# EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF ORAL COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES ON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' LEARNING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS

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**Abstract**

*Students at Vinh Trach High School in rural An Giang province have faced persistent difficulties in developing English speaking skills, largely due to limited exposure to communicative practice. This study examined the effects of oral communicative activities on the speaking development of 44 eleventh-grade students through a 12-week classroom intervention. A mixed-methods design was employed, integrating a quasi-experimental pretest and posttest speaking assessment with a survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative findings showed a significant improvement in students' speaking performance, and strong reliability across questionnaire items. Qualitative results indicated that students viewed activities such as role plays, discussions, and interviews positively, noting gains in confidence and fluency. However, students expressed challenges related to limited vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, and fear of making mistakes. The study not only validates oral communicative activities effectively build fluency and confidence, but also highlights the importance of supportive, student-centered communicative teaching to reduce anxiety and promote meaningful oral interaction in rural learning contexts. These insights offer valuable guidance for teachers, school leaders, and future research aiming to improve English speaking instruction in similar rural contexts.*

**Keywords:** *English-speaking skills, high school, oral communicative activities, perceptions, practices.*

# KIỂM TRA NHỮNG ẢNH HƯỞNG CỦA CÁC HOẠT ĐỘNG GIAO TIẾP LÊN VIỆC HỌC KỸ NĂNG NÓI TIẾNG ANH CỦA HỌC SINH TRUNG HỌC PHỔ THÔNG

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**Tóm tắt**

  *Học sinh Trường Trung học phổ thông Vĩnh Trạch ở vùng nông thôn tỉnh An Giang gặp nhiều khó khăn trong việc phát triển kỹ năng nói tiếng Anh, chủ yếu do ít có cơ hội tiếp xúc với các hoạt động giao tiếp. Nghiên cứu này kiểm tra những ảnh hưởng của các hoạt động giao tiếp lên sự phát triển kỹ năng nói của 44 học sinh lớp 11 thông qua một thực nghiệm giảng dạy kéo dài 12 tuần. Một thiết kế phương pháp hỗn hợp được sử dụng, kết hợp bài kiểm tra nói trước và sau tác động theo hình thức bán thực nghiệm với bảng khảo sát và phỏng vấn. Kết quả định lượng cho thấy sự cải thiện đáng kể trong khả năng nói của học sinh và độ tin cậy cao của các mục trong bảng hỏi. Kết quả định tính chỉ ra rằng học sinh đánh giá tích cực các hoạt động như đóng vai, thảo luận và phỏng vấn, đáng chú ý là sự tự tin và độ lưu loát được cải thiện. Tuy nhiên, học sinh cũng bày tỏ một số khó khăn như hạn chế từ vựng, phát âm và nỗi sợ mắc lỗi. Nghiên cứu không chỉ khẳng định hiệu quả của các hoạt động giao tiếp trong việc xây dựng sự tự tin và tính lưu loát, mà còn nhấn mạnh tầm quan trọng của phương pháp dạy học giao tiếp lấy người học làm trung tâm nhằm giảm lo lắng và thúc đẩy giao tiếp ngôn ngữ có ý nghĩa trong bối cảnh nông thôn. Những phát hiện này mang lại những gợi ý giá trị cho giáo viên, ban lãnh đạo nhà trường và các nghiên cứu tương lai nhằm cải thiện việc dạy kỹ năng nói tiếng Anh trong những bối cảnh tương tự.*

  **Từ khóa:** *Hoạt động giao tiếp nói năng, kỹ năng nói tiếng Anh trung học phổ thông, nhận thức, thực hành.*

**1. Introduction**

English speaking competency is regarded as an important skill in today's globalized world, particularly for students in non-native English-speaking countries as Vietnam. It is essential for intellectual, professional, and personal success, and it allows individuals to engage in worldwide conversation and to benefit from global resources (Crystal, 2003). Furthermore, good speaking competence plays a significant role in supporting the students' confidence and social interactions, which allow them to become more successful in a variety of situations (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000). Oral communicative activities such as discussions, interviews, and debates are paramount in fluency development and critical thinking (Littlewood, 2011). These tasks enable students to make use of the language in natural ways and enhance an interactive, student-centred learning process (Tuan & Mai, 2015). International studies underline the positive impact of oral communicative tasks for enhancing English speaking skills, with Communicative Language Teaching giving emphasis to using English for purposeful interaction in real-life contexts to facilitate both fluency and accuracy (AL-Garni & Almuhammadi, 2019; Nunan, 1989). For instance, role plays, group discussions, and debate have been shown to be beneficial by research at the University of Jeddah (AL-Garni & Almuhammadi, 2019) and Tuyen Quang School for Excellence (Hue, 2024). In Vietnam, research has emphasized the importance of promoting interactive activities with speaking anxiety reduction and fluency promotion in high schools, including role plays and project-based tasks (Vy et al., 2024; Dinh & Tran, 2020; Khau & Huynh, 2022).

The Vietnamese government has recognized the urgent need to reform English language education, particularly in developing students' speaking skills, and has implemented several policies to address this issue. Notably, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) introduced the General Education English Language Curriculum under Circular No. 32/2018/TT-BGDDT, making English a compulsory subject from grades 3 to 12. In addition, Conclusion No. 91-KL/TW issued by the Politburo in August 2024 reaffirmed the goals of Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW, emphasizing English as a second language to enhance Vietnamese students' global competitiveness. Despite these efforts, students in rural areas still face significant obstacles in acquiring speaking skills due to limited exposure to English, traditional teaching methods, and economic constraints. These challenges are evident at Vinh Trach High School of An Giang Province, where English entrance scores remain among the lowest in the region, and the average score of 5.39 on the 2024 GCSE exam falls below the provincial mean. Many students come from low-income families, limiting their access to private tutoring and learning resources, while opportunities to use English outside the classroom are scarce. These factors collectively hinder the development of students' speaking abilities, stressing the urgent need to implement more oral communicative activities to enhance speaking competence .

In response to this context, the current study aims to assess the effects of oral communicative activities on eleventh-grade students' speaking development. The research would consider learners' perceptions of and opinions on English speaking skills, along with existing difficulties that hinder their target language. Specifically, the study is conducted to investigate and respond to the two research questions:

(1) To what extent do oral communicative activities affect English-speaking skills among 11A1 students at Vinh Trach High School in An Giang province?

(2) What are Vinh Trach High School students' perceptions of oral communicative activities in learning their English speaking skills?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. English Speaking Skills

Speaking skills are crucial in learning English, allowing learners to express their thoughts and engage in conversations both academically and socially. According to Mahbub and Hadina (2021), the ability to speak clearly is vital for effective participation in discussions and sharing ideas. Speaking involves several sub-skills, including fluency, accuracy, grammar, and pronunciation (Qasim, 2021; Mahmoud et al., 2024). Fluency, in particular, refers to the smooth and spontaneous use of language, while accuracy ensures correct grammar and pronunciation (Masuram & Sripada, 2020). Mastering these elements contributes to clearer communication, helping learners express themselves confidently and engage listeners effectively. Thus, speaking proficiency requires not only a strong grammatical foundation but also the ability to use language appropriately in real-life situations along with combining aspects like intonation and non-verbal communication (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2000).

### 2.2. Oral Communicative Activities

Oral communicative activities are designed around a concept widely used in communicative language teaching program where learners are engaged in structured face-to-face interactions to stimulate their speaking ability in real-life communication. These activities, including role plays, group discussions, debates, and problem-solving tasks foster fluency, accuracy, critical thinking, collaboration, and self-confidence while reducing speaking anxiety (AL-Garni & Almuhammadi, 2019; Luis, 2021). Worldwide, CLT-based activities have proven effective in promoting student participation and developing communication skills, as seen in studies with Chinese and Vietnamese students (Dinh & Tran, 2020). While challenges like resource limitations and traditional teaching methods persist, the continued adaptation and incorporation of interactive, student-centered techniques into curricula and teacher training are crucial for optimizing the impact of these activities on English language learners (Rao, 2019; Hue, 2024). Some oral communicative activities, such as role plays, interviews, debates, discussions, and project-based speaking tasks, have proved to be successful ways for helping students to improve their speaking skills.

First of all, interviews play a significant role in enhancing students' speaking skills and communicative competence. As stated in Sakale (2019), classroom interviews allow students to practice both formal and informal English through role reversal as interviewer and interviewee, helping them develop the ability to initiate and sustain dialogues. These activities promote authentic communication, provide opportunities for direct feedback, and improve clarity, coherence, and elaboration in speaking (Idham et al., 2024; Hue, 2024). Furthermore, interviews simulate real-life communication, boosting students' confidence and reducing speaking anxiety, ultimately strengthening their practical language skills in a supportive classroom environment, as noted by Sakale (2019).

Next, debates are an effective educational activity that enhances students' persuasive language skills and critical thinking. By requiring students to reason and present arguments, debates challenge and improve oral production (Syamdianita & Maharia, 2020). Debates also foster interaction in the classroom, creating an enjoyable and engaging environment where students actively share their opinions on a topic (Firmansyah & Valatansa, 2019). Moreover, debates encourage higher-order thinking and allow students to practice advanced vocabulary and dynamic language use, contributing to both communication and cognitive skill development (Tseng & Tsai, 2020). Integrating debates into the curriculum helps students develop essential skills for effective interaction.

In addition, role plays are highly effective in enhancing students' speaking skills and overall language proficiency by simulating real-life situations, such as ordering food or making appointments, which reinforces vocabulary and contextual language use (Thorne, 2020). Studies show that students who engage in role plays are more fluent and confident than those using traditional teaching methods (Assadi et al.,(2025)). Role plays also help improve fluency, vocabulary, and confidence, and encourage active classroom participation, as demonstrated by Truong and Le (2024). Additionally, role plays help students overcome shyness and fear by providing realistic communication scenarios, motivating them to participate actively (Katemba & Grace, 2023).

Unlike debates, with their emphasis on competition and formatted argumentation, discussions center on active listening, empathy, and exploration of different points of view (Luis, 2021). Discussion Pyramid Technique, as adopted by Buhari (2019), was an arranged pattern that allowed students to participate in conversation at varying levels of complexity, thereby boosting spoken fluency and activist involvement. Furthermore, Bohari (2020) discovered that small group discussions among the eleventh graders could facilitate the collaborative learning process, which also serves as a supportive setting to practice oral skills, leading to significant improvement in speaking proficiency. As Hue (2024) notes, mediated discussion also assists learners in acquiring conversational skills needed in a target language, such as turn-taking, active listening, and appropriate feedback to peers.

Project-based speaking activities, including video clips, PowerPoint presentations, and online presentations, effectively enhance students' speaking skills through collaborative research, creation, and presentation efforts. Especially, Chien et al. (2019) proved that peer assessment with spherical video-based virtual reality environments was highly effective for improving English speaking performance and learning perception. Similarly, Sirisrimangkorn (2021) demonstrated presentations for project-based learning as a powerful way to increase students' oral ability. Riswandi (2018) supported these findings by showing that the implementation of project-based learning strategies leads to substantial improvements in students' speaking skills. Similarly, Dewi (2020) stated the role of engaging students in project-based activities as a means to promote speaking proficiency.

### 2.3. The effects of Oral Communicative Activities on Speaking Skill Development

Oral communicative tasks play a great role in supporting students' speaking skills by giving students real speaking contexts. According to Adem and Berkessa (2022), these activities significantly improve speaking abilities in secondary EFL classrooms, fostering student interaction and increasing oral responses. Tasks like role plays and discussions help students practice vocabulary and grammar in context, enhancing fluency and accuracy (AL-Garni & Almuhammadi, 2019; Buhari, 2019). Research by Velarde et al. (2022) shows that communicative tasks positively impact fluency, confidence, and language accuracy, with activities such as debates, group discussions, and collaborative tasks improving oral production. Moreover, oral tasks boost students' confidence and reduce speaking anxiety, with controlled activities like interviews and dialogues fostering a relaxed classroom environment conducive to fluency (Idham et al., 2024; Bohari, 2020). Role play has been shown to effectively improve students' speaking skills by increasing their confidence and encouraging more active participation in communication activities (Ayuningtias & Yana, 2019). Additionally, debates and group work enhance critical thinking, persuasive language skills, and teamwork, which are essential for both language proficiency and interpersonal development (Tipmontree & Tasanameelarp, 2020; Alharbi, 2021). Despite extensive international research highlighting these benefits, very few studies have examined how oral communicative activities impact speaking development among students in rural high schools.

Existing researches in Vietnam often focus on urban contexts or general classroom challenges, leaving a gap in understanding how specific interactive speaking activities support learners in resource-limited rural settings.

### 3. Research Methods

### 3.1. Research Design

A mixed-methods research design combining a quasi-experimental approach with qualitative methods was used to examine the impact of oral communicative activities on the EFL speaking performance of high school students. According to Rogers and Revesz (2019), quasi-experimental designs are useful when random assignment is not possible. This study incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of students' progress and experiences. Quantitative data from pretest and posttest assessments, along with survey responses, provided measurable insights into students' speaking skills and their beliefs, difficulties, and practices in speaking lessons.

Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews offered a deeper understanding of students' emotional states, motivations, and personal experiences (McKim, 2017). A mixed methods approach is ideal for studying speaking skills development, which involves cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions (Qasserras, 2023). While quantitative tools like scoring rubrics and paired t-tests objectively assess performance, qualitative interviews capture students' perceptions that may not be reflected in numerical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Mahapatra, 2024). This combined approach strengthens the credibility and validity of the findings and helps to explore the effects of oral communicative activities on English speaking skills at Vinh Trach High School in An Giang province.

### 3.2. Participants

This study involved a total of 44 eleventh-grade students from class 11A1 at Vinh Trach High School, comprising 22 male and 22 female students. These participants were selected through convenience sampling (Mertens, 2005) and based on their prior involvement in oral communicative activities during their tenth-grade English classes, which provided them with initial exposure to speaking practice. While the students already had a basic level of English, they noted that they had few chances to actually use it in their daily lives, so they were all in the process of relearning and enhancing their speaking skills. Most students live in the countryside, and the majority of participants come from farming families, reflecting the school's socioeconomic background. Only a few students took English courses outside the classroom, while the others never studied with a foreign teacher. Particularly, no students had experienced formal English proficiency examinations.

### 3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The study used multiple data collection tools, including speaking tests, questionnaires, and interviews, to understand the effects of communicative activities on students' speaking abilities. SPSS software (version 26.0) was used to analyze speaking test scores and questionnaire data. A pretest was administered before the intervention, and a post-test was conducted after the 12-week intervention. Each student was randomly assigned a topic from the five topics in the second semester of English 11 Global Success, published by Vietnam Education Publishing House. Students had five minutes to prepare, and then gave a brief oral presentation, followed by follow-up questions. Two English teachers assessed each student's speaking performance using a 20-point rubric that covered components such as content, organization, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. A standardized twenty-point scoring rubric was developed in line with the orientation of the 2018 General Education English

Language Curriculum as well as the practical learning conditions at the school, through consensus among the English group at Vĩnh Trạch High School, and approved by the school administration. The scores were averaged to minimize bias, and the results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and paired t-tests to check for significant improvements.

In the second phase, the 29-item questionnaire was developed and validated by adapting constructs from extensively cited studies on Communicative Language Teaching (Nunan, 1989; AL-Garni & Almuhammadi, 2019), oral communicative practices such as interviews, debates, role plays, and discussions (Sakale, 2019; Syamdianita & Maharia, 2020; Thorne, 2020; Buhari, 2019), and common speaking challenges related to vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, confidence, and anxiety (Qasim, 2021; Masuram & Sripada, 2020; Mahmoud et al., 2024; Baker & MacIntyre, 2000). It comprised three sections: (1) students' practices in using oral communicative activities (items 1–11), (2) perceptions of these activities (items 12–20), and (3) challenges in speaking English (items 21–29). There was from 1 (never) to 5 (always) for section 1. Each item was constructed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for sections 2 and 3. Its content validity was ensured through the review by two English teacher colleagues and further refined through a pilot test with 10 students from the target population. The questionnaire was distributed and collected within a 30-minute timeframe, with clear instructions provided to ensure a high response rate.

Finally, following the previous literature concerning oral communicative activities, including participation, perceptions, and common speaking challenges and the qualitative interviewing approach for language learning proposed by Creswell & Creswell (2017) interview questions were conducted with a purposive sample of 10 students (5 males and 5 females). The final interview version was structured into three components with fourteen items: students' practices (Items 1–6), perceptions (Items 7–10), and challenges (Items 11–14). The interviews were recorded with informed consent, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to identify key patterns and insights into how communicative activities influenced their speaking skills.

During the 12-week intervention plan conducted in class 11A1, a variety of communicative and collaborative activities were practised to enhance students' English speaking skills while exploring meaningful topics. In Weeks 1 and 2, students studied *Unit 6: Preserving Cultural Heritage*. They engaged in pair work through heritage preservation methods, practiced conversations about giving directions, and participated in interviews and group discussions on ways to preserve cultural sites in Vietnam, particularly in An Giang. Weeks 3 to 5 focused on *Unit 7: Education Options for School-Leavers*. Students compared different post-school education choices through pair work, debates, and group discussions, exploring vocational training versus academic study and comparing education systems in Vietnam and the UK. Next, a project on job options for school-leavers was developed culminating in video presentations. In Weeks 6 to 8, the lessons covered *Unit 8: Becoming Independent*. Learners discussed the concept of independence and practiced life skills such as doing laundry and cooking rice. Students also debated cultural differences in independence between American and Vietnamese teenagers, and took part in group discussions on basic life skills. Weeks 9 and 10 addressed *Unit 9: Social Issues*, where students examined peer pressure, shared personal experiences through interviews, practiced expressing sympathy, and discussed common social issues affecting Vietnamese teens. Finally, Weeks 11 and 12 focused on *Unit 10: The Ecosystem*. Students discussed biodiversity protection strategies, debated the best methods for preserving ecosystems, and analyzed how similar environmental projects could be implemented and adapted for Vietnam.

### 3.4. Ethical considerations

The study followed Dong Thap University's ethical regulations and general educational research principles to ensure credibility and integrity. All participants gave informed consent and joined voluntarily, knowing their rights and freedom to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained using coded identifiers, and all collected data were securely stored. Interviews took place in private, respectful settings to help participants feel comfortable sharing their views without anxiety. The study minimized potential risks, ensured a non-judgmental environment, and complied with all ethical guidelines to protect participants' well-being and use data responsibly.

### 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1.Results

*4.11.Obtaining the scale's validity and reliability*

**Table 1. Item-Total Statistics of the Questionnaire**

| Item | Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted | Item | Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0.324 | 0.813 | 16 | 0.426 | 0.804 |
| 2 | 0.405 | 0.806 | 17 | 0.328 | 0.808 |
| 3 | 0.313 | 0.809 | 18 | 0.261 | 0.811 |
| 4 | 0.225 | 0.810 | 19 | 0.367 | 0.807 |
| 5 | 0.333 | 0.812 | 20 | 0.322 | 0.809 |
| 6 | 0.425 | 0.812 | 21 | 0.348 | 0.808 |
| 7 | 0.508 | 0.801 | 22 | 0.498 | 0.814 |
| 8 | 0.461 | 0.814 | 23 | 0.420 | 0.804 |
| 9 | 0.312 | 0.809 | 24 | 0.592 | 0.823 |
| 10 | 0.576 | 0.800 | 25 | 0.373 | 0.806 |
| 11 | 0.367 | 0.807 | 26 | 0.340 | 0.808 |
| 12 | 0.366 | 0.807 | 27 | 0.285 | 0.810 |
| 13 | 0.455 | 0.804 | 28 | 0.492 | 0.801 |
| 14 | 0.376 | 0.807 | 29 | 0.336 | 0.812 |
| 15 | 0.337 | 0.808 | | | |

The item-total statistics revealed that 26 out of 29 items showed positive correlations, ranging from 0.312 to 0.592, indicating strong consistency and reliability across the scale. Although three items (4, 18, and 27) had slightly lower values, they still exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.30. High correlations for items such as 24, 10, 7, 22, and 28 demonstrated their strong contribution to measuring students' perceptions, challenges, and practices in oral communicative activities. The Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted values ranged from 0.800 to 0.823, with the highest alpha observed when Item 24 and the lowest

when Item 10 were deleted. The small difference between these values indicates that removing any single item would not meaningfully improve the overall reliability of the scale. Overall, the results confirm that the questionnaire is consistent, stable, and reliable, providing strong support for its use in further data analysis. No negative or weak correlations were found, confirming the questionnaire's validity and internal coherence in assessing communicative learning approaches among 11A1 students at Vinh Trach High School.

*4.1.2. Pretest and Posttest Speaking Findings*

SPSS version 26.0 was used to analyze the data, including the Descriptive Statistics of Students' Speaking Scores and the One-Sample t-test results. These analyses were conducted to compare the students' pre-test and post-test speaking scores

**Table 2. Comparison of Students' Pretest and Posttest Speaking Scores (N=44)**

| Tests | Min | Max | Mean | SD | T | DF | SIG. (2-TAILED) | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| *Pretest* | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.67 | 0.24 | 45.41 | 43 | 0.00 | 1.60 | 1.75 |
| *Posttest* | 1.40 | 2.00 | 1.85 | 0.15 | 81.71 | 43 | 0.00 | 1.80 | 1.90 |

The analysis of students' pretest and posttest speaking scores revealed a clear improvement in performance following the implementation of oral communicative activities. Data from 44 students showed that pretest scores ranged from 1.00 to 2.00, while post-test scores increased to a range of 1.40–2.00, reflecting overall progress and reduced performance gaps among students. The mean score rose from 1.67 (SD = 0.24) to 1.85 (SD = 0.15), indicating both higher achievement and greater consistency after the intervention. A one-sample t-test using a test value of 0 confirmed that both pretest (t = 45.41, p < .001, 95% CI [1.60, 1.75]) and post-test (t = 81.71, p < .001, 95% CI [1.80, 1.90]) scores were significantly above the test value, demonstrating statistically significant learning gains. The increase in mean scores and reduction in variability together validate the effectiveness of the intervention in enhancing students' speaking performance as well as the positive impact of the oral communicative activities on students' speaking skills.

*4.1.3. Questionnaire Results*

**Table 3. Students' responses to the effects and perceptions of oral communicative activities in learning English speaking lessons (N=44)**

*Cronbach's Alpha = 0.814 for 29 Items*

| Items | Mean | SD | Items | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 4.32 | 0.800 | 16 | 4.07 | 0.759 |
| 2 | 4.39 | 0.618 | 17 | 4.30 | 0.734 |
| 3 | 4.25 | 0.719 | 18 | 4.27 | 0.660 |
| 4 | 4.45 | 0.589 | 19 | 4.182 | 0.7857 |
| 5 | 4.34 | 0.608 | 20 | 4.27 | 0.727 |

| Items | Mean | SD | Items | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **6** | 4.39 | 0.689 | **21** | 4.09 | 0.709 |
| **7** | 4.16 | 0.680 | **22** | 4.05 | 0.746 |
| **8** | 4.50 | 0.629 | **23** | 3.93 | 0.846 |
| **9** | 4.32 | 0.708 | **24** | 3.84 | 0.645 |
| **10** | 4.14 | 0.632 | **25** | 3.89 | 0.813 |
| **11** | 4.20 | 0.734 | **26** | 3.91 | 0.709 |
| **12** | 3.91 | 0.676 | **27** | 3.93 | 0.789 |
| **13** | 4.16 | 0.645 | **28** | 3.95 | 0.776 |
| **14** | 4.32 | 0.674 | **29** | 3.84 | 0.568 |
| **15** | 4.02 | 0.821 | | | |

As seen in Table 3, the descriptive statistics reveal that students expressed consistently positive perceptions across all 29 items, with mean scores ranging from 3.84 to 4.50 on a five-point Likert scale. The highest mean score was found in Item 8 (M = 4.50, SD = 0.629), suggesting that students showed particularly strong agreement and satisfaction with that aspect of the questionnaire. Similarly, items such as Item 4 (M = 4.45, SD = 0.589), Item 2 (M = 4.39, SD = 0.618), and Item 6 (M = 4.39, SD = 0.689) also received high mean scores, indicating that students generally held favorable views toward these areas. In contrast, Items 24 and 29 (M = 3.84) recorded the lowest means, showing slightly less agreement but still reflecting a positive response overall. The standard deviations, which ranged from 0.57 to 0.85, suggest a moderate level of consistency among participants' answers, with no extreme variation across responses. Taken together, these results demonstrate that students had an overall positive and relatively uniform perception, highlighting their agreement and satisfaction with the aspects measured by the questionnaire.

### 3.1.4. Qualitative Insights from Interviews

*The Impacts of Oral Communicative Activities in English Speaking Classes.*

Eight in ten students reported that they participated in oral communicative activities occasionally, mostly when assigned by the teacher or during speaking-focused lessons. S1 explained, *"I usually practice speaking when the teacher tells us to do role plays or group discussion, about once a week".* Similarly, S6 noted that speaking activities were more common during revision weeks or project presentations. Students stated that they primarily engaged in role plays, pair discussions, and classroom interviews, with role plays being the most frequently assigned. S8 commented, *"Our teacher often gives us situations like ordering food or asking for directions".* S4 shared that they sometimes prepared scripted dialogues in pairs, while S10 mentioned that group discussions about familiar topics (like hobbies or school rules) were the most comfortable. Interestingly, 4 students mentioned that while debates were sometimes introduced, they were less common and mostly optional due to the difficulty level. Only 3 out of 10 students reported that they tried to practice speaking English outside of class, usually by talking to friends, practicing with siblings, or mimicking YouTube videos. S6 said, *"Sometimes I watch English shows and try to repeat after them, but I don't always understand."* However, two students admitted that they rarely practiced speaking outside class, citing reasons such as lack of speaking partners, fear of making mistakes, and limited access to technology or English environments. S4 said, *"I don't speak English at home, and I don't know*

*how to practice alone.". In short, m*ost students said they spoke English during class when assigned tasks like role plays, discussions, or interviews, with role plays being the most common, while a few students practiced speaking outside class because of limited opportunities, confidence issues, or lack of support.

*Students' perceptions of classroom communicative activities for speaking skill enhancement.*

Most students wrote favorably of oral communicative activities, primarily in terms of confidence, fluency, and "real" communication. In particular, eight of the ten participants related activities like discussions, role plays, interviews, to *" extremely helpful" "interesting," or "effective."* For example, S1 reported that the experiential activities built her confidence and her ability to use English in real situations, and S1 described how it improved their fluency and interactional skills. Role plays and interviews were considered as the most beneficial activities for enhancing oral communication skills by the students. They described this as practical, feasible and helpful to increasing confidence in themselves. S2 said that role plays helped increase confidence and flexibility in communication. S8 remarked: *"It's true that at first, I was worried, but after two or three interviews, I was able to respond faster and more effectively.".* On the whole, students tended to view oral communicative activities as lively weapons through which English speaking lessons were made interesting. When asked which oral communicative activities were most helpful, a large proportion of students, representing 80% of the sample, favored discussions and role plays. They cited these activities as practical, interactive, and suitable for small group learning. S9 noted, *"Discussions help me think in English and understand my friends better,"* suggesting that these activities enhance both cognitive engagement and interpersonal understanding.

The findings also discovered several key challenges that affected students' participation in oral communicative activities. The most common issue, reported by the majority, was limited vocabulary and weak grammar, which made it difficult for them to express ideas clearly and confidently, often leading to hesitation or silence during discussions and role plays. Many students also struggled with fear and anxiety, worrying about making mistakes or being laughed at, which reduced their willingness to speak, especially in front of peers. External factors such as limited speaking time in class, noisy and overcrowded classrooms, and a lack of opportunities to practice English at home further hindered progress. Despite these difficulties, both quantitative and qualitative results confirmed that oral communicative activities had a significant positive impact on students' speaking performance, with mean scores improving from 1.67 to 1.85 ($p < .001$) and high reliability across questionnaire items (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.814). Students expressed positive perceptions of activities like debates, group discussions, and project-based speaking, recognizing their value in improving fluency and confidence.

### 3.2. Discussion

This section presents findings from quantitative and qualitative data organized through two research questions: (1) how oral communicative activities affected learning English speaking skills for 11A1 students at Vinh Trach High School, An Giang province, and (2) what students' perceptions and challenges are related to speaking activities in learning English speaking skills.

For the first research question, the findings revealed that oral communicative activities significantly improved the English speaking skills of 11A1 students at Vinh Trach High School, as shown in Table 2 by the increase in mean scores from 1.67 (pre-test) to 1.85 (post-test, $p < .001$), with a decrease in standard deviation from 0.24 to 0.15, indicating more

consistent performance across learners. This supports previous studies by Al-Garni and Almuhammadi (2019) and Hue (2024), confirming the effectiveness of communicative tasks such as role plays, debates, and group discussions in enhancing fluency and confidence. Questionnaire results further demonstrated high student engagement, with strong agreement on the benefits of collaborative learning (M = 4.29–4.39) and debate participation (M = 4.32, SD = 0.67, $p < .001$), consistent with findings by Huynh (2024) and Velarde et al. (2022). Qualitative interview data also showed that students felt more confident and capable of expressing ideas in real-life situations after participating in these interactive tasks, echoing Tuan and Mai's (2015) and Littlewood's (2011) emphasis on the importance of contextual communication practice. With a Cronbach's alpha of 0.814 and strong item-total correlations, the results confirm the reliability of the study and underscore the value of interaction-focused approaches in developing speaking proficiency, particularly in rural educational contexts, aligning with Baker and MacIntyre's (2000) view that cooperative speaking tasks promote inclusive and effective learning environments. The combination of robust quantitative results, underscored by significant statistical values, with rich qualitative insights, paints a more comprehensive picture of the transformative potential of oral communicative activities in the language learning process.

For another research question, the findings show that classroom speaking activities play a vital role in developing students' English speaking skills. Questionnaire results (Table 3) indicated consistently high scores (M > 3.9), with debates (M = 4.32) and project-based tasks (M = 4.30) being the most favored. Interviews supported these results, as students shared that interactive tasks like discussions, role plays, and interviews made them feel more confident and comfortable using English, similar to the findings by Huynh (2024) and Dinh and Tran (2020). While students appreciated role plays (Q12, M = 3.91), many found debates and interviews more effective for improving fluency and complex language use, reinforcing Tuan and Mai's (2015) idea that varied communicative activities develop well-rounded speaking abilities. Students also expressed a desire for more creative and technology-based speaking opportunities, echoing trends noted by Chien et al. (2019). However, challenges remained, particularly limited vocabulary (M = 4.09), fear of making mistakes (M = 3.91), and lack of ideas (M = 4.05), which reduced participation and confidence, issues also observed by Ahmed (2022) and Al-Garni and Almuhammadi (2019). Interviews revealed that anxiety and limited opportunities to practice outside school made it difficult for students to apply English in daily life, consistent with Khau and Huỳnh (2022) who emphasized the importance of emotional support and peer interaction in reducing speaking anxiety. Overall, the results suggest that while communicative classroom activities effectively build fluency and confidence, teachers should also address emotional barriers and provide more varied, engaging, and supportive learning environments to help students use English more naturally and confidently.

### 4. Conclusion and Implications

This study explores how oral communicative activities enhance English-speaking skills among 11A1 students at Vinh Trach High School and examines their perceptions and challenges toward these tasks. Results showed that activities like role plays, interviews, and discussions effectively improved students' fluency, confidence, and participation while reducing anxiety. Students adopted strategies such as practicing with peers and scripting before speaking, though some still relied on memorization and needed more support for spontaneous communication. Despite their positive attitudes, challenges such as limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, and uneven participation persisted. Overall, the findings confirm the effectiveness of communicative language teaching in developing speaking skills and highlight the need for more personalized and supportive teaching methods to help students overcome linguistic and emotional barriers.

This study provides key implications for improving English-speaking instruction. Students should take a more active role by practicing English regularly, embracing mistakes as part of learning, and working with peers to build fluency and confidence. Teachers need to design engaging, level-appropriate speaking tasks such as role plays, discussions, and interviews, while fostering a supportive classroom that encourages participation and risk-taking. School administrators should integrate oral communicative activities into the curriculum and provide ongoing teacher training in communicative language teaching. For future research, broader studies across diverse and rural contexts are needed to examine how factors like anxiety, classroom environment, and teacher support affect speaking performance and long-term language confidence.

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# APPENDIX 1

## SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

*Please give your opinion after each statement below by putting a tick (✔) in the box.*

| *Section 1: Students' practices regarding oral communicative activities in learning English speaking lessons* | *Never* | *Rarely* | *Sometimes* | *Often* | *Always* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I actively practice speaking English with my partner during lessons. | | | | | |
| 2. I participate in group activities in speaking lessons | | | | | |
| 3. I engage in interview-based speaking activities during English lessons. | | | | | |
| 4. I take part in debate activities with my classmates | | | | | |
| 5. I perform role plays to practice real-life communication situations in English | | | | | |
| 6. I contribute to project-based speaking activities such as presentations or video recordings. | | | | | |
| 7. I receive fair and constructive feedback from my teacher and classmates on my speaking performance. | | | | | |
| 8. I give positive feedback or compliments to my classmates during speaking activities when appropriate. | | | | | |
| 9. I feel encouraged and motivated by the classroom environment to practice speaking English. | | | | | |
| 10. I learn English speaking through interactive lesson plans that include games, visual aids, and rewards. | | | | | |
| 11. I use helpful expressions, model sentence structures, and correct grammar provided by my teacher to improve my speaking skills. | | | | | |
| *Section 2: Students' perceptions of classroom communicative activities for speaking skill enhancement* | *Strongly disagree* | *Disgree* | *Neutral* | *Agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 12. Role-plays help me improve my speaking fluency and confidence in English. | | | | | |
| 13. Group discussions encourage me to express my thoughts more naturally and improve my communication skills. | | | | | |
| 14. Participating in debates enhances my ability to use complex language structures and develop critical thinking. | | | | | |
| 15. Interview activities improve my ability to ask and answer questions effectively in English. | | | | | |
| 16. Project-based speaking activities, such as presentations or video recordings, help me become more confident in speaking English. | | | | | |
| 17. The oral communicative activities used in my English class help me think more critically and express my opinions better. | | | | | |
| 18. Oral communicative activities make learning English more engaging and enjoyable. | | | | | |
| 19. Speaking activities in class help me become more comfortable communicating in real-life situations. | | | | | |
| 20. By participating in oral communicative activities, I have expanded my vocabulary and improved my pronunciation. | | | | | |
| *Section 3: Students' challenges in implementing oral communicative activities for English-speaking lessons* | *Strongly disagree* | *Disgree* | *Neutral* | *Agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 21. Lack of vocabulary in English | | | | | |
| 22. Having no idea what to say | | | | | |
| 23. Confused about arranging words | | | | | |
| 24. Knowing a few grammar structures and useful expressions | | | | | |
| 25. Lack of confidence when speaking English | | | | | |
| 26. Afraid of making errors in class, as I will be laughed at by my friends | | | | | |
| 27. Difficult-to-pronounce words | | | | | |
| 28. Lack of a friendly and motivating learning environment | | | | | |
| 29. Hard to cooperate with groups or teams | | | | | |

**APPENDIX 2**

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**PART 1: Students' practices regarding oral communicative activities in learning English speaking lessons**

1. How often do you actively participate in oral communicative activities during English speaking lessons?

2. What do you usually prepare for oral communicative activities in English-speaking lessons?

3. How do your classmates support or influence your participation in oral communicative activities?

4. When participating in speaking activities, do you prefer working in pairs, small groups, or speaking individually? Why?

5. How do you deal with mistakes when speaking English? Do mistakes make you feel discouraged, or do you use them to improve?

6. What experiences have you had when participating in oral communicative activities, such as interviews, debates, discussions, role plays, and project-based speaking tasks, during your English speaking lessons?

**PART 2: Students' perceptions of classroom communicative activities for speaking skill enhancement**

7. What do you think about investigating oral activities like discussions, role-plays, interviews, and debates in learning English speaking?

8. What kinds of oral communicative activities, like interviews, debates, discussions, role plays, and project-based speaking tasks, do you find the most helpful for improving your speaking ability?

9. What kinds of oral communicative activities, like interviews, debates, discussions, role plays, and project-based speaking tasks, do you find the least effective for improving your speaking ability?

10. What changes have you had when examining oral activities (interviews, debates, discussions, role plays, and project-based speaking tasks) in your English speaking lessons?

**PART 3: Students' challenges in implementing oral communicative activities for English-speaking lessons**

11. Have you ever had a bad experience when speaking English? What happened?

12. What things make you feel hard to work in groups in speaking lessons?

13. What specific aspects of speaking (e.g., pronunciation, grammar, fluency, vocabulary) do you find the most challenging?

14. Do you feel lack of confidence when speaking English in front of your classmates and teachers? Why?