

The Efficiency of E-teaching Activities in Teaching Speaking Skills for English Major Students

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Abstract

In the pandemic context of COVID-19, all universities in Viet Nam have paid great attention to implementing E-teaching activities. The study focuses on evaluating the efficiency of E-teaching activities on speaking skills for second-year students of English major at University of Foreign Language Studies - The University of Da Nang (UFLS-UDN). A survey was conducted in a group of 15 teachers and 100 students of UFLS-UDN to figure out what the reality is. The findings indicated that the information technology infrastructure system of the school meets the needs of online teaching. Most teachers mastered E-teaching equipment, especially supporting software, applying teaching methods suitable to the online teaching model to integrate polarize learners' learning activities. Moreover, most students are self-consciously participating in the form of E-teaching and doing exercises as well as answering questions posed by teachers in the learning process. However, some teachers are still conscious of implementing this duty or spending time to draft lessons. The research proposes suitable and feasible solutions to improve E-teaching activities at UFLS-UDN, particularly at universities, faculties of foreign languages in Viet Nam in general.

Keywords: efficiency, E-teaching, speaking skill, English major.

1. Introduction

Online literacy plays a significant contribution and essential role in student learning and teacher teaching. With the developments of software that intend to improve education quality and access educational information, the learning and teaching opportunities have increased. In fact, teaching and learning on the Internet have changed how teachers communicate with students and vice versa. According to Carol (2003), “technology is a force worthy of consideration, whether one wishes to focus on the technological potential, to examine pragmatic technology use, or to criticize both” (p.9). Van et al. (2021) and Nguyen (2021) found that technology is an essential tool in elearning in order to help students improve their English skills. In addition, Bhatti (2021) asserts that technology plays an important role in English language teaching. Thanks to the developments of technology, how teachers gain access to information in lessons and how students widen their knowledge in learning has changed in recent years.

In recent years, universities in Viet Nam have paid great attention to implementing E-teaching

activities, especially in the epidemic context of COVID-19. It affected most of aspects in the society (Hoang & Le, 2021; Pham & Vo, 2021). University of Foreign Language Studies - The University of Da Nang (UFLS-UDN) is one of the educational institutions requiring students to study online during the last pandemic. Although teachers seem to master how to use technology in teaching, there is still an issue that they cannot acknowledge, understand, or 'catch' the way the world's technology changes rapidly. They feel difficult to update these techniques, especially in teaching and learning the speaking skills of a foreign language. The research evaluated the efficiency of E-teaching activities on speaking skills. It proposed suitable and feasible solutions to improve the efficiency of E-teaching activities at UFLS-UDN in particular, at universities, faculties of foreign languages in Viet Nam in general.

2. Literature review

The technologies have an impact on learning and teaching foreign languages. In teaching speaking, teachers show attentions to constant revision and recycling. Teachers try to mix many activities with helping learners' language skills. They often use tasks of dialogues, poems, songs, music, games in their lesson schedules. Students have chances to check if their speaking abilities improve, their skills of pronunciation get better, and especially their language awareness develops. In particular, using techniques in the classroom can aid in the development of a learner's speaking ability, and we have held in mind that interaction and dissection are important aspects of learning. As a result, we should have more oral focus in our instruction and allow students as much speech time as possible (Andrade, 2005:22).

In the recent context of education, most teachers pay attention to design activities in teaching speaking skills to students. They try to make more requirements on tasks aiming to achieve the criteria of the oral skills that are fluency and accuracy in the assessment.

In communication, speaking competently considers being the most basic session for a communicator who does it fluently. During speaking, language users should focus on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, which are appropriated. Depending on the situation, they also should apply exact cultural as well as social characteristics. Therefore, teaching this skill aims to make learners ensure communicating effectively. According to Chandra (2004), the ability of technology to meet learners at any moment and in any location has the power to bring about radical improvements in the educational paradigm.

In any educational setting, e-teaching is a necessary prerequisite for e-learning, particularly for inexperienced students. Teachers' responsibilities in an online world vary significantly from those in a conventional classroom setting. The majority of today's teachers and academics lack adequate digital literacy (Alexander et al., 2017; Wineburg et al., 2016).

2.1 Research Questions

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

- a) What are E-teaching activities in teaching speaking skills for major English students of the University of Foreign Language Studies - The University of Da Nang?

b) What is the efficiency of E-teaching activities in teaching speaking skills for major English students of the University of Foreign Language Studies - The University of Da Nang?

3. Methods

3.1 Pedagogical Setting & Participants

University of Foreign Language Studies - the University of Da Nang was established in accordance with the Decision No. 709 / QD-TTg dated 26 August 2002 by the Vietnamese Government, with the mission to improve students' knowledge of language and culture to contribute to national construction, development, and international integration. The University is selected by the Ministry of Education and Training and the Management Board of National Foreign Language 2020 project to be one of the five regional centers for foreign languages undertaking the task of training, fostering, and assessing foreign language. Skills, as well as developing pedagogical skills and applying information technology in teaching and learning foreign languages.

The University offers a self-study system based on textbooks, face-to-face tutorials, and a web-based instructional environment. Especially in the COVID-19 pandemic, the University performed the lessons online absolutely through MS-Teams and Zoom Meetings.

Microsoft Teams is a workspace for real-time teamwork and networking, workshops, file and software sharing, and even the odd emoji—it's the best chat app for the company. All are in one spot, out in the open, where everybody can see it. The University chose the method for E-teaching and learning for the following reasons: Text, audio, video, and file sharing are all included in this rich chat. Having a private conversation to create an idea before sharing it with the whole company; All of the users' notes, docs, and other documents are kept in one location.

Zoom Meetings is a simple-to-use platform that combines cloud video conferencing, remote meetings, community chat, and a software-defined conference room solution.

In a usual context, E-teaching and learning are optional or non-mandatory. Course sites really do not replace textbooks or face-to-face tutorials. However, in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, these activities are necessary to preserve the learning process among students. Through these systems, course sites simplify organizational procedures and enrich students' learning opportunities and experiences.

Participants

Participants were 15 lecturers and 100 students of UFLS – UDN. Lecturers had at least 5 years of teaching experience and have experienced in the ways of distance education and been trained for using these systems for E-teaching in this period. Students are in the second year of English major in the University and have enrolled in the English speaking skill courses.

3.2 Design of the Study

The aim of the study is to assess the effectiveness of E-teaching in teaching students to talk by using a set of well-structured questionnaires to provide a study context. To agree on the results of this practice, this analysis uses a descriptive test design. The researchers were able to collect data from a wide variety of respondents on the effects of speaking ability E-teaching and learning thanks to this study design. This aided in the analysis of the responses received in terms of how they impact educational content.

3.3 Data collection & analysis

Data collection through questionnaires: Questionnaires are the most common method for gathering primary data in the realistic analysis since the researcher may choose the sample size and types of questions to ask. Initially, the questionnaire architecture was coded and mixed up based on uniform constructs from individual topics. As a result, the questionnaire yielded useful information that was needed to meet the dissertation's objectives. A five-item Likert scale was used to construct the questionnaires. Each argument was rated on a five-point Likert scale, with one equaling "strongly support" and five equaling "strongly disagree." The responses were totaled to generate a ranking on each of the tests.

Participants' consent was approved at the class after they came back to school through the questionnaires, which were given to them directly. This 5-minute survey was conducted by the participants and sent to the researcher. The thesis was carried out in such a way that the participants' privacy was covered. To answer the questions raised, the analysis gathered quantitative data.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1 Activities of E-Teaching for Speaking Skills

- Lecturers prepared lesson planning for teaching speaking skills online. This is an important step for teaching speaking online. They consider the learning, their requirements, and the goal of students' learning and have some grading criteria to assess the progress of the students.
- Lecturers focus on making and dividing activities to prepare daily and weekly to achieve lessons' goals.
- Lecturers organize all the lessons and activities for students in a chronology.
- Students follow the instructions of lecturers to prepare the content.
- Students practice within the chatroom.
- Lecturers give some quizzes or exams which can be conducted to help students memorize and recite dialogues, looking at pictures and describing them, role-playing, conducting group discussions in the chatroom.

These activities help students get the chance to complete the tasks and practice what is in the

textbook. The student's success in interacting in the chatroom can be used as an assessment tool to assess the student's learning. They also help teachers make amendments, assist students in struggling areas, and plan how to perform better.

4.2 The efficiency of E-teaching for speaking skills for major students at UFLS-UDN

Table 1.

The comments of students on E-teaching for speaking skills

Questions / Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
<i>Learning speaking online is interesting</i>	11	87	0	2	0
<i>Learning speaking online is comfortable because of being seated at home</i>	93	2	1	2	2
<i>Students could study more effectively and productively</i>	67	14	9	5	5
<i>The website use of the school in learning speaking is stable and in good condition</i>	75	12	7	3	3
<i>Student has the right to get in contact in case of any problems</i>	87	7	2	4	0
<i>Students of the system could easily access the content of lessons</i>	64	34	1	1	0
<i>The knowledge which is provided within e-learning appropriate to the student's needs</i>	45	47	6	1	1
<i>Students could get education together in a virtual classroom</i>	54	40	4	2	0

As can be seen from Table 1, the students of UFLS - UDN highly rated the effects of E-teaching on speaking skills. With the question “*Learning speaking online is interesting*” and a five-point Likert-type scale, for which 1 = “strongly agree” to 5 = “strongly disagree”, we have been found that all the students are interested in learning online. However, the result of the survey dropped at the scale 2 “agree” (87%). With the question “*Learning speaking online is comfortable because of being seated at home*”, we have been found that the students gave the answer “strongly agree” (93%). During Covid-19, the students of UFLS – UDN were in the home and attended classes actively with big support from the school. In fact, home is always a very comfortable place, especially for introverted students.

Table 2.

The comments of the lecturers on E-teaching for speaking skills

Questions / Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
<i>The website use of the school in learning speaking is stable and in good condition</i>	86	7	7	0	0
<i>Students could easily access the content of lessons</i>	86	14	0	0	0
<i>The knowledge which is provided within e-learning appropriate to the student's needs</i>	100	0	0	0	0
<i>Students could get education together in a virtual classroom</i>	100	0	0	0	0
<i>Teachers are trained in information technologies and Internet in order to gather with the students in virtual classrooms</i>	100	0	0	0	0

Besides, we have received the result with high rates for the last questions in the level of “strongly agree” from the lecturers surveyed. According to the educators interviewed, the majority clearly agree with the following statements: "the knowledge given by e-learning is suitable for the student's needs," "Students should receive education in a virtual classroom," and "Teachers are educated in information technology and the Internet in order to gather with students in virtual classrooms" (100 percent).

In fact, the efficiency in E-Teaching for speaking skills offers teachers and students of UFLS-UDN many advantages:

For the English major students of UFLS-UDN:

- getting interesting, comfortable feelings;
- studying more effectively and productively;
- having the right to get in contact in case of any problems;
- accessing the content of lessons easily;
- being provided the appropriate knowledge within e-learning;
- getting education together in a virtual classroom;

For the lecturers of UFLS-UDN:

- shaping the online classes to best suit their students;
- leaving them with knowledge and course satisfaction;
- being trained in information technologies and the Internet in order to gather with the students in virtual classrooms.

In general, using technical methods in E-teaching allows the learner to be trained. Students (from various locations) could learn together in a virtual classroom. The lecturers could pose questions to the students in the classroom, and the students could answer through their computer screens. It allows for the quality and appropriateness of instructional resources to be reviewed and renewed. Technology not only makes education more appealing by rich audio-visual presentations, but it also improves learning levels. E-learning allows students to gain skills without having to attend classes. As a result, they will save money on lodging and transportation.

However, with open the suggestion “Please give the ways to improve the efficiency of E-teaching activities at UFLS-UDN” in the questionnaires, we propose suitable and feasible solutions as follows:

- The school should establish virtual labs which provide the chance to follow the developments in education.
- Since many e-learning programs need shared engagement through technical resources and gathering with their students in virtual classrooms, teachers of e-learning programs must have extensive in-service preparation.

5. Conclusion

The findings indicated that the information technology infrastructure system of the school meets the needs of online teaching. Most of the teachers mastered E-teaching equipment, especially supporting software, applying teaching methods suitable to the online teaching model to integrate polarize learners' learning activities. Moreover, most of the students are self-consciously participating in the form of E-teaching and doing exercises as well as answering questions posed by teachers in the learning process. The study also supposes some suitable and feasible solutions to improve the efficiency of E-teaching activities at UFLS-UDN in particular, at universities, faculties of foreign languages in Viet Nam in general for second-year students of English major.

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Biodata

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