The Problems of English Speaking of Grade 12 Students at Paktha Secondary School in Laos

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were 1) to study the problems of English speaking; 2) to analyze the problems of English speaking; 3) to propose the ways to solve the problems of English speaking of grade 12 students at Paktha Secondary School in Laos. This research used a mixed method combining both quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions, the study was based on the analysis of 30 questionnaires, which were distributed to 104 students of grade 12, to know the problems of English speaking and to suggest them the best ways to improve English speaking. In addition, 5 key informant teachers were interviewed to observe vividly their experiences in teaching English as second language.

The finding of the problems in this study shows that the most of students faced the difficulties in English speaking in a very short period, lack of vocabulary and lose confidence to speak with another, which were totaled rate at high level ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 4.07, S.D. = 0.68). The finding of the ways to solve the problems show that many respondents required to make self-motivation and

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to use various strategies to support them on learning English speaking such as; reading more English books, listening to English music, watching English movies, practicing with friends, teachers and other people, which were totaled rate at high level ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$) = 4.38, S.D. = 0.50)

According to the in-depth interview, most of the teachers reported that students were lacked of confidence, lacked of skills in learning languages and the ways to solve the problems were to make confidence, motivation and practice more and more in the daily live.

Keywords: English Speaking Skill, English Speaking Problems, Laos Students

Introduction

Being accepted for years, English language is very meaningful and most spoken around the world, and most of the people learn this language in order to have better occupation, career, job security, in order way to communicate more effectively with English spoken people .Presently, English is more powerful in Laos because Lao people are now using the social networks and the varieties of cultural all around the world .Therefore, Lao people should adapt themselves in order to be able to communicate in English thus to keep up with those situations, and to provide a good servicing to the visitors.

There are many languages in the world but only some languages are used by the people as a global language in international forum such as English, Chinese, Russian, Italian and Spanish, among them, English becomes more popular than other languages in the modern world .For over 60 nations in the world use English as their official language, and have a dominant place in a further 20 .It is also dominant in all six continents.

There were plenty numbers of students starting their English since they were in secondary school .But unfortunately, could not help them to communicate with foreigners .In contrast, it made them less confidence .This might affect to get an opportunity as a profession and to support higher education in the future .The Ministry of Education has recognized that kind of problems, and they instituted the foreign language curriculum)English program (started from secondary school in order to open more chances to teenagers .So, they can be familiar with English skill for self-development, to pursue their further knowledge and paving way for their future career . According to Ellis, Mark & Johnson, Christine "Classroom activity is one of the most effective methods to generate chances for students interacting with others, providing them to be able to communicate efficiently prepare for speaking in the current situation, and also to generate English speaking confidence".

After Laos established its independence as Lao People Democratic Republic)Lao PDR (in 1975, the English language has played the important role of the country development .Various international organizations were appropriately accepted by the government policy assistant for developing the Lao country .However, at the moment the English language was limited use, because the majority of the language officially used as Lao language used in official documents of the government and medium of teaching and learning processes in institutions including secondary school and higher education levels.

Paktha secondary school is only one higher secondary school in the district of Paktha, which is located in the north west of the district; it is approximately 47 kilometers far from Bokeo province to the south .It was built in many years ago and taught a lot of students in several periods of times .But

anyway, there are still the problems with the students who are studying in the higher class or higher levels because of most of them could not speak English well; they still have the problems on their communication with the foreigners or the visitors as English spoken .In real conversation situation is ranked as the second most important problem .Another major factor that caused speaking problems is anxiety, which make the students lose confidence and hinder their ability to speak English effectively.

Based on the references above, the researcher would like to show the students how to aware of speaking English language which can help them to overcome their limitations and problems in learning especially in speaking ability .Students should know how native speakers use language in real life situations and have the ability to communicate with others effectively, furthermore, language learners must also acquire the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange owing to the fact that effective oral communication is called for the speakers to use the language appropriately in various social interactions .The researcher was interested to study the research entitle "The Problems of English Speaking of Grade 12 Students at Paktha Secondary School, Paktha district, Bokeo province, Laos". According to Tarigan, 1987, cited in Musaddat, 2008, said that Speaking is required by people to interact among them .In speaking activity, many things that should be paid attention, not only relate to what is being spoken, what the language is used, but also who is our interlocutor .In addition, a good speaker should pay attention what the topic is being spoken by him, what the language that he/she uses in order to be understood easily by his listener, and to whom he/she speaks .Hence, speaking is a tool to communicate ideas that are arranged and developed accordance with listener's need .According to Scott, learning to speak a foreign language

requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules .Students should know how native speakers use language in real life situations and have the ability to communicate with others effectively .Diversity in interaction involves not only verbal communication but also paralinguistic elements of speech such as pitch, stress and intonation.

Objectives of Research

1. To study the problems of English speaking of grade 12 students at Paktha secondary school in Laos.

2. To analyze the problems of English speaking of grade 12 students at Paktha secondary school in Laos.

3. To propose the ways to solve the problems of English speaking of grade 12 students at Paktha secondary school in Laos.

Research Methodology

The researcher designed both of quantitative and qualitative research, and the base of collecting the data are focused on questionnaires and in-depth interview. Therefore, this research is mainly on the problems of English speaking of grade 12 students at Paktha secondary school, Paktha distrct, Bokeo province, Laos.

Quantitative data was to provide the respondents' attitudes towards the speaking problems of 104 students in grade 12 at Paktha secondary school, Paktha district, Bokeo province in Laos. They are taking an English course in the semester of 2019-2020 academic years. The information got from the questionnaires was analyzed by $\bar{x}$ and S.D., and then it was interpreted to show the real information.

Qualitative data was to determine the improvement of key informant's attitudes in speaking and teaching ability of 5 key informants who are teaching English language at Paktha Secondary School in Laos, by providing them topics to speak, interview and discuss with them then recording with tape and video recorder.

Percentages, average mean, and standard deviation are employed to provide the level and extent in studying the English speaking skill, problems and solutions, of grade 12 students at Paktha secondary school, Paktha district, Bokeo province in Laos. Therefore, research design is the most important of data collection.

Reliability refer to the consistency of a measure. An instrument is considered reliable if we get the same result repeatedly (Richard, Platt & Platt, 1999). Then each time of test is administered to a subject, the result should be approximately the same. This study will be reliable, and can be administered with confidence that the measurement error will be minimal.

Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what its claims to measure (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995) it is vital for an instrument to be valid in order for the result to be accurately applied and interpreted (Richard, Platt & Platt, 1999). In other words, validity determines whether the research truly measure what it is intended to measure or how truthful the research are. The research general determine validity by asking a series of questions, and often look for answers in the other research.

Primary Data

Primary data is collecting information from the target group of the previous research study, consisting of the 104 students, by answering the questionnaires, the researcher makes up the questions and suggestions, opinions about the problems of English speaking and the ways to solve the problems of English speaking skills. Especially, in-depth interview, the researcher has emphasized those teachers in English subjects.

Secondary Data

Secondary data is collecting information from documentary survey such as academic books, theses, journals; these things are used for supporting information in this study. The documentary survey is provided as guidelines to amplify the research to be completed from the previous study.

Analysis of data from the questionnaires

1. The results from questionnaires of the students' background information such as gender, age, grade was calculated by frequency and percentage.

2. The student's opinions on the problems of English speaking were analyzed by using arithmetic mean and standard deviation.

3. The students' opinions on the way to solve the problems of English speaking were analyzed by using arithmetic mean and standard deviation.

Analysis of data from the in-depth interview

The In-depth interviews were transcribed immediately after each interview. All data obtained from the interviewees were noted from voices recorder and analyzed the data by using the three competencies which were identified by Henderson (1995) as follows: organize disparate information into categories, analyzed the key points that support decision-making and detach self from the finding and report negative finding data for decision-making.

Results of Research

Table 1: The cause of the problem of English speaking skills.

The result from the cause of the problems of English speaking skill, the researcher had collected and analyzed then showed in the table were as follows:

No	Statements	$\overline{\mathbf{X}}$	S.D.	Levels
1	I feel too shy to speak English.	4.34	1.011	High
2	I Have a limited vocabulary knowledge.	4.14	.818	High
3	I feel nervous and worried when speaking English.	4.18	.922	High
4	My English pronunciation is very poor.	4.10	.950	High
5	I feel pressure in giving a speech.	4.08	.932	High
6	I do not know what I am speaking.	3.91	1.016	High
7	I cannot speak English for a long period.	4.16	.826	High
8	I am nervous while I am speaking English.	4.03	1.038	High
9	I am afraid of talking English with foreigners.	4.17	.929	High
10	It is difficult for me to speak English.	3.91	1.098	High
11	English grammar seems rather difficult to speak correctly.	4.07	.873	High
12	I am unable to discuss in English.	3.87	1.212	High
13	I lose my confidence when I made a mistake.	3.94	.993	High
14	I cannot clearly express my ideas in English.	4.14	.886	High
15	English words seem difficult to pronounce.	4.08	.844	High
	Total	**4.07**	**.684**	**High**

In this table shows that the total rate were at high level ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 4.07, S.D. =.684). The most high level was at ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 4.34, S.D. =1.011), of the respondents felt too shy to speak English, following by moderate high level was at ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 4.18, S.D. =.922), of the respondents felt nervous and worried when speaking English, and high level was at ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 3.87, S.D. =1.212), of the respondents were unable to discuss in English.

Table 2: The ways to solve the problems of English speaking skills.

The result from the ways to solve the problems of English speaking skill, the researcher had collected and analyzed then showed in the table were as follows:

No	Statements	$\overline{\mathbf{X}}$	S.D.	Levels
1	Making self-motivation to speak English.	4.60	.600	Very high
2	Using English grammar carefully in conversation.	4.27	.827	High
3	Try to use English in classroom every day.	4.59	.601	Very high
4	Try to think in English while speaking.	4.33	.756	High
5	Create a small group to train our English with friends.	4.44	.735	High
6	Making self-confidence to speak English.	4.48	.638	High
7	Creating a positive attitude.	4.38	.754	High
8	Talking in English with friends and teachers every day.	4.44	.651	High
9	Watching English movies.	4.29	.844	High
10	Practice English speaking skills from BBC, CNN news.	4.19	.936	High
11	Speaking English with native speakers.	4.27	.884	High
12	Always use English as habitually.	4.39	.781	High
13	Speaking English from English lesson.	4.41	.732	High
14	Taking a pronunciation course from Facebook.	4.31	.882	High
15	Always practice English conversation from YouTube.	4.33	.756	High
	Total	**4.38**	**.508**	**High**

In this table shows that the total rate were at high level ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 4.38, S.D. = .508). The most high level was at ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 4.60, S.D. =.600), of the respondents were making self-motivation to speak English, following by moderate high level was at ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 4.59, S.D. =.601), of the respondents were trying to use English in classroom every day, and high level was at ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 4.19, S.D. =.936) of the respondents were Practice English speaking skills from BBC, CNN news.

Conclusion and Discussion

The finding result pointed out that the most important problems of the respondents were faced the difficulties about speaking English due to most of the respondents spoke English in very short period like one day a week at

school, so that is why they were lacked of confidence to speak English with teachers, friends and foreigners, which were totaled rate at high level ($\overline{X}$ = 4.07, S.D. = 0.68). According to Richards (In Juwita, 2015) points out several problems which were faced by students in learning English. First, the students speak too slowly. Second, students lack of vocabulary. Third, their spoken English does not sound natural. The last, students were lack of communication strategies.

The finding result pointed out that there are many important ways to solve the problems of English speaking of the students, at first students should make self-motivation to speak English by using various things to support them on learning English speaking such as; reading more English books, listening to English music, watching English movies, practicing with friends, teachers and other every day, which were totaled rate at high level ($\overline{X}$ = 4.38, S.D. = 0.50). According to Malamha stated that pair-work, group-work, and informal chat are some interactive activities that would help students to be engaged in the classes. In addition, he also suggested that the teacher has the ability to stimulate the learners by using the pair work which makes the students free and enjoy asking questions and giving answers on certain task that is involved in the curriculum.

Furthermore, making the best situation for class in learning English at our home or when we are with our close friends, when speaking out and expressing with feel comfortable in vigorous emotion, so that we will be able to accumulate skills due to having an inspiration or idol dedicated to our English work will keep our organized and motivated adroitness and comprehension.

Suggestions for Research

1. Students should improve their English speaking by using short movie media and should be more varied of people stages; for example, giving a speech in public or in front of the class for increase the confidence.

2. Further studies for a quantitative study should be conducted with more questionnaires and more section of the questionnaires

3. Further studies for a qualitative study by using interview should be conducted in order to collect in-depth interview data about English speaking.

4. Further studies for a qualitative study should be conducted with more questions in-depth interview.

5. Further studies should focus more on the problems that cause on speaking communication problems and solution problems with the real pre-test and post-test.

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