

## **Difficulties and Some Solutions Suggest Learning English for Students of English Language Department, Sai Gon University**



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**ABSTRACT:** English is a second language to become inseparable and compulsory in every college and university today. To learn a second language, a physical, intellectual and emotional involvement is needed to successfully send and interpret linguistic messages. However, compelling student not majoring in English to lean English as a subject while their jobs-to-be does not need English at all is a prominent reality. The students are forced to study in a stressful condition, therefore they always feel nervous and bored and the results reflects everything. This reality won't exclude the studying environment in the Preschool Education Faculty in Sai Gon University.

In this study, our objective is to investigate the handicap in English studying performance of students in the Preschool Education Faculty in Sai Gon University by pointing out the difficulties presented in the research as well as drawing solutions to fix these problems. We also propose some utilitarian references for related researchers especially aiming at students with low level. We select participating students randomly from among the students of the faculty of Preschool Education in the Saigon University to complete the questionnaire consisting of 10 questions. The students selected are seniors in order to narrow down the field studied. Results indicated that students find difficulties in learning English because of their low level and since English is a compulsory subject, they are forced to study, consequently their performance is bad. Also, the results revealed that their teaching career in the future won't need English, as a result, they are not interested and do not have motivation to study English. These results implicate that academic teachers should build an interesting classtime accompanying with good teaching method. Teachers' attitude should be friendly so that students are able to immerse and absorb in an interesting class and they will advance in just a blink.

**KEYWORDS:** Deficits in English learning of students from the Faculty of Early Childhood Education.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Perhaps there is no need to mention too much about the influence and value of the English language in society. Learning English is like holding a trump card that you believe you will beat every opponent. And that is also the key to opening the door to your dream future. As you probably know, most of the graduate students are unemployed or working against the profession. So in your opinion, the cause is where? Not because of poor professional knowledge and little experience, but because of inability to English

With the trend of globalization today, English has shown its importance on the way to the world, especially for pedagogical students. English helps students have the opportunity to expose to international knowledge, reading foreign language books. There are over 1 billion websites in English. Just learning a foreign language is able to exploit most of that knowledge base. The most popular software in the world. The most popular social networks. The most abundant portal. All are written in English! The same goes for television and newspapers, international channels like CNN and BBC. In addition, it also opens up opportunities to study and exchange abroad. You can look for study abroad scholarships as well as student exchange programs. Another important factor, English helps you get high job opportunities. Facing each individual are candidates who are good at English, employers will feel extremely excited and will have ideas to bring out your best in relevant international activities and events. (Abbas, 2016)

However, learning English is facing many difficulties. Most people are very weak in vocabulary. The problem that people

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have in learning English vocabulary is that they learn new words, but they tend to forget what they have learned quite soon after they have just learned them. One more complaints when learning a new language is inability to communicate successfully. Whether it's a problem with low stress, or not knowing the vocabulary or grammar to create a good conversation, many people struggle with poor speaking skills. Not being able to have interaction with native English speakers can be a great hindrance on one who is learning English. Most people lose grammar basics so their writing skills are quite poor. They misspell, misspell or even use inappropriate words. (Abubakar, 2015)

Especially, students of the Faculty of Kindergarten at Saigon University are also facing many difficulties in learning English. Most of the students from other provinces do not have conditions to contact English. Students lose English basics right from high school, so it is difficult to correct pronunciation and grammar. The majority of students have narrow economic circumstances, so they cannot afford to invest in learning English.

Realizing the importance of English and the real situation of English learning among students of the Saigon University's preschool education department, our group decided to choose "Difficulties and some suggested solutions in learning english of the students at preschool education faculty in Sai Gon University" as a subject research topic.

In recent years, there has been a dramatic proliferation of research concerned with students facing difficulties in learning English. English Skills for University by Terry Phillips and Anna Phillips (1988) aimed to ensure that students gained confidence in using a limited set of lexical items as they work through the unit, rather than constantly having to cope with new words. Remnaldi, A., Stefani, R. P., & Gulo, I. (2016) investigated the Phonological difficulties faced by students in learning english. Besides, from Brown's book (2000), the author introduced a number of basic principles of English learning, for students and suggest a more nuanced and flexible model of the linguistics student. One more work from Rod and Shanon (2005) discussed addresses the areas of overlap between the struggles of ESL students and students with learning disabilities, where teachers might identify these overlaps, and how these observations can be recorded. Abbas, P. G., & Narjes, B. S. (2016) studied on learners' listening comprehension difficulties in English Language Learning. Banks (2008).

Examined FL difficulties as well as effective strategies that others had used to conquer these challenges. Research indicated that LD students and at-risk students both had FL learning difficulties, due to deficiencies in their native languages. Feyfant, A., Gausssel. M. (2007) focused on reading methods and learning difficulties. Besides, Evans, Morrison (2012) identified and proposed a way to understand the language-related challenges confronting both categories of student when studying academic subjects in English. One more work, the study of Liao, P., & Chiang, M. (2015) obtained an overview of college students' learning strategies in developing English speaking skill. Research conducted by Singh, S. (2016) examined the developing speaking skill in english through activity based learning. Article by Banu (2017) analyzed the causes that make the students difficult to communicate in English and suggested some solutions that can overcome the difficulties. In this background, descriptive nature of this present paper highlights the difficulties faced by college student in speaking English –a sociological reflection. Afzal (2019) investigated the problems faced by English majors in learning the vocabulary at Prince Stattam bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU). It also put forward some vocabulary-learning strategies to minimize the potential problems.

It can be seen that the research papers have invested a lot in studying the current situation of learning English, finding out the difficulties and solutions to learn English well for students.

The above studies have been very successful when discussing the difficulties that students face. Those difficulties come from learning vocabulary, grammar as well as the occasional use of English. Most of the poor English learners have difficulties practicing English speaking, even misspellings. Coupled with the fact that English is not the native language of many countries, using it is very difficult for them.

Research projects also offer many good English learning methods as well as teaching English for many students not teaching English in the future but having to learn English. English learners need daily practice, listening to English regularly as well as practicing with native speakers. To learn English well, you have to learn many English words and practice writing lots of English. Teachers should also refine their English teaching methods. (Alqahtani, Vol. 4, No. 3, 2019)

However, research papers are limited to a few specific subjects and specific scope. It has not studied the reality of learning

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English of students in the preschool education department of Saigon university. Besides, it has not given specific solutions to the difficulties faced by preschool education students. So the problem here is that we need to know what are the difficulties students in the preschool education department of Saigon university? At the same time, what solutions are there to overcome those difficulties?

Learning and improving foreign language skills, especially English is extremely necessary for students because this subject is included in all study programs and is a compulsory condition for students in college and university schools. We would like to sort the purposes of this present study by various categories. Firstly, glimpsing at the reality of learning English of the future teachers who won't teach English to understand what occurs. Since English is a compulsory subject at Preschool Education Faculty in Saigon University, students have to study stressfully and nervously just to pass the final exams.

In addition, another objective is to help students avoid the difficulties presented in this research, and at the same time suggest solutions to them. Furthermore, we aim to provide useful reference materials for any interested researcher, especially lower-level students to hone their knowledge.

This research could be useful to students in realizing the importance of learning English, so that changing their method of learning English to improve their studying as well. There is a fact that nowadays, not only students but also teachers also want to change teaching methods and content to bring the best results. In fact, to learn English effectively does not only need a right method, but also a right guide. Besides, our research helps teachers find the most effective method to impart students to have a more positive outlooks on learning English as well as the curriculum content of the preschool department in general and the University Saigon in particular.

Moreover, with this research group's topic, we will help the Minister of Education think about the difficulties that preschool students are facing to better understand the English program in their studies students do not specialize in English.

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In addition, another tool is to help the foreign language department rebuild its training program to suit students who do not specialize in English, so that ones are more interested and interested in this subject.

More specifically, the research helps parents to have a more overview to guide their children in choosing the right career but also to support them in their learning. At the same time, investing English for children at a young age is an important thing that parents need to pay attention to.

Furthermore, the leaders of Saigon University will have a correct vision of teaching and learning English at school with the most specific and authentic data analysis. The shortcomings still exist and the comparison with the increasing demand for English proficiency of the society.

Results of this study may orient those who are interested in learning English to have documents for further study. Know more about the difficulties that preschool faculty students are facing. Since then, offer more reasonable training programs, consistent with the current situation.

Moreover, it is also valuable for English teaching and learning researchers who are interested in this topic and are more interested in providing practical solutions that will help students enjoy learning English which they do not specialize in English.

#### **2.1 Research Questions**

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey was seeking to answer the following research questions:

#### **APPENDIX I – QUESTIONNAIRE**

##### **1. Why is English necessary for your job?**

- Because it is easy to apply for a job
- Applying for jobs in international schools where English is available is available
- To communicate with foreigners
- Compulsory subject
- Other: .. .. .

**2. How do you feel when studying English?**

- Interested
- Excited
- Nervous
- Bored
- Other: .....

**3. Which is your best skills?**

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- None

**4. Which is your worst skills?**

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- All

**5. Which one makes you feel English is difficult?**

- Your English level is low.
- The topic of each reading lesson is impractical.
- The classes are too crowded.
- The lecturers are so strict.
- Other: .....

**6. Which one is the most difficulty when studying Reading?**

- Vocabulary
- Structures
- Meaning
- Idioms
- Other: .....

**7. Which one is the most difficulty when studying Listening?**

- Reading speed
- Poor sound
- Confusing content
- Long sentences
- Other: .....

**8. Which one is the most difficulty when studying Speaking?**

- Vocabulary
- Pronounce
- Practice less

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- Hard topic
- Other: .....

### 9. Which one is the most difficulty when studying Writing?

- Vocabulary
- Structures
- Grammar
- Idioms
- Other: .....

### 10. Is it because you won't teach English in your future job, you are not interested in studying English and gradually you feel it difficult to study?

- Yes, it is
- No, it isn't

### 11. Which solution do you choose to attract students to be in the English classes regularly?

- Interesting classes
- Good teaching method
- Friendly lecturers
- All
- Other: .....

## 3. METHODS

100 random senior students from Preschool Education Faculty received prepared questionnaires and they were asked to complete the questionnaires.

The students we chose to survey are fourth-year students at Preschool Education Faculty in Saigon University. They were students who had been learning English in the curriculum. However, their work did not use English to teach young children after graduation. So, learning English for students of Preschool Education Faculty is facing many difficulties.

The investigation was performed during students' classtime in Preschool Education Faculty in Sai Gon University.

Our survey data is that 100 fourth-year students were randomly selected from among the students of the faculty of Preschool Education at the University of Saigon mentioned above.

Because surveying a large number of students will take a lot of time and money, we only conduct a survey for 4th year students from Preschool Education Faculty in Saigon University and who have learned English in the curriculum.

In order to ensure accurate and objective research results, after choosing the topic, we conducted a research plan and learned the results of previous research to have necessary information related to the topic. your research. Next, we randomly selected a survey data of 100 students who had passed English subjects in their school curriculum. They were invited to answer questions in the questionnaire about difficulties in learning English and suggest solutions to learn English more effectively.

The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions, content of the first 6 questions focused on collecting data about difficulties students face when learning English at school, we used the last 4 questions to collect data a bout proposing solutions for learning English more efficient. After collecting survey data, we processed and analyzed the collected data. Finally, we wrote a report on the results of our research.

## 4. RESULTS/FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

According to the research results of scientists in the world, learning foreign languages, especially English is essential for us. In the

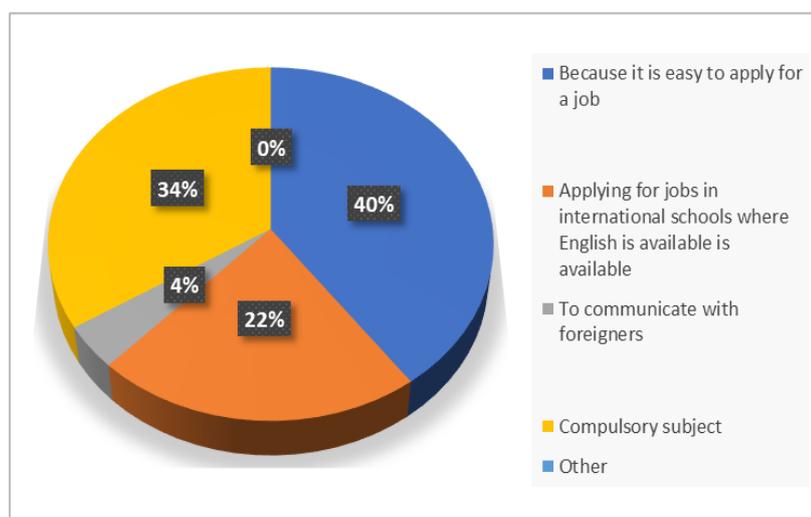
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strong international integration and exchange, English has become a popular means of communication, it is a “tool” for everyone to understand each other. Therefore, learning English is very important. The results of the survey on awareness of 4th year students, the Faculty of Preschool Education, Saigon University reflects the above point of view. (Figure 1). In the difficult problems of learners, stress in English lessons (Figure 2) is the also reason why students do not have interest in learning. The figure 3 shows what the students’ best English skill are. After analysing surveyed results, listening is the worst skill (Figure 4). Figure 5 depicts the reason for feeling English is difficult to learn. Next, figure 6, 7, 8, 9 illustrate the most difficulty when studying listening, reading, speaking, writing respectively. On the other hand, Figure 10 demonstrates the ascertainment of the relation between teaching english in the future and interested in studying English of students surveyed. Following by figure 11, it demonstrates the solutions to attract students to be in the English classes regularly.

### APPENDIX II – TABLES AND FIGURES

**Table 4.1: The reason why English is necessary**

	Number	%
Because it is easy to apply for a job	40	40%
Applying for jobs in international schools where English is available is available	22	22%
To communicate with foreigners	4	4%
Compulsory subject	34	34%
Other	0	0%

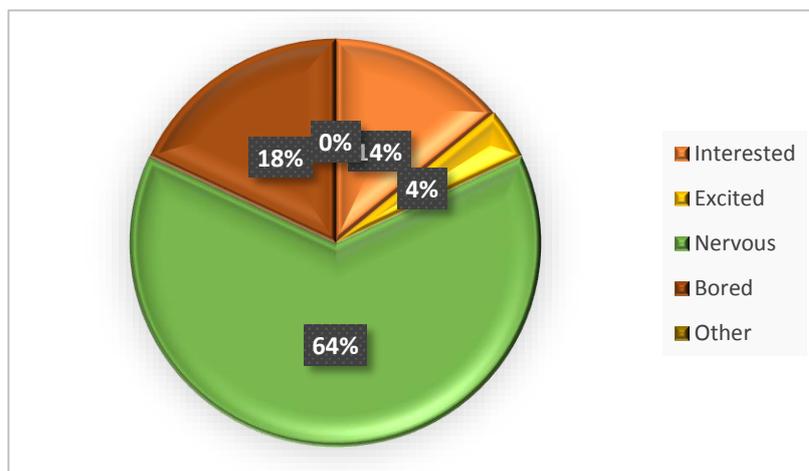


**Figure 4.1: The English necessary for your job**

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**Table 4.2: Emotion of studying English**

	Number	%
Interested	14	14%
Excited	4	4%
Nervous	64	64%
Bored	18	18%
Other	0	0%



**Figure 4.2: Emotion of studying English**

**Table 4.3: The best English skill**

	Number	%
Listening	8	8%
Speaking	18	18%
Reading	62	62%
Writing	12	12%
None	0	0%

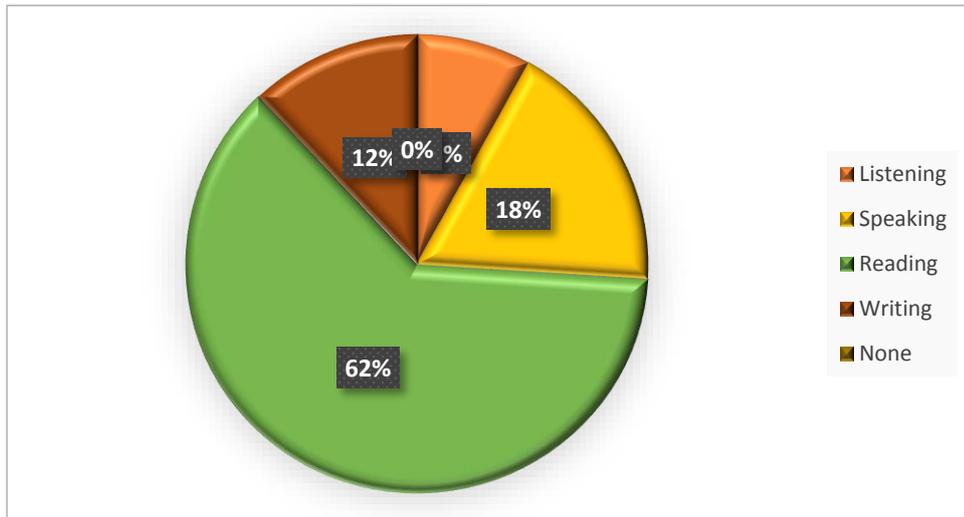


Figure 4.3: The best English skill

Table 4.4: The worst English skill

	Number	%
Listening	64	64%
Speaking	24	24%
Reading	2	2%
Writing	10	10%
All	0	0%

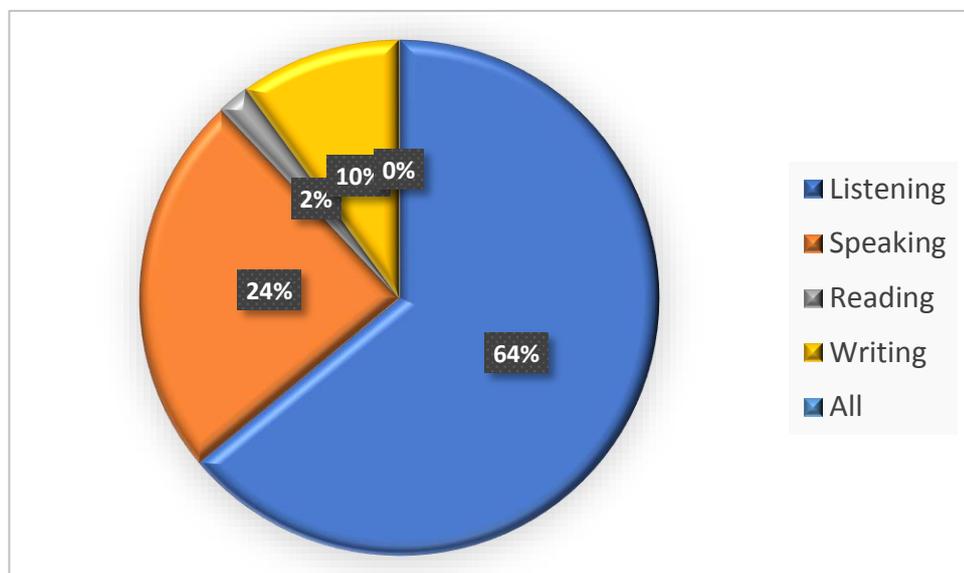
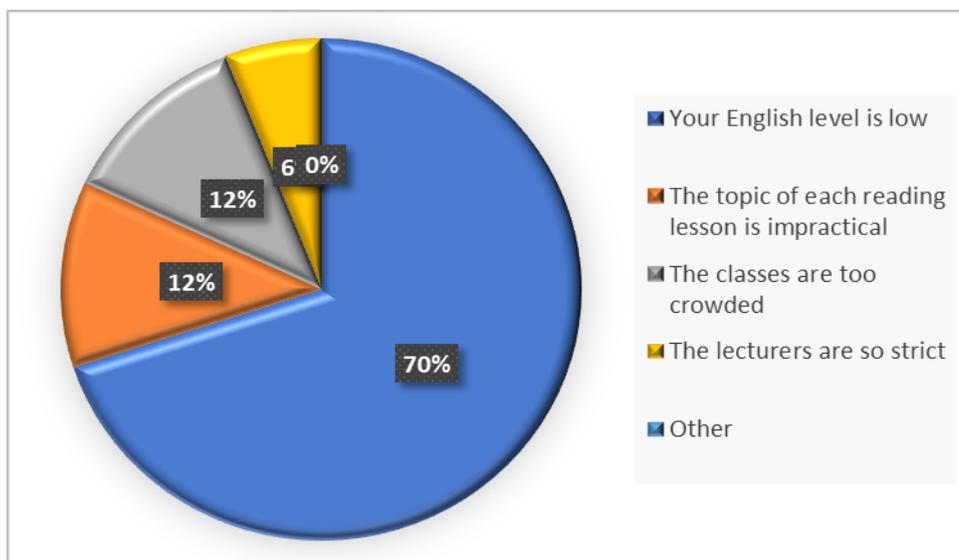


Figure 4.4: The worst English skill

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**Table 4.5: The reason why English is difficult to learn**

	Number	%
Your English level is low	70	70%
The topic of each reading lesson is impractical	12	12%
The classes are too crowded	12	12%
The lecturers are so strict	6	6%
Other	0	0%



**Figure 4.5: The reason why English is difficult to learn**

**Table 4.6: The most difficulty when studying Reading**

	Number	%
Vocabulary	42	42%
Structures	10	10%
Meaning	38	38%
Idioms	10	10%
Other	0	0%

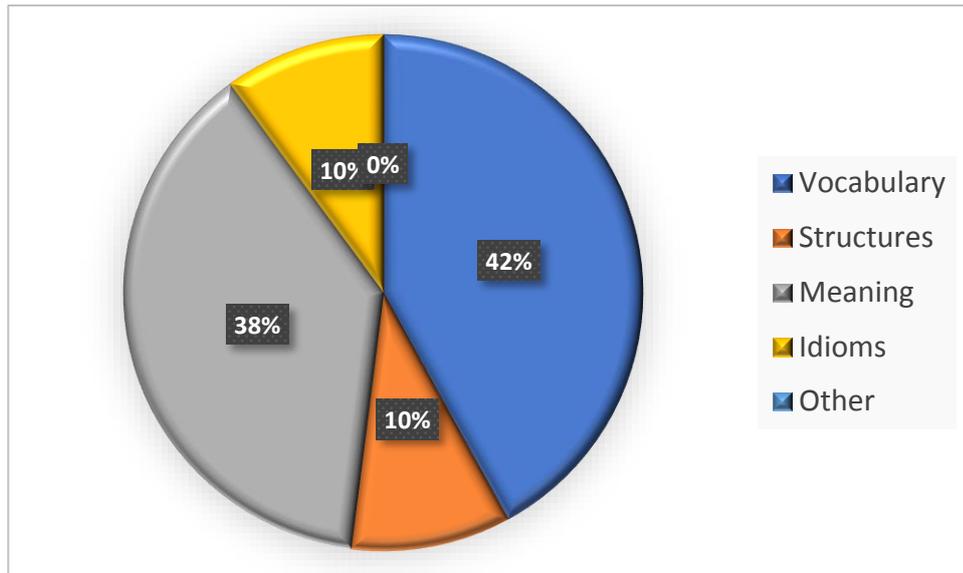


Figure 4.6: The most difficulty when studying Reading

Table 4.7: The most difficulty when studying Listening

	Number	%
Reading speed	70	70%
Poor sound	6	6%
Confusing content	24	24%
Long sentences	0	0%
Other	0	0%

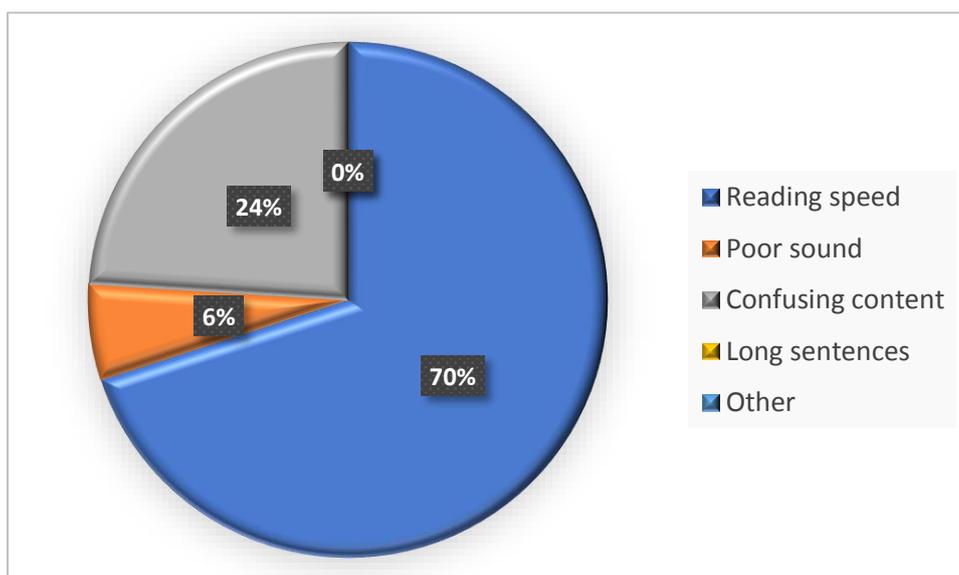
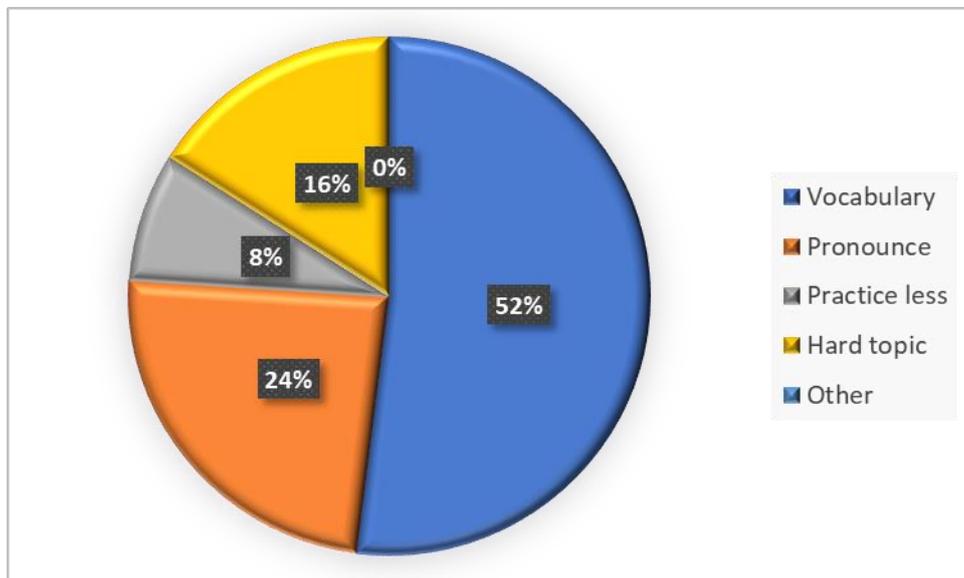


Figure 4.7: The most difficulty when studying Listening

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**Table 4.8: The most difficulty when studying Speaking**

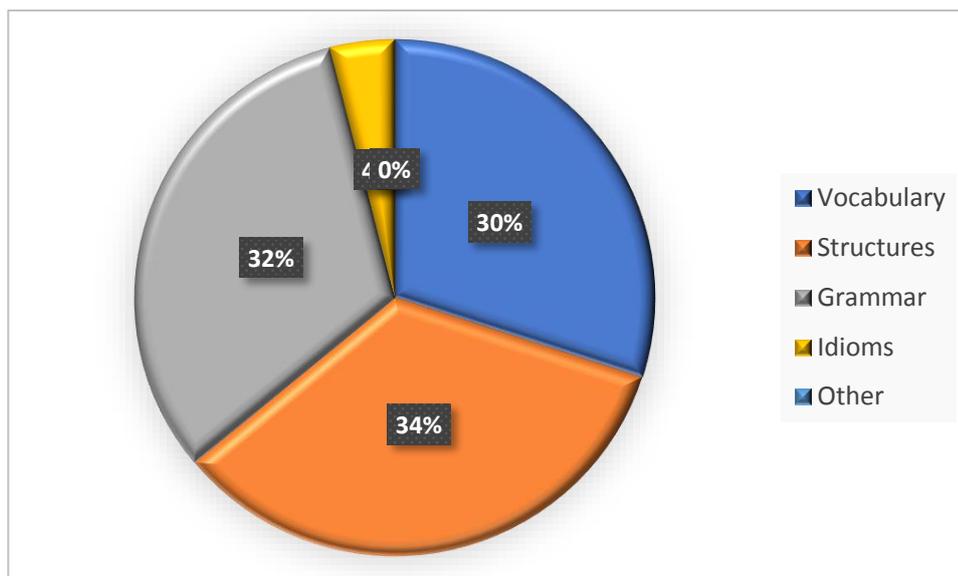
	Number	%
Vocabulary	52	52%
Pronounce	24	24%
Practice less	8	8%
Hard topic	16	16%
Other	0	0



**Figure 4.8: The most difficulty when studying Speaking**

**Table 4.9: The most difficulty when studying Writing**

	Number	%
Vocabulary	30	30%
Structures	34	34%
Grammar	32	32%
Idioms	4	4%
Other	0	0%



**Figure 4.9: The most difficulty when studying Writing**

According to the survey results, up to 40% of respondents thought that learning English was very necessary for the job (accounting for the highest percentage). However, this rate did not exceed 50% of respondents' opinions, which showed that students were not fully aware of the importance of learning English. On the other hand, up to 34% of students believed that learning English is compulsory because it was the output standard of the field of study. On the other hand, due to the need to learn English of Early Childhood Education students, up to 60% of students thought that because they did not teach English in the future, they did not care to learn and have difficulties in learning English.

In the difficult problems of learners, up to 64% of students thought that stress in English lessons was the reason why students did not have interest in learning. Even nearly 50% of students could not pass English in the first exam. We also found that most surveyed students (62%) chose reading as the best English skill. In contrast, among the skills of learning English, students' listening skills were the worst (64%) For more details for the research, we also investigated what factors within the English skills that make it difficult. For instance, it appears that 42% surveyed students thought that vocabulary made reading skill so hard. Followed by listening skill, 70% students complained that the reading speed of the tape is too fast. Similiar to reading skills, vocabulary was still the hardest factor for speaking skill (52%). The last skill was writing whose the most difficult that student face is structure (34%). In addition, surveyed students said that they found difficulties in studying English because their level was low (70%). When asked about whether or not the results of not being interested in studying English and gradually feeling difficult to study coming from not teaching English in the future job, 60% said yes and 40% said no.

**Table 4.10: Opinion of students about whether or not the result of not being interested in studying English and gradually not feeling difficult to study coming from not not teaching English in the future job**

	Number	%
Yes, it is	60	60%
No, it isn't	40	40%

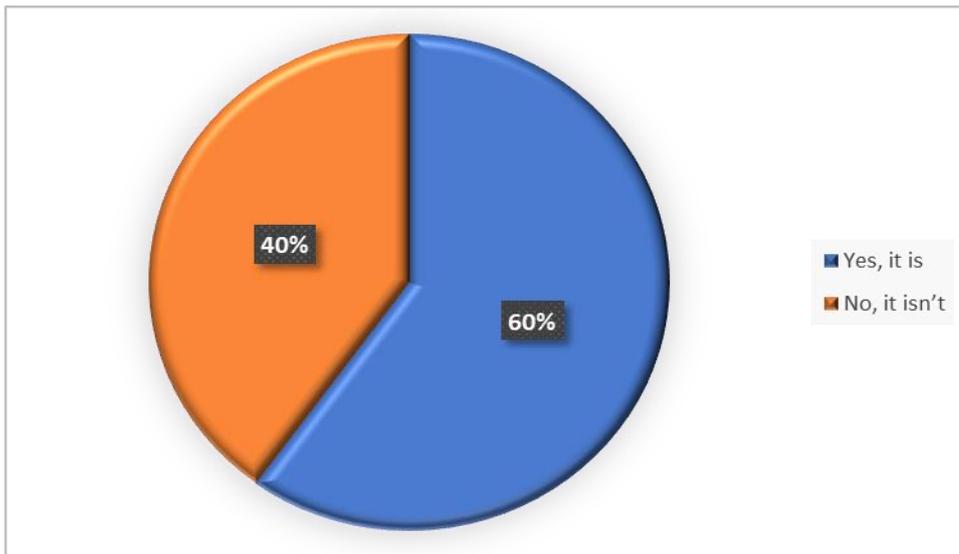


Figure 4.10: Opinion of students about whether or not the result of not being interested in studying English and gradually not feeling difficult to study coming from not not teaching English in the future job

Table 4.11: Solution to attract students to be in the English classes regularly

	Number	%
Interesting classes	10	10%
Good teaching method	12	12%
Friendly lecturers	0	0%
All	78	78%
Other	0	0%

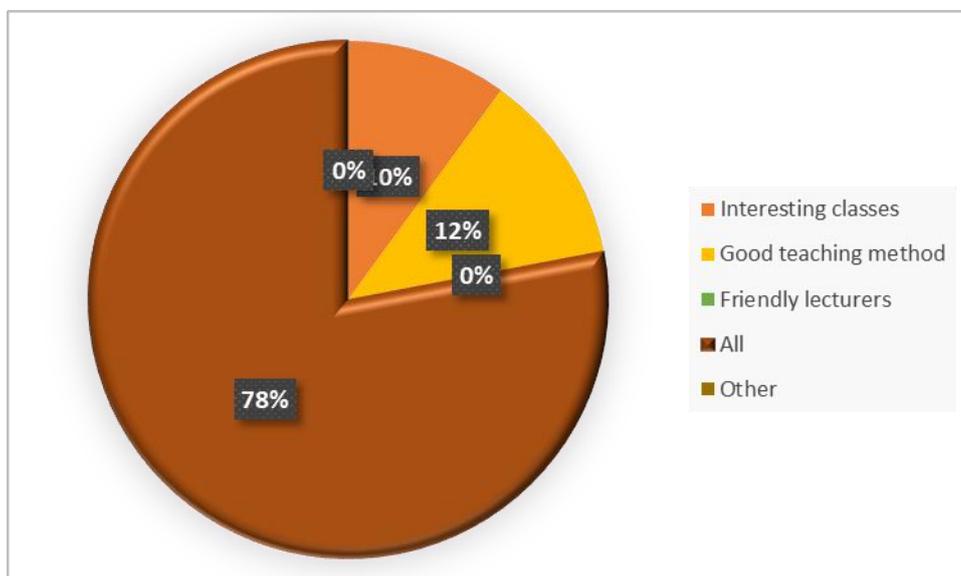


Figure 4.11: Solution to attract students to be in the English classes regularly

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## 4.1 Comment on the result

Generalize the results: Results of the present study may represent the reality of learning English of the future teachers who won't teach English.

Possible explanation: The students' English education at Saigon University is facing many difficulties such as: students have not identified the correct motivation for learning; the learners' English level has not yet met the subject requirements; the practice of listening - speaking - reading - writing skills of students is still limited; learning English has not come from the practical needs of students' jobs in the future ... This situation exists in almost all students of pedagogy (in addition to English pedagogy). Obviously, the little or no use of English in the daily work in the future is the reason why students are not interested in learning English. Students learn English mainly to deal with the school's regulations, to meet university graduation requirements only. Thus, the incorrect

Determination of students' English learning purposes is the cause of forming a poor learning awareness for students. Students learn English just to deal with learning outcomes, not out of the needs and benefits brought by English. Therefore, learning English will meet a lot of difficulties. Besides, in learning English, speaking skills are not standard, vocabulary and listening skills are the most common difficulties of learners. Our research and survey results have also reflected correctly this situation. Stress makes it difficult for students to acquire knowledge, cannot remember the lesson content... makes their learning results very low. Even nearly 50% of students cannot pass English in the first exam. The cause of weakening in listening skill are: poor sound, fast speech speed, difficult listening content. The structure of English includes vowels, consonants, stresses and intonation that most students often forget to stress English and speak without intonation. This causes a lot of interference in communication. Since then, when listening to the native speaker pronunciation, students cannot recognize it because normally they remember that word in a completely different way. Obviously, students are not interested in learning English, along with the fact that teachers speak quickly or the videos speak English of native speakers too fast, with regional accents ... making it difficult for students to listen. Even 64% of births cannot hear or understand what the speaker said.

These results are consistent with those reported for at-risk students face in learning a foreign language in Banks' findings.

## 4.2. Discussion

The theory led us to infer that difficulties in studying English is a problem in the Preschool Education Faculty in Sai Gon University. The findings, luckily, support the theory. Students' level were prettily low to make significant progressions in the English subject but that is just one cause. Another findings discovered are impractical topic of each reading lesson, which made English more difficult to comprehend. Besides, crowded classroom was a secondary making English difficult to many students because they were distracted by many things like: chatting, using smart phones, sleeping... One trivial cause we found was lecturers' rigidity, we believe the attitude of the lecturer influenced on students' performance. If he or her was so strict, the students will get burdened and gradually became stressed and nervous. The possible explanation for these findings may be students focus too much on other subject since English is not the only compulsory in their academic curriculums. Another reason could be that students in Preschool Education Faculty obviously will not teach English for their jobs-to-be, so clearly they discern that studying English just to pass the final exams or meet the requirements to graduate. Understanding that studying the difficulties of learning English of students in Sai Gon University is a very broad field, Preschool Education Faculty is what we chose. This faculty is not only a representative location for the studying-English problems but only a smaller location, so that our research becomes easier to be conducted.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The approach outlined in this study could be replicated in other Preschool Education Faculty in other universities not only in Ho Chi Minh City but also in other cities in Vietnam to access documents for further research. Other researchers may find a gap to conduct their own researches in the future. We believe more and more researcher delving in this area will help many readers like: lecturers, minister of education, parents... perceive truly about the relation between students' English learning and their occupations. Therefore, more solutions like reforming textbooks, changing teaching ways, adding recreative activities during classtimes shall be planned. Students will absorb and English will never be hard again.

## **6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The authors would like to thank Van Lang University for supporting this research.

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