An Analysis of Factors Influencing the English-Speaking Abilities for Oral Presentation of Second-Year Students in the Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

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Abstract

This research had the objectives to: (1) to study the factors influencing the oral presentation skills in English of second-year students, and (2) to propose practical guidelines for improving English-speaking abilities for oral presentation. A mixed-methods research design was employed. Quantitative data were collected from 50 Bachelor of Arts students using a 15-item questionnaire, and qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews with five lecturers responsible for teaching English in the Faculty of Education. The quantitative data were analyzed through frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, while the qualitative data were examined through content analysis.

Answer as the objectives 1) overall level of factors influencing students' oral presentation abilities in English was high ($\overline{x}$ = 47.42, SD = 16.883). Students experienced moderate-level difficulties related to anxiety, confidence, vocabulary, pronunciation, time management, and creating visual aids. The highest-rated influencing factor was students' understanding of the presentation topic. Qualitative results supported the quantitative findings, indicating that psychological stress, limited language exposure, and insufficient practice negatively affected students' presentation performance. Lecturers emphasized linguistic development, increased practice opportunities, teacher encouragement, and supportive classroom environments as essential solutions. 2) The study proposed practical guidelines focusing on speaking practice, rehearsal before presentations, vocabulary and pronunciation development, visual aid training, time management, and motivational classroom support. These guidelines are expected to improve students' confidence, reduce anxiety, and enhance English oral presentation competence for academic and professional success.

Keywords: English-Speaking Ability; Oral Presentation; EFL Learners; Factors Influencing Speaking; MCU Students

Introduction

English is widely recognized as a global language and is increasingly essential in education, communication, international business, research, and career development. Students who aspire

to become educators or professionals in international environments must be able to communicate effectively, particularly through oral presentations. As Crystal (2003) emphasizes, English has become an international language used globally for academic and professional purposes. King (2002) elaborates that oral presentations promote active learning and develop communication, leadership, and academic skills.

In universities, especially Buddhist and education institutions, students are frequently assigned oral presentations as part of courses, assessments, research dissemination, and seminar discussions. However, for many learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), oral presentation is challenging. Anxiety, limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, pronunciation problems, and insufficient practice lead to ineffective communication. Students often read directly from slides, struggle to maintain eye contact, forget content, and experience difficulty organizing ideas logically.

At Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), students study English to prepare for academic, cultural, and professional communication. Although English presentations are used in coursework, many MCU students lack confidence and face linguistic and psychological barriers. They feel nervous, shy, and embarrassed; struggle with grammar and vocabulary; and lack experience speaking publicly. Hedge (2001) notes that students must develop grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills together in order to present effectively.

Therefore, this study investigated the factors influencing the oral presentation abilities of second-year Bachelor of Arts students in the Faculty of Education at MCU. The findings aim to improve students' academic performance and prepare them for future professional responsibilities in teaching, communication, and leadership.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1 To study the factors influencing the oral presentation skills in English of second-year students in the Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

2. To propose the practical guidelines for improving oral presentation skills in English of second-year students in the Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

Research Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In the quantitative phase, data were gathered from 50 second-year B.A. students in the Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University using a systematically developed 30-item questionnaire. For the qualitative component, in-depth interviews served as the primary data collection tool, involving five lecturers from the Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University who are responsible for teaching English language courses and evaluating student presentations. Quantitative data collection was conducted through the administration of the 30-questionnaire items to all 50 participants.

Qualitative data were obtained via recorded interviews with the five key informants and supplemented by researcher observation. Quantitative data were analysed using statistical software to calculate frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Qualitative data analysis involved content analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns.

Results

1. The information of the respondents

The respondents have shown that details gender distribution among 50 students: 36 male (72%) and 14 female (28%), indicating a predominance of males. Shows age distribution: most students (72%) were 20–25 years old, with smaller groups aged 26–30 (16%) and 31–35 (12%). Presents status: 27 monks (54%), 1 novice (2%), and 22 laypersons (44%), with monks comprising the majority. Outlines ethnic backgrounds: 35 Burmese (70%), 3 Thai (6%), and 12 from other groups (24%), making Burmese students the largest group. Lists countries of origin: 45 from Myanmar (90%), 3 from Thailand (6%), and 2 from other countries (4%), with most participants from Myanmar. Each table covers the total sample of 50 students.

2. Analysis of Factors Influencing Oral Presentation Skills in English

These questionnaires were used to explores the factors affecting students' oral presentation skills in English among second-year students in the Faculty of Education. These questionnaires consist of 15 items, and all items have five choices: (5) Strongly agree, (4) Agree (3) moderate (2) Disagree and (1) Strongly disagree.

items	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
I feel anxious when presenting in English.	3.10	1.182	Moderate
I lack confidence when delivering oral presentations in English.	3.06	1.150	Moderate
Cultural differences influence how I deliver presentations in English.	3.28	1.030	Moderate
Lack of practice opportunities affects my English oral presentation skills.	2.90	1.035	Moderate
I have difficulty memorizing my presentation content.	3.18	1.137	Moderate
My understanding of the presentation topic affects my ability to present effectively in English.	3.50	1.035	High
I find it challenging to use appropriate grammar structures in my presentations.	3.24	1.060	Moderate
I struggle with limited vocabulary when giving presentations in English.	3.24	.938	Moderate
I have difficulty with English pronunciation during presentations.	3.00	1.069	Moderate
I find it difficult to create effective visual aids for my presentations.	3.18	.918	Moderate

items	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
I have trouble managing my time effectively during English presentations.	3.04	.946	Moderate
I struggle to maintain eye contact with the audience during presentations.	3.02	1.059	Moderate
I struggle with understanding and answering questions in English during the Q&A portion of presentations.	3.32	1.219	Moderate
I am concerned about the audience's reactions to my presentation.	3.32	.978	Moderate
I find it difficult to engage with the audience during presentations.	3.04	1.068	Moderate
Total	**47.42**	**16.883**	**High**

Research objective 1. The results shown that all items expressed as the results of the factors affecting students' oral presentation skills in English among second-year students in the Faculty of Education. In total, descriptive statistic results show that the Mean Value of the factors affecting students' oral presentation skills in English is equal to 47.42 at a high level, Standard Deviation is equal to 16.883.

2. Analysis of the solutions and guidelines for Improving Oral Presentation Skills in English

items	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Practicing deep breathing exercises would help reduce my anxiety during presentations.	3.70	.952	High
Receiving positive reinforcement from teachers would boost my confidence in presenting.	3.52	.838	High
Cultural awareness training would help me adapt my presentations to different audiences.	3.56	.884	High
Recording and reviewing my practice presentations would help me improve.	3.46	.908	Moderate
Write down the note on a piece of paper what is the main point to present.	3.78	.887	High
Creating a clear structure with an introduction, body, and conclusion would make my presentations more effective.	3.78	.995	High
Using simple but correct grammar structures would improve the clarity of my presentations.	3.86	.782	High
Learning more vocabulary related to my presentation topics would improve my delivery.	3.76	.893	High
Regular practice of English pronunciation would improve my oral presentation skills.	3.62	1.140	High

items	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Learning to create effective visual aids would enhance my presentation quality.	3.42	1.070	Moderate
Time management workshops would help me structure my English presentations better.	3.60	1.049	High
Presenting in small groups before giving to the whole class would help me feel more comfortable.	3.46	.973	Moderate
Participating in mock Q&A sessions would prepare me for audience questions.	3.56	.884	High
Maintaining a positive mindset would improve my presentation performance.	3.56	.929	High
Learning audience engagement techniques would make my English presentations more effective.	3.64	.875	High
Total	54.28	14.059	High

Research objective 2. The result shown that all items expressed as the results of solutions and guidelines for Improving Oral Presentation Skills in English. In total, descriptive statistic results show that the Mean Value is equal to 54.28 at a high level, Standard Deviation is equal to 14.059.

3. Analysis of Interviews

In-depth interviews with five English lecturers at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University highlight shared views on the multidimensional challenges students face in oral presentations.

3.1 Factors affecting students' oral presentation skills in English

Lecturers agree psychological barriers like anxiety and lack of confidence and fundamental language skill gaps are major obstacles. While focus areas differ (e.g., phonetics, vocabulary, content mastery), all see effective presentations as requiring linguistic skills, emotional support, content understanding, and a positive learning environment. However, tensions arise regarding prescriptive teaching methods versus confidence-building approaches, and definitions of "practice" vary widely. The research mainly reflects lecturer perspectives, omitting student voices and lacking strong empirical evaluation, which may limit practical impact.

3.2 Proposed solutions for improving English oral presentation

In For progress, an integrated intervention supporting language skills, psychological readiness, content knowledge, structured practice, and classroom culture is recommended. This shift requires teachers to act as facilitators and supporters rather than just instructors, and calls for more research including student input, robust intervention studies, and attention to culturally relevant pedagogy. Ultimately, fostering effective English presentation skills involves not only improving proficiency but also building student confidence and cross-cultural communication abilities through ongoing reflection and evidence-based practice.

Discussion

After asking students by questionnaires and doing interviewing teachers by in-dept interview, information to discuss here is as follows:

1. Psychological Factors: Anxiety and Lack of Confidence

One of the most significant findings of this study is that students experience moderate anxiety and low confidence when presenting in English. This aligns with Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), who argued that foreign language anxiety is caused by fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation. In the interviews, lecturers explained that many students worry about being judged by peers or being corrected publicly by teachers. As Joughin (2007) stated, students often view oral presentations as high-risk because their errors are immediately visible and evaluated. This research confirms those ideas: students avoided eye contact, read directly from slides, and forgot prepared content when they felt nervous. These behaviours match Enein's (2011) findings, which showed that anxiety causes students to lose concentration and limits their ability to express ideas clearly. When comparing these results to previous studies such as Nouh, Abdul-Kareem, and Taqi (2015), the pattern is consistent—students with low self-confidence participate less, speak softly, and perform poorly in spontaneous question-and-answer sessions.

Interestingly, the lecturers in this study emphasized that anxiety decreases significantly when students rehearse and receive supportive feedback. King (2002) suggests that students' confidence gradually increases when they are repeatedly exposed to authentic speaking tasks. Therefore, the findings reinforce that psychological barriers must be addressed alongside language instruction.

2. Linguistic Factors: Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation

The results also revealed that students struggled with vocabulary, grammar accuracy, and pronunciation three key components of oral communication. This supports Richards and Renandya (2002), who claimed that vocabulary is central to language proficiency because learners cannot convey meaning without the right words. Wilkins (1972) famously stated, "without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed," which directly reflects the experiences of MCU students, who often stopped mid-sentence to search for words.

Pronunciation difficulties were also observed. Students expressed fear of mispronouncing words, which supports Horwitz's (2001) explanation that pronunciation concerns are a major source of anxiety in oral tasks. According to Hoge (2016), pronunciation affects clarity and credibility; when students mispronounce key words, listeners lose understanding. Lecturers explained that many students speak English fluently in informal situations but struggle to pronounce properly when speaking formally in front of a group. This suggests that pronunciation errors are related not only to skill level but also to performance pressure.

The findings also confirm Zappa-Hollman's (2007) observation that grammar problems interfere with oral fluency. Even when students have ideas, inaccurate grammar makes communication unclear. This is consistent with Latha's (2012) argument that grammatical

competence is necessary for building coherent sentences. Therefore, linguistic difficulties are not only technical weaknesses but also factors that increase anxiety and reduce confidence.

3. Presentation Skills and Preparation

Students also reported difficulty managing time, preparing visual aids, organizing content, and answering audience questions. These challenges are supported by Chuang (2010), who found that presentation problems often result from insufficient preparation rather than lack of language ability. Likewise, Chivers and Shoolbred (2007) explained that students commonly create overly complex slides or rely heavily on reading instead of presenting naturally.

This study found that many MCU students write overly long scripts and then read them word for word during presentations. Lecturers noted that this happens when students do not rehearse or when they lack topic understanding. This aligns with Tracy's (2008) idea that effective presentations require extensive preparation and organization before speaking.

In addition, the study revealed that students who understood the topic deeply performed better, even with limited language proficiency. This supports the claims of Otoshi & Heffernan (2008) and Hovane (2009), who emphasized that topic familiarity improves fluency, confidence, and audience engagement.

4. Environmental and Classroom Influences

The qualitative findings demonstrated that classroom environment and teacher encouragement play a crucial role in student success. If the classroom is supportive, students dare to speak; if it feels stressful or judgmental, they remain silent. This is consistent with Liang and Kelsen (2018), who stated that language anxiety decreases when teachers create a comfortable learning environment.

Lecturers in this study noted that students are more confident when the audience reacts positively. This supports Razawi et al. (2019), who found that positive feedback increases motivation and reduces nervousness. However, fear of peer judgment remains strong, especially among students with lower English proficiency.

5. Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of this study closely match those of Rajinda (2018), Weerayut (2017), and Wattana (2020), whose research on MCU and Thai students found similar difficulties: limited vocabulary, pronunciation, anxiety, and lack of preparation. The present study adds new insight by showing that second-year students also struggle with time management, visual aids, and memorization.

Furthermore, many studies in the literature recommended rehearsal, teacher support, and vocabulary development as solutions. The interview results from lecturers strongly supports those suggestions. Therefore, this study confirms previous research and expands understanding by connecting linguistic ability, psychology, and classroom environment.

6. Implications of the Findings

The results suggest that improving oral presentation skills requires more than teaching grammar or vocabulary. Students must also develop confidence, rehearsal skills, time management, audience communication, use of visual aids.

Therefore, instructors should design classroom activities that encourage frequent speaking, peer feedback, and positive reinforcement. These findings are important for MCU and other educational institutions aiming to prepare students for future careers in teaching, leadership, and international communication.

Conclusion

This study analysed the factors affecting English oral presentation skills among second-year Education students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, aiming to suggest ways to improve performance. A mixed-methods approach was used, combining questionnaires from 50 students with interviews from five English lecturers.

The student group was mainly male (72%), aged 20–25 (72%), with 90% from Myanmar, 70% Burmese, and 54% monks, reflecting a unique cultural and religious context. Students rated content mastery as the greatest challenge (Mean = 3.50), while anxiety about Q&A sessions and audience reactions (Mean = 3.32) also posted significant obstacles. Grammar and vocabulary issues were further concerns (Mean = 3.24).

Proposed solutions, rated highly effective overall (Mean = 54.28), emphasized using simple grammar, clearly structured presentations, and written notes. Strategies for building confidence and practicing pronunciation were also valued. The findings highlight students' preference for clear, structured, language-focused training to address presentation difficulties.

Suggestions

1. Suggestion for Applications

1.1 For Students: Practice presentations multiple times before delivery, research topics thoroughly, use breathing exercises to manage anxiety, and view presentations as opportunities to share knowledge rather than moments of judgment.

1.2 For Instructors: Create supportive classroom environments, use simple language, provide constructive feedback, teach pronunciation and vocabulary systematically, and model effective presentation techniques through interactive teaching methods.

1.3 For Curriculum Development: Integrate presentation skills training throughout the program, address both technical skills and psychological aspects, include time management and visual aid training, and consider cultural needs of diverse students.

1.4 For University Administration: Establish presentation skills workshops, provide recording equipment for practice, organize peer mentoring programs, and create low-stakes practice opportunities before major presentations.

1.5 Psychological Support: The university should offer counselling or workshops for presentation anxiety, including mindfulness and relaxation techniques. Students should see presentations as opportunities to share knowledge. Group support systems can help students exchange advice and coping strategies.

2. Suggestions for further researchs

2.1 Future studies should include students from other faculties or universities to compare factors influencing presentation skills across different academic disciplines.

2.2 Researchers could conduct longitudinal studies to track students' progress in oral presentation ability over several semesters to assess the long-term effects of practice and instruction.

2.3 Further qualitative research should explore students' personal experiences and emotional responses to oral presentation tasks to gain deeper insight into their psychological challenges.

2.4 Future researchers could test specific interventions, such as pronunciation training, peer mentoring, or anxiety reduction workshops, to measure their effectiveness in improving presentation skills.

2.5 Future studies should examine how oral presentation skills development relates to and support other language skills (reading, writing, listening). Research could investigate whether integrated skills approaches are more effective than isolated presentation skills instruction.

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