The English–speaking Abilities of Bachelor of Arts Students of Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus, Thailand

Ven. Kim Thanh Di[1], Veerakarn Kanokkmalade[2], and Nilratana Klinchan[3]

(diwit.555@gmail.com)

Abstract

This study focuses the English-speaking abilities of students, the objectives of this research were study the English-Speaking Abilities and analyze the English-Speaking Abilities of Bachelor of Arts students of Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubonratchathani Campus. The researcher mixed quantitative and qualitative methods. The questionnaire used for collecting quantitative data from 40 students in academic year 2019-2020 and in-depth interview used for collecting qualitative data from 10 key informants. Statistics include Percentage, Mean ($\overline{\mathbf{X}}$) and Standard Deviation (S.D.).

The results of the research found that:

The results of data analysis for lack of confidence in English speaking of the students, resulting at overall at moderate level for mean 3.34. The students had no shyness in English speaking resulted in overall at moderate level for mean 3.24. In pronunciation, the students using mother tongue in English-speaking and understanding resulted in overall at moderate level for mean 3.49. The results of data analysis for vocabulary that causes the students to feel anxious about

[1] Master of Arts in English International Program, at Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

[2] Department of Foreign Language, at Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

[3] Department of Foreign Language, at Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

their ability to properly use English vocabulary, resulting in overall at moderate level for mean 3.20. And the students had ability in English speaking, resulting in overall at 3.24.

The following discovered from interview with key informants. The most students had the English-speaking ability were: The students had limited vocabulary for English speaking, the students had improved pronunciation when they spoke in English, the students were sure about their pronunciation and understanding when a person spoken, the students needed practice with foreigners for a confidence in English-speaking. And then some students had a little problems on pronouncing not clear, after that they had practice to pronounce to right sound.

Keywords: English-speaking, English Abilities, Bachelor of Arts Students

Introduction

English speaking is the dominant language spoken by many people around the world in both of oral and written, because it is the lingua franca used for international communication to the all aspects of human life such as economic, cultures, business, politic, administration, science and academia. Crystal, D. (2003). Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. The information can be shared using both verbal and non-verbal communication in a variety of context in which it occurs based on the participants themselves, the collective experiences, the physical environment and the purpose for speaking. Florez, Marry A. C. (1999). Speed, pausing, variations in pitch, volume, and intonation may also create a texture for their utterance that encourages and improves what they are saying. The sound of people's speech is significant because it is used for assessing speaking, and people tend to judge whether the speaker has native and non-native status depending on their pronunciation. Louma, S. (Chiang Rai: Mae Fah

University, 2014). English is a top important tool that students must learn to approach new knowledge and have a good opportunity in their education. Learning to speak English in foreign language (EFL) will be facilitated when learners are actively engaged in attempting to communicate. Richard, Jack C. (1995). Hence, speaking is a tool to communicate ideas that are arranged and developed accordance with listener's need, Tarigan, 1987, cited in Musaddat, 2008. It means that the speaker must strive communicate his/her ideas clearly so that those ideas can be accepted well accordance with what is wanted by the listeners.

For most foreign language is not an easy thing to undertake because learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing is grammatical and sematic rules. Apart from these, Bunkart (1998) explains that language learners need to have three areas of knowledge involved within speaking namely 1) mechanics of language elements pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, which emphasize on use of right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation, 2) the functions of language that deals with speaking performance in the form of transaction and interaction, how to change information and giving the clarity of essential message, 3) the sociocultural norms such as turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants, understanding how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason. In addition, non-linguistic elements of speech such as gestures and body language or posture, facial expression, and so on, may accompany speech to convey messages directly. In other words, speaking is the most complex and difficult skill to master, Hinkel, 2005, cited in Nazara, 2011.

Otherwise, the English-Speaking abilities of the students, we need to know the difficulties and improves in English speaking of the students, because when we are to work, there are still lots of communications we need to do. Concise and academic language is needed for the explaining part. Precisely speaking and English language competence will help a lot not only for the study

but also for future work. In here researcher would like to research the technique of them about how they are able to and improve themselves in English-speaking for communications in the classroom. Researcher hoped that this research would be helpful for those who wanted to practice to be a good communicator and for speaking skills.

Objectives of Research

    1. To study the English-Speaking abilities of Bachelor of Arts students of Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus.

    2. To propose solutions the English-Speaking abilities of Bachelor of Arts students of Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus.

Research Methodology

    This study was mixed methods between a quantitative research methodology and qualitative research methodology. The researcher took both quantitative and qualitative research using questionnaires and interviews to keep information and questions relating to English speaking. Every stage of data collection was performed step by step to simplify things to be valuable to the study in nature to identify, analyze and describe abilities in English speaking for students Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus.

The population and Key Informants

    1. Population of the study was 40 students at Faculty of Humanities, Major in English, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus.

2. Key Informants, the researcher took 5 teachers and 5 students who were teaching and learning at Faculty of Humanities, major in English, Mahachulalongkorn rajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus.

The research tools

1. The tool for Quantitative Data Collection

For collecting quantitative data, a questionnaire is constructed. Questions in the questionnaire contain 3 statements as follows:

1.1 General information of respondents

1.2 The abilities in English speaking of students at Bachelor of Arts, major in English, Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus.

1.3 Solutions on the abilities and improving the English speaking of students, major in English, Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkorn-rajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus.

2. In-depth Interview

For collecting qualitative data, the tool of in-depth interview will be used for collecting the information from 10 key informants as the 5 lecturers and 5 students who are teaching and learning at Faculty of Humanities, Major English, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubo Ratchathani Campus.

Data collection

1. The questionnaire is consisted of multiple-choice questions to 40 students who are studying at Faculty of Humanities, major in English, Mahachula longkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus. And then the researcher had taken information from questionnaires.

2. An in-depth interview is consisted of 5 lecturers and 5 students who are teaching and learning at Faculty of Humanities, major in English, Mahachula longkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus and then the researcher will take the information from questions.

Data analysis

1. The analysis of quantitative data, the researcher use the questionnaire has been processed by a computer program. Statistics including frequency, percentage, mean ($\bar{X}$), standard deviation (S.D.) has been used for analyzing data.

2. The analysis of qualitative data, the researcher used for analyzing qualitative data collected from in-depth interview 10 key informants.

Results of Research

The analysis of the abilities in English speaking of Bachelor of Arts of Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Ubon-ratchathani Campus

1. Finding One

The analysis of the abilities in English speaking of the students in pronunciation

No	Statements	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
1	I have troubles in pronunciation while speaking English.	3.3	0.61	Moderate
2	I never have a pronunciation in English speaking.	3.23	0.77	Moderate
3	A native speaker of English understands my pronunciation.	3.55	0.68	High
4	When I communicate with an English native speaker, I never feel shy about my pronunciation.	3.65	0.77	High
5	I can understand the pronunciation spoken by English native speaker.	3.73	0.64	High
	Average	**3.49**	**0.69**	**Moderate**

According to English pronunciation in English speaking, the analysis results collected which were the overall mean score and standard deviation of English pronunciation ($\bar{X}$ = 3.49 with S.D. = 0.69). It interpreted that the participants had at the moderate level.

2. Finding Two

The analysis of the abilities in English speaking of the students in vocabulary

No	Statements	$\overline{\text{X}}$	S.D.	Level
1	I have an adequate English vocabulary for effective speaking.	3.08	0.73	Moderate
2	I never have an English vocabulary problem.	2.75	0.71	Moderate
3	I can understand a vocabulary while speaker is speaking.	3.35	0.66	Moderate
4	When I have a presentation in English speaking, I confidently use vocabularies.	3.50	0.75	High
5	When preparing a speech, I feel anxious about my ability to use English vocabulary.	3.33	0.83	Moderate
	Average	**3.20**	**0.74**	**Moderate**

According to the information presented above, the results had an overall mean score and Standard Deviation (S.D.) in English vocabulary ($\overline{\text{X}}$ = 3.20 with S.D. of 0.74). The results presented above that the participants had at moderate level. (It is not clear for English vocabulary).

3. Finding three

The analysis of English speaking of the students in ability

No	Statements	$\overline{\text{X}}$	S.D.	Level
1	Do you speak English in the class every day?	3.38	0.84	Moderate
2	You practice English speaking with your friends in the class.	3.40	0.81	Moderate
3	You can understand well while others talk to you	3.00	0.78	Moderate
4	Pronunciation helps you to ability in English speaking.	3.55	0.93	High
5	Do you have unable in English speaking?	2.85	0.74	Moderate
	Average	**3.24**	**0.82**	**Moderate**

According to the analysis of information shown above, the results collected which were overall mean score and standard deviation (S.D.) of ability in English speaking ($\overline{X}$ = 3.24 with S.D. of 0.82). All of these results presented above the participants had at moderate level. It confirmed that the students had moderated on ability in English speaking.

Finding from interview

Phramaha Singnarong Sirintarameti said the best techniques I always used for developing my students' speaking skills were: Firstly, got out in the classroom and speak with their friends. Second, practiced as much as possible in the students' daily life. Thirdly, got rid of shyness and started to speak with everyone.

Miss Warunee Prapraimuang said we had creating new activities in the class such as listening English song and speaking English or let them to talk with friends on around University.

Phra Winai Winayakitti said English words could be difficult to pronounce – and when speaking English, he had to consider not only the pronunciation of the individual words, but also the connection between the words in the sentence. More than intonation of the sentence to consider – and sometimes your mouth gets confused. There were two things that can help me improve my English-speaking ability. One way was to take a pronunciation course. Another way to improve my pronunciation was to keep practicing my listening. The more I listened to English, the more my pronunciation would naturally get closer and closer to native pronunciation.

Conclusion and Discussion

1. The purpose of the Abilities in English Speaking of Bachelor of Arts Students with the main points of objectives were: To study the abilities in English Speaking of Bachelor of Arts students of Faculty of Humanities,

Mahachulalongkorn rajavidyalaya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus. 2) To analyze the abilities in English Speaking of Bachelor of Arts students of Faculty of Humanities, Maha chulalongkornrajavidyalaya, University Ubon Ratchathani Campus.The population in this research studied consisted of 40 participants. The method research was mixed a quantitative research method of questionnaire for 40 participants and qualitative research method of in-depth interview for 10 key informants both of them were used as research tools in collecting data.

2. Lack of information was also a problem to speak the presentation for the respondents. Knowing the grammar and vocabulary English words not enough, and lack of confidence was also one of the reasons by which the students could not speak the English language, shyness is one way of the factors by which the students could not speak the English language, It is a kind of feeling which students feel while in speaking the English language. Through oral communication, students can easily learn and can easily communicate and feel comfortable speaking with other people.

Discussion:

1. Personal information of the participants, the majority of 40 participants who are studying at Faculty of Humanities, Major in English, Mahachulalongkorn rajavidyalya University, Ubon Ratchathani Campus. In the gender of populations, most of consisting 28 participants that are monks, accounting for (70%), 10 participants that are novices, accounting for (25%), and laity 2 participants, accounting for (5%). The nationality of participants, most of consisting of 24 participants that are Thai students, accounting for (60%), 10 participants that are Laos students, accounting for (25%), 5 participants that are Cambodian students, accounting for (12.5%), 1 participant that is Bangladesh student (2.5%). With age of participants, most of the participants aged 20-29 year, accounting for (62.5%). lower 20 year, accounting for (35%), between 30-40 year,

accounting for (2.5%). The faculty of participants' study, most (100%) of the participants in the Faculty of Humanities, Major in English. Year of study the participants, most of 15 participants that are second year students, accounting for (37.5%), in the first year 10 students, accounting for (25%), the third year 5 students, accounting for (12.5%), and the fourth year 10 students, accounting for (25%).

   2. Analyzing data from the abilities in English speaking of the students, the results of data analysis of the students had pronunciation in English speaking at the moderate level by average ($\overline{X}$ = 3.49) with (S.D. of 0.69), vocabulary in English speaking at the moderate level by average ($\overline{X}$ = 3.20) with (S.D. of 0.74), abilities in English speaking at the moderate level by average ($\overline{X}$ = 3.24) with (S.D. of 0.82). In the analyzing data above most the students complained that English speaking ability is different stages to the students even though the students are not given for the improvement of speaking ability in the classroom. Some students agreed they could speak on a given for a limited duration. Some students could speak in the classroom of English because of the training and explaining of their teachers. So, students should be developed self-confidence for English speaking ability of students' daily life.

   3. From interviews with 10 key informants, most the students had problems in English speaking are the students had grammar problems they did not know how to make correct sentence structures to speak, the students had vocabulary problems they did not remember new English words enough to use for speaking, the students had pronunciation problems they could not make correct pronunciation when they spoke English and they often used mother tongue in the classroom, the students have lack confidence in English speaking and even though the students were not given for the improvement of speaking ability in the classroom or outside.

Suggestions for Research

1. The researcher proposed to the learning and teaching

The researcher proposed solving the problems in learning and teaching English for the students are: The students should read English books, newspapers and magazines, speaking- English with friends and classmates and writing some words in English vocabulary, listen to English music or conversation videos. The students should be careful in English speaking do not often use mother language because English has become the international language used in business, technological, and academic communication. The students need to talk with native speakers when learning a second or foreign language, is measured from the performance of learners to speak the language learned. The teachers try to speak and explain by English speaking not other languages, and teachers should take the students get outside or traveling places for the students practice English speaking with visitors. Finally, the researcher hoped successful for learning speaking of the students and should tried creative to find your own ways to develop your speaking ability. The students should use every opportunity to practice English in and out of the class. Especially as you got to grips with the sounds of your new language. It might seem boring to speak over the same sentences again and again, but it was necessary. Students might make commitments with classmates to use English as much as possible in their daily communications.

2. The researcher would like to suggest for further studies:

1) The students should be developed own- self in English-speaking.

2) Finding the technique for the improvement of English speaking skills of MCU students, Ubon Ratchathani Campus.

3) Taking the foreigners or native speakers give the experiences of English speaking skills of MCU students, Ubon Ratchathani Campus. This could be very important and valuable for the students.

4) The students should try to speak English more and more for studying on next time and become a good English speaker.

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