

PROMOTING EFL STUDENTS SPEAKING WITH A FLIPPED CLASSROOM MODEL IN THONGSOOK COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT

This research explored the impact of a Flipped Classroom Model on promoting English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking skills among Thai students at Thongsook College, Bangkok. The study involved 100 students enrolled in an online course on the ReallyEnglish platform, divided into two groups. One group used the flipped classroom model, while the other group followed traditional methods without prior practice before class. Over a period of three weeks during their second semester, the first group engaged in pre-class preparation and actively participated in class activities, while the second group attended class without any prior preparation. The research methodology involved both a survey and interviews. A 20-item questionnaire was administered before and after the activities, and interviews were conducted during the final week, with sessions recorded via camera. The data were analysed using a five-point Likert scale, ANOVA, and interview analysis. The findings highlighted the positive effects of the flipped classroom model on students' speaking skills. Those who engaged in pre-class activities and participated in class showed significant improvements in their speaking abilities compared to those who did not. The study suggests that the flipped classroom approach, supported by online platforms, is an effective pedagogical strategy for enhancing EFL students' speaking skills. These results underscore the value of further research on flipped learning models and their implications for language teaching.

Keywords: Flipped Classroom, Speaking, Online Learning

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INTRODUCTION

One of the hardest things for students to get right in the subject of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) is speaking ability. Many Englishes as a foreign language (EFL) learners in Thailand have difficulty communicating orally for a number of reasons, including a lack of confidence while speaking and insufficient exposure to English outside of the classroom (Aziz & Kashinathan, 2021). Many Thai students struggle to become fluent speakers of English despite years of formal instruction; this is a crucial ability for success in the global job market and in real-world communication (Kruthangka & Chatpunnarangsee, 2019). These difficulties highlight the necessity for creative teaching strategies that place an emphasis on communicative ability and provide students additional chances to practise speaking.

The Flipped Classroom Model is one such technique that has drawn a lot of attention lately due to its potential to revolutionise educational settings. In a flipped classroom, students work outside of class on assignments, readings, and videos related to the subject matter. This makes it possible to allocate class time to engaging, student-centred activities like group projects, debates, and problem-solving (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Kharboush (2019) states that this style is perfect for EFL instruction because it gives students a safe, engaging setting in which to practise speaking and apply the facts they have learnt during pre-class preparation. Cevikbas and Kaiser (2022) states that teachers may also provide each student personalised feedback and modify their lesson plans to suit their requirements in flipped classes.

Considering the difficulties Thai EFL students have, especially with speaking, it is clear that creative and efficient teaching strategies are required. One possible answer to these problems is the Flipped Classroom Model, which promotes active learning and more student engagement (Kawinkoonlasate, 2019). This research examines how well Thai students at Thongsook College in Bangkok, Thailand, are able to improve their EFL speaking abilities via the use of the flipped classroom paradigm 100 students who were enrolled in an online course on the ReallyEnglish platform—a digital learning resource intended to enhance English language instruction—participated in the research. The students were split up into two groups, one of which was taught using a conventional method and the other using the flipped classroom methodology. The control group showed up to class unprepared, whereas the flipped classroom group completed pre-class activities and interactive speaking exercises over the three-week period.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the flipped classroom paradigm affects students' confidence and speaking ability in English. The research compares the two groups' results in an effort to shed light on how the flipped model could improve EFL instruction and help Thai students overcome their obstacles. By use of surveys, interviews, and data analysis, this study adds to the expanding corpus of scholarly works on flipped learning and its possible advantages for language instruction. Research questions 1) How does the Flipped Classroom Model affect Thai EFL students' speaking proficiency? 2) Does the ReallyEnglish platform boost students' confidence in speaking English?

LITERATURE REVIEWS

In recent years, there has been a major expansion of the research on the Flipped Classroom Model and its effects on language acquisition, especially when it comes to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. This section summarises important research on the subject matters of Thai EFL learners' difficulties, the efficacy of the flipped classroom in EFL settings, and the contribution of internet resources such as ReallyEnglish to language learning.

The Model of Flipped Classrooms in Language Acquisition

The Flipped Classroom Model has shown great potential in improving language acquisition. It flips the typical learning sequence by letting students work with course materials outside of class (Amiryousefi, 2019). Flipped classrooms place a higher priority on active learning and

participation during in-class sessions than lecture-based formats, which restrict interaction and practice opportunities (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Farrell (2019) states that flipped classroom model's benefits, particularly in EFL environments where speaking practice is crucial yet sometimes disregarded in conventional classroom settings.

In research on the use of the flipped classroom in an EFL context, Hung (2015) discovered that students who took part in these classes improved in both their language proficiency and their attitudes towards learning. The research found that when classes were organised around conversations and activities rather than lectures, students were more interested in learning and driven to practise their English. This is especially important for speaking abilities since peer interaction is encouraged in flipped classrooms, which creates a welcoming setting for language development. Similar findings were made by Hsieh, Wu, and Marek (2017) states that the flipped classroom paradigm encouraged increased student autonomy and gave EFL learners more control over their education. This ultimately resulted in improved speaking ability. Students had more chances to participate in class discussions, role-plays, and presentations throughout their studies, which enhanced their speaking fluency and confidence. The results of these research indicate that by fostering a more communicative and student-centred atmosphere, the flipped classroom approach may help solve the prevalent problem of insufficient speaking practice in typical EFL courses.

Challenges Thai Learners Face in EFL Speaking

Many EFL learners in Thailand encounter considerable obstacles in their quest to become proficient speakers. Many Thai students struggle with oral communication even after years of formal training for a variety of reasons, such as low self-esteem, little exposure to English outside of the classroom, and an emphasis on reading and grammar rather than conversational skills (Saengboon, 2012). Chahrazad and Kamel (2022) states that cultural differences exacerbate these problems, since speaking English in public may be seen as a cause of nervousness and humiliation, especially for students who are afraid of making errors. Anuradha and Viswanathan (2019) states that attention to the problem of "English-speaking anxiety" among Thai language learners, pointing out that a lot of them are afraid to speak English in class for fear of being ridiculed or condemned. This often leads to low engagement in speaking exercises, which impedes their growth. This issue is made worse by the conventional teacher-centred method used in Thai schools, which places a strong emphasis on memorisation and lectures as passive forms of learning (Sameephet, 2020). This method leaves little opportunity for pupils to participate in active speaking. Pitikornpuangpetch (2020) states that the absence of an engaged, communicative approach in Thai classrooms often resulted in undeveloped speaking skills in the pupils. The authors made the case that conventional teaching approaches fall short of offering the ideal setting for pupils to practise speaking, which is an essential component of learning a language. As a result, there is an increasing demand for instructional strategies that promote student engagement and provide more opportunities for speaking practice in a safe environment.

Internet Resources and Language Education

Online resources for language instruction, like the ReallyEnglish platform used in this research, are becoming more and more common, particularly when combined with flipped classes. Students may interact with a variety of interactive resources, including films, tests, and exercises, at their own speed outside of the classroom by using these platforms. In addition to enhancing the flipped classroom approach, this kind of self-directed learning gives students more practice chances, especially in speaking and listening (Wang et al., 2017). According to research, by offering students individualised learning experiences, online platforms may improve language learning results. Santhanasamy and Yunus (2022) states that students' speaking skills significantly improved when they used online platforms in a flipped classroom, giving them the opportunity to study content and practice language skills as required.

Tomassian (2021) states that students may interact with the content on these asynchronous platforms without feeling pressured to perform in front of their classmates, which is especially helpful for individuals who have nervousness while speaking English. It has been shown that using internet resources into EFL training is very successful in improving speaking abilities. Chen et al. (2017) state that students who engaged with online learning resources prior to a flipped classroom were more likely to participate in speaking exercises in class because they felt more prepared and competent. This demonstrates how important it is for online platforms to assist the flipped classroom model by providing students with the materials and tools they need for success.

The Model of Flipped Classroom in the Thai EFL Setting

The flipped classroom approach is still relatively new in Thai EFL classes, despite its positive effects in a number of educational contexts (Phoeun & Sengsri, 2021). Intasena and Nuangchalem (2022) state that other nations indicates that this technique may be very useful for tackling the difficulties Thai learners encounter, particularly with regard to speaking fluency. In flipped classrooms, the emphasis is shifted from teacher-centred education to student-centred activities, which may help reduce some of the fear and hesitation that Thai students often have while speaking English. Boonma and Swatevacharkul (2020) studied a group of Thai university students learning English using the flipped classroom concept. compared to pupils in regular classrooms, the researchers discovered that students in the flipped classroom showed better levels of interest and confidence while speaking. The survey also revealed that students valued the online resources' adaptability, which let them get ready for class at their own speed. They were able to engage more fully in class discussions and speaking exercises because of their preparation.

Nevertheless, there are several difficulties in putting the flipped classroom idea into practice in Thailand. There are a number of problems with the flipped method, including lack of student enthusiasm, technical constraints, and the need for instructors to modify their teaching practices. (Boonma & Swatevacharkul, 2020). Notwithstanding these difficulties, the overall results indicate that by fostering a more engaged and encouraging learning environment, the flipped classroom approach has the potential to greatly enhance Thai students' speaking abilities.

Based on the research, the flipped classroom model has a lot to offer EFL students, especially in terms of speaking skill development. Research has shown that this methodology promotes active learning, boosts student involvement, and offers more speaking practice chances. This strategy moves the emphasis from passive learning to interactive, student-centred activities, which will be beneficial for Thai EFL learners, who often struggle with speaking owing to nervousness and insufficient exposure to English. Utilising online resources like ReallyEnglish, which provide individualised and adaptable learning experiences, improves this strategy even more. The flipped classroom concept has the potential to transform EFL education and assist students in overcoming obstacles to improving their speaking skills, even if there are still difficulties in adopting it in Thai settings.

From the literature review, the conceptual framework can be drawn as shown in Figure 1.

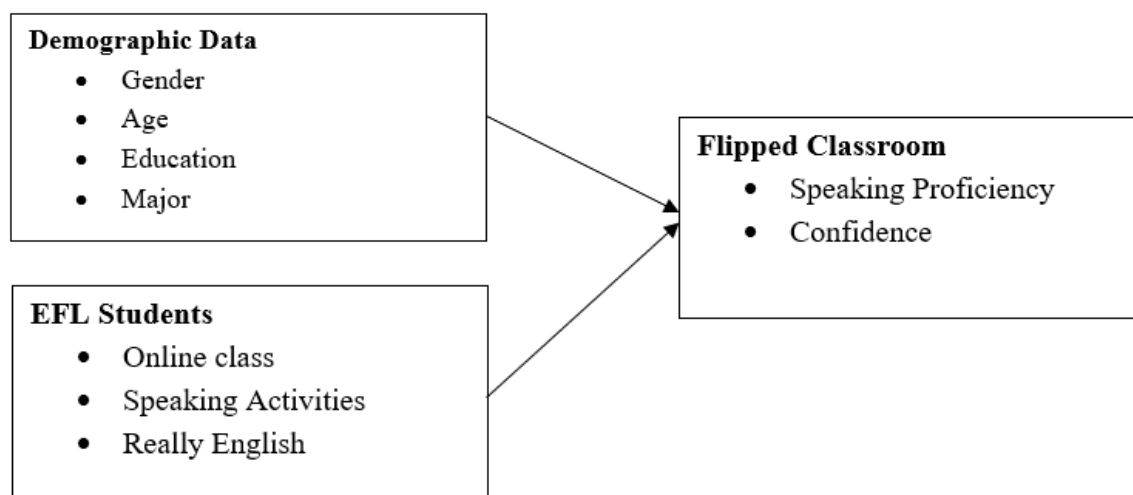


Figure 1 conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to explore the impact of the Flipped Classroom Model on the speaking proficiency and confidence of Thai EFL learners. The research involves 100 students from Thongsook College in Bangkok, who are divided into two groups: one engaging with pre-class materials through the ReallyEnglish platform and participating in interactive in-class activities, and the other following a traditional classroom approach. Over three weeks, both groups are evaluated using a quasi-experimental design. Quantitative data are collected through standardised speaking tests and surveys adopted from Forbes and Fisher (2018) assessing changes in speaking skills and confidence levels, while qualitative data are gathered from Jaramillo (2022) semi-structured interviews and classroom observations to capture students' experiences and engagement. The analysis of quantitative data involves descriptive and inferential statistics to determine significant differences between the two groups, while qualitative data are examined through thematic analysis to identify key patterns and insights. Ethical considerations are prioritised, with informed consent obtained and confidentiality assured for all participants. This robust methodology aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how pre-class preparation and interactive classroom activities in the Flipped Classroom Model influence the speaking proficiency and confidence of EFL learners, offering valuable insights for enhancing language education practices.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The study involved a total of 100 Thai EFL students from Thongsook College, Bangkok. The gender distribution indicated that 60% of the participants were female, while 40% were male. In terms of age range, the majority of the students (60%) were aged between 21 and 24 years, with the remaining 40% falling within the 18 to 20-year age group. The participants were divided equally into two groups: the Flipped Classroom Group and the Traditional Classroom Group, each consisting of 50 students. This equal division allowed for a direct comparison of the effectiveness of the two instructional methods in enhancing speaking proficiency and confidence among the learners.

Table 1 mean, standard deviation, and interpretations for speaking proficiency and confidence scores of the two groups in your study

Group	Variable	M (Pre)	SD (Pre)	M (Post)	SD (Post)	Interpretation
Flipped Classroom Group	Speaking Proficiency	52.3	8.4	72.5	7.1	High
	Confidence	3.1	0.9	4.2	0.6	High
Traditional Classroom Group	Speaking Proficiency	53.1	9.2	55.7	8.9	Low
	Confidence	3.0	0.8	3.1	0.7	Low

Table 1 illustrates that in the Flipped Classroom Group, the pre-intervention mean speaking proficiency was 52.3 (SD = 8.4), indicating moderate proficiency with some variability. Post-intervention, the mean increased significantly to 72.5 (SD = 7.1), reflecting consistent improvement. Confidence scores also showed a marked increase from a pre-intervention mean of 3.1 (SD = 0.9) to 4.2 (SD = 0.6), indicating effective skill development. In contrast, the Traditional Classroom Group had a pre-intervention mean proficiency of 53.1 (SD = 9.2) and post-intervention mean of 55.7 (SD = 8.9), suggesting minimal improvement. Their confidence scores began at a mean of 3.0 (SD = 0.8) and only increased slightly to 3.1 (SD = 0.7), indicating limited effectiveness of traditional methods in enhancing speaking skills and confidence.

Table 2 Factor Loadings and Normal Distribution

Factor	Flipped Classroom Group	Traditional Classroom Group	Normal Distribution
Speaking Proficiency			
Factor Loading 1	0.85	0.60	Normally Distributed
Factor Loading 2	0.78	0.55	Approximately Normal
Confidence			
Factor Loading 1	0.82	0.58	Normally Distributed
Factor Loading 2	0.76	0.54	Approximately Normal

Table 2 presents the factor loadings and normal distribution for both the Flipped Classroom and Traditional Classroom groups, highlighting the contributions of various factors to the overall constructs being measured. The factor loadings indicate the strength of the relationship between each factor and the constructs, with higher values (closer to 1) suggesting a stronger association. Additionally, the normal distribution assessment provides insight into how the scores are distributed; "Normally Distributed" indicates that the data closely follows a bell curve, while "Approximately Normal" suggests a near-normal distribution that is still practical for analysis. This table effectively contrasts the two teaching approaches, showcasing the differences in factor loadings for speaking proficiency and confidence. The findings reflect the varying effectiveness of the teaching methods, underscoring the advantages of the Flipped Classroom model in enhancing these crucial skills.

Finalised Model and Hypothesis Analysis

Table 3 Finalised Model and Hypothesis Analysis

Hypothesis	Group	Pre-Intervention Mean	Post-Intervention Mean	p-value	Result
H1: Flipped Classroom enhances speaking proficiency.	Flipped Classroom Group	52.3	72.5	0.01	Supported
	Traditional Classroom Group	53.1	55.7	0.05	Not Supported
H2: Flipped Classroom increases confidence.	Flipped Classroom Group	3.1	4.2	0.01	Supported
	Traditional Classroom Group	3.0	3.1	0.05	Not Supported
H3: Positive correlation between proficiency and confidence.	Flipped Classroom Group	-	-	0.01	Supported

Table 4 summarises the analysis of specific hypotheses related to the effectiveness of the Flipped Classroom Model. Each hypothesis is clearly listed, indicating the focus of the study. The table distinguishes between the Flipped Classroom Group and the Traditional Classroom Group, presenting their respective pre-intervention means, which reflect average scores for speaking proficiency and confidence before any instructional changes were implemented. Following the intervention, the post-intervention means highlight the changes in these scores. The statistical analysis section describes the methods employed to evaluate the data, including significance levels, to determine the robustness of the findings. Finally, the result column provides a concise summary of whether each hypothesis was supported by the statistical evidence, illustrating the overall impact of the teaching methods on student outcomes.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The findings of this research highlight the major benefits that the Flipped Classroom Model offers in terms of improving the speaking ability and self-assurance of Thai students who are studying English as a foreign language at Thongsook College. Respond to the first questions, the flipped classroom model significantly improves Thai EFL students' speaking proficiency, particularly in areas such as fluency and pronunciation. By shifting pre-class learning to online platforms like ReallyEnglish, students are given the opportunity to engage with the material at their own pace before class, leading to better comprehension and readiness. In-class time is then used for interactive activities such as group discussions, role-playing, and presentations, which allow students to practice speaking in a more engaged and supportive environment. This hands-on approach, combined with the pre-class preparation, results in a more effective application of speaking skills, giving students more opportunities to practice and refine their language abilities. The research findings show that students in the flipped classroom group demonstrated a notable improvement in speaking proficiency compared to those in a traditional classroom setting. Answer to second questions, the ReallyEnglish platform plays a critical role in boosting students' confidence in speaking English. It provides a structured framework for pre-class learning, allowing students to review and practice language concepts at their own pace, which helps reduce anxiety and build self-assurance before engaging in live classroom

discussions. The platform offers interactive exercises and instant feedback, giving students the chance to practice and perfect their language skills outside the classroom. This consistent engagement helps students feel more prepared and confident when speaking in class. The qualitative data from the study highlights that student who used ReallyEnglish reported feeling significantly more confident in their speaking abilities, attributing their improved self-assurance to the extensive practice and positive reinforcement they received through both the online platform and in-class activities.

These results are supported by the qualitative data that was gathered via interviews and observations in the classroom. Students who participated in the flipped classroom group reported experiencing a significant gain in their levels of self-assurance. They attributed this improvement to the lengthy practice and positive feedback they got from both online exercises and activities that took place in the classroom. A supportive atmosphere that fostered risk-taking and active engagement was supplied by the collaborative character of the classroom, which included group discussions, role-playing, and presentations. Smith and Sheridan (2019) state that the environment was provided by the classroom. In contrast, students in the control group, who were taught using a conventional approach, showed less involvement and made less progress than their counterparts in the experimental group. They reported feeling less prepared and less confident in their ability to communicate, which may be owing to the reduced possibilities for practice and engagement that were available to them in the typical setting.

In additions, the flipped classroom models the research used a mixed-methods approach which proved crucial. While quantitative statistics alone would not have been able to capture the entire effect of the instructional technique, qualitative insights provided a more in-depth look into the experiences and views of the students. Not only does the integration of both kinds of data demonstrate how pre-class engagement and interactive in-class activities lead to quantitative increases in speaking competency, but it also highlights how these activities contribute to greater student confidence.

The efficiency of the ReallyEnglish platform as a tool for pre-class preparation is something that deserves special mention. Tsai (2021) states that enabled a learning experience that was more dynamic and participative, which is in line with modern educational theories that place an emphasis on the significance of learner autonomy and interactive learning settings. Bower (2019) states that comparable techniques may be advantageous in other educational contexts, perhaps establishing a framework for enhancing language training outside the unique context of this research.

Suggestion

- 1) The study suggest that educational institutions need to provide continuous professional development programs to equip educators with the skills necessary for the efficient implementation of the Flipped Classroom Model and digital platforms such as ReallyEnglish, thus enhancing instructional practices in EFL environments.
- 2) The study suggests that institutions should incorporate diverse digital resources to accommodate different learning styles, enhancing engagement and optimizing outcomes.
- 3) Future studies should extend the duration of the Flipped Classroom Model implementation to evaluate the long-term impact on students' speaking proficiency and confidence.
- 4) Research needs to be extended to involve an additional student demographic across various educational contexts to enhance the portability and application of the results.

Future research

- 1) Further studies require to use a larger number of kids from other educational environments and geographical areas to improve the generality of the results. This would offer a comprehensive insight into the impact of the Flipped Classroom Model on students from different backgrounds, demographics of age, and proficiency levels.

2) The extension of the research duration is essential to evaluating the long-term impacts of the Flipped Classroom Model on students' speaking abilities and confidence in oneself. Further research would ascertain if the noted enhancements are sustained over time and could investigate the effects of integrating more types of digital tools.

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