



# Factors Affecting English Major Students' Speaking Performance at University of Phan Thiet

TONG, Thi Truong Nhung

Faculty of Foreign Languages, University of Phan Thiet, Binh Thuan province, Vietnam.

**Abstract:** Speaking is a major component of the learning process. Regardless of years of English exposure, English majors at University of Phan Thiet (UPT) still struggle with speaking. This research aimed to investigate factors affecting speaking skills of UPT English majors. The purpose of this study was two-fold: (1) to investigate factors affecting UPT English majors' speaking skills and (2) to examine contributing elements of a well-rounded English communicator. A total of 175 English major students at UPT participated in this study. The study employed a surveyed-research method. The findings showed that major factors affecting UPT English majors' speaking were categorized into two types: (1) internal factors, namely self-confidence, listening ability and the dearth of ideas; (2) external factors including performance conditions, teaching methods and learning environment. Furthermore, the study indicated that to be qualified for a decent speaker, diverse vocabulary used, good pronunciation and fluency were sizeable factors. The study then suggested some strategic ways to minimize the undesirable effects of negative factors, which could also help the educators to know which the key affecting factors were in order to improve their learners' oral fluency along with better designing a more effective educational program for their learners.

**Key words:** speaking skills, factors affecting speaking skills, criteria of a good English speaker.

## I. Introduction

### Background of the study

Open-door policy in 1986 followed by the need for integrating into the world has been acting as a trigger for a high demand for English in Viet Nam (Anh, 2010). Anh (2010) further added that Mastery of English is the key factor for Vietnamese modernization and industrialization. Thus, it is undeniable that English is instrumental in Vietnam, which can be reflected in establishing a substantial number of English centers with the aim of gratifying the strong needs for learning English of inhabitants. Besides, it is English that greatly assists the Vietnamese in a huge number of subjects. Specifically, rarely do the recruiters deem English skills as trivial once they find and hire outstanding staff for key and skilled positions. For that reason, it is proved that this language plays a vital role in recruitment procedures by international and multi-national companies or large Vietnamese organizations promoting closer integration with overseas countries. Furthermore, it is obvious that English is utilized for academic purposes at the tertiary education. In fact, not only does it become a mandatory subject at school but students are also advised to be an authority on four English skills in the hope of applying for their future jobs regardless of any adversities. Additionally, there is very little doubt that the importance of speaking skills is considerable to both students and employees in communicating with a view to expressing their ideas, making their voices heard and fostering mutual understanding. Moreover, people have a tendency to regard speaking skills as common ones, but this notion might not be precise as the prowess at speaking effectively and fluently is not a mediocre ability. For this reason, those with honed

speaking skills could be outstanding from others. In other words, the mastery of speaking skills is advantageous to career progression. All of these factors explain why the trend of emphasis on people's English communicative competence is in fashion.

However, admittedly, despite great efforts of educators and learners to be proficient in oral competent skills, up to now the results have been still far from satisfaction. As a matter of fact, a large proportion of students still could not speak properly even simple communication sentences after a long period of learning English, let alone use English effectively (Mai & Iwashita, 2012). Therefore, this research was an endeavor to investigate elements affecting English speaking skills, and also to examine contributing features of a good English speaker.

### **Objectives of the study**

This study had several principal objectives. First and foremost, it was an endeavor to discover both negative and positive factors influencing UPT English majors' speaking skills. Later then, criteria of a good English communicator were revealed.

### **Research Questions**

In order to achieve the above-mentioned aims, the two research questions below formed the central core of the study:

1. What were factors affecting UPT English majors' speaking skills?
2. What were criteria for a good English speaker?

### **Scope of the Study**

In this research, the researcher provided a focus merely on the students majoring in English at UPT. Further research could include teachers and non-English learners as the targeted samples in these regards. Although the research population was expected to be the representative of the whole UPT English majored students, further research should employ larger research subjects to justify the findings. Furthermore, it should also be noted that the study also limited itself to the investigation of internal and external factors affecting students' speaking performance only. Further studies may concern investigation into other factors influencing speaking skills and remedies as well for immense hardships that English majors were facing.

### **Significance of the Study**

Several research have been conducted in the same regard. With the notion that understanding factors affecting students' speaking skills will to some extent help students be better English speakers, findings of this research would give teachers and educators practical perspectives to best serve their learners' needs. Given that, they can better design a more effective educational program for English learners.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **Nature of Speaking**

#### **Definitions**

In light of previous research, it is noticeable that there are numerous definitions of speaking from different experts and authors. According to Cameron (2015), speaking is regarded as the active use of language with a view to conveying messages so that people find it feasible to fully understand them. Ann and Florez (1999) on the other hand argued that speaking is a two-way process in which an effective communication of ideas, information or emotions is engaged (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). In line with this, Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) also concur that speaking means showing oral expression to thoughts, opinions and feelings in terms of talk or conversation (as cited in Fajriyah, 2013). Additionally, speaking involves sharing a growing fascination or a great passion for something, discussing or settling a specific issue, or building and cementing the rapport and companionship (Hui, 2011). Besides, Hui (2011) believes that speaking is not akin to reading or

writing since not only does it occur in real time but it also necessitates simultaneously using many abilities with different rates.

Attempt to vary definitions of speaking, Bygate (1987) reveals that the production of auditory signals which are made to give diverse verbal responses to a listener is speaking. According to him, speaking is deemed as sounds linked in an orderly way so as to form meaningful utterances (as cited in Torky, 2006). In brief, adopting the aforementioned definitions, the author conceptualizes that speaking is a skill to express ideas, thoughts, wishes or desires orally, fluently, coherently and suitably for a number of purposes in a variety of circumstances happening in real time where there are two or more people getting involved.

### **Purposes of speaking**

According to Torky (2006), the main purpose of speaking can be either transactional or interactional. It is obvious that there are some differences between the spoken language used in both transactional and interactional discourse.

In terms of transactional discourse, instead of being listener-oriented, language is message-oriented (Nunan, as cited in Torky, 2006). Apparently, not only precision and coherence of the message but also substantiation that the message has been grasped plays a significant role in this type of discourse. In 2002, Basturkmen stated that speaking turns fulfilling this purpose appear to be long and comprise the priority for content and utilization of linguistic devices with a view to giving a sign to either the organization or type of information which will be provided (as cited in Torky, 2006). With regard to interactional discourse, some conversations are held with the aim of fostering or continuing a relationship. Occasionally, this kind of discourse is so-called the interpersonal use of language and instrumental in making the social intercourse become far smoother (Yule, as cited in Torky, 2006). Examples of interactional uses of language are greetings, grief talks, and compliments. On the contrary to transactional discourse which is message-oriented, the language used in the interactional mode is listener-oriented. In addition, Dornyei & Thurrell (1994) and Richards (1990) (as cited in Torky, 2006) concur that the length of speakers' talk in this type tends to be curtailed.

### **Components of speaking**

Speaking is concerned with five components (Syakur, as cited in Hui, 2011)

#### ***Comprehension***

Not only does oral communication certainly necessitate an interlocutor to understand, to give responses and to make a speech but it also demands the subject to start a conversation.

#### ***Grammar***

As a matter of fact, students have the capacity for using structure in a skillful way and differentiating appropriate grammatical forms in diverse situations (Heaton, as cited in Hui, 2011). Therefore, they have to find it urgent to construct a correct sentence in conversation in order to learn the correct method to be an authority on using language in oral form.

#### ***Vocabulary***

It is impossible for people to communicate effectively or share their thoughts not only in oral but also in written form owing to a dearth of vocabulary. Hence, vocabulary is an indispensable instrument in communication. Besides, having narrow vocabulary is also a major hindrance to language learners since messages can be conveyed without grammar, but nothing can be expressed without vocabulary.

#### ***Pronunciation***

It is highly likely for students to produce far clearer language once they speak by means of good pronunciation. Additionally, a speaker from another country with different language can encounter hardships in understanding what is said by the one who frequently mispronounces words.

#### ***Fluency***

The ability to speak fluently and accurately is called fluency, which is a target that a thousand of language learners are desirous of achieving. Besides the five aforementioned components of speaking from

Syakur (1987), Weir (1993) adds one more speaking component that is appropriateness (as cited in Hadriana, 2008).

### **Factors Affecting Speaking Skills**

For the purpose of assisting students in overcoming issues they frequently face in learning speaking, it is necessary to take internal and external factors influencing speaking ability into consideration.

#### **Internal factors.**

Guo Minghe and Wang Yuan (2013) propose that internal factors are made up of motivation, self-esteem, anxiety, attitude, personality and cross-cultural awareness.

#### **Motivation.**

Amongst all internal factors performing considerable role, motivation is possibly an essential factor for successful language learning. The more abilities teachers have to motivate students, the more effective teachers' teaching methods are. Thus, motivation is defined as the source behind behavior and provides an explanation for why people do things (Lee, as cited in Guo & Wang, 2013). Also, Brown (1980) defines motivation as an inner drive, impulse, emotion or desire that moves one to a particular action (as cited in Guo & Wang, 2013). In other words, motivation is an instrument that provides assistance for one person in reaching his or her desired targets.

#### **Self-esteem.**

White (1959) considers self-esteem a measure of one's confidence (as cited in Guo & Wang, 2013). Observing classroom learning, Guo and Wang (2013) can discover that learners with high self-esteem demonstrates more confidence and make more positive assessments on themselves which will enhance their language learning. A handful of students do not succeed in oral English learning or lack real confidence in speaking English in class simply as they have a low self-esteem. They always keep silent or find it hard to be active in oral English class. Guo and Wang (2013) reveal that since they are in dearth of confidence, have low self-esteem and make a negative evaluation on themselves, they usually feel frustrated and confused, which may cause devastating consequences on their speaking abilities.

#### **Anxiety.**

Anxiety is probably considered the biggest affective factor that hinders the learning process. In addition, Guo and Wnag (2013) say that whereas moderate anxiety is more likely to help students stay focused on learning, too much anxiety can impinge on learners' speaking performance and lead to poor performance through worry and self-doubt. Moreover, anxiety is a momentous element directly reducing students' graving for participation, which results in declined motivation, negative attitudes and hardships in language performance (Guo & Wang, 2013).

#### **Attitude.**

Attitude also serves a fundamental factor in language learning success. According to Guo and Wang (2013), merely learners having positive attitude will make no stone unturned to explore and put a diversity of learning strategies into practice. In addition, positive attitudes might offer encouragement to learners to get engaged in the class activities and speaking ones in particular, which definitely sets the stage for greater success in their speaking skills. On the contrary, negative attitudes of students towards learning process can be a culprit for their lackluster speaking performance (Guo & Wang, 2013).

#### **Personality.**

Personality is another basic factor that exerts a strong influence upon the students' speaking abilities. It is apparent that students with different personalities may choose different oral English learning strategies. Guo and Wang (2013) show that learners can be broadly divided into the extroverts and introverts. To be more specific, in the process of practicing speaking English, the extroverted students are inclined to be more active in choosing oral English learning strategies than the introverted ones. Furthermore, Guo and Wang (2013) recommend that when oral English teachers organize an activity in class, they should take both the extroverts and the introverts into account and create balance between them.

***Cross-Cultural awareness.***

Cultural factors occupy a fundamental role in second language acquisition, especially in oral communication. It is mandatory for learners to learn a second language along with a second culture (Brown, as cited in Guo & Wang, 2013). From time to time, learners may have some cultural obstacles caused by “cultural clash” between different cultures, including misunderstanding, confusion and anxiety which will affect or impede their communication (Guo & Wang, 2013). This fact has resulted in English oral learning issues that cause adversities in settling for a long time. As a matter of fact, whenever language teaching and learning is concerned, cultural differences make a tremendous contribution to the discussion and should be severely considered.

***External factors***

In 2013, Guo and Wang state that learning environment is an external factor having a significant effect on students’ study. According to them, learning environment has many aspects. First and foremost, “fresh air and pleasant temperature in the classroom can make students clear-headed and keep them in a happy state of mind”. Thus, it is possible for better learning environment to aid students in yielding good teaching and learning results. In contrast, “an unfavorable learning environment can reduce teaching and learning efficiency”. In addition, class-scale is another environment factor since not only does it make instructors and students happier, more active and more energetic in the small-scale class but it also satisfies students’ different desires. For this reason, class-scale should not be too large in order to achieve more effective oral English learning. Another external factor that affects students’ oral English learning is good language learning environment. In fact, English is a language used in communications, so a good language environment can effectively promote learning and speaking abilities. In 2015, Nguyen and Tran propose two more external factors comprising feedback during speaking activities and performance conditions.

***Feedback during speaking activities.***

The fact that instructors provide students with feedback about their speaking performance is the expectation of almost student. Harmer (as cited in Nguyen & Tran, 2015) firmly states in case the teachers correct once issues arise, the conversational flow and the purpose of the speaking activity as well will be damaged. Moreover, the fact that the students are always incorrupted will make them find this discouraging, so students might become afraid of speaking. It is suggested that the teachers make corrections to the students’ mistakes positively with encouragement (Baker & Westup, as cited in Nguyen & Tran, 2015).

***Performance conditions.***

Nguyen and Tran (2015) believe that students perform a speaking task under a variety of conditions. Nation and Newton (as cited in Nguyen & Tran, 2015) also say that performance conditions can have an influence on speaking skills of students. The four types of performance conditions proposed by Nation and Newton (as cited in Nguyen & Tran, 2015) include time pressure, planning, the standard of performance and the amount of support. To be more specific, students could perform their speaking abilities better in case they are not put under unrelenting time pressure and have a meticulous preparation. Also, prior to students’ speaking performance, it is advisable that teachers supply them with the standard of it with a view to letting them realize what they are required to reach. Last but not least, teachers should provide encouragement to students to speak English and tell them do not shy away from making mistakes during their speaking performance.

To sum up, there are twelve factors influencing student’ speaking skills with six internal factors and three external ones: Motivation, self-esteem, anxiety, attitude, personality, cross-cultural awareness, learning environment, feedback during speaking activities and performance conditions.

### III. Methodology

#### Research Subjects

The research subjects were English majors studying in the Faculty of Foreign Languages in UPT. Most of the participants were first- and second- year students and some were in their third year, and no seniors participated in this study (Table 1).

**Table 1. Participants' current academic school year**

	Current academic school year				Total
	1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	4 <sup>th</sup> year	
Frequency	75	75	25	0	175
%	43	43	14	0	100%

#### Research instrument

As previously mentioned, data for the research was collected via the questionnaire investigating factors affecting UPT English majors' speaking skill and examining contributing elements of a well-rounded English communicator. The questionnaire was translated into Vietnamese before delivering to the students.

A total of 200 questionnaires were delivered to the selected sample group. As a result, 175 responses were recorded, accounting a response rate of roughly 87.5%.

Factors affecting speaking skills of UPT English majors were measured by a self-designed questionnaire. Several explanations can be given for choosing questionnaire as a data collection method. First, questionnaires are very useful for gathering large-scale information regarding different kinds of issues, such as language needs, communication difficulties, preferred learning styles, preferred classroom activities and attitudes, and beliefs (Nunan, 1992). Secondly, questionnaires allow researchers to collect a large quantity of factual information in a relatively short period of time (Thomas, 2003). Finally, questionnaires are economical, standardized, confidential and used for specific purposes (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993).

There were totally three sections A, B, and C in the questionnaire. With reference to section A, this part comprised two questions devoted to find out the participants' views on nature of speaking and necessary elements to include in Speaking. Section B included two questions asking the subjects about factors affecting speaking skills. Each question in this part was exploited to specifically clarify their views on external and internal factors affecting their speaking skills. Finally, section C with two questions was a part to clarify the participants' thoughts about criteria of a good English speaker.

#### Data analysis

Results then were analyzed by SPSS Statistics 20. The data was analyzed, tabulated and interpreted using means, percentages and frequencies, in which mean (M) was used to calculate the average level of agreement of aspects concerning factors affecting students' speaking (Table 2). Standard Deviation (S.D.) depicted the spread of the scores of the respondents within the respondent group. Cronbach Alpha was used to check the internal reliability of the questionnaire. The questionnaire of this study had a high coefficient value of .887.

**Table 2. The criteria of the agreement level of factors affecting students' speaking**

Scale	Mean range	Agreement level
1	1.00-1.49	Strongly disagree
2	1.50-2.49	Disagree
3	2.50-3.49	Undecided
4	3.50-4.49	Agree
5	4.50-5.00	Strongly agree

#### IV. Results and Discussion

##### The participants' views on nature of speaking

Before investigating factors affecting the participants, the research endeavored to find out how the participants understood about speaking, particularly the nature of speaking. Eventually, the findings showed that the students grasped a good understanding of the nature of speaking. They agreed that the purpose of speaking is to convey specific messages by means of the active use of language. Moreover, the students knew that speaking is actually a two-way process happening in a real situation, which involves more than one individual. The research went deeper by asking the students' opinions on other functions of speaking, as a result, they consented that speaking is also an action of discussing or settling a specific issue, or building and cementing the rapport and companionship.

##### Elements included in speaking

In general, the students indicated that the speaking process mainly revolved more around elements of pronunciation and vocabulary than other elements namely fluency, comprehension and grammar (Table 3). Fluency stood at the third position among top five involvement in speaking. Over a half of the students thought grammar was an element included in speaking. It was interesting to notice that comprehension factor received the least care among the participants when it comes to the aspects involved in the speaking process.

**Table 3. Elements in speaking**

Elements in speaking	Frequency	%
Comprehension	83	47.4
Grammar	95	54.3
Vocabulary	148	84.6
Pronunciation	152	86.9
Fluency	125	71.4

##### Factors affecting UPT English majors' speaking skills

###### *Internal factors*

Results about intrinsic factors affecting the students' speaking skills were displayed in table 4. In terms of internal factors, the results showed that self-confidence was reported to be the most influential internal element ( $M=4.35$ ), and listening ability was the second most dominant aspect affecting the students' speaking skills ( $M=4.14$ ). Furthermore, according to the students, the inadequacy of topical knowledge and ideas ( $M=4.02$ ) as well as fear of making mistakes and criticism ( $M=4.01$ ) when speaking also impacted upon their speaking performance. Therefore, it was understandable why the participants agreed that anxiety and nervousness also influenced their speaking performance. It was noticeable that personality and cross-cultural awareness had the least impact on English speaking skills among the participants, with  $M=3.66$  for the both factors.

**Table 4. Intrinsic factors affecting Speaking skill**

Items	Mean	S.D.
Factor 1: Motivation	3.91	.753
Factor 2: Self-confidence	4.35	.607
Factor 3: Personality	3.66	.792
Factor 4: Attitudes	3.91	.811
Factor 5: Listening ability	4.14	.655
Factor 6: Anxiety and nervousness	3.91	.890
Factor 7: Lack of topical knowledge and ideas	4.02	.735
Factor 8: Fear of mistakes and criticism	4.01	.841
Factor 9: Cross-cultural awareness	3.66	.862



**External factors**

Table 5 showed results regarding external factors influencing the participants' speaking skills. The findings indicated that performance conditions such as time pressure or preparation had the biggest influence on speaking skills of the students ( $M=4.25$ ).

The same finding was found in the study conducted by Rezail and Okhovat (2016), which mentioned task preparation to be as a noticeable factor affecting L2 learners' oral fluency in speech production. It was noticeable to notice that teaching methods were perceived to be the second most influential aspect affecting speaking skills among the participants ( $M=4.06$ ).

Accordingly, it was not surprising to find out that learning environment was also a substantial element when it comes to factors affecting speaking skill ( $M=4.03$ ). The learning environment in this study includes physical and psychological conditions. Currently, UPT majored students are studying in fan-equipped classrooms which could be uncomfortable in hot weather conditions. This finding was supported in Bohlke's research (2014) which stated that the ability to produce language naturally and fluently depends substantially on the learners' exposure to English environment. Teachers' comments were also a sizeable factor affecting the students' speaking skills ( $M=3.86$ ), and it was interesting to find out that peer pressure was the least affecting factor on the participants' speaking skills.

**Table 5. Extrinsic factors affecting speaking skill**

Items	Mean	S.D.
Factor 1: Teacher's comments	3.86	.812
Factor 2: Learning environment	4.03	.723
Factor 3: Peer pressure	3.50	.940
Factor 4: Teaching methods	4.06	.704
Factor 5: Performance conditions (time pressure, preparation...)	4.25	.680

**Criteria for a good English speaker**

When being asked about criteria of a decent speaker, the survey participants practically agreed with suggested criteria of the questionnaire (Table 6).

The findings showed that according to the participants, to be qualified for a decent speaker, good pronunciation and clear voice, fluency, and diverse vocabulary were the top three criteria. Furthermore, good stressing and intonation as well as the ability to use language in suitable social settings were also sizeable factors. Given that, the English majored-students at UPT put more emphasis on these criteria to be good English speakers, which lecturers should take into consideration these factors to help the students. In other words, in order to gain satisfaction from the learners, speaking lessons should focus more on pronunciation, fluency and vocabulary than other aspects ranging from pragmatic competence, grammatical competence to discourse competence and strategic competence.

**Table 6. Criteria for a good English speaker**

Items	Mean	S.D.
Criteria 1: Wide range of vocabulary	4.29	.702
Criteria 2: Speaking fluency	4.31	.651
Criteria 3: Good stressing and intonation	4.26	.658
Criteria 4: Good pronunciation and clear voice	4.37	.628
Criteria 5: The ability to connect language structures into a cohesive and coherent oral or written text of different types (Discourse Competence)	4.10	.687
Criteria 6: The ability to use words, phrases and sentence structures which are suitable for specific situations (Pragmatic Competence)	4.12	.737
Criteria 7: The ability to recognize and repair communication breakdowns before, during,	4.11	.690



---

or after they happen (Strategic Competence)		
Criteria 8: The ability to use knowledge and skills for appropriate language use in a social context (Sociolinguistic Competence)	4.19	.690
Criteria 9: The ability to use, forms of expression that are grammatically correct and accurate in speaking (Grammatical Competence)	4.10	.793

---

## V. Conclusion

The purposes of this study were to discover factors affecting UPT English majored-students' speaking skills as well as criteria making a decent English speaker. The study first looked at how the students grasped the essence of speaking. It turned out that the participants showed their good understanding about the nature of speaking. Furthermore, according to the participants, pronunciation and vocabulary were prominent elements involved in speaking, followed by fluency, grammar and comprehension. These results were further supported in those found in the section of criteria making a good speaker as the students believed that a good speaker should have good pronunciation and ability to use a wide range of vocabulary as well as good fluency. Elements related to discourse, pragmatic, strategic, grammatical and sociolinguistic although received good level of agreement among the participants but were still lower than other aspects namely pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency. It was interesting to find that the grammatical aspect received less care among the participants compared to those about pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency.

The research then endeavored to find out factors affecting speaking performances among UPT English majored students. From the statistics of the data obtained from the questionnaire, the affecting factors were classified into the intrinsic and extrinsic groups.

With regard to internal factors, self-confidence, listening ability and the shortage of topical knowledge and ideas as well as fear of mistakes and criticism were the top four aspects influencing speaking performance among the students. Clearly, there are clear connections among these internal factors, thus finding strategies to help the learners conquer these troublesome factors could contribute significantly to their speaking improvement. As a matter of fact, fear of making mistakes and nervousness could hinder the students from freely expressing their own ideas (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). This is easy to understand as according to Brown (2014, p. 151) we humans are prone to fear of negative social evaluation, arising from a learner's need to make a positive social impression on others". Therefore, English language students are afraid of losing face so they maybe tend to be shy to comfortably and actively express their ideas in front of people. Inevitably, shyness along with fear of making mistakes would act as a predicament for their speaking improvement as they would be reluctant in class speaking practices. Therefore, giving feedback or corrections from the lecturers is actually more than an art. The lecturers should amend the students' mistakes with personal care, encouragement and positive attitudes rather than complaints or negative judgement. Teachers should make students understand that making mistakes is a natural process in acquiring a second language, which will spur the learners to be willing to share their thoughts. Moreover, it is advisable that mistake corrections should occur only when students have accomplished or finished their speaking since interval corrections could impede students' flow of speeches or ideas. Sometimes, the lecturers can also encourage self and peer corrections so that the students can remember their mistakes longer and avoid repeating the same mistakes. All in all, how to boost learners' motivation is of paramount important since motivation is a crucial factor to achieve proficiency in a second language (Gardner & Lambert ,1972), which can boost learners to perceive the target language. Motivation should necessarily come from the inside of the learners where they are determined to self-advance their speaking performance sometimes with assistance from their teachers and friends in the class. This idea is well supported by Hong and Ganapathy (2017), "Motivation can promote learning and learning can produce motivation again". The are several ways that students themselves can self-enhance their speaking performance. First, the students should practice speaking English at every possible occasion both inside and

outside the classroom. In addition, the students should actively participate speaking practices to avoid shyness as well as to boost self-esteem and confidence in speaking.

Regarding external factors, the results showed that UPT majors really cared about learning environment when studying, which was in line with findings of Guo and Wang (2013). Given that, it is suggested that UPT leading parties and educators should be conscious about creating a setting with fresh air and fine temperature as well as motivating and inspiring atmosphere to boost the students' learning productivity. To this end, replacing fans with air-conditioners and improving ventilation systems in classrooms are top priorities to improve the learning conditions. Additionally, as the students indicated their big concern about performance conditions, therefore, the lecturers should avoid putting their learners under high pressure in speaking classes by giving more time for their preparation and planning as well as clear sets of standard prior the students' performance. Nguyen and Tran (2015) pinpointed that time pressure can cause poor performance in speaking. Furthermore, peer support and teachers' encouragement can make things less challenging because it is easier to present a topic with others than doing it by themselves (Thornbury, 2005). Furthermore, lecturers also play significant roles in yielding quality speaking classes. Apart from playing academic roles, the lecturers also need to provide pastoral care for their students. In that way, students and lecturers could form intimate bonds so that suggestions and feedback given by the lecturers could be easily taken into considerations by the learners.

## VI. References

1. Anh, K. H. K. (2010). Use of Vietnamese in English Language Teaching in Vietnam: Attitudes of Vietnamese University Teachers. *English Language Teaching*, 3(2).
2. Ann, M. & Florez, C. (1999), Improving Adult English Language Learners Speaking Skills, *National Center for ESL Literacy Education*, 4.
3. Bohlke, D. (2014). Fluency-oriented second language teaching. In M. Celce-Murcia.
4. Fajriyah, N. (2013). Using group discussion tasks to improve the English speaking learning process of grade XI students of Ma Al-lanah Playen Gunung Kidul in the academic year of 2012/ 2013 (Master's thesis). Yogyakarta State University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
5. Finocchiaro, M., & Brumfit, C. (1983). *The functional-notional approach: from theory to practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
6. Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers.
7. Guo, M., & Wang, Y. (2013). Affective Factors in oral English Teaching and Learning. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 5(3), 57-61.
8. Hadriana. (2008). Improving students' speaking skills through communicative activities in small group discussions at the third semester class A of the English study program of FKIP UNRI. *Journal of English and Education*, 2(2), 34-51.
9. Hong, Y. C., & Ganapathy, M. (2017). To investigate ESL students' instrumental and integrative motivation towards English language learning in a Chinese school in Penang: Case study. *English Language Teaching*, 10(9), 17-35. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt>
10. Hui, L. (2011). Improving Students' English Speaking Skill Through Content-based Instruction (Master's thesis). Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta, Indonesia.
11. Leong, L., & Ahmadi, S. M. (2017). An analysis of factors influencing learners' English Speaking skill. *International Journal of Research in English Education*, 34-41. doi:10.18869/acadpub.ijree.2.1.34
12. Mai, N. K., & Iwashita, N. (2012). A comparison of learners' and teachers' attitudes toward communicative language teaching at two universities in Vietnam. *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL*, 7, 25-49.
13. McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (1993). *Research in education: a conceptual introduction* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). New York. NY: Harper Collins.

14. Nguyen, H. T., & Tran, N. M. (2015). Factors affecting students' speaking performance at Le Thanh Hien High School. *Asian Journal of Educational Research*, 3(2), 8-23.
15. Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching and learning*. USA: Heinle.
16. Rezail, M., & Okhovat, B. (2016). The effect of working memory on EFL learners' oral fluency. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 6, 74-8.
17. Torky, S. A. E. F. (2006). The Effectiveness of a Task-Based Instruction program in Developing the English Language Speaking Skills of Secondary Stage Students (Doctoral thesis). Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt.