

A study on speaking strategies and how to improve speaking confidence among aviation students

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Abstract: The study aims to explore speaking strategies used by aviation students that may effectively work for their speaking for actual communication. Data collection was designed through qualitative study. The participants were five aviation students from different classes which were taught in the same criteria and learning goals. Data were analyzed with interview questions as well as close observation in the classroom. The interview questions were drawn from the effective speaking strategies guideline and specifically classified in accordance with specific themes relating to the aviation industry. The result showed that there were four strategies that aviation students commonly used when they needed to improve their speaking in classroom activities, namely, role-play, small group discussion and singing. The study also shaded a variety of benefits of speaking strategies to encourage, stimulate students confidence in their speaking. Furthermore, students had opportunities to practice their speaking by using their own strategies that work to them the most. The implications of this study was that students can improve their vocabulary as well as pronunciation while they used their personalized speaking strategies. Further recommendation of the study was active activities in English classes should be emphasized on interaction between students to students as well as students to teachers.

Keywords: Speaking, Speaking strategies, Confidence, EFL, Aviation

I. Introduction

There is nothing to come up with when it comes to international collaboration, multicultural organizations; speaking seems obvious to determine one's skill in English. With fluency in speaking skill of English, one can probably achieve a communicative goal. Considering other skills in English -- listening, reading and writing, speaking seems to be an important skill for communicating goals or working in international working places. Aviation students are expected to perform their English speaking in an acceptable level of communicative goal. Confidence in their speaking ability may enhance their opportunity to work in international organizations, especially in the fields of aviation industry.

However, it is not easy to achieve fluency in speaking ability as well as having high confidence with accuracy of speaking ability. Students studying in aviation lines need to work on their speaking to become fluent. Therefore, the study aims to investigate the speaking strategy used by aviation students that work the most for them and lead them to become successful in their future career.

According to several speaking strategies investigated by numerous scholars, it is important that EFL students need to collaboratively select their own speaking strategies in accordance with their preferences and learning styles. In an EFL classroom, it is important that a variety of speaking activities can assist a student's speaking performance with confidence in an interactive way. These include role-play, small group discussion, storytelling and songs.

With the important speaking ability, students are expected to perform their English speaking with appropriate situations, circumstances and opportunities. Apart from other skills in English, including listening, reading and writing, speaking seems to be the most demanding skill in international collaboration.

It has been controversial on speaking performance among second language learners (particularly aviation students) that confidence in speaking skill is far reaching to the expectation of international context. Delivering the words with appropriateness and accuracy in speaking is still problematic. EFL students are still facing difficulties expressing speaking in the international context.

The direction of studying English speaking deems to have a command in speaking in real life. English has been predominantly emphasized on international business as a tool for communication. It is required that people who use English for daily may have a high confidence in their speaking. This is an important issue in language learning to investigate speaking strategies that may work the most for their communicative goal. It is also indicated that fluent English competency will have a good relationship with numerous people from all over the world. Therefore, learning English speaking with appropriate strategies may enhance one's skills in speaking competency in the long run.

It is undeniable that learning English is one of the most desirable expectations and has become a necessity in individuals. Classrooms with intensive English speaking have shown evidence of improving students skills and master English speaking in the international context. However, there have been a variety of aspects in learning speaking to become fluent; namely grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling.

In order to achieve speaking ability, it is important that students need to use their own learning strategies that work the most to improve their speaking. They will eventually master their English speaking with appropriate learning strategies. Since aviation students need to master their English speaking with fluency and confidence, it is interesting to explore the speaking strategies used by them to achieve English speaking in the real world.

With the importance of speaking skill, it is important and useful for a wide range of communication including international business, aviation industry. The fact that those working in the aviation industry require to have a very great in English speaking skill to work for their communication.

However, learning English, emphasized on speaking improvement, is still lacking. Improving confidence in speaking needs to have the correct words to create sentences, deliver the sentences, and understand the natural way of spoken language. Moreover, speaking skill is generally claimed that it is quite hard to achieve a communicative goal.

The difficulty in speaking has been shown that students are not really competent when it comes to having communication (Dincer & Yesilyurt, 2017). It has also raised big concerns for English teachers and students to explore appropriate ways in teaching and learning. Improvement in speaking competency is what students are expected to do. Therefore, speaking strategies are importantly suggested to encourage students to become good learners in the long run.

The fact that aviation students need to perform their speaking in the expected level of communication, ranging from intermediate and upper-intermediate. The ability in speaking needs to have a wide range of components in English such as how to produce words, sentence structure and how to generate ideas in English. Still, the limitations and obstacles in which may demotivate student performance in speaking have still been problematic, for example, students lack confidence, feel anxious, and mispronounce the words or rarely understand the sentence structure. All of these affecting factors might continuously increase unless students use appropriate speaking strategies.

Problems in speaking may deter student's confidence in speaking. One of the obvious factors deterring student's speaking performance is lacking confidence. There are several affecting factors that may be seen in aviation speaking ability, namely, impracticality in expressing words, mistakes in using sentences, doubt in generating the ideas.

It has still been problematic that aviation students cannot express their speaking ability at the appropriate level of English command. Tuan & Mai (2015) claimed that speaking needs to be emphasized to let students know how to speak and try to express their opinions when it comes to communication.

When students need to express their ideas in speaking, it is common to see mistakes in their speaking, errors in speaking and feel embarrassed or even scared if they might not be able to talk or discuss a particular situation. This has led to decreasing the confidence in speaking in which it deters the speaking competence.

According to Melendez et al (2014), students with low English proficiency may encounter a lack of confidence in their speaking and even feel anxious while speaking. Silence is one of the most ineffective approaches in speaking that can be seen in improvement of their speaking.

Confidence can be defined in various ways. Lack of confidence in speaking can be determined that students' speaking ability is limited. English teachers can motivate students to improve their speaking to be better. With effective speaking strategies, students may have more chances to practice their speaking that is necessary for their prospect.

In order to achieve confidence, it is imperative that students need to expose the speaking environment in a supportive way. Unless students have chances to speak, they may eventually become demotivated because of lack of confidence. Therefore, proper speaking strategies may enhance their speaking and further develop their speaking skills to be better.

According to Kuivamaki (2015), speaking needs to be emphasized in the particular prospect that uses English for their communication, collaboration and integration. For instance, customer services and flight attendants have determined to have good command in English. Business context is also indicated that numerous workers need

to perform their speaking with confidence and fluency. Therefore, learning English speaking is a core competency to make students become confident.

Flight attendants or those working in airline business deem to have a fluency in speaking as well as confidence in obvious ways. Possessing such a good skill in English speaking is very optionally outstanding to examine a student's achievement in communicative goal. However, the problem in speaking skill has still been obviously problematic in which it is struggling to make them successful.

Finding the speaking strategies based on student's preferences and competencies is what the study has brought into the following research questions as follow:

- **What are aviation students' speaking strategies to overcome their level of confidence in speaking in accordance with an aviation prospect's expectation?**

In effect, speaking strategies used by aviation students may enhance their confidence in speaking, particularly for their future prospects.

II. Review literature

Speaking competency

Language learning is fundamental for EFL learners to master their English as a whole. Speaking competence seems obviously challenging and needs to focus on how to speak in a particular context. It is a very important skill that EFL learners should fully develop in order to communicate in international context (Afsar & Asakereh, 2016).

With the process of oral communication, it is a combination of both speakers and listeners to share information and understand the spoken language (Lavani Satya Christies, Listyani & Kusrini, 2015). Speaking is a fundamental language skill that EFL students will eventually communicate as a spoken communication. It is a process of interactive communication in any prospects that commonly use English as a tool for communication.

The significance of speaking ability

In EFL context, learning English consists of four skills that EFL students need to master including reading, writing, listening and speaking. However, speaking skill is one of the most important skills that can determine the overall performance to use language in a communicative goal.

If students can perform their speaking with full command in spoken language as well as showing their confidence, they can fully develop their speaking in daily conversation as well as the expected prospects in the future (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Speaking with confidence is considered as a progressive development in communication among people in a certain way (Al-roud, 2016).

The important skill in English falls to speaking because it is a prompt task that is spontaneously proposed in the actual communication, especially daily conversation (Derakhshan et al, 2016). However, it is a challenging task to achieve for better communication in particular contexts, particularly the aviation industry.

Challenging in speaking ability

Progress in speaking ability is what scholars have discussed in order to master English speaking for daily communication. According to Afisa (2015), anxiety and lack of confidence in English speaking among low-level EFL learners when they need to express speaking with accuracy and fluency.

The difficulties encountered by EFL learners may be an ability to deliver words correctly and fluently and feel exhausted and shy when speaking (Normawati & Muna, 2015). This needs to make improvement on the level of confidence that can be brought in communicative learning. Another factor contributing to speaking performance is psychological and attitudinal barriers in the EFL language (Abraham, 2015).

The problematic issue on speaking competence is lack of confidence and shyness in which students cannot express their speaking. Lack of confidence is unacknowledged in a way of discussion in speaking.

Confidence in speaking ability

There has been numerous evidence on investigation in speaking ability with confidence in EFL learners. According to Kanza (2015), it is claimed that self-confidence is what EFL students should possess in certain sentiments, feelings, beliefs and trustworthy in their ability to deliver speaking in a successful way of

communication. These play an important role in learning language and determine how one can achieve in speaking competency.

Confidence in speaking ability can be further developed with a variety of language learning strategies. With a great command in speaking, EFL learners may enhance their presentation skill, explore their ideas and opinions in certain ways (Kanza, 2015).

Lack of confidence in speaking leads to anxiety in speaking and hardly achieves the goal of communication. Students studying in the aviation industry need to improve their confidence in order to perform their speaking in their future prospects.

It is generally believed that confidence in speaking may inspire students to perform their speaking for a better version of themselves. Therefore, the key understanding on improving speaking skill is how to motivate students to have a level of confidence.

Student's strategies to improve confidence in speaking ability

With a wide range of effective speaking strategies, it is important that EFL students may choose to use and apply their own personalized strategies that they can improve their speaking the most. The main understanding in speaking strategies would be beneficial for learning and teaching in English language classrooms.

According to Anjaniputra (2015), speaking strategies can be selectively used in the language classroom and outside the classroom. During the speaking classroom, it is expected that EFL learners are able to use speaking strategies in order to develop their confidence in speaking without much struggling and pressure.

Speaking strategies that can be developed among EFL students is that they can avoid having failure of oral communication in a communicative setting. According to Imane (2015), it is suggested that failure in speaking can be prevented from lack of confidence by fostering a psychological cognitive approach, called "positive reinforcement".

It is claimed that English teachers should encourage students to use role-play activity in EFL classrooms in order to build student's confidence. With role play activity, students can enhance their confidence in speaking skill and develop their English vocabulary simultaneously.

Storytelling is one of the most effective speaking strategies that students will eventually develop their speaking ability (Rokni & Qarajech, 2014). It improves student's confidence and further enhances vocabulary among EFL learners. Unfortunately, it is not recommended to use extensive storytelling that is heavily emphasized in the language classroom due to complexity and difficulty (Gafu & Badea, 2011).

However, different strategies may apply in different groups of EFL students. Another speaking strategy to improve student's confidence is that small group discussion. This can improve speaking competency and vocabulary in a particular context.

Singing English songs is determined to improve a student's speaking skill as well as confidence. According to Remero et al (2012), using singing strategy was effective in English class, with further development of communicative abilities. Confidence can be enhanced through singing English activities and encourage students with positive reinforcement.

Medium instruction by using technology can be encouraged in speaking performance. With the computer-mediated communication (CMC), it is beneficial for EFL students to improve their speaking in the right direction (Wu et al, 2011). This allows students to have opportunities to speak with native speakers from all over the world. Furthermore, it provides collaborative learning that matters for students to improve their speaking in the right track.

In accordance with collaborative learning, EFL students can develop their speaking and build positive attitudes to practice speaking in daily (Al-tamini, 2014). Speaking strategy used by EFL learners may be an essential tool to drive them to become successful.

Speaking strategies used by EFL students

Numerous speaking strategies have been investigated with a variety of aspects in learning and teaching. In order to improve student's confidence in speaking as well as competence in speaking with authentic situations. According to Askia et al (2016), they examined how active learning strategy can improve student's skill in spoken communication.

An experimental design conducted by Askia (2016), showed that active learning strategies can provide student's opportunities to improve their speaking. Not only the classroom speaking activities, but also the actual situation can take place that students will eventually communicate their spoken English effectively.

A small group discussion, like games and drama, proposed by Grisales & Cruz (2017), played a significant role in student's speaking improvement. It is expected that speaking language learning strategies can improve student's collaboration and foster a student's confidence in their speaking, especially discussion in what they are interested in. Another speaking strategy that can be taken into consideration is that singing English songs in order to imitate sounds in spoken English.

Some evidence has been shown in language learning strategies that students can improve their confidence in accordance with the learning environment in an integrative way. Students may feel confident in expressing their speaking with collaborative learning.

Numerous speaking strategies used by aviation students are expected to have an ability in discussion with a wide range of speaking competence as a whole (Alam & Uddin, 2015). Expectation of student's oral communication (OCSs) is what EFL students need to possess in an integrative way as well as serving the core competence in accordance with the National Curriculum for English Language (NCEL).

Effective speaking strategies will be extensively discussed through qualitative research such as demonstration, role-play and small discussion. These provide benefit in improving the speaking competence among EFL students.

With a variety of investigations on effective speaking strategies, the aim of speaking strategy is to encourage students to speak with a high level of confidence. This also clarifies a certain way of collaborative learning that may work the most for EFL students. Therefore, if EFL students can practically use their own customized speaking strategy, they will eventually improve their speaking as a whole.

III. Methodology

The context of this investigation was conducted in the aviation program of one of leading universities in Bangkok. Students are purposely selected in an intensive English speaking class.

There were five students studying to expose their own speaking strategy in order to improve their English speaking with confidence. Speaking strategies were selectively used in accordance with the expectation of aviation exposure. Improving confidence in speaking is a core subject matter to explore the result in different ways. The qualitative study with semi-structured interviews was conducted in this investigation.

In-depth interviews and personal experiences can be further added in this study in order to examine strategies used by aviation students and controlling the consistency and validity.

Data Collection Instrument

Semi-structured interview was the first priority to conduct as a protocol guidance. There were five questions related to speaking strategies used by aviation students as the core language questions to the five participants. An audio recorder with mobile phone was applied to record the information in this interview and data were qualitatively analyzed with wording analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

Interview was conducted in January and February 2020 by aviation program study. Five aviation students were interviewed with face-to-face conversation and took notes when necessary in order to obtain detailed information.

Data Analysis

After the data collection procedure was obtained from a semi-structured interview, the data transcription was translated into written text accordingly. Classification and identification were done with the theme of related questions.

Strategies are classified into four aspects: role-play, small group discussion, storytelling and singing English songs. The core theme in this investigation was served to the main use of English communication in aviation prospect.

With qualitative analysis, the pattern of data transcription was used to make parallelism with relevant data. Data were all illustrated in deep detailed information that correlated to subject matter during the interpretation.

IV. Results & Conclusion

From the interview and discussion, the results showed that aviation students chose the speaking strategies in different ways. There were four effective strategies in improving their English speaking as well as confidence, namely, small group discussion, role-play, storytelling and songs.

Strategy 1: Role play

It is important to say that role play is one of the most effective speaking strategies in this study. Aviation students are determined to apply in their speaking in order to enhance their confidence. Role play assisted students in enhancing their speaking. It is very useful that an integrative class by using role play as the speaking activity can enhance students' confidence.

With a wide range of speaking activity, it is very crucial that students can use role-play as their activity in speaking class. This can be made by letting the student and student or teacher and student do dialogue or in pairs in the speaking classroom. It also encourages students to increase their vocabulary, especially in spoken language.

In order to enhance student's confidence in speaking, role play seems to assist students that have a low level of English proficiency to become competent in speaking. Not only enhancing vocabulary in speaking, but this also encourages students to become fluent in their speaking. Consequently, they can eventually build their confidence significantly.

Role play can be an alternative strategy for improving speaking skill. Therefore, if students desire to enhance their speaking, they will probably use role-play as their speaking strategy.

It is suggested that role-play has positively encouraged student's confidence as an effective strategy for speaking class. However, it is claimed that role-play can deter students who have low English proficiency skills that refrain from the effectiveness of speaking improvement. Thus, teaching speaking with role-play activity is purposely selected for a particular group of students.

Role-play may be a demanding task for EFL students because it requires preparation, practice, assessment as well as a special session in English speaking classroom. It is encouraged that intermediate level of English learners, especially aviation students, may choose role-play activity as their first priority for their speaking effectiveness.

Strategy 2: Small Group Discussion

Small group discussion is one of the most effective strategies in speaking and it improves student's confidence significantly. This study showed that the speaking activities in language classrooms need to use integral parts by using small group discussion. Not only it strengthens the student's ability in speaking, but it also enhances students confidence. This has led to the student's speaking skill in a fluent way.

According to Antoni (2014), speaking strategy by using small group discussion is one of the most effective techniques and leads students to have opportunities to speak. Encouraging to speak in English class can be determined through the small discussion technique. This strategy benefits most with student's interactive communication. It reflected on student's improvement on pronunciation as well as confidence in speaking.

Understanding spoken language was also mentioned in the small group discussion technique. Students can be able to discuss in speaking class by understanding the spoken language including questions and perform well with active listening.

In order to motivate students to speak, they need to understand the spoken language clearly. This can be examined through understanding of discussion with the theme and scope of responding in accordance with questions. The ideas and perspectives in small group discussion proposed by students were also an indicator of the result in this study.

Pronunciation was significantly improved with the small group discussion strategy. This reflected a positive result on improving pronunciation in certain ways. Stress, intonation and spelling were all improved with this strategy used by students.

According to Argawi (2014), it is proposed that small group discussion was a crucial strategy in speaking improvement. It allows students opportunities to express their opinions by using their ideas, perspectives and variety of sources. Vocabulary was also substantially improved through small group discussion with proper speaking strategy in appropriate involvement.

Strategy 3: Storytelling

Storytelling was an encouraging activity that students used for their speaking strategy as they could substantially improve their speaking skills. This can be made with explanations related to student's personal experiences in short story telling. It is very helpful for students to improve their speaking with opportunities to speak and build their confidence.

Passive students also benefited with speaking strategy by using storytelling. In order to develop student's confidence, they are required to explain their personal experiences and share their history with a short story. This improves students speaking with accuracy in pronunciation as well as confidence.

Students revealed that storytelling was the most challenging task for speaking in front of the class, however, it was a useful strategy in improving their English speaking as a whole.

An alternative speaking strategy used by students was storytelling. In this approach, students can enhance their speaking with high levels of confidence. This motivates students who are quite shy to improve their speaking ability to be better. Students also revealed that this strategy may benefit for their English presentation as well.

According to Rokni & Qarajeh (2014), storytelling becomes one of effective speaking strategies in enhancing a student's speaking skill as well as confidence. This strengthens a student's ability to speak and develops students confidence in their speaking.

With storytelling techniques, it is generally used in speaking activity in language classes. Students exposed that they felt positively beneficial and prevented from being excited or even get bored when it comes to speaking.

Strategy 4: Singing English Songs

The result showed that singing English songs was used by students as their effective speaking strategy. Students revealed that singing English songs encourage student's speaking ability as well as confidence. This also helped them improve their English pronunciation while speaking.

Speaking strategy by singing English songs was helpful for students' speaking indirectly. To illustrate, students exposed that they chose their favorite English songs and remembered the lyrics to improve pronunciation as well as confidence.

It is determined that students normally use singing as they had opportunities to speak outside of the classroom. Singing was one of the most effective speaking strategies in order to improve their speaking in the right direction. It is an activity that students can do for their leisure time. Moreover, it serves students confidence in their speaking once they can sing English songs to express their speaking.

Students revealed that there were numerous favorite English songs that they can sing, then, apply their speaking when it comes to speaking in daily. This significantly improved student's pronunciation as well as their confidence in speaking.

It is suggested that singing English songs can be useful for students to improve their speaking, confidence and willingness for communication. Pronunciation seemed significantly improved through the speaking strategy with singing.

In order to assure student's competence in speaking, they need to expose themselves with numerous opportunities to express their speaking with positive reinforcement. This speaking strategy was effective to foster students' psychological affection in learning English (Remoro et al, 2016).

V. Discussion & Recommendation

Conclusion, discussion and recommendation of current study were drawn from most top four speaking strategies used by aviation students. The main objective of the study was to improve students' speaking skill and see how well they can eventually signify their confidence for their speaking ability.

Role-play was the effective speaking strategy in which it allowed opportunities for students to improve their speaking practice. It enhances student's interaction, collaboration and confidence. It is suggested that this encourages students to improve their speaking and increases students' vocabulary.

Next, the small group discussion extensively enhanced student's speaking ability, and let students perform their speaking within the scope of particular topics. With interactive learning, the small group discussion fosters student interaction including participation, ongoing interactive learning. Furthermore, it provides chances in speaking, turning students become fluent and improving their confidence.

Another speaking strategy that matters for students speaking improvement was storytelling. This substantially develops student's literacy skills, including vocabulary and how to speak based on the information they have. It enhances students' critical thinking that they have to express their speaking in a logical way. In effect, it makes students become fluent with a high level of confidence in their speaking.

Finally, one of the most effective speaking strategies that build students' confidence was singing English songs. Students can be able to speak correctly and fluently with the approach of singing English songs. This creates positive reinforcement on improving English speaking without intense effort. Also, students can enhance their vocabulary if they are familiar with the lyrics of songs.

Enhancing speaking skill is not easy; it requires continuous practice with appropriate, proper and practical language learning strategies. To motivate students to achieve in their speaking. It is necessary to consider which speaking strategy can work the most among their attempts. With speaking strategies discussed above, namely, role-play, storytelling, small group discussion and singing English songs, these were effective in learning English and drive students to become successful learners.

In effect, aviation students are expected to have good command in English speaking skills with appropriate learning strategies. Speaking strategies used by students were successfully indicated to make their speaking much more better. Improving confidence in speaking can be determined that students may have low anxiety when it comes to speaking.

The result of the study implied that speaking strategies can enhance a student's ability to speak and help them become successful learners. As it can see, improving pronunciation in speaking English was a positive consequence to build their confidence. Enhancing vocabulary was also beneficial to students because they may face different speaking situations in authentic ways.

Preferences of choosing speaking strategies depend on the student's learning styles as well as the area of their interests. Contextual speaking situations influenced the ability to speak with confidence in an extensive way. However, the limitation of the study is that the generalization is restricted. The five participants were expected to show the result of the study qualitatively.

It is recommended that speaking strategies used by aviation students need to further develop in more insights and various strategies can be explored. In order to ensure confidence in speaking ability, obtaining information should further investigate with different methodology or conducted quantitatively. To ensure validity and authenticity, the further explanation on speaking strategies used by aviation students can be elaborated in a variety of contexts.

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