



FACTORS AFFECTING ORAL PRESENTATION SKILLS OF ENGLISH MAJORED SOPHOMORES AT TAY DO UNIVERSITY, VIETNAM

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Abstract:

The oral presentation is a form of communication that is intended to convey certain ideas, messages and information. It has become a part of most courses that are usually used in higher education or university. Nonetheless, making a presentation in fact, especially in English, sometimes becomes a big challenge task for a large number of students. Thus, the research "Factors affecting presentation skills of English majored sophomores at Tay Do University" was conducted to find out possible factors that students might encounter in making presentations. The participants in this study were 80 English-majored sophomores at Tay Do University. In the study process, questionnaires and interviews were used as the instruments to collect the data. The results of the research show that English majored sophomores at Tay Do University faced the factors in terms of background knowledge, linguistic factors, psychological factors, preparation and teachers' roles in the presentation process.

Keywords: factors affecting oral presentation skills; English majored sophomores, Vietnam

1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher would like to present the rationale of the thesis, the aim and significance of the study and finally the organization of the thesis.

1.1 Rationale

In this era of globalization, English is now playing an indispensable role and is an international language widely used in many countries around the world as a means of communication to help people from different countries and languages communicate with

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others. Besides, it is a golden key that has an important function in many aspects of life, such as in politics, business, trade and diplomatic relations. Moreover, English cannot be separated from the development of technology, science, economics, and education. In Vietnam, English is one of the necessary requirements for many people in the workplace and in life. Especially, using English fluently is a great advantage to help the owner get a dream job with a high salary in an international working environment.

Nowadays, besides courses to improve knowledge, there are many soft skills in classes to develop yourself. In addition, the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, English presentation skill is also one of the essential skills for students. Hedge (2000) advised that learners should develop knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and necessary communication skills at the same time to improve their language proficiency, particularly in presentation. According to Hou (2008), learners' success in handling presentation skills will reinvigorate them in learning spoken English, thinking logically and innovatively, and improving context awareness and confidence. The best way to assess proficiency in communication is through oral presentations. Therefore, to become a successful person, learners need not only intellect, knowledge, thinking but also good presentation skills. These will help learners build confidence in the crowd, effectively communicate information, attract the attention of listeners and especially have the opportunity to progress at work.

Nevertheless, writing presentation content is difficult, even harder to implement and present to the audience to hear and understand. In fact, the presenter does not simply hold a paper to read but these require the speaker to have enough knowledge, vocabulary and confidence to present. Therefore, these skills may be complex and difficult for learners who learn English as a foreign language in a language other than their mother tongue. Morita (2000) saw oral activities as challenging and complex presentations in terms of interaction and mental processes and suggested more researches to be conducted. Moreover, most English majored sophomores at Tay Do University have difficulties in presenting successfully and giving effective presentations. They lack background knowledge because they have little or no previous connection with these skills. Because of psychology, students feel embarrassed or stressed when they are required to present in front of the class. In addition, it is difficult for students to correctly master phonetics, grammar structure and countless vocabulary. Other difficulties such as preparation, personal characteristics and experience also put pressure on them. If students lack these factors, English presentation skills will always be a big problem.

For those reasons, the researcher decided to conduct a research on "Factors affecting oral presentation skills of English-majored sophomores at Tay Do University" to explore and provide an overview of the difficulties for learners during the oral presentation process. In addition, it also helps students identify their own problems and creates motivation for students to overcome the obstacles.

1.2 Research aims

The research aims to investigate factors affecting the oral presentation skills of English-majored sophomores at Tay Do University. The purpose of this study is to support students in finding out solutions to their problems in the process of making a presentation. Also, the findings can be useful for teachers to reflect their teaching methods which are appropriate for their students.

1.3 The signification of the research

The results of the present research can be meaningful in both theoretical and practical aspects. For theoretical significance, it will provide valuable information and make suggestions for later concerned researchers. For practical significance, it can serve as a premise for learners and teachers to make suggestions and methods to improve presentation skills. Thanks to the findings, the thesis also helps learners and teachers have the right focus when they learn and teach presentation skills.

1.4 The organization of the research

This research includes five chapters consisting of (1) Introduction, (2) Literature Review, (3) Research methodology, (4) Research Results and Discussions, and (5) Conclusion, Implications, Limitations, and Recommendations for further research.

Chapter one presents the rationale of the research, the aims and significance of the study and the organization of the thesis.

Chapter two synthesizes the definition of presentation, types of presentation, the importance of oral presentation skills and factors affecting oral presentation skills.

Chapter three indicates the research methodology, research questions, mentions the hypothesis, the research design and introduces research participants. It also introduces and explains the instruments of the study and the procedures of the research.

Chapter four shows the results collected from the questionnaires and interview questions on factors affecting the oral presentation skills of English majored sophomores in order to find out the common difficulties that affect oral presentation skills and discuss the results of the research.

Chapter five presents the implications and limitations of the research and makes suggestions for further research and a conclusion.

2. Literature review

Chapter two indicates the definitions and types of presentation. Besides, it also states the importance of oral presentation skills, factors affecting oral presentation skills and related studies.

2.1 The definition of presentation

There are a lot of definitions of presentation stated by different researchers. The following definitions are considered.

The definition of a modern presentation offered by Ellis and Johnson (1994, p. 222) is as follows a preplanned, prepared, and structured talk that may be given in formal or informal circumstances to a small or large group of people. Its objective may be to inform or to persuade.

Mandal (2000) defined presentations are speech that is usually given in a business, technical, professional, or scientific environment. Beebe (1999) shared the idea that presentation is a sustained speech made by a speaker to an audience.

Moreover, Hedge (2000) found that presenting is an effective teaching method because it adds variety to the classroom and allows students the opportunity to teach one another instead of always learning from the teacher.

Most presentations are made up of material such as content, subject matter, information, know-how, argument, conclusion, and a 'message'. Each presentation may be augmented by visual aids, handouts, documents containing text or pictures, or both which are given to the audience.

In most cases, presentations are conducted by oral presentations. An oral presentation is an extension of oral communication skills. According to Levin and Topping (2006), an oral presentation is planned and practiced speech that is not memorized or read from notes but is introduced by a presenter to an audience. Besides, Joughin (2007) added that: *"We can look at the oral presentation from three perspectives: presentation as a transmission of the ideas of others to a passive audience with anxiety at a low level, presentation as an imparting of the material studied from which students seek to make their own meanings from the ideas of others; and presentation as a position to be disputed and defended by persuading the audience."*

From these views about the presentation, it can be concluded that presentation is a speech given by the presenter to the audience that is limited of time and also supported by several visual aids.

2.3 Types of presentation

Each type of presentation requires a specific organizational technique to ensure they are understood and remembered by the audience. The first step in preparing a presentation is to determine the purpose of the presentation. The following is an overview of the two main types of presentations and their purposes.

2.3.1 Informative presentation

One of the most popular presentation types is informative presentations. The purpose of this type is to provide, share and convey to people about a new concept, topic, content or idea that promotes understanding. In this type of presentation, speakers use words to convey information and deliver messages to the audience. Chivers and Shoolbred (2007, p.5) said that this type of presentation is used in many organizations where students or employers are expected to report progress at key stages of a project. The reasons for delivering an informative presentation are varied. For example, you share your cooking experience with the whole class, you recommend famous places to your tourists, or your

supervisor announces something to the whole class. The common point of all the examples above is sharing information about a certain topic for the audience/listener.

2.3.2 Persuasive presentation

The second type of common presentation is persuasive presentation. The purpose of persuasive presentations is to convince, motivate, or cause others to change their thoughts, actions, or reviews of decisions. Besides, the speaker can also make arguments for the listener to listen, accept views and thoughts, act according to the wishes of the speaker. A truly persuasive presentation provides evidence, logic, and emotion in it. Chivers and Shoolbred (2007, p.3) stated that in this type of presentation, speakers need to have strong content and present it in a clear way. These key components will help spark a reaction and ultimately help convince and persuade your audience. For some, such as elected officials, giving a persuasive speech is an important part of achieving and continuing success in their careers. Others, in other industries, careers are defined by persuading customers - customers are paid to listen and be persuaded (insurance, sales ...). All are related, affecting the changing mindset of others through "a persuasive presentation". If you can develop the skills to persuade effectively, it will be of great help to you in your personal or academic life and at work.

To sum up, both types of presentations are important and helpful for conveying opinions, thoughts, and messages to the audiences. In different situations, the speakers will use different types of presentations depending on their primary purposes. Each type of presentation will be a separate tool to approach, attract and create trust with the audience.

2.4 The importance of oral presentation skills

Nowadays, mastering oral presentation skills is essential because it serves as the key to success in one's life, career, and relationships. This is closer to real language use and gives learners a chance to develop research and critical thinking skills, as well as linguistic and communicative skills. Some studies listed the benefits of oral presentation, such as helping instructors cater to students' learning styles, practicing speaking, providing students with a deep understanding of the presentation topic, and providing independent, critical learning to facilitate cooperative learning and to introduce students to technology (Al-Issa & Al-Qubtan, 2010; Munby, 2011). In particular, college and university students should be taught oral presentation skills as these provide opportunities for them to hone their public speaking skills and develop stage confidence when they stand before an audience. According to Hou (2008), learners' success in handling presentation skills will reinvigorate them in learning spoken English, thinking logically and innovatively, and improving context awareness and confidence.

Upon realizing the importance of mastering good presentation skills, most colleges and universities use the oral presentation as a form of assessment of English proficiency in teaching and learning processes. From this fact, many teachers ask their students to make an oral presentation in class. It is a great opportunity for students to

perform their speaking ability in conveying their messages and information through a public speech. Furthermore, this in turn will enable learners to perform well in presentation activities, small group discussions, negotiating and answering questions in class, as well as demonstrating ideas and commenting on certain topics. Therefore, they can be more confident and skillful to speak in front of many people. When students are asked to give an oral presentation, it is one of the few times in the language classroom that the students themselves have direct control of both the content and the flow of the classroom presentations has also been shown to improve students' abilities in ways that can be beneficial for their future employment (Živković, 2014).

Another equally important point is that oral presentations are ideal tools for introducing students to advanced and sophisticated technology, training, and encouraging them to use it to bring change into the classroom which breaks the monotony and adds a new flavor. An oral presentation will increase the knowledge and the capability of the student in using technology as the equipment in English learning. Besides, oral presentations do more than just give students an opportunity to practice language skills; they also give students an opportunity to teach something to their peers. It provides students with additional motivation to study English. Girard, Pinar and Trapp (2011) found that using oral presentations in their classroom leads to greater class interaction and participation, an increased interest in learning, and noticeable improvements in their students' communication and presentation skills. King (2002) added that oral presentations have been shown to help bridge the gap between language study and language use; those presentations require students to use all four language skills in a naturally integrated way and those presentations have been shown to encourage students to become active and autonomous learners.

The final benefit of oral presentations is used extensively in the workplace. One of the causes of unemployment among graduates is being unable to present well in English. Thus, it is important for students to master oral presentation skills as they may need to use these skills when they enter the working world such as attending a job interview or presenting a paper to a group of colleagues or superiors in a meeting. Experience with oral presentations can be beneficial to students' future careers because many potential future employers place a high degree of importance on the communication skills that students learn during a presentation class. Additionally, many employers are looking for candidates who have the ability to give formal presentations, and the skills that students learn when they are presenting in English are transferable to their First Language (Pittenger, 2004). Having good English presentation skills will help students have more opportunities to study abroad and have a good job after graduation.

2.5 Factors affecting oral presentation skills

2.5.1 Background knowledge

An oral presentation is difficult for many reasons. First of all, one of the problems in making the presentation is a lack of background knowledge. It is an extensive term to describe different kinds of knowledge.

According to Otoshi & Heffernan (2008), general background knowledge includes knowledge of target culture, knowledge of the topic under discussion, and general world knowledge of current affairs, arts, politics, and literature.

As referring to background knowledge, Hovane (2009) indicated that "... *the kind of knowledge learners have before learning a new topic affects how they make sense of the new information.*" Although making presentations is a familiar English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teaching method at this college, it is considered new for the majority of students who have had little previous experience with self-made presentations at secondary school. Students' lack of knowledge about the speaking activities also demotivated them to participate (Juhana, 2012).

Besides, Dornyei and Kormos (2000) pointed out that the challenge facing students' results from trying to convey their thoughts and at the same time understanding what is said despite limited language ability. Moreover, Jordan (1997), concluded that the problems or hurdles in speaking English are domination of mother tongue effect, unavailability of the environment that helps to speak English at home and in school, and family low background. In particular, according to Harmer (1991), there are some reasons why learners use mother-tongue in their speaking classes. The first reason is that when teachers ask their learners to talk about a topic that they do not have enough knowledge of, they will try to use their language. The second reason is that the application of mother-tongue is very natural for learners to use. If teachers do not urge their learners to talk in English, learners will automatically use their first language to explain something to their classmates. Bachman & Palmer (1996) stated certain test tasks may be easier for those who possess the relevant topical knowledge and more difficult for those who do not.

In short, background knowledge mentions all that learners have known, which may strongly affect the way in which the learners interpret and impart in the presentation process. Successful delivery in presentation takes place when the speakers have good background knowledge.

2.5.2 Psychology

2.5.2.1 Anxiety

One of the main difficulties reported facing students in oral presentation is anxiety. The first aspect of language anxiety is communication apprehension, which is defined as an individual level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons (McCroskey, 1977, p.78). Research has consistently revealed that anxiety can impede English of Foreign Language (EFL) students' production and achievement (Al-Nouh; Abdul-Kareem & Taqi, 2014). Second, the audience and the instructor were believed to be the main reasons for students' unwillingness to present (e.g., negative evaluations, hard questions, humiliating feedback, etc.) (Wolfe, 2008).

More research on the sources of anxiety was conducted by Chuang (2010), who investigated the sources of anxiety of speaking English and anxiety-driven situations. Results showed that undergraduate students often feel worried when they are required

to do oral presentations in English, anxious even if prepared in advance, uncomfortable and shy when they had to speak in front of others.

Furthermore, students are afraid that the teacher would pay attention to their English mistakes, they fear getting low marks and being laughed at by their peers when making mistakes while speaking in front of the class and felt their peers spoke better English than they did. Studies of oral assessment have occasionally noted the potentially inhibiting role of anxiety in affecting students' ability to perform (Joughin, 2007).

Additionally, classroom atmosphere also influences students' performance in conducting an oral presentation. An apprehensive and tense atmosphere caused by a number of circumstances gives rise to invisible barriers that hinder the students from doing well in their oral presentations (Mezrigui, 2011).

Finally, lack of presentation skills was seen to play a crucial role in students' feelings of anxiety (e.g., researching, planning, organizing, practicing, and presenting) (Leichsenring, 2010). However, students cannot avoid oral presentations tasks just because they lack the relevant skills or anxiety. If they overcome their psychological issues, they can make a good presentation.

2.5.2.2 Motivation

Motivation is one of the necessary factors that affect the process of learning. Mourtaga (2004, p.16) explained that motivation is very important in learning English. The learners need to be motivated in learning English, not only to pass the exams but also to use English in communicating orally with others.

Besides, Yusoff (2010) stated that students' communication competence is demonstrated through their ability to deliver a clear, convincing oral presentation to a specific audience, in this case, their industry and faculty supervisors, in a way that elicits response, understanding, appreciation, assent, or critical inquiry (p. 103). Actually, motivation is the crucial force that determines whether a learner embarks on a task at all, how much energy he devotes to it, and how long he preserves (Littlewood, 1984, p.53). The teachers would recommend the students to choose presentation topics that they are familiar with, in terms of their connection to real life and topics that suit the level of the language required to talk on them. This step is aimed at increasing students' interest and making the presentation easier for them (Mezrigui, 2011).

Learners can do something well when they feel happy and encouraged of doing it. On the other hand, there are several reasons that demotivate students to carry out an oral presentation. Some students are afraid that their peers or the teachers may judge their proficiency in English, and this makes them feel embarrassed. Therefore, they prefer to remain passive, and unwilling to participate in oral presentation tasks. Another reason is that the students are not interested in the English subject. Thus, they are not motivated to take part in any form of speaking activities, such as oral presentations (Mezrigui, 2011). On the other hand, a classroom with a large number of students provides less opportunity for students to practice their oral presentations in class (Mezrigui, 2011). The teacher is not able to give individual attention in providing guidance or training to each

student. The development of communicative skills can only take place if learners have the motivation and opportunity to express their own identity and relate with the people around them (Thornbury, 2005).

2.5.3 Linguistic factors

According to Zappa-Hollman (2007), linguistic problems were seen as the most challenging during oral presentations. A study conducted by Juhana (2012) showed that linguistic factors such as lack of vocabulary, lack of understanding of grammatical patterns, and incorrect pronunciation are obstacles for students to present in the English class. Similarly, although English of Foreign Language (EFL) situations place a great emphasis on reinforcing the learners' linguistic competence, among the speaking problems are grammar structures, limitations of vocabulary, and wrong pronunciation (Foppoli, 2009).

2.5.3.1 Grammar

According to James (2005), Grammar is a study of the structure of the language and describes the way of putting words together to make meaningful sentences. As Tanveer (2007) said there are some aspects of English grammar that become English as a Second Language / English of Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) students' difficulties.

In fact, learners also usually have difficulties in grammar and syntax. They make mistakes in subject-verb agreement, pronouns, tenses, articles, prepositions, and basic sentence structures. Students know how to build tenses, but when using them in presentation they are confused.

Furthermore, learning grammar can be pretty dull, as no one likes rules. The memorization of rules is worse than applying them. This is because both first and second languages do not have the same language pattern and apply the same grammar rules. If the presenter does not have enough knowledge about grammar and does not catch about the grammar rules, they will have problems using appropriate sentences, so they make a misunderstanding for audiences.

On the other hand, native speakers say what they want without having any problems because they are familiar with the language. If they have problems in expressing themselves, they try to use other ways of telling those things. They may make certain mistakes syntactically but these mistakes do not change the meaning of the sentences they want to express and this doesn't create serious problems for the listeners to comprehend them. But the mistakes non-native speakers commit are those that change the meaning of utterances they want to convey and can create some problems for their understanding (Mahripah, 2014).

Therefore, English of Foreign Language (EFL) learners should have knowledge of words and sentences. Grammatical competence can help speakers apply and perceive the structure of the English language correctly which leads to their fluency (Latha, 2012). In addition, grammar rules help students to make their communication appear coherent and more logical.

2.5.3.2 Vocabulary

Besides some difficulties above, vocabulary is another difficulty that students face in oral presentations. Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and it provides much of the basis for making learners speak, listen, read, and write well (Richard and Renandya, 2002, p. 255). Wilkins (1972) wrote that “...while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”. Actually, students have trouble in choosing suitable words in particular contexts. Lack of vocabulary makes students unable to express their ideas. They do not know the appropriate use of words to put their thought in their presentation. This means that students are less interested in reading English materials, lack active listening activities, and have very little involvement in producing the language (Wilkins, 1972). Also, because of a lack of vocabulary, the students use the same words in different contexts. The audience will get difficulties understanding and comprehending students’ speech because the words that are used will influence the meaning of the presentation.

Without mastering vocabulary, learners will have fewer opportunities to use their language learning around them such as listening to the radio, listening to native speakers, using the language in different contexts, reading, or watching television, and especially in an oral presentation, students will feel hard to present what in their mind.

In addition, Tokoz (2014), found that the main problem of students’ inability to speak English was because of fear of a limited vocabulary in which students could not express what they would like and they gave up speaking. Similarly, Rababah (2003) suggested that Arab learners feel troubled when involved in communicative interactions because they have less vocabulary which makes them unable to further conversations. Schewertly (2012) stated that choosing appropriate vocabulary is an important aspect of any presentation. Lack of knowledge vocabulary will become a challenge to choose the correct words. According to Miles (2009), inadequate vocabulary not only can hamper speaking but also understanding others which leads to communication breakdown.

From the above points, it seems reasonable to infer that vocabulary plays a significant role in learners' presentation process. The richer speakers' amount of vocabulary is, the better their speaking is.

2.5.3.3 Pronunciation

Pronunciation also becomes one of the learner’s challenges in making an oral presentation. It is an indispensable factor for students who want to master speaking ability. Grussendorf (2007) noted that pronunciation relates to the generation of sounds that we use to form meaning. It is a central significance because it is a section of successor all production or communicative competence (Hismanoglu, 2006).

Furthermore, one of the elements of comprehensible communication is clear and good pronunciation, otherwise, the whole talk exchange will be hard to follow and that stands as a barrier for English of Foreign Language (EFL) learners (Dan, 2006). Students may become too concerned and start thinking that they will never be able to pronounce a word correctly or give a good presentation (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Besides, it is also stressful for students who are not fluent in English and are expected to speak in the target language, especially during their English lessons (Khairi & Nurul Lina, 2010). Also, English of Foreign Language (EFL) learners are hesitant to speak because of the inability to pronounce some words, which is embarrassing for them. In his study on Saudi students' reluctance to speak, Hamouda (2013) found that 71.70% of them have pronunciation problems.

In fact, the pronunciation of English words is not similar to their spellings. Words with similar spellings are sometimes pronounced differently because of their surrounding contexts like tenses and phonemes that come after them. This can cause a lot of problems for non-native speakers of English and they sometimes get confused in producing the English words. They do not comprehend how words are divided into different sounds and how sentences are stressed in specific ways. In particular, if the speakers often pronounce certain words inaccurately, the listeners cannot identify the main information, the meaning of what they hear and grasp the content. This hinders the ability of the audience to listen and reduces the success of the speech.

In short, students should train pronunciation and practice it frequently because this would help develop their oral presentation skills and help bring the messages to the audience clearly.

2.5.4 Preparation

A big issue in making a presentation is that some students do not spend much time on preparing it. To ensure that the presentation is well-realized, they should prepare some basic things.

2.5.4.1 Content and ideas

The students also encountered challenges in preparation with content and ideas. For many subject areas, there is usually much more content than can be delivered within the time allocated for the presentation. Rivers (1968) mentioned that it is difficult for the learners if the teacher gives a topic which is they do not have enough knowledge about the topic. As a result, it will make the students confuse because they should know about the organization of the presentation about the topic that is going to be presented (Zainuddin & Selamat, 2012).

Similarly, Nguyen (2016) also found that if the presenter lacks knowledge about the subject they have to present, they will give the listener an uncomfortable feeling, because they just want to acquire knowledge or information from people who are knowledgeable in the field. A good presenter usually has broad overview knowledge and a certain understanding of the topic that they will say.

On the other hand, communication involves the delivery of ideas and feelings to others (Abdul Aziz Yusof, 2003). Ideas (including details, development, and focus) are the most important part of the message, the subject matter of the piece, the central theme, plus all the details that supplement and develop that theme. Learners of English as a second or foreign language also face problems of exploring ideas and thought to

communicate with others (Clifford, 1987). The difficulty of students in presentation is in generating their ideas. Actually, the students are not able to transfer their ideas when they have to put them into a concrete one. Arranging ideas is also a problem that many students usually encounter in preparing the presentation. In addition, many students do not make an outline when planning the presentation, so their points and supporting ideas are not directly related to the topic.

It can be concluded that the presenters have enough information on the subject, firmly grasp and understand the information, and prepare additional information, new information, ideas which are meant to further illustrate before a talk will make the presentation more satisfied.

2.5.4.2 Visual aids

Nowadays, the current proliferation of technological tools augurs well for computer-assisted language learning, which has been used to reinforce teaching and learning in the classroom and help students with limited language proficiency (Wang & Chang, 2011). In many ways, using audio-visual aids is the best way to support in presenting and help the presentation be more effective. This is the part where students should spend a lot of time preparing and being proactive in investing.

There are many types of visual aids; these include whiteboard, flip charts, tables, overhead projector (OHP), PowerPoint, diagrams, videos, etc. Visual aids are an important part of oral presentations because they provide support for both the speakers and listeners during the presentation, which can help to reduce stress and make the presentation more successful (Lambert, 2008). Emden and Becker (2004) stated that the speakers may use supporting materials such as projectors, slides, chalkboards, videos, and photos. What appears on the screen is the first impression that persons listen to approach speech. Moreover, preparing realistic materials, pictures, diagrams, models, numbers will create more persuasive listening and help the listener easier to understand. However, students still face difficulties in using Visual aids, such as PowerPoint. PowerPoint has become synonymous with oral presentations in classrooms. Many forget that PowerPoint software is just a computer-assisted language learning tool and that their message does not come from the slides but rather from the presenter who must maximize the use of the slideware and convey the message effectively to the audience (Johnson, 2012).

In fact, while some students employ PowerPoint slides creatively making their presentations lively and interesting, many others have slides that are poorly designed. Many present a summary instead of making and supporting an argument (Grussendorf, 2007) or focus on trivial information rather than critical points and present far more than the allotted time (Oliver & Kowalczyk, 2013).

Likewise, the biggest problem in technical presentation is overusing slides. Putting too much information on each slide will confuse the viewer and cannot remember all the data shown. Reading from crammed texts and the overuse of bullet points hinder them from presenting their ideas coherently or speaking effectively and confidently in front of

large groups (Artyushina et al., 2010). Furthermore, such presentations cause listeners to feel frustrated and bored (Anderson and Williams, 2012).

To sum up, spending a lot of time preparing visual aids is very essential in making a perfect presentation. Students should learn how to use and check audio-visual equipment in advance of the presentation to avoid incidents during the delivery.

2.5.4.3 Practice

Practice is the last key that students should pay attention to and actively invest in. Nguyen (2016) stated practice will help us gain confidence which is a factor affecting the presentation. Likewise, one of the most important and often overlooked issues is practice before the presentation, this is the most important factor that will make the presentation successful (Nguyen, 2016).

Tanveer's (2007, p.24) study revealed that sociocultural factors such as limited exposure to the target language and lack of opportunities to practice speaking in such environments are setbacks to the development of students' communicative abilities. In fact, the lack of practice in giving oral presentations has also been identified as a cause of language anxiety during such presentations. Even though the engineering students were aware of the oral presentation delivery skills, they did not use appropriate delivery skills when giving oral presentations. This is probably due to a lack of practice among the students (Habil, & Ab. Rahman, 2010).

Practice is a very important part for the speaker to master the content and correct inaccuracies in the presentation. The more practice the speaker has, the more opportunities they will have to memorize, correct mistakes, and train their voice. Students can jot down main ideas, practice in front of a mirror, or record audio or video to listen and correct defective parts. However, to be more effective, the speaker should practice in front of a few people or groups of friends, consult and learn from their experience. During practice, note that your expression is comfortable and natural, adjust the expressive voice, and be loud enough for the farthest listener to hear. In addition, speakers should use more body language, facial expressions and expressive eyes will attract the attention of the audience more.

2.5.5 Teachers' role

The last section of this research looks at what teachers can do to ensure that they have set up the oral presentations in the classroom in a way that allows students to succeed. Teachers need to be facilitators, especially for those students who are not receptive to the collaborative learning environment and feel shy and uncomfortable. As oral presentation is a student-led activity, teachers should pay more attention to lesson planning and teaching strategies.

Before students can begin to work on their presentation, it is important that they understand the genre of the oral presentation. Thus, the teachers must realize that the features of oral presentation may be unfamiliar to most of the students in the class and that they need to provide sufficient scaffolding to help students understand the

requirements of the presentation. This means providing examples of presentations and having students identify each stage in the presentation sequence. Giving students example presentations, done by the teacher or other students, can help to introduce them to the genres that they are expected to present in (Hovane, 2009).

Besides, teachers should work as mentors to inform students about possible sources like English newspapers, magazines, websites while students are preparing presentation content. One of the great advantages of introducing support forms in English of language teaching is that it allows teachers to provide a context for discourse participants, by combining and integrating various modes of communication. This helps teachers situate linguistic events in their socio-cultural settings, reduce the distance from unfamiliar situations, and make their comprehension easier for learners (Donato and McCormick, 1994).

On the other hand, students have to be taught the skills involved in giving a presentation. Parts of the course should be set aside to explicitly teach and provide students with the opportunity to practice language and presentation skills specific to oral presentations. This can include such things as *“when to use eye contact, how to organize a presentation, (how to) connect with an audience, (how to) use body language and manage time, and how to construct an effective PowerPoint presentation”* (Otoshi & Heffernen, 2008, p. 74). Since these skills are usually unfamiliar to the students each of these sections need to be carefully introduced and students should be provided with adequate scaffolding to allow them to be successful when they are researching and planning each of the sections.

Additionally, the teaching of these genre-specific micro-skills is of particular importance to student motivation, as most students believe that improving their English language speaking ability is the primary purpose of an oral communication class (Miles, 2009). It is important for the teacher of an oral presentation class to spend time introducing students to both the macro and micro-skills that they need to give oral presentations to improve students' English language skill presentations. If this is not done then the students will not have confidence in their ability to present and *“will feel that the teacher has just dumped them into the sea to struggle for survival”* (King, 2002, p. 406).

In conclusion, the teacher's role in preparing presentations is important for students to overcome barriers to successful presentations. By developing oral presentation skills, learners will also be trained and nurtured in other skills that are relevant and complementary to this skill.

2.6 Related studies

In different cases, the researchers with different purposes have expressed their conception of "oral presentation skills". Nevertheless, there are very few research papers on "factors affecting students' oral presentation skills at universities". A number of factors are the difficulties that not only affect a student's ability to speak publicly but also impair the success of the presentation.

The first one that should be mentioned is the research *“The difficulties in making a presentation of fourth-year English majored students at Tay Do University”* by Quang

(2018). The aim of this research is to find out some common difficulties of seniors in the process of making and delivering a presentation. To achieve the goal of this study, the participants were 56 fourth-year English-majored students of course 9 at Tay Do University. Data of this study was collected by the main instruments including questionnaires and interviews for students and teachers. The results of the research would show that English majored seniors got difficulties in terms of linguistics, background knowledge, presentation skills, and psychology in making a presentation.

Likewise, the research “Assessing the Perceptions and Difficulties of Students at COT, VNU in Making ESP Presentations” by Tong (2009) is also a demonstration. The study was conducted as an attempt to examine the perceptions of students at College of Technology, Vietnam National University (COT, VNU) towards making English for Specific Purposes (ESP) presentations and find out possible difficulties that those students might encounter in making ESP presentations. It was carried out with 100 second-year students and two teachers of English at the Department of Information Technology (DIT) at COT, VNU. The data was collected during a period of two weeks by a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, including the use of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The findings of the study revealed students’ mixed attitudes towards making ESP presentations and their clear perceptions of achievements through making ESP presentations. Their most significant problems in making ESP presentations included searching for relevant materials, selecting presentation forms, memorizing presentation contents, and lacking presentation skills.

Moreover, Kho, M. G. W. and Leong, L. M. (2005) carried out the research “Causes of Academic Oral Presentation Difficulties Faced by Students at a Polytechnic in Sarawak”. The purpose of this study is to identify the causes of oral presentation difficulties encountered by the students at a polytechnic in Sarawak. It also examines the differences in the causes of difficulties in academic oral presentation faced by the engineering and commerce students. The participants of this study were 223 engineering and commerce students. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from the respondents. Based on the results, the main cause of oral presentation difficulties faced by the students was a lack of practice. Moreover, the researcher found there were significant differences between engineering and commerce students in the causes of oral presentation difficulties such as psychological factors, lack of practice and role of teachers.

Finally, Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem and [Taqi](#) (2015) studied the research “EFL College Students’ Perceptions of the Difficulties in Oral Presentation as a Form of Assessment”. The present study aims to solicit female English of Foreign Language (EFL) undergraduate college students’ perceptions of the difficulties in oral presentations as a form of assessment. Participants were 500 female English of Foreign Language (EFL) college students from different grade levels enrolled in a four-year pre-service teacher education program at the College of Basic Education (CBE) in Kuwait City, Kuwait. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from the respondents. Results showed students’ perceptions of the difficulties they experienced at a medium level

($M=3.10$). However, significant differences in the results were found when students' nationalities and GPAs were taken into account.

3. Research methodology

This chapter describes the methodology of the research including the research question, hypothesis. Additionally, it also states research design, research participants, instruments, data analysis and procedure.

3.1 Research question

This study aims to answer the following research question:

What factors affect the oral presentation skills of English majored sophomores at Tay Do University?

3.2 Hypothesis

According to the literature review in chapter two, the researcher has a reason to hypothesize that English-majored sophomores at Tay Do University can encounter factors affecting oral presentation skills including background knowledge, psychological factors, linguistic factors, preparation and teachers' roles.

3.3 Research design

The research is carried out to find out the factors that affect oral presentation skills that English-majored sophomores at Tay Do University have faced in the presentation process. The reliability and the validity of the research results are based on the instruments. To achieve the above-mentioned purpose, the sophomores majoring in English are chosen randomly as the sample to the survey. The data from the participants will be collected through the questionnaire and interviews. The collected information of the instruments will be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to show the problems in making oral presentation skills.

3.4 Research participants

The participants in this research were eighty English-majored sophomores at Tay Do University and they were from two classes (English 13A and English 13B). There were 27 males and 53 females and the age of participants was from 19 to 21 years old. They came from different provinces, both rural and urban. They spoke Vietnamese as their mother tongue and English is considered their foreign language. The participants made a number of presentations in some language classes, especially in listening and speaking classes through a variety of topics. They would be chosen randomly to give questionnaires and interviews in order to get information about factors they had faced in oral presentation skills. This helped to provide reliable results and generalize the findings of the thesis.

3.5 Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires and interviews to find out some problems in oral presentation skills and students' attitudes toward these skills. The questionnaires and interviews were considered very useful instruments used to collect data on phenomena that are not easily observed such as attitudes, motivation and self-conceptions. The students shared their opinions which are essential in the research process.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

In this research, a questionnaire was used as the main instrument to achieve the aim of the study. The questionnaire consisted of twenty-five questions and was divided into two parts. The first part included five questions and the second part consisted of twenty statements listed in a table with the Likert scale of 5 levels from 1- strongly disagree to 5- strongly agree with a number of open-ended questions. They were classified into the following groups:

| Group | Summary of the content of questions group |
|--------------------------|---|
| a. 1,2,3,4,5 | Students' general background |
| b. 6,7 | Students' problems in background knowledge |
| c. 8, 9,10,11 | Students' problems in psychological factors |
| d. 12, 13,14,15,16,17 | Students' problems in linguistic factors |
| e. 18,19, 20, 21, 22, 23 | Students' problems in preparation |
| f. 24, 25 | Students' problems in teachers' roles |

3.5.2 Interview

3.5.2.1 Interview for students

In order to make the study more reliable, the researcher interviewed 10 English majored sophomores at Tay Do University who were randomly selected in two classes (13A and 13B) with four questions. The purpose of the interview was to compare with the questionnaire in order to make the data of the research more dependable as well as to find out the factors which affect the presentation skills of the participants. Besides, the researcher also wanted to know the students' attitude towards presentation skills as well as their ideas about the solutions to improve these skills. The purposes of the interview were clarified in the below table.

| Questions | Purposes |
|-----------|--|
| 1 | Students' attitudes towards oral presentation skills |
| 2 | Students' problems in oral presentation skills |
| 3 | Students' attitudes towards teachers' roles |
| 4 | Students' ideas about the solutions to improve presentation skills |

3.5.2.2 Interview for teachers

On the other hand, the researcher also interviewed two teachers who taught classes related to presentation activities at Tay Do University with four open-ended questions. It

had the same purpose as the interview for students. Additionally, the interview was also conducted to find out some suggestions to improve students' oral presentation ability. The purposes of the interview were clarified in the below table.

| Questions | Purposes |
|-----------|---|
| 1 | Student's problems in the process of oral presentation. |
| 2,3 | Teacher's points of view on teaching oral presentation skills |
| 4 | Teachers' ideas about the suggestions to improve presentation skills. |

3.6 Data analysis

After the data was collected, all findings were checked, aggregated, calculated and analyzed to find out the factors which affect the participants' oral presentation skills. The results from the questionnaire would be calculated by quantitative analysis. On the other hand, the findings from the interview were mainly interpreted by qualitative analysis. In addition, Microsoft Excel was also a small tool that helps the researcher process the collected data.

3.6.1 Procedures

| Duration (12 weeks) | Activities |
|--|--|
| Step 1 From the 1 st week to 2 nd week | - Correcting the research topic and submitting the research proposal. |
| Step 2 From the 3 rd week to 5 th week | - Putting forward purposes of and hypotheses for the research. - Designing questionnaire papers and interviews. |
| Step 3 From the 6 th week to 8 th week | - Delivering the questionnaire to students - Interviewing the students and the teachers |
| Step 4 From the 9 th week to 12 th week | - Analyzing the collected data - Completing the thesis |

4. Results and Discussions

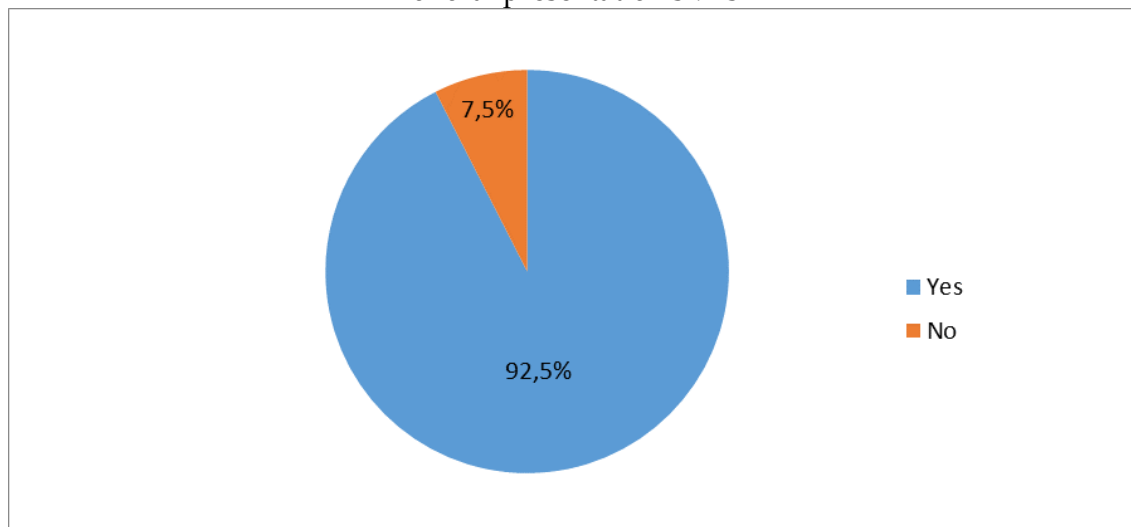
This chapter synthesizes, calculates and analyzes the results from the questionnaires as well as the interviews in order to find out the factors that affect students' oral presentation skills and discussion about the results is the final part.

4.1 Results from questionnaires

4.1.1 Participants' general opinions about oral presentation skills

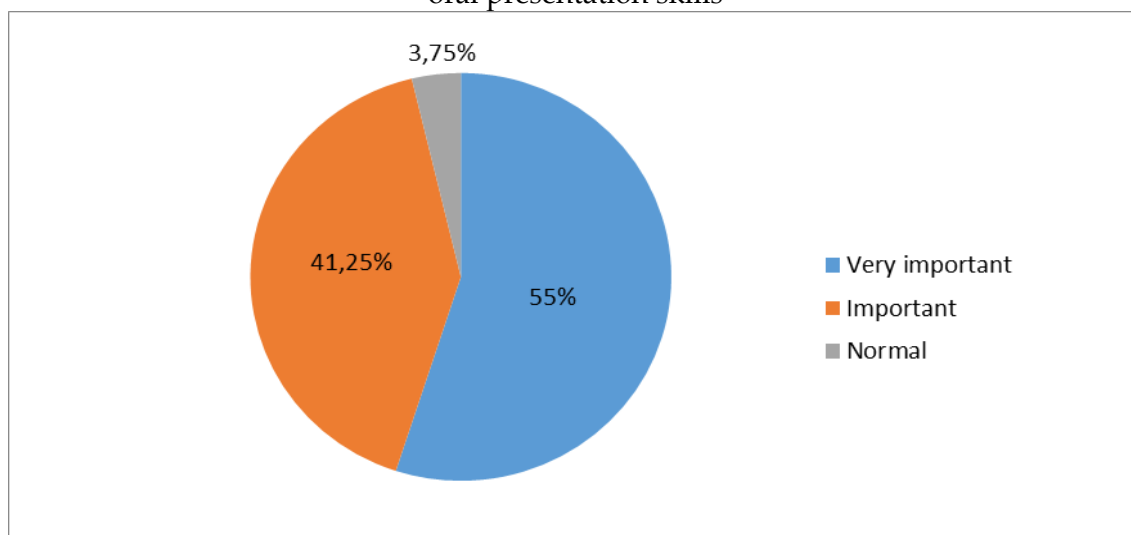
First of all, in order to survey the participants' opinions on the difficulty level of oral presentation skills, the first question was mentioned to indicate their awareness of these skills. The results were classified in the following figure:

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document..1: Students' awareness of the difficult level of oral presentation skills



Moreover, oral presentation skills are very useful and necessary in both academic and professional careers in the future. Hence, the second question refers to the participants' opinions about the importance of oral presentation skills. The figure below shows this content.

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document..2: Students' awareness of the importance of oral presentation skills



Only 3,75% of the students in Figure 4.2 were unaware of the significance of oral presentation skills. While there were 41,25% of the participants feeling that oral presentation skills were important. In particular, more than half of the students (55%) claimed that these skills were very important. This meant that the students' awareness of improving oral presentation skills had been enhanced.

Another aspect that the researcher would like to investigate was the participants' practicing time for oral presentation skills. The findings are shown in the table below.

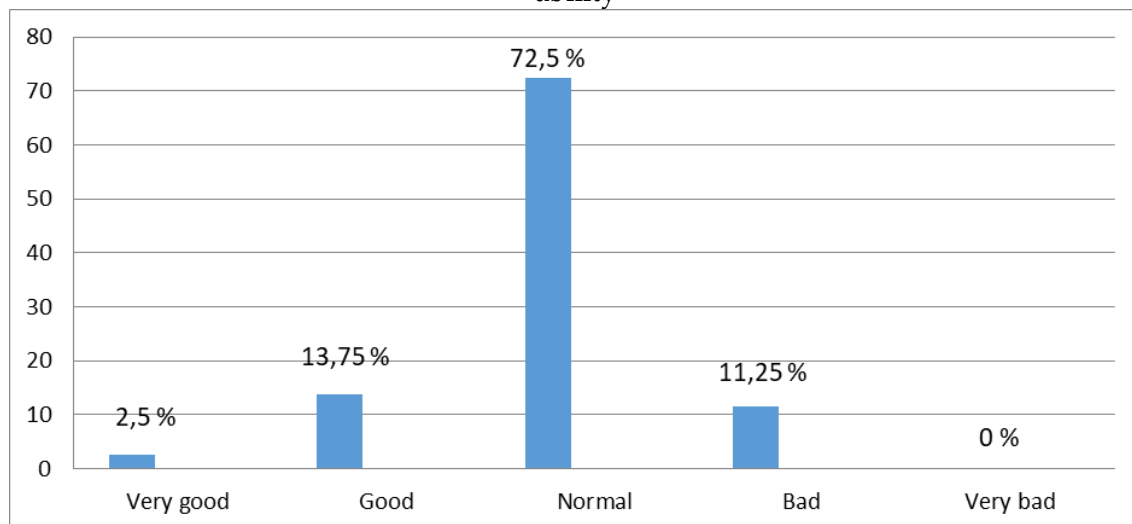
Table Error! No text of specified style in document..1: Participants' practicing time about oral presentation skills

| Time | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| a. Never | 1,25% |
| b. Only when you have a presentation | 55% |
| c. In free time | 36,25% |
| d. Every week | 6,25% |
| e. Every day | 1,25% |

Based on the responses in Table 4.1, most participants (55%) focused on practicing when they had a presentation. Besides, 36,25% of the students practiced their oral presentation skills when they had free time. Next, very few students (6,25%) practiced these skills every week. While the percentage of the learners who never practice and practiced every day was 1,25%. It could be concluded that most students spend time practicing to improve their skills.

Additionally, the oral presentation ability of the participants is also an aspect that needs to be explored. Students self-assess their competencies, which helps them identify their problems during the presentation and calculates strategies to improve these issues. The data was described below.

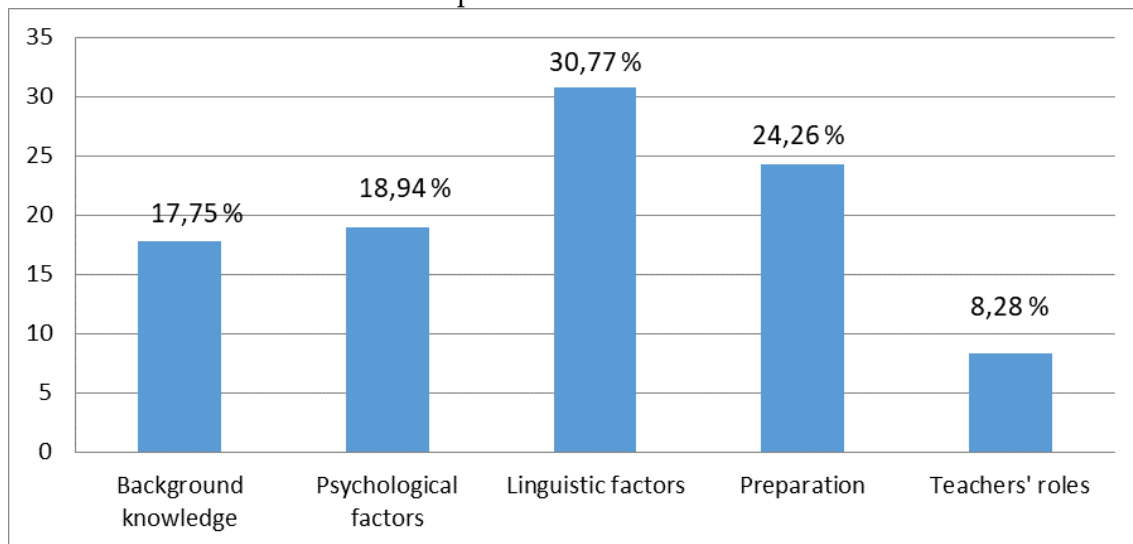
Figure Error! No text of specified style in document..3: The participants' oral presentation ability



As we can see in the chart, a few students (2,5%) admitted that their oral presentation ability was very good. Similarly, 13,75% of them confirmed that their oral presentation ability was good. On the contrary, almost the students (72,5%) responded that their oral presentation ability was normal. However, 11,25% of students felt that they were very bad at making presentations. No one declared that their oral presentation

ability was very bad, so the percentage was zero. From the statistical data, it could be found that the students had to improve these skills to raise their presentation competence. Lastly, creating a successful presentation requires a lot of different factors. The following figure indicates the five most common factors that participants often encounter in the presentation process.

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document..4: Factors affecting students' oral presentation skills



The results from Figure 4.4 showed that there were 17,75% of the students often encountered difficulties in background knowledge when giving oral presentations. Besides, 18,94% of them had to face psychological factors in the presentation process. Moreover, there were 30,77% of the participants usually met linguistic factors in making and delivering presentations. Also, 24,26% of the learners had problems with preparation before they presented. On the other hand, a few students (8,28%) felt that teachers' roles influenced the success of their presentations. In general, all of the above factors affect students' presentation process.

4.1.2 Participants' opinions about some factors on oral presentation skills

4.1.2.1 Background knowledge

The first factor is background knowledge, which affects students' oral presentation skills. The results of the table, including two statements, were presented as follows:

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..2: Students' opinion about background knowledge

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|--------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 6. Due to lack of background knowledge, you cannot make a presentation well. | 17,5% | 56,25% | 21,25% | 5% | 0% |
| 7. When you have a lot of background knowledge, you can convince the audience easier. | 52,5% | 41,25% | 5% | 1,25% | 0% |

Referring to Table 4.2, it can be seen from the first statement that due to a lack of background knowledge, students cannot make a presentation well as 17,5% of students strongly agreed and 56,25% of them agreed with this statement. Besides, there were 21,25% of students who had no idea. While 5% of them chose to disagree with this statement.

Moreover, the second statement in the table dealt with the fact that when students have a lot of background knowledge, they can convince the audience more easily. Almost all participants (93,75%) agreed with this statement, including 52,5% who strongly agreed and 41,25% who agreed. A few students (5%) chose no idea. However, there were only 1,25% of them who disagreed.

In conclusion, it could be predicted that background knowledge was a useful factor that assisted students in making presentations.

4.1.2.2 Psychological factors

4.1.2.2.1 Anxiety

One of the main difficulties reported facing students in oral presentation is anxiety. This part includes two statements and the table below, which presents the final findings:

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..3: Students' opinion about anxiety

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|--------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 8. When standing in front of the crowd, you feel uncomfortable and anxious. | 26,25% | 50% | 16,25% | 6,25% | 1,25% |
| 9. When you are anxious, you cannot present well. | 32,5% | 61,25% | 5% | 1,25% | 0% |

Table 4.3 describes participants' opinions about the effect of anxiety on oral presentation skills. It was easy to see that a large amount of the students (26,25% strongly agreed and 50% agreed) agreed with the first statement that when standing in front of the crowd, students feel uncomfortable and anxious. There were 16,25% of them who had no idea about the statement. Nevertheless, 7,5 % of the participants (6,25% disagreed and 1,25% strongly disagreed) disagreed with it.

In addition, the second statement stated that when students are anxious, they cannot present well. Almost the sophomores (32,5% strongly agreed and 61,25% agreed) agreed with the statement. Conversely, there were 5% of students who had no idea and only 1,25% of them chose to disagree.

4.1.2.2.2 Motivation

Motivation is one of the necessary factors that affect the process of learning. This table consists of two statements that will show the results.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..4: Students' opinion about motivation

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 10. You need to be motivated to overcome the difficulties when making presentations. | 31,25% | 42,5% | 23,75% | 1,25% | 1,25% |
| 11. Being able to choose your favorite topic motivates you to give a better presentation. | 37,5% | 45% | 13,75% | 3,75% | 0% |

Through the results in Table 4.4, more than 70% of the participants consisting of 31,25% of strong agreement and 42,5% of agreement felt that they need to be motivated to overcome the difficulties when making presentations. Besides, 23,75% of them had no idea. While there were both 1,25% of students who chose disagreed and strongly disagreed with the first statement.

As for the second statement, a large number of students (37,5% strongly agree and 45% agreed) agreed that being able to choose their favorite topic motivates them to give a better presentation. Apart from that, there were 13,75% of learners with no idea and only 3,75% of them disagreed with the statement.

In short, anxiety and motivation are two psychological factors which affect students' oral presentation skills. Anxiety is a negative factor that affects the quality of student presentations. Conversely, motivation is a positive factor that encourages students to overcome their own obstacles when they present.

4.1.2.3 Linguistic factors

4.1.2.3.1 Grammar

Grammar is one of the important factors in terms of linguistics. The results were shown in the table below:

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..5: Students' opinion about grammar

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 12. You often make mistakes about grammar in making presentation. | 21,25% | 57,5% | 17,5% | 3,75% | 0% |
| 13. You meet trouble in choosing appropriate grammar structures to deliver your message to the audience. | 22,5% | 50% | 21,25% | 1,25% | 0% |

From the findings in Table 4.5, statement 12 dealt with the fact that students often make mistakes about grammar in making presentations. The percentage of participants who consented was up to 78,75% including 21,25% strong agreement and 57,5% agreement. There was 17,5% of them choosing no idea. While a few students (3,75%) disagreed with the statement.

For statement 13, it can be seen that students meet trouble in choosing appropriate grammar structures to deliver their message to the audiences with 72,5% of the participants who agreed with this statement (22,5% strongly agreed and 50% agreed). However, 21,25% of them had no idea and there was only 1,25% choosing disagree.

4.1.2.3.2 Vocabulary

Another factor in linguistic terms is vocabulary that students face in an oral presentation. This table includes two statements indicating the results as the followings:

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..6: Students' opinion about vocabulary

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 14. Poor vocabulary limits your oral presentation ability. | 35% | 47,5% | 12,5% | 2,5% | 2,5% |
| 15. Without vocabulary, you cannot express your ideas easily. | 42,5% | 45% | 8,75% | 2,5% | 1,25% |

From the outcomes of statement 14, 35% of participants who chose strongly agree, and 47,5% of those who chose to agree admitted that poor vocabulary limits their oral presentation ability. There were 12,5% of students without idea. Nevertheless, there were both 2,5% of them who chose disagreed and strongly disagreed with this statement.

In statement 15, more than 80% of the participants consisting of 42,5% of strongly agreed and 45% agreed said that without vocabulary, they cannot express their ideas easily. In contrast, 8,75% of students shared no idea, while only 3,75% of those (2,5% disagreed and 1,25% strongly disagreed) disagreed with this statement.

4.1.2.3.3 Pronunciation

Besides some factors above, pronunciation is an essential factor that students usually make mistakes in the presentation process. The following table described the results:

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..7: Students' opinion about pronunciation

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|--------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 16. Because of your past pronunciation habits, you usually make mistakes in pronunciation | 25% | 53,75% | 13,75% | 6,25% | 1,25% |
| 17. You cannot pronounce correctly with all vocabulary because some words are difficult to pronounce. | 17,5% | 45% | 27,5% | 7,5% | 2,5% |

Based on the first statement, it was easy to see that there were 78,75% of participants (25% strongly agreed and 53,75% agreed) who agreed with the statement that because of their past pronunciation habits, they usually make mistakes in pronunciation. 13,75% of them had no idea, but there were still 7,5% of those who disagreed with it (6,25% disagreed and 1,25% strongly disagreed).

In the next statement, most of the participants (17,5% strongly agree and 45% agreed) admitted that they cannot pronounce correctly with all vocabulary because some words are difficult to pronounce. Conversely, there were 27,5% of them shared no idea. Apart from that, 10% of those (7,5% disagreed and 2,5% strongly disagreed) disagreed with it.

In conclusion, three linguistic factors including grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation affect students' oral presentation ability. If one of these three elements misses, the presentation will diminish in quality and success.

4.1.2.4 Preparation

4.1.2.4.1 Contents and ideas

The students usually encounter challenges in preparation with content and ideas. The table below indicates the findings:

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..8: Students' opinion about contents and ideas

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|--------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 18. You feel confused because presentation topics are strange to you. | 17,5% | 45% | 27,5% | 7,5% | 2,5% |
| 19. Lack of ideas makes the presentation boring and unattractive. | 23,75% | 61,25% | 12,5% | 2,5% | 0% |

Referring to Table 4.8, it could be seen from the first statement that they feel confused because presentation topics are strange to them as 17,5% of students strongly agreed and 45% of them agreed with this statement. Besides, there were 27,5% of students who had no idea. While 7,5% of those who chose disagree and 2,5% other who strongly disagreed with it.

In addition, the second statement stated that lack of ideas makes the presentation boring and unattractive. Almost the sophomores (23,75% strongly agreed and 61,25% agreed) agreed with the statement. However, there were 12,5% of students who shared no idea and only 2,5% of them chose to disagree.

4.1.2.4.2 Visual aids

Using audio-visual aids is also a necessary factor that students should spend a lot of time preparing and being proactive in investing. The data was stated in the table below:

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..9: Students' opinion about visual aid

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|--------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 20. You know how to use audio-visual aids to support your presentation. | 18,75% | 61,25% | 18,75% | 1,25% | 0% |
| 21. The use of visual aids to make your presentation more engaging and successful. | 35% | 52,5% | 12,5% | 0% | 0% |

From the findings in Table 4.9, the first statement dealt with that students knows how to use audio-visual aids to support their presentation. The percentage of participants who consented was up to 80% including 18,75% strongly agreed and 61,25% agreed. Nonetheless, there were 18,75% of them with no idea, while only 1,25% disagreed with the statement.

As for the second statement, a large number of students (35% strongly agree and 52,5% agreed) agreed with the use of visual aids to make their presentation more engaging and successful. In contrast, there were only 12,5% of the learners who had no idea.

4.1.2.4.3 Practice

Practice is the last key in the presentation process that students should pay attention to and actively invest in. The results were presented below:

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..10: Students' opinion about practice

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|--------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 22. The more practice you have, the more opportunities you will have to memorize and train your voice. | 62,5% | 33,75% | 3,75% | 0% | 0% |
| 23. Practicing many times before your presentation helps build your confidence. | 55% | 36,25% | 8,75% | 0% | 0% |

Through the results in table 4.10, more than 90% of participants consisting of 62,5% of strongly agreed and 33,75% of agreed felt that the more practice they have, the more opportunities they will have to memorize and train their voice. Otherwise, 3,75% of them had no idea.

In addition, the second statement stated that practicing many times before their presentation helps build their confidence. Almost all the participants (55% strongly agreed and 36,25% agreed) agreed with the statement. Conversely, 8,75% of others chose no idea.

In summary, content, ideas, visual aids and practice are valuable factors that students need to prepare to invest in their presentations. This is the best way to support in presenting and help the presentation be more effective.

Referring to table 4.11, it was easy to see a large amount.

4.1.2.4.4 Teachers' roles

The last section of this research looks at what teachers can do to ensure that they have set up the oral presentations in the classroom in a way that allows students to succeed. The findings were stated in the table below:

Table 4.11: Students' opinion about teachers' roles

| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | No idea | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|--------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 24. You can make a presentation easier with guidance and advice from your teacher. | 47,5% | 50% | 2,5% | 0% | 0% |
| 25. Teacher's evaluation after each presentation gives you a lot of experience for the next time. | 57,5% | 36,25% | 6,25% | 0% | 0% |

Referring to Table 4.11, it was easy to see that a large amount of the students (47,5% strongly agreed and 50% agreed) agreed with the first statement that they can make a presentation easier with guidance and advice from their teacher. Nevertheless, 2,5 % of the participants shared no idea about it.

For the second statement, it was easy to see that teacher's evaluation after each presentation gives them a lot of experience for the next time with 93,75% of participants who agreed with this statement (57,5% strongly agreed and 36,25% agreed) while only 6,25% of them chose no idea with it.

Hence, it can be inferred that the teacher's role has a positive impact on the participants' presentation. This element will help students become more confident and overcome barriers to having successful presentations.

4.2 Results from interviews

After the questionnaire was done, ten English-majored sophomores from the two classes were invited to interview. From the students' responses, the researcher analyzed the data carefully to make the research more reliable.

4.2.1 Interview from students

First of all, when the participants were asked about the necessity of oral presentations skills in real life, there were 9/10 of the interviewees claimed that these skills were really essential in both schools and workplaces in the future. They said that most colleges and universities use the oral presentation as a form of assessment of English proficiency in teaching and learning processes. Moreover, the students believed that having good English presentation skills would help them have more opportunities to study abroad and have a good job after graduation. In addition, these skills provide opportunities for them to hone their public speaking skills and develop stage confidence when they stand before an audience.

Secondly, when the researcher asked the students about some factors which affect their oral presentation skills, all the participants (10/10) agreed that background knowledge, psychological factors, linguistic factors, preparation and teachers' roles were common factors that influenced the success of a presentation.

Thirdly, from the findings of question 3, which dealt with the teachers' role in the oral presentation, a majority of interviewees (9/10) admitted that the teachers play an important role in their presentation process. They also stated that the teachers take the

time to introduce and guide them on topics related to their presentations in order to help them finish them more efficiently. In addition, teachers give advice and suggestions to help them improve their oral presentation skills. In particular, teachers also motivate them to be confident and regularly participate in presentation activities to improve themselves.

Last but not least, participants themselves also suggested some solutions for improving their competence in oral presentations such as more thorough preparation and practice, improving language knowledge, participating in more public speaking activities, consulting with teachers and friends around, observing other people's presentations.

4.2.2 Interview from teachers

Aside from the findings of the students' interviews, the researcher also collected data to analyze the results of the teachers' interviews from two teachers who taught language skills at Tay Do University. Four questions were posed to two teachers to explore some additional information and support for the relevant materials.

To begin with, both of the teachers admitted that all of the factors, such as background knowledge, psychological factors, linguistic factors, preparation, and teachers' roles are the ones that students usually face in making a presentation. Additionally, they thought that all of these factors influence students' oral presentation skills, so students need to combine these factors to be good presenters.

In the second question, two teachers confirmed that it is necessary to give students clear criteria and instructions before they have their presentations. One teacher believed that this would help students know what to present and focus on to achieve the best results in their presentations. Another teacher thought that to be a good presenter toward students, teachers have to guide students through all the techniques to present prior to the audience.

Next, when the teachers were asked the question "What do you often do before and after your students make presentations?", they answered that before students present, they will explain the task they ask their students to present, tell them what to focus on and share with them possible presenting techniques, check their presentation slides and give them more advice or correction if necessary. On the other hand, after students present, they will give constructive feedback, tell them what they do well and where they need to improve and show them how to handle "hard questions" from the audience.

Finally, the teachers give some suggestions to improve oral the presentation skills of students. One teacher advised that students should prepare and practice a lot because these are the two key tips to succeed in any presentation. Another teacher said that students ought to read aloud all English and Vietnamese texts before their presentations, check their pronunciation and intonation and look up all the new words in the dictionary to get the right pronunciations.

4.3 Discussions

The aim of this research was to investigate whether English-majored sophomores at Tay Do University had to deal with any factors that affected oral presentation skills. The results from analyzing the necessary information from the questionnaire and the interviews showed that most of the students recognized the importance of oral presentation skills in their studying and future careers and were interested in these skills. Besides, through the findings from these two instruments, students felt that making a presentation is not easy for them and they usually met problems in this process. The students' problems were related to background knowledge, psychological factors, linguistic factors, preparation and teachers' roles. This has been proved by the results of the questionnaire and interviews presented in Chapter 4. Moreover, these findings also contributed to supplementing the lack of other studies mentioned in the literature review of this study.

The first factor was background knowledge that the sophomores had problems in making presentations. Based on the results collected from the questionnaire, a lot of participants agreed that they could not make a presentation well due to a lack of background knowledge. Students also felt that when they had a lot of background knowledge, they could convince the audience more easily. This conclusion was supported by the results of the interview when most students agreed that background knowledge was also one of the factors affecting their presentation ability. Furthermore, this finding was consistent with the confirmation of Juhana (2012), and Bachman & Palmer (1996) in the literature review chapter.

The second students' obstacle was psychological factors, including anxiety and motivation, that many students encountered in the process of delivering a speech. As presented in chapter 4, a majority of students felt uncomfortable and anxious when standing in front of a crowd. As a result, it led to shyness in speaking English and they could not present well. On the other hand, students declared that they need the motivation to overcome their difficulties when making presentations. Especially, being able to choose their favorite topic motivates them to give a better presentation. Similarly, the interview's results did mention that most of the students claimed that psychological factors were their biggest problems in making a presentation. This finding is in line with Al-Nouh; Abdul-Kareem & Taqi (2014) and Mezrigui (2011) presented in the literature review.

The next problem was linguistic factors, consisting of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, which had a great influence on the participants' oral presentation skills. First of all, most of the students found that it is hard to choose appropriate grammar structures to deliver their messages to the audiences. Thus, they often made grammatical mistakes while presenting. Next, a lot of participants did not have good knowledge of vocabulary, so they could not express their ideas easily and their oral presentation ability was limited. Also, many students admitted that because of their past pronunciation habits and some words that were very difficult to pronounce, they could not pronounce them correctly and usually had problems in pronunciation. Additionally, a great number of interviewees agreed with linguistic factors that determined if the presentation was

convincing or not. This was found to be typical of the findings of Juhana (2012) and Foppoli (2009).

Another factor was the preparation, including content and ideas, visual aids, and practice, which was the most important factor in participants' oral presentation skills. In particular, a large number of students admitted that they felt confused with strange presentation topics and believed that a lack of ideas made the presentation boring and unattractive. Besides, almost participants also agreed that the use of visual aids made their presentations more engaging and successful. Especially, practicing many times before the presentation helped build their confidence and gave them more opportunities to memorize and train their voice. Also, when being interviewed, mostly, these learners declared that preparation affected strongly affected their successful presentation. This concurred well with the affirmation of Lambert (2008) and Quang (2016).

Finally, together with other factors, teachers' roles were a useful factor that helped students complete their presentations better. Indeed, almost participants claimed that because of the teacher's evaluation after each presentation, and the guidance and advice from their teachers, learners could have a lot of experience and make a presentation easier. As mentioned in the results of the interview, most interviewees responded that teachers' roles had a positive influence on their ability as well as the success of any presentations. This finding was barely distinguishable from the results of Donato and McCormick (1994).

5. Conclusion, Implications, Limitations and Recommendations

Chapter 5 contains the conclusion, implications, limitations, and recommendations for further research.

5.1 Conclusion

English was an important language taught in almost universities and colleges in Vietnam. Hence, learning English has become a great interest of many students, especially English-majored students. The best way to assess proficiency in communication was through oral presentations. However, creating a good presentation was not easy. In the process of making and delivering a presentation, students encountered many problems that prevented them from achieving success. After conducting this research by analyzing the valuable information collected from the participants, the researcher finally figured out the factors that influence the oral presentation skills of English-majored sophomores at Tay Do University. These factors were obstacles to background knowledge, psychological factors, linguistic factors, preparation, and teachers' roles. According to the research "The difficulties in making a presentation of fourth-year English majored students at Tay Do University" by Quang (2018), he gave some advice that students should spend more time on practicing presentation skills, gaining knowledge of linguistics and different fields in society, and boosting their self-confidence. Besides, thanks to important information from questionnaires and interviews, researchers could make some suggestions that students should participate in many speaking or

presentation activities in class, prepare content psychologically well before delivering it, broaden knowledge in many aspects, and collect ideas from teachers.

5.2 Implications

The findings of the research revealed that students faced many obstacles in making presentations, including background knowledge, psychological factors (anxiety and motivation), linguistic actors (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation), preparation (contents and ideas, visual aids, and practice), and teachers' roles. The researcher hoped that the students would become aware of their problems so that they could explore appropriate solutions and effective learning methods to improve their skills in oral presentations and become good speakers. Furthermore, thanks to the findings, the thesis also helped learners and teachers have the right focus when they learned or taught presentation skills. Also, it could be useful for teachers to reflect on their teaching methods and see if they are suitable for their students.

5.3 Limitations

Although receiving enthusiastic instruction and support from the supervisor, family, and friends, there were still some limitations in this research that may have influenced the final results. This was the first time the researcher had conducted such a real study, as well as the researchers' limited time and knowledge about oral presentation skills studies, so mistakes in the course are unavoidable. Besides, the number of participants who took part in the research was limited because there were only two classes. Thus, the outcomes of the research were not as reliable as expected. However, the researcher strongly hopes that this research, in its scope, was able to contribute to its usefulness to the English majored students at Tay Do University in their oral presentation learning process as well as the students who are interested in oral presentation skills.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the limitations mentioned above, it is better if further researches will focus on a larger scale with students from many different courses so that the results could be more diversified, practical, and reliable. In addition, as the researcher already completed the work of investigating the factors affecting English- majored sophomores on oral presentation skills, hopefully, in the near future, other researchers are going to conduct more researches better to figure out other obstacles as well as solutions to help students overcome their problems.

Conflicts of interest statement

The authors whose names are listed immediately below certify that they have no conflicts of interest, authorship, and disclosures in publication. They confirm that this work is original and has not been published elsewhere, nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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