and 15 males, aged from 18 to 21. All students have studied English for 7 to 12 years. The aim of the study is to understand the factors affecting the difficulties in English speaking proficiency of non-English majors. Through the process of learning English at university, teachers will find out the best way to support students in improving their English speaking skills for the next courses in the learning program and equip them with communication knowledge of English for future jobs.

3.1.2 Methodology

To investigate the significant obstacles in learning English speaking skills for Primary Education and Nursing students, the researcher utilized a quantitative research method to collect data via an 18-item questionnaire. The study used a five-point Likert scale spanning from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire was designed and evaluated to improve its clarity, validity and reliability by piloting it with 10 students in two different classes. The content of the questions was designed in detail and easy to understand to help students accurately answer their difficulties when speaking in class. Then, the questionnaire was distributed to 60 students participating in the survey. The researcher used the SPSS version. 20 to analyze to ensure the reliability of the questions and provide descriptive statistics while also suggesting some useful activities to improve students' English speaking proficiency.

3.1.3 Findings and discussion

The analysis mainly focused on the aim of the study is to explore factors affecting the difficulties in English speaking proficiency of 60 participants.

Table 3.1: The reliability statistics of 10 participants to 18 items

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.865	18

Initially, the central purpose of this work was to set up the reliability of the 18 items in the questionnaire. Ten first-year non-English majors in two classes were invited to pilot to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.2: Factors affecting student’s difficulties in English speaking proficiency

Item no	Items	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I find that speaking skill plays a critical role in learning English language	60	4	5	4.60	.494
2	I find that learning English speaking skills is very difficult	60	3	5	4.15	.606
3	I tend to speak Vietnamese when working in pairs or groups	60	2	5	3.93	.756
4	I find a large class is not good for learning English-speaking	60	2	5	3.72	.885
5	My vocabulary of English-speaking topics is limited	60	3	5	4.07	.634
6	My grammatical structures of English are not good	60	3	5	4.28	.585
7	I have difficulty hearing and understanding other people speaking English	60	2	5	4.10	.630
8	I find that it is very difficult to pronounce well as an English native speaker	60	2	5	4.08	.619
9	I feel worried my classmates will laugh at my mistakes when speaking English	60	3	5	4.22	.640
10	I am shy to speak English in front of the class	60	1	5	3.70	1.30
11	My self-confidence level in English speaking is low	60	2	5	3.85	.860
12	I feel I lack engagement and motivation in studying English speaking skill	60	1	5	3.87	.965
13	I lack the English speaking strategies in class	60	1	5	3.85	.777
14	I feel that English-speaking activities in the classroom are not interesting	60	1	5	3.48	1.066
15	I feel that lecturers focus on good English-speaking students	60	1	5	4.08	.743
16	I find lecturers rarely correct students' English-speaking mistakes	60	1	5	4.28	.940
17	I have difficulty when I lack time to practice English speaking in class	60	1	5	4.00	.883
18	I find that the learning environment is a problem for students learning to speak English	60	2	5	3.87	.791
Overall Mean score: 4.0074						

Secondly, as shown in Table 3.2, the descriptive statistics method indicated that the average score for students’ difficulties in English speaking proficiency is high ($M = 4.0$), which suggested that the participants viewed the factors that affected students’ English speaking proficiency. Out of the 18 items in this cluster, the mean score for the item ‘speaking skill plays a very important role in learning English language ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.94$) occupied the highest mean of 4.60 among the eighteen questions. It suggested that participants highly appreciated the importance of English speaking skills. Remarkably, students were worried that the grammatical structures of English are not good ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.49$) as well as found that lecturers rarely correct students' English speaking mistakes ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.94$). The item ‘I feel worried my classmates will laugh at my mistakes when speaking English’ was a big concern for students ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.64$).

Also, 'I find that learning English speaking skills is very difficult' was accepted by participants quite high ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.61$). Having difficulty hearing and understanding other people speaking English, students in English-speaking classes were interested ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.63$). The next two items, 'I find that it is very difficult to pronounce well as an English native speaker' and 'I feel that lecturers focus on good English speaking students' were also agreed by survey participants with results respectively ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.60$, $M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.74$). Lack of vocabulary about English-speaking topics is also challenging for students ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.63$). Students also did not take this item lightly 'I have difficulty when I lack time to practice English speaking in class' ($M = 4.0$, $SD = 0.88$).

Also, according to the results in Table 3.2, out of the eight items in this cluster ($M = 3.48$ to $M = 3.93$), the item 'I tend to speak Vietnamese when working in pairs or groups' was honestly responded ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.76$). Two levels of agreement were received among participants, while one item received a lack of engagement and motivation in studying English speaking skills ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 0.97$), and the learning environment is a problem for students learning to speak English ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 0.92$). Within item 11 'My self-confidence level in English speaking is low', and item 13 'I lack the English speaking strategies in class' showed agreement among the participants ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.86$, $M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.78$). Additionally, participants were also interested and worried about the items 'I find a large class is not good for learning English speaking' ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.89$) and 'I am being shy to speak English in front of the class' ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.0$). At last, the participants also admitted that English-speaking activities in the classroom are not interesting ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.1$).

Based on these findings, most Primary Education and Nursing student participants at Tra Vinh University strongly agreed on the importance of speaking skills in learning the English language. Although speaking skill plays an important role in the students' English learning process, they tend to face with many difficulties such as lack linguistic knowledge (grammatical structure, vocabulary, pronunciation and) listening ability, inhibition, feedback, practice time, practice environment, large class, motivation, mother tongue use, and teaching methods (strategies and activities).

The results above in items 5, 6 and 8 were consistent with the study conducted by Al-Lawati (1995) and Lukitasari (2008) found out that Omani students had difficulty in the linguistic domain (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation). Similarly, Hendra (2016) stated that students of Syiah Kuala University encountered various difficulties in their English speaking ability, a lack of vocabulary, and a fear of making mistakes.

Furthermore, Dil (2009) studied the communication obstacles of Turkish EFL learners in English classes and reported that shyness, anxiety and unwillingness in the process of speaking English were considered two of the biggest obstacles for EFL learners. Dil's research related to this issue is illustrated by items 9,10 and 11.

The items 7 and 8 of this study were consistent with Bozorgian's study (2012) conducted a study on the relationship between listening skills and other language skills. The author indicated there is a close correlation between listening comprehension and language proficiency. The higher the listening score, the higher the speaking score.

Additionally, after conducting the research, we found that items 13,14 and 18 were similar (Ardiyarso, 2013; Noviyenty, 2018). There are many factors causing challenges in speaking English for EFL learners such as students themselves, strategies, activities and the learning environment.

The researcher found that there are similarities between this study in sections 15 and 16 and other previous studies. Sana (2019) studied the role of teacher feedback in classroom speaking activities in Morocco. The increased interaction and density of negotiation really established the link between learners' accuracy and fluency. Additionally, a number of strategists and language experts have demonstrated how teaching style and how teachers provide feedback play an important role in learners' speaking skills. Nada (2019) stated that students strongly agree that teachers providing corrective feedback can help them improve their speaking skills.

According to items 3, 4 and 17 of this study, there were similarities with the study of Dina *et al.* (2013) on the 'low' speaking proficiency of EFL university students coupled with negligible teaching of speaking skills at the level of university courses. The more prominent difficulty in this study is that students use their mother tongue in English speaking classes, and large classes and lack practice time in class.

English-speaking learners often face problems with a lack of encouragement and motivation in learning English speaking in item 12, as stated in a study by Mas (2016). Similarly, Dincer (2018) also found that motivational factors play a role in Turkish students' willingness to learn, with teachers seeming to be the critical factor in the classroom as supportive and motivating people to learners in speaking class.

3.2. Proposing some valuable activities to improve students' speaking proficiency

Speaking skill is regarded as one of four significant skills in learning a language, which the learners cannot ignore or underestimate. So, how do teachers teach English to students? Focusing on developing speaking skills for students while encouraging students to invest time and effort in this skill is a huge challenge for students at Tra Vinh University and other universities. Skinner (1958) believed that language teaching is a process that provides students with experiences, ways of understanding, and creative use. This definition means that teaching helps students understand problems and important things. The most important thing is to give them opportunities to use in real-life situations and meaningful contexts. That is why English teachers do not just explain rules but also provide students with a variety of topics to practice. According to the survey, some activities are held regularly in English classes at Tra Vinh University, like working in pairs and groups, playing games, presentations, having conversations, and others. These activities will definitely create excitement in learning as well as an English practicing environment for students.

However, practicing English speaking skills, students at Tra Vinh University still encounter many difficulties and cannot rely solely on the limited number of teaching periods in the class schedule (60 periods per course). Students must accumulate and

proactively self-study and self-practice according to their abilities at a suitable time and place under the guidance and help of teachers.

Brown (2001) offers many solutions to help teachers use most of their class time to guide students in self-study, self-practice:

- a) Use time in class for instruction and interaction with students;
- b) Do not waste time giving activities that students can self-study and self-practice at home;
- c) Reduce the role of the test and emphasize its importance of the competencies achieved;
- d) Encourage students to have strategies for studying and practicing outside the classroom;
- e) Provide many additional learning and training opportunities outside the classroom for students and
- f) Establish clubs with regular and valuable activities.

In addition, Wongsuwana (2006) believed that speaking skills can be improved through regular practice, regardless of the learner's aptitude. Therefore, the student's practice process and practice method will determine the student's level of progress. This progress takes time to accumulate gradually over time, and it includes practice in class with friends and teachers. It also requires each student to practice outside of class. Through the actual teaching process in class and investigating students' difficulties, the researcher proposed valuable activities to help students practice outside of class to improve their speaking skills.

A. Attend an English speaking club

Currently, in Vietnam, English clubs are organized very often by universities, foreign language centers, youth organizations, and student associations. This is a healthy, academic playground with the purpose of helping students improve their speaking skills. Students can exchange, share and discuss in English in terms of topics that are very close and suitable for all levels of students.

B. Establish a self-study group

As we know, time to practice speaking English in class is limited, so students should establish English-speaking self-study groups outside of class. Group work will help students enhance their communication skills. Meeting and exchanging information and opinions with group members in English helps improve communication skills. Students have the opportunity to practice language, improve pronunciation, and be confident in chatting with others. Additionally, students improve teamwork skills, promote creativity, increase work productivity, and reduce work stress.

C. Use English practice software

English listening practice software has many useful functions to support learning and improve skills, such as Elsa, Duolingo, Bitu, Hello talk, LingTalk and others. The software

helps students practice listening and pronunciation. Listening exercises help students better understand how native speakers pronounce words and sentences. Learners can also practice pronunciation to improve communication skills. Furthermore, the software also helps learners learn vocabulary and grammar, learn English through fun games and activities, practice writing, reading and taking tests and assessments. Students choose the software that suits their learning goals and take full advantage of its features to achieve the best results.

D. Watch movies in English

Watching movies with English subtitles helps learners hear the pronunciation of English words and phrases in natural contexts and through a variety of voices. Learners can also imitate the pronunciation of movie characters, thereby improving their English pronunciation and listening comprehension. Also, it helps students increase their vocabulary and grammar and increase their interest in learning through promising segments and dialogues of the characters in the movie.

E. Listen to music in English

Listening to English music helps learners improve their listening and speaking skills quickly and very easily. Music uses common words and communication to help listeners easily understand the song's content. Songs in English always contain many vocabulary, phrases and common sentences in everyday communication. Other benefits of listening to music helps listeners pronounce English more accurately, improves learners' vocabulary and enhances the learner's communication ability.

F. English-speaking coffee shop

Nowadays, English is a popular language, and the demand for learning English is increasing. The English-speaking cafe model has developed and become popular. Students can go to English-speaking cafes to practice English; they can interact and chat with native speakers. This helps them practice their English reflexes very well and improve their pronunciation. A dynamic, open environment helps them correct and perfect this language for themselves. In addition to practicing English speaking, students have the opportunity to meet and talk with native speakers and better understand their culture and lifestyle.

4. Conclusion

Practical teaching shows that all English skills, in general and English speaking skills in particular, are very necessary, and regular long-term practice will bring good results for learners. Nobody learns a foreign language without making mistakes. Therefore, they need to be confident and patient in communicating a lot in the classroom and especially outside the classroom. Only by practising in real life can students improve their foreign language skills and abilities. The practice helps students add more vocabulary and self-

adjust, gradually correcting mistakes to improve their English speaking skills daily. The practice process requires guidance and support from teachers and must be conducted regularly and long-term because English speaking skills are really significant and essential not only in the learning process of students at Tra Vinh University but also helps a lot in the job interview process after graduating. However, practice time in class is limited, a major obstacle for students participating in this study. So, getting some practice outside of the classroom through these practical activities is very useful and essential for students.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

About the Authors

Vi Tuong Thi Hua is an instructor at the School of Foreign Languages, Tra Vinh University, Vietnam. Her research interests include action research and language learning.

Thuy Thu Thi Huynh is an instructor at the School of Foreign Languages, Tra Vinh University, Vietnam. Her research interests include action research and language learning.

References

- Al-Lawati, M. (1995). A diagnostic study of the difficulties encountered by Omani secondary school students in their oral production of English (Unpublished master's thesis). ELT Curriculum and Methodology, College of Education. Sultan Qaboos University.
- Al Nakhalah, A. M. M. (2016). Difficulties of speaking that encounter English language students at Al Quds Open University. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 5(12), 2319 - 7714.
- Ardiyarso, K. (2013). External factors that discourage students to practice speaking in English [Thesis]. Satya Wacana Christian University.
- Bachman, L., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language Testing in Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Baker, J., & Westrup, H. (2003). *Essential speaking skills: A Handbook for English Language Teachers*. London Continuum.
- Bozorgian, H. (2012). The relationship between listening and other language skills in international English language testing system. *Theory and practice in language studies*, 2(4), 657-663.
- Brown, D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. New York: Longman.

- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Teaching by principles - An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Prentice Hall Regents.
- Burns, J. H. (1997). *Focus on speaking*. Sydney: National Center for English Language Teaching and Research.
- Bygate, M. (1987). *Speaking*. Oxford University Press.
- Chaney, A. (1998). *Teaching oral communication in grades K-8*. USA. A Viacom Company. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Dincer, A. (2018). Motivational factors in multilingual students' learning additional languages: The case of English and Turkish. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 275-299.
- Dil, Y. (2009). EFL learners' communication obstacles. *Electronic Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(29), 84-100.
- Dina, A., & Ghadeer, A. (2013). An investigation of the difficulties faced by EFL undergraduates in speaking skills. *Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education*, 7(1).
- Doff, A. (1998). *Teach English: A training course for teachers*. Cambridge University Press.
- Fadi, et al. (2016). Improving English language speaking skills of Ajloun National University students. *International Journal of English and Education*, 5(3), 2278-4012.
- Harmer, J. (1991). *The practice of English language teaching. The 3rd Edition*. Longman: London and New York.
- Hendra, H. (2016). Speaking problems faced by the English department students of Siahkuala University. *Liingua Diidakttiika*, 6(1).
- Khamkhien, A. (2010). Teaching English speaking and English speaking tests in the Thai context: A reflection from Thai perspectives. *English Language Journal*, 3(1), 184-200.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Littlewood, W. (2007). *Communicative Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lukitasari, N. (2008). Students' strategies in overcoming speaking problems in speaking class. Malang: Muhammadiyah University of Malang.
- Mas, D. I. (2016). Students' motivation in speaking English available online. *Journal of English Educators Society*, 1, 31-48.
- Nada, H. G. (2019). EFL learners' preferences of corrective feedback in speaking activities. *Nada H. World Journal of English Language*, 9(2).
- Nation, I. S. P., & Newton, J. (2009). *Teaching ESL/EFL listening and speaking*. ESL & applied linguistics professional series. *Routledge Taylor & Francis Group*.
- Noviyenty, L. (2018). Strategies in learning and techniques in teaching English speaking. English Franca. *Academic Journal of English Language and Education*, 2 (1), 35-48.
- Nunan, D. (1995). *Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers*. NY: Phoenix Ltd, 593.

- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House Publishers.
- Rivers, W. M. (1968). *Teaching foreign language skills*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Skinner, Ch. (1958). *Essential Of Education Psychology*. Prentice Hall Inc, Engelwood Cliffs, New York.
- Shumin, K. (2002). *Factors to consider: Developing adult EFL students' speaking abilities*. In J. C. Richards, & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching*. University Press, 204-211.
- Samira, Al. H. (2014). Speaking difficulties encountered by young EFL learners. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature*, 2(6), 2347-3126.
- Tuan, N. H., & Mai, T. N. (2015). Factors affecting students' speaking performance at Le Thanh High School. *Asian Journal of Educational Research*, 3(2).
- Vang, N. X. (2004). English language teaching in Vietnam today: Policy, practice, and constraints. *Eastern Universities Press*, 447-454.
- Wongsuwana, T. (2006). Speech could be trained. *Thailand Education Journal*, 21, 44-50.

Creative Commons licensing terms

Author(s) will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions, and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions, and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Foreign Language Teaching shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage, or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflicts of interest, copyright violations, and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated into the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed, and used in educational, commercial, and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).