

A Case Study of Improving English Speaking Ability for Presentation Using Audio Lingual Method*

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Abstract

The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) has long been accepted as an English language teaching approach for developing learners' listening and speaking skills. It emphasizes habit formation through imitation, repetition, and corrective feedback between learner and instructor an approach that shares similarities with instructional methods in Thai dance and music. This research article presents the application of ALM to enhance learners' English speaking ability for presentations, utilizing ALM as the sole instructional method. The study aimed to compare the English-speaking performance of undergraduate students before and after the implementation of ALM. The participants were 20 undergraduate students majoring in Thai dance and music at Sukhothai College of Dramatic Arts, all of whom were enrolled in an academic English course during the second semester of the 2024 academic year. Research instruments included: (1) ALM-based learning management plans, and (2) learning materials, activities, and assignments across lesson chapters. The study employed a classroom action research framework based on Jean McNiff (1998), following the cyclical process of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, percentage, and the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test.

Findings revealed that: the learning outcomes aligned with the research objectives. Initially, students had difficulty with (1) accurate pronunciation of consonants and vowels, (2) correct syllable stress and appropriate intonation, and (3) grammatical

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correctness in speech. Improvements in these areas were observed progressively across the three action research cycles. Evaluations were based on students' performance in presentations, activity participation, and assignment completion. Results showed that the post-test mean score ($M = 50.60$) was significantly higher than the pre-test score. The Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test confirmed that students' speaking performance after the intervention was significantly improved at the .01 level. The findings align with previous ALM studies, which emphasize the effectiveness of repetition and substitution drills in enhancing learners' pronunciation and grammatical competence. Furthermore, the study highlights parallels between ALM and traditional Thai performing arts instruction, suggesting pedagogical compatibility and potential for cross-disciplinary application.

Keywords: Audiolingual method; Improving; English speaking ability for presentation

1. Introduction

Student English competencies have probably played a master role and determined which teaching method will be appropriately selected. Audio Lingual Method has been considered as a trustworthy method as reckoned within the context of Thailand, where English is both theoretically and practically an EFL situation. It could simply be an alternative teaching method, especially for listening-speaking skills at the beginner level (Chunsuvimol, & Charoenpanit, 2017). Dealing with problems through English speaking ability for presentation, my learners find it difficult to access and expose themselves onto pronunciation and sentence structures since their limited competencies have not long been improved consecutively causing the inaccessibility to English learning and the confident mitigation when it comes to provide presentation speech in front of class.

As evaluated practically and theoretically, the problems aforementioned have turned out that my students are facing with mispronunciation and confusion of the consonant and vowel sounds, while stress and intonation are following not knowing how to pronounce the correct sounds based on the letters and produce the accurate pitches and intonation according to word syllables and sentence patterns respectively. Additionally, grammatical errors seems to be classically occurred, they are unable to identify a correct verb form not utilizing an appropriate structure in sentences.



The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) draws its rationale from the dominant psychological theory of the time Behaviorism which posits that language learning is the result of habit formation (Skinner, 1957). This method is relevant to the theory of learning relying on the behaviorist habit learning theory whereby learners imitate, memorize, and reinforce their learning process becoming fluent and accurate habits. Related researches also supported that ALM is effective as a sole-use approach to improve foreign language learners' listening and speaking skills. Based on reinforcement- and correction-based learning activities in the Audio-Lingual Method and my students' challenges claimed, learning management plans according to ALM have been conducted in order to fulfill the gaps, there are various activities which are enhanced pronunciation and grammatical errors for instance, close attention to pronunciation, intensive oral drilling, a focus on sentence patterns and memorization, these tasks based ALM learning will be integrated and designed as contents related to the learners' problems. While, listening and repetition drills will be provided them in order to repair and correct their errors on the presenting monologue.

With regard to addressing the research objective, it was found that studies both in Thai and International contexts utilized ALM from past to present conducted by Bunpok (2018, pp. 61-80), ALM has been applied either as a sole solution or in combination with other teaching methods to compare students' achievement. The researches also yielded significant findings that this approach is capable of enhancing learners' better English-speaking skills. Varied educational levels as a significant factor is considered as a main variable, at the initial stage, primary and secondary levels were precedingly chosen as a study group. Until 2007, the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) was instructionally and expandingly reconstructed for adults, graduates, and the general public, reflecting its continued applicability and its capacity to be contextually and appropriately adapted to different situations and learning environments. In terms of international studies related to Thai contexts, there was research study that examined the application of the Audio-Lingual Method in teaching English to non-native learners; Nyeu (1970, as cited in Bunpok, 2018) investigated English learning achievement among Taiwanese upper secondary students taught through the Audio-Lingual Method and a traditional method. Using tests of



vocabulary, grammar, listening comprehension, and language use, the study found that students taught with the Audio-Lingual Method achieved significantly higher scores. Thus, when considering a different aspect from the aforementioned issues, the sample group in this study consists of participants whose learning context emphasizes practical instruction rather than a theoretical or academic orientation. Since Thai dancing and music undergraduates have long been acquired their major content subjects by memorizing a lot of poses through songs or literatures they perform or rehearse upon notes, melodies, rhythms, musical playing methods on the stage respectively. However, it is not only memorization all those lessons but repetition and correction of what they learn also play a significant factor of being perfectly fluent and accurate toward the performances they display. Similarly, as defined ALM above, it emphasizes on imitation, memorization and reinforcement of how students perceive a good habit formation through language learning. Therefore, this notion has supported my decision to select ALM due to their parallel traits as a teaching method to improve learners' English speaking ability for presentation. Importantly, some previous empirical study has highlighted particularly on this linkage as they share an identical instructional framework in teaching learners' pronunciation skills, it is hoped that ALM will effectively improve students' English speaking ability for presentation and fulfill my research objectives completed.

2. Research Objectives

To improve the learners' English speaking ability for presentation applying the Audiolingual method as a sole-solution and compare the achievement of learners' English speaking skill for presentation of the undergraduates before and after implementing the Audiolingual method.

3. Methods

Classroom Research Action (CAR) contributed by McNiff (1998) was applied in this research to select what the appropriate activities were selectively implemented for the learners according to the approach mentioned. This framework is not only well suited to instructional contexts that require the adaptation of teaching methods to align with



learners' characteristics, particularly those emphasizing practice-oriented learning, but also allows the researcher to integrate ALM-based learning activities and instructional design into the classroom and to immediately evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process through the four steps; planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. They were designed as a research procedure between teacher and students throughout a semester or sixteen weeks. 20 undergraduates majoring Thai dancing and music were purposively selected as a study group. In terms of data analysis, discussion and feedback of four discussions during pre, while, post sessions were interpreted as a qualitative data while, pre and post tests were also analyzed to identify and compare the students' achievement. The differences of learners' achievement were tested by the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test whether this method improve their abilities or not.

4. Results

Since their contextual fields share the similar traits of a content acquisition, my students still are not familiar with some type of the subject which is distinguishably both on contents and indicators, they find it difficult to get through of what abilities or competencies they should complete especially in English course whereby a speaking skill has been found tough as an obstacle that they meet to pass without learning anything about it. According to their demonstrating presentation in class and result through a pre-test revealed three main problems they have encountered; 1. Pronunciation through vocabularies, 2. Stress and intonation and 3. Sentence structures. Therefore, the teaching method and the learning activities management will be integrated throughout the process of teaching whereby four steps; 1. planning 2. acting 3. observing 4. reflecting were neatly practiced to improve students' English speaking ability for presentation. The results were divided based on the approach according to the classroom research action by McNiff (1998).

The Cycle 1. The students dealt with problem that they were not capable of pronouncing vocabularies within sentences, so they were unable to speak and pronounce fluently including some irrelevant sounds both on consonants and vowels, clusters, and initial or final consonants. Some stopped and jumped to the part where they could read



or memorize causing an irrelevant and incomplete monologue. Hence, the contrastive minimal pairs and listening and repetition drills were served to fulfill this gap providing an essential foundation for English better pronunciation.

1. Planning

1.1 Learning indicators were analyzed to design learning management plan and activities regarding Audio lingual method.

1.2 Monologues based presentation were taught. If there was error, pre and post reading tasks would be planned and identified the problem in order to find a solving method.

1.3 Selecting appropriate and enhancing activities and exercises related to learning indicators

1.4 Discussing students after the method application

2. Action. This step took place of four discussions whereby teacher and students critically shared and exchanged their useful issues in order to design and adjust the better versions of their own tasks for improving the materials and skill.

2.1 Teacher explained about how the sounds are different according to the minimal pairs and sound correspondent in the words through phases and sentences that apply in the monologue during giving presentation.

2.2 Repairing and correcting the mispronouncing words and phrases in sentences, students could be adjusted and initiated easier to memorize, compare, and understand the errors they made in terms of the longitude memorization.

2.3 Discussing and practicing the errors pronunciation to make sure they pronounced the right one relying on its sound and symbol.

2.4 Minimal pairs, listening and repetition drills, monologue memorization, filling and rearranging word blanks were provided focusing on spoken structures and sequences. Next, learners needed to practice the monologue in front of class reassuring they passed the indicators.

2.5 The demonstration of giving presentation was tested to evaluate students' improvement.



3. Observation

3.1 Observing learners' behaviors throughout the class

3.2 Discussing them after finishing the ALM learning activities, learners would be asked to give their feedbacks or some suggestions.

3.3 Reinforcing and correcting the errors to assess their development after the teaching method application.

4. Reflection. In the cycle 1, students gradually initiate to improve their pronunciations after observing their interactions in class and testing the skill. They are able to pronounce and compare the error sounds to another or phrases according to meanings in the sentence. After knowing and acquiring words' meaning, they could recognize difficult words or phrases and use them correctly and suitably at the right meaningful contexts. Students find it more confident, getting used to consonant and vowel sounds cohesion and fluently pronounce clearer based on the drill and principle given. They start to contrastively differentiate the sounds they produced. According to the discussion, it turned out that the repetitive drills were the effectively learning activities since they mitigate nervousness and enhance them to imitate the monologue beyond teachers' suggestions.

The Cycle 2. In this cycle, stress and intonation play a master role in words and sentences since most of learners have not known pitches that can differentiate meanings in English. Realistically, it is difficult for them to aware of this condition due to their prior knowledge and lexical limitation, so both basically theoretical and practical principles of how to produce the accurate stress and intonation are instructed.

1. Planning

1.1 Learning indicators were analyzed to design learning management plan and activities regarding Audio lingual method.

1.2 Monologues based presentation were taught. If there was errors, Pre and post reading tasks would be planned and identified the problem in order to find a solving method.

1.3 Selecting appropriate or enhancing activities and exercises related to learning indicators.

1.4 Preparing an additional lesson on stress and intonation



1.5 Discussing students after the method application

2. Action. There were four discussions after finishing the lesson.

2.1 Teacher explained about how to produce the sounds through words and sentences in terms of stress and intonation that apply in the monologue during giving presentation.

2.2 Listening and repetition drills were provided. Next, learners needed to practice the monologue in front of class reassuring they would pronounce accurately and passed the indicators.

2.3 The demonstration of giving presentation was tested to evaluate students' improvement.

3. Observation. There were three procedures to evaluate the learners' competency whether ALM might works or not including

3.1 Observing learners' behaviors throughout the class

3.2 Discussing them after finishing the preceding drills, learners would be asked to give their feedbacks or some suggestion.

3.3 Reinforcing and correcting the errors they made to assess their development after the teaching method application

4. Reflection. In the cycle 2 as observed and discussed, learners have improved their stress and intonation since they have theoretically acquired the principles and enabled to practically used when pronouncing words and sentences. In terms of activities, listening and repetition drills are significantly knotted since learners have realized their errors and kept repairing of what they were listening to based on the native audio sound during a presentation.

The Cycle 3. According to the presenting demonstration and spoken testing in the two preceding cycles, some types of verb and prepositional forms that they are not understandable led to the ungrammatical mistakes. Firstly, an incorrect verbs ordering, they add an infinitive verb upon a preceding one which is verb to be becoming an ungrammatical structure for instance "...I am present about...", "...we are talk to...", "...I am discuss...". As discussed, they are not capable of identifying and differentiating which pattern is the correct one, so correct verb structures is instructed. Secondly, the incorrect



prepositions, it revealed that they could not grammatically match the partially co-occurrence words at the preceding one because they do not recognize which the matching one is. Therefore, substitution drills and exercises are provided in order to enhance their memorization.

1. Planning

1.1 Learning indicators were analyzed to design learning management plan and activities regarding Audio lingual method.

1.2 Selecting appropriate or enhancing activities and exercises related to learning indicators.

1.3 Preparing an additional lesson on sentence structures

1.4 Discussing students after the method application

2. Action. There were four discussions after finishing the lesson.

2.1 Researcher lectured about the sentence structures and their functions according to what the problems they encountered which related to the sentence structures that apply in the monologue during giving presentation.

2.2 Substitution and repetition drills, monologue memorization, as well as filling blanks and rearranging word sequences were provided focusing on the functions, sentence structures and their correct orders. Next, learners needed to practice the monologue in front of class reassuring they would speak grammatically and passed the indicators.

2.3 The demonstration of giving presentation was tested to evaluate students' improvement.

3. Observation. There were three procedures to evaluate the learners' competency whether ALM might works or not including

3.1 Observing learners' behaviors throughout the class

3.2 Discussing them after finishing the ALM learning activities, learners would be asked to give their feedbacks or some discussions.

3.3 Reinforcing and correcting the errors to assess their development after the teaching method application.



4. Reflection. In the cycle 3, students find it more understandable and recognizable of what mistakes they do in the grammatical part. The more activities and exercises are given, the more they enable to improve the competency. The learning activities and exercises also engage and motivate their English learning exposure since most of them have abilities to interact and response what errors they used to make becoming the correct one. Therefore, they have gained confidence being able to give their presentations without any hesitation or confusion.

To compare students ability through the three cycles mentioned after implementing ALM method on a learning management, there were two components of the pre - posttests with the full scores of sixty items and points; the first part included pronunciation, stress and intonation, and the second one consisted of sentence structures. When the achievement scores had compared between pre and posttests after implementing the ALM method, the scores result had risen prior to using the method which was calculated as 50.60% of the full scores totaling 60%.

To test the hypothesis, the pre and posttests scores would be compared the arrangement of the differences with the statistic testing of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test as shown in the table below;

Table 1 The comparative analysis of the learning achievement scores during pre and post improvement of learners' English speaking ability for presentation after implementing Audio Lingual method

Score Tests	N	(60)	\bar{X}	S.D.	Test result by Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test				
					Post-Pre	n	Mean Rank	Z	Sig.
Pre-test	20	60	19.35	4.83	Negative Ranks	0	.00	3.923	.000
Post-test	20	60	50.60	4.92	Positive Ranks	20	10.50		



In accordance with the table, it yielded that the learning achievement scores prior to the development was 19.35 as an average from the full scores of 60 while, 50.60 was calculated after applying the teaching method. To test the hypothesis for comparing the learning achievement of learner's English speaking ability for presentation after the improvement was higher than the pretest with statistically significant at the .01 level. This revealed that the learning management by using ALM had made the achievement of the learners' English speaking ability for presentation risen.

5. Discussion

According to the result, it could be summarized that Audio-lingual method has improved students' English speaking ability for presentation as a sole-application method which is generally relevant to ALM researches. Using ALM learning management plans and activities; monologue-based presentation, repetition and substitution drills were utilized to enhance their adequate learning outcomes for the entire problems in each cycle.

During the four stages of the improvement in each of cycles would be determined what solutions were employed and improved the students' competencies. At the stage 1. planning, the learning indicators were analyzed and designed as a learning management plan and the activities according to ALM. While, 2. action and 3. observation, the learners were intensively taught and drilled based on the plan and activities from the preceding stage. Relating contents and exercises based on their problems were built and given. There were four discussions between teacher and students to give some feedback and suggest what contents, activities, and exercises should be adequately fulfilled upon the gaps. Then, their learning behaviors were evaluated when presentation practicing had been done. After finishing the lessons, they were eligible to give some feedback of what they learnt or unclear contents they did not understand, teacher would additionally adjust the lessons based on learners' feedback to fit in their capabilities and ongoing enhancement. The reinforcement and correction occurred through these two entire stages. Finally, 4. reflection, we would see how learners improved themselves and what were the appropriate contents, activities, and exercises should be matched with our learners. In the cycle 1 and 2 that dealt with the partial pronunciation, students found



it incapable of memorizing the sounds and letters, therefore the lesson that review how the accurate stress and intonation were articulated in utterances and sentences so that they would ensure their confidence how the correct one would be pronounced and also drills which also repeat what the correct consonant and vowel sounds were produced. Besides, contrastive minimal pairs lesson was additionally lectured and guided in order to differentiate the sound that share the similar characteristics of places and manners of articulation so that students could realize what the exact sound should be pronounced. As observed and discussed, the frequencies of repetition through drills in each cycle played a crucial role of improving the students' competency and increasing their confidence. Furthermore, learners felt more relaxed and relieved although they made the mistakes, fortunately teachers' suggestion would be encouraged and intimately guided step by step to figure out their errors of every cycles. This was relevant to researches conducted by Boonpok (2007); Charoenpanit (2014), Hidayati (2016, pp. 25-34) which claimed that repetition drills help to improve learner pronunciation and reduce their fear, shyness or reluctance to speak English. One main reason was they repeated after their instructors, and hence following the model, they felt safer and more secure, gradually leading to be more confident and independent in English speaking skill. While the cycle 3, sentence structures lesson was taught based on the errors they made. Repetitive substitution drills was designed as the main exercises; monologue memorization of correct and distinguished structures given in order to solve their ungrammatical lessons. Learners have gradually improved themselves memorizing the correct structure forms and spoken more grammatically in front of class. This was consistent with Racelis, & Matsuda (2013) whose their research also pointed out that substitution drill is also one of the useful methods that allow learners to reinforcement the grammatical structures they have learnt and mitigate the rate of errors in language production.

While, the point that involved in the research decision making due to some similar characteristics of ALM and Thai dancing and music teaching processes, there was also some supporting study conducted by Zhang, Baills, & Prieto (2024, pp. 1-23) whose research studied the value of an embodied music training program for improving pronunciation skills, they suggested that rhythm and music-based training can enhance



pronunciation and phonological skills in second-language learners, indicating that the sensibilities of dance and music students may transfer advantageously to language learning. Therefore, it is noted that in ALM, learners internalize language patterns through repeated drills and substitution exercises, similar to how dance and music students master sequences through rehearsal and corrective feedback. These skills can transfer advantageously to language learning, improving fluency and automaticity. The alignment of embodied practice with ALM's structured oral repetition creates a natural bridge, facilitating more effective acquisition of second-language pronunciation and listening skills.

In terms of quantitative data, pre and posttests as well as different achievement scores were calculated as average, standard deviation, means and percentage in order to point out how the method improved the student competencies. Statistically, the post-test reached at the higher scores which was increasingly counted as 50.60 for an average. After testing the hypothesis, the result also identified that the post-test is higher than the pre-test with statistically significant at the .01 level. Therefore, It could be summarized that Audio-lingual method has effectively improved student's English speaking ability for presentation.

6. Suggestions

According to the conclusion and discussion, there are recommendations including two issues as follow;

1. Teacher's supportive role model-based assistance arise from ALM should be taken back for reconsideration since it enables to mitigate learner's nervousness, anxiety and increase confidence improving English pronunciation and grammar during errors reinforcement and correction. Therefore, it will be fundamentally initiated as a model-based practice in educational institutions whereby associating stakeholders should realize how effective the method is or how long-term the research outcomes have been and bring it into action tangibly.

2. Further research should investigate the long-term retention and generalizability of learners' speaking improvements by applying the Audio-Lingual Method to larger and more diverse student groups to determine whether its effects remain consistent across contexts.



7. Knowledge Assets

New knowledge contributed by this research; 1. Audiolingual method as a sole instructional application is capable of enhancing systematically Thai undergraduates' English speaking skill for a specific purpose. 2. The Repetitive activities and Substitution drills based ALM are the effective method in developing errors of partial pronunciation and grammar as well as learner confidence. 3. Classroom Action Research that includes Planning, Acting, Observing, and Reflection is able to ensure an ongoing feedback whereby the instructional adjustments meet learners' specific needs. 4. The significance of a supportive teacher-learner interaction in ALM application can promote learners' English Speaking competency since it is an essential factor to reduce anxiety and encourage risk-taking in speaking.

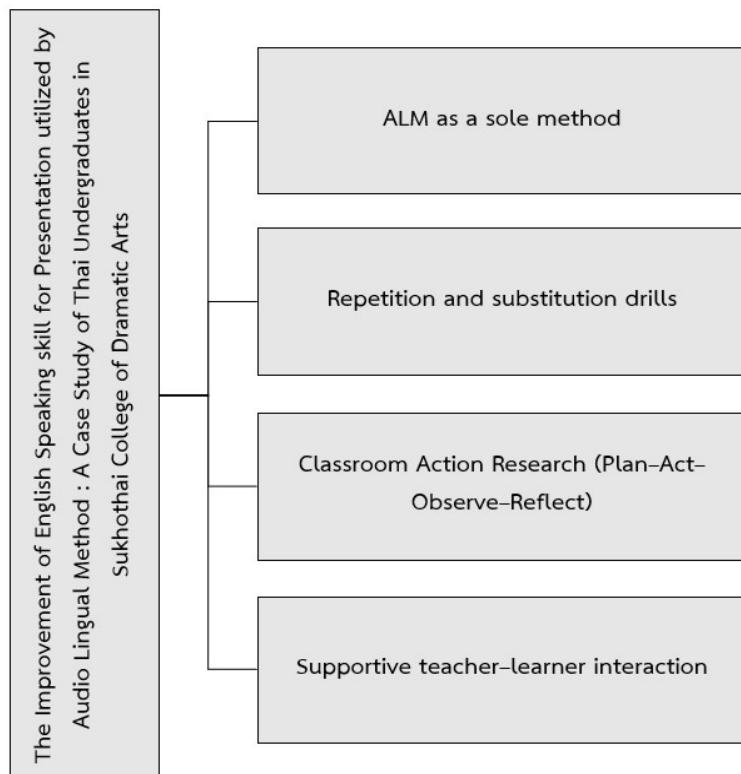


Figure 1 New knowledge



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