The English-Speaking Achievement of Myanmar Students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were 1) to study the English-speaking achievement of the B.A. Myanmar students of the Faculty of Humanities at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2) to know the factors that affect students' achievement in English speaking of the B.A. Myanmar students of the Faculty of Humanities at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. This research used a mixed method combining both quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions. The study has based on the analysis of 50 questionnaires, which were distributed to 50 students in the B.A. Myanmar students of the Faculty of Humanities the problems in English speaking and to suggest the best ways to solve the problems of English speaking in addition, 5 key informants were interviewed to observe vividly their experiences in teaching English as a second language. The result of the findings was found that English-speaking achievement of Myanmar students studying at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University is at a moderate level, with a total mean of 3.58 and standard deviation of 1.20. and the factors that affect English-speaking achievement of Myanmar students are key indicators of proficiency include fluency, coherence, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, grammatical accuracy, and interactive communication skills.

Keywords: English Speaking; Achievement; Effect; Myanmar Students

Introduction

English has become the primary language of international communication, higher education, research, and global mobility. Proficiency in English, particularly in speaking, is essential for students who pursue academic studies abroad or engage in cross-cultural contexts. For Myanmar students studying in international environments, English-speaking ability plays a crucial role in academic performance, classroom participation, and social interaction. Despite years of formal English instruction, many Myanmar students still encounter significant challenges in developing effective speaking skills.

One major concern in English language education is the gap between linguistic knowledge and communicative competence. Many students possess adequate knowledge of grammar rules and vocabulary; however, they struggle to express themselves fluently and confidently in real-

life situations. According to Hoge (2014, 2015), traditional classroom instruction in many parts of the world emphasizes grammar explanation, memorization, and written examinations rather than communicative practice. This grammar-translation approach may help students perform well in written tests, but it often fails to develop spontaneous speaking ability. As a result, learners may understand English structures intellectually yet remain unable to communicate effectively.

This study is grounded in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) theory, which emphasizes meaningful interaction, learner participation, and real-life communication as central components of language acquisition. CLT proposes that communicative competence includes not only grammatical knowledge but also sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. Therefore, effective speaking performance requires the integration of fluency, coherence, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, grammatical accuracy, and interactive communication skills. (David, 1991)

In addition, this study draws upon Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory, particularly the interaction hypothesis and affective factors in language learning. SLA theory highlights the importance of meaningful input, output practice, learner motivation, confidence, and reduced anxiety in developing oral proficiency. Psychological constructs such as willingness to communicate, self-confidence, and learner autonomy are also considered essential components influencing speaking achievement. (Jeremy, 1998)

Furthermore, the study incorporates aspects of learner-centered pedagogy, which stresses the role of teacher facilitation, student autonomy, critical thinking, and culturally responsive instruction in enhancing communicative competence. These theoretical perspectives collectively frame the investigation of English-speaking achievement among Myanmar students. (Rod, 1994)

Although previous studies have examined English-speaking difficulties among EFL learners in various contexts, several gaps remain.

First, most prior research has focused primarily on identifying speaking problems such as grammar limitations, pronunciation difficulties, or lack of confidence. However, fewer studies have quantitatively measured the level of English-speaking achievement while simultaneously exploring qualitative factors influencing performance within a multicultural university setting.

Second, limited research has specifically investigated Myanmar students studying abroad, particularly in Thai higher education institutions such as Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. The unique multilingual and multicultural learning environment may influence speaking development differently compared to domestic contexts.

Third, earlier studies often emphasized challenges but provided limited integration of institutional support, culturally responsive teaching, and learner autonomy as combined influencing variables. Therefore, there is a need for a mixed-method study that examines both measurable achievement levels and contextual factors affecting English-speaking proficiency.

To address these gaps, the present study employs a mixed-method approach to assess English-speaking achievement quantitatively and to explore influencing factors qualitatively,

thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of Myanmar students' oral proficiency in an international academic setting.

Research Objectives

1. To study the English-speaking achievement of the B.A. Myanmar students of Faculty of Humanities at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

2. To know the factors that affect students' achievement in English speaking of the B.A. Myanmar students of Faculty of Humanities at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study is a mixed method between qualitative examination and quantitative exploration. The quantitative information is to give the members' mentalities toward the speaking ability issues. The data got from the questionnaire has been dissected by the mean and standard deviation (S.D) and afterward, it has been deciphered.

Qualitative information is to decide the improvement of members' speaking skills by furnishing them with topics to speak about and depth-interview.

The percentage, average mean, and standard deviation are utilized to give the level and degree of concentration on the English-speaking expertise issues, and arrangements, of Myanmar understudies who are learning at MCU. Hence, the exploration is significant for information assortment.

Populations and Key Informants

Population

The number of inhabitants in the review is under 50 number; subsequently, the exploration chose 50 students as the example of study by a purposive testing technique.

Key Informants

The research chooses 50 Myanmar students who are studying for a Bachelor's Degree in English at the Faculty of Humanities and 5 experienced students from the Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Lamsai sub-district Wangnoi District, Ayutthaya.

Research Tools

This study comprises a survey and an interview. They are the principal apparatuses for doing explore. Subsequently, research for the review is partitioned into two sections of questionnaires and interviews.

Data Collection

The steps to collect data consist of two methods are as follows:

Primary Data

Primary data is straightforwardly gathering data from the objective gathering of examination which comprises 50 Myanmar students who are studying for a Bachelor's degree in English at the Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, five experienced

students, and an up-close and personal interview. In part of the questionnaire, the researcher makes up the inquiry and allows them to offer perspectives about English speaking ability issues and how to take care of those issues.

Secondary Data

Secondary data is gathering data from documentary studies, for example, proposal books, scholastic books, scholarly articles, and journals. These things are utilized for help and study. The documentary also rules to help and foster the researcher.

Data Analysis

Data analysis of the research study is to analyze the data from the respondents. The data from the completed questionnaires were collected and analyzed by computer using the statistical package for English-speaking.

Result

Quantitative Results: English-Speaking Achievement Based on Questionnaire Data

The study of English-speaking by the B.A. Myanmar students of Faculty of Humanities at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. The findings of this study indicate that the overall English-speaking achievement of B.A. Myanmar students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University is at a moderate level, with a total mean score of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 1.20. This suggests that students generally demonstrate a satisfactory level of speaking performance, though there remains room for further improvement.

Out of the 50 items, a considerable number were rated at the high level, reflecting positive perceptions toward classroom practices that support speaking development. The highest mean scores were observed in items related to learner autonomy, multicultural harmony, confidence building, and supportive classroom environments (e.g., Items 31, 41, and 50; M = 3.70). These findings indicate that students feel more confident and perform better in classrooms where lecturers encourage autonomy, mutual respect, and cultural sensitivity.

Several instructional practices were also rated highly, including critical thinking promotion (Item 7, M = 3.63), fair academic support (Item 35, M = 3.62), multicultural curriculum design (Item 45, M = 3.62), and the integration of digital technology in learning (Item 27, M = 3.61). These results suggest that communicative, learner-centered, and technologically supported teaching approaches contribute positively to students' speaking achievement.

Meanwhile, most items were interpreted at the moderate level, indicating that while students benefit from communicative activities such as role plays, group discussions, vocabulary strategies, and social interaction, these practices may not yet be fully optimized. For example, students' ability to understand and respond appropriately to English speakers (Item 8, M = 3.07) was among the lower mean scores, suggesting that interactive competence still requires further development.

The findings also highlight the importance of psychological and cultural factors in English-speaking achievement. Students reported high agreement with statements related to respect,

openness, and equitable treatment in multicultural classrooms. However, some moderate responses (e.g., Items 39 and 49) suggest that intercultural flexibility and cross-cultural collaboration could be further strengthened.

In summary, the statistical results reveal that Myanmar students' English-speaking achievement is supported by positive classroom environments, communicative teaching strategies, learner autonomy, and multicultural awareness. Nevertheless, improvements are still needed in enhancing real-time communicative competence, vocabulary flexibility, and interactive speaking confidence. Therefore, strengthening communicative language teaching approaches, expanding authentic speaking opportunities, and fostering intercultural competence are recommended to elevate students' English-speaking achievement from a moderate to a high level.

Qualitative Results: Findings from Open-Ended Interviews

This open-ended interview aimed to explore the English-speaking achievements and the factors affecting these achievements among B.A. Myanmar students at the Faculty of Humanities, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. The respondents highlighted several key indicators of English-speaking achievement, including fluency, coherence, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, grammatical accuracy, and interactive communication skills. Confidence and the willingness to communicate were also considered vital markers of proficiency.

Effective teaching strategies identified by the respondents include interactive and immersive methods such as role-playing, peer teaching, and the use of multimedia tools. These strategies create an engaging learning environment that encourages students to practice English in real-life contexts. Additionally, incorporating culturally relevant materials and providing constructive feedback were emphasized as important elements in fostering English-speaking skills.

The respondents also identified several challenges faced by Myanmar students in achieving English proficiency. Limited exposure to English outside the classroom, the traditional rote-learning approach, and cultural factors like fear of making mistakes were noted as significant obstacles. To address these challenges, the respondents suggested enhanced exposure to English through everyday communication, interactive teaching methods, and the use of technology to provide access to language resources.

Assessment of English-speaking abilities was conducted through oral exams, presentations, role-playing exercises, and peer feedback. To support struggling students, remedial classes, language buddies, and a supportive classroom environment were recommended. The respondents stressed the importance of regular feedback and monitoring to help students improve their skills.

Institutional support was deemed crucial for enhancing English-speaking achievement. Suggested resources included language labs, qualified language instructors, peer tutoring programs, workshops, and access to English media. Creating an inclusive learning environment and providing incentives for improvement were also highlighted as beneficial.

The interview results underscore the multifaceted nature of English-speaking achievement among Myanmar students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

Key indicators of proficiency include fluency, coherence, pronunciation, and interactive communication skills. Effective teaching strategies involve interactive, immersive methods and culturally relevant materials. Challenges such as limited exposure, traditional learning approaches, and cultural barriers can be mitigated through enhanced exposure, interactive teaching, and the use of technology. Institutional support, including language labs, qualified instructors, and peer tutoring, plays a critical role in fostering English-speaking skills and ensuring students' academic and professional success.

Discussion

This study examined the English-speaking achievement of Myanmar students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and the factors influencing their oral proficiency. The results show a moderate level of speaking performance, with strengths in autonomy, cultural respect, and critical thinking, while interactive speaking skills remain moderate. Key influencing factors include fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, teaching strategies, cultural context, and institutional support. The chapter relates these findings to previous research, identifying areas of agreement, difference, and contribution.

Confirmation with Previous Literature

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research showing that students commonly face difficulties in fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, motivation, and confidence. Similar to earlier studies, the results highlight that limited language knowledge, anxiety, and lack of practice negatively affect speaking performance. The study also supports prior research emphasizing the importance of interactive teaching strategies, culturally relevant materials, learner autonomy, and institutional support such as language labs and peer tutoring in enhancing English-speaking achievement.

Divergence from Previous Literature

Despite these similarities, some findings differ from earlier studies. While previous research reported high levels of nervousness and avoidance of peer interaction, this study found that supportive, learner centered classroom environments can reduce anxiety and increase student participation. Additionally, although limited English-speaking environments were previously identified as major obstacles, the present study indicates that structured institutional support can help compensate for limited external exposure and improve engagement in communicative activities.

Contribution and New Insights

This study contributes to the literature by integrating quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of English-speaking achievement. Beyond identifying common challenges, it highlights students' positive perceptions of autonomy, critical thinking, multicultural respect, and interactive learning strategies. The findings offer practical insights into

how culturally responsive teaching, technology integration, and targeted practice opportunities can enhance oral proficiency.

Summary

In summary, the study confirms common speaking challenges identified in previous research, identifies contextual differences related to supportive learning environments and institutional resources, and contributes new practical insights for improving English-speaking performance. The results emphasize the importance of teacher facilitation, student motivation, institutional support, and culturally responsive pedagogy in fostering effective oral communication skills among Myanmar students.

Conclusion

The objective of the research is to study the English-speaking achievement of the B.A. Myanmar students of Faculty of Humanities at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. The participants of the study consisted of one class 50 students in number; 30 male, 20 Female, and 0 nonbinary, according to Table 1.

According to questionnaires, both problems of English-speaking and seeking a way to solve the problem of English-speaking achievement of the B.A. Myanmar students of Faculty of Humanities can be concluded briefly in the following:

Students use different methods to increase their English-speaking, such as reading books, listening to music, and watching movies. They use a Myanmar-English dictionary when they don't know some words. They analyse the meaning of words by swarming with friends or doing activities. Many students can analyse the meaning of words from pictures found in the content. Most students think that watching English movies is the best way to improve their English-speaking.

The results of this study will be useful and appropriate for students and individuals who want to improve their English-speaking and use it in daily life. The study also revealed that students can use many ways to improve their English-speaking such as reading books, listening to music, and watching movies.

The factors that affect English-speaking achievement of Myanmar students are key indicators of proficiency include fluency, coherence, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, grammatical accuracy, and interactive communication skills. Effective teaching strategies involve interactive, immersive methods and culturally relevant materials. Challenges such as limited exposure, traditional learning approaches, and cultural barriers can be mitigated through enhanced exposure, interactive teaching, and the use of technology. Institutional support, including language labs, qualified instructors, and peer tutoring, plays a critical role in fostering English-speaking skills and ensuring students' academic and professional success.

Suggestion

Suggestion for Implementation

1. Students should improve vocabulary and confidence in English sentences when they have to speak English and encounter problems in speaking English.

2. Students should improve their English vocabulary by using short movie media and should be more varied in people stages.

Suggestion for Further Studies

1. The researcher should research more than one teaching subject and then compare to find strengths and weaknesses to be used to develop achievement in English speaking every day.

2. The next researcher should conduct research where students have strong English language and conduct research where students have weak English language to see the clarity of the problem of English speaking.

3. To see the problem of English speaking and learning achievement in English speaking more, the researcher should focus on qualitative research rather than quantitative research, because qualitative research can see the facts more.

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