

How to improve speaking skills for students at Dong Nai technology university

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Abstract: *Among skills, speaking skill is considered a top important skill because it is the basis of all communication relationships, and it is also a difficulty and obstacle for many students when learning subjects, especially foreign languages. This situation has also been happening at Dong Nai Technology University. Many students at the University find it difficult to fully express an issue, content, or idea, even though they have consciously prepared for the lesson. This article analyzes the current situation, causes and limitations in the practice of speaking skills of students at Dong Nai Technology University. From there, some solutions are proposed to help students improve the quality and effectiveness of speaking skills.*

Keywords: *Dong Nai Technology University; Speaking skills; Students*

1. Introduction

Speaking skill is one of the most important points in the conversation process, the words, the tone of the pause, ... will greatly affect the effectiveness of communication. If students have good speaking skills, it will help ensure that the audience will understand what they are trying to convey, without causing misunderstanding or stress to the conversation. Besides, good speaking skills allow the speaker to convey his message most convincingly, easily convincing the opponent, make it attractive to the audience, convey concisely [1].

Dong Nai Technology University has a history of formation and development for more than 10 years. Currently, the University is training many students of different majors such as: majoring in Economics, majoring in Administration, majoring in Languages; Technology majors...etc. During the training, students practice a lot of soft skills, including communication skills. However, the reality shows that many students often face some difficulties that hinder their ability to speak fluently and accurately. Therefore, in this article, the author has introduced about the difficulties that students face when learning speaking skills and the factors affecting this skill, and also offers some effective speaking solutions to help students develop speaking skills. students can improve their speaking skills to become proficient communicators.

2. Research results

2.1. Characteristics of speaking skills

According to Mejilla (2014), activities for learners should be designed based on two criteria to be achieved with equal importance. That is fluency and accuracy of speech. Because, these are two important elements of teaching foreign languages in a communicative way. Practical activities in class can help students develop their communication skills. Therefore, they need to understand the proper functioning of the language system. The first feature of speaking activity is fluency and this is the main goal that teachers want their students to achieve when teaching them speaking skills. [4]

Accuracy is the second most important feature of speaking activity. If learners want to speak fluently, they need to pay attention to the accuracy of grammatical structure, vocabulary, as well as pronunciation while speaking. Therefore, teachers should focus on both accuracy and fluency of speech in the process of teaching speaking skills to students. According to Thornbury (2005), the correct use of grammatical structures while speaking requires learners to pay attention to the length, complexity of utterances and complete structure of clauses. To achieve accuracy in terms of vocabulary, learners must choose words that are appropriate for the context. The same word or phrase used in different contexts has different meanings. Therefore, learners should know how to use words and idioms correctly to avoid misleading listeners. Thornbury (2005) affirmed that pronunciation is also a factor that learners need to pay attention to while speaking. To be

able to speak English correctly, learners should know the rules of phoneme as well as the pronunciation of different words in English. In addition, it is necessary to understand the meta-segmentation features such as stress, intonation, and rhythm. These features help learners to speak English easily and effectively [5].

2.2. Current status of speaking skills of students at Dong Nai Technology University

To find out the reality of speaking skills of students at Dong Nai Technology University. The author did a survey. When asked about the perceived difficulty of speaking skills compared to other skills, the following responses were received:

+ Survey data: Students in 2nd, 3rd and 4th years of Dong Nai Technology University.

+ Survey method: Send the survey by email in combination with the survey by the actual number of votes. The number of survey questionnaires distributed was 800 regardless of gender and school year. After cleaning and removing the invalid votes, the number of votes collected was 710 votes. Through the survey, up to 61% of students think this skill is difficult; 34% think this skill is average and only 5% of students think this skill is easy. The survey results are shown in the chart 1.

2.3. Causes of limitations in practicing speaking skills of students at Dong Nai Technology University

Firstly, due to the fact that self-study and self-practice are not high: In many subjects, students must have communication and presentation skills. However, most students do not improve their awareness and attitudes in self-study and self-training in speaking skills. It is the dislike of learning, and learning in the manner of dealing with a lazy attitude that has not created a positive and effective result for students in the process of studying subjects. Especially when it is necessary to use speaking skills, so it is not possible to create a natural reflex for students themselves when practicing this skill.

Secondly, not confident in communication. Almost very few students actively communicate with teachers and friends. The practice in class, after hours is also limited to a small number of groups and usually must be requested by the instructor. This, of course, will lead to students not being confident when communicating outside of society, including polite greetings or responses in ordinary situations. Therefore, in the classrooms, there is always a situation where only a few students are

active, actively participate in listening and speaking practice activities, always volunteer to speak or be the leader in groups when other students hide themselves. There are students who rarely even never participate in these activities because they are afraid or embarrassed to say the wrong things. Because of self-confidence, the ability to create opportunities or take advantage of possible opportunities to practice speaking among students is always limited.[3].

Thirdly, lack of vocabulary and knowledge is also the reason why students lack confidence when speaking. With communication skills, it is necessary to have a wide range of knowledge in all fields such as economics, politics, society, sports, religion, etc. Students often lack ideas, information or knowledge to present, and lack words to express their ideas to teachers and friends.[4].

2.4. Some solutions to improve speaking skills for students at Dong Nai Technology University

Firstly, the University needs to come up with solutions to support students to improve their speaking ability, specifically [2].:

The curriculum renews to be constantly updated and innovated in the direction of creating more interaction for students in practicing speaking skills. In addition to the content of the lesson that meets the basic knowledge, it is necessary to mix practice sessions so that students and lecturers have conditions to practice more and more with speaking skills. Student assessment methods need to be improved in the direction of reducing the amount of time for written exams, increasing assessment through oral or group work, and needing direct interaction between students and between students. teacher with lecture.

Create conditions to foster and develop the teaching methods for lecturers, support lecturers in training and improve their qualifications through training programs, professional exchange, and exchange of lecturers with affiliated Universities at homeland and abroad. Homeland, especially go along with universities that have developed strongly in training and teaching methods. Improving facilities for learning and teaching: in learning or teaching, it is necessary to have facilities, modern information technology equipment will support the learning and teaching process well. It is necessary to add specialized classrooms with full computer equipment and projectors to help for learning speaking skills more vividly. Invest in additional libraries, textbooks and reference materials, from grades and specialized

books with rich knowledge, wide diversities [5].

Secondly, Solutions for lecturers: Lecturers need to improve themselves, improve germ skills, practical communication skills, update knowledge related to economic - political - social information. Getting the news to integrate into the program to develop for the diverse presentations. Self-training in standard pronunciation, using computer software for teaching, using information technology in teaching to create an attractive environment for learners, creating a positive attitude for students in the process of learning for knowledge.

Thirdly, Solutions for students: Students need to improve their own awareness and sense of learning because only with good awareness and high consciousness will students actively learn, study learning methods, actively exchange and interact to improve. skills, especially speaking skills, need an environment to develop. Actively participating in extracurricular activities organized by schools and classes and actively participating in clubs can help students develop their speaking skills.

(1) *Use the simplest and most concise answers*: For students who are not confident in communicating, they often listen quietly and say nothing while other students are talking. In order to encourage them to really engage in communication, teachers can guide them to use the simplest and most concise answer possible in different communication situations [3].

(2) *Study carefully sample conversations*: Some communication situations are often guided through sample conversations. For example, greetings, apologies, compliments, invitations and other functions influenced by cultural and social norms are often accompanied by sample conversations. the same is true of the transaction. These exchanges include activities such as information gathering and trading. In conversations like this, switching between speakers and listeners and vice versa can be expected. Teachers can help students develop their speaking skills by making them aware of sample conversations related to different communication situations. Therefore, when faced with similar situations they can predict what they will hear and how they will respond. By organizing interactive classroom activities, teachers can provide opportunities for students to practice using the language they have accumulated from sample conversations or change this language depending on the language each

context [4].

(3) *Using language to talk about language*: Language learners often become so confused or unconfident that they can't utter a word if they don't understand what the speaker is saying, and when they find out you can't either. understand what they are saying. Therefore, to help students overcome reticence, teachers should encourage them to understand that misunderstandings and the need to clarify any issues may arise. at any point in the communication process and occurs with communicators at all levels. In addition, teachers also need to provide students with strategies and phrases to use to clarify the speaker's meaning and to assess their comprehension.

3. Conclusion

In the process of training speaking skills for students of Dong Nai University of Technology, there are currently some difficulties that need to be solved such as: Due to the fact that students' self-study and self-practice are not high. Students are not confident in communication, and lack vocabulary and knowledge about culture, economy and society. Therefore, in order to be able to help students overcome the above difficulties, it is required that the school needs to implement synchronous solutions from all the aspects of the school's process, the lecturer's self - development and the student's capabilities. Those who work in the field of education, to appeal to them to promote the values of care for others, peace, justice, goodness, beauty, acceptance and fraternity in the atmosphere of studying. From there, it helps students become confident to be able to master different communication situations that take place outside the classroom.

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