| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

A Phenomenological Analysis of the Obstacles Impeding Vietnamese EFL Learners' Willingness to Communicate in English

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| **ABSTRACT**

The goal of this article is to examine the viewpoints of Vietnamese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners with respect to their willingness to communicate (WTC) and identify the barriers that impede their proficiency in the English language. The research employed a phenomenological approach to investigate the obstacles that hinder communication among Vietnamese EFL learners. According to the findings, common challenges encountered by learners include a restricted lexicon, inaccurate pronunciation, diminished self-assurance, and apprehension. These challenges are further compounded by cultural elements and unstimulating learning environments. Offering pertinent activities in a secure, adaptable, and intellectually stimulating learning environment may increase inquisitiveness and enhance English proficiency, according to the article. It is essential that teachers be involved in the delivery of high-quality courses, irrespective of the textbooks and curriculum employed. However, due to the subjective opinions of a small number of participants, the findings of this article are limited; future research should investigate teaching and learning techniques and more objective explanations for English communication difficulties. Furthermore, we recommend that future investigations broaden their scope beyond high school students by incorporating a wider range of topics and settings.

| **KEYWORDS**

Phenomenological Analysis; Vietnamese English; EFL learners

| **ARTICLE INFORMATION**

1. Introduction

English has become a widely spoken language on a global scale. Many governments recognize it as a secondary and official language, and a large number of people worldwide use it as a foreign language. It facilitates internet communication, aviation, technology, politics, science, and commerce. Many people appreciate clear and eloquent English writing and speech. Many non-native English-speaking countries, such as Vietnam, are prioritizing English education and articles because of the language's growing importance. English is a mandatory subject in all educational institutions in Vietnam. There is an increasing prevalence of English conversation. In order to continue serving students, we reissue English textbooks as communicative materials. Effective language training now focuses on practical application rather than just grammar. Active involvement is necessary for the acquisition of a second language (L2) (Gass, 2003; Swain, 1995). The aim of conversational approaches to language acquisition and instruction is to improve students' conversational skills. The level of willingness to communicate (WTC) greatly affects both course participation and the acquisition of a second language (L2). High WTC students tend to use their second language more often outside of the classroom (Kang, 2014; MacIntyre et al., 1998). In recent years, the popularity of English instruction has increased. Modern students aim to develop language proficiency for effective communication with immigrants. According to Nguyen (2010), Vietnamese university students who have been studying English since high school face challenges in communicating with people from different cultures and struggle to organize basic social events. Experts in academia have examined English acquisition and instructional

methods for Vietnamese students preparing for written English exams. Vietnamese EFL learners struggle to express themselves due to their focus on grammar and vocabulary rather than conversational communication. This hinders their speaking abilities, despite their desire to improve. Many people hesitate to communicate due to fear and timidity (Nguyen, 2019). Interaction is a powerful tool in human communication, with both positive and negative consequences. According to Sidelinger and Booth-Butterfield (2010), an engaging classroom can enhance student participation and reduce inactivity. It is important to implement classroom interventions to improve the oral communication skills of L2 students. The use of L2 language, on the other hand, sparked the development of the heuristic willingness to communicate (WTC) paradigm. Understanding the various factors that affect L2 students' WTC is important. This article aims to help EFL teachers, especially those from Vietnam, understand regional WTC variables. English as a Foreign Language teachers in Vietnam need to identify the barriers that impede students' use of WTC in order to improve their communication and methodological skills. This article delves into the challenges faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speakers in developing their English speaking skills, as well as the willingness to communicate (WTC) among Vietnamese learners. The goal of this program is to identify WTC factors through interviews with stakeholders. In conclusion, we will explore different approaches to promoting English speaking among students.

2. Conceptual Framework

Firstly, we introduced the definitions of EFL willingness to communicate and the factors that influence EFL learners' willingness to communicate. This section then presents the previous studies that examined the relationship between EFL learners' willingness to communicate and the factors that influence this willingness.

2.1. Willingness to communicate

The Oxford Learner Dictionary (Hornby, 2015, p. 1764) defines "willingness" as the ability to perform something, emphasizing readiness or pleasure. Academic success requires a thirst for information. Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2017) examined classroom interaction and communication through speaking and writing. Many people think communication is just about sharing information, yet it has many meanings. Start an English chat. Speech is essential for oral output, says Lazaraton (2001). A deeper intricacy exists beyond verbalization. Speakers must follow content and pronunciation requirements for optimal comprehension. Check pronunciation, emphasis, rhythm, and intonation. For substantive sentences, use appropriate vocabulary, word arrangement, and word form. In speeches, Peck (2001) stresses the need for a solid relationship between the core argument and supporting concepts. MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, and Noels (1998) pioneered WTC in L2 communication research. MacIntyre et al. (1998) describe "willingness to communicate" (WTC) as overcoming shyness when speaking a second language. (Nguyễn, 2019). McCroskey and Richmond (1990) initially measured "willingness to communicate" to determine a speaker's conversational disposition. To determine this, we used "willingness to communicate." Introversion, self-esteem, communication skills, limited communication fear, and cultural variety all contribute to the L1 WTC. According to Levine and McCroskey (1990), WTC is the urge to connect. WTC was once thought to be a personality feature that persisted across time and circumstance.

2.2. Factors influencing EFL Learners' Willingness to Communicate

Several factors impact L2 learners' willingness to communicate (WTC), affecting their communication success, according to research. These factors fall into four categories: learner, teacher, task, and environment.

2.2.1. Learner-related factors

Learners' psychological state or self-perception may affect WTC. For instance, learners fear reprimands for pronunciation, grammar, or content representation problems. Dornyei (2005) and Hashimoto (2002) assert that shy students tend to become distracted during reprimands. People lose self-confidence and interact less as a result. Evidence shows that language ability, anxiety, and motivation alone do not predict L2 classroom speech participation (Boo, Dornyei, & Ryan, 2015; Dornyei, 2009). The results confirm Dornyei's notion. For some reason, a gifted and driven student may be silent in class. Studies (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, and Conrod, 2001; Matsuda, 2012) reveal that the regular use of a second language startles less proficient learners. Even though Dornyei (2003) stressed the importance of linguistic proficiency, this is still the case. Concern over one's original language may hinder L2 acquisition. Communication-related anxiety is stress and anxiety. Some people feel uneasy speaking their second language in public. Language anxiety is negatively associated with WTC. A change in one variable may affect the other. Low anxiety is associated with increased L2 WTC, according to Baker and MacIntyre (2000), Kim (2004), and Yashima (2002). Hesitancy may cause linguistic anxiety among second-language learners. The learner's self-perception of communication skills is another factor. These are evident in the classroom, conversation, and interlocutor (Cao & Philp, 2006; Peng, 2012). Yashima (2002) found that concerned students talk less confidently. Nervous students may have trouble interacting. They may avoid social events because they are upsetting (Dornyei & Ryan, 2015; Yashima et al., 2018). Speaking in public in a second language causes anxiety for many learners (Kruk, 2019). This includes those with less anxiety about other aspects of second language learning. Akkakoson (2016) says anxiety hinders students' communication and comprehension. Several studies (Fallah, 2014; Khajavy et al., 2016) show that learners' confidence affects their L2 classroom WTC. Academically successful students are confident. Cole, Ellis, and Mason (2007) and MacIntyre and Doucette (2010) say "confidence is as crucial as the capacity to speak and listen" (p. 118).

2.2.2. Teacher-related factors

Teachers may also affect students' WTC. Students feel more comfortable in class when they like their teacher. Bergmark and Westman (2018) discovered that students with positive teacher-student relationships are more willing to answer questions and participate in class. According to Cao (2011), teachers' knowledge may help students, establish a safe classroom, and enhance second-language communication. Myers and Martin (2018) found that teachers' classroom management and pedagogical ideologies affect classroom organization and L2 communication preparation. Students may be reluctant to voice their ideas if academics are not present and encourage student participation. Given the importance of social interaction in the L2 classroom, Vongsila and Reinders (2016) recommend that teachers develop WTC on page 2. L2 teachers may struggle to help students communicate in the classroom due to the multiple elements that affect working memory capacity (WTC; Mesgarshahr & Abdollahzadeh, 2014). Shi et al.'s 2019 article encourages educators to promote learner connection while minimizing WTC's harmful effects. We should encourage L2 students to communicate, because it helps their education. Applied linguists like Dornyei (2003) push teachers to improve L2 WTC in the classroom. Many in the field agree. Determine what's bothering them, then utilize scaffolding (Hung & Nguyen, 2022) and incentive strategies (Dornyei, 2003) to get them talking. This will encourage student communication.

2.2.3. Task-related factors

According to Cao (2011), students prefer organized, including group, activities to teacher-led ones. These exercises may boost student communication and minimize anxiety (Kozlowski & Iigen, 2006). Zarrinabadi (2014) believes that assignment duration may motivate students to converse by providing them with linguistic skills and fluency. This may increase second-language learners' World Language Competency (WTC). Discourse topics can also affect students' emotions. Cao (2011), Zarrinabadi (2014). Bonyadi (2014) observed that engaging subjects increased student discussion. This may improve students' WTC (MacIntyre & Wang, 2021). Pair and group work in the classroom increases peer engagement and communication, according to Cao and Philp (2006). Illés and Akcan (2017) say classroom warm-ups help students think in English and recollect content. Teachers use various warm-ups to keep students engaged, ready to talk, and comfortable. Thus, teachers may begin class with pleasant, memory-boosting physical tasks like matching images to sentences or keywords. Casual games match images to keywords or phrases. Teachers may also let students perform and receive comments. Teams boost L2 classroom WTC. Teachers encourage students to discuss ideas in groups to increase involvement, camaraderie, and encouragement. Students cooperate, participate in group activities, and accomplish assignments to develop unity. (Hung, 2019). Students engage in discussions, work together on group projects, and perform assigned tasks. Hung, 2021; Vygotsky, 1978. Sociocultural theory suggests mediation in group activities may help kids learn. Teachers must thoroughly assess the questions. Lee et al. (2012) suggest asking open-ended questions to encourage EFL learners' expression and knowledge extension and get their answers. They promote critical thinking, discussion, and language learning. They help kids learn language and cognition. Asking follow-up questions instead of yes-or-no questions promotes meaningful conversation. Task complexity may affect WTC. In a longitudinal study of 32 advanced French learners at an Australian institution, De Saint-Léger and Storch (2009) demonstrated that tough activities can impair WTC by causing anxiety. Kang (2005) indicated that barriers may discourage students and make them less vocal. Simple tasks can demotivate people, according to Eddy-U (2015). Tasks of sufficient complexity enhance state WTC, according to Eddy-U (2015). Except for de Saint-Léger and Storch (2009), all state WTC longitudinal studies included fewer than twelve individuals. They relied on qualitative interviews, learning notebooks, and classroom observations. Only Cao (2013) tracked state WTC trajectories and showed statistical within-person variances. Having only six measures from six people over five months may explain why Cao (2013) discovered no state WTC fluctuation trends. We need more large-scale investigations and more frequent testing to discover how state WTC differs by person and how it interacts with situational variables.

2.2.4. Environment-related factors

Conversational variables may alter spoken communication. Personal talks are enjoyable for students (Alrabai, 2022). Kim and McDonough (2008) said working with experts can help people solve difficulties and overcome language challenges. Davis (2009) discovered that pairing lower-level students with higher-level classmates increases discourse. Peng and Woodrow (2010) also found that classroom atmosphere can affect second language learners' WTC. Khajavy et al. (2016) found that tranquil environments help students' imaginations communicate. Thus, people communicate more when there are no risks (Bui & Nguyen, 2022; Dorman & Fisher, 2006; Park, 2000). These findings appeared in Bui & Nguyen, 2022; Dorman & Fisher, 2006; and Park, 2000. Asian cultures may struggle with classroom communication. Learners defend their appearance as a social asset and may avoid conversation in unpleasant settings (Bui & Nguyen, 2022; Park, 2000).

2.3. Previous studies

Much L2 Willingness to Communicate (WTC) research in EFL programs comes from Asia, a continent rich in cultures and languages (Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Zarrinabadi, 2014). Studies in Iran (Fallah, 2014; Zarrinabadi, 2014) explored WTC among university students, highlighting the impact of motivation and anxiety (a negative correlation). These findings echo the importance of considering cultural contexts in L2 acquisition research.

Joe, Hiver, and Al-Hoorie (2017) conducted a study on the L2 WTC (willingness to communicate in English) of Korean high school students for EFL purposes. It explored the link between classroom social environment (supportive teachers), student motivation (self-determination theory), and WTC. While WTC didn't directly impact academic achievement, a positive learning environment with supportive teachers increased student motivation. This suggests context matters for L2 WTC, and positive environments might be more important for motivation than WTC itself.

The study focuses on the work experience and motivation of EFL learners. Lin (2019) examined Taiwanese EFL learners and found that the motivation (external versus internal) for career success boosted WTC and vocabulary proficiency. Shao & Gao (2016) conducted an analysis on East Asian EFL learners and stated cultural barriers might cause a reluctance to speak in class. Chen et al. (2022) conducted a comparison between Chinese domestic students and international students and proved that both groups had low WTC, highlighting the role of teachers and methods. In their 2020 study on Pakistani EFL learners, Kalsoom et al. found that social support enhances WTC and reduces anxiety. Mulyono & Saskia (2005) examined how Indonesian EFL learners WTC increased in confidence, low anxiety, and motivation across all settings (class, outside, and digital).

Zerey & Cephe (2020) conducted research on the WTC and the classroom environment of EFL learners. Zerey & Cephe (2020) investigated Turkish EFL learners. A positive classroom climate encouraged students to speak, especially girls. Siying et al. (2020) conducted a study on Chinese students studying abroad to establish a correlation between an ideal L2 self-image and higher classroom WTC levels. Zoghi et al. (2014) analyzed Iranian EFL learners and found that learning styles influence communication willingness. Teachers must adapt to each individual's needs.

Overall, these studies highlight the importance of motivation, positive classroom environments, and addressing cultural barriers to improve EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English. Despite the importance of communication for language learning (Pourhosein, 2016; Harmer, 2007), many EFL learners struggle, particularly with speaking (WTC). Identifying these barriers is vital for improving EFL teaching in Vietnam. This article delves into the obstacles hindering high school EFL learners' communication using a qualitative approach to gather rich student perspectives.

2.4 Research questions
The research questions that guide this study are:
Question 1: What obstacles do Vietnamese EFL learners encounter in communicating in English?
Question 2: What are the causes of the obstacles preventing EFL learners' WTC in English?

3. Methods
3.1. Participants
Participants answered open-ended and conversational questions about speaking challenges, reasons for communication preparedness, and ways to improve. Despite Creswell (2013) suggesting 8–12 people for a phenomenological study, the study sample was likely only five due to time and setting constraints. Englander (2012) states that before choosing a sample size, the researcher ensured that participants had the expertise to answer study questions. The researcher made sure the sample represented the population. Participants in this study had to show that they had studied English for at least seven but no more than 10 years in Vietnam through English language teaching. The study selected five high school students from three Bao Thi commune high schools, Long Khanh district, and Dong Nai province for membership, based on their own decisions..

3.2. Instruments
Elliott and Timulak proposed utilizing self-report questionnaires that include open-ended questions for qualitative data collection. Additionally, Elliott and Timulak recommended collecting participants' contact information prior to data analysis to obtain further clarification on their responses. Therefore, the researcher diligently recorded the participants' contact information as a crucial component of the study. Hence, self-reports, open-ended inquiries, observations, and field notes served as the main techniques for gathering data. We employed these methods to conduct primary, in-depth interviews with a sample of five participants. This approach enabled us to collect authentic and comprehensive insights from their responses. In addition, we have kept a record of the participants' contact information for possible follow-up or further interviews.
In semi-structured and unstructured interviews, we requested five questions to assess Vietnamese EFL learners' English communication willingness and ten questions to assess their English communication barriers and causes. These questions seek to identify obstacles to English communication among the questioned students. These questions appear.

➢   Five questions to test English-language willingness:

1. Do you usually say greetings to your friends in English? Please give some examples.

2. When someone gives you a pen or something else, do you generally say "thanks" in English? How?
3. Do you tell your friends about what's going on in your life in simple English? How? Why?
4. Do you often read a conversation from your English textbook out loud? How often?
5. When you talk in English class, do you ever translate Vietnamese expressions into English? How?

➢ Ten questions examine the obstacles Vietnamese EFL learners face when speaking English, as well as the reasons why.

1. Can you tell me about your experiences communicating in English? What are some of the challenges you have faced?
2. How do you feel when you need to communicate in English? Are there any specific situations that make you feel more anxious or nervous?
3. Can you describe a time when you struggled to communicate in English? What were the obstacles you encountered?
4. In your opinion, what are the most common obstacles that Vietnamese EFL learners face when communicating in English? Why do you think these obstacles exist?
5. How do these obstacles affect your willingness to communicate in English? Do you feel less confident or motivated to communicate when you encounter these obstacles?
6. What strategies have you used to overcome these obstacles? Have any of these strategies been successful?
7. How do you think your cultural background or previous language learning experiences have affected your ability to communicate in English?
8. How do you think your language proficiency level affects your ability to communicate in English? Are there specific language skills that you find more challenging than others?
9. Can you describe a time when you felt successful in communicating in English? What made that experience successful?
10. Based on your experiences, what recommendations would you have for improving English language learning and communication for Vietnamese EFL learners?

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis
Research interviews were conducted to investigate the challenges faced by Vietnamese EFL learners in English communication. We recruited participants, obtained informed consent, and scheduled interviews in comfortable settings to gather data. Open-ended questions encouraged participants to speak freely in English, with Vietnamese used for clarification. Interviews lasted 30-45 minutes and were recorded and supplemented with notes. Body language was observed to navigate the conversation. Back-translation was used to analyze the transcripts to ensure translation accuracy.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1. Vietnamese EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English
The interviewer asked intimate and private questions to establish rapport and assess the student's English communication readiness before diving into the main issues. In this section, we discussed the following topics: Do interviewers express gratitude in English during the receiving process? Do they share personal stories in plain English with their peers? Do they often memorize English textbook dialogues? Finally, do Vietnamese idioms sometimes translate into English?

Five EFL interviewees (A, B, C, D, and E) used different languages when responding to greetings and gratitude, personal experiences, and textbook reading aloud. By analyzing these characteristics, researchers can better understand EFL interviewees' linguistic strategies for improving English competence and peer communication.

EFL interviewee A usually asks, "How are you?" or "What's happening?" about their classmates. This is a casual salutation. Interviewee B prefers conversational questions like "How are you doing?" or "What's new?" Friends often start conversations with these salutations. Interviewees C and E also like passionate greetings like "How are you doing?" and "What's up, friend?" The salutations give their conversations a joyful feel. Interviewee D tailors their greetings to their peers' language and setting. If their companions speak English, they say, "Hello, how are you?" or "Hello, it's a pleasure to see you!" If not, they salute in their native language. They care about helping native speakers of different languages communicate.

Interviewee A says they usually say "thank you" or "thanks a lot" when someone gives them a pen. A heartfelt and polite thank you. Conversely, Interviewee B expresses gratitude more confidently. Saying "Thank you so much!" or "Thanks a ton!" can effectively convey gratitude. Interviewee C says, "Thank you so much!" and "Thanks a lot!" B and C agree that informal English helps them feel comfortable using the language. In contrast, interviewers D and E say, "Thank you; your assistance is truly appreciated!" and "That was extremely kind of you; thank you very much!" Interviewees D and E emphasize the importance of thanking and acknowledging assistance in a language that facilitates multilingual communication.

Because they enjoy narrating personal events, all five respondents want to share their daily lives with their peers in simple English. To describe their unique experiences, they understand the necessity of using key words and idioms. This practice improves their English language skills and guarantees that their classmates understand and respond to them. They think that clearly sharing their personal experiences will help their peers comprehend and communicate.

Each of the five interviewees emphasizes reading English textbook dialogues aloud. They say this activity improved their speech and fluency. Reading the dialogues aloud boosts confidence and helps students speak English more naturally. Reading the textbook aloud can help students improve their English conversational intonation and cadence.

In conclusion, the five EFL interviewees' comments show that while their language preferences and choices differ, they nevertheless share some similarities. Each interviewee is committed to developing their English, communication, and linguistic skills. They use English salutations, admiration, personal experiences, and textbook reading aloud. These tactics show their determination to improve their English and self-confidence, which will help them interact with other students. By understanding these variances and similarities, teachers and language learners can learn effective approaches and tailor their methods. Some respondents' responses to questions about their English-language communication experiences and feelings answered this study's purpose. After a lot of practice, Interviewees C and E feel less apprehensive and easier while speaking English, but Interviewees A, B, and D feel confused, humiliated, contemptuous, and frightened. All five students cited a lack of vocabulary as a further obstacle, as well as mispronunciation that made them feel insecure and embarrassed when the person they were communicating with did not understand or misunderstand them. When asked about the biggest English communication challenges experienced by Vietnamese EFL learners and their causes, they gave inconsistent answers. Learners A, D, and E said that Vietnamese people's reluctance to speak is their biggest obstacle to communicating in English, as they prioritize grammar over creating an effective English-speaking environment. According to learners B and C, the biggest obstacle is a lack of learning motivation.

According to the analysis, Vietnamese English learners confront various challenges: Two studies from other countries, Dornyei (2005) and Hashimoto (2002), note that shy, anxious, and insecure students are more likely to become distracted when punished. Thus, people lose self-confidence and socialize less. Tasks and teachers face obstacles due to a lack of vocabulary, mispronunciations, and enthusiasm caused by an incomprehensible and uninteresting curriculum that primarily focuses on grammar, reading, and writing for assessments. Thus, students lose enthusiasm, even under pressure, and become lethargic and bored while studying English. Others agree with applied linguists (e.g., Dornyei, 2003) that teachers should improve L2 WTC in the classroom. Determine the learners' concerns, and use scaffolding (Hung & Nguyen, 2022) and encouraging approaches (Dornyei, 2003) to get them to talk. This will encourage student interaction. We thought environmental barriers were English communication gaps. Khajavy et al. (2016) say tranquil environments help students' imaginations communicate. Thus, people converse more without danger (Bui & Nguyen, 2022; Dorman & Fisher, 2006; Park, 2000). The pressure to pass national graduation English tests and the limited opportunities for target language usage in Vietnamese schools, where English is taught weekly for a few hours and "the teacher is expected to be the sole provider of experience in the target language" (Le, 1999, p. 74), appear to hurt teachers' motivation.

4.2. Vietnamese EFL learners' obstacles to communicate in English and the causes of these obstacles

It was requested that each of the five participants answer 10 questions on their experiences and the challenges they face when communicating in English. The findings presented a variety of perspectives on this heated topic. Every question was noted down and analyzed in the following manner:

Question 1: Can you tell me about your experiences communicating in English? What are some of the challenges you have faced?

Most interviewees had spoken English at school. Their English was spoken with native speakers from various countries. When speaking English with foreigners, they felt anxious and insecure. One student felt anxious when speaking English. These feelings arose for many reasons. Students were uncomfortable using English due to a lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, and English proficiency.

Question 2: How do you feel when you need to communicate in English? Are there any specific situations that make you feel more anxious or nervous?

Participants reported feeling worried, terrified, bewildered, and other negative emotions when compelled to speak English. Some had similar thoughts in class, while others experienced them while on holiday with their family. They interacted with foreigners. They felt they didn't have the language or confidence to answer the interlocutors' questions. Students also feel unprepared for school tests and exams, which increases their anxiety and tension.

Question 3: *Can you describe a time when you struggled to communicate in English? What were the obstacles you encountered?*

Students had trouble communicating in English in two situations. Students have to work together to teach a lesson. Students must utilize English to present in class. They frequently translated from Vietnamese to English due to their limited vocabulary. They embarrassed themselves, their lecturers, and their friends with their mispronunciations. However, students struggled to communicate with family in the US, UK, and Australia. Several of them couldn't understand their interlocutors because of their poor English. Their family couldn't understand them due to their poor speech and grammar. They stressed the importance of reading more to enhance their English.

Question 4: *In your opinion, what are the most common obstacles that Vietnamese EFL learners face when communicating in English? Why do you think these obstacles exist?*

Participants present four perspectives on this problem. They thought reserved youngsters had trouble speaking English. Vietnam's English curriculum prioritized reading and grammar above creative writing, causing this difficulty. Vietnam gave me a few chances to use English. Many participants indicated they couldn't speak English fluently because they didn't have a good environment to practice in. Teachers have no time to cover so much material.

Question 5: *How do these obstacles affect your willingness to communicate in English? Do you feel less confident or motivated to communicate when you encounter these obstacles?*

Most interviewees believed they felt fear and lacked confidence when faced with English challenges. This had a negative impact on the learners' brains, leading them to lose motivation to speak English in the future. When they ran into challenges communicating with their interlocutors, some of them planned to cut their conversations short. They were not willing to participate in the event or continue the dialogue. These challenges left them unhappy for an extended period of time.

Question 6: *What strategies have you used to overcome these obstacles? Have any of these strategies been successful?*

Students have many learning tools to overcome their obstacles. For instance, Learner A decided to focus more on listening and speaking. Another student practiced public speaking in private. Others advocate taking classes at a reputable language institute to improve their English. These amenities helped them improve their public speaking. Finally, one thinks joining an English-speaking group may help them learn the language. Students have found several language-improvement approaches beneficial.

Question 7: *How do you think your cultural background or previous language learning experiences have affected your ability to communicate in English?*

Most participants knew how varied cultures affect English. Their school's English class was boring. The teachers used only the texts, not the outside world. They believed various cultures had better communication and confidence. On the other hand, the learners' prior cultural backgrounds piqued their interest and made them curious, allowing them to explore languages and have English-language conversations.

Question 8: *How do you think your language proficiency level affects your ability to communicate in English? Are there specific language skills that you find more challenging than others?*

All participants agreed that language competency affected learners' communicative abilities. They claimed that English competence directly affects linguistic fluency. Students believe that watching movies or listening to music might improve listening and speaking skills, which may be important for communicating well. Writing is the hardest skill to learn. Reading and writing took longer than speaking, listening, and other skills. To enhance the quality of their products, they delved into a wealth of information, including examples of various writers' work. This aided my writing.

Question 9: *Can you describe a time when you felt successful in communicating in English? What made that experience successful?*

Students' English communication skills vary by context. Learner A stated that effective English usage occurs when the intended audience can understand the communication, regardless of context. Another student had a productive English conversation with their teacher in the first hour. Learner D showed great recollection when interacting with foreign museum visitors. They said self-confidence, patience, and effort were the most significant factors in English talks.

Question 10: *Based on your experiences, what recommendations would you have for improving English language learning and communication for Vietnamese EFL learners?*

Students, especially Vietnamese EFL learners, are eager to give feedback to enhance their English language abilities and communication. They advised students to speak English without fear with native speakers and outsiders. Body language, like eye contact and gestures, can effectively convey the message. They advised teachers to use English more and create a realistic learning

atmosphere. The last tip from students was "practice makes perfect." English is difficult to learn. Looking for ways to practice English could engage keen English learners.

When questioned about the challenges and root causes of issues English learners encounter when communicating in English, the majority of the learners interviewed expressed that the English teaching and learning programs in Vietnam possess numerous shortcomings, leading to students feeling unmotivated, depressed, and under pressure due to the lack of comprehensive recognition of their learning abilities and English skills. Brown's (2007) study indicated that classroom instruction may affect students' willingness to speak their second language. Students using English as a Foreign Language (EFL) communicate with teachers and peers.

Given the close relationship between human behavior and feeling and thinking, mood can also significantly influence learning. Stress, anxiety, and other negative emotions can impair learning and academic performance (Ellis, 2008; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Research by Ellis (2008), Horwitz (1986), and MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) supports this. Thus, the causes can be individual learners' incompetence or unwillingness to study, inappropriate English learning approaches, or the acceptance of English as a non-essential objective issue for progress toward their ideal future. All participants agreed that linguistic competency affected learners' communication. They held the belief that fluency directly correlated with English proficiency. Learners believe that watching movies or listening to music may improve one's listening and speaking skills, which may be necessary for efficient communication. Students will find that writing challenges them most. They stated that reading and writing took more time than listening, speaking, and other skills. They were required to read a wide range of materials, including works by various authors, in order to enhance their writing skills. By doing this, they enhanced the quality of their work. They did this to simplify student writing. Experts have gathered multiple opinions on the English teaching and learning methods that taught Vietnamese learners grammar, enabling them to pass written assessments. Vietnamese EFL learners desire to improve their speaking skills, but their study habits concentrate grammar and vocabulary above conversational communication skills, making it difficult for them to express themselves. People typically struggle to express themselves or avoid communicating due to fear or shyness (Nguyen, 2019).Classroom speaking is viewed as difficult in Asian cultures, which may contribute to shyness or a lack of confidence when speaking English. Although learners value their looks as a social asset, they may avoid communication in unpleasant situations (Bui & Nguyen, 2022; Park, 2000). Most respondents acknowledged the value of cultures in English language use when asked about their cultural background or past language learning experiences that had affected their English proficiency. They complained that learning English in school was meaningless. Teachers often depended on textbooks over real-world sources. They believed cultural differences improved communication and trust. The children's earlier cultural experiences piqued their interest and inspired them to study and speak English.

The learners who were interviewed talked about the challenges faced by English language learners in Vietnam and the factors they believed contributed to these issues. The students also suggested ways to improve English language teaching and learning in Vietnam for themselves and other instructors. Using a variety of learning methods, interviewee learners overcame barriers. For instance, Learner A decided to focus more on listening and speaking. Another student practiced public speaking in private. Others advocate taking classes at a reputable language institute to improve their English. These amenities helped them improve their public speaking. Finally, one thinks joining an English-speaking group may help them learn the language. Students have found several language-improvement approaches beneficial.

5. Conclusion
We provide the students with an extensive array of educational resources to assist them in overcoming their obstacles. Learner A, for example, elected to allocate additional time towards honing his speech and listening abilities. Another student regularly practices their public speaking skills on an individual basis. Additional individuals have proposed that they consider enrolling in courses at a reputable language institute as a means to improve their command of the English language. These facilities provided them with an environment in which to improve their public speaking skills. Lastly, one of them holds the belief that engaging in English-speaking group activities could potentially contribute positively to their endeavors to enhance their language proficiency. Learners have implemented several of the recommended strategies to enhance their language proficiency, and these approaches have demonstrated efficacy.

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