The Formulation of Model for Enhancing Oral Linguistic Performance of Teaching English Major Students of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phrae Campus

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were to investigate their problems and needs concerning oral linguistic performance, to formulate model for improving their oral linguistic performance and study its efficiency, and to study model's effectiveness by comparing oral pre-test and post-test score after model implementation. This mixed-method research was conducted with 2 groups of participants, selected by purposive sampling method. The first group consisted of 18 Teaching English major students and the second was 14 recent graduates majoring in Teaching English. The research instruments were problem and need assessment questionnaires; model for improving oral linguistic performance; and pre-test and post-test. The data were then analyzed by using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

The results revealed that poor English pronunciation was the most serious problem of the participants. In terms of their needs, they wanted to enhance their English pronunciation and speak English for a long period during their classroom teaching. To develop their oral performance, the model was formulated, consisting of 4 teaching stages: pre-speaking stage, while-speaking stage, post-speaking stage, and extension practice. The lessons based on the formulated model were also constructed, consisting of 3 units. After the model implementation, the mean scores of the post-test scores (15.28) are significantly higher than the pre-test scores (10.11) at a significant level of 0.05. The average score of all lessons was 72.35/75.87, which was higher than 70/70 standardized criteria. It means that the oral linguistic performance of the participants was improved after the model application.

Introduction

Nowadays, English communicative skills are highly required in many societies. In Thai context, English instruction has developed continually, based on other countries' standards. The

ability to communicate in English, has therefore become a primary concern of teaching programs launched at any education level in Thailand, trying to advance and develop more knowledgeable citizens. However, mastering oral linguistic performance skills, which means oral expression skills practiced by the individual through speech skills; that deal with the human voice with its diverse manifestation of accent, tone and vibration, rhythm and timbre, and gratifying, laminating and magnification, extending the shortening, stopping and arriving, is not always easy in Thai social and academic contexts (Fahd, 2016). It is not only required linguistic and lexical knowledge but also decisions of how to deliver the message across (Ali Dinçer and Savaş Yeşilyurt, 2013).

Developing oral communication skills in Thai context is a tangible difficulty since teaching English usually focuses on grammar and vocabulary teaching. This conventional English teaching method causes an imbalance in teaching English components and skills, especially productive skills, of all Thai educational institutions. Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phrae Campus, the context of the study, offers a bachelor's degree in Teaching English. In the second semester, the fourth-year students have to practice teaching English subjects in schools and perform other school tasks. They are always expected to be fluent in English communicative skills to provide effective language teaching.

Although the expectation over Teaching English major students with good oral English performance is increasingly high, their English-speaking performance is now considered weak. During their teaching practicum, most of them always face many difficulties in communicating in English. Their stress always occurs when they are afraid of making mistakes or errors in communicating and teaching students in English. It is because their performance is under the observation of their students, mentor teacher, and visiting lecturers, all of whom provide feedback that causes students' anxiety. Moreover, they always used Thai language in their English classroom to avoid their English-speaking mistakes and difficulties. Since gaining speaking accuracy and fluency comes with practice and time, they do not feel competent enough in speaking English.

With the aim of addressing oral English performance issues, this study, therefore, attempted to understand students' problems and needs relating to their oral linguistic performance, to formulate the model for improving their oral linguistic performance, and to investigate the model's effectiveness.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate problems and needs relating to oral linguistic performance of Teaching English major students of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phrae campus.

2. To formulate the model for improving oral linguistic performance of Teaching English major students of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phrae campus and study its efficiency.

3. To study the model's effectiveness by comparing Pre-test and Post-test scores after using the model.

Literature Review

Oral linguistic performance

The definitions of oral linguistic performance, according to Hamid and Fareed (2016), is oral expression skills practiced by the individual through speech skills; that deal with the human voice with its diverse manifestation of accent, tone and vibration, and rhythm and timbre, and gratifying, laminating and magnification, extending the shortening, stopping and arriving, an art showing the learner's ability to provide material stored in the nearby or distant memory in an influential manner in a collective position. Oral linguistic performance consisted of 3 main components: accuracy, complexity, and fluency (CAF). In terms of accuracy, according to Housen and Kuiken (2009), it refers to error-free speech which can be measured either specifically or generally. Fluency in language means speaking smoothly and confidently with no mistakes. Kormos, and Dénes (2004) proposed 4 components for analyzing speaking fluency: repair, speed, breakdown of fluency, and automatization.

Phonology

In light of previous research, it is noticeable that there are numerous definitions of speaking from different experts and authors. Hyman (2009) defined phonology as the study of sound systems, that is, the study of how speech sound structure and function in languages. According to Fromkin et al (1969), phonology is the study of the sound patterns found in human language. It is a term to refer to the kind of knowledge that speakers have about the sound patterns of their particular language. Phonology studies the ways in which speech sounds form systems and patterns in human language. The phonology of a language is then a system and patterns in human language. In line with this, Rabiah (2018) pointed out that phonology is a part of the language subsystem. It explains that learning a language is inseparable from learning phonology because phonology is a part that forms language. Phonology is the study of sound systems, which is about how the sound in a language can be produced, patterned, and functioned. This means that learning phonology is important in order to know how to pronounce the language correctly. In terms of phonological rules, they are defined as the mapping between two distinct levels of sound representation (Goldsmith, J. et al.,2011, p. 27). Phonological rules describe how phonemes are realized as their allophones in a given environment. According to Katamba (1989, p.28), it is described as "generalizations" about the different ways a sound can be pronounced in different environments. The environment in phonology refers to neighboring phonemes. Haye (2009, p.15) noted that phonological rules are described as generalizations of the distinct ways in which each sound is able to be pronounced in different development. Additionally, caused by the preceding or following phoneme, phonological rules deal with the alteration of sound in a word or phrase. There are several kinds of phonological rules all over the world grounded in Lass's theory (1998, p.92). Assimilation, dissimilation, and deletion are frequently found in English language.

English Pre-Service Teachers and Speaking Performance

As good oral communication skills provide effective language teaching, it is still a very challenging skill for Thai language students to acquire. The exposure to English of Thai learners is thus somewhat limited since English in Thailand is taught as a foreign language. English instruction is therefore located in an area where English is not a primary language (Noom-Ura, 2013). According to the fact that students majoring in Teaching English have more exposure to English than do non-English majors, their communications skills are challenged when they practice teaching since they do have enough competence and confidence in speaking in English during their classroom teaching. As stated by Dincer and Sava (2013), English teachers are always expected to be fluent in both English communicative skills and the usage of instructional media use in the classroom. It is in accordance with the study of Brown (2004) which noted that pre-service teachers' communication skills have been considered challenged; they have to practice teaching and develop both their competence and confidence in speaking in English during the school practicum. Richards (2017) also affirmed the need for pre-service teachers needs to have a level of English proficiency to be able to teach effectively. They are expected to develop their language skills so they can deliver their lessons smoothly and process students' answers with fluency in English language. Cristie Ann L. Jaca and Felino B. Javines (2020) also pointed out that oral communication abilities which are needed to be expressed by students studying in Teaching English major were the ability to formulate questions in English, ability to answer students' questions in English, ability to communicate spontaneously, ability to pronounce words correctly, and ability to process students' answers. According to the background of speaking performance of English pre-service teachers and their common issues with speaking English, it is necessary to identify their weak points and then work on them. In addition, training in speech communication is necessary to provide enough opportunities for pre-service teachers to improve their communication skills before their teaching professional internship.

To sum up, good English speaking performance is considered important for Teaching English major students since they are always expected to be fluent in English communicative skills in order to deliver the lessons smoothly and process students' answers with fluency in English language. Therefore, it is important to conduct this study in order to develop their oral linguistic performance based on phonological concepts to provide them the opportunities to reinforce their English oral communication skills before their teaching practicum.

Research Methodology

The section below provides the research methodology of the study. It involves research design, participants, research setting, population and sample, and research instruments. The explanation will be started by explaining about research design of the study.

Research Design

The current study uses qualitative research methods to help obtain the result of the study. The Descriptive qualitative design is chosen to describe the findings of the study in more

detailed way as it interviews participants' needs and problems concerning their oral linguistic performance.

Research Setting

The research was done at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phrae campus located in Meaung district, Phrae province.

Population and Sample

The participants, selected by purposive sampling method, consisted of two groups. The first group, which consisted of 18 third-year students and English pre-service teachers studying in Teaching English major of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phrae campus in the academic year 2021, was used for the thorough studies to evaluate the efficiency of the formulated model. Regarded as the participants for the try-out study, the second group consisted of 14 recent graduates of Teaching English major. Most of them faced the problems of using spoken English during their teaching practicum or in their workplace after graduation.

Research Instruments

The research instruments were questionnaire, interview, lessons for improving oral linguistic performance, pre-test, and post-test. They were employed to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data needed in the study.

In order to investigate students' needs and problems relating to their oral linguistic performance, need and problem assessment questionnaire was constructed, consisting of personal information, needs of developing oral linguistic performance, and problems of their oral linguistic performance. The five-point Likert scale was applied in the third part, aiming to ask about participants' problems and needs for developing oral linguistic performance. The interview was also added to help strengthen the quantitative data obtained in the research findings.

The model was formulated based on their problems and needs, phonological skills, and the four-step pedagogical method. After the model was formulated, the lessons were created by following the guidelines of the model. Before the experiment, the participants' oral linguistic performance was measured by using an oral pre-test. Then, they would receive three hours of English instruction per week for six weeks in the semester using the lessons based on the formulated model. At the end of the semester, all participants received the English oral post-test. Then, the data were analyzed after the end of the lessons.

In order to evaluate the formulated model, students' oral linguistic performance was evaluated in terms of process (E_1) and product (E_2). E_1 refers to the efficiency of the process, taken from a mean of exercises and activities. E_2, taken from the oral post-test, is the efficiency of the outcome in which the students' oral linguistic performance is changed after taking the lessons developed from the formulated model.

Research Results

According to the first research objective, the results showed that the participants agreed that poor English pronunciation was the most serious problem in terms of their oral linguistic performance ($\bar{x}$= 5), followed by cannot speak English for a long period ($\bar{x}$= 4.5), the difficulty of speaking English during classroom teaching ($\bar{x}$= 4.3), and being afraid of making mistakes when speaking English language ($\bar{x}$= 4.3). The data obtained from the interview revealed that the sound systems of English language were difficult and they lacked confidence when they have to pronounce unknown words and teach their students in English. In terms of their needs, they wanted to enhance their English pronunciation ($\bar{x}$= 5). They also wanted to speak English for a long period during their classroom teaching and reduce their mistakes ($\bar{x}$= 5), followed by wanting to find the motivation to teach their students in English and being a good role model to motivate their students to use English in daily communication ($\bar{x}$= 4.5), pronouncing some difficult English words fluency and naturally ($\bar{x}$ = 4.4), and wanting more opportunity to correct their mispronunciations ($\bar{x}$ = 4.3). The qualitative results also confirmed that most of them wanted to improve their English pronunciation since they believed that it could help them to speak English naturally. They also claimed that good pronunciation could reduce their anxiety.

According to the second research objective, the model was designed and constructed based on students' needs and problems, the concept of phonological skills, and the four-step pedagogical method. It consisted of 4 teaching stages as follows: pre-speaking stage, while-speaking stage, post-speaking stage, and extension practice. The pre-speaking phase was conducted before speaking to help students to be sufficiently in knowledge, vocabulary, and strategies, leading to anxiety-free. The second phase, Maurice's 4/3/2 technique in which the learner talks about a topic for 4 minutes; next he repeats the topic within 3 minutes; and then he conducts the same speech within 2 minutes, was integrated to enhance learners' speaking fluency and accuracy. Speaking activities such as speaking tasks, using a fluency technique, and forming automaticity were also employed. The third phase, post-speaking activities, focuses on developing students' oral proficiency. Students need to analyze and evaluate their output and correct their own mistakes in language use, leading to better performance. Finally, extension practice was implemented through task repetition to develop both fluent and accurate spoken language. Students have to tell the same topic to different persons, ask different people similar questions, or use the same materials to communicate.

After the model was developed, before the experiment, their oral linguistic performance was measured by using the oral pre-test. Then, they would receive three hours of English instruction per week for six weeks in the semester, using the lessons based on the formulated model. At the end of the semester, all of them received the oral post-test. Finally, their oral linguistic performance was evaluated so as to compare their pre-test and post-test scores. The results were presented in the following table.

Table 1 Pre-test and Post-test Averages Scores of Participants

	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{D}$	S.D.D	t	Sig (1-tailed)
Pre-test	10.11	1.13	5.17	1.47	14.96*	0.000
Post-test	15.28	1.07	5.17	1.47		

As seen in the table above, the students' score in the oral pre-test and post-test was compared. It was found that the mean scores of the oral post-test scores (15.28) were significantly higher than the pre-test scores (10.11) at a significant level of 0.05. It means that the lessons based on the formulated model helped the participants to improve their oral linguistic performance.

To determine the efficiency of the lessons, the 70/70 standard was used as a criterion. The efficiency of the process (E_1) and the efficiency of the product (E_2) formula were applied to evaluate the efficiency of the model. E_1 was the percentage of all scores the participants earned from activities and assignments of each lesson, while E_2 was the percentage of all scores they earned from their post-test. The efficiency of the constructed lessons based on the formulated model was shown in the following table.

Table 2 The Efficiency of the Constructed Lessons based on the Formulated Model

Lessons	n	E_1	E_2	E_1/E_2
Classroom Language Used at the Beginning of the Lessons	9	72.00	78.30	72.00/78.30
Classroom Language Used during the Lesson and Classroom Management Phrases	9	71.66	75.33	71.66/75.33
Classroom Language Used at the Ending of the Lesson	9	73.40	74.00	73.40/74.00
Average Score	9	72.35	75.87	72.35/75.87

According to the table above, the value of each lesson was 72.00/78.30, 71.66/75.33, and 73.40/74.00 respectively. The average score of all lessons was 72.35/75.87, which was higher than 70/70 standardized criteria. It showed that the oral linguistic performance of the participants was improved after the model application.

Discussions

The discussion in this section will be based on the research objectives presented in the first chapter. According to the first research objective, the problems and needs relating to the oral linguistic performance of the participants were investigated. It was found that the most serious problem concerning their oral linguistic performance was poor English pronunciation

because some English consonant sounds were difficult to pronounce. This is consistent with what has been found in the previous study of Patthamawadee and Bhornsawan (2017) which indicated that Thai students' major problematic sounds were the sounds that do not occur in Thai phonological system, leading to difficulties for students to pronounce.

The results also pointed out that they were not able to speak English for a long period and they always faced difficulties in speaking English during classroom teaching. The results were supported by the study of Juhana (2012) who stated that anxiety concerning fear of making mistakes was an important factor that decrease the ability in speaking English. As a matter of fact, fear of making mistakes and nervousness could hinder the students from freely expressing their own ideas (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). This is also congruent with Deyuan (2013) who stated that as pre-service English teachers feel uncomfortable when being the focus of attention in class, they usually avoid teaching their students in English.

In terms of students' needs of developing their oral linguistic performance, the findings indicated that most of them agreed that they wanted to enhance their English pronunciation. This result ties well with the study of Low (2021) who pointed out that pronunciation is a necessary part of learning English language since it is one of the most difficult aspects of English to acquire. Additionally, it is also congruent with Yusriati et al (2019) who confirmed that good pronunciation can lead to communication flow and it should be a priority in English language learning in order to achieve successful communication. The findings also pointed out that most of the participants wanted to speak English for a long period during their classroom teaching and reduce their mistakes. They believed that it is necessary to find the motivation to teach students in English and be a good role model to motivate students to use English in daily communication were important. Richards and Renandya (2002) claimed that achieving fluency in oral communication is the main dream and motivation that many learners bring to language classes. It ties well with the idea of Anuradha et al (2004) who pointed out that teachers could motivate students' interest and learning spirit in a positive environment from the very first lesson. Additionally, Harmer (1991) believed that teachers have great potential to facilitate speaking skills by providing balanced moral support to speak the language confidently. A similar conclusion was reached by Kala and Parilah (2020) who confirmed that providing the necessity to know, appreciate, and practice English language is crucial to tap the students' motivation and desire to learn this language.

The second research objective aimed to formulate the model for enhancing the oral linguistics performance of Teaching English major students of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Phrae campus. It was found that the model was constructed based on the concepts of phonological skills, problems, and needs of students. The model components consisted of 4 teaching stages: 1) pre-speaking stage, 2) while-speaking stage, 3) post-speaking stage, and 4) extension practice. Aiming to strengthen students' knowledge and vocabulary, the first stage was conducted before speaking to reduce their stress. The second stage focused on speaking fluency

and accuracy by applying Maurice's 4/3/2 technique. The study by Henry (2018) also supported that this technique gives the opportunity to speak, therefore, students are able to express what they want to say without being afraid of making mistakes. Permata et al (2020) also claimed that the 4/3/2 technique has advantages as follows: improving speaking fluency, enhancing grammatical accuracy, and intensifying control over the content of the talks. The post-speaking stage, which provided the opportunity to correct speaking mistakes concerning pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, was conducted with its main purpose: developing oral proficiency. It ties well with the study of Hamouda (2013) which pointed out that teachers should vary their teaching approaches that are conducive to developing students' speaking skills. Gashan and Almohaisen (2014) also suggested positive comments to help students to speak. The final stage, extension practice, focusing on developing students' fluent and accurate spoken language, was applied. According to Bygate and Samuda (2003) extended speaking is an opportunity to practice all the skills needed for communication. Besides, in order to develop both fluent and accurate spoken language, extension practice needs to be implemented through task repetition.

The participants' scores before and after using the constructed lessons, based on the formulated model, were compared to investigate the efficiency of the constructed lessons. The mean scores of the oral post-test scores (16.11) were significantly higher than the pre-test scores (9.89) at the significant level of 0.05, which means that the lessons based on the formulated model helped the participants to improve their oral linguistic performance. In addition, the average score of all lessons was 72.35/75.87, which was higher than 70/70 standardized criteria. As the constructed model could help students be sufficient in knowledge, vocabulary, and strategies, their anxiety, pressure, and speaking mistakes were reduced. Therefore, it was confirmed that their oral linguistic performance was improved after the model application. The findings are supported by Canale (1983) who pointed out that learning models with a variety of activities and methods can consistently improve English speaking skills of the students. The model based on the enhancement of oral linguistic performance has been shown to provide an effect on the oral performance of Teaching English major students.

Knowledge from Research

The body of knowledge obtained from this research was the model for developing oral linguistic performance, applying the concepts of phonological skills and the four-pedagogical method. It is presented in the following diagram.
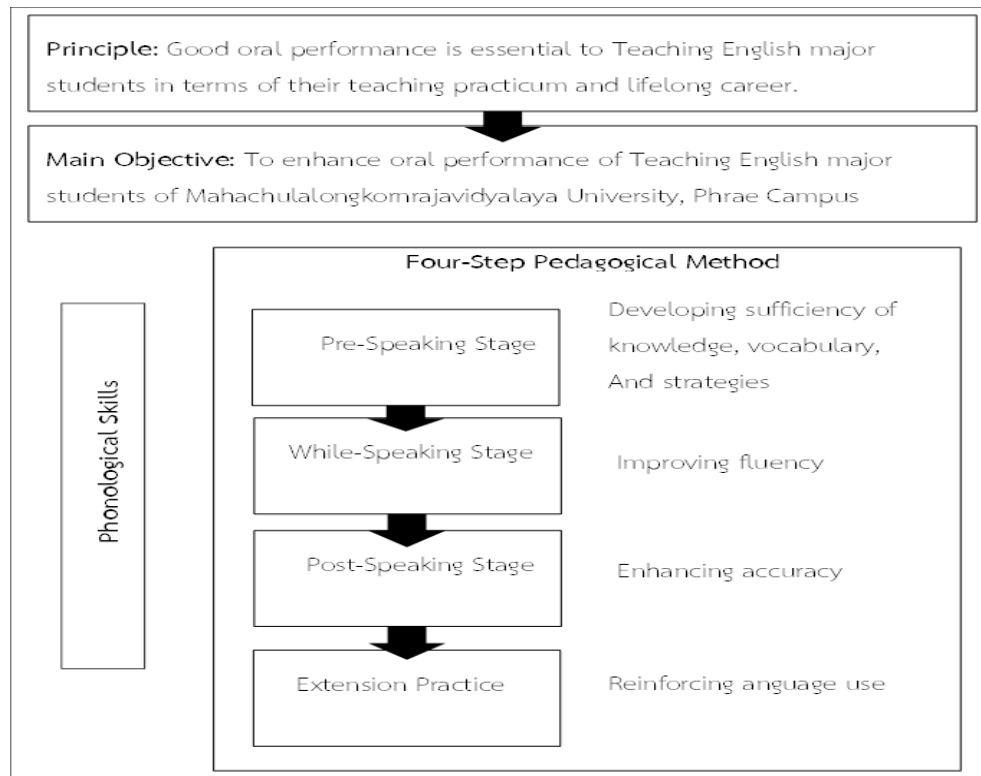
Fig.1 Model for developing oral linguistic performance

Pre-speaking stage: it aims to develop students' knowledge, vocabulary, and strategies. It also provides students enough time to plan and offers them some support in the language. The pre-speaking stage is conducted by applying the following activities: pre-task planning, pre-speaking support, and authentic input.

While-speaking stage: This stage focuses on improving students speaking fluency. Various speaking tasks in this stage encourage them to express their opinions freely, especially, Maurice's 4/3/2 technique which enhances their speaking fluency without distracting their attention to the language form at the same time.

Post-speaking stage: This stage aims to develop speaking accuracy. It places importance on language-focused activities, 2) self-repairs, and 3) corrective feedback.

Extension practice: The final stage focuses on reinforcing their language use. In order to reinforce their language use, they need to analyze, evaluate their output and correct their own mistakes. Task repetition, which is the repetition of the whole task or some parts of a task is required to develop both fluent and accurate spoken language, for example, telling the same topic to different persons, asking different people the similar question, and using the same materials to communicate.

Conclusion

According to the research findings, it can be concluded that poor English pronunciation, cannot speak English for a long period, facing difficulties in speaking English during classroom teaching, and being afraid of making mistakes were respectively students' problems influencing their speaking performance. In terms of their needs of developing their oral linguistic performance, enhancing English pronunciation, developing the pronunciation of some difficult English words, and having more opportunities to correct mispronunciations were also respectively considered their needs. The model for enhancing oral linguistics performance was formulated based on students' problems and needs, phonological skills, and four-step pedagogical method. The model components consisted of 4 teaching stages: 1) pre-speaking stage, 2) while-speaking stage, 3) post-speaking stage, and 4) extension practice. After that, the lessons based on the formulated model were constructed. In terms of the model's effectiveness, the efficiency of the constructed lessons, the efficiency of the process (E1), and the efficiency of the product (E2) formula were applied. The 70/70 standard was used as a criterion. It was found that the value of each lesson and the average score of all lessons were higher than 70/70 standardized criteria. It showed that the oral linguistic performance of the participants was improved after the model application.

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