

# Developing English Communication Skills For The First Year Students Of Thai Nguyen University Of Agriculture And Forestry

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**Abstract:** *The study was conducted to determine the ability to communicate and present ideas in English in front of a crowd of students still faces certain barriers to develop English communication skills for students. The population were the teachers and students at Thai Nguyen university of Agriculture and Forestry of during the school year 2023-2024. A total of 12 teachers and 260 students were chosen through a convenience sampling method. The findings revealed that Students need to recognize the importance and benefits of self-directed learning, and they should realize the position and role of a foreign language in their future careers. They must consistently elevate their self-motivation, clearly define their goals, and make continuous efforts. Based on the findings, some implications for improving and developing English communication skills of students were suggested and recommendations were made for further research.*

**Keywords:** *Communication, English communication skills, methods, first year students, significance.*

## 1. Introduction

In the modern development of the society, English plays a crucial role in communication and is undoubtedly the most advanced and essential means of communication worldwide.

The issue of developing students' communication skills during the process of learning a foreign language needs special attention. Communication skills in English involve the ability to effectively convey and express knowledge, experience, personal viewpoints through the use of English to achieve communication purposes. This skill is not an innate factor but is developed through learning, practice, and experiences, rather than mere knowledge acquisition.

To attain this skill, various influencing factors need to be considered: language of communication, skills, experiences, social interactions, education, and individual characteristics. Learning a foreign language can help students become familiar with the culture of the countries that use the language they are learning.

Language is used to express ideas, thoughts, problem-solving, and written communication, all of which are central to communication. In communication, there are times when we encounter difficulties in conveying our own

viewpoints. This can be attributed to limitations in communication competence. Rickheit & Strohner (2008) suggested that for successful language use, whether in native or foreign languages, in communication, individuals must possess both language and communication competencies.

In this study, the researcher conducted research on methods to develop English communication skills for students. The aim is to acquaint students with effective techniques, methods of English communication, teaching materials, and the formation of practical and creative application skills.

## 2. Research contents

### 2.1. Subjects of the research.

The respondents of the study were 260 first-year students and 12 teachers at Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry in the second semester school year 2023-2024.

### 2.2. Research methods.

To achieve the objectives, the following studies are used:

Theory: Researching language literature, psychology-pedagogy, textbooks, and methodologies related to the research topic, analyzing existing curricula and textbooks.

Experiment: Observing the educational

process, engaging in discussions with teachers and students, conducting experiential learning. Surveying 260 students and 12 teachers at Thai Nguyen University.

### 2.3. Research Results

Results and discussion

#### 3.1 Current State of Students' English Communication Skills

Table 1

Current State of Students' English Communication Skills

No	Level	Number of students	Rate
1	Unable to hear / speak anything.	39	15%
2	Able to hear/speak every word	118	45,4%
3	Able to listen / speak longer sentences.	56	21,5%
4	Able to communicate in common and simple situations.	29	11,2%
5	Able to communicate in any situation.	18	6,9%

The survey results revealed that despite students having been exposed to English education early on, their writing skills are relatively proficient; however, their language communication abilities remain quite limited. Specifically, as shown in Table 1, the percentage of students who can listen/speak individual words is relatively high at 45.4%. However, among these, only 6.9% of students are capable of effective communication in various situations. When questioned in English, students still hesitate and employ basic vocabulary. Very few students are able to elaborate on their ideas to expand a conversation. The majority of students tend to focus on answering the teacher's questions rather than taking the initiative to develop and present their own ideas.

#### 2.4. Issues in Students' English Communication Skills Learning

The first issue pertains to the traditional approach towards language learning. English language instruction typically encompasses all four language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. However, communication skills are often not given equal emphasis as

reading and writing skills. In Vietnam, as well as in many other countries, under the traditional teaching method, students require direct guidance from teachers to grasp the knowledge, inadvertently fostering a passive learning habit. The consequence of this traditional learning approach is that a majority of students excel in paper-based assessments, but feel uncertain, lacking confidence during communicating. Few students are adept at elaborating on their ideas to extend or sustain a conversation.

Secondly, the lack of interaction or insufficient interaction with native speakers is a notable issue. Currently, a significant portion of students learn English solely through self-study can result in a lack of interaction with native speakers. Interacting with native speakers is among the most effective ways for students to enhance reflexes and grammar. It simultaneously boosts students' confidence in real-life communication. Consistently engaging with native English speakers is crucial if students seek fluency in the language. When students make an effort to communicate with native speakers, they gradually become accustomed to their intonation, leading to quicker responses to questions.

The third issue is students' lack of motivation. Many students begin learning English merely due to academic requirements or workplace demands. Motivation plays a significant role in distinguishing between language learners who become proficient and those who only grasp a few words. Motivation can influence various supportive aspects of language learning. Motivation aids learners in excelling in assessments and achieving favorable outcomes. This learning attitude is pivotal in skill enhancement.

#### 2.5 Methods for Developing English Communication Skills for Students

\* For Teachers

Alongside the shift in methods, the concept of teaching methods has also undergone significant development. The most effective foreign language teaching method, as recognized by leading experts in the field of language education, is the Communicative Approach.

The success of teaching and students'

attitudes towards a subject largely depend on the level of interest and emotions conveyed by the teacher during lessons. To address the issue of learning, merely replicating real-life situations within the classroom is insufficient. Additional training and efforts are required to master both language materials and information, and to develop various communication actions and perceptions.

Methods within the Communicative Approach are often employed through games and communicative dialogues, where students solve communication tasks and gain understanding using English. Hence, the primary purpose of games and communicative dialogues is to organize foreign language communication while addressing assigned communication tasks or problems.

According to E.I. Negnevitskaya, using games and communicative dialogues as a way to develop communication skills in schools allows teachers to formulate speech tasks with motivating purposes and actions, while also determining the necessary communication patterns for use.

\* For Students

Students need to recognize the importance and benefits of self-directed learning, and they should realize the position and role of a foreign language in their future careers. They must consistently elevate their self-motivation, clearly define their goals, and make continuous efforts.

Students should seek a community of English learners. Here are some excellent ways to connect with fellow students if you're studying from home:

Reddit English forums; Seek answers to challenging questions in the Preply Q&A section; Join public ESL Facebook groups; Befriend international students at your school and engage in cultural and life-related exchanges. Furthermore, students need to set goals for themselves to enhance their study motivation. The best goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound, or "SMART goals."

Once students have established their goals, they can ensure that every effort they make brings them one step closer. This approach also aids in developing their communication skills further. Finally, students need to choose study methods that are suitable for

them. To enhance their communication abilities, students can consider the following methods:

Watching English programs with subtitles; Recording their own speech and listening back improve skill; Learning English based on specific topics.

### 3. Conclusions and recommendations.

English plays a significant role in today's modern civilization. According to the survey, the majority of information on the internet is in English (over 54%). Being proficient in this international language allows individuals to receive a well-rounded education, pursue their dream job, and communicate effectively with people from around the world. Therefore, the methods discussed above not only contribute to boosting students' confidence in communication but also foster a positive mindset and encourage active thinking. These methods guide students to not only memorize and reproduce knowledge but also apply it practically, thus contributing to the development of their communication skills through various avenues.

Hence, enhancing English proficiency for students is crucial to empower them with the ability to use a foreign language effectively in communication and in their future professional endeavors. This endeavor requires the close attention of administrators, the unwavering determination and continuous efforts of educators, along with the implementation of coherent solutions as previously discussed.

Based on the results of the study, some recommendations were given. Firstly, teachers may pay attention to the needs of the students especially those who have some speaking difficulties. Secondly, patience and self-dedication on the part of the teachers may help a lot in the enhancement of the learning capabilities of student. Next, teachers may attend seminars and other in-service training to development of more skills. Finally, administrators may organize a functional speaking program to enhance speaking abilities of the students.

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