

Using the Flipped Classrooms in Developing EFL Pre-Service Kindergarten Teachers' Speaking Skills and Program Satisfaction

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Abstract: Teaching foreign languages via “flipped” or “inverted” classroom, in which the typical elements of a course are reversed, has been a popular pedagogy recently. The present research study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the flipped classroom in developing pre-service kindergarten teachers' skills of speaking English as a foreign language (EFL). Also, it sought to find out the effect of this flipped classroom on developing these teachers' program satisfaction. It attempted to add to the research literature of EFL instruction and to establish a model example for the subsequent design and delivery of EFL training programs. Sample for the study included 67 pre-service novice kindergarten teachers who were randomly assigned to the study two research groups: The experimental group (N=32) and the control one (N=35). Data was collected from kindergarten teachers' pre and post grades. The study results showed that there were significant differences between the research two groups as the experimental group participants had better results than the control group. Thus, the flipped classroom mode proved to be effective in developing kindergarten teachers' speaking skills and program satisfaction. The study suggested some other key benefits of the flipped classroom to be studied. Training prospective kindergarten practitioners on implementing the flipped classroom and measuring its effect on learners' motivation were recommended.

Keywords: Flipped classroom, foreign language, kindergarten teachers, speaking, program satisfaction.

1. Introduction

The field of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), especially at the early childhood stage, has developed rapidly in the past fifty years and has become one of the major research areas. Evaluating teachers' satisfaction with the traditional training programs proposed for developing their language skills and their teaching skills can help organizations and institutions understand the factors that help satisfying participants' needs effectively (Butler, 2015 and Garcés-Manzanera, 2018). Hence, it can enable them to modify these programs based on teachers' real needs and preferences in accordance with effective instructional technologies.

Using instructional technologies and the internet has a substantial impact on education, especially in learning activities. It is expected that in the future the entire educational system and learning experience will greatly improve especially by using online platforms (Fernandez, 2020). Fernandez stated that in the past, only language laboratories used to be available for language teaching, now they are replaced by multimedia activities.

The adaptation of technology into English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms enabled a shift from a teacher-centered instruction environment to a more learner-centered, communicative-based one (Garrett, 2008; Schreurs & [Dumbraveanu](#), 2014 and Lak, Soleimani & Parvaneh, 2017). This new learner-centered model forgoes unnecessary teacher-talk time during class by scaffolding learning from pre-class assignments and expanding or deepening learning in class, Lak, Soleimani and Parvaneh added. This stance towards learning in which technology is used to reverse the traditional role of classroom time is sometimes referred to as the inverted or flipped classroom (Thiyagu, 2014 and Yusuf, 2021).

Many learners are still passive and play only a minimal role in speaking activities. Such poor involvement constitutes an obstacle to a successful language learning particularly in speaking. A new approach is needed to improve their speaking skills (Sönmez, 2020 and Yusuf & Taiye, 2021). Sönmez (2020) suggested the flipped classroom as an alternative approach to developing speaking for kindergarten teachers. He defined the flipped classroom as an instructional strategy and a type of blended learning that reverses the traditional educational arrangement by delivering instructional content, often online, outside of the classroom.

2. Reviewing the literature

This section reviews literature related to the research topic, notably the flipped classroom and the skills of teaching speaking for kindergarten teachers. Besides, kindergarten teachers' satisfaction variables are reviewed.

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2.1. The flipped classroom advantages, and procedures

Traditional classroom does not show personalization and adaptation in terms of education, but rather a lack of communication between an instructor and his learners is underlined (Thiyagu, 2014). Traditional teaching lessons or training sessions tend to be more of an instructor-centered method. According to Thiyagu, the lecture mode is still the most widespread form of information presentation and skill development and the most popular way of instruction in training centers. Because of these negative facts, the effectiveness, attitude, satisfaction, and other main measures are low, Thiyagu added.

In fact, technology helps develop language instruction very positively. It cannot be denied that face-to-face meetings are still vital between learners and instructors especially when discussions, negotiations and arguments take place. To achieve this, the recommendation is to redesign and create something new rather than rearrange the existing components of a training program (Narcy-Combes & McAllister, 2011). Technologically, many significant digital tools are suggested. Practically, most methods that are related to blended learning give learners more motivation, participation, involvement and satisfaction. Napier, Dekhane and Smith (2016) stated that blended learning is related to technology combining learning traditionally in a modern way. It moves well beyond the concept of bolting a website onto a traditional classroom-based course (Narcy-Combes & McAllister, 2011). Cohesion in the online and face-to-face elements of a blended course is important (Napier, Dekhane & Smith, 2016).

The flipped classroom is a model which provides learning with a significant number of exciting, involving and creative activities (Singh, 2020). Steen-Utheim & Foldnes (2017) stated that the flipped mode does not only give learners the chances to keep up with the advanced technology, but it also creates a better environment to join positively and voluntarily. For the above-mentioned reasons, the researcher would like to conduct the research to find out whether there are any better results from using the flipped classroom model than the traditional ones.

The flipped classroom is one of the learning strategies discussed in education because it can increase learning outcomes at all levels from elementary to university (Kurihara, 2016 and Bush, 2020). With the flipped classroom model, language learners must prepare their contact moments. As a result, instructors can zoom in on the application and deeper processing of the learning material. In the traditional classes, learners no or even little knowledge about the subject when they come to class. In class, they are taught all the knowledge, and it is often the basic knowledge about a subject.

The flexibility that flipped learning offers in terms of access is well documented in the literature (Hughes, 2003; Syafiq, Rahmawati, Anwari & Oktaviana, 2012; Herreid & Schiller, 2013; Halili & Zainuddin, 2015; Han, 2015; Mundhe, 2015; Shen & Cheng, 2015; Çetin-Köroğlu, & Çakir, 2017; Wang, 2017 and Tran, 2018). Flipped learning is often associated with pedagogical innovation (Danker, 2015). The flipped classroom can transform instructional practice to become learner-centered with a focus on knowledge construction, authentic activities, social interaction, and skill development (Gerstein, 2011). Flipped learning environments also benefit both learners and instructors by helping them develop the skills they need to survive and thrive in the fast-changing world of technology (Filiz & Benzet, 2018).

Flipped classrooms combine a traditional classroom with digital technology. This is found to increase learners' vocabulary (Mundir et al., 2022), communicative competence (Li, He, Tao, & Liu, 2022), writing skills (Khan & Zulfiqar, 2022), and oral language skills (Filiz & Benzet, 2018 and Khoiriyah, 2021). Although prior research has established the effectiveness of flipped classrooms in teaching English, few studies have focused on speaking skills with kindergarten teachers of EFL.

The flipped classroom, thus, is one of the revolutions in education that utilizes internet technology in learning. Learners are required to access and study material online at home before face-to-face learning in the classroom. In class, the instructor focuses on his learners' involvement in speaking English. In today's digital age, the traditional teacher-centered learning model is no longer suitable for implementation in daily learning activities. In the future, the learning process is more modern and learner-centered by utilizing existing internet technology to access teaching materials from anywhere, anytime, with anyone, and anything by online or e-learning.

In their definition, Li & Yang (2021) refer to the different flipped classroom patterns before the class which can be online discussions among learners or between learners and the instructor, digital research, videos or presentations by third parties other than the instructor and text reading. The flipped classroom is also a hot topic in foreign language teaching. Flipped classroom provides teaching outside by watching videos online and preparing additional exercises and activities in face-to-face learning (Herreid & Schiller, 2013; Enomoto, 2015 and Han, 2015).

According to Salem (2018), flipped learning, flipped classrooms, inverted learning, and turning learning upside down are all terminology that are related to the flipping process for a long time. The essence of flipped learning is the process of altering focus. Flipped learning encompasses numerous processes such as flipping teachers, flipped learners, and flipping instructional approaches. As a result, flipped classrooms are linked to a shift in focus from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered approach. It refers to transforming classroom teaching/learning procedures into a larger self-learning environment that relies on the utilization of outside-of-class learning materials and resources.

Activities in flipped classrooms are not mere videos and screencasts, it enhances learners' engagement in an active in-class learning experience. In personalized learning environments such as flipped learning, learners are providing individualized educational experiences that extend beyond physical constraints (such as time and space) and allow them to study class materials whenever and wherever they choose as long as they have access to the internet. In addition, it changes the focus of class time by saving much more time allocated to communication.

Houston and Lin (2012), Alfahid (2017) and Hojnacki (2018) indicated that for a class to be considered "flipped" it must have four basic important pillars: (1) a flexible environment in which learners choose when and where they learn, (2) a learning culture where learner-centered model is applied, (3) an intentional content used by educators to maximize classroom time in order to adopt methods of learner-centered, active learning strategies, depending on grade level and subject matter, and (4) a professional instructor who takes on less visibly prominent roles in a flipped classroom.

Incorporating the flipped classroom in EFL classes achieved a set of pedagogical benefits as determined by researchers. Some of these benefits included (1) providing more opportunities for discussion (Gerstein, 2011), (2) increasing active learning (Enomoto, 2015), (3) motivating learners in learning (Karimi & Hamzavi, 2017), and (4) increasing the degree of autonomous learning because "learners might use their free time to study more on topic, seek assistance using other sources to improve their vocabulary" (Li & Li, 2022 and Sheerah & Yadav, 2022).

Learners can review material at their own pace and according to their own needs; the videos make the most of class time to advance the deeper, inquiry-based learning; instructors can structure class time to optimize individualized attention to learners; learners have the opportunity to make use of the material they are learning in a reinforced setting. The flipped classroom, thud, is recommended to fosters autonomous learning and learner-learner and learner-instructor interaction, to enable instructors to use the language of today's learners who use the web and social media for information and interaction frequently, to provide transparency of instruction and parent/tutor involvement; to develop higher order skills in the classroom, to improve skills in which the learners has not been proficient yet, and to provide learners with real life situations.

Flipped classroom does not necessarily supplant other educational techniques but can be used in conjunction with them. This refers to the inherent flexibility in applying the flipped classroom model. One does not necessarily have to abandon favored techniques when adopting the flipped classroom. In fact, the flipped classroom can be seen as the combination of techniques employing educational technology and active learning. Those who are in the field know that language teaching has made substantial contributions to both educational technology and active learning (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Holmes, Tracy, Painter, Oestrich & Park, 2015 and Namaziandost & Çakmak, 2020).

Temizyurek and Unlu (2015) summarized the procedure of the flipped classroom model. It has two key components, outside-class and in-class. The outside-class component involves watching videos and doing quizzes, or mini tests that the teacher prepares before coming to the classroom. Another outside-classroom element is using learning management systems such as online discussion groups which create a preview to in-class discussions. The in-class component involves in-class discussions in small groups or as a whole class. Learners' outside-class learning can be reinforced with in-class activities that involve critical thinking and problem solving activities. Figure (1) summarizes the main components of the flipped classroom:

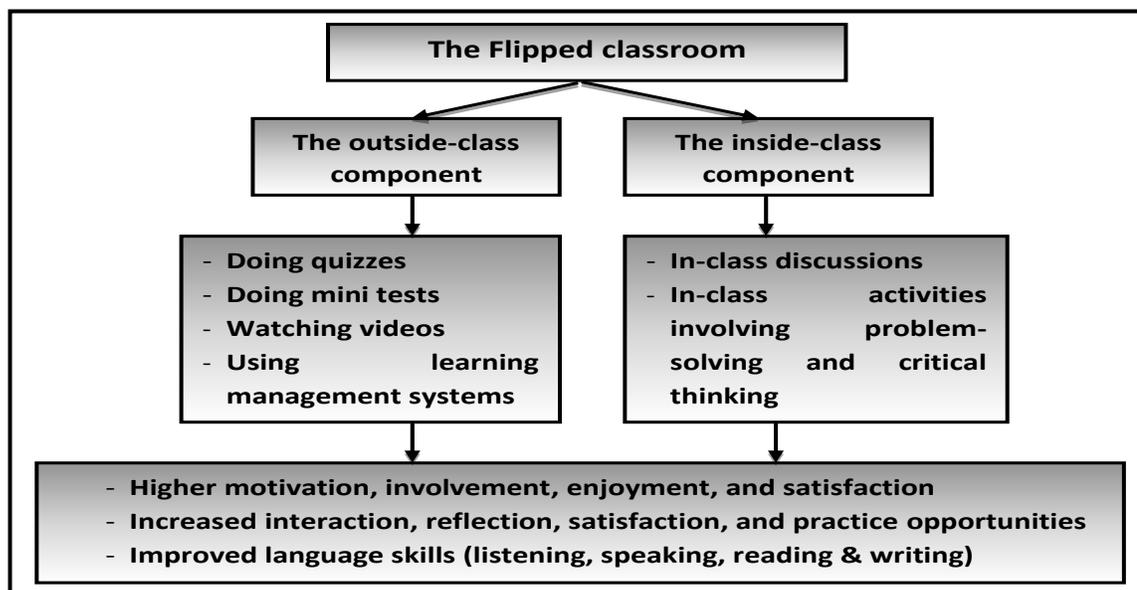


Fig. 1: The Flipped classroom Components

Kurt (2017), Lee and Lai (2017), and Kwon and Woo (2018) indicated some key factors that should be considered while planning flipped classroom model:

- Time and place: Expecting learners to watch videos as homework and not supporting them through this period may not be adequate. Thinking that not all the learners may have same opportunities may lead to a way to design a structure which can support learners at out of class activities. Another important point is that learners should be provided an appropriate time and place to watch videos.
- Meaningful content: The instructor should determine and take into consideration the content that will be presented. The content should be creative and meaningful to increase learners' awareness.
- Attention grabbing models: How learners will use this content is also important. While designing classroom activities, some models such as problem-based learning, group interactive learning and project-based learning should be used.
- Reflection: Instructors should have an expectation for each video. They should expect learners be aware of the things they learned, transfer and adapt their knowledge in the scope of the video they watched. It is important to improve learners high-level skills and make them deal with cthe ontents and activities that can be reflected towards goals of courses.

Johansen and Cherry-Paul (2016) carried out an action research that aimed to explore learners' perceptions of the flipped classroom approach, in which the roles of schoolwork and out-of-class content are reversed, in speaking lessons in contrast to conventional teaching. The results showed that a high majority of learners reported being satisfied with the flipped classroom. The major factor that led to satisfaction was their enjoyment of the flipped class model. They stated that it was more enjoyable and interesting compared to traditional speaking lessons. Moreover, Webb, Doman and Pusey (2014) did research at a Chinese University aimed at investigating the effect of a flipping classroom on speaking skills in English as a foreign language and their attitudes towards flipping. The results showed that flipped classrooms had a positive impact on learners' speaking ability and empowered them through more active learning.

The flipped classroom uses online and offline technology, particularly video clips. Instructors use them to introduce new concepts to learners before they meet in the classroom setting (Vereş & Muntean, 2021). Learners can revise content outside the class space and synthesize the material at their own pace. It was found that a considerable number of learners felt more motivated and satisfied because of the flipped classroom instruction. Prodoehl (2015) reported an example of flipping a classroom on learners' English collocation knowledge and compared this instructional design with traditional instruction. The study also examined the learners' attitudes towards the flipped model. The experimental research design comprised an experimental and a control group. The findings revealed that flipped instruction helped enhance the learners' collocation knowledge. Most flipped learners generally had a satisfactory perception of the flipped classroom.

Schmidt and Ralph (2016) investigated a research study on the effectiveness of flipped teaching. A perceived improvement in learners' satisfaction and skills was reported. Instructors attributed such improvement to the integration of technology, support from strong inquiry-based class activities, and learners' ownership over their learning. Steen-Utheim and Foldnes (2017) compared two groups of female English majors on their achievement in two different English courses and identified their feelings and satisfaction about flipping their classes. This study applied the learning process from a teacher-centered process to a learner-centered one. The results indicated that the mean scores of the two experimental group learners in the achievement post-tests are remarkably high and this is due to the effectiveness of flipping the teaching. Flipped learning increased the continual and positive interaction among the instructor and learners, provides learners with more access to learning materials and consequently increases their academic achievement and course satisfaction.

In terms of improving learners' speaking skills, Narcy-Combes and McAllister (2011) implemented a study on the effect of the flipped classroom at using pre-tests and post-tests to examine its effectiveness. Results showed that there were significant differences between the two groups, and it was clear that the flipped model learners performed better than those in traditionally taught classes, and the participants showed satisfaction and positive attitudes towards this model. However, Wolff and Chan (2016) described a study conducted to explore the effect of implementing the flipped classroom pedagogical approach on a female. The results revealed that the flipped learning did not sufficiently enhance the experimental group's speaking skills to cause a statistical significance in comparison to the controlled group.

While the advantages of the flipped classroom were identified, some disadvantages were also found. For instance, Holmes et al., (2015), Misela (2016) and Hojnacki (2018) highlighted the fact that the flipped classroom approach is technologically oriented; it can thus be problematic learners do not have access to learning equipment or have technological knowledge. Also, some learners claimed that this type of instruction was time-consuming because it required them to spend more time studying before a face-to-face lesson. In addition, the negative aspect of this teaching approach "included the excessive workload on learners, lengthy videos, and technical challenges" (Li & Li, 2022). Nevertheless, the flipped classroom is beneficial in English teaching when considering both its advantages and disadvantages.

2.2. Kindergarten teachers' skills, and perspectives

Kindergarten teachers according to Filiz and Benzet (2018) play a very important role in a child's early development. What they experience and learn during their very early years often helps to build their views of the world and themselves. A kindergarten teacher has the power to affect a child's success or failure through school and even into their personal lives. Teachers use interactive discussions to help their learners learn and apply abstract concepts. English kindergarten teachers should have competence in English -including clear and accurate pronunciation. Also, English teachers should have the knowledge of foreign language learning processes and teaching methods (Alfahid, 2017 and Washington & Jones, 2020).

English Kindergarten teachers must know how to encourage, praise and motivate children. Teachers must understand children's, needs, interests, and development. They should treat each learner as an individual and therefore try to help him or her with their emotional, physical, social, or creative needs. Also, they should be able to effectively interact with parents. Kindergarten teachers must have excellent skills in solving problem, organizing procedures, and resolving conflicts, training and motivating children, and communicating successfully.

The process of just flipping a classroom will not transform children' learning. According to a study by Houston and Lin (2012), a successful implementation of a flipped classroom would need the videos to be relatively short (no longer than 20 minutes) and teachers should briefly review the course content before in-class activities to answer any questions and to make sure that the majority of the learners have sufficient understanding of the material. During the in-class activities, teachers must be deliberate to guide and increase the interaction with learners. In addition, the instructional design using technology needs to be carefully planned to ensure the learners' learning experience is enhanced.

2.3. Speaking significance, and development

Speaking is one of the four language skills, whose development is significant and necessary in order for learners to fulfill their communication needs, express their feelings and interact with each other. People who know a language are referred to as speakers of this language. Language is primarily spoken, and to many people, mastering speaking skills is their ultimate goal. In the following lines, the speaking concept, significance, elements, aspects, purposes and its challenges are addressed.

Of all the four skills, speaking seems the most important because it is the heart of FL learning, the most important skill in business fields and, theoretically, the most ignored one according to Sampath and Zalipour (2009). A common approach that is well-considered in the literature, when defining speaking, is based on the distinction made between bottom-up and top-down processing. Cummins and Davison (2007) and Aljadili (2014) indicated that bottom-up processing refers to using the incoming input as the basis for understanding messages and thus comprehension begins when the received data is analyzed until meaning is derived. In terms of speaking instruction, the bottom-up approach suggests starting with teaching the smallest units- sounds- and moving through mastery of words and sentences to discourse (Richards, 2006).

Alternatively, adopting a conception of speaking based on interactional skills which involve learners in making decision about communication was advocated by Bygate (2009) and Knapp and Antos (2009). This is considered the top-down view of speaking. Top-down processing refers to the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of a message and thus processing goes from meaning to language (Richards, 2008). Adopting this view, Knapp and Antos (2009) and Kocaman and Balcioglu (2013) defined speaking as a two-way process involving real communication of ideas, information, feelings, or experiences. Kavaliauskienė (2013) applies such interactive perception and defines speaking in terms of its main function as a productive skill whose main goal is facilitating communication.

Based on the above-mentioned review, it could be concluded that bottom-up processing goes from language to meaning and, thereupon, speaking would be considered as combining sounds in a systematic way, according to the language specific principles to form meaningful utterances. The problem with the bottom-up approach is that it overlooks the interactive and social aspects of speaking and, additionally, it is hard to ensure a satisfactory or predictable transition from the supposed learning in the classroom to the real-life use of the speaking skill because teaching is not a synonym of learning. Thereupon, instead of teaching learners to make well-formed sentences and then putting them to use in discourse, instructors should encourage learners to take part in spoken activities from the beginning.

Attempting to elaborate more on the interactive nature of speaking, the current study defines speaking as a productive language skill that entails constructing and sharing meaning through the appropriate use of verbal and non-verbal means of communication. It is influenced by the interaction context in which it occurs and the learners' linguistic and psychological variables and aims at enabling learners to be language users expressing their intended oral messages fluently and accurately in meaningful contexts. In other words, speaking is interactive even when learners involve in soliloquies by talking to themselves. Speaking may be spontaneous as in conversations, planned as in presentations, strategic as in interviews or argumentative as in debates.

As for the specific skill of speaking, reviewing the literature reveals a great deal of emphasis on three main aspects: Speaking is face to face, speaking is interactive and speaking happens in real time (Luoma, 2004; Torky, 2006 and Bailey & Damerow, 2014).

- Speaking is interactive as speakers have to adapt vocal and visual aspects to match time, setting and the listeners' needs and interests. Also, turn taking is a main feature of spoken interaction and usually takes place unconsciously.
- Speaking usually takes place directly allowing for immediate feedback on the listeners' understanding, interest, agreement or refusal. Vocal (e.g., volume, speed, and pitch) and visual (e.g., facial expressions and gestures) means of communication play a crucial role in verbal communication.
- Speaking is a real-time production that may or may not be preceded by planning. And so, learners' opportunities to plan and edit output are limited.

Speaking has many purposes including socializing with others, expressing feeling and opinions, exchanging information or reporting actions. Basturkmen (2006), Sreehari (2012), and Kwon and Woo (2018) outlined two main purposes of speaking: Transactional or interactional. In transactional discourse, language is used primarily for communicating information. Language serving this purpose is message-oriented rather than listener-oriented. Both accuracy and message comprehensibility are of outstanding importance. In interactional discourse as in the majority of conversations, language is used with the purpose of establishing or maintaining a relationship. This latter kind plays a significant role in oiling the wheels of interaction. However, Zareie, Gorjian and Pazhakh (2014) pointed out that interactional language is combined with transactional language. In other words, speakers do one thing by doing another and thus both purposes can be viewed as two dimensions of spoken interaction. For better analysis of speaking purposes, Khan (2013), Tasama (2013) and Aljadili (2014) combined both the transactional and interactional purposes as follows:

- Interpretative and predictive purposes for exploring meanings, creating and considering inferences and for predicting possible future events.
- Persuasive and personal purposes for changing others' opinions, attitudes, or points of view, and for expressing personal feelings, opinions, beliefs and ideas.
- Explanatory and informative purposes for explaining, clarifying, and supporting ideas and opinions and for sharing information with others.
- Descriptive and narrative purposes for describing someone or something, real or imagined and for creating and telling stories or sequenced events.
- Instructive and questioning purposes for giving instructions or providing directions designed to produce an outcome and for asking questions to obtain information.
- Comparative and imaginative purposes for comparing two or more objects, people, ideas, or opinions to make judgments about them and for expressing mental images.

As for speaking genres, Richards (2008), Subasi (2010) and Reid (2016) referred to three speaking genres: speaking as interaction, as transaction and as performance and each of these speech genres is quite distinct in terms of form and function. Speaking as interaction refers to what is normally meant by conversation, as interaction primarily serves a social function. Speaking as transaction refers to situations where the focus is on what is said or done for making oneself understood clearly and accurately and on how they interact socially with each other. Speaking as performance refers to public speaking that transmits information before an audience. Šolcová (2012) reported two major speaking genres in the FL context: extensive and intensive speaking. Extensive speaking includes oral presentations, and storytelling, during which the opportunity for oral interaction from listeners is either highly limited or ruled out. Intensive speaking has the purpose of producing short stretches of oral language and demonstrating competence in grammatical, lexical, and phonological aspects.

Bashir, Azeem and Dogar (2011), Mart (2012) and Oradee (2012) identified two types of sub-skills for speaking: micro- and macro-skills. Micro skills included using the language variety that is appropriate to the situation by making the main ideas stand out from supporting ideas or information, pronouncing the distinctive sounds of a language clearly, making tonal distinctions, using stress and rhythmic patterns and intonation patterns clearly, using the correct order and forms of words and using vocabulary appropriately. As for macro skills of speaking, Bashir, Azeem and Dogar indicated, they include conveying connections between events and communicating relations, ideas and feeling, given and new information, generalization and exemplification, facial expressions and other nonverbal cues along with verbal language.

A more comprehensive and elaborated approach to speaking taxonomies distinguishes between verbal, vocal and visual sub-skills of speaking that are complementary with each other for producing successful spoken output (Nunan, 2003 and

Sreehari, 2012). That latter approach has provided illuminating guidelines for the study suggested taxonomy. These sub-skills of speaking follow the following groupings as shown in figure 2 below.

A common approach to speaking elements that is widely adopted in the literature reveals two major elements: fluency and accuracy (e.g., Cornbleet & Carter, 2001; Cummins & Davison, 2007; Bashir, Azeem & Dogar, 2011 and Kaminskienė & Kavaliauskienė, 2014). While fluency relates the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate slowness, or undue hesitation, accuracy relates to the extent to which the target language is produced in relation to the rule system of this language (Ercan, Irgil, Sigirli, Ozen & Kan, 2008).

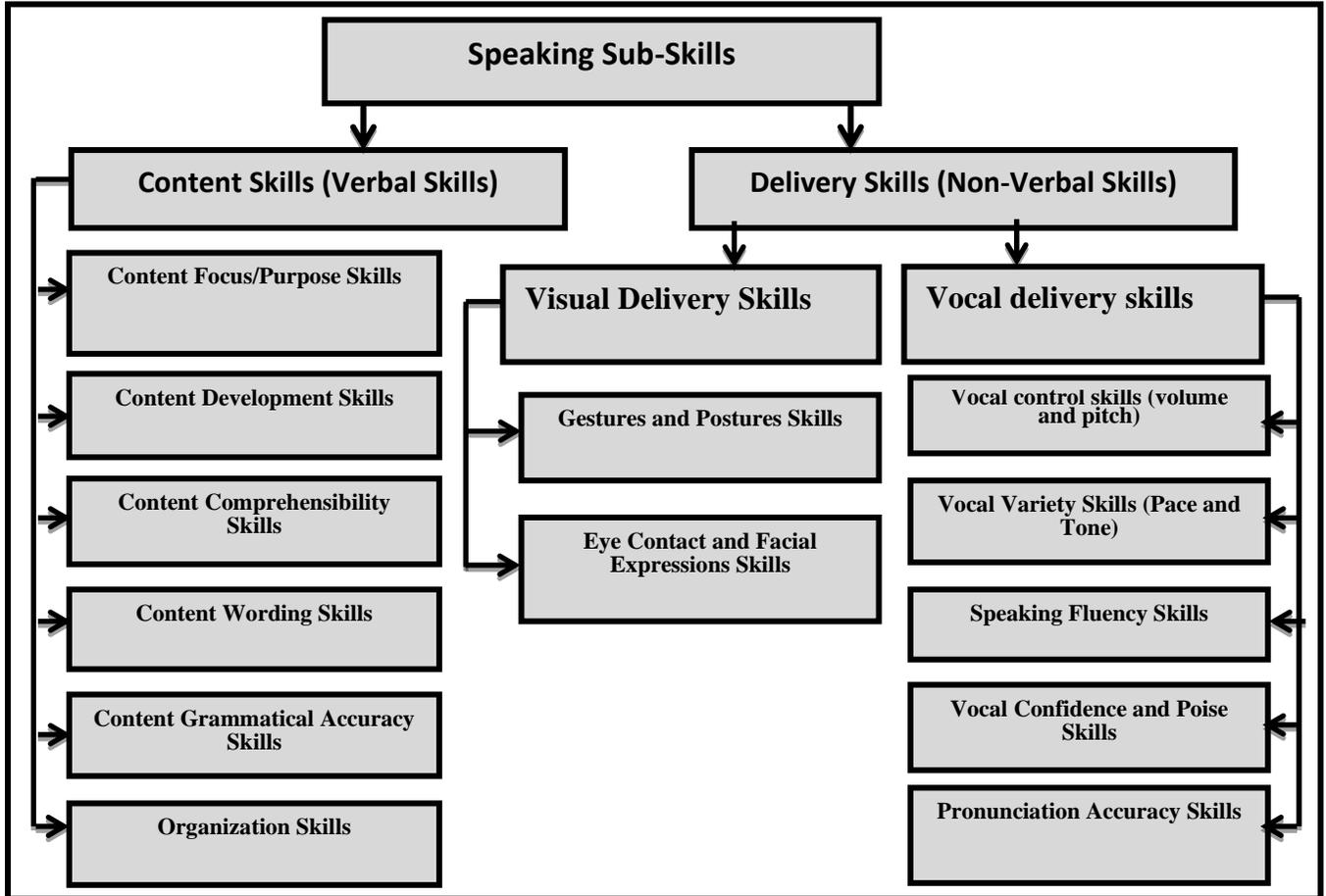


Fig. 2: Sub-skills of speaking (Source: original)

In brief, a fundamental issue to understand the nature of speaking is to analyze it in terms of its competencies (underlying abilities). Learners have to be given the chance to express their ideas and needs and to develop their speaking skills. While fluency is achieved when learners are able to express themselves in a clear and easy manner without hesitation or inappropriate slowness, accuracy requires learners to produce correct utterances that follow the rule system of the target language so as to be understood and followed by their target audience.

Korolyova and Voyakina (2014) stated that if learners do not learn how to speak or do not get ample opportunities to speak in the FL class, they may get demotivated and lose interest. On the other hand, if the right tasks are used in the right way, speaking can be a lot of fun and learners' motivation would be raised, Korolyova and Voyakina added. Oradee (2012) and Sreehari (2012) pointed out some basic principles for teaching speaking that included choosing interesting topics, activating learners' prior knowledge, motivating them to speak, supporting learners' self-confidence and encouraging them to speak for real purposes. Nunan (2003) and Zappa-Hollman (2007) indicated some other relatively different basic guidelines that included being aware of the differences between second and FL learning contexts, planning speaking tasks that involve negotiation for meaning, providing opportunities for learners to talk making use of pair and teamwork and limiting teacher talk.

Speaking is labeled as the most challenging skill for the great majority of FL learners. Imane (2015) indicated numerous difficulties in the FL context including having nothing to say, being shy and feeling uncomfortable, fearing making errors so as not to be laughed at, viewing speaking in front of an audience as a threatening experience, and worrying limited

vocabulary and poor pronunciation skills. Korolyova and Voyakina (2014) indicated other difficulties that are more associated with practitioners themselves in teaching speaking that included using traditional teaching techniques, poor consideration of learners' demotivation, and the inability to create situations in which learners are comfortable and stimulated. The limited time spent in FL classes in addition to the inappropriate consideration of learners' needs justify learners' low proficiency level in spite of the many years spent in formal language classes (Tarnopolsky, 2013).

A growing number of studies aimed to investigate the reasons behind learners' low proficiency at speaking skills (e.g., Turner, Roberts, Heal & Wright, 2012 and Akindele & Trennepohl, 2014). These reasons can be grouped under three categories. First, personal traits such as shyness and fear of facing an audience, lack of self-confidence, and speaking anxiety. Elliott and Chong (2004) and Radzuan and Kaur (2011) found that learners' personal traits were the reason behind their reluctance and feelings of anxiety. Second, the audience and the instructor were believed to be main reasons for learners' unwillingness to involve or even participate in speaking tasks for avoiding negative evaluations, hard questions, humiliating feedback (Wolfe, 2008). Finally, content and form oriented difficulties were seen as influential factors resulting in learners' demotivation in the learning situation (Imane 2015). For deeper investigation and enlarged review of the literature on the challenges hindering the development of learners' speaking skills, the following ten factors were considered:

- Pronunciation difficulties: Aldohon (2014) found that most learners produce words without caring about their pronunciation because of their unconsciousness of supra-segmental features, such as intonation.
- Inhibition: Many of them experience inhibition which is caused by many factors such as shyness and fear of criticism and of making errors (Thornbury, 2005 and Imane, 2015).
- Nothing to say: Many learners prefer to keep silent while others might indicate having nothing to say, or would resort to their mother tongue. Munby (2011) related this difficulty to learners' lack of motivation.
- Poor practice: Learners' poor practice and exposure opportunities were indicated as a main source of speaking difficulties (Bashir, Azeem & Dogar, 2011). Assia, Halima and Eddine (2013) and Motallebi and Pourgharib (2013) asserted that a focus on the linkage between listening and pronunciation increases learners' involvement and motivation to speak in the target language.
- Low self-confidence and self-esteem: Self-confidence is the learners' knowledge of their abilities on taking the risk and not fearing of making mistakes (Alwi, Sidhu & 2013 and Alonso, 2014). Self-esteem is the effort and willingness to achieve a specific goal and is considered as a key factor that influences learners' satisfaction and motivation (Aljadili, 2014 and Naouel, 2015).
- Lack of or passive vocabulary makes learners unable to show and share their opinions with others in a comfortable way (Huang, 2014). In her study "Vocabulary Learning Strategies", Jurkovi  (2006) related learners' lack of vocabulary to the unemployment of authentic materials.
- Mother-tongue (MT) use: Since all learners share the same MT, many would prefer using it to the target language as they feel more at ease (Tarnopolsky, 2013 and Darginavi ien  & Navickien , 2015).
- Lack of Grammar: Ismail (2010) and Pratoomrat and Rajprasit (2014) found that many EFL learners in the Arab countries are poor at producing correct grammatical sentences due to the minimized practice opportunities. Lack of practice opportunities is associated with instructors' use of language-centered techniques.

In light of the preceding review, teaching speaking skills is a crucial part of the EFL instructional process. There are four things that learners need to do with the FL language: be exposed to it, understand its meaning, understand its form and practice it. Bridging the gap from theory to practice reveals many difficulties encountered by learners. To provide every learner with practice in speaking is an out of reach goal under the banner of the FL classroom limited time and over-crowded classes. Learners rarely listen to each other talk and conversations degenerate into one learner after another saying unrelated things. Besides, speaking instruction is still limited by the FL class boundaries. However, speaking is not the only language skill that is challenged by such negative aspects that hinder its development.

2.4. Program satisfaction

Ming, Fei, Noor, Latif and Aziz (2012) asserted that one of the main factors which are of a great significance in TEFL among kindergarten teachers is evaluating the effectiveness and appropriateness of their training programs. Ming et.al. (2012) added that these training programs have played a crucial role as a source of learning and as a predictor of kindergarten instructors' motivation and satisfaction. The main goals of TEFL training programs are to strengthen kindergarten instructors' language skills (Richards, 2006 and Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2011), to help instructors cope with everyday situations (Bracaj, 2014), and to prepare instructors to develop their teaching skills (Rahimy & Safarpour, 2012

and Bracaj, 2014). TEFL at the early stage, Bracaj (2014) stated, should not be used in isolation but in the context of appropriate authentic tasks. Such relevant usage, according to Sampson (2009), has had the value of improving kindergarten teachers' satisfaction and motivation in addition to guiding them in applying their learning in a meaningful manner.

Evaluating instructors' program satisfaction depends on collecting feedback that can help training organizations or academic institutions measure participants' satisfaction levels for their specific programs (Ilic, 2021). Several scholars argued that a heavy dependence on the traditional training programs can have many negative consequences on kindergarten instructors' performance on and satisfaction with their training experience (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; McGorry, 2003; Wallace, 2003; Palloff & Pratt, 2007; Liaw & Huang, 2013; Lister, 2014; Kurucay & Inan, 2017 and Gündüz & Işman, 2018). For example, when English is learnt at the early stage, it is mostly believed that speaking skills are one of the most important skills needed for their success. However, Gündüz and Işman (2018) stated that traditional training programs overemphasize language receptive skills (listening and reading) at the cost of language productive skills (Speaking and writing).

Training programs success at the content, design and delivery levels could be investigated and evaluated according to the following definite criteria:

- Slomanson (2014), Bernard (2015), DeLozier and Rhodes (2017) and Kurucay and Inan (2017) stated that teachers' needs should be analyzed and considered as the basis for developing these courses.
- The design of training courses lacks flexibility which Reidsema, Kavanagh, Hadgraft and Smith (2017) and Lee and Wallace (2018) described as the byproduct of designing such courses in a task-based form.
- Abeysekera and Dawson (2015), O'Flaherty and Phillips (2015), Rodriguez (2015) and Namaziandost and Çakmak (2020) indicated that evaluating the methodology associated with training courses has proved to be frustrating since teaching has been lecture-based for most of the instructional practices.
- Developing instructors' reading skill is over-emphasized and the other three skills has been given little attention although developing speaking skills are among the most repeatedly laid objectives associated with training kindergarten teachers (Gilakjani, 2016; Koroglu & Cakir, 2017; Lo & Hew, 2017; Long, Cummins & Waugh, 2017; Molnar, 2017 and Park & Park, 2018).
- Odisho (2014), McCarthy (2016), Reid (2016) Lo & Hew (2017), Long, Cummins & Waugh (2017) and Molnar (2017) criticized such training programs because of traditional activities. Incorporating technology-based approaches such as web-based instruction and blended learning was recommended.
- Obari and Lambacher (2015), Mehring (2016), Lo and Hew (2017) and Deng (2018) inquired about the extent to which IT is absent or even poorly incorporated in kindergarten training programs.
- A natural outcome of the many drawbacks in kindergarten training programs, instructors are demotivated to participate in developing their language skills and are dissatisfied with the entire training experience (Long, Cummins & Waugh, 2017 and Lee & Wallace, 2018).

Satisfied teachers are active and motivated and are more likely to accomplish their course cognitive goals (Long, Cummins & Waugh, 2017 and Lee & Wallace, 2018). McCarthy (2016) and Lee and Wallace (2018) indicated that the key factors that influence learners' satisfaction included program evaluation, trainer's performance, and teacher-trainer interaction. Such factors were also classified by Lee and Wallace (2018) into personal variables, institutional variables and circumstantial variables. Hamdan, McKnight, McKnight and Arfstrom (2013), McCarthy (2016) and Long, Cummins and Waugh (2017) concluded that teachers' satisfaction with their training programs was a significant predictor and at the same time a basic element that should be considered when effective learning in general and skill development in particular are the outstanding goals.

Additionally, training programs were criticized by Lage, Platt and Treglia (2000), Rahimy and Safarpour (2008), Karariga and Knox (2012) Kardaş and Yeşilyaprak, (2015) and Hao and Lee (2016) since skill development seemed to be limited to reading skills. Speaking well, thereupon, is misperceived as a natural outcome to listening attentively to proficient trainers in lecturer-based settings. Additionally, numerous drawbacks characterizing most kindergarten training programs such as the inconsideration of the basic program design prerequisite of devaluating needs analysis, overemphasizing the reading skill, devaluating productive skills by addressing them as byproducts, authenticity poor consideration in addition to the minimized communication and collaboration opportunities. Therefore, the present study attempts to develop teachers' speaking skills and program satisfaction through the flipped classroom.

Thus, the flipped classroom instructional model has a significant impact on the English proficiency development of EFL

kindergarten teachers across a variety of areas. The flipped classroom is one of the alternatives in education and the current learning revolution that utilizes internet technology in the learning process. The flipped classrooms were used to improve EFL kindergarten instructors' teaching skills. The flipped classroom increases EFL kindergarten teachers interest and motivation to teach English, gave children opportunities to study independently at home before face-to-face learning in class. Children and teachers interact with each other and collaborate, so that learning activities in the classroom become more effective, efficient, and student-centered learning. EFL kindergarten teachers and learners can spend more time discussing each other and collaborating to complete learning materials at the same time.

Consequently, we can state that the studies on flipped classrooms in foreign language education have been increasing in line with the integration of technology into education. We expect these findings to contribute to the studies conducted on flipped classroom models and EFL kindergarten teachers. Thus, this paper is thought to promote the identification of gaps in the research area and support future studies.

2.5. Context of the problem

For investigating and documenting kindergarten teachers' actual situation about speaking skills, a pilot study was implemented. The study aimed at providing preliminary evidence on the pre-service teachers' speaking skills. A total of 35 kindergarten teachers studying a pre-service training program (regardless of the gender variable) were required to respond in an online delivery mode of a 10-minute single speaking task associated with their field of study. Teachers' responses were evaluated according to an analytic grading rubric designed. The main results based on the rubric administration could be summarized in the following table:

Table 1: Kindergarten teachers' performance on the speaking skills analytic grading rubric

No	Assessment Criteria	Excellent to Good		Good to Average		Fair		Needs Much Improvement		Total Scores	Skill Performance
		Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores		
1	Content	30- 27		26- 22		21- 17		16-13		502	47.8%
		Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores		
		1 (2.9%)	27	2 (5.7%)	44	3 (8.6%)	51	29 (82.9%)	380		
2	Pronunciation	20- 18		17-14		13-10		9-7		336	48%
		Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores		
		3 (8.6%)	54	4 (11.4%)	58	6 (17.1%)	66	22 (62.9%)	158		
3	Vocabulary and Grammar Usage	20- 18		17-14		13-10		9-7		349	49.9%
		Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores		
		4 (11.4%)	72	4 (11.4%)	57	7 (20%)	76	20 (57.1%)	144		
4	Vocal Aspects	25- 22		21- 18		17- 11		10- 5		434	49.6%
		Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores		
		3 (8.6%)	66	6 (17.1%)	118	7 (20%)	79	19 (54.3%)	171		
5	Organization of Ideas	5		4		3		2		108	61.7%
		Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores	Teachers	Scores		
		5 (14.3%)	25	7 (20%)	28	9 (25.7%)	27	14 (40%)	28		
Total		16 (9.1%)	244	23 (13.1%)	305	32 (18.3%)	299	104 (59.4%)	881	1729	49.4%

The above table shows that only (9.1%) of the pilot study participants got excellent to very good, (13.1%) got good to average, (18.3%) got fair and (59.4%) out of the study participants' speaking needs much improvement. Besides, teachers' speaking performance according to a descending order started with organization of ideas (61.7%), followed by vocabulary and grammar usage (49.9%), vocal aspects (49.6%), pronunciation (48%) and the least developed skill was that associated with content creation (47.8%). Finally, kindergarten teachers' overall performance on the speaking task according to the analytic grading rubric scored (49.4%).

Outcomes of the above-mentioned evaluation and discussion of the current problematic situation regarding training courses presented to kindergarten teachers support the outcomes of the questionnaire administered for studying definite characteristics of the subjects at a certain point in time. The questionnaire aimed at measuring kindergarten teachers' program course satisfaction level. A sample of 42 teachers were asked to respond to a 30-point questionnaire on an EFL training program that addressed the following three dimensions:

- The training program placement, timing, registration, goals, content, methods, helpfulness, and relevance.

- The program trainer's characteristics, skills, and support.
- Instructional Tools, Facilities, technologies, and Assessment.

Table 2: Kindergarten teachers' program satisfaction

Satisfaction Criteria	Grading Score (5)		Grading Score (4)		Grading Score (3)		Grading Score (2)		Grading Score (1)		Total Score	%
	Teachers	Score										
The Training Program Placement, Timing, Registration, Goals, Content, Methods, Helpfulness, & Relevance	4 9.5%	20	5 11.9%	20	9 21.4%	27	12 28.6%	24	12 28.6%	12	103	44.7%
Trainer's Characteristic, Skills, and Support	8 19%	40	13 31%	52	11 26.2%	33	6 14.3%	12	4 9.5%	4	141	67.1%
Instructional Tools, Facilities, Technologies, and Assessment	9 21.4%	45	7 16.6%	28	10 23.8%	30	8 19%	16	8 19%	8	127	60.5%
Total	21 16.6%	105	25 19.8%	100	30 23.8%	90	26 20.6%	52	24 19%	24	371	58.9%

The above table shows that only (16.6%) of the study participants are strongly satisfied with their training program, (19.8%) are satisfied with their presented program, (23.8%) hold a neutral position, (20.6%) are dissatisfied, and (19%) are strongly dissatisfied. Besides, teachers' satisfaction level according to a descending order started with the trainer's competence and performance (67.1%), followed by instructional tools, facilities, and assessment (60.5%), and the least developed satisfaction level was that associated with training program elements which scored (44.7%). Finally, kindergarten teachers' overall satisfaction level scored 58.9%. Such findings on teachers' low satisfaction rate is underlined as a serious problem by a number of researchers such as Lage, Platt and Treglia (2000), Rahimy and Safarpour (2008), Karariga and Knox (2012), McKnight, McKnight and Arfstrom (2013), McCarthy (2016) and Long, Cummins and Waugh (2017) and Lee and Wallace (2018). Such satisfaction, to Hao and Lee (2016) is the perception of enjoyment and accomplishment in the academic environment.

Teachers' satisfaction was described by Lee and Wallace (2018) as the resulting attitudes and evaluation of the instructional experience. Such psycho-cognitive factor, according to Kavanagh, Hadgraft and Smith (2017), has been acknowledged as an important factor in estimating the effectiveness of a course although teachers' satisfaction has not necessarily been associated with their achievement.

2.6. Statement of the problem

In the discussions of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), special attention is paid to kindergarten teachers. Research on teaching speaking reported during the last three decades in the field provides evidence for paying the due attention to kindergarten teachers. However, with the recent findings of a close relationship between the flipped classroom and EFL skills in many learning contexts, the specific skill of speaking and the phenomenon of teacher satisfaction need empirical investigations to discover the nature and facts about this relationship.

Low effectiveness of many kindergarten training programs in addressing the main goals of lowering speaking anxiety, creating academic settings where teachers interact and enhance their specialized knowledge and speaking skills using authentic materials is evident in many investigations and studies.

2.7. Significance of the study

Studies worldwide have found that who are teachers who are less satisfied with their training programs are less interested in developing their language skills. Research into teacher satisfaction has a great effect and value because less dissatisfaction causes little commitment and productivity, reduced ability to meet student needs, and poor skill development attempts. Developing kindergarten teacher's speaking skills, motivation and satisfaction should be highly targeted and included in their training opportunities. With this claim, it is possible to assume that difficulties in developing speaking skills poses more challenges to kindergarten teachers too.

Additionally, since there is not enough research on the relationship between EFL kindergarten teachers' speaking skills and flipping the classroom, this study is set out to investigate how flipped classrooms would develop pre-service kindergarten

teachers' speaking skills and their program satisfaction.

2.8. Questions of the study

The present study is an attempt at answering the following main questions:

1. What are the speaking skills kindergarten teachers should have?
2. What are the features of the pre-service kindergarten teachers' program?
3. How far is the flipped classroom effective in developing pre-service kindergarten teachers' speaking skills?
4. How far is the flipped classroom effective in developing pre-service kindergarten teachers' program satisfaction?

2.9. Hypotheses of the study

Based on reviewing the literature and the study key goals and questions, the study sought to verify the following hypotheses:

1. There are statistically significant differences at $p < .05$ between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the post speaking test.
2. There is no statistically significant difference at $p < .05$ between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the post program satisfaction questionnaire.

2.10. Rationale of the study

This research study aims at describing the general insights, techniques and procedures of using the flipped classroom that a teacher can apply in teaching speaking to young learners in which it can also improve both learner's motivation and engagement. The research topic meets the current issues and time. The study presents a certain interest of mine as a person who has been excited about keeping in the area.

The aim of the study is to find out how effectively using the flipped classroom helps enhance learners' speaking skills, and to figure out their opinions of using the flipped classroom as well as challenges they might face when applying the technology for teaching speaking English. As previous studies have not investigated whether the flipped classroom is a successful instructional technique to blend with training programs assigned for pre-service kindergarten teachers. This study provided teachers with a quantitative perspective of the effectiveness of the flipped classroom and feedback that could help improve their own pedagogy in learning and teaching speaking skills.

2.11. Significance of the study

The study is expected to be beneficial to training program designers and practitioners within kindergarten teaching since it informs them on how analyzing teachers' needs would take place. It also guides them in determining the goals and objectives of training programs, defining content selection criteria, selecting, and developing materials, organizing the content, evaluating the program, and allowing for its improvement. An additional contribution is associated with teachers through attempting to develop their speaking skills and program satisfaction. For more explanation, several considerations that would give value to the present study are provided:

- Providing a model on how to specify the training program content in terms of purposefully designed and well-selected tasks to help teachers focus on meaning.
- Converting a F2F lecture-based training program to a flipped classroom model for achieving the target goals effectively.
- The study provides kindergarten practitioners with a flipped classroom model on integrating the four language skills rather than overemphasizing the reading skill (language skills integration rather than language skills segregation).
- The study provides practitioners with a need-based training program script that blends F2F and online instruction for developing learners' speaking skills and satisfaction.
- Suggesting valid and reliable speaking skills test and assessment grading rubrics in addition to a satisfaction scale that kindergarten practitioners can practically use to diagnose and evaluate teachers' speaking skills and satisfaction.

2.12. Definition of key terms

Kindergarten teachers

Kindergarten teachers are tutors working with young children ages four through six, promoting learners' academic, physical, and social development. They should share a passion for children, child development, and teaching. They should

also be able to balance having fun with maintaining control of the classroom.

Program satisfaction

Program satisfaction is the perception of enjoyment and accomplishment in the learning environment. It is a psycho-cognitive byproduct of the program study experience that reflects to what extent learners' attitudes and feelings are positive and to what extent their evaluations are marked with accomplishment. Estimating learners' or trainees' satisfaction with a definite program aims at integrating their feedback on a definite program for evaluating its effectiveness, redesigning, or improving it and developing the program to go with their needs, expectations, and program design and implementation criteria.

Speaking skill

Speaking is a language productive skill that entails constructing and sharing meaning through the appropriate use of verbal and non-verbal means of communication. It is influenced by the interaction context in which it occurs and by the learners' linguistic and psychological variables, and it aims at enabling learners to be language users capable of expressing their intended oral messages fluently and accurately in meaningful contexts. Thus, speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information.

Flipped classroom

A flipped classroom- the reverse of traditional classes – is a type of blended learning where learners are introduced to content at home and practice working through it later at academic settings. A flipped classroom, thus, flips, or reverses, traditional teaching methods as the online portion of the course is used to share new information before class time. Its key procedures are:

- Establishing spaces and time frames that permits learners to interact and reflect on their learning.
- Giving learners opportunities to engage in meaningful activities without the instructor being central.
- Scaffolding these activities and making them accessible to all learners through differentiation and feedback.
- The instructor's making of himself available to all learners in real time as needed.
- Conducting ongoing formative assessments during class time through observation and by recording data to inform future instruction.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Design of the study

The study is mainly quantitative. The design of the present study is quasi-experimental which is based on manipulating the independent variable and measuring its effect on the dependent variable (Torchim, 2003). The pretest-posttest control group design, as shown in figure (3), was used to investigate the effectiveness of the flipped classroom mode in developing pre-service kindergarten teachers' speaking skills and program satisfaction.

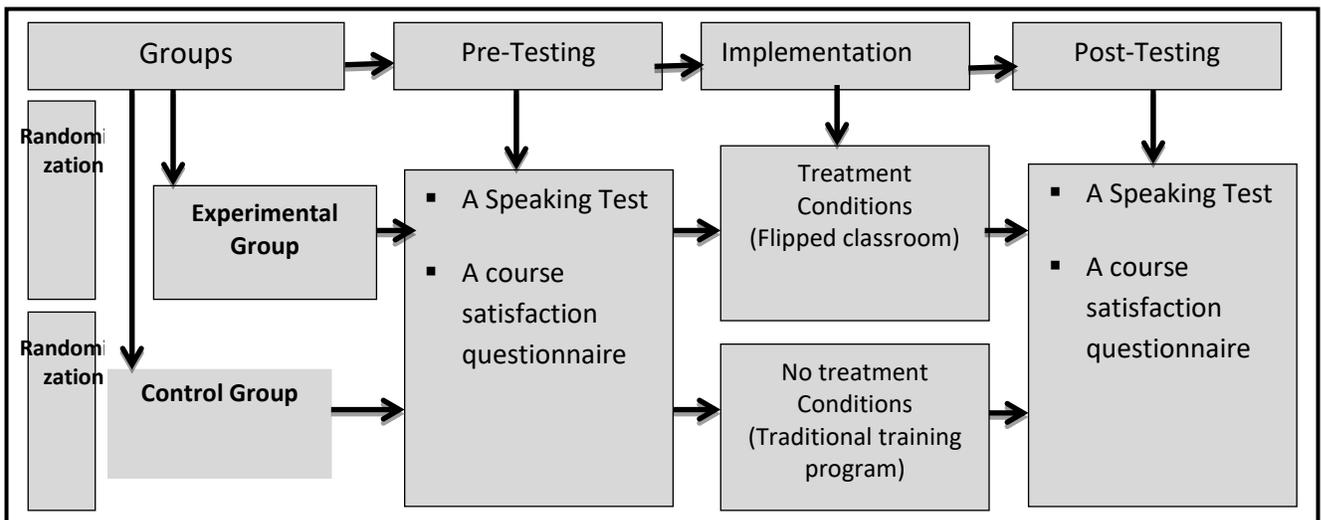


Fig. 3: The research design used in the study (Source: original)

3.2. Variables of the study

- The independent variable: In the current study, the independent variable is the flipped classroom mode.
- The dependent variables: They are also called the manipulated or the experimental variables (Torchim, 2003). The dependent variables of the current study are kindergarten teachers’ speaking skills and program satisfaction

3.3. Instruments and materials of the study

The current study made use of the following instruments for data collection and treatment investigation:

- A needs analysis questionnaire.
- A speaking test (based on a speaking skills checklist and scored using an analytic assessment scoring rubric).
- A program satisfaction program scale.

The speaking checklist.

The speaking checklist has two sections; the first section deals with the main skills of speaking. The second section underlies the sub-skills associated with the main skills that learners have to exhibit when speaking English. The speaking checklist was submitted to a jury of staff members at the curriculum and methodology department to identify its content and face validity. The checklist was approved after rephrasing some minor sub-skills for achieving more clarity and facility. Finally, the final version was administered.

The speaking skills test

The speaking test was developed by the researcher and administered as a pretest to get evidence on the equivalence of the experimental and control groups before the experiment to gauge teachers’ level in the target speaking skills. The test was also administered as a posttest to determine whether the flipped classroom resulted in changes in this dependent variable. The test was designed on the basis of considering the speaking checklist.

The skills which the test examined were selected making use of the literature reviewed. Also, the international standards on EFL instruction such as the standards suggested by the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) were considered. While section one takes the form of oral presentation skills, section two deals with conversation skills. The test was piloted for investigating its validity and difficult vocabulary and complex sentence structure were avoided. The preliminary form of the test was administered to a pilot of kindergarten teachers and no problems with clarity or comprehensibility were reported. Regarding time allocation, the researcher computed the mean time spent by the first and the last learners to finish the test.

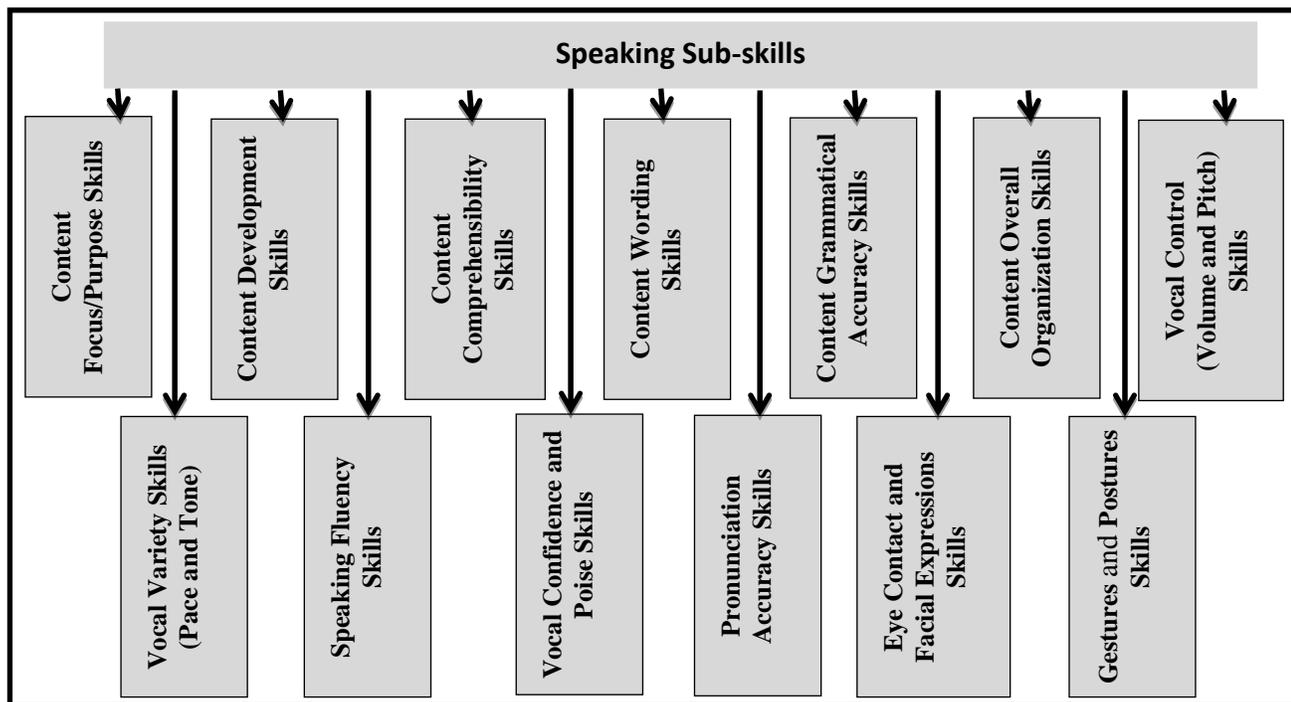


Fig. 4: Speaking main skills included in the checklist (Source: original)

The test was submitted to the jury members to judge its validity in terms of content validity to determine whether it covers a representative sample of the skills to be measured and that the skills are logically put in order (i.e. content validity which is determined by a review of the items and not through using statistical analyses). Besides, the test appears to be assessing the intended skills and sub-skills under study (i.e. face validity which is also a non-statistical validity technique).

Inter-raters reliability (also called observer reliability and it assesses the degree to which two different raters agree in their assessment decisions and so they independently score the same responses) was calculated. Inter-raters reliability was calculated using Cooper's ratio (Cooper & Cross, 1988) and it estimated .857 (a high reliability coefficient).

An analytic assessment scoring rubric was developed. The two major elements included in the speaking rubric of the current study are speaking skills marking criteria (elements considered in judging the quality of learners' speaking skills) and speaking skills grading standards (descriptive statements about the level of each criterion). There are five levels of performance when providing learners with feedback on their speaking skills. These levels were (88–100) = A, (75–87) = B, (62–74) = C, (50–61) = D and (1–49) = F. The score 4 refers to the advanced level, 3 refer to proficient, 2 refers to beginner and 1 refers to an unacceptable performance level. The present rubric is a four-point scoring guide.

The program satisfaction scale

For the purposes of investigating the effectiveness of the flipped classroom mode in developing kindergarten teachers' satisfaction a scale was developed. The scale belongs to Likert-type or frequency scales, which assume that the strength/intensity of experience could be expressed on a continuum from strongly agree to strongly disagree, and thus responses could be measured to identify degrees of agreement (Creswell, 2003). Two types of statements were included;

- The first type included statements whose indication was positive.
- The second type included statements whose indication was negative.

As for developing the scale, reviewing the literature in addition to the outputs of the needs analysis questionnaire guided and illuminated creating and developing the items of the scale.:

- The first step in developing the scale was to identify the purpose of the scale.
- Identifying the main measured constructs and their sub-constructs.
- Creating a set of potential scale items that can be rated on a 1-to-5 disagree-agree response scale.
- For estimating the validity of the scale, it was submitted to specialists in the field of TEFL and psychology.
- The second draft of the scale was administered to a pilot sample other than the study participants.
- The test-retest-reliability coefficient (the coefficient of stability) of the scale was calculated using SPSS version 22.
- Using Pearson Formula, reliability coefficient estimated 0.807.
- The internal consistency of the scale was measured using Cronbach's Alpha and estimated .802 which proved that the scale was reliable for measuring the intended constructs.

3.4. Procedures of the study

Based on considering the research problem, questions and hypotheses, the following procedures were followed:

The pre-experimentation stage:

- Studying and analyzing the theoretical background and related studies on kindergarten teachers' needs and problems, training program characteristics and requirements, speaking skills, program satisfaction, flipped classrooms principles and merits, implementation and effectiveness.
- Implementing a training program that is based on the flipped classroom model.
- Designing, piloting, validating, and estimating reliability of the study instruments.
- Randomly selecting the sample participants for the study, who participated in the study different procedures, and randomly assigning them to the experimental group and the control group and pre-testing them on the study instruments.

The experimentation stage

As for the control group participants, they studied the traditional F2F lecture-based program. Conducting the experiment on the experimental group whose members are presented to the flipped classroom model. Kindergarten teachers are taught in

traditional face-to-face setting with traditional methods. Basically, in the experimental group teachers are taught by trainers using a flipped classroom method, in which teachers are given video for listening tasks and speaking questions for discussion related to the video before the face-to-face sessions takes place. Then, teachers would give the answers to the listening task and present their ideas about the required speaking questions in front of the group. The trainer collects the entire ideas from teachers and have further discussions with them.

The post-experimentation stage

- Post administration of the study instruments to both the control and experimental groups for estimating the effectiveness of the proposed intervention in developing teachers' speaking skills and program satisfaction.
- Statistical analysis of the data, making use of t-test for assessing whether the means of the two groups have been statistically different from each other. The effect size has also been computed.
- Drawing conclusions, recommendations, theoretical and practical implications, and suggestions for further research.

4. Results of the study

This section deals with findings of the current study and aims to verify the study hypotheses. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version.22) was used for statistically analyzing these results. Findings of these analyses are discussed and interpreted, and conclusions are indicated. Results of this study are presented by relating them to the study hypotheses.

4.1. The first hypothesis.

There would be no statistically significant difference at $p < .05$ between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the post speaking test.

Table 3: Results of the independent sample t-test on the speaking test

No.	Skills	Groups	Means	N	SD	t-value	Df	Significance	Cohen's d.
1	Presentation Skills	Post. Exp.	16.718	32	1.224	26.159	65	Significant $\alpha=.01$	7.441
		Post. Cont.	8.371	35	1.373				
2	Conversation Skills	Post. Exp.	16.031	32	1.307	24.488	65	Significant $\alpha=.01$	5.953
		Post. Cont.	8.857	35	1.088				
3	Total	Post. Exp.	32.749	32	3.483	46.140	65	Significant $\alpha=.01$	09.320
		Post. Cont.	17.228	35	4.192				

For verifying the validity of this hypothesis, *t*-test was used to compare the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the speaking skills post-test. Data analysis of learners' post-test scores shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the speaking test in favor of the experimental one. Since the groups were homogenous (the equal variance option was assumed) in terms of speaking skills before the experiment, it was concluded that this difference can be attributed to the treatment which has proved to be effective in developing kindergarten teachers' speaking skills.

Results indicate a statistically significant difference between the two groups with regard to speaking skills. And so, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative one was assumed indicating that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the post speaking test in favor of the experimental group.

4.2. Discussion and interpretation of the first hypothesis.

The significant difference between the mean scores of the control group and the experimental one supports the effectiveness of the flipped classroom in developing kindergarten teachers' speaking skills. Certain characteristics of the flipped classroom contributed to the interpretation of the development of the experimental group participants on the post speaking test as compared to the performance of the control group participants.

The significant difference between the experimental group pre- and post-mean scores supports the effectiveness of the flipped classroom mode in developing kindergarten teachers' speaking skills. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing have to be all interrelated in the language learning environment. Developing speaking skills in isolation from the other language skills is an out-of-reach and pointless goal. So, skill integration, rather than skill segregation, was emphasized. The flipped classroom mode is one of the major options characterized by and recommended for achieving skill integration.

The flipped classroom made extensive use of the two main categories of authentic material, print and auditory, for allowing teachers to bridge the gap between what takes place in the classroom and the outside world. Such materials are particularly

important for communicative purposes since they reproduce an immersion environment and provide a realistic context for speaking tasks that relate to teachers' needs. Scaffolding involves attending to both the cognitive demands and affective states for facilitating learners' completion of the main task of the session.

It was indicated that the art of flipping the classroom is singular for knowing when to remove the scaffolding since the appropriate removal is essential. At the beginning of each session, teachers were not expected to produce spoken language that they have not been introduced to either explicitly or implicitly. Scaffolding was intended to involve learners, simplify speaking tasks and maintain the completion of these tasks.

Other factors that have also contributed to the development of the experimental group participants' speaking sub-skills in the post assessment included the reflection and consolidation stage at the post-task stage which encouraged teachers to use the task as an input for subsequent tasks, and thus supporting the development of speaking-content oriented skills and vocal control skills. Besides, the increased teacher-to-teacher communication as well as trainer-to-teacher communication supported the development of vocal confidence and poise.

Ongoing feedback by peers and by the trainer with the variable task completion settings whether onsite or online, supported teachers' speaking accuracy and encouraged them to practice speaking fluently and to overcome their speaking anxiety or low self-confidence. Flexibility, which is a major characteristic of the flipped classroom supported teachers' fluency, vocal control and vocal variety as teachers enjoyed the possibility of performing tasks individually, in pairs or groups and were also allowed to choose the role to play.

The control group participants suffered from the different drawbacks of their traditional one-size-fit-to-all course. Low self-confidence, anxiety, uneasiness, reluctance, shyness, minimized accuracy and/or poor vocal control were reflected in learners' speaking. When they were obliged to share their thoughts, even about familiar topics, many of the control group members indicated having nothing to say and preferred using their mother tongue. Teachers found the learning environment threatening as they feared being criticized by the practitioner. The great majority of decisions were made by the practitioner and much of class-time was in the practitioner's voice consumed by practitioner's excessive talking.

Low participation opportunities under the banner of the traditional time-limited class minimized the opportunities needed for developing teachers' speaking skills. Interaction opportunities were limited by the traditional instruction context and class hours. The control group members rarely listened to each other's talk, and conversations degenerated into one teacher after another speaking anxiously or using the mother tongue extensively. Able teachers almost held the floor, as giving every teacher the appropriate amount to practice speaking was out of reach. Lack of sufficient exposure to the target language hindered the development of their speaking skills.

Conversely, the experimental group participants enjoyed the integration of form and meaning and of productive and receptive skills. Kindergarten teachers at the experimental group were scaffolded and motivated to engage in speaking tasks. The integration of authentic materials for developing speaking skills played an important role in developing teachers' speaking skills as they became aware of how language is used in the real world. The flipped classroom allowed teachers' roles to be enlarged and enriched as they took more responsibility and greater control over their learning.

Participants in the experimental group benefited from the flexibility in sequencing tasks, in interacting with peers and with their practitioner, in adding materials, in modifying their language product and in the interaction-setting of time and place. Besides, they acted as self-correctors of their own performance and peer-correctors of their colleagues' performance. In short, the experimental group members made use of the best of both worlds: familiarity and direct interaction of the F2F learning environment and independence and self-paced learning of the online setting. However, the control group members suffered from the limitations imposed by a large class, limited class-time, over-emphasized reading practice, practitioner-centered instruction and, thereupon, one-size-fits-all course which they viewed as irrelevant, boring or pointless. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative one was assumed.

4.3. The second hypothesis.

There would be no statistically significant difference at $p < .05$ between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the post program satisfaction scale.

Table 4: Results of the independent sample t-test on the satisfaction scale

No.	Skills	Groups	Means	N	SD	t-value	Df	Significance	Cohen's d.
1	Satisfaction on the Training Elements	Post. Exp.	17.068	32	1.626	20.298	65	Significant $\alpha=.01$	6.945
		Post. Cont.	9.458	35	1.44				
2	Satisfaction on Trainer's	Post. Exp.	15.938	32	1.627	18.304	65	Significant	4.459

Characteristic	Post. Cont.	9.029	35	1,466			$\alpha=.01$		
3	Satisfaction on Instructional Tools & Facilities	Post. Exp.	15.407	32	1,317	22.421	65	Significant $\alpha=.01$	5.583
		Post. Cont.	8.404	35	1,243				
4	Total	Post. Cont.	48.413	35	3,482	40.682	65	Significant $\alpha=.01$	8.024
		Post. Cont.	26.891	35	4,193				

For verifying the validity of this hypothesis, *t*-test for independent samples was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups on the post satisfaction scale. Data analysis of learners' post-testing scores shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the mean scores of the control group on the program satisfaction scale in favor of the experimental one. Since the groups were homogenous (the equal variance option was assumed) in terms of program satisfaction before the experiment, it was concluded that the difference would be attributed to the treatment, which in turn has proven to be effective in developing kindergarten teachers' satisfaction.

Thereupon, the null hypothesis has been rejected and the alternative one has been assumed indicating that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control one on the program satisfaction post-scale in favor of the experimental group.

4.4. Discussion and interpretation of the second hypothesis

The significant difference between the mean scores of the control group and the experimental one supports the effectiveness of the flipped classroom in developing kindergarten teachers' program satisfaction. Certain characteristics of the flipped mode contributed to the interpretation of the development and outperformance of the experimental group participants on the satisfaction post-scale as compared to the performance of the control group participants.

The significant difference between the experimental group pre- and post-mean scores supports the effectiveness of the flipped classroom in developing kindergarten teachers' program satisfaction. Certain characteristics of the flipped classroom contributed to the interpretation of the development of the experimental group participants on the program satisfaction post-scale. Learner-centeredness is one of main aspects of the flipped classroom stimulated shifting the instructional focus to learners (kindergarten teachers) and resulted in increasing kindergarten teachers' independence.

Acknowledging teachers' interests, needs, preferences and problems resulted in their choices concerning what and how to learn. Consequently, teachers involved with higher satisfaction. Besides, teachers benefited a lot from the satisfactory effect of giving them some control over their learning. What makes the flipped classroom special is that it has been designed in conformity with teachers' *needs* and *preferences* and thus *personalizing* the learning experience by basing instruction on kindergarten teachers' needs and goals.

Teachers have involved with high satisfaction what they have described as important, preferred, desired, enriching, helpful, enjoyable, relevant, and useful at present for academic purposes or later for professional purposes. Authentic materials exposed teachers to real language and culture and participated in developing their satisfaction. Support is encouraging, stimulating and motivating. Academic support was achieved onsite and online through the language practitioner, peers, and task characteristics. Affective support was introduced mainly through flexibility and interaction whether directly (F2F) or online. As for the technical support, it took place through human support, making use of the e-moderator who responded to learners' different problems and frequently asked questions.

Success with less difficult tasks radiated teachers' energy to participate and engage in difficult tasks. Success with minor goals energized learners to move a step forward with grand goals. Practice and mastery opportunities were increased as what took place onsite was complementary with what took place online. And so, learning time that had previously been confined by the classroom boundaries has been extended and enriched.

The control group participants were presented with the traditional program content. So, they did not perceive the instrumental feature of language learning and thereupon they soon became dissatisfied and demotivated. Disconnection between what teachers studied and worked on, on the one hand, and their academic and professional goals, on the other hand, had the negative effect of demotivating them because they did not see the academic or professional value of what they were studying. Because they did not get ample opportunities to reflect on or evaluate their learning experience, they soon became dissatisfied.

In contrast, the participants of the experimental group benefited from the flipped classroom mode which is a learner-centered training program that required them to be active, responsible participants in their own learning according to their own learning pace. The program put learners' interests, goals, and needs forefront and acknowledged their voice as central to the learning experience. The flipped mode allowed kindergarten teachers to view the instrumental value of the program, and the outputs reaped by involving in the online and onsite tasks that the program comprised.

Participants of the experimental group showed higher degree of punctuality as shown in their attendance to F2F class meetings and their ongoing interaction online. Connection between what participants studied and worked on and their academic and professional purposes had a positive impact on stimulating and developing their motivation. Due to the supportive learning environment, they felt included and heard and thereupon their satisfaction was stimulated, developed, and maintained. On the basis of considering the results and interpretations indicated above, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative one was assumed.

Conclusions

Based on the above review on the study results, it has been concluded that the flipped classroom proved to be effective in developing the experimental group participants' speaking skills and program satisfaction. Before the experiment, both group members showed inappropriate speaking skills. Before the experiment, kindergarten teachers' speaking skills in both groups were generally characterized by some identifiable characteristics. Speaking pace was inconsistent, and tone was inappropriate. The focus of the speech content was either implicitly stated or unstated, and main points were hardly identifiable. Sequencing ideas was not coherent and difference between main points and supporting details was blurred. Comprehensibility-supporting strategies (e.g., summarizing, emphasizing key words, rephrasing, etc.) were rarely used or used unsuccessfully. Word choices were almost inappropriate.

After the experiment, teachers' speaking skills developed in a remarkable manner. Clear, energetic, audible, and easy voice was identified. Volume, pace, and pitch varied at key points for supporting the verbal message. Appropriate pronunciation was traced. Effective manipulation of eye-contact, facial expressions, gestures, and postures successfully supported the content and vocal skills of speaking. Comprehensibility supporting strategies were used for facilitating comprehension, and opinions were displayed and supported in a generally tactful manner. Sub-points were appropriately related to the focus of the speech content. Main points were distinct and coherent, and transition from one point to another was used. Language choices were appropriate in a manner that supported the clarity of the spoken message.

Regarding satisfaction, before the experiment participants studied an English training program that overemphasized receptive skills and that is presented by a sage on the stage practitioner. Limited class hours, limited communication opportunities and a mismatch between what took place in class and the world outside resulted in dissatisfaction. Mastering English and being able speakers of English were viewed as an out-of-reach goals. Low expectations for success dominated the scene, and little value of the training program was reported.

After studying under the banner of the flipped classroom, the experimental group participants reported its significance and indicated that it enabled them to be better at the other disciplines and to be more active. Increased involvement in the training program different tasks even optional tasks was graspable. More satisfaction with the program was reported and even after post-testing, participants kept involved, especially online, as was reflected in uploading different materials, persistence in using English when discussing any issue even personal ones, assigning tasks themselves and inviting each other to respond and collaborate, asking the practitioner to assign more tasks.

Recommendations of the study

This study discussed the effectiveness of the flipped classroom in developing the speaking skills of English as a foreign language among kindergarten teachers and their program satisfaction. Some Recommendations are:

- A progress test to investigate the kindergarten teachers' skills during teaching to examine how the flipped classroom affects the teaching skills.
- Future studies can measure the effect of the flipped classroom on English skills, such as speaking, reading, writing, communication, and other subjects among EFL kindergarten teachers.
- Using the flipped classroom to change the EFL kindergarten teachers' role from a sage on the stage to guide on the side and increases class attendance.
- When teaching EFL skills like pronunciation, flipped classroom works as a scaffolding since children can learn the language by watching professional videos of skillful native speaker teachers.
- As a method of teaching, flipped classroom can be integrated with other teaching methods, strategies or techniques to make use of its benefits as it helps them get prepared well before the class and this, in turn, expands their involvement in learning, increases interactive practice and enhance tutor-mentored performance during the class.
- For course developers, using flipped classroom allows for providing the children with a well-organized and professional multimedia-based content gist which encourages self-pacing and self-learning.
- The Effect of the flipped classroom on children' English pronunciation skills.

- The impact of the flipped classroom on developing the teaching skills at the Faculty of Early Childhood.
- Future studies can address EFL kindergarten teachers' perspectives on flipped classrooms through video conferencing.
- Flipped classroom program for developing EFL listening skills among EFL kindergarten teachers.
- Flipped classroom module for developing writing skills at the Faculty of Early Childhood.
- A flipped classroom program through video conferencing to develop the teaching skills among EFL kindergarten teachers.
- It is suggested that there should be further research to be conducted to fill the research gap, among this research is to conduct studies about the impact of the flipped classroom on the development of communication skills of EFL kindergarten teachers.
- Other aspects and disciplines in addition to the skills of kindergarten teachers can be improved using the flipped classroom as an aspect of blended learning.

In conclusion, the experimental group participants made use of the best of both worlds: F2F interaction as well as independence and self-based learning under the banner of the flipped classroom mode that has been based on their academic and professional needs. And so, it proved to be effective in developing pre-service kindergarten teachers' speaking skills and program satisfaction.

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