Contemporary Perspectives on Teaching and Learning English as a Primary Foreign Language at HUFI

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ABSTRACT

This study gives a brief history of the teaching methods and learning English subject as a formal language at Ho Chi Minh City University of Food Industry (HUFI) between two periods: as a college and a university. Over the few past periods, there have been similarities and differences in the frequency of ineffective teaching and learning strategy use for students, and all teachers being the most important stakeholders in teaching language, their contribution to these failures is significant. The paper aims to illustrate why some of the efforts undertaken are successful and why some are not, despite significant investments of time and resources. The researcher has investigated the factors affecting English teaching practices and suggested developing foreign language skills to become one of the key factors helping the university higher education. Sixty non-students helped the researcher focuses on the questions of concepts that motivate learning and teaching English, and various needs of professional knowledge at the tertiary level.

Keywords: the professional strategies, English learning and teaching, higher education

1 Introduction

Teaching is a profession built fundamentally around decision-making processes. Teachers have to make all kinds of decisions before, during, and after teaching. With the Higher Education Reform HUFI, English has gained its prevalent role in the foreign language teaching program at the tertiary level for the last two periods. After taking numerous new language teaching methods for training and approaching different education research perspectives to reintegrate students' learning process, under the impact of using English language skills in higher education, the need to enhance English language teaching and learning has become one of the most important aims of the higher education reform process in HUFI. Faculty of Foreign Language aims to 'formulate a strategy on integration into the international academic community, increase cooperative language learning and bring competitiveness of students' tertiary education.

In order to do this, firstly the curriculum has to organize teaching and learning subjects to understand and communicate well in English.

Secondly, with the goal of creating English language teachers' learning opportunities to improve their qualification for training, understanding and applying these new teaching methods to help students to acquire linguistic competence are necessary to teachers working in HUFI.

Since decision-making skills take knowledge and experience to develop, teachers should have a good lesson plan with a clear purpose for each topic of their teaching in order to make educated choices.

The blooming of studying English in Vietnam has caused HUFI, even all universities a number of problems which can be presented below. At HUFI, the results of teaching and studying English are evaluated in grammar and reading comprehension. Therefore, the whole education system has not really invested effectively to teach this language focusing on important skills, such as listening, communicating, and writing. In summary, there is a quality standard that achieves effective foreign language learning of students at HUFI teachers base instructional decisions on their own practical theories shaped by a range of interacting factors inside the classroom. Consequently, teachers of adult learners showed a slight alteration in an activity on

the spot to avoid a certain subject brought up by the class. Those are reasons to carry out the investigation of the current factors affecting the English teaching and learning practices at HUFI.

2   Literature review

This research aims to investigate the factors affecting the teaching and learning of English at HUFI. It aims to find some possible answers to the question of why the efforts to enhance English teaching in the system have failed and to suggest some possible solutions to improve the current situation.

This paper represents part of the findings from a larger study, which looks at the ways to enhance graduate employability at HUFI over a period of time. The study adopted a qualitative approach and wanted to look at the problem from the students' and graduates' perspectives. These participants have been considered the 'center of the study' in the Vietnamese HES by (Tran, 2013). She also said that students are the ones who receive the services provided by their universities in the process of reforming English teaching and learning. It is also worth mentioning that this study excluded the teaching and learning of English in English-specialized programs of the Faculty of Foreign Language at HUFI. According to some major findings of the reviewed studies presented below, the major authors who give effective methods meet the need of the Faculty of Foreign Language. According to Tran, T. T. (June). (2013), good motivation is considered a positive factor that may lead to the successful process of enhancing English teaching at university.

The teachers have to apply interactive teaching methods and create different language games for students to join actively in the lectures. It's a difficult issue for all teachers to face for a long time with the large class size and even the time limitation. Therefore, educational researchers have become more aware of the fact that teachers' slight alterations in teaching activities play a significant role in their instructional choices.

The principles of teaching for the 21st century identified by Donovan, M. S., & Bransford, J. D. (2005), teachers must address and build upon prior knowledge to promote student learning students learn more effectively when they are aware of how they learn and know how to monitor and reflect on their own learning. The principles of teaching show complete mastery of a positive learning atmosphere developed through understanding of the lesson not only memory or recall. Besides, the teacher gives opportunities to students to extend and apply their learning. Moreover, the nine effective instructional strategies of Research-based Teaching help students develop understanding and extend knowledge (Donovan, M. S., & Bransford, J. D., 2005). The effective ways of creating a positive environment are:

- Setting learning objectives and providing specific feedback in relation to the objectives
- Reinforcing student's individual effort which is the most reliable way to achievement and providing genuine recognition
- Employing cooperative learning. To help students develop an understanding of lessons that have been learned.
- Focusing on what is important by giving explicit cues, asking questions, and preparing graphic organizers.
- Using non-linguistic representations such as graphic organizers, physical models or manipulative, pictures, mental pictures, illustrations, pictographs, and kinesthetic activities
- Summarizing and note taking
- Assigning meaningful homework and providing correct practice. Two ways to help students extend and apply their learning are
- Identifying similarities and differences
- Generating and testing hypotheses.

The researchers have learned that Research-based Teaching and Learning helps to internalize and practice research conducts and methods, skills such as formulating a precise question and processing and monitoring

a research process. Students attain abilities in dealing with uncertainty, independence, teamwork, and organizational skills. Students need experiences that allow them to collaborate, communicate effectively, be open to diverse perspectives, and incorporate group feedback into their schoolwork. The ability to work collaboratively and creatively with others has become an essential skill for long-term success. A future teacher can apply Research-based Teaching and Learning by collecting evidence of gains in student knowledge and problem-solving capability in the specific curriculum content; and evidence of the opportunities provided by the design for students to experience collaboration, self-regulation, and skilled communication. Teaching and learning knowledge and skills by knowledge construction and real-world problem solving and innovation supported through collaboration, self-regulation, use of and skilled communication. Students all meet three issues when learning English communication as poor pronunciation, lack of vocabulary and grammatical structures with communication, and lack of confidence in the research findings by (THAO, 2022). Moreover, a researcher from Utusan Malaysia recorded "Problems and Solutions" where 70% of the respondents were found to be weak in English (Hashimah Jalaluddin et al., 2009). Among the reasons that have been identified are linguistics and environmental factors. Hence, efforts to improve the pedagogy, linguistic knowledge of teachers, and learning strategies should be stepped up in line with the nation's aim to build and accelerate the development of quality human capital. Structural differences between English and Vietnamese have also been identified as another problem faced by students in learning English. In addition, weaknesses in morphology and syntax, which are part of the main thrusts in language learning, further exacerbate the problem. An environment that is not conducive to language learning further adds to the problem.

The review of the analysis of recent research and publications on the educational environment allows teachers to state that the problem of forming the professional competence to support students and teachers in utilizing national and foreign opinion is covered aspect by aspect. Moreover, the theoretical issues of forming the professional competence of future teachers are the need to build the scientific works in maintaining and organizing training sessions for faculty on teaching features of teaching with state-of-the-art services, solving the problem of forming and developing the digital competence of a teacher in media technologies which are essential for an educational institution.

Today, we can see how science and technology have changed life at an unprecedented pace. This change and transformation can be seen in many fields including health, defense, food, technology, and education. The 21st century, which is called the information age, has altered expectations from individuals to a different perspective in the globalized world. It is not enough to learn and memorize knowledge, individuals are expected to be able to multi-task and be well-equipped, analyze the knowledge, make interference, and use the information to solve problems encountered in many sectors. It is known that many international institutions categorized 21st-century skills. This study tries to determine to what extent current skills are included in the social studies curriculum updated in 2018 on the basis of the classification determined by the standard model which has been commonly discussed in the literature. The following research questions have reached the main target mentioned above. When planning your questions, try to anticipate possible student responses. Anticipating student responses should help in your planning by forcing you to consider whether the phrasing is accurate, whether questions focus on the goal you have in mind, and whether you have enough flexibility to allow students to express ideas in their own words. The survey provides information on the following research questions to achieve the study objectives:

- What are some typical misconceptions that might lead students to incorrect answers?
- What will instructors' strategy be for handling incorrect answers?
- What will instructors do if students do not answer?

3   Methodology

As known at Food Industry College, the aim of teaching and learning English programs was to take the exam, not focus on other skills, such as listening and speaking. This skill contributes to reducing the quality of English teaching. As an English teacher at university for a long time, the responsibility is to collect information about teaching and learning English in school to introduce people, including the causes and results, and the ways to improve these skills, which can save time for English teachers that want to have an overview before giving the teaching and learning method.

Since reformed and known as Ho Chi Minh City University of Food Industry (HUFI), English has played a vital role in areas of study. The status of English has significantly gained attention in language teaching and learning programs and methods. With projects from Management's university, more and more English-speaking foreigners have come to Vietnam to do business, bringing with them the need for Vietnamese nationals to learn English for intercultural communication.

Moreover, the target actually explores the possible challenges and limitations of teaching today's English in HUFI from the perspectives of ELT teachers. This project is part of a larger-scale research focusing on Vietnamese ELT teachers' reflections on the possible implications of the recent changes within English for their teaching profession.

In general, most students can speak English fluently after graduating from University (HUFI) not only non-majored students but also for majored students.

In the survey evaluation meeting at HUFI, all of the teachers and participants stated that teaching English was a challenging job as students' levels of English were low mainly due to the exam-oriented scheme of the educational system. The English graduates have not met the needs of the job. Many students could not read, write, listen, or speak well. They have always taught and practiced vital skills constantly during class. The needs of the Faculty of Foreign Language stated that only ten percent of students used English skills fluently.

The English proficiency of the non-majored students does not meet the requirements. The testing forms are somewhat different but reflect the general module of ineffective teaching and learning English in the education system at HUFI. Because learners face major challenges in learning to comprehend increasingly more complex materials. Many students find it challenging to communicate with good fluency and comprehension while some teachers feel the time is too short when trying to include teaching and transferring knowledge in their current English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It offers a model of language competence. Therefore, teacher responsibility is necessary for transmitting both knowledge and skills in approaching subjects. The best approach describes how people acquire their knowledge of the language and makes statements about conditions that will promote successful language learning.

There are 3 steps applied in teaching and learning subjects in the classroom.

- Classroom setup: the challenge for the teacher is to create a classroom environment that is bright and cheerful.
- Positive suggestion: it is the teacher's responsibility to compose the suggestive factors in a learning situation, thereby helping students break down the barriers to learning that they bring them with. Teachers can do this through direct and indirect means.
- Learning of experienced conditions: this technique can be defined if the real environment is given excellent opportunities for learning, students can absorb the knowledge of vocabulary effortlessly through the presence in the learning language conditions of posters and advertisements, and so on.

In addition, the research on the current issues of teaching and learning English at HUFI helps to implement theoretical and methodological foundations for the formation of professional competence of future teachers. The aspects of teaching and learning English run smoothly with the help of teachers who are at a

certain pole to make a perfect balance in the process of teaching. Because, for some learners and teachers, it is difficult to get a domain in English skills. Teachers are the supporters of their students' skills. Consequently, an important component of the professional competence of teachers is defined as the facilitator who is nowadays essential for professional activity in a foreign language information and communication space. Therefore, the play also serves as a reward or break after some intense, serious work because it is considered peripheral, and not crucial for students' intellectual development.

With the current infrastructure of most universities in Vietnam, reducing the size of language classes to 15 or 20 students in a class as suggested by Tran, T. T. (June). (2013) does not seem to be feasible. However, according to (Mccarthy, 2004; Văn Nam, 2018) said that a large language class size of 60 or 70 students could be managed by carefully designing class activities and with the help of computer-based activities. This will allow students to receive as much individualized instruction as they need inside and outside of the classroom. Teaching in a large class with students of different levels of understanding and a whiteboard, sometimes a tape player negates all the efforts to try new teaching methods of the teacher. English test design is also another problem. Most English assessments in the system up until recently were still created to double-check the grammar and structures students learnt in the course (Hoang Van Van, 2008)., the rigidity of the exam design and the desire to pass as many students as possible tie the teacher to the textbook provided. It is also hardly possible for them to bring in more interactive and interesting activities due to the time limitation.

Classrooms experience various problems every day that in turn, affect student learning negatively. Although teachers strive to resist these challenges, it is usually hard. Regardless of the techniques employed in the classroom, some factors may never be removed. Nevertheless, schools must work towards reducing the effect of these problems while improving students' learning. Teaching students is a difficult responsibility because there are lots of natural barriers that impede learning. These challenges talked about are one or more of these issues that are faced by HUFI. Some of the reasons suggested by participants in this study leading to the low quality of English teaching at HUFI are:

First, the objective considers the possibilities of introducing modeling at HUFI if there is a disproportionate demand–supply. With crowded students in class, of whom a sizable proportion have a strong desire to learn English, the demand for English language teaching far outstrips the supply of native speakers and competent non-native speaker teachers. It may be useless to present the students with problems suggesting situations that they haven't previously studied but which are familiar to them. To practice the models effectively, we centered on estimating the inconceivable numbers, since this will force the students to use a method and practice them.

Second, as a way to start, a brief history of English language teaching at Food Industry College was taught in some classes as an offered subject. The goals of learning the language seemed to be confined only to passing the final test.

The prevailing method of teaching English at Food Industry College in the past was a structural methodology on lexical grammar, reading, and translation skills. First, teachers introduced the class to a sentence pattern; and then they told them to use substitution and transformation techniques to review this sentence pattern. Students have to provide examples based on this sentence pattern by themselves. As a form of consolidation, It is time for them to translate the given examples from Vietnam into English conversely. Some attention was paid to mastering skills, particularly to improving language accuracy, through the new sentences in the context. The fluency aspect of language teaching needs to sacrifice.

Despite the importance of English in the new context of integration and globalization, English language teaching in class, due to its low quality like students' mixed capacity, has not met the demand for competent English-speaking people. There are some reasons:

- Most of the English teachers are particularly teaching at lower levels that are disqualified.
- Most teachers, except some who are teaching at the college level, have not had a chance to study abroad.
- Most English teachers do not normally communicate in English and cannot keep up teaching that mainly depends on communicative interactions.

Third, the lack of supportive learning environments, teaching facilities, and teaching materials limited the diversity of English which contributed to the constraints and challenges in teaching English at that time at HUFI. Most teachers and students stated that there were not enough teaching facilities to meet their teaching demands, especially when they felt the need to apply new teaching techniques or to update themselves on the recent developments in English. English teachers at HUFI many times recognize that co–workers used textbooks as main guides to teaching methodology. It is inconvenient. All textbooks are mainly imported from foreign countries, however, the major books such as Hotel and Restaurant, and Reading Skill limit the teacher's ability to keep themselves up to date with recent changes within English. Some of the reasons suggested by participants in this study leading to the low quality of English teaching at universities are:

- Too large class size
- Students of different English levels are mixed up
- Poor teaching resources
- Limited class time
- Grammar-structure teaching focus
- Teaching for examination
- Limited time and efforts invested in teaching preparation and teaching renovation of

4   Results and Discussion

The researcher has had the responsibility to promote English at a higher level for many years at HUFI, so the teaching approaches and methods used in the classroom have to be encouraged rather than the methods. Techniques are the specific activities manifested in the class that is consistent in harmony with an approach as well. It is a well-defined procedure used to accomplish a clear activity or task. Therefore, the researcher's experience requires the mastery of skills and concepts to carry out "advanced programs" in which English is to be a medium of instruction. First, an approach gives rise to methods that include techniques like tasks or activities, as it is vital for the presentation of a lesson based on a selected approach. Second, the method is the practical realization of an approach. It includes various procedures and techniques as part of its standard fare. Besides, the technique is the tool of specific methods and strategies to support language learning as video material. It can involve using different materials, activities, and approaches to help language learners develop their skills. It implies a logical arrangement of steps. By using methods, the researcher has recognized some positive studies have improved based on their attitude and the way of interacting in class. They are eager to study anymore and speak better. University students have more active because they take a chance to work with more techniques. In contrast, students at College were more passive in studying as they just worked with their teacher by completing the exercises to finish tasks and got better for their scores. The students at the College had to complete their activities to pass the exam so they felt more tired to study than the students at University when they had a chance to study with technology and motivation from lecturers. From the figure below, it can be seen the percentage between 30% and 70%. They were not equal after applying innovation at university.
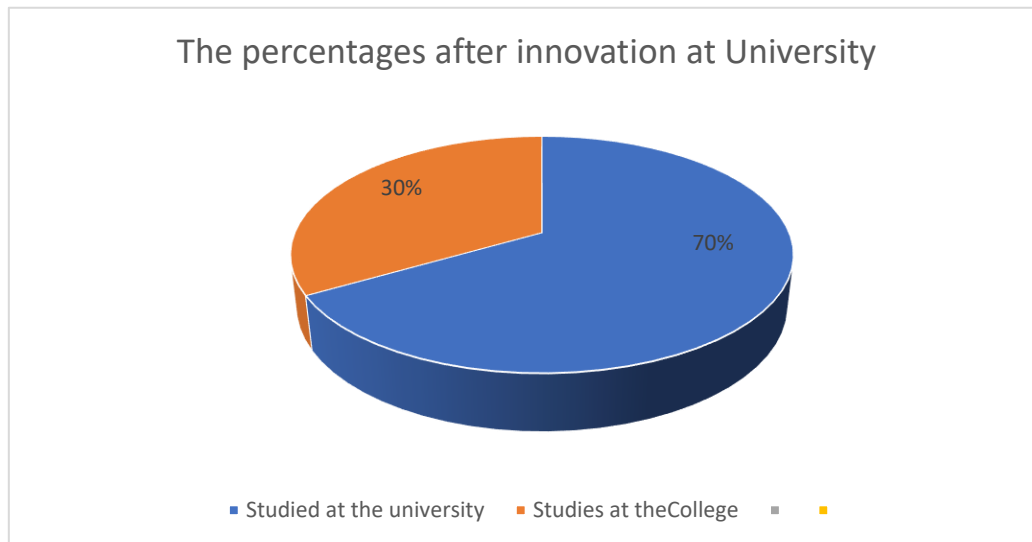
Figure 1: *The results after giving the innovation*

5   Conclusions

To sum up, the present study reveals the process of motivation to successful foreign language learning outcomes. More specifically, this study was undertaken in order to understand how motivation took place to produce successful learning outcomes for EFL students in HUFI. The paper was an attempt to capture the experiences and understanding of the local ELT context using a reflective inquiry approach. Teachers can research, evaluate, and organize their strategies into three experienced teaching skills based on two major steps.

With the evolving role of the English Language globally, the language teaching-learning objectives have changed and the learners in the local context are now pursuing the English language for a variety of reasons. Therefore, all English teachers should explore the problems in universities English teaching, change traditional teaching by taking modern education and teaching theories as guidance, regard reform of teaching contents, teaching model, and teaching approach as breakthroughs, and start from training students' intercultural communication ability, emphasize on cultivating students' English application abilities, especially the listening and speaking competence, and focus on training students' effective learning strategies and humanistic qualities.

A high-quality classroom environment necessitates the possession of all knowledge and expertise by highly qualified teachers. This leads to ELT assuming distinctive forms at different academic levels, educational set-ups, and regional settings; a fact which language teachers and through them the language learners must be consciously aware of in order to approach English language teaching and learning more meaningfully.

6   Declarations

6.1   Study Limitations

The study introduced viral methods for teaching the English language in the classroom at the university. A difference in their abilities and types of learners is a short description of different methods for learning a language. Language is a series of grammatical rules that must be learned one at a time. Learners use the language that they are already using to complete the task, and there is little correction of errors. The goal of this study is to emphasize the importance of learning a foreign language in order to complete tasks successfully. Language is essential for students learning. Indeed, despite the advantages of approach, method, and technique in the curriculum, it does have some limitations. First, no teacher is comfortable being impacted by knowledge. Moreover, trying to interact with and encourage students to think critically

and independently is challenging. In spite of these limitations, the teacher's role has been used to study the issues related to beliefs, perspectives, and personal experiences to promote students' physical, intellectual, and emotional development in learning foreign languages.

As regards work culture, in the future, it would be useful to differentiate between the cultures of the individual, team, and organization. Social interaction, knowledge sharing, and collective problem solving is depending on individuals, and communities When teachers mixed the methodology and principles of the study in order to gain an understanding of a relatively new topic. Personal, social, and institutional knowledge practices may thus all represent different work cultures. However, this study was limited by the structure of the training and the focus of the funding organization, which was to develop organizations by working with the individuals representing them. Thus, it was beyond the scope of the methodology to look at the best approaches to transmitting both knowledge and skills more closely. In addition, the organizations represented very different kinds of structures to face English and Vietnamese problems for students.

Furthermore, the nine effective instructional strategies of Research-based Teaching demonstrated the need for scientifically established scales to assess physical spaces, and related work practices as well as more general strategies and self-regulation regarding knowledge work. For these reasons, this study was restricted to approaching the research questions with a rather simple comparative methodology. However, following this study and in order to serve these needs in the future, a new scale measuring broad self-regulatory skills in multi-locational knowledge work has been developed and piloted.

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6.3   Publisher's Note

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