





The Effects of Flipped Classroom in English Language Communicative Skills

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article History Received: August 2023; Revised: November 2023; Published: December 2023</p> <p>Keywords Flipped Classroom; English Language; Professional Communicative Skills</p>	<p>This study investigates the effectiveness of Flipped Classroom in teaching speaking skills for an English communicative class as well as the students' perceptions of this approach towards their learning experience. In the flipped classroom, students watched the videos and read the provided documents outside the classroom. In class, which was done virtually, group discussions, debates, and role-plays were conducted based on the content that they had watched before the class. Both the pre-test and post-test were the instruments used to measure effectiveness, and all eight students were interviewed to identify their perceptions of Flipped Classroom. This research found that this instructional method was effective in teaching speaking skills, as there were improvements in the post-test in comparison with the pre-test, where only three students managed to score above 50% while the rest failed. This study also revealed that the flipped classroom was beneficial to students as it helped them improve their speaking skills. Despite the problems they faced in class, their speaking skills improved tremendously.</p> <p> https://doi.org/10.36312/ijece.v2i2.1394 Copyright© 2023, Yakob et al. This is an open-access article under the CC-BY-SA License.</p> 
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INTRODUCTION

In Vietnam, a fair number of students are having difficulty speaking in English language and participating in classroom activities. However, the need for students to learn English speaking skills has become more pertinent to obtain a particular qualification in English language, especially when oral proficiency is one of the fundamental skills in developing communicative competence. Vietnam has reinforced its detailed measures for the implementation of a strategic scheme for foreign language education, like English language, in all levels of the education system (Ton & Pham, 2010). This is to ensure that students are able to use it independently, build their confidence in communication and further their education or career in an integrated and multicultural environment, serving the cause of modernisation for the country (Nguyen, 2015).

One of the common issues that every teacher has to deal with on a daily basis is having inactive students in class, which causes the student to be inefficient during the learning process. These issues are seen in their participation in class activities, where interaction between the teacher and students, as well as among their peers, is minimal. Based on personal observation at an English center in Vietnam, some students felt they came to their respective classes without any prior knowledge of the topic learned, which made them feel less confident

in contributing their ideas and views in class. Additionally, opportunities for these students to foster communication skills are observed to be lacking. Thus, the absence of such opportunities further diminishes the chances for them to learn another language, as one of the major factors in enhancing their communicative ability in a foreign language is highly dependent on verbal communicative practices. In countries where people do not converse in English in their everyday conversations, classes are the only place for students to get access to resources to learn the English language and develop their skills accordingly (Bui & Nguyen, 2014).

In addition, it is argued that students' lack of interest in learning the English language stems from the teachers' style of teaching and their lack of interactive activities. This can affect their development of speaking skills. When learning English, students felt unmotivated in class as they complained about the class being boring and the explanation of the teacher taking most of the time in class. Although new methodologies were introduced to Vietnamese educators in training programs, educators continue to teach using the same traditional teacher-centered approach in English classes (Hoang, 2010). The lack of interactive activities stemming from conventional methods creates inadequacy in students' engagement, uncomfortable feelings in students, and an inappropriate learning environment, making the teacher the focus of the learning process.

The problems with students' participation in class and attitudes towards English will continue unless the teaching and learning processes are reformed; thus, innovative learning approaches with the help of technology should be employed. Educators need to create the best environment for delivering the content of the lesson using practical, innovative approaches in the classroom, especially when teaching English language subjects. It is about finding what is best for the students when delivering new knowledge and letting them express their creativity, thus improving their learning outcomes. In the 21st century, the processes of teaching and learning have evolved at all levels of education, and teaching has centered around the idea of catering to students with various sets of skills. To prepare the students with good English communication skills, the flipped classroom acts as a prerequisite that offers students the opportunity to be collaborative, engaging, and expressive in sharing their ideas and opinions.

Purpose and Significance of the Research

The purpose of this study is to explore how Flipped Classroom can assist students in becoming better learners in English language communicative skills classrooms and to evaluate the extent to which the research lessons with the use of action research can be effective in improving the students' ability to learn English. Additionally, it aims to explore the impact of students' attitudes toward learning English given the context in which they are exposed to flipped classrooms and, thus, extrapolate their views on participating in such classes. From the above, it is hoped that this study will reveal the challenges that are faced in the implementation of the flipped classroom.

This research is seen as relevant, current, and practical in today's education system, as the flipped classroom encapsulates the students' needs and the technology of today's world. This involves the responsibility of any educator to ensure that students reach the skills and abilities that are in line with the 21st-century era (Santikarn & Wichadee, 2018; Ali et al., 2022). They need to encourage learning to be both learner-autonomous and socially constructed while simultaneously getting the most out of the influence of technology. Student-centered pedagogy, namely, the "flipped classroom," is a way to improve on good teaching and the use of technology.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this research is social constructivist theory. The use of the flipped classroom model suggests a distinctive learning theory of constructivism where knowledge is created and shaped through the students' prior knowledge and experience (Grennon & Brookes, 1999). The constructivist approach puts emphasis on the importance of student-centered learning, which replaces the students' passive listening to the teacher with devoting their class time to actively participating in collaboration and inquiry (Alsowat, 2016). This is because constructivists believe that students should experience learning that promotes deep understanding. From the constructivist perspective, the flipped classroom illustrates the process of knowledge construction in understanding the topic where active learning is being done both inside and outside of the classroom. According to Bhattachargee (2015), some of the principles of constructivism that are relevant to this study involve the learners' ability to (1) construct their own meaning for the learning acquisition, (2) build the knowledge acquired based on their prior knowledge, and (3) enhance the learning process through social interactions. In accordance with these principles, prior to the class, teachers would provide teaching materials in the form of video lectures for students to watch and understand, while in class, the knowledge acquired would be applied in class activities, group discussions, and presentations. This gives the students the aid of active learning and problem solving, in which the problem is presented to the students and is then used as motivation for them to discuss or present any opinions and ideas in class (Cavanagh, 2011). With that knowledge, this provides opportunities for students to be more involved in their own learning, where they need to cooperate with one another in creating new knowledge (Eppard & Rochdi, 2017).

Furthermore, in a constructivist classroom, the role of a teacher has developed from the traditional role of knowledge transmitter to that of a facilitator, where the teacher prompts the students by asking questions so that the students will think more critically and ask more questions (Srivastave, 2014), whilst fostering students' thinking skills (Albalawi, 2018) and thereby aiding the students to express their opinions in class as well as to be more independent in their own learning. This is because knowledge acquisition is no longer a process transferred entirely from teacher to student but rather a process that lets teachers create an environment that inspires students to practice high-level thinking, problem-solving skills, and self-regulation (Albalawi, 2018). Therefore, the teacher will be scaffolding students to reach their fullest potential by encouraging them to communicate and collaborate while conducting the tasks given. Thus, learning the concept or problems from the video lecture and strengthening that knowledge through in-class activities will not only help students learn but also construct an active learning environment.

Research Questions

This research seeks to provide insights into students' achievements as well as their perceptions of learning using the Flipped Classroom. Apart from that, some of the challenges that students experienced utilizing this strategy will also be examined. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. How does the Flipped Classroom improve student's communication skills?
2. What are the students' perceptions towards the Flipped Classroom?

Scope and Limitation

This research was conducted at one of the centers in Da Nang, Vietnam. This center was set up by one of the universities in Brunei in collaboration with one of Vietnam's universities. It is an overseas campus with the aim of carrying out the city's goal, which is to be an English-proficient start-up city that offers both local and international graduates exposure to becoming

marketable individuals. The scope of this research will only focus on the ASEAN program course that comprises students with upper-intermediate learning abilities. The class consisted of eight adult learners aged between 18 and 30 with different learning needs and levels of academic achievement, as well as different attributes such as interests, readiness, and learning style. They may have difficulty speaking and little motivation to learn the English language. This study will expose the students to a new kind of lifelong learning and hopefully help them get used to cognitively active learning. This study will also help to increase 21st-century learning skills, which include collaboration, communication, and higher-order thinking skills. Hence, the generalizability of the result may only be limited to the students in the class and may not represent the majority of students across different levels.

There were a number of limitations in conducting this research. Primarily, the number of students in this study was small. There were only eight students in this course participating in this research. Also, time constraints may be an issue, as it usually takes time for students to get used to the flipped model. The time to do this study was limited, as it was only conducted for 1.5 weeks of class time. Implementing this strategy would be challenging for the first few classes, as the students' willingness to adhere to partaking in the usage of such a strategy may not go as planned. Hence, students felt compliant with the implementation of the new approach in the class.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will examine literature reviews on Flipped Classroom as guidelines to answer the research questions, which cover three main themes: Flipped Classroom, the use of Flipped Classroom in English subjects, and students' perceptions towards the approach. Although most of the studies were widely done on content-based subjects, only a few studies have been done on English subjects in ASEAN countries.

Flipped Classroom

In a traditional classroom, teachers typically spend more time introducing basic concepts, explaining ideas, asking students to read, and giving boring lectures, which results in teacher dominance in the teaching and learning process. However, in accordance with 21st-century learning development, teachers acknowledge the use of the "flipped classroom" approach to utilize class time for activities that can help teachers assess students better and help students apply the knowledge acquired through online lectures and notes prepared by the teacher (Alsowat, 2016; Ali et al., 2022; Hamdan et al., 2022; Latif et al., 2017; Manjanai & Shahrill, 2016; Nawi et al., 2016; Toh et al., 2017). Here, students are primarily responsible for the extra effort, especially in acquiring knowledge through watching videos, reading articles, and visiting related websites. As for the teachers, this approach expects them to create an interactive classroom environment that enhances their thinking skills through different activities such as pair work, group work, and class discussion.

The concept of the "flipped classroom" is described as an inverted classroom, reversed instruction, and blended learning that replaces the traditional style of teaching (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). The flipped classroom is a new approach to improving instruction and student learning as well as increasing students' engagement. It is suggested that this ideology of transforming the style of teaching and learning allows for a more student-centered approach. Strayer (2012) explained the approach of converting lectures into media that can be shared online while class time is dedicated for students to discuss, collaborate, and problem-solve the problem or topic learned beforehand. The interaction between students and the teacher is allocated in class to tackle complex exercises and build more face-to-face class time (Bailey &

Smith, 2013). Brame (2013) described it as a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the instructional method changes from group to individual learning space and students can implement the concept while engaging freely and creatively in the lesson. With the time used in class for active learning and discussion, the flipped classroom is rather a student-centered approach that aims to flourish the students' comprehension of the topic given through hands-on activities instead of sitting through lectures. The following Figure 1 illustrates Baker's (2000) concept of a "flipped classroom." In this scenario, not only do the students benefit from discussing the issues collectively in class, but teachers can also easily distinguish difficulties and provide necessary support as well as feedback to those who need it (EDUCAUSE, 2012). Hence, these activities teach them to take control of their own pace and be accountable for their learning.

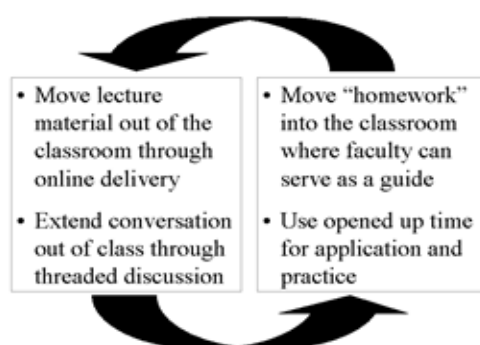


Figure 1. An overview of Baker's (2000) Flipped Classroom Concept

In parallel to the development of technology, the conditions for education and different learning demands develop as well (Seferogly, 2011). Kirkgoz (2011) stated that incorporating technology with face-to-face instruction has been found to foster an effective learning experience, especially in foreign language courses. The flipped classroom has proven to be ideal as it is characterized by technology-enhanced learning where teaching materials and contents can be previewed and learned before they come to class (Hamdan et al., 2013). Technology keeps evolving and advancing; it plays a significant role in language teaching and learning and shapes the needs of an individual (Ayçiçek & Yanpar Yelken, 2018).

The implementation of flipped classrooms, with the convenience of technology, is to be had at the expense of the advantages of personalized attention to the strengths and weaknesses of each individual. The advancement of technologies allows educators to make use of videos in delivering their lessons (Ali et al., 2022). As mentioned by Franciszkowics (2008), visual media helps teachers scaffold their students as well as help them solve problems. He further added that the use of video gives teachers opportunities to identify the students' misconceptions by asking them questions in class after they have watched the video outside of class, to which he explained that students could take the information from the video and learn the content more deeply during class time. This helps students develop a deeper understanding of the subject, consequently increasing their engagement and motivation (Willmot et al., 2012).

Flipped Classroom in English Lessons

Previous studies have demonstrated both positive and negative effects of the employment of a flipped classroom strategy on academic performance (Tune, Sturek, & Basile, 2013), especially in the English language (Hung, 2014). Numerous studies have reported that such a model encourages active learning and individual learning (Bishop & Verleger, 2013), provides more time for students to do inventive research (Herreid & Schiller, 2012), and

encourages good rapport between teacher and students (Robinson, Scott, & Gottfried, 2019). In comparison with a lecture-based approach, there is overwhelming support from students for the utilization of flipped-based teaching methodologies as more hands-on activities are promoted in class. Findings from past research also revealed that students valued the Flipped Classroom design, and they found it very easy to adjust to this new methodology as they had positive experiences and found it familiar with online resources, which they regarded as a learning asset.

In English subjects, Flipped Classroom has had a positive impact on students' performances and proficiency levels in various areas of the language. Generally, implementing the flipped classroom model in English classes improves the students' academic performance (Hung, 2015). This approach has shown positive results where students were more participative in learning, increasing test scores and students' attendance. Restructuring the English classes from traditional settings to flipped classrooms improves students' speaking skills, specifically in English for International Communication (TOEIC) scores (Obari & Lambacher, 2015), and students' confidence in the areas of the English language such as grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and other related criteria (Han, 2015). Galway et al. (2014) reported that high examination scores are obtained when teachers use this approach. Also, Kong (2014) informed us that students understand the content of the subject better and obtain a high score in the tests or exams when using the flipped classroom approach.

Further, past studies showed that the strategy could encourage learners to be more attentive in their learning process. In studies where the flipped classroom was utilized to encourage students to be more attentive in their learning process, students were found to be more participative in activities carried out by the teacher. Hung (2015) confirmed that 80% of the participants spent more time and effort learning the materials on their own in comparison to those who were in traditional class settings. According to Strayer (2012), the flipped classroom provides students with a more interactive environment and improves their communication skills. In addition, Davies, Dean, and Ball (2013) explored the effectiveness of utilizing technology, and the result shown in their post-test scores was positive. Correspondingly, Han (2015) noted that students dedicated their time and effort to finding the resources they needed to be able to apprehend English more independently, showing both motivation and interest in English learning. Thus, flipped classrooms have been proven to be ideal for English teaching and learning.

Students' Perceptions Towards Flipped Classroom Approach

Based on previous studies, it is agreed that the flipped classroom is more favorable to students than traditional classes. Generally, the perceptions of the flipped classroom in English subjects were positive. In a study done by Wagner, Laforge, and Cripps (2013), a positive perception of flipped classrooms was conveyed by students as a unique, yet challenging, opportunity to maximize learning effectiveness. Farah (2014) examined the attitudes of high school students towards flipped instruction, and they proved to be equally favorable. Moreover, ALRowais (2014) also explored the students' achievement and attitudes in higher education and concluded that the outcome was positive. Studies conducted by Moffett and Mills (2014) and Gilboy, Heinerichs, and Pazzaglia (2015) stated that the majority of the students preferred flipped classrooms. Similarly, positive students' perspectives of the flipped classroom in comparison with the traditional classroom are seen in Chen, Wang, and Chen's (2014) study. According to Kang (2015), students felt that flipped classrooms improved their self-confidence and level of participation in the learning process. Obari and Lambacher

(2015) found that students are positively influenced to learn by the availability of online resources and a variety of learning materials.

Other recent studies explored their views on students' attitudes towards the flipped classroom. McLaughlin et al. (2014) also reported that flipped classrooms excel in teachers' support, students' participation, and active learning. Bergmann and Sams (2012) mentioned that teachers are able to help slow learners while encouraging competent learners to move ahead if the exercises are deemed easy. With this, teachers could identify students' mistakes and tackle the misconceptions students faced prior to any exercises given to them. Apart from that, students are given the freedom to control the amount of content they absorb. Lage, Platt, and Treglia (2000) mentioned that students become more active in class rather than sitting passively throughout the lessons. Therefore, researchers have recommended that teachers try this approach in order to improve their teaching and learning experiences. However, Albert and Beatty (2014) reviewed that most of the investigation into students' experiences and perspectives on utilizing this strategy is done with content-based subjects. This study examines the perception of students in English-language subjects because the suggested model being used in this study is different from the previously examined flipped classroom paradigm.

However, some studies showed that students are less satisfied with the teaching strategy (Strayer, 2012) and have unsatisfactory results for their performance (McLaughlin et al., 2013). This is because the use of variety in strategies, format, and materials in a flipped classroom approach prevents any one reliable implementation approach across different contexts. According to Chen, Wang, and Chen (2014), numerous students struggled with adapting to the strategy and revealed that the classes were heavy, and students found it tedious to do the necessary preparation before class. Milman (2012) pointed out that a common problem with this practice is that the quality of the video is poor. The students will find it dreary to watch if the content and design of the video are unappealing. Hence, the effectiveness of this model depended heavily not only on the quality of the teacher's teaching materials but also on the preparedness of students prior to entering the class.

METHOD

Research Approach

This section will focus on the methodology and instruments used for the data collection to explore the effectiveness of using Flipped Classroom in an English course, whether this approach can make an improvement in students' speaking skills in the Professional Communication in English (PCE) course, and their perceptions towards the changes in strategies. The research methodology used in this study was action research, which is defined as "any systematic analysis conducted by teacher researchers or other experts' principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in the teaching and learning environment to gather information about how their particular school operates, how they teach, and how well their students learn" (Mills, 2003).

Action research uniquely blends theory with educational practice and provides opportunities for a bilateral flow of information between theory and classroom, and classroom to the development of theory and best practices. This is deemed beneficial to the researchers as it could help with both the study and teaching skills. As the overall application of this action research was needed to be carried out for this study, the first author, who is also the main researcher, had to conduct the research while reflecting on the content taught in innovative ways in line with today's education system.

This study attempted to examine both students' improvement and their perceptions of the use of the flipped classroom strategy in the class. This study was done using three instruments: class observation was carried out during the intervention phase; both pre- and post-tests were given to students before and after the intervention; and lastly, semi-structured interviews were conducted after the intervention.

Research Procedures

The research design for this study was adapted from Crane and Richardson's (2008) action research cycle (Figure 2). The first step was to plan based on the identified problem, which in this study was students who were having difficulties speaking English. The difficulty may arise due to a lack of motivation among students when given discussion topics. With that regard, the research was carried out to increase students' motivation in acquiring speaking skills as well as engagement in class activities by changing the approach to student-centered. As this was done in the second week of the course, it was found that the students needed prompts in answering some of the questions asked. Although they are deemed intermediate-level students, the students needed a set of questions as guidance for their answers.

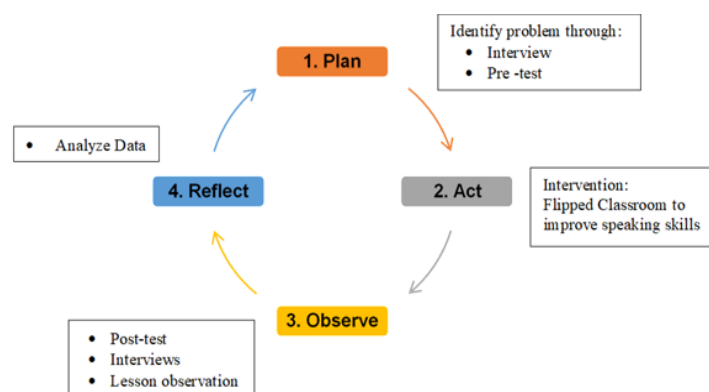


Figure 2. Action Research Cycle (Crane & Richardson, 2008)

Students were given a pre-test (refer to Appendix A) before the implementation of the flipped classroom strategy was carried out. The topic used for this study was "Verbal and Nonverbal Messages in Communication." The rubric used was adapted from the Pearson Longman textbook for Summit 2 (intermediate level), as it is commonly used in the classes offered in this center. This is to evaluate their English competency level as well as the areas of problems faced in speaking in an English class.

Once the results from the pre-test were obtained, the researcher analyzed their answers using the rubrics. This was to ensure that changes were made to the research design before it was fully implemented. Some of the scores made by the students were taken into consideration, and the researcher incorporated these needs into the research to ensure that the students would be fully engaged during the learning process.

Then, the researcher started the intervention period, whereby the flipped classroom was implemented in the class and lesson plans were constructed based on the level of competencies derived from the pre-test result analysis. The intervention was carried out in five classes within a 2-week period in the month of October. For the first session, explanations about the process by which the class would take place were provided to the students. Videos and documents to be watched before class were shared in Google Classroom (refer to Appendix B), while discussion and activities, including question and answer sessions, were allocated in the online classes using Google Meet. Throughout the process, the researcher only offered guidance whenever necessary.

The intervention was followed by a post-test, which covered the same topic as the pre-test questions, to observe any improvements made by students. The researcher observed the students' speaking competency to identify any elements mentioned in the literature review that had been successfully carried out. To assess the students' speaking skills, the same rubrics were used (refer to Appendix C). Semi-structured questions were asked in an interview (see Appendix D) to obtain more necessary information, especially their attitudes and perspectives, when using the flipped classroom strategy. With the marks scored by the students, all the results obtained from the post-test, class observation, and interviews were gathered and thoroughly analyzed according to the schedule planned. The researcher managed to carry out the study, although there were a few changes in the time spent on each of the tasks (see Appendix E).

Data Collection

As the nature of this research is exploratory, data collection during this study used the qualitative research method to determine answers to the research questions mentioned above. Since the class was conducted virtually online, all of the data, from pre-test and post-test, interviews as well as observations, were collected using screen recording. Qualitative methods were implemented in this study for the reason that offers a thorough and in-depth understanding of the aspects, thus, revealing a meaningful context to the study (Yin, 2003). This study used pre and post-test, semi-structured interviews, and lesson observation, which will be explained more below:

Pre-test and post-test

Pre-tests and post-tests were also used in order to compare the students' performances in both stages: before and after implementation of the flipped classroom. Both tests were graded according to the marks given to see the differences before and after the implementation. Hence, it measured the changes of participants' knowledge, attitudes or behaviour concerning the learning from the start until the completion of the intervention (Colosi & Dunifon, 2006). These tests helped the researcher to identify if any improvement in the students' speaking skills from the implementation of the approach.

Semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview was conducted before and after the implementation of the lesson to explore in depth the teaching style used in their previous classes and their thoughts towards the flipped classroom strategy, whether they found the strategy useful or otherwise. As the interview was carried out only once for each period, the use of semi-structured questions will be the best option to gather as much information as possible from the interviewee (Bernard, 1988, cited in Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). This gave the interviewees an opportunity to express their views in their own terms, where the originality and honesty of their experiences could be recorded to construct narratives (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). This interview was preceded by observation, informal interviews, and unstructured interviews. This was deemed necessary for the study as it helped researchers develop relevant semi-structured questions and thus a clear understanding of the topic of interest.

Lesson Observation from video and audio recordings

Throughout the period of using the flipped classroom approach, the lesson was recorded and observed with the purpose of obtaining any valuable information during the intervention period. With the use of video and audio recordings, data can be replayed to allow more time for the researcher to evaluate the data before drawing any conclusions (DuFon, 2002). This assisted in having a thorough data analysis while avoiding premature

interpretation of the data. Hence, capturing the data is important not only to acknowledge any information but also to improve the validity of the data and analysis.

Data Analysis

This study has employed Creswell's (2018) style of qualitative data analysis to get answers to the presented research questions. In order to analyze the data gathered from both pre-test and post-test interviews and observation, the recommended steps were taken. Firstly, the researcher collected the raw data in the form of class pre- and post-tests, observations, and interviews. With the data collected, it was then organized accordingly. By doing so, the researcher carefully reads through the data, understands them, and codes the data manually (see Appendix F). Subsequently, the codes were generated to come up with themes that were in line with the study. Decisions were then made on how these themes could be represented in the study. The interpretation of the meanings of each theme should match the findings.

Participation of the Study

This research exercise was conducted at one of the English centers in Vietnam. The participants who were involved in this study were from Professional Communication in English courses. Initially, the number of participants in this research was fifteen; however, due to the current pandemic, the class was being held online and could only accommodate eight students. The participants in this study were between the ages of 18 and 30 and had varying levels of English proficiency.

Ethical Considerations

Before the study could be conducted in the class, a permission letter was obtained from Universiti Brunei Darussalam. This permission letter was given to the director of the center in Da Nang. Once the director granted the researcher permission, the study began by informing the participants about the nature of the research before implementing the flipped classroom approach: the purpose of the study, instruments, and data analysis. Since this is only a 7-week program, the researcher had to carry out the study in the second week of the semester. During the briefing, the participants were given a consent form to be signed and an information letter to inform them about the conduct of the flipped classroom strategy. Other than that, they were also notified that their identity would remain anonymous and were permitted to withdraw their participation at any time during the research. This was to ensure that the research practice fostered trust and transparency with the students who participated in this study..

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section will examine the results of the implementation of Flipped Classroom in teaching English communicative skills for the Professional Communication in English (PCE) course. Qualitative analysis was used to answer the two research questions for this study, namely their improvement in their communication skills as well as their perceptions of the implementation of the flipped classroom. Both the pre-test and post-test were carried out to examine the effectiveness of such an approach. At the same time, interviews, as well as class observation, were conducted to provide a more detailed explanation for the students' performances in tests and class.

Research Question 1: How does the Flipped Classroom improve students' communication skills?

For the first research question, both pre-test and post-test were used as instruments to measure the improvement of student's communication skills. This section will analyse the quality of students' answers and examine the differences in overall scores of 20 marks based

on the five criteria from the rubric: (1) grammar, (2) fluency, (3) vocabulary, (4) pronunciation and (5) content.

Grammar

This criterion entailed the students' performances based on the degree of grammar usage in their speaking skill test. One of the main criteria for grammar was that students were required to give a complete sentence which includes a subject, main verb and a complete thought. So, when the answer has a verb but no subject, it is considered an incomplete sentence. During the pre-test, six students scored 2 out of 4 marks and managed to use a variety of sentence structure with occasional errors. In comparison, two students scored 1 out of 4 marks, where they made frequent errors in tenses and sentence structures (refer to Appendix G). These students disregarded what the question was asking for, and they were simply listing out what they could get from their prior knowledge. Table 1 shows Student 6 and Student 7's answers when asked if advances in technology affect communication and whether they could give examples.

In the pre-test, students failed to produce good grammar usage in their answers as their sentences were missing either a subject or a verb, which resulted in expressing an incomplete thought. For instance, highlighting the second sentence in Student 6's answer, he stated that "technology is mainly my image and messages in this world." This sentence appeared to be missing the subject "it" and was expressed without conjunction between "image" and "messages." However, after implementing the Flipped Classroom strategy, the two students who used basic sentence structures in their pre-test answers scored 2 out of 4 marks and managed to respond to the questions with minimal grammatical errors. As shown in Table 1, the students managed to use a range of complex structures with some flexibility in their post-test answers. Taking Student 7's answer as an example, he said, "Like in this COVID-19 situation, advanced technology is more impactful in communication because people need to stay at home and work from home in this situation, and they will use many technologies to communicate with their work or their clients." Although there were still minor errors in accuracy, especially in the use of the prepositions in and at, it did not impede the researcher's comprehension of their answers.

Table 1. Students' grammar usage in their answer.

Question: Do advances in technology affect communication? Could you give examples as well?		
Student	Pre-test:	Post-test:
6	(repeats the question) Impact in technology in communication. (long pause) In technology is mainly my image, messages in this world. In medias. (pause) We communicate in the medias.	Yes, I think so. because uh advanced technologies uh is literally they advance technology (inaudible) but they are also (inaudible) when people who is longer distance it is easy for them to use. But then they use technology to communicate with other people but if they lose internet connection it become hard to communicate. Like interrupt communicate. For example, one use computer internet and one-use cell phone to communicate with other people. If the people with good tech they are easy to use but who are not good at software it becomes complicated to communicate with each other.

Question: Do advances in technology affect communication? Could you give examples as well?

Student	Pre-test:	Post-test:
7	Uhh yes. Uhh... I think it impact on communication because during this COVID19 (mumbles), we use many technologies like social media to communicate with each other.	Yeah. Like this COVID-19 situation, advance technology is more impact in communication because people need to stay at home and work from home at this situation and they will use many technologies for communicate with their work or their client. For example, we have a meeting with UN or another organisation. At that time, we are using many video-conferencing applications like Zoom, Microsoft team, WhatsApp and etc. That's all from me.

Fluency

For this criterion, the researcher was looking for the utterance level and speech rate when speaking the English language. When giving their answers, they were expected to show they are comfortable speaking English, express their ideas with ease, and communicate naturally while giving a reasonable pause without taking too much time. In the pre-test, three students were found to be very hesitant to convey their answers, which often interfered with the communication, resulting in a score of 1 mark. In comparison, the remaining five students scored 2 out of 4 as they answered the questions with only some hesitation, which interfered less with their communication than the other three students (see Appendix H). The question asked was how they could communicate effectively, and the students' answers varied from pre-test to post-test, as shown in Table 2.

When the researcher asked the question, students 2 and 5 had long pauses and several interjections of "Uh" and "Uhm" during the pre-test, indicating that they needed time to think in order to express their thoughts. This may be due to a lack of remembering or selecting the appropriate words to answer the question. Nevertheless, in the post-test, there was an improvement for this criterion, as Students 2 and 5 scored full marks, and they managed to answer the questions without hesitation, which resulted in their ideas flowing smoothly. It is plausible to note that the students managed to develop the topics fully and appropriately without any noticeable hesitation after implementing the flipped classroom approach. Although their answers are deemed short, they spoke fluently with appropriate, cohesive features.

Table 2. Fluency in students' answers.

Question: How do you communicate effectively?		
Student	Pre-test:	Post-test:
2	Umm, (long pause). You communicate effectively in person to people by paying attention when they speak and looking at their eyes. And umm, if you want to communicate effectively using written text, you can use umm... (pause) short words or simple words so that the other	When I talk to other people, it's better I give them clear messages. And if someone is talking to me, then I have to listen to them attentively and give them feedback in order to, make sure that I am involved in that conversation.

Question: How do you communicate effectively?

Student	Pre-test:	Post-test:
	person can easily understand what you are saying.	
5	Uhh... I think... uhh... in my life, in my daily life, I just communicate with my mum and my family, and my friend, and the general puppy (?), major, course of engineering. I can make effective communication with the uhh... with the... my friend. I think in conclusion, uhh... I can make communicate effectively if I can talk with other people if, that is my major topic that is my uhh topic that I know. Not... the I not the outside about that . So, because uhh I give the topic that I know I am afraid that I can make something wrong or give uhh wrong information to order that is uhh... uhh effective.	Yes, I think from my explanation both of communication- verbal and non-verbal communication. We can use it to make communicate effectively because when people don't understand what we are talking about we can make it clearly with how the meaning of the word, like what I say sorry. Make a concrete meaning not a general meaning in verbal communication. When in non-verbal communication, it can support our verbal communication with our gesture body. Yeah, something like that.

Vocabulary

This criterion assessed the students' ability to make use of a number of different words flexibly to discuss a variety of topics and express themselves clearly. Generally, the researcher looked at the accuracy of the word usage based on the students' level of English and the topic. During the pre-test, one student scored 1 out of 4 marks, as this student only used basic vocabulary and expressions when answering the question. This led the student to give the teacher short answers. However, one student managed to use a variety of vocabulary and expressions learned from the topic but still made minor errors in word choice, while the other six students managed to score 2 out of 4 marks in their pre-test (see Appendix I).

In the post-test, while six students managed to score 3 out of 4 marks and succeeded in including a variety of new vocabulary with minor errors, two students still used limited vocabulary and expressions. Based on Table 3, it is plausible to note that Student 6 tried to illustrate a picture of what to wear at a workplace but could only reorder the question with no significance to the answer. Subsequently, during the post-test, Student 6 managed to improve his vocabulary and was aware of the style and collocation of the words used in the sentences, which flowed naturally and accurately.

However, there was no improvement in either of the tests for Student 7. Although Student 7 still managed to talk about the topic, this student had a limited vocabulary and a few inaccuracies in the meaning of the sentence. As shown in Table 3, this student tried to convey the answer by using many big words but could not construct a natural combination of words, especially when giving examples. One example would be when the student tried to illustrate his examples by saying that the vehicle that they were using should have a food vendor sticker. Instead, the student said "sticker food vendor." It is important to look at these mistakes and see whether they could construct proper sentences, especially when learning a new language.

Table 3. Variety of vocabulary in the students' answers.

Question: Does the dress code need to be reinforced at the workplace?		
Student	Pre-test:	Post-test:
6	Yes, it is really need to be reinforce (soft voice) because we dress when we feel like confident, we can do comfortably in the work place. Yeah!	I disagree with this rule because dress code needs to be (inaudible) because the workers or employee they should focus on their work more than their clothes or uniform that they wear. They focus on the outcome of their work, the outcome or their work that they do. And once get high quality of their work but they only focus on uniform or clothes that they're wearing cause almost all employee had problem with money so they cannot get suit so they need money. How to be professional if no money and how can make quality work like that.
7	I partially agree. But at my present work, sometimes they do not need dress code. They do like investigation. When they investigate criminal case, they didn't wear dress code. Because when they go outside, someone can fight with them. This is from my side. (laughs) But when we meet ministry or NGO or something like that, we need unique uniform for our organisation.	I'm – I'm partially agree with dress code needs to be reinforced in workplace. For some companies, dress code is needed because uhh... they have business attire make more productive for them. For example, like food vendor, when we order the food, the food vendor come in they are wearing their uniform in the motorcycle or car, they have a sticker food vendor. And from other side, as I told from week one, because of my organisation, investigation and corruption case, like this situation, dress code can (inaudible, cannot understand – probably 'intervene') for investigation process and uhh... when we wearing dress code during investigation or trial investigation, people don't mix well, until they don't want to tell the truth. No one want to tell the truth about they do the corruption.

Pronunciation

This criterion entailed the clarity of the words uttered during the test. This includes the correct use of clear enunciation of words as well as correct sentence stress and intonation to emphasize meaning. For the pre-test, Student 3 scored 3 out of 4 marks for this criterion. This student managed to provide clear and accurate pronunciation and intonation with only a few problem areas, while the rest of the students scored half of the full marks. They made a few errors in pronouncing some of the words, which made some parts of their answers inaudible, thus challenging the teacher to understand. However, in the post-test, only Student 3 managed to obtain a full score, while the rest of the students scored 3 out of 4 marks (see Appendix J). Student 3's answer was easier to understand throughout the test, with the accent having only a minimal effect on intelligibility. For instance, one of the questions asked during the pre-test was if they agreed that advances in technology impact communication. Table 4 contains Student 3's responses to the question.

In the pre-test, Student 3 was generally understood by the researcher throughout the conversation. However, some of the words Student 3 could not properly pronounce were "experience," "comfortable," and "impact." The researcher had to listen to the audio recording again in order to decipher Student 3's answer. For the post-test, the student managed to answer the question with better pronunciation, and the researcher easily understood what Student 3 was saying, thus scoring full marks for pronunciation.

Table 4. Pronunciation in Student 3's answers.

Question: Do advances in technology impact communication? Why/Why not? Give examples.		
Student	Pre-test:	Post-test:
3	Yes. (pause) Umm... I will give like an example. So, based on my experience (wrong pronunciation), before the technology, the student need to meet the teacher in person to communicate or to ask questions but nowadays, they tend to feel more, I don't know like, comfortable (wrong pronunciation) to talk to their teacher because they don't have to meet them or see their face. They can just text their teachers. Sometimes it can impact (wrong pronunciation) the teachers because they feel the students are less polite. Since.. (pause) Sometimes they use informal language when they text them.	Okay uhm.. yes and no. Because in today's world, as much as it's an ever-growing process how technology is always evolving as time passes, some people might still be unfamiliar with all the current technologies that are out there. But at the same time, in that way, it does promote communication. Like for example, mobile phones. It's easier now to communicate with someone through mobile phones. For instance, like us now, just because we can't get to class, we can still use technology to communicate via various platforms such as Google Meet, Hangout and whatnot.

Content

For this criterion, students were expected to use the information acquired from the materials shared by the teacher and the activities done in class. To give a correct answer, students needed to explain their answers by giving accurate information and elaborating on that information with examples and other supporting details. For the five questions provided in both the pre-test and post-test, there was an improvement in their answers. For the pre-test, four students managed to score 2 out of 4 marks, while the other four students scored 1 mark (see Appendix K). This shows that they did not have enough prior knowledge on the topic. When asked about whether they think dress codes should be reinforced at the workplace or not with reasons why they are important, Student 1 gave a more extended answer but failed to organize his ideas coherently and logically. However, Student 4 gave a short answer, which showed that the student had little to no prior knowledge of the topic, resulting in shallow answers with no relevance to the topic.

Table 5. Content in Student 1 and 4's answers.

Question: Does the dress code need to be reinforced at the workplace? Why do you think this is important?		
Student	Pre-test:	Post-test:
1	I think it's important. Uhh... (long pause) especially for when we look at dress code in	It depends. I would say that for example, in the mining sector, especially for those

Question: Does the dress code need to be reinforced at the workplace? Why do you think this is important?

Student	Pre-test:	Post-test:
	a company, it shows the identity of the company. Also, I would say that dress code, (stutter) for example in company or academic office, it needs to show that this is our.. our identity. And it will make some impact even in terms for the communication. Because when the interact with others and they will give the identity to other people. They will give their name but using their dress code. I think it is reinforced.	people who work in the field, using helmet for example, and they need to using a complete uhh... uniforms, for what, to make... uhh... they need to could be prevented in the field and it should be uhh... a (mumbles) for those people but sometimes it can also be flexible for those who will in the office. I look at some cases in Indonesia for example, there are women were Muslim. They wear hijab when they work. But when they got a job, they were enforced to wear short skirt and that is forbidden in their religion and I think if they the capability in working and also they have the ability to do the job, I think it should be flexible. The important thing is the quality of work.
4	uhm, (long pause) yes. (pause) Yes. But I think the workplace uh, like of course when u go to a workplace u have to wear formal clothes right? (laughs) I think yes because uh, it shows u how professional your job is. (rising tone- show not confident with the answer).	I agree because a proper dress code will give the like uhh the person who see when we are wearing a proper dress code, it shows that we are professional enough in working or something like that. Because the first impression that we're looking to if the person is working or going to work is the dress code first. Is the attire first. Whether he's wearing good attire because the attire represent himself in real life. For example, if we have a job interview, the moment the interview will look is the way we present ourselves, of course, but so if we want to present ourselves more, we should wear a proper dress code to show that we are professional enough.

After implementing the flipped classroom, most of the students managed to obtain higher scores. In the post-test, these students scored full marks and provided a significant level of detail in their answers that were properly organized, elaborated, and relevant to the questions, as can be seen in their four answers. Although there were still a few grammatical errors in some of the sentences, the student demonstrated full knowledge of the topic by agreeing to the statement and giving reasons and explanations with examples in his answer. Hence, this shows that this student was knowledgeable about the topic.

Overall Results

Generally, the rubrics for both the pre-test and post-test were explained to the students beforehand; thus, students should understand the criteria needed for speaking skills in this English communication course. While some of the students managed to grasp the importance

of the criteria, other students failed to fully comprehend the criteria needed for this test. As shown in Table 6, only three students passed the pre-test with scores of 50% and 55%, while the rest of the students scored below 50%. When compared with the post-test results, all students managed to pass and improve their speaking skills scores. The highest mark was 85% scored by Students 5 and 6, while the lowest mark was 55% scored by Student 8.

Table 6. Overall students' marks.

Student	Pre-test (%)	Post-test (%)	Differences in scores
1	50	75	+25
2	55	80	+25
3	55	80	+25
4	45	75	+35
5	45	85	+40
6	30	70	+40
7	40	65	+25
8	40	55	+15

Based on Table 6, in contrast to their pre-test scores, students 5 and 6 reflected a significant improvement and successfully enhanced their speaking skills in their post-test by 40%. It is possible that the improvement in these students' test scores is due to the development of their positive attitude towards learning. This was evident when the students were actively participating in the class activities during the intervention period. According to Tune, Sturek, and Basile (2013), the improvement in the students' marks was because they had a better understanding of the topic after experiencing the flipped classroom. After the implementation of this approach, similar findings were found in studies done by Galway (2014), ALRowis (2014), and Hung (2015) as students established good academic performances in the English language. Furthermore, as examined by ALRowis (2014), the impact of the flipped classroom on student achievement in higher education revealed an improvement in test scores in the experimental group. The implementation of the Flipped Classroom involved the students in developing their knowledge, improving their thinking skills, and expressing their opinions in the class. Here, the teacher acted as a facilitator. Through this approach, a drastic change in the students' behavior was observed when partaking in the class. By making use of the materials that were given before class, the students were able to understand the concept of the topic for that week, which was "Verbal and Nonverbal Messages in Communication."

Moreover, the students were encouraged to solve problems by cooperating with their peers in contributing opinions and ideas, which influenced them to construct their knowledge to comprehend the topic better. This supports the study done by Obari and Lambacher (2015), who found an improvement in students' TOEIC scores. Thus, the study proved that the lessons during the intervention period were effective in improving their English language and test scores.

Based on our observations, the scores for both tests varied, as some students scored full marks in one criterion in the rubric but not in the other. This partially supports the findings by Han (2015), who found that there was an improvement in students' speaking skills in the areas of English language, i.e., grammar, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and content. Although the students scored high in the content criterion, their sentences were fragmented, which resulted in low scores in the grammar criterion. There were still several grammatical errors when they tried to create a good sentence structure as they lacked an understanding of

the grammar, which was significantly reflected in both the pre-test and post-test. It is possible the lack of improvement in the technical grammar criterion may be due to the lack of attention paid to grammar exercises, which was only concentrated in the first two lessons. Furthermore, this cannot be improved in a short period of time, as the students would need more time and practice to improve their speaking skills.

Regardless, the flipped classroom approach is deemed to be an effective approach in teaching English communicative skills, as there is an improvement observed in the students' post-test scores. This is supported by Kong (2014), who believed that both the teacher and students must be actively involved in the process for the students to understand the topic better and achieve good results. Based on the differences found in the scores for both tests, all students have improved their English communicative skills after implementing the Flipped Classroom, albeit with difficulties in expressing their thoughts using the correct grammar.

Research Question 2: What are students' perceptions towards the Flipped Classroom?

In order to report the finding on the second question for this research, all eight students were interviewed to get their perceptions towards the use of the flipped classroom, specifically in English communicative skills. This is to provide a more detailed explanation of the improvement in their performance. This section will analyze the students' perceptions of this approach in accordance with the themes that have emerged from the thematic analysis of the interview questions: self-learning, active learning, the teacher's role in the flipped classroom, collaboration, and the applicability of the approach in a communicative class.

Self-learning

Generally, the participants of this study preferred the flipped classroom, as they came to class feeling confident with the preparation made before the lesson. This approach encouraged students to practice self-learning. Self-learning requires students to explore the topic by reading the materials and watching the videos given by the teacher so that they can better participate in class activities. One of the problems faced by students in an English language class was that they were not confident enough to share their ideas. This preparation helps students be more aware of the topic they are learning that day. The responses about self-learning derived from the interview are as follows:

...like I have to make prepare before I come to class. (S1)

.....it's great because personally, I...I feel more...what do I call it? Like maybe...more comfortable that I know some information before I go to the class.(S2)

You send the materials before lectures because I can prepare for tomorrow lecture and more participant-more participation in the class. (S7)

Furthermore, this approach encouraged three of the students to have a sense of responsibility to do their own research to find the definitions for the new, unfamiliar words they encountered. It triggered their curiosity and interest in the topic, so they used Google to do their research before attending the class. As mentioned in a study done by Hoang (2010), students in Vietnam lacked motivation when learning the English language. By using the flipped classroom, as suggested by Herreid and Schiller (2013), it can develop a deeper understanding by being resourceful in finding both the meaning and content of the topic learned. Two students mentioned the need to understand the content better with their own initiatives, as commented below:

We should need to looking for it or even google it. (S1)

We also like get into knowing it, like we can have, we can know what is the word or we can google it first before the class start. (S4)

The students felt they were responsible for their learning, which is geared towards achieving their own needs and interests. This supports the findings from the studies done by Hamdan et al. (2013), Bishop and Vergeler (2013), Han (2015), and Alsowat (2016), as the approach encouraged individual learning by equipping themselves with information before class. When students set their goals and associate them with the criteria before the lesson starts, they are able to improve their skills more. This also goes in accordance with the study done by Albalawi (2018), which explained that one of the key components of the flipped classroom is the self-learning process, whereby students tackle the lower level of cognitive work (remembering and understanding) at home to prepare themselves for the activities in class.

Active learning

Based on the interviews, the majority of the students agreed that the flipped classroom helped them promote active learning, whereby students contributed and participated more during class activities such as discussion, roleplay, and debates. Students believed they had become more expressive when it came to sharing ideas with their peers. It is significant to highlight the intervention using the Flipped Classroom in an online class to encourage learning, as indicated by one of the students below:

We can enhance our capabilities in English, it's not for English, but also to for other languages. Because like before, we debate. I was surprisingly doing it – did it without a doubt and it is a part of something that I can see that really benefit me to improve my English and I swear that really good for my English skill. (S1)

The findings agreed with those of Bergmann and Sams (2012), who examined the impact of the flipped classroom on students' preparation before class. Their study indicated this approach encourages students to understand the materials at their own pace, regardless of their level of competency in the topic. This can be proven based on personal observation, whereby the students were more comfortable and well-informed in class after early preparation. As students are well-equipped with the essential prerequisites, they are able to enhance their knowledge by tackling the higher level of cognitive work in class. This allowed students to be more active and participatory in class activities.

Collaboration

Based on the interviews, students expressed their fondness for the activities done in class. Generally, most of the students stated that the discussion session in the class activities helped them gain additional knowledge from their peers. Collaboration in group activities allowed students to learn the necessary skills, especially when it comes to improving their speaking skills. When collaborating, students shared the responsibility of the work, as the learning activity is designed to encourage students to share, discuss, and decide upon the points made. It is worth mentioning that the discussion was not limited. Discussions were encouraged in most of the class activities, such as preparation for debates and roleplays. In addition, students found that they were likely to understand the topic better as their discussions gave them opportunities to share ideas and information with their friends, as some acknowledged in the comments below:

I feel my English speaking is improve significantly because I used my speaking in English inside my ideas in discussion with my friends and class members and I share my ideas. (S1)

It does promote me to, help me to understand that they are also learning from me so I need to be sure that what I say is correct. (S3)

We can share the ideas in small group and we can understand quickly. (S5)

The students also expressed how the class activities helped them participate more. These students liked the idea of sharing knowledge because they found the activities to be more engaging, thus improving the participation level in class. This is in agreement with Strayer (2012), where he stated students could improve their communicative skills in a more interactive environment. The findings in this study show the positive aspects of collaboration in class activities. When asked in the interview, they mentioned they appreciated the opportunity to share the information and get different views on the topic.

All of the class members have to discuss together. I enjoyed it because there are sections for discussion where we can be in a group that helps us to share our ideas together. (S5)

I like discussion in class because discussion we have more idea from other people different people and different idea we can share together and speak together and try to learn from other people. (S6)

The comments above reflected Wilmot et al. (2012) and Kang (2012) in their studies comparing students' performances when using the flipped classroom approach. With early preparations, the students contribute more in class by presenting their ideas and participating actively in class activities. With their participation and communication in the flipped classroom setting, students were able to strengthen their understanding of the topic. One student mentioned how he was able to learn from his peers as they participated in the class activities. He said, "I don't understand the meaning of the word, so I ask my classmates, and they explain to me, so I think I have a problem with this activity in class." As collaboration is rooted in the approach, this comment showed that good rapport had been established. This was agreed upon in Robinson, Scott, and Gottfried's (2019) study as the dynamic between the teacher and students and among students in class enables students to participate and engage more in the class activities, thus creating a meaningful learning experience.

Other than improving their participation in class activities, students saw improvement in their communication skills. The class activities required them to utilize and practice their speaking and listening skills. For instance, one of the students mentioned that the approach made him less passive in participating in class activities, specifically in the debate activity. This supports Lage, Platt and Treglia's (2000) study, who believed Flipped Classroom encourages students to be more active in their learning process, and can also be seen in Students 1, 6, and 7's comments below:

I followed some courses before and I think I was like a passive person. But this course it was making me to be an expressive person. (S1)

I can practice English like roleplay in class I can practice speak with classmate. (S6)

We can prepare, first, we can prepare how we talk and we can practice and then we can have role play in front of you. (S7)

Teacher's Role in Flipped Classroom Approach

The advancement in technology allows for an innovative learning environment where technology plays a vital role in class. This offers students a new method of gaining knowledge from new resources other than traditional books or lectures from teachers. In the interview, all of the students mentioned that the learning materials provided by the teacher were concise and easy to understand. They enjoyed watching the videos and believed the information from the lecture videos was useful and could accommodate most participants in this study. The success of learning materials was credited to the understanding of students' perceptions of the materials themselves. Some of the students said:

I think how teacher explains the materials are really good – (inaudible), simple to understand and the teacher are always good at making it simple and short. (S1)

The videos are very nice because when I saw them I watched the video that you upload, I can practice my listening to the video and I learn some vocabulary that I use in the video and most video is quite good. (S6)

The most I like is you post short video lecture. It's useful for me. I can learn again and again when I have free time or if I don't understand. (S7)

One of the comments above made by Student 7 confirmed that the videos used by the teacher enabled students to review the lesson repeatedly. The student said, "I can learn again and again when I have free time or if I don't understand." This shows students were able to cater to their needs and improve their learning experience with this approach. The finding supports Herried and Schiller's (2012) and Ayçiçek and Yanpar Yelken's (2018) studies, as this approach, with the use of videos, helped both teachers and students utilize the technology aspect of the approach. The innovation of technology has assisted and eased learning for students. Hence, students' learning experiences became specific and flexible to cater to their needs.

Correspondingly, it is essential to consider the role of a teacher as a facilitator in this approach. As a facilitator, the teacher has to guide the students in order for them to achieve their targets or goals in the learning process. The majority of the students mentioned that both the teacher and their peers gave them a few pointers in order to complete the task given. Srivastava (2014) noted that the teacher's role has evolved from a knowledge transmitter to a facilitator to encourage students to be more active in attaining knowledge. This gave us the chance to promote student-centered learning, which is significantly represented in the core of the flipped classroom approach. This finding supports McLaughlin et al.'s (2014) and Hung's (2015) views on teachers' support in the flipped classroom and can be seen from the excerpt in Student 1's comments below:

This course made me, was making me improve my English especially because I got a good feedback from the teacher. (S1)

...because I got a good feedback from the teacher and also can share everything with my partners. (S1)

However, two of the students voiced out that the videos shared were not engaging and interactive enough and suggested sticking to pdf files, which they preferred to read. Along with the lecture video, the teacher attached a YouTube video to explain the concepts of the topics. Although some viewed the videos from YouTube as useful, one student felt the videos were too long, which resulted in a loss of concentration on the materials. This needs to be considered, as Milman (2012) commented in his study that the common problem faced in flipped classrooms is poor video quality, which is unappealing to the students. Another student commented that she preferred to read articles and suggested the teacher give more pdf-format materials rather than video materials. They suggested the video could be shortened to a maximum of ten minutes. The students said the following:

The videos are well not for me personally, listening to how they respond to it. I feel that it's too long for them to-. Actually, okay, I'll say it personally as well. It's too long for me to pay attention to the videos. (S3)

I don't usually watch the videos so I prefer in pdf because I don't really uh I don't really like to watch that kind of videos. (S4)

Applicability of Flipped Classroom

The collected data from the semi-structured interview showed the students' positive attitudes towards the flipped classroom were positive, and they agreed that it enhanced their communication skills and benefited their learning and, thus, should be applied in English language communicative class. This supports the findings done by ALRowais (2014), Moffett and Mills (2014), and Chen, Wang, and Chen (2014), as the approach was preferred by students, showing positive perceptions compared to the conventional style of teaching and positive performances in higher education. One of the students stated that the combination of both assignments and the materials shared were constructive learning activities that gave them the confidence to speak in class.

The debate from yesterday and also the discussion and also the assignment which is, which are reading articles and also writing essays and those are a good combination to improve my English. (S1)

Apart from that, the interview also revealed the students' experience of taking part in the learning process in the Flipped Classroom setting, where three out of eight participants confirmed that this approach develops "positive feelings" within them as they enjoy the learning experiences. They stated that the class was exciting and intriguing, making the class activities enjoyable. Student satisfaction is a vital aspect of learning a language because it pushes students forward to participate, engage, and have meaningful learning. thus offering rich knowledge to students. This finding supports Wagner, Laforge and Cripps' (2013) study, as they declared that students viewed the approach positively, allowing them to maximize their learning experiences. While it decreases the teacher's time in class, students find themselves contributing more input and thoughts to the class activities. The findings of the students' satisfaction confirmed the importance of implementing a more innovative teaching approach, as quoted below:

It's fun like...I'm actually like...looking forward to the class every day. (S2)

As long as I learn English subject, I can make friends in this subject so yes, I can enjoy it. (S5)

I was excited uhh...to be involved in the activities. (S8)

Nevertheless, as this class was conducted online, one student voiced his concern that the internet connection in the country resulted in an unsatisfactory learning experience. This resulted in the student getting disconnected from the virtual classroom on Google Meet and missing some parts of the class activities, such as discussions and speaking activities. This is vital to note as Kirkgoz (2011) stated that the combination of the usage of technology with face-to-face interaction in the flipped classroom could affect the students' learning experience, especially in attaining new languages. Although the course is being done online, discussions and activities done in Google Meet are deemed necessary for carrying out Flipped Classroom. Students 4 and 5 mentioned how the virtual classroom might become inaccessible as it requires a stable internet connection. In their case, a stable internet connection might require them to pay extra fees to their internet provider to attend the class without interruption. Below are excerpts from students 4 and 5:

But if I want to like hotspot on my laptop, I cannot hotspot it. Because it's very expensive here. (S4)

I think just connection internet is always trouble in my hometown. (S5)

Ideally, due to the different locations of the students, the issue of internet stability could not be controlled. In fact, during the post-test period, the researcher faced a problem with

Student 5, as the internet connection interrupted the interview. Some of the excerpts derived from the student's 5-post-test are as follows:

T: Last question. Dress code needs to be reinforced at the workplace. Do you agree or disagree?

S5: Ooh, yes. A- yesterday (inaudible) when we use dress code-

T: I can't hear you, S5

S5: Eh sorry? because my connection is trouble heh

T: Mm, no no, I think your mic.

S5: Huh? Test test-

T: Okay.

These findings proved that the flipped classroom approach increases both engagement and participation in the learning process. They were deemed significantly interrelated with one another, as there is potential to improve their overall performances. The overall findings from this study suggested that when students are engaged or actively participate in the class activities, they can achieve satisfactory test scores. Most of the feedback from the students indicated they preferred the approach and noticed improvements in their speaking skills. They highlighted that the progress was due to self-learning before class, active participation in the learning process, and collaboration in activities. The students were also satisfied with the teacher's role in providing feedback and preparing materials before class.

Despite the internet connection problems faced during the learning process, students expressed a positive attitude towards the flipped classroom. With respect to the acquisition of the English language, in the context of Vietnam, Flipped Classroom does help students to be more confident in presenting ideas in class activities while improving their English proficiency, albeit the course being conducted online during this COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers should implement the approach into the teaching and learning process, as this could be the solution to overcome the inadequacy of students' engagement and achievement in the English language.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has provided insight into the use of flipped classrooms in teaching and learning English for ASEAN scholarships from the Center in Da Nang, Vietnam. The findings yielded from this study highlighted several vital points that should be noted. This study has found that the implementation of the flipped classroom in English communicative class was successful, as there were improvements in the students' post-test scores. Results from this study also showed that both learning materials and activities done by the teacher were successful in carrying out the approach. This study has shown positive feedback on the use of this approach by students, focusing on the preparation done before class, collaboration in acquiring knowledge, and the teacher's role in facilitating the students. It does, in fact, contribute to the achievement of satisfactory student test results. This has reflected in the improvements in the students' understanding of the topic, their overall speaking performances, and their behavior towards learning English.

Most students believed the materials, namely videos and other learning resources, given to them prior to the class were useful and made them become independent learners as they were in control of their own studies and time. With the information attained, they admitted they were confident enough to speak up during class activities and share their thoughts and opinions with their peers. They revealed their friends had helped them acquire new knowledge throughout the intervention period, especially when facing new vocabulary words. Apart from that, they also revealed their speaking skills have improved during the

implementation of Flipped Classroom. However, it was found that several students declared in the interview that they preferred to read the PDF notes instead of watching the videos due to the length of the videos. Also, they mentioned they faced several internet connection problems during class activities. This could not be eradicated as the time for research was limited. In conclusion, with more practice, this approach can be a better pedagogy for teaching English, making it more meaningful while helping them develop 21st-century skills.

RECOMMENDATION

There are some recommendations for researchers who wish to conduct further research on the flipped classroom and for teachers who want to implement this approach into their teaching and learning processes. The implications and recommendations are as follows: Firstly, in an English communicative class, teachers need to consider language use and incorporate appropriate grammar lessons into class activities. Although this course covers content-based topics, teachers need to incorporate English grammar usage into activities for practice. For instance, teachers need to review the present tense in the "Verbal and Non-verbal Messages in Communication" topic. The teacher will need to ensure that there are resources readily available for the students to use, especially when it comes to resources on grammar. Secondly, teachers need to prepare a set of questions for students to answer while watching and reading the materials given prior to the class. This is to ensure students come to class more prepared and more interactive in their activities. Thirdly, as some students do not favor watching video-based learning material, teachers need to take into consideration other alternatives and options when giving students learning materials. Apart from videos, teachers need to create more focused documents and consider the length of the document. Fourth, in creating videos for the students, teachers need to be selective in adding the necessary contents to said videos. Teachers also need to consider the length of the video and the importance of the points delivered in the videos. Careful planning should be done by the teacher before the use of the flipped classroom to ensure that the resources used fit with the topic. Finally, as some may not be exposed to this kind of approach, teachers need to ensure the duration to carry out this approach is adequate, as both teachers and students need to adapt to the approach.

Author Contributions

The authors have sufficiently contributed to the study, and have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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APPENDIX A

PRE AND POST SPEAKING TEST

Topic: Verbal & Nonverbal Messages in Communication

Communication is a process of making sense out of the world and sharing that sense with others by creating meaning through the use of verbal and nonverbal messages. Both verbal and nonverbal communication are powerful skills in a professional business world.

Instruction: Answer the following question in your own words. You will be given 15 minutes to prepare your points. You may discuss it with your partner before you answer the questions.

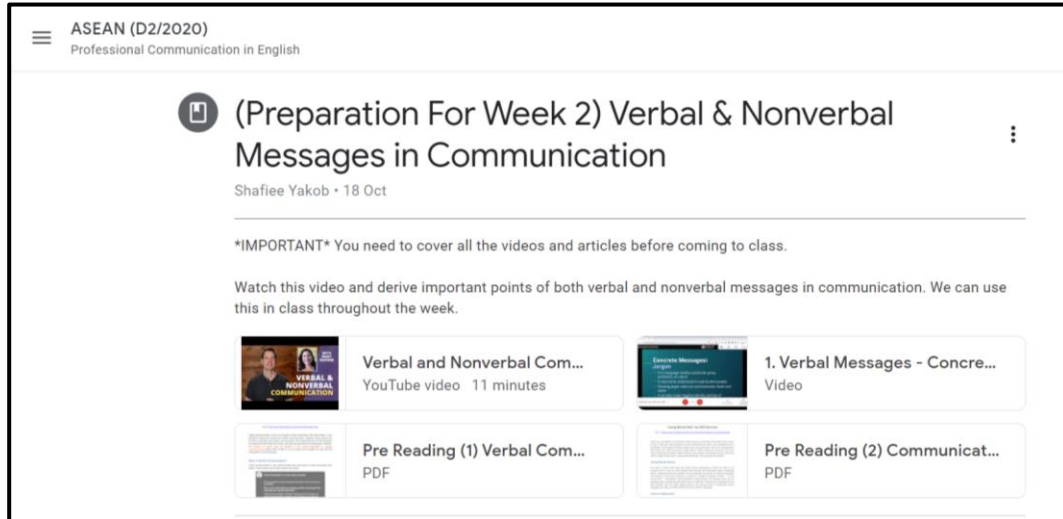
Questions:

1. Briefly define the term verbal and nonverbal messages in communication?
2. How do you communicate effectively?
3. Do you agree that effective verbal and nonverbal communication are necessary to promote success in business? Why?
4. Do advances in technology impact communication? Why / Why not? (Give examples)
5. Dress code needs to be reinforced at the workplace. Why do you think this is important?

APPENDIX B

LEARNING MATERIALS

Examples of learning materials given to students during the intervention period in this study.



ASEAN (D2/2020)
Professional Communication in English

(Preparation For Week 2) Verbal & Nonverbal Messages in Communication
Shafiee Yakob · 18 Oct

IMPORTANT You need to cover all the videos and articles before coming to class.

Watch this video and derive important points of both verbal and nonverbal messages in communication. We can use this in class throughout the week.

Verbal and Nonverbal Com...
YouTube video 11 minutes

1. Verbal Messages - Concre...
Video

Pre Reading (1) Verbal Com...
PDF

Pre Reading (2) Communicat...
PDF

Google Classroom



It is vital to understand how people interpret verbal messages.

what's the opposite of denotative?

connotative, connotational, implicative, suggestive, inferential, intensional, connotative of, implicit

Denotative = literal meaning
Connotative = interpretation of the words

6

Relevant Messages:
1. Usefulness

Instead of making the message about you and your needs, make the message about the other person's needs. For example,

Microsoft Windows 98 → Windows 10

13

Relevant Messages:
3. Focus [EXAMPLES]

SELF-FOCUSED

I'm Ricardo Gonzalez from Progreso Corporation. My presentation will cover the following four points: Progreso product line, our partnering criteria, our point-of-sale promotional plans, and what we need from you.

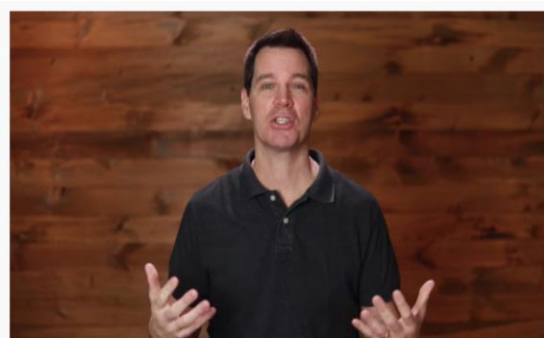
OTHER-FOCUSED

I'm Ricardo Gonzalez from Progreso Corporation. Let me make sure I understand your priorities for our time together. Based on our previous conversations, here's what I think you're after.

Sources of Nonverbal Messages

Physical Appearance, Vocal Qualities, Gestures and Body Movement, Facial Expression and Eye contact, Space, Time, Touch

Lecture Videos



Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

36,085 views • 28 Jan 2020



591



28



SHARE



SAVE



Gibb's Supportive and Defensive Climates

39,694 views • 27 Jun 2011



190



9



SHARE



SAVE

Video 1: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOhLMEKL TKE&ab_channel=CommunicationCoachAlexLynn

Video 2: Gibb's Supportive and Defensive Climates.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cclq48OZT_c&ab_channel=LEZakel

YouTube Videos

Verbal Communication

Source: <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/verbal-communication.html>

Verbal communication is the use of words to share information with other people. It can therefore include both spoken and written communication. However, many people use the term to describe only spoken communication. The verbal element of communication is all about the words that you choose, and how they are heard and interpreted. However, *the choice of words can be equally—if not more—important in written communication*, where there is little or no non-verbal communication to help with the interpretation of the message.

What is Verbal Communication?

Verbal communication is any communication that uses words to share information with others. These words may be both spoken and written.

Communication is a two-way process

Communication is about passing information from one person to another.

This means that both the sending and the receiving of the message are equally important.

Verbal communication therefore requires both a speaker (or writer) to transmit the message, and a listener (or reader) to make sense of the message. This page discusses both parts of the process.

There are a large number of different verbal communication skills. They range from the obvious (being able to speak clearly, or listening, for example), to the more subtle (such as reflecting and clarifying). This page provides a summary of these skills, and shows where you can find out more. It is important to remember that effective verbal communication cannot be fully isolated from non-verbal communication: your body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions, for example. Clarity of speech, remaining calm and focused, being polite and following some basic rules of etiquette will all aid the process of verbal communication.

an organic garden. You could take a picture of any of those things, but you can't take a picture of "work."



Adapted from Hayakawa

Figure 3.2 Ladder of Abstraction

Source: Adapted from S. I. Hayakawa and Alan R. Hayakawa, *Language in Thought and Action*, 5th ed. (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace, 1990), 85.

You can see the semanticist S. I. Hayakawa's classic example of the abstraction ladder with "Bessie the cow" in [Figure 3.2 "Ladder of Abstraction"](#) (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1990). At the lowest level, we have something that is very concrete. At this level we are actually in the moment of experiencing the stimuli that is coming in through our senses. We perceive the actual "thing," which is the "cow" in front of us (either in person or as an image). This is concrete, because it is unmediated, meaning it is actually the moment of experience. As we move up a level, we give the experience a name—we are looking at

PDF notes

APPENDIX C

SPEAKING SKILL RUBRICS

The rubric is adapted from the Pearson Longman textbook for Summit 2 (Intermediate level).

1 = Below Average

2 = Satisfactory

3 =Above Average

4=Excellent

Category	1	2	3	4
Grammar	Uses basic structure, makes frequent errors in verb tenses and/or sentence structures.	Uses a variety of structures with frequent errors, or uses basic structures with only occasional errors in verb tenses and/or sentence structures.	Uses a variety of grammar structures, but makes some errors in verb tenses and/or sentence structures. Have the ability to correct grammar without prompts.	Uses a variety of structures with no more incorrect grammatical errors than a native speaker would.
Fluency	Hesitates too often when speaking and have great difficulty remembering or selecting words, which often interfere with communication	Speaks with some hesitation, which interferes with communication	Speaks with some hesitation, but it does not usually interfere with communication	Speaks smoothly, naturally and confidently, with no hesitation. Ideas flow smoothly.
Vocabulary	Uses only basic vocabulary and expressions	Uses limited vocabulary and expressions	Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions, but makes minor errors in word choice.	Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions
Pronunciation	Frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation which makes it impossible to understand.	Pronunciation and intonation errors sometimes make it difficult to understand.	Pronunciation and intonation are usually clear and accurate with a few problem areas	Pronunciation and intonation are almost always very clear and accurate
Content	Little or no understanding of the subject. Statements are shallow or not relevant	Some understanding of the subjects but could not provide relevant ideas and some details.	Aware of the subject and attempts to provide some relevant ideas and some details.	Knowledgeable about the subject and provide a significant level of details.

APPENDIX D
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS
AFTER IMPLEMENTATION OF FLIPPED CLASSROOM STRATEGY

1. What are your thoughts on the flipped classroom strategy?
2. Are there any difficulties you find during the activities? If yes, please state?
3. Do group activities help you to speak English? If no, why?
4. Do you feel that your English-speaking skills improve using this strategy?
5. Do you like English subject now after doing the activities?

APPENDIX E

RESEARCH SCHEDULE

Below is the schedule of tasks carried out throughout the research exercise:

Planning	
In Practice	

Tasks	Month									
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Topic search and research questions										
Literature search										
Planning research										
Methodology for data collection										
Research proposal write-up										
Defense proposal										
Data collection and analysis										
Interpretations and conclusion										
Writing up research exercise report										

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

Student 1:

Analysis on Student 1:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
Self-learning		Student agree that FC allow more practice and self-train.	22,23
- Preparation before class	22,23 25	Student prepared before class.	25
- Own research	61,62	Student learned by researching on Google.	61,62
Active Learning	43,44	Student become more expressive in class.	43,44
- Participating in class activities	46,47	Student found they were able to create their own opinions.	46,47
Collaboration	4	Student love the idea of sharing the information with their peers.	4
- Sharing information	15,16	Student felt that their peers are good partner to study with.	15,16
Teacher's Role	3,4,	Student like the feedback given by the teacher.	3,4,
- Feedback	40,41	Student felt that the pre-task before class was interesting.	40,41
- Materials prepared	51	Student thought the explanation and the videos are good.	51
	57,58,59,60	The materials prepared by the teacher were simple and easy to understand.	57,58,59,60
Applicability in English	10,11,12	Student found that FC is effective because of the good combination of materials and activities.	10,11,12
- Effectiveness	34	Student agreed that their English skill improved.	34
- Improvement	72	Student agreed that they can communicate effectively.	72

Student 2:

Analysis on Student 2:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
Self-Learning	1,2	Student felt comfortable and ready to go to class.	1,2
	5	Student learnt more before class itself.	5
Active Learning	19	Students believed they can train to speak more in the activities.	19
	21,22		21,22

Analysis on Student 2:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
	27,28	Students felt they were given more opportunity and chances to practice their speaking skills. Activities were said to force students to speak up.	27,28
Collaboration	10,11,2,13	The learning and explanation from others gave students more understanding towards the topic, especially when they teach their friends (felt like they are absorbing the materials again).	10,11,2,13
	29,30	Students could create their own ideas and agree with other students.	29,30
Teacher's Role	35	The learning materials (articles and videos) given was informative, helpful for both.	35
	40,41	The teacher gave good explanation.	40,41
Applicability in English	23	Students see the improvement in the speaking skills and felt that the activities in class promote learning.	23
	24,25	They felt excited to go to class -positive feeling towards the class.	24,25
	34,35	Students prefer this strategy.	34,35

Student 3:

Analysis on Student 3:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
Active Learning	2,3	Students found to speak more in class, hence, active participation.	2,3
	4,5	Students were more open to discuss the topics, and engaging.	4,5
Collaboration	15	They learnt from each other	15
Teacher's Role	18	Student felt the teacher style of questioning is good; asking for opinions.	18
	27,28	Student felt that the materials were "nothing special" and the videos were not "for me personally".	27,28
	32,33	Student mentioned that the video was too long and suggested to limit it to 10 minutes.	32,33

Student 4:

Analysis on Student 4:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
Self-Learning	1,2	Student have ideas before coming to class- felt prepared.	1,2
	4,5	Student googled the relevant information before class. Student felt the notes trigger curiosity and learnt new words.	4,5
Teacher's Role	27,28	Student prefer PDF than video but find the content to be very helpful.	27,28
	31	Students found the activities to be helpful as well.	31
Applicability in English	13,14	Student could speak more in class.	13,14
	21	It enhances their English skills.	21
	36	Weak connection at home.	36

Student 5:

Analysis on Student 5:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
Self-Learning	15,16	Student understand better before class – key terms.	15,16
Active Learning	25,26	Student still felt nervous to share ideas but eager to follow the class	25,26
Collaboration	1,2, 9,10,11	Student can discuss together with other member / friends.	1,2, 9,10,11
	53	Student share ideas and understand quicker	53
Teacher's Role	57, 58	The learning material was hard to understand because of the speed and accent in the video	57, 58
	62, 63	Suggestion to pick other materials in the future.	62, 63
Applicability in English	20, 66	Internet connection problem – trouble	20, 66
	38,39	Improve speaking.	38,39
	42	Feel confident to speak in English.	42
	50	Enjoyed being in class.	50

Student 6:

Analysis on Student 6:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
Self-Learning	11,12	Student felt the information prepared trigger their curiosity – check dictionary and examples online.	11,12
	42,43	Student listened to the videos given and learnt some new vocabulary.	42,43
	45	They felt prepared coming to class.	45

Analysis on Student 6:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
Active Learning	6, 7	Student found themselves speak more in class	6, 7
Collaboration	4,5,7	Student discuss with friends and practice speaking skills together	4,5,7
	14,15	Student can ask friends for explanation	14,15
	17,18	Share the key points learnt in class	17,18
Teacher's Role	40	Nice videos	40
Applicability in English	23,24	Prefer this strategy. Student see the improvement in speaking skill	23,24

Student 7:

Analysis on Student 7:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
Self-Learning	2	Student can learn the materials given "again and again"	2
	4	Prepare before class.	4
Teacher's Role	1,2	Student felt the lecture videos were short and useful	1,2
Applicability in English	11,12	Student preferred this approach. They speak more English - more practice	11,12

Student 8:

Analysis on Student 8:			
Themes	Line	Keywords and findings	Line
Teacher's Role	16	Student liked the activities prepared by the teacher	16
	20		20
	22	Student enjoyed the videos and the activities, especially debate.	22
Applicability in English	1,2	Students felt excited to be involved in the learning process.	1,2
	10,11	Student see an improvement in speaking skills	10,11
	14,15	Not feeling nervous.	14,15

APPENDIX G

TEST SCORES FOR GRAMMAR CRITERION

Students' marks for the criterion: Grammar

Student	Pre-test	Post-test
1	2	2
2	2	2
3	2	3
4	2	3
5	2	3
6	1	2
7	1	2
8	2	2

APPENDIX H

TEST SCORES FOR FLUENCY CRITERION

Students' marks for the criterion: Fluency

Student	Pre-test	Post-test
1	2	3
2	2	4
3	2	3
4	2	2
5	1	4
6	1	3
7	2	3
8	1	2

APPENDIX I

TEST SCORES FOR VOCABULARY CRITERION

Students' marks for the criterion: Vocabulary

Student	Pre-test	Post-test
1	2	3
2	3	3
3	2	3
4	2	3
5	2	3
6	1	3
7	2	2
8	2	2

APPENDIX J

TEST SCORES FOR PRONUNCIATION CRITERION

Students' marks for the criterion: Pronunciation

Student	Pre-test	Post-test
1	2	3
2	2	3
3	3	4
4	2	3
5	2	3
6	2	3
7	2	3
8	2	3

APPENDIX K

TEST SCORES FOR CONTENT CRITERION

Students' marks for the criterion: Content

Student	Pre-test	Post-test
1	2	4
2	2	4
3	2	3
4	1	4
5	2	4
6	1	3
7	1	3
8	1	3