



**THE DIFFICULTIES IN ORAL
PRESENTATION OF ENGLISH-MAJORED
JUNIORS AT TAY DO UNIVERSITY, VIETNAM**

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Abstract:

It could be broadly accepted that oral presentations are becoming important for students. It is required in almost every field and in the university environment. To succeed in the university environment and in their future jobs, these students need to improve their oral presentation skills. However, one of the drawbacks of using oral presentations in the language classroom is that students often find oral presentations extremely challenging. Therefore, the researcher conducted this research with the main goal of finding out common problems when giving an oral presentation to English-majored juniors at Tay Do University. Ninety juniors majoring in English at Tay Do University were selected to take part in the study. Data are gathered through questionnaires and interviews. The researcher used quantitative and qualitative methods to do the research. From the collected data, when they give a presentation, students usually make some mistakes such as problems in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, psychological and background knowledge. Through this study, they would recognize their own problems when giving a presentation. Besides, understanding students' learning difficulties may also enable teachers to help students develop effective learning strategies and ultimately improve their presentation skills. It is hoped that this research can be helpful for not only students but also teachers in learning and teaching English.

Keywords: difficulties in oral presentation; English-majored juniors; language classroom

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1. Introduction

This chapter is an introduction to this study. It mentions the ins and outs of rationale, significance, and the organization of the study.

1.1 Rationale

Nowadays, English has become the main means of communication in all fields such as education, culture, politics, medicine, and business. Particularly, English has been widely accepted as the most widespread language used in the world, as it is the prime means of communication globally (Kitao and Kitao, 1996). Kumar (2009) stated that English is the most important language in the world because it is the only language truly linking the whole world together. Therefore, it is easy to understand why all enterprises and companies require their employees' foreign language is mostly English. In recent years, more people want to learn English for the purposes of studying abroad and having a better job. Hybels (1992) indicated, "*communication is vital to our life, to live is to communicate*". When people know how to communicate in English, they can easily take advantage of their professions, as many jobs require the necessary English levels and diplomatic English skills. Especially, if they have got excellent English presentation skills, it will be easy to find good jobs with high salaries or get promotions in their careers.

Oral presentation plays an important role in the success of a career. Nowreya, Muneera, and Hanan (2015) stressed that in a technology-driven society, the ability to communicate orally continues to be an essential skill for students at school and university. In order to communicate better, speaking skill is considered one of the most important skills. According to Fachrurrazy (2012, p.79) "*speaking is an active and productive skill. The target of speaking skill is an ability to express ideas freely and spontaneously*". At the university level, the process of speaking English is given through an English-speaking course. In this course, the lecturers usually give the students some projects that must be completed. That activity is aimed to make it easier for the students to practice speaking in order to communicate with each other. Al-Hebaish (2012) states that oral presentation is one of the courses introduced to English majors in order to enhance their speaking ability. Therefore, oral presentation in a speaking course is very important to enhance the students' ability to communicate. With globalization, graduates need to be proficient in oral communication skills in order to function effectively in a professional setting. They need to improve their capabilities in speaking the English language and communicating orally with others. For successful oral communication, students need thoroughly in-depth instruction and practice. The best way to assess proficiency in communication is through oral presentations. According to Hou (2008), learners' success in handling presentation skills will reinvigorate them in learning spoken English, thinking logically and innovatively, and improving context awareness and confidence. This in turn will enable learners to perform well in presentation activities, small group discussions, negotiating and answering questions in class, as well as demonstrating ideas and commenting on certain topics. Some English-majored students want to develop their

academic oral presentation abilities, but they encounter many difficulties in the process of preparing and delivering a presentation. There are some reasons for the fact that many learners are not good at English presentation performance. Firstly, lack of linguistic knowledge is their common problem. They do not have enough vocabulary to express their thoughts or opinions. They also make grammatical mistakes and have incorrect pronunciation during the delivery. These are the consequences of not gaining linguistic knowledge and not practicing speaking skills at school. Secondly, being short of background knowledge is also a big obstacle because students cannot convey their ideas to others if they do not have the information related to what they want to mention. Thirdly, students do not equip themselves with the necessary presentation skills. For example, they do not build the speech with three main parts, which are opening, body, and closing. In addition, they do not know how to present effectively and answer the question impressively. Finally, students feel nervous when they have to deliver a speech in front of many people. Psychological factors affect their emotions and performances, so they usually have negative attitudes towards making a presentation. These obstacles make them feel bored and passive, so they find it difficult to make a good presentation. This leads to the inability of communicating in public places. For this reason, Hedge (2000) advised that learners should develop knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and necessary communication skills at the same time to improve their language proficiency, particularly in presentation. In fact, English majored seniors at Tay Do University are a typical example. English is considered their foreign language, so delivering a speech in English is not easy. In addition, making a presentation is a complicated process with many steps, which requires students to prepare meticulously. Therefore, it is undoubtedly challenging for them to make a good presentation. Because of many obstacles in making a presentation such as deficiency of linguistic knowledge, shortage of necessary presentation skills, poor background knowledge, and speaking anxiety, they are afraid of presenting a topic in front of their teachers and classmates. Besides that, if they are not flexible and confident in presentation skills for a long time, it will be difficult for them to improve and develop their communication skills.

In the past decades, many studies have been increasingly conducted on the importance of presentation in the English learning process. However, previous studies have tended to focus on the use of presentation in language teaching and learning, rather than on the difficulties in making a presentation for language learners. Therefore, the research entitled "Oral Presentation Difficulties of English-majored juniors at Tay Do University" was implemented to help English learners in general and the seniors majoring in English at Tay Do University, in particular, realize their own problems in making a presentation. Hence, the researcher hopes that students can considerably improve their presentation performance.

1.2 Significance of the study

This research was conducted to find out which are the difficulties in oral presentation of English-majored juniors at Tay Do University as a task of the researcher. Due to the

findings, it is hoped that this research will provide a useful reference, which would help students realize their own problems in making an effective oral presentation, so they can get the motivation to study and enhance their English competence. Besides, teachers would have favorable information to consult and get a clearer view. Hence, they would know how to help their students in making oral presentations effectively.

1.3 Organization of study

The research is made up of five main chapters as follows.

Chapter 1 - Introduction provides the rationale, significance and organization of the study.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review includes the theoretical framework for the study. In particular, the definition of oral presentation, the importance of oral presentation and the difficulties in oral presentation and the previous study.

Chapter 3 - Research Methodology, indicates the study method employed in this thesis including such features as research design, participants, instruments, and procedure. Besides, research aims, research questions, and hypotheses are also listed here.

Chapter 4 - Results and Discussion report the findings of the research to figure out the participants' common difficulties in oral presentations. Then, the discussion will follow to wrap up this chapter.

Chapter 5 - Conclusions, Implications, Limitations and Recommendations give the conclusions, implications reflect on the limitations of the study and put forward recommendations for further research.

2. Literature review

Chapter 2 indicates the definitions, the importance, and the difficulties of presentation.

2.1 Definition of oral presentation

There is much-related research that suggests many definitions of oral presentation. According to The Learning Centre, The University of New South Wales (2010), an oral presentation is a short talk on a set topic given to a tutorial or seminar group. In an oral presentation, one (or more) students give a talk to a tutorial group and present views on a topic based on their readings or research. The rest of the group then joins in a discussion of the topic. Meanwhile, Jessica Cook, (2018) wrote that an oral presentation is similar to giving a speech but is usually not just a person behind a lectern. Visual aids and teaching tools are used to further enhance the spoken words. An oral presentation can be given as an individual or as part of a group. It also might add components of technology, such as a slide show, video clip or audio recording.

Moreover, according to Schmidt (2018), oral presentations are a common requirement in many courses. They may be short or long, include slides or other visual aids, and be done individually or in a group. In the view of Heather Burdo (2019), the definition of an oral presentation is the delivery of a speech to an audience; for example,

in a business meeting, employees sit around a table while either the boss or another co-workers give a speech or displays a presentation. That is one of the types of presentations in the workforce. Another is when you own a business and you want to pitch your product or service to another business owner or a large company. You would use an oral presentation to successfully pitch to that company. In another research, Ohio Wesleyan University, in their “Guidelines for Oral Presentations” defined oral presentations as *“brief discussions of a focused topic delivered to a group of listeners in order to impart knowledge or to stimulate discussion. They are similar to short papers with an introduction, main body and conclusion. The ability to give brief presentations is a learned skill and the one that is called on frequently in the workplace”*.

In a nutshell, there are numerous definitions by many researchers but they share the same opinion that oral presentation is the delivery of a speech to an audience or a short talk on a set topic; it can be given as an individual or as part of a group. In general, an oral presentation is one of the best platforms where nonverbal cues are combined with effective verbal skills adding a broader aspect to your communication. It allows individuals to present their thoughts and views confidently in front of a live audience. It also helps students improve their communicative skills.

2.2 The importance of oral presentation

Like some other skills, oral presentation skill is one of the essential skills for students in institutions of higher learning. To help improve their presentation skills, students are encouraged to use systematic methods to facilitate their presentations in the classroom. The main purpose of emphasizing presentation skills in higher education is to help develop professionalism in the learning environment. In this era of technological advancement, students can enhance their presentation skills by using high-tech equipment, for improving their ability to present information in a professional manner.

There have been numerous discussions on the importance of oral presentation skills in various fields. According to Alshare and Hindi (2004), a student’s presence in the classroom becomes an important element in delivering positive learning experiences. The statements above show that the presentation is important, the presentation gives the high points of working life, and it can be used to encourage the students to be more active in the learning process and give a positive learning experience. According to the Malaysia Job Street survey in 2015, employers are dissatisfied with the quality of fresh graduates in Malaysia. The poor ratings were not generally associated with their academic qualifications, but with the poor attitude and communication skills shown during interviews or in the workplace.

Therefore, the ability to communicate is the most important goal that communicative language teaching aims to reach. It is to be able to operate effectively in the real world (Hedge, 2000). According to Emden and Becker (2004: 1), *“the ability to speak well enough to interest, influence or persuade other people is a major asset for whatever they want to do in the future and it may change them in ways that they did not expect”*. That idea is true as oral presentation skills can bring many benefits for the learners. The very first

reason is that oral presentations often provide practice in speaking for the presenter and they develop the ability to speak to an audience. While making a presentation may seem to be a more limited activity than other tasks, such as role-play, and information-gap activity, it can in fact involve all the language skills. People will need to develop and use this skill throughout their life, for example, when they attend job interviews or present a paper to a group of colleagues in a meeting.

What is more, through the mastery of speech, individuals come to be fully effective in an organization, in the management and expression of ideas and arguments, especially when they write a report or even write an essay (Powell, 2003). Finally, when people can speak clearly, concisely, and convincingly, they will gain enormous confidence, which as Emden, Becker (2004: 2) put it *“will result in an even better presentation next time”*, and *“the newfound confidence may affect other areas of your work”*. People are more ready to ask questions, respond to a challenge and organize themselves and their work more effectively. For all reasons, giving oral presentations is one of the necessary skills that students have to acquire in learning a foreign language.

2.3 The difficulties in oral presentation

2.3.1 Linguistic factors

Linguistic knowledge is one of the most meaningful parts of assisting students to learn oral presentation skills efficiently. However, it is one of the most common difficulties faced by students. A study conducted by Juhana (2012) showed that linguistic factors such as lack of vocabulary, lack of understanding of grammatical patterns and incorrect pronunciation are obstacles for students to present in English class. Moreover, linguistic factors refer to the lack of English proficiency among the students when delivering oral presentations.

2.3.1.1 Vocabulary

Learning vocabulary represents one of the most important skills that are necessary for presentations. Vocabulary learning is very important for people who learn English both as a foreign language and as a second language. Tozcu and Coady (2004: 473) point out that learning vocabulary is an important aspect of language two and foreign language acquisition and academic achievement and is vital to reading comprehension and proficiency, to which it is closely linked. Vocabulary learning is an imperative part of learning a foreign language (Schmitt and Carter, 2000). It is one of the major and most important concerns of foreign language learning. Researching vocabulary was neglected by researchers up to the 1960s; however, recently it has gained the attention of a lot of researchers (Muliawati and Ismail, 2017). Vocabulary learning demands the learners' competence in both theory and practice. Schmitt (2008) has explained that vocabulary learning is essential as it is a vital indication of language proficiency. Similarly, learning any foreign language is fundamentally associated with vocabulary knowledge, the shortage of vocabulary items obstructs the process of second language learning. Chastian (1998) maintained *“the lack of needed vocabulary is the most common cause of student's inability*

to say what they want to say during communication activities". According to Folse and Bologna D. (2003) "without syntax, meaning is hindered; but without vocabulary meaning is impossible". Wilkins (1972) stated, "without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed". In addition, students often repeat the words and have trouble choosing suitable words in particular contexts because they lack vocabulary. Some words have different meanings in many cases, so they have to consider the words that they are going to use in the presentation. Richard and Schmitt (1997) argue that knowing the meaning of a word occurs, the company it keeps, each different situation has the suitable meaning with it, its syntactic action, its basic form and derivations, its word associations, and its semantic features. Thus, they should use suitable words in different contexts, but it is very hard because they cannot remember the exact meaning of the word and a word can have many meanings. The limitation of vocabulary makes us cannot express thoughts, feelings, ideas, and not have enough self-confidence to communicate. Thornbury (2004) pointed out some factors that make it difficult for learners (pronunciation, spelling, length and complexity, grammar, meaning, range, connotation and idiom).

Moreover, almost all the researches show words that are difficult to pronounce are more difficult to learn. For example, many learners find that words with clusters of consonants such as "health" or "crisps" are problematic. Besides, when two words overlap in meaning, students are also likely to confuse them. Students might find the use of these two words confusing. Along with many other problems, vocabulary is a key issue in the speaking performance of language learners. Thus, the learners should study vocabulary harder because lack of vocabulary is a reason why the students cannot show what they are thinking. They cannot speak fluently because they do not have enough vocabulary to express ideas, thoughts and emotions. Therefore, students should be equipped with more vocabulary to help them improve their oral presentation skills. Pikulski and Temleton (2004) believe that rich vocabulary and the skills for using those words are the greatest to help learners achieve success in their education and general life. In fact, to achieve success, the learner should overcome this mistake and try to develop the knowledge of vocabulary.

In summary, vocabulary is one of the most important factors in making oral presentations. Without the vocabulary or poor knowledge about it can make the presentation less effective and boring. In fact, vocabulary is the key to communication to lead to success.

2.3.1.2 Pronunciation

Pronunciation plays an important role in speaking. It is the most hindrance in studying English and oral presentation because it includes many other factors such as intonation, stress, linking, accent, etc. It can make different meanings in the same sentence, which depends on raising intonation or falling intonation to change the function of words in the sentence. Cook (1996, 2016) defined pronunciation as the production of English sounds. Pronunciation is learnt by repeating sounds and correcting them when produced

inaccurately. When learners start learning pronunciation, they make new habits and overcome the difficulties resulting from the first language. Therefore, Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) defined “...as part of successful communication, pronunciation teaching has become important”. With the same ideas, Hoge (2016) wrote, “English pronunciation is more important than grammar, especially when giving a speech or presentations in English”.

Moreover, pronunciation is the first thing that every English-speaking learner needs to learn. It has been a common concern that acoustic signals are prone to face communication breakdown (Harper, 2004). Nevertheless, considering the fact that L2 learners use English more often among non-native speakers than among native speakers (Jenkins, 2000), most commonly in the Malaysian educational and professional setup, L2 learners may still need to master the much learnable segmental sounds of English for mutual intelligibility instead of the complex supra-segmental qualities. A study carried out by Rajadurai (2001) on the attitude and concern for accurate English pronunciation among a group of Malaysian ESL teacher trainees showed that more than 80% of the trainees agreed that pronunciation is an important element in spoken English.

Nonetheless, pronunciation is one of the obstacles for a language learner to master. According to Aliaga García (2007); Martínez-Flor et al. (2006); Pourhosein Gilakjani, (2016), it is one of the most difficult skills to acquire and learners should spend lots of time improving their pronunciation. Understandable pronunciation is one of the basic requirements of learners’ competence and it is one of the most important features of language instruction. Good pronunciation leads to learning while bad pronunciation promotes great difficulties in language learning (Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2012). Students faced several problems in presenting. Firstly, learners find that their mother tongue influences their pronunciation of English. Avery and Ehrich argued, “the native language affects both the ability to produce English sounds and the ability to hear sounds” (Avery and Ehrich, XV). As Wikipedia showed, “the speech of non-native English speakers may exhibit pronunciation characteristics that result from such speakers imperfectly learning the pronunciation of English, either by transferring the phonological rules from their mother tongue into their English speech or through implementing strategies similar to those used in primary language acquisition. They may also create innovative pronunciations for English sounds not found in the speaker’s first language”.

Furthermore, students usually mispronounce some English words and sentences. Regarding this issue, Jahan (n.d, p.36) stated in her article that inappropriate pronunciation of English would make people misunderstand the speaker easily. Hence, they face many English pronunciation difficulties. They have a problem with stress and intonation that they are unable to put the right emphasis on the right part of the word. In addition, they have problems with vowel blends and consonant blends as well. For example, sounds like “ea” and “ou” can be confusing because when they listen to the audio recordings, it can be very difficult for them to pick up the subtle blends of two or more vowels. Additionally, in consonant blends, they have a problem with the “th” sound because they are not accustomed to putting “t” and “h” together to form “th”

sound to reproduce. In addition, the accent is recognized as a major cause of miscommunication between the speaker and the audience during the presentation. Gilakjani (2012) emphasized that unintelligible sounds may cause greater problems than speech with lexical or grammatical errors. This is because accent-associated issues could weaken the communicative competence of L2 speakers.

In brief, pronunciation should be viewed as more than the correct production of individual sounds or words. It should be viewed as an important part of the presentation that is incorporated into classroom activities.

2.3.1.3 Grammar

Grammar is also one of the essential elements, which helps students get good oral presentation skills. James (2005) defined “*grammar is a study of the structure of the language and describes the way of putting words together to make meaningful sentences*”. According to (Ur, 1999) states that grammar is defined as the way words are put together to make correct sentences. Moreover, learning English grammar helps students understand and know important language concepts helping them understand many aspects of sentences correctly. Grammar helps the student write and read correctly. Without studying the grammar, the correct results of learning the language will not be achieved. Grammar is the basis of every language. Its certain methods and organization must be followed and not ignored in order to achieve the goal of mastering the language and learning the language efficiently and correctly. It is also known that each language has its own words, sounds and systems. It is not just learning the correct language; it is a discovery of the nature of the language (Azar, B. 2002). Harmer (1991) declares that the knowledge of grammar is very important for learners, grammar is an essential element to help learners can speak English fluently and accurately.

However, the rules of grammar are very hard to remember so students usually make grammatical mistakes in their presentation such as organizing words, phrases, tense, part of speech, and prepositions. They do not know how to use grammatical sentences. According to Graham and Walsh, there are some major problems that ESL students have with grammar. First, students often have difficulties with word order. They usually make sentences that seem to be strange to the native speakers due to the wrong word order. In fact, word order is more important in English than in other languages according to these authors. Second, verbs also cause difficulties for learners. Besides, learners have difficulties with prepositions and nouns. Thornbury and Slade (2007) believed that one of the students’ problems in speaking was transferring L1 into L2, which was done manually. Therefore, it will make the presenter have another problem in constructing a good sentence with correct grammar/vocabulary because the presenter needs to think twice about the grammar rule. Rajoo (2010) pointed out that grammar also plays an important role in the students’ mistakes. It is because students sometimes make a sentence without considering the grammar. In addition, Ellis also says that grammar study can make it easier to localize the syntax system. Therefore, it improves smooth development (Hinkel and Fotos, 2002, p.10). Once a person has learned

grammar, he will easily have other grammar rules later than those who have never learned it before. He will know how to organize and express ideas in his head without any difficulty. Thanks to that, he will be able to speak, read or write a language fluently and skillfully. Furthermore, when the learners learn a foreign language, they also have trouble choosing appropriate grammar structures in the presentation. Students often make mistakes in grammar because they apply their mother tongue or first language structure to the structure of the foreign language, which is different from their native language (Haryanto, 2007). Vietnamese students often transfer Vietnamese sentential structures into English, and they tend to string together English words using Vietnamese word order.

In conclusion, grammatical knowledge is useful in every aspect of life from education to management and social life to employment opportunities. Proper grammar is also essential for understanding English as a second language as well as for learning a new language since all languages follow grammatical patterns. In fact, if we master grammar well, we can speak the right form of language, fluently and accurately.

2.3.2 Background knowledge

Background knowledge plays a significant role in listening as well oral presentation skills. It is the knowledge that we can learn from schools, books and knowledge of social life is through the process of accumulation and exposure to life. Stevens (1982) points out that basic knowledge is as simple as what people already know about a topic. According to Dimitracopoulou (2002), the meaning of a language relates to social actions as linguistic communication happens in interpersonal exchange. Frake (1980, 2009) posits that people talk to construct the cultural world, and display and recreate their social orders. In order to communicate effectively, one must master the language's use in a social context. Because *"shared values and beliefs create tradition and social structures that bind a community together and are expressed in their language"* (Carrasquillo, 1994).

One must know how to use the language culturally appropriate in different social situations. In order to speak English well, besides knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening and reading, we need more basic knowledge in many areas of social life such as knowledge. economy, history - geography - culture knowledge, law knowledge, local practice, medical knowledge, economic knowledge, knowledge of history - geography - culture, knowledge of the law, local practice, medical knowledge, foreign language knowledge. Culture, as defined by Samovar and Porter (2004) was *"an integrated system"*, which included history, religion, values, social organization, and language. It is sure that we must have background knowledge about social, cultural and other fields making an effective and interesting conversation. Moreover, teachers can activate students' background knowledge in a number of ways (Fisher & Frey, 2009). Background knowledge and prior knowledge are generally used interchangeably. For example, Stevens (1982) defines background knowledge quite simply as what one already knows about a subject. Dochy et al., (1995) provide an elaborate definition,

describing prior knowledge as the whole of a person's knowledge, including explicit and tacit knowledge, and metacognitive and conceptual knowledge.

Nevertheless, background knowledge is also one of the disadvantages of listening skills for learners because Bartlett (1932) had said, "*listeners' background knowledge about a passage can have a profound impact on their ability to understand what has been said. Without a schema, understanding a passage can be extremely difficult. A classic demonstration of this phenomenon was first*". It can be realized that the level of understanding of learners is assessed through knowledge that they have such as religious, technical and cultural knowledge or topic familiarity. In reality, students have difficulty showing their opinion on an unfamiliar topic because of a lack of general knowledge. Therefore, students have to prepare as well as learn about knowledge of topics before the presentation. Besides, knowledge of the language elements such as vocabulary and grammatical structure seems necessary but not sufficient. The reason is that when making the oral presentation, students seem to lack the knowledge to understand the topic. In addition, Turner, Husman and Schallert (2002) said, "*a person's background knowledge, often called prior knowledge, is a collection of "abstracted residue" that has been formed from all of life's experiences*". Actually, experience plays an important role in oral presentation skills because it not only helps presenters understand the meaning of the topic but also expresses the information to audiences exactly.

Many studies have been done on factors influencing subjects' language learning. Some researchers have investigated the effect of background knowledge on improving language learning in general and learning language skills and sub-skills in particular. Some specialists consider the role of schematic knowledge as a determining factor affecting and influencing language components, especially comprehension. Brown and Yule (1983) define schemata as "*organized background knowledge which leads us to expect or predict aspects in our interpretation of discourse*" (p. 248).

What is more, students seem to lack the knowledge to build the presentation and usually meet difficulties in expressing their ideas. If students do not have enough information about their topics, they cannot manifest their opinions convincingly. Besides, students seldom read books to gain their knowledge, so it is difficult for them to show their thoughts and opinions about new topics and issues.

To sum up, background knowledge is a necessary factor in learning the English language because it helps students make sense of new ideas and experiences. Therefore, background knowledge plays a significant role in oral presentation skills.

2.3.3 Psychology factors

In every learning situation or environment, human psychology plays an important role. Speaking English is a language skill heavily influenced by human psychology. Miles and Huberman (1994) said that psychological factors actually negatively affect the English-speaking activities of students. Although most students think they have good English vocabulary and grammar, they are not safe to speak English.

The psychology factor is the most complicated influence causing many issues in an oral presentation by English of many students such as Anxiety, lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence, shyness and fear of making mistakes. These are causes that delay students when presenting. Ariyanti (2016) saw that there are three psychological factors affecting presentation performance, which are speaking anxiety, motivation and self-esteem. It confines the presenter's ability to accept information and makes students feel anxious when presenting English. Additionally, they always think that they are not good at presentation, so this is the most popular psychological obstacle. Zaremba (2006) wrote, "*public speaking has been ranked as one of the human top fears. People get nervous when they have to present something in front of an audience*".

Moreover, psychological factors include individual-level processes and meanings that influence mental states. Sometimes, these words are combined as "psychosocial." This is a shorthand term for the combination of psychological and social, but it also implies that the effect of social processes is sometimes mediated through psychological understanding (Stansfeld and Rasul, 2007). Examples of psychosocial factors include social support, loneliness, marriage status, social disruption, bereavement, work environment, social status, and social integration.

2.3.3.1 Anxiety

Anxiety plays an important role in students' learning and is also shared by other researchers like Horwitz (1991). Public speaking anxiety is usually associated with fear among different categories of people in any society (Gibson, Gruner, Hanna, Smythe and Hayes, 1980). In addition, according to Daly, Vangelisti, Neel, and Cavanaugh (1989) "*public speaking anxiety represents a cluster of evaluative feelings about speech-making*". Moreover, Spielberger (1983) defines anxiety as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with the arousal of the nervous system". Horwitz and Cope (1986) define foreign language anxiety as "*a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behavior related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process*" (p.128). "...it is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, or worry" (Brown, 2000). Anxiety can be generally associated with "*threats to self-efficacy and appraisals of situations as threatening*" (Pappamihel, 2002).

One of the main difficulties reported facing students in the oral presentation was anxiety or fear of speaking. Research has consistently revealed that anxiety can impede EFL students' production and achievement (Abdul-Kareem and Taqi, 2014). Other studies were concerned with listing the difficulties that students usually face in an oral presentation, such as feeling nervous (Chuang, 2009; Abu El Enein, 2011; Alwi and Sidhu, 2013).

There are several reasons for learners' "anxiety". The first reason is that they fear that they may make mistakes or errors in front of others. One additional cause is that they worry about the evaluation of others; learners want to save their positive image or impression in the mind of their teachers and peers (Tanveer, 2007). Most of the students

do not like to speak English in class. Speaking anxiety is a natural psychological aspect, which contains the feeling of fear, which cannot be controlled in some situations. It often occurs in the process of language learning. People tend to feel anxious whenever they make mistakes, especially in a public situation because it is related to the judgment of many people about their ability in performing the speech. In addition, there will be a possibility of being embarrassed when making mistakes in public or the speech is not understood or not acceptable. Anxiety is a feeling of tension, apprehension and nervousness associated with the situation of learning a foreign language (Horwitz, 2001). Further Nascente writes that, among other affective variables, anxiety stands out as one of the main blocking factors for effective language learning. In other words, anxiety influences students in learning the language. Therefore, paying attention to this factor of learning should also be taken into consideration. The fact that anxiety plays an important role in students' learning is also shared by other researchers like Horwitz (1991). They believed that anxiety about speaking a certain language can affect students' performance. It can influence the quality of oral language production and make individuals appear less fluent than they really are. According to Ur (1996), the inhibition factor makes speaking difficult for second or foreign language students.

Additionally, studies of oral assessment have occasionally noted the potentially inhibiting role of anxiety in affecting students' ability to perform (Joughin, 2007). To investigate the effect of personality traits on performance and specifically, to find out how students' status and familiarity with the English language affect anxiety levels, Elliot and Chong (2004) solicited the opinions of first-year university students in Australia and found that one-third of the sample had a high or very high level of presentation anxiety. Two-thirds of the students believed that their level of anxiety affected their performance. Interestingly, it was found that the level of anxiety was higher for international students. To sum up, anxiety is an important factor affecting the presentation of students although there are different factors that affect students' oral presentation, most of them stem from the anxiety of speaking.

2.3.3.2 Motivation

Motivation is one of the most important factors that influence students in an oral presentation. Motivation has long been identified as one of the main elements affecting English (Gardner, 1985). It is defined as referring to the individual who works or strives to learn a language because of a desire to do it and the satisfaction experienced in this activity (Gardner, 1985, p10). The other definition of motivation by (Keller, 1987), the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid and the degree of effort they exert in that respect. Littlewood (1984) argues, "*motivation is the crucial force which determines whether a learner embarks in a task at all, how much energy he devotes to it, and how long he preserves*". Moreover, Liker (1932) defines that "*an inference which is made on the basis of a complex of beliefs about the attitude object*". In addition, motivation is also Al-Nouh (2014) defined that "It is the goal to promote all actions of people. It keeps the important role of learning language and is a key component in the

study of students. When we do anything, we need the motivation to achieve goals". In addition, Gardner (2006) says, "*students with high levels of motivation will do better than students with lower levels*". Littlewood (1981) says that when learners have the motivation and opportunity to express their own identity and relate with the people around them. This is a factor to develop communication skills, thus, when we want to have a good result, we must have objectives and strategies to achieve (Tanveer 2007). Besides, Stephen (2016) points out that "*strategy has the power to transform passive students into active learners equipped with the tools to promote strategic planning*".

Nonetheless, making an effective oral presentation is not an easy process, and it requires time and effort. It leads us to bring some affective factors to this process and one of these affective factors is motivation. However, lack of motivation still constitutes a serious problem for both teachers and students in presentations in classrooms. Spolsky (1990) states "*motivated are likely to learn more and learn more quickly than students who are less motivated*". Some students keep silent when they are asked to practice on a given topic. This is because of the lack of motivation in expressing himself or herself or the chosen topic they have not anything to say about it. River (1968) said, "*the teacher may have chosen a topic which uncongenial to him or about which he knows very little and as a result, he has nothing to express, whether in the native language or foreign language*". Learners do not have anything to say about a given topic because they have only some ideas or do not know how to use words or correct forms of sentences. Moreover, teachers' negative attitudes toward students and non-supportive classroom environments damage students' willingness towards presentations. Shortage of positive reinforcements, approval and appreciation of students by teachers influences motivation to present negatively.

In conclusion, learners' motivation will determine the success of students. Actually, they can do something well when they feel the pleasure of doing it. Believing in their ability and encouraging themselves are some of the best ways to gain confidence. If they overcome their psychological issues, they are able to make a good presentation.

2.3.3.3 Self-confidence

Self-confidence is one of the most influential variables, which affects learning. It is one of the central drives in human beings and can exercise a determining influence on a person's life, for good or bad. Dörnyei (2005, p.211) stated that the concept of self-confidence is closely related to self-esteem, both share a common emphasis on the individual's perception of his or her abilities as a person.

General self-confidence influences the process of speaking activity because language learning is a complex process that influences cognitive and affective factors, which constitute the main source of individual differences in foreign language learning. Moreover, Bitterlin, et al. (2011) explains that self-confidence is affected by life experiences, such as parents, siblings, friends, and teachers. From them, you learn how to think about yourself and the world around you. It is the support and encouragement you receive from the people around you or the lack of it that helps shape your inner

feelings about yourself. A nurturing environment that provides positive feedback improves self-confidence.

According to Brown and Skehan, as quoted by Al-Hebaish (2012), the affective factor is the emotional side of human behavior and it involves a variety of personality aspects, such as emotion, motivation, attitude, anxiety, personality, and self-confidence. Among these, self-confidence is one of the most influential variables, which affect learning. Students who have general self-confidence will be able to overcome fears or negative thoughts, so they will be easy to communicate with, especially in the oral presentation in front of the class. Brown (2002) defines general self-confidence as how you feel about yourself and your abilities. It tells your overall self-confidence level. Furthermore, the students who are able to communicate fluently and confidently, with a good impact of high self-confidence, can increase their academic achievement in the speaking course because the criteria of the assessment on speaking skills are fulfilled by the students. General self-confidence is essential to students in social life, especially in their academic achievement. Foreign language learners who possess general self-confidence perform well and most likely believe themselves to be capable learners. When there is low self-confidence, on the contrary, learners suffer from uncertainty, insecurity, fear and social distance (Rubio, 2007, p.7).

Students faced several problems in speaking. One of the biggest problems is a lack of confidence. Students are not confident to speak English because of fear of making mistakes. It is a kind of feeling where the students attribute their unwillingness to participate in every class presentation and discussion. They tend to speak the easiest words when speaking. The interference of this feeling could contribute negatively to students' speaking performance or presentation. This negative thought adversely affects the students' ability to take advantage of learning opportunities, affecting students' ability to see themselves as successful learners. It is a complex feeling appraisal concerning the potential and perceived threats inherent in certain situations

According to Leong Lai Mei (2012) *"the common cause of oral presentation difficulties faced by the students was from a psychological perspective. One of the psychological factors that most students face is lack of confidence"*. Based on Awan, Azher, Anwar and Naz's (2010) study, the students were not confident when they were required to conduct an oral presentation because they might feel embarrassed with their broken English due to their low English proficiency. They became very worried about getting low marks in their oral presentation assessments and started to have negative thoughts that affected their level of confidence. Every student tends to compete with one another for better grades (Hassan & Selamat, 2002). This condition is known as *"test anxiety"* (Horwitz and Young, as cited in Joy, 2013, p.2). Likewise, anxiety might stem from a lack of self-confidence, which affects students' overall performance. For example, Al-Hebaish (2012) wanted to investigate the correlation between the self-confidence of Saudi undergraduate female English majors and their academic achievement in the oral presentation course. Findings showed that there is a positive, significant correlation between self-confidence and

achievement in oral presentation tests. Self-confident learners were willing to speak out and take the risks, while learners with low self-confidence try less.

Among the four language skills, the achievement of oral performance is thought to be highly correlated with self-confidence. FL learners cannot speak the language or express themselves freely and fluently without some degree of it (Brown, 1994). Therefore, self-confidence is the most essential factor that determines learners' willingness to participate in oral activities in language classrooms (Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide and Shimizu, 2004). In other words, we can say that where there is self-confidence, there will be good communication. On the other hand, lack of self-confidence is thought to be the most dangerous barrier to effective communication. A number of studies have been carried out on the effects of self-confidence on learners' readiness to participate in classroom communicative activities (Molberg, 2010; Al-Sibai, 2005; Gregersen and Horwitz 2002; Brown, 1994). Some studies claim that no language learning activities will be carried out successfully without it (Huitt, 2004 and Khodadad, 2003). These studies revealed that self-confident learners usually take risks in speaking another language even if they do commit mistakes. They engage in different oral activities regardless of the topic discussed and the number of students in class. They learn from mistakes, work hard and eventually, increase their language proficiency. On the other hand, low confident learners usually look away from the instructor to avoid being called on. They feel uncomfortable when using the language orally because they are concerned about being criticized or disapproved of. As a result, they tend to perform less successfully (Al-sibai, 2004). Likewise, fear of facing the audience and the instructor was reported by most studies as the worst fear of all in oral presentations. To explore college students' attitudes towards oral presentations, Wolfe (2008) found students reporting audience reactions as an unpleasant experience in oral presentations as well as group presentations in which group members do not share the work equally. Wolfe ultimately concluded that fear of public speaking was rated as the worst fear for many students. In addition, students do not feel confident to make English oral presentations. Nunan (1999) said, "*students who lack confidence about themselves and their English necessarily suffer from communication apprehension*".

To sum up, self-confidence is a personal factor that plays a supportive role in the achievement of foreign language learning. It is influenced by many factors. Hence, there is a need for environmental support and more speaking practice in order to gain the students' self-confidence.

2.4 Previous studies

Previously, research on public speaking and anxiety has also been investigated by Scott Campbell and James Larson, who focused on contributing a "*public speaking anxiety: comparing face-to-face and web-based speeches*". The goal of their study was to determine if people experience different levels of anxiety between delivering a speech in the traditional classroom (face-to-face) and a speech delivered to the same audience using web-conferencing technology. A secondary goal of this study was to determine if there is

a need for communication courses to teach both the traditional method of speaking before a live audience and the emerging method of speaking before a web-based audience. The study included approximately 70 students. Participants were placed in groups (Group A and Group B). All students gave the same speech two times. Group A began by giving their speech to an audience face-to-face. Their second speech was delivered to a remote audience through web-based technology. The members of Group B delivered the speech twice, but in reverse order of Group A. Two instruments were used to measure the anxiety levels for the speeches, during the speeches; each student was equipped with a monitor that provides data on the student's heart rate for the duration of the speech. The results of both speeches for each student were compared to determine if there was a different anxiety level between the two speeches. The other instrument used to determine their anxiety level was a survey. The survey asked the students to compare their anxiety levels between the two speeches. The survey results for each student were compared to the heart rate data to see if there were differences between the heart rate data and perceived anxiety level for each speech as indicated. The result of this study showed that there were no significant differences in anxiety between delivering a traditional face-to-face speech and a speech given using web-conferencing technology.

Furthermore, many researchers had some related studies in making an oral presentation as well as difficulties that hindered English-majored students in doing oral presentations. However, the topics are not completely the same and the participants may be from different levels: As such, the thesis "Strategies in facing difficulties in the oral presentation: A case study" by Bram Sivadjati (2016), was carried out to investigate some strategies for dealing with difficulties that students in Santya Wacana University encountered during making oral presentations. The researcher used the qualitative method by using interviews in revealing the student's tactics. The result of this study showed that the participants had challenges such as grammatical problems, having problems understanding the topic and organizing the idea, difficulties in the audience's interest, and speaking speed. As for the strategies to overcome those problems, the participants proposed studying more about grammar, looking for the information on the internet, mastering the topic, adjusting the speed of speaking, practicing, calculating the time, etc.

Besides, a study titled "An investigation into the ability to use grammatical cohesive devices in oral presentations: A case of grade 10 students at Dau Tieng High School" by Dao Thi Thuy Linh (2018) investigated the ability of high school students in grade 10 at Dau Tieng high school to use the means of linking English proposed that students can apply these means of linking effectively and the use of fixed words given by teachers are two grammar in oral presentations. Through this study, a few suggestions for students were the best measures to help students improve their grammar in oral presentations. Furthermore, in a graduation paper titled "A study on how to make an effective presentation for the fourth-year English majors at Haiphong Private University" by Nguyen Huong Thom (2010), the researcher considered that most fourth-year English-majored students at Haiphong Private University still got some difficulties when making

a presentation. This was actually a serious problem affecting graduation and having a future job. The research also found out general difficulties faced by those fourth-year English-majored students and then gave out solutions for these difficulties and tips for an effective presentation.

3. Research methodology

Methodology states the study's method employed in the thesis, including (1) research aims, (2) research questions, (3) hypothesis, (4) research design, (5) participants, (6) instruments comprising the questionnaire and the interview. The last (7) is the procedure.

3.1 Research aims

This research aims to find out the difficulties in the oral presentation of English-majored juniors at Tay Do University. It also helps students raise awareness of their own problems in making an effective oral presentation to get a promotion of study and enhance their English competence.

3.2 Research questions

To find out the difficulties in an oral presentation that English-majored juniors usually meet in making a presentation, the researcher answers the following research questions:

- 1) Do English majored juniors at Tay Do University meet any difficulties in making oral presentations?
- 2) What difficulties do they usually meet in the presentation process?

3.3 Hypothesis

Through the research aim and literature review, it was hypothesized that English-majored juniors at Tay Do University often meet many difficulties when making a presentation.

3.4 Research design

In order to answer the research questions, this survey research was carried out at Tay Do University. Therefore, the participants were English-majored juniors at Tay Do University. The reliability and validity of the research results were based on the instruments. The two tools used to get information about the participants were the questionnaire and the interview. Then, the collected data of these two instruments were analyzed to show "The difficulties in oral presentation of English-majored Juniors of Tay Do University". Besides, the students' report was concluded to give more information about this. This is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research.

3.5 Research participants

There were 90 participants in this study who are English-majored juniors. In fact, they were selected randomly, including both males and females. Their English level was

immediate and they studied in different classes. This research was conducted on 90 juniors majoring in English course 13 at Tay Do University. 30 students came from English 13A, 30 students came from English 13B and 30 students came from English 13C. They were males and females from 18 to 21 years old. They speak Vietnamese as their mother tongue and English is considered their foreign language. In addition, they have learned English for at least 9 years. They came from different places both the countryside and the city. Moreover, all of them practiced an oral presentation with some extensive topics given by their teacher since the first-year students. Besides, some students would be randomly given questionnaires and interviews in order to get information about the aspects.

In addition, five teachers who taught Speaking were invited to take part in the interview, which helped to give their opinions about their students' problems in making a presentation and provide the evidence that made this research more reliable and found out "Oral Presentation Difficulties of English-majored juniors at Tay Do University".

3.6 Instruments

The questionnaire and interview were two helpful instruments in this research. The reason why the researcher used the questionnaire was that it provided a reasonable, quick, and efficient way of obtaining large amounts of information from a large sample of people. However, just one instrument was not dependable for this study. As a result, the interview was utilized as the second instrument. Those instruments were used to find out aspects that were elements affecting the English oral presentations of English-majored juniors at Tay Do University.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

Based on the previous studies about Oral Presentation Difficulties of learners, the questionnaire was designed by the researcher. The aim of using a questionnaire was to find out the difficulties in an oral presentation. Ninety participants took the questionnaire with the guidance of the researcher. The questionnaire comprised 28 questions in total (see appendix A) and was divided into two parts described as follows.

Part 1 consisted of the first 5 questions (numbered from 1 to 5) which investigated the students' background and their opinion related to the oral presentation. In this part, students were required to choose the answer that best suits their opinion. In some cases, they would give their specific answers and choose more than one answer (question 5).

In **Part 2**, there were 23 statements (numbered from 1 to 23) designed in the form of the five-degree Likert-type scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree). Students could circle the number on their answer sheet. Statements 1 and 2 aimed to investigate students' perspectives on presentation and its importance. Statements 3 to 14 demonstrated the difficulties of linguistic factors. Then, the statements from 15 to 18 were employed to get more insights into students' difficulties in background knowledge. Five final statements mentioned the influences of students'

psychology factors. All the information was collected and then analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively.

3.6.2 Interview

For making the study more trustworthy, five English- majored juniors were invited to take the interview with 4 open-ended questions. Five teachers who teach speaking sections who worked with students through skill language courses are interviewed. The semi-structured questions are about: (1) their presentation of frequency, (2) their perception of students' difficulties in oral presentation and (3) their teaching methods to improve their oral presentation skills. The purpose of the interview was to give their opinions about their students' problems in making presentations find out the difficulties affecting the English oral presentations and suggestions to improve them. After the interview, the researcher based on the interview results to analyze the data. The interview results will be recorded carefully. The interview data analysis will be presented with the collected data from the questionnaire in each part.

3.7 Procedure

In this part, the process of carrying out the research was presented. The study lasted about 12 weeks and was divided into 4 steps as listed in the following tab:

Duration	Activities
The first 2 weeks	- Selecting and submitting the topic - Searching for related documents
From the 3 th week to the 6 th week	- Writing a literature review - Designing the instruments of the research
From the 7 th week to the 9 th week	- Delivering questionnaires and interviews to the students and teachers to collect the data
The last 3 weeks	- Analyzing the collected data - Completing the thesis

4. Results and Discussion

Chapter 4 shows the results of the research based on the data collected from the questionnaire and the interview in order to categorize oral presentation difficulties of English-majored juniors at Tay Do University. Then, the discussion will follow to wrap up this chapter.

4.1 Results

This part showed the results of the whole research. The final findings were drawn for analyzing the data that the researcher collected from 90 English-majored juniors mentioned in the previous chapter. The results included 2 sections, namely the results from questionnaires and the results from the interview.

4.1.1 Results from questionnaires

The questionnaires helped the researcher to get a lot of valuable and reliable information from participants. The results from the questionnaires were divided into 2 main parts, including students' background and students' difficulties in making an oral presentation.

4.1.1.1 Students' background

4.1.1.1.1 Students' English learning years

The number of years that students learn English also affects their communication ability. It is obvious that if students spent many years learning English, they would have larger knowledge about vocabulary, grammar as well as background knowledge about society, culture, language, etc. It is very helpful to point out the level and the knowledge in the speaking ability of English-majored juniors by investigating their English learning years. This table will indicate the students' English learning years calculated from this year.

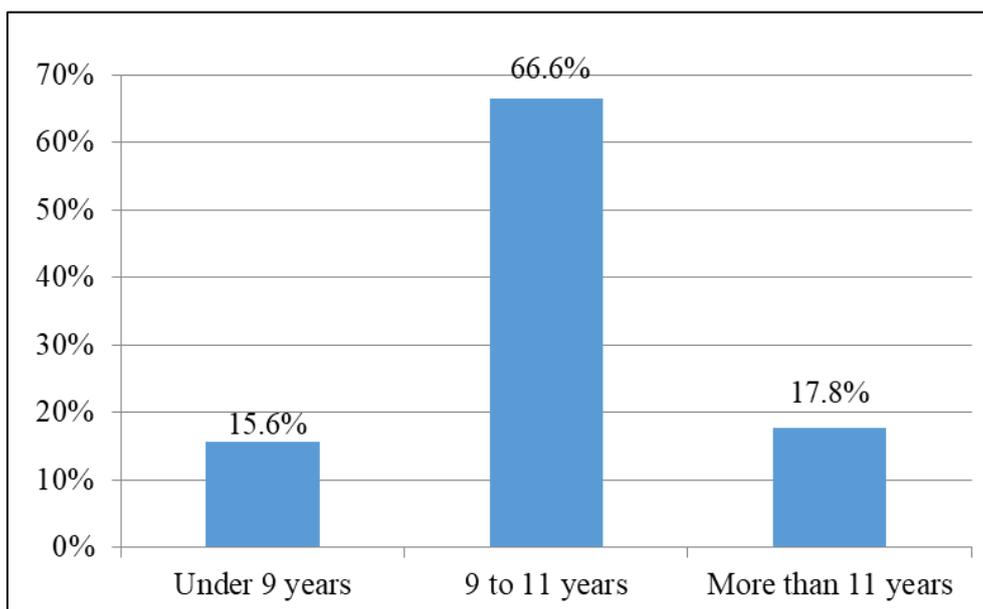


Figure 1: Students' English learning years

According to this figure, the column in the middle represented the highest columns with 60 juniors, who have learned English for 9 to 11 years, it was clear that they started learning English when they were in grade 6. These juniors had almost 11 years of learning English. However, there were also a lot of English-majored students who started learning English in primary school (grade 3 or grade 5) which was the reason why there were a total of 16 English-majored juniors who had more than 11 years. On the other hand, 14 English-majored juniors learned English in less than 9 years of learning this language. It is synonymous with the fact that they just spent three years in high school learning English before entering university. It cannot be denied that students had to study many compulsory subjects along with learning English in their high school time. Then, it caused many problems in learning English because they did not have enough time and environment for practicing, especially speaking and listening skills. In addition,

these two skills are not the center of teaching English at many high schools. Another reason for this was many students met some problems with their old majors then they changed to study English, and thus their times of learning were different. Generally, this may lead to possible difficulties in making English oral presentations found in the questionnaire. Therefore, almost all students cannot develop their communication skills, and there are very few students who have the ability to communicate well in English.

4.1.1.1.2 Students' opinion about the importance of presentation

English is essential to many fields of education. In many countries, students are taught and encouraged to learn English as a second language and so does Vietnam. A good English background is necessary for making an effective English oral presentation, but whether the oral presentation is successful or not, it is based on English-majored students' attitudes towards oral presentation nowadays. Therefore, investigating their attitude towards the importance of oral presentation is very helpful in this study. This is also what question number 2 referred to in the questionnaire.

Figure 2 below shows the results of this question about juniors' opinions about the importance of oral presentation.

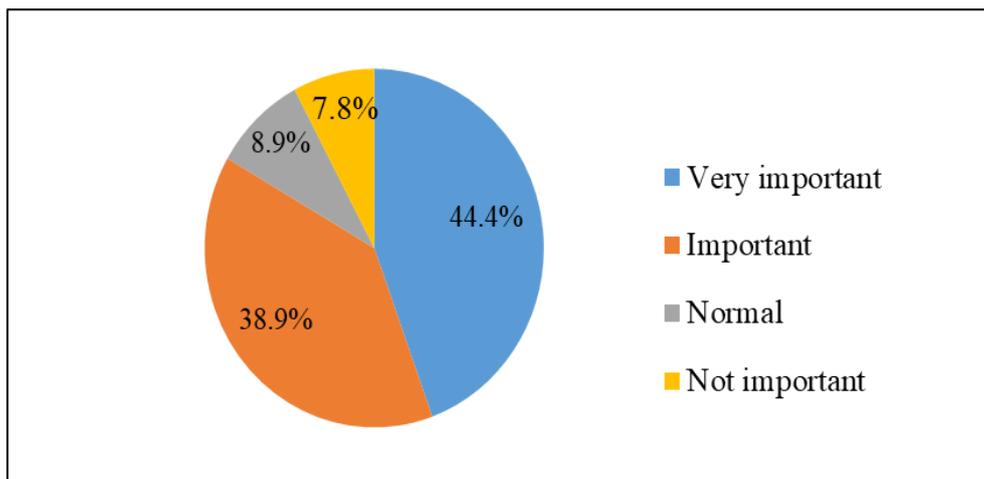


Figure 2: Students' opinion about the importance of presentation

From the findings in Figure 2, there was no doubt about the percentage of students' viewpoints towards oral presentation. First, most of the students admitted that oral presentation was very important to them, with the rate up to 44.4% and 38.9% of them thought that oral presentation was important. This meant that their awareness of improving presentation skills had been raised. With the attraction of foreign investment, students had opportunities to cooperate with foreign partners. In addition, students who reckoned that they liked the oral presentation and thought it was important might be because it helped them practice in the lessons or future, also it gave them a sense of excitement. Besides, very few students felt normal about their presentation (8.9%). In Particular, only 7.8% of the juniors considered that oral presentation is not important.

They felt uninterested in this because it may take them a lot of time to make an oral presentation.

It could be concluded that nearly all students agreed with the importance of oral presentation, although there were a few students who thought otherwise. Besides the students' attitude towards the importance of oral presentation, question number 2 is also important, it mentioned whether the students have a positive attitude about an oral presentation or not.

4.1.1.1.3 Students' frequency of making a presentation at the university

In recent years, there has been growing interest in using presentation as a form of assessment in the processes of teaching and learning. It is a great opportunity for students to perform their speaking ability in public. This table will indicate the students' frequency of making a presentation at the university.

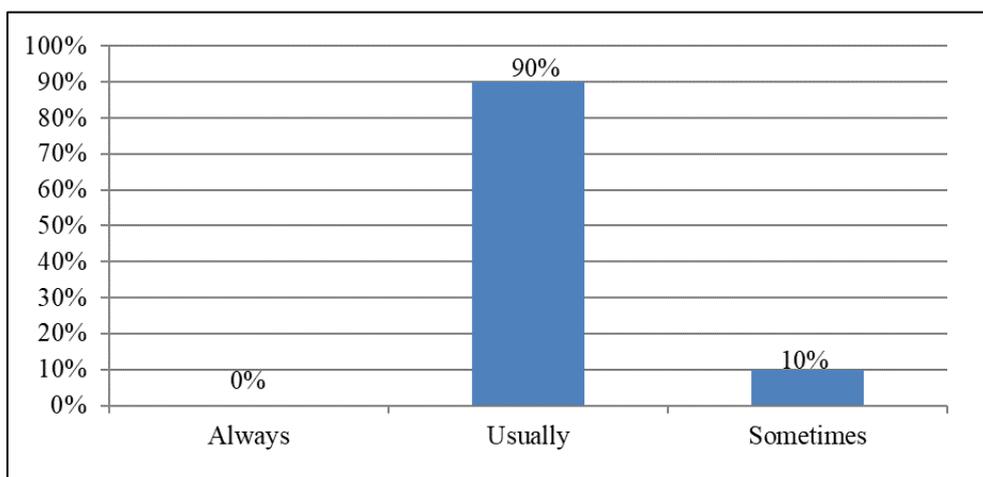


Figure 3: Students' frequency of making a presentation at the university

In Figure 3, 90% of respondents (81/90) confirmed that they usually made a presentation at the university. It was a remarkable success as the presentation was viewed as a form of assessing students' speaking ability in higher education. That was the reason why many teachers asked their students to present a topic in class. However, 10% confirmed that they sometimes made a presentation. The results of this question might be because they are often absent from school and they only make a presentation once a month.

4.1.1.1.4. Students' self-evaluation of presentation skills

Aside from receiving precious feedback from teachers, it is essential to find out how students evaluate their own presentation skills. Through self-evaluation, students can realize how skillful they are and plan a better strategy to improve their skills. Figure 4 displays students' self-evaluation of their presentation skills.

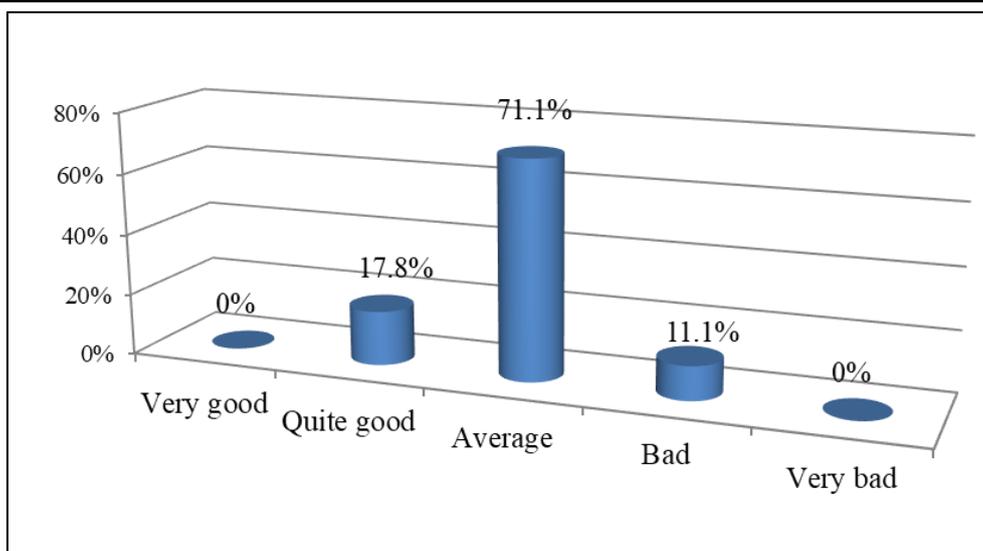


Figure 4: Students' self-evaluation on presentation skills

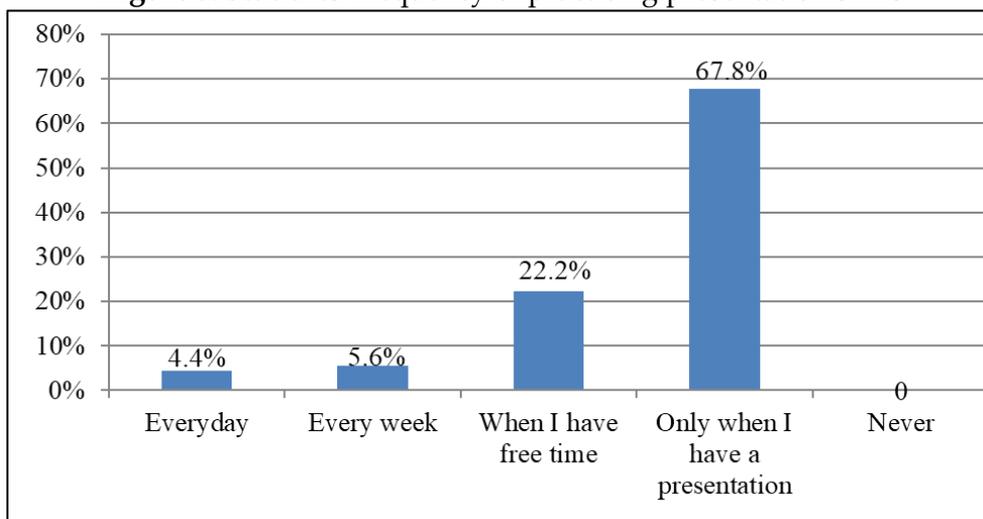
When being asked how their presentation skills were 71.1% of them responded that their presentation skills were just average, this may be what they felt about their ability. However, there were quite a few students who chose the answer "Quite good" at these skills. The percentage of juniors in the question also occupied very little, only 17.8% of them said they are quite good and 0% of them thought that they were very good. Moreover, 11.1% of students admitted that they were bad at making a presentation. Presently, students with lower levels feel it is hard for them to do a presentation; this anxiety causes many mistakes that lead their ability down. In return, they were lucky that no one chose the "Very bad" level. This was reliable evidence providing that juniors majoring in English had some difficulties in making a presentation. Generally, the juniors are not quite confident about their ability

Consequently, they had to improve these skills as soon as possible because they would graduate soon and good presentation skills would bring them better opportunities in their careers.

4.1.1.1.5 Students' frequency of practicing presentation skills

It can be said that practice time is an essential element to make an effective oral presentation. To find out the time that students should spend doing an oral presentation, question number 4 mentioned this. According to the results from Figure 5, we can see how many times students spent practicing oral presentation in a day.

Figure 5: Students' frequency of practicing presentation skills



Clearly, 67.8% of juniors only practice when they have a presentation. There were 22.2% of juniors who only spent practicing when they had free time, while the number of juniors who spent time in practice every day and every week was much less with 4.4% and 5.6% of them. From the statistical data, it could be found that students seemed to consider seriously practicing these skills. However, it was not enough for them to actually improve presentation skills, as it required much effort, practice regularly and perseverance in the long term. Therefore, it could be the reason why they still made mistakes when delivering a speech.

4.1.1.1.6. Students' self-evaluation on difficulties in making an oral presentation

The last aspect for students to evaluate themselves is how they feel which is the most difficult in making oral presentations.

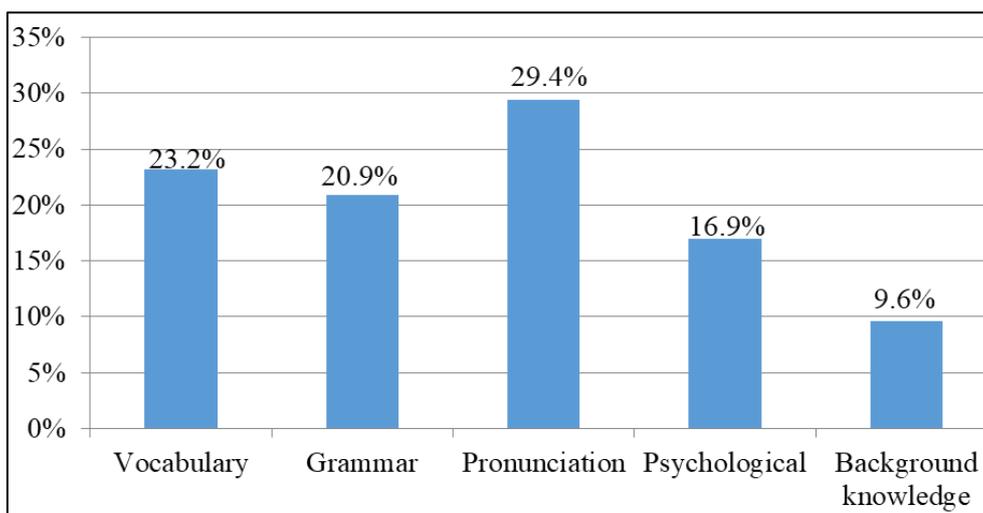


Figure 6: Students' self-evaluation on difficulties in making oral presentation

In Figure 6, we can see most of the juniors believed that vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation were the most difficult they had to face to make a good presentation, namely 23.2%, 20.9% and 29.4% to them, it might be the most important factor of an oral presentation. Besides, there was a small difference between psychological and background knowledge that was the most difficult for them. Only 16.9% and 9.6% of them chose this as their thoughts because it made it hard to do a presentation.

To sum up, from the statistical data in the questionnaire, it could be found that students seemed to realize the importance of oral presentation as well as their interest in making it. Besides students who are good at oral presentation, there are also many students who are bad at this. Generally, they also encountered many difficulties in making an oral presentation.

4.1.1.2 Student's attitudes and opinions towards presentation

This was the students' second time confirming their recognition of the presentation. If they had a special interest in this activity, they could make a good presentation to deliver to the public. This part includes four statements and the table below displays students' general options for presentation:

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1. You are interested in learning English.	56%	39%	6%	0%	0%
2. Oral presentations are one of the necessary skills in studying English	33%	62%	4%	0%	0%
3. You have faced difficulties when making a presentation	40%	57%	3%	0%	0%

Table 1: Students' general options for presentation

As illustrated above, Table 1 embraced three statements in total that indicated the students' general options about presentation. To begin with, let's take a close look at statement 1. Over 90% of students consisting of 56% strongly agreed and 39% agreed with the statement, the residual with 6% neutral. No one chose "disagree" and "strong disagreement". Hence, it concluded that English-majored juniors were motivated in learning English due to their interests.

In statement 2, nearly 100% of participants recognized the importance of presentation in studying and working (33% totally agreed and 62% agreed). None of them selected "disagree" and "strongly disagree" while only 4% of them chose neutral. In the third statement, the percentage of participants who consented to the fact that they have faced difficulties when making a presentation was up to 97% including 40% strongly agreed and 57% agreed. There were only 3% of them who chose "Neutral". No one chose "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree". Based on these three statements, it could be pointed

out that students met difficulties in making a presentation although most of them had great recognition and a special interest in this activity.

4.1.1.3 Student's difficulties in making an oral presentation

This section was unbelievably significant to the research since it was conducted in an effort to get more insights into the students' difficulties in making an oral presentation. In addition, this section was categorized into 3 small parts, corresponding to 3 prevalent elements stated in chapter 2 linguistic factors, background knowledge and psychological factors.

4.1.1.3.1. Linguistic factors

- **Vocabulary**

In terms of vocabulary, in this group, there are 5 statements from statements number 4 to number 8 that relate to difficulties that students can meet in making an oral presentation.

Table 2: English-majored juniors' difficulties in vocabulary

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
4. Vocabulary is necessary for presentations.	39%	53%	8%	0%	0%
5. You cannot remember the exact meanings of words and multiple meaning words.	28%	58%	11%	3%	0%
6. You do not have enough vocabulary to express ideas, thoughts and emotion.	34%	53%	9%	3%	0%
7. You repeat the words because you lack vocabulary.	30%	54%	16%	0%	0%
8. You do not apply the right vocabulary in a different context.	44%	48%	7%	1%	0%

From statement 4, it was obvious that vocabulary is necessary for presentations as 39% of students strongly agreed and 53% of them agreed with this statement. None of them selected "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree" while only 8% selected "Neutral". Statement 5 dealt with the fact that students cannot remember the exact meaning of the word and multiple-meaning words. The percentage of participants who consented was up to 86% including 28% strongly agreed and 58% agreed. 11% of students chose "Neutral" while 3% of them selected "Disagree".

In statements 6, 7 and 8, the students may often meet difficulties when using vocabulary in their presentation. It shows clearly in the column "Agree" with 53%, 54% and 48%, the results of lack of vocabulary to express ideas and lack of words to apply the right vocabulary in the different contexts.

In conclusion, it could be predicted that vocabulary was an obstacle for students in making a presentation.

- **Pronunciation**

Pronunciation is indispensable in delivering a speech as it directly affects the whole performance. This table including 3 statements will show the results:

Table 3: English-majored juniors' difficulties in pronunciation

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
9. You mispronounce the word.	43%	48%	6%	3%	0%
10. You place stress on the wrong syllables.	21%	53%	23%	1%	0%
11. Intonation is one of the obstacles in making a presentation.	31%	52%	13%	3%	0%

Participants' ideas about their pronunciation through the results in statement 9, a very large majority of respondents concurred with this statement including 43% strongly agreed and 48% agreed. Only 6% gave the neutrality and 3% chose "disagree" for their response. They believed that they mispronounced the word. It means their pronunciation was not good for delivering a speech.

In statement 10, more than 70% of students felt that they place stress on the wrong syllables (21% strongly agreed and 53% agreed). While only 1% of the participants had the opposite thought and 23% did not give any ideas. Thus, they also had problems with pronunciation.

In the next statement for pronunciation, the statement theorizes that intonation is one of the obstacles in making a presentation. There were 52% choosing "agree" and 31% choosing "strongly agree". While only 3% of the participants had the opposite thought and 13% did not give any ideas. None of them selected the "strongly disagree" scale.

To sum up, the results of these statements proved that pronunciation was a great difficulty for the students when they had to speak in public.

- **Grammar**

Grammar also has remarkable effects on presentation on communication skills which were discussed before. And it will be analyzed more obviously in the following:

Table 4: English-majored juniors' difficulties in grammar

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
12. You usually make grammatical mistakes in your presentation.	23%	46%	20%	11%	0%
13. You often have difficulties with word order.	18%	44%	22%	16%	0%
14. You also meet trouble choosing appropriate grammar structures in the presentation.	18%	54%	19%	9%	0%

The first statement in this table stated that students made grammatical mistakes in their presentations. The percentage of respondents who occurred was nearly three-fourths (46% Agreed and 23% strongly agreed). Only 11% of them disagreed and 20% of them chose "Neutral".

For statement 13, there were 62% of students admitted that often have difficulties with word order. This statement also got 18% of participants who strongly agreed and 44% of them agreed. On the other hand, the respondents who had the opposite thought were 16% and those who did not give any idea were 22%.

For statement 14, nearly half of them believed that they also met trouble in choosing appropriate grammar structures in the presentation with 54% respectively for the column "Agree". On the other hand, nearly no one of them ever met linguistic factors, the last column, "Strongly disagree" shows that the percentage is very small, almost all are 0%. Therefore, we can see that English-majored juniors sometimes met difficulties in linguistics, but not too often when making an oral presentation.

Generally, it could be concluded that students still lacked the knowledge of grammar to make a good presentation and they really met difficulties in linguistic factors such as vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, and pronunciation.

4.1.1.3.2 Background knowledge

Another factor that students considered as difficult in making an oral presentation is background. It is very necessary for students to make a presentation as it helps them manifest their opinions convincingly. The following table consisting of four statements will indicate the results of this part:

Table 5: English-majored juniors' difficulties in background knowledge

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
15. Background knowledge plays a significant role in oral presentation skills.	28%	60%	12%	0%	0%
16. You meet difficulty showing your opinion on unfamiliar topic	23%	59%	18%	0%	0%
17. You cannot make a presentation well because of poor background knowledge.	26%	47%	26%	2%	0%
18. You meet difficulties in expressing your ideas in your oral presentation.	24%	52%	22%	1%	0%

According to the table, it can be seen that no one objected to these ideas, just only 2% chose "Disagree" for these statements. For statement 15, "Background knowledge plays a significant role in oral presentation skill", almost all students believed that it was true (60% chose "agree" and 28% chose "strongly agree"). And 12% of responders were in the middle.

Next, students had difficulty showing their opinions on an unfamiliar topic. 23% of students responded that they strongly agreed and 59% of them agreed with this statement. About 18% had no idea.

Moreover, statement 17 claimed that they could not make a presentation well because of poor background knowledge. It also received a large number of participants' agreement including 47% falling into "agree" and more than a quarter was in "strongly agree" (26%). The others who chose "neutral" accounted for 26%.

The last one stated that students met difficulties in expressing their ideas in their oral presentations. And most of the participants have proved that the statement is true by the agreement rate of students (52% of the students agreed and 24% strongly agreed) and only 1% disagreed with it. Besides, 22% of them had no idea.

Generally, most of the participants agreed that background knowledge was one of the factors affecting their presentation skills.

4.1.1.3.3 Psychological factors

It was believed that the psychology of the presenters was also a factor that affected their presentation skills. The data were shown in the table below:

Table 6: English-majored juniors' difficulties in psychological factors

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
19. Psychology factor plays an important role in oral presentation.	31%	54%	14%	0%	0%
20. You feel anxiety or fear of speaking in front of other people.	38%	41%	21%	0%	0%
21. You are embarrassed when making mistakes in public.	26%	51%	21%	2%	0%
22. You have a lack of motivation in presentations in classrooms.	11%	56%	22%	11%	0%
23. You don't feel confident making English oral presentations.	49%	39%	9%	3%	0%

From statement 19, it was obvious that the Psychology factor plays an important role in oral presentation as 54% of students agreed and 31% of them strongly agreed with this statement. None of them selected "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree" while only 14% of them selected "Neutral".

According to Table 6, statements 21 mentioned students' problems of embarrassment when making mistakes in public. The juniors who very often had trouble with it occupy 51% in column "Agree".

In addition, lack of motivation also made students unable to give an effective presentation, the results show quite equally in statement 22. The percentage was 56% in the column "Agree" for this statement. They frequently met this difficulty; it made them become passive and have no idea about the topics.

The last statement mentioned the confidence of students in their presentation skills. More than 80% of participants including 49% "strongly agree" and 39% of "agree" were lacking confidence in their presentation skills while 9% of them had no idea. Only 3% of students disagreed with this statement, which implied that they were self-assured about their performance. Therefore, juniors met difficulties with motivation, confidence and anxiety.

4.1.2 Results of the interviews

4.1.2.1 Interview for students

After the questionnaire was conducted, fifteen students from the participants (fifteen English majored juniors) were invited to take the interview. After the interview had been analyzed, it was seen that most of the students met difficulties in an oral presentation. All of the respondents also gave their points of view about factors that affect them the most in the process of learning English.

Question 1: Do you like presenting in English? Why?

From the student responses, most of the participants gave the answer “Yes”, even they showed their answer that “Yes, I really like presenting in English because it helps me be more confident in communication. In addition, they answer that “Yes, I like presenting in English because my speaking skill is also improved thanks to the presentation”. Moreover, some interviewees affirmed that they had a special interest in presenting in English, so it gave them opportunities to improve their speaking skills effectively and communicate with foreigners confidently. Besides, there were two students who said that they do not like presenting in English because they lack confidence.

Question 2: What do you think about the role of oral presentation in real life?

For this question, all of the interviewees confirmed that the presentation was very important as it was a chance for them to express their ideas and messages to others. Some students also shared that practicing presentation skills regularly also helped them become more and more confident when they had to speak in front of many people.

Question 3: What are your difficulties in making an oral presentation?

After answering question 2, students were asked the next question, “what are your difficulties in making an oral presentation?” Similarly, 15 of them agreed that they saw many difficulties that made it hard for doing an oral presentation. Moreover, they did not deny that their problems were lack of confidence, topic choices and linguistic factors. They considered that they find it hard to remember a lot of vocabulary, especially the synonyms, the expression skill and forgetting content when giving presentations were also the weaknesses. It is easy to see that these difficulties might give them bad results after presenting and they did not really fix them.

Question 4: What should you do to improve your presentation skill?

The interviews were continued by question 4. In this question, half of the juniors admitted “I will carefully prepare my oral presentation, become more confident, and use body language to communicate well with the audience” or “I think we should improve grammar, vocabulary and background knowledge. In addition, we should spend time learning body language and practice it”; moreover, other juniors wanted that they would focus on the topic, the content to pay the audience’s attention. Furthermore, it is necessary to meet teachers to receive comments so that they can organize a good presentation. In addition, gaining experience from predecessors also makes their background better.

4.1.2.2 Interview for teachers

Aside from the results of the students’ interviews, the researchers also analyzed the findings of the teachers’ interviews with three teachers who taught the students' language skills and academic subjects.

Two teachers confirmed that they often asked their students to present in class at least once or twice a month depending on the requirement of the subject while the other one only requested them to answer the questions with an explanation.

Next, when being asked about the difficulties that their students usually met in making a presentation, the teachers said that the students faced some difficulties such as poor speaking ability, limited linguistic knowledge, not having the strategy to create an interesting presentation, and the lack of confidence

Finally, one teacher advised their students that practice made perfect. They needed to practice preparing the speech as well as practice speaking in front of the audience regularly. The second teacher said that it was necessary to help the students realize the importance of presentation and instruct them on all steps and tips for a good speech. The last one suggested the students watching videos of TEDx talks of professional speakers and reading books and relevant materials.

4.2 Discussion

The aims of this study were to investigate the presentation difficulties of English- majored juniors at Tay Do University. Besides, the correction and possible ways to improve their presentation skills are also presented. Based on the data collected from the questionnaire, the interviews. It was shown that their problems were related to vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, background knowledge and psychological factors.

The first students' problem in making a presentation is linguistic knowledge including vocabulary, grammar structures, and pronunciation. First of all, vocabulary was an obstacle for students in making a presentation. They do not have enough vocabulary to express ideas, thoughts and emotions. Moreover, they cannot remember the exact meaning of the word and the multiple meanings of words. Besides, most of the students did not have good knowledge of grammar, so they could not choose appropriate grammar structures to use in the presentation and made grammatical mistakes while presenting. Also, many students admitted that intonation is one of the obstacles in making the presentation and they place stress on the wrong syllables. Therefore, they should gain their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar as well as practice their pronunciation regularly to make their speech better.

The second factor was students' background knowledge which determined if the presentation was convincing or not. A lot of participants have agreed that background knowledge plays a significant role in oral presentation skills. However, some students could not make a presentation well because of poor background knowledge. They met difficulty showing their opinion on unfamiliar topics. It can be concluded that background knowledge had a certain influence on participants' presentation skills.

Finally, psychological obstacles are the biggest problem that many students meet in the process of delivering a speech. Indeed, a majority of students could not speak well in front of an audience because they were embarrassed when making mistakes in public, and they have a lack of motivation in presentations in classrooms. That was the reason why they were usually nervous when presenting and afraid of being laughed at by

people when making mistakes. Therefore, it was concluded that psychological factors affected students' presentation skills.

5. Conclusions, Implications, Limitations and Recommendations

Chapter 5 mentions the conclusions, implications, and limitations and gives some recommendations for further research.

5.1 Conclusion

English is a language that many people around the world use to communicate with others, so learning English becomes a great interest for many students. In reality, to practice the way to communicate in English effectively, one of the best methods is making and delivering a presentation in class. English-majored juniors at Tay Do University believed that public speaking was necessary because it would help them much in learning English as well as improving speaking skills. However, during the process of making and delivering a presentation, they encountered many difficulties, which prevented them from achieving success.

After analyzing the important information from juniors at Tay Do University, the researcher finally found out that there were factors affecting in making an oral presentation. Those factors were linguistic factors, background knowledge and psychological factors. Thanks to precious information from the questionnaire and the interviews, the researcher could make a conclusion that students' problems were mostly from psychological factors and linguistic knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation). Therefore, they have to make an effort to overcome their problems. They should spend more time practicing presentation skills, gaining knowledge of linguistics and different fields in society, and boosting their self-confidence. In general, investigating the problems in making a presentation was a useful way to help English-majored juniors realize their weaknesses in public speaking. From these mentioned problems, they could propose appropriate resolutions for their positive improvement.

5.2 Implications

The analyzed results from the questionnaire and the interviews showed that most of the participants of this study recognized the vital role of presentation in studying and working. Additionally, English-majored juniors had the awareness of their difficulties in making and delivering a presentation. The findings of the research revealed that students had many problems in a presentation related to linguistics (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation), background knowledge, and psychological factors. The researcher hopes the students realize their weak points so that they can find proper resolutions and suitable learning methods to improve their skills in public speaking and become good speakers. Furthermore, this study is also useful for teachers who want to know the difficulties that their students usually meet. Consequently, they can offer their students

some advice and solutions that help them overcome the mentioned obstacles and improve their necessary skills in the presentation.

5.3 Limitations

Although making this thesis was a valuable chance for the researcher and it was supported enthusiastically by the supervisor, family and friends, there are still some unavoidable restrictions. Firstly, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult about time and delayed the research's progress. Next, the number of participants who joined the research was limited, to just 90 English major juniors, therefore the outcomes of the research might not be as reliable as expected. However, the researcher strongly hopes that the study, in its scope, would be useful to the English-majored juniors at Tay Do University as reference material for motivation as well as the readers who are interested in finding out about motivation in learning English.

5.4 Recommendations for further research

Based on the limitations presented above, it is recommended that further research would be investigated on a larger scale so that the results could be more persuasive, practical and trustworthy. In fact, the researcher could choose not only English-majored juniors, but also sophomores, freshmen, or even seniors because an oral presentation is an indispensable aspect to all of them.

In addition, the researcher completed the study by investigating the factors affecting oral presentation like linguistic factors, background knowledge and psychological factors. Hopefully, in the near future, there should be more research papers that might contribute by finding more useful methods and techniques to improve their oral presentation skill.

Conflicts of interest statement

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

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Appendix A: Questionnaire for Students

My name is Nguyen Thi Ngoc Chan and I am currently a senior of English at Tay Do University. I am conducting the research entitled *“The difficulties in oral presentation of English majored Juniors at Tay Do University”*. I will sincerely appreciate if you can take a few minutes to answer the following questions by circling the most appropriate answers. The data collected will be very important and useful to my research papers. Your personal information will be kept secretly. Thank you for your cooperation.

a. Personal Background

Full name (optional):

Gender:

Male

Female

Age:

How long have you studied English?years

Part 1: Please read the following questions carefully and choose the appropriate answer(s) for each question. Give specific answers if needed.

1. How often do you make oral presentation in university?

- a) Always;
- b) Usually;
- c) Sometimes;
- d) Seldom
- e) Never

2. How is the important of oral presentation to you?

- a) Very important
- b) Important
- c) Normal
- d) Not important
- e) Not important at all

3. How do you evaluate your oral presentation skill?

- a) Very good
- b) Quite good
- c) Average
- d) Bad
- e) Very bad

4. How often do you practice your oral presentation skill?

- a) Everyday
- b) Every week
- c) When I have free time
- d) Only when I have a presentation
- e) Never

5. Which difficulties you meet when you giving presentation? (You can choose more one option)

- a) Vocabulary
- b) Grammar
- c) Pronunciation
- d) Psychological
- e) Background knowledge

Others question:

.....

Part 2: Please Circle the number 5,4,3,2 or 1 on your answer sheet to indicate the level to each of the following sentences

Statements	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1. You are interested in learning English.	5	4	3	2	1
2.Oral presentations is one of the necessary skills in studying English.	5	4	3	2	1
3.You have faced difficulties when making a presentation.	5	4	3	2	1
4. Vocabulary is necessary for presentations.	5	4	3	2	1
5. You cannot remember the exact meaning of word and a multiple meaning words.	5	4	3	2	1
6. You do not have enough vocabulary to express ideas, thoughts and emotion.	5	4	3	2	1
7. You repeat the words because you lack of vocabulary.	5	4	3	2	1
8. You do not apply the right vocabulary in the different context.	5	4	3	2	1
9. You mispronounce the word.	5	4	3	2	1
10. You place stress on the wrong syllables.	5	4	3	2	1
11. Intonation is one of obstacles in making presentation.	5	4	3	2	1

12. You usually make grammatical mistakes in your presentation.	5	4	3	2	1
13. You often have difficulties with word order.	5	4	3	2	1
14. You also meet trouble in choosing appropriate grammar structures in the presentation.	5	4	3	2	1
15. Background knowledge plays a significant role in oral presentation skill.	5	4	3	2	1
16. You meet difficulty to show your opinion with unfamiliar topic.	5	4	3	2	1
17. You cannot make a presentation well because of poor background knowledge.	5	4	3	2	1
18. You meet difficulties in expressing your ideas in your oral presentation.	5	4	3	2	1
19. Psychology factor plays an important role in in oral presentation.	5	4	3	2	1
20. You feel anxiety or fear of speaking in front of other people	5	4	3	2	1
21. You are embarrassed when making mistakes in the public.	5	4	3	2	1
22. You have a lack of motivation in presentations in classrooms.	5	4	3	2	1
23. You don't feel confidence to make English oral presentations.	5	4	3	2	1

Thank You for Your Kind Support!

Appendix B: Interview for Students

Dear friends,

I am Nguyen Thi Ngoc Chan, English majored senior of English at Tay Do University. This interview is one of my instruments for the research named *“The difficulties in oral presentation of English majored Juniors at Tay Do University”*. I will be very much appreciating if you can take your precious time to answer these following questions. The data collected will be very necessary and useful to my study. Your personal information will be kept confidential. Thank you for your cooperation.

a. Personal Background

Full name :

Gender:

Male

Female

Age:

1. Do you like presenting in English? Why?

.....
.....

2. What do you think about the role of oral presentation in real life?

.....
.....

3. What are your difficulties in making oral presentation?

.....
.....

4. What should you do to improve your presentation skill?

.....
.....

Thank You for Your Nice Support!

Appendix C: Interview for Teachers

Dear teachers,

I am Nguyen Thi Ngoc Chan, English majored senior of English at Tay Do University. This interview is one of my instruments for the research named *“The difficulties in oral presentation of English majored Juniors at Tay Do University”*. I will be very much appreciating if you can take your precious time to answer these following questions. The data collected will be very necessary and useful to my study. Your personal information will be kept confidential. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. How often do you ask your students to make a presentation in class?

.....
.....

2. What difficulties do your students usually meet in making a presentation?

.....
.....

3. What are your suggestions to help your students improve their oral presentation skill?

.....
.....

Thank You for Your Kind Support!

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