Communication Skills and Reflection Practice in Smart English Teaching and Learning Environment

A Case Study

Hong-Thu Thi Nguyen
Hanoi Law University, Hanoi, Vietnam
Thuvicnguyen@gmail.com

Abstract—The development of information technology (IT) has made significant innovations in educational quality generally and positive changes in language teaching approaches particularly. Thanks to the support from technology devices, reflective practice (RP) in teaching and learning has become more convenient, especially in smart education environment. This paper is aimed at investigating the evaluation and perception of students on the effects and challenges of using information technology to enhance communication skills and Reflection Practice in teaching and learning English speaking skills and recommending some technology-assisted teaching strategies. In order to examine this, a set of questionnaires, interviews and reflection journals were administered to 80 English major students at Hanoi Law University and six teachers who have taught English speaking skills. The findings showed that using technology-driven teaching approach in RP helped learners achieve more benefits for communication skills.

1   Introduction

In the Internet era, human beings have constantly created breakthroughs thanks to the prominent benefits of high-tech devices. In education, even though there are still some skeptual ideas about the effectiveness of IT, educators and practitioners have chosen IT as an effective solution to pedagogical problems in global education environment. The digital world we are living in is changing rapidly and thus the approaches to teaching and learning need renovating to meet the requirements of integration and globalization. The information technology obviously brings a lot of significant assistances in exploiting knowledge and training skills as Wilson et. all [1] asserts that anyone who is interested in improving the quality of foreign language teaching and learning in the 21st century needs to acknowledge that learning activities based on computer technology have helped to perfect the process of grasping, absorbing the language of learners in the most effective way. Moreover, mobile

learning is necessary for lifelong learning and mobile devices are accessible smart tools to learn regardless of time and place among the students [2]. Especially, in the Covid-19 outbreak context, it is imperative to embed IT in education with the online teaching and learning approaches to reduce the spread and negative consequences of the pandemic. Human beings need to be aware and utilize the various online sources efficaciously to maintain a safe education environment.

There is a consensus that what people needs in learning process goes beyond the formal knowledge and personal experience. It is crucial that a cautious reflection on learning and teaching experience should be put on the priority in classroom, which assists learners and teachers to take a back look on what they performed and made the relevant changes for the goals of lessons. This paper is aimed to discuss the strategies in learning and teaching speaking skills by applying reflective teaching method with the assistance of IT. By the real experiences of teaching English for students of English at Hanoi Law University, the writer identified and analyzed the benefits, impacts, challenges of applying IT systems in smart classroom from students' perspective as well as recommended the strategies to assist teaching speaking skills. The objectives of the research are:

- IT-driven activities used for RP in learning speaking skills
- Effects and drawbacks of using technology applications for RP in learning speaking skills
- Technology-based pedagogical strategies of using IT in learning and teaching speaking skills

2 Review of Literature

2.1 Reflective practice in teaching and learning

Reflection is a broad term, however, in this study it is scoped in education field with pedagogical activities related to learning and teaching English speaking skills. The concept of RP has been defined in many ways from the different authors' perspectives. Reflective practice is the representation of reflection; it is the "practitioner's ability to access, make sense of and learn through work experience to achieve more desirable, effective and satisfying work" [3]. Similarly, Schön [4] considers reflective practice as one's own experiences in which there is a conscious consideration in applying knowledge to practice. Farell [5] reminds that RP is a process in which teacher takes time to look backwards to what happened, find the reasons and the results for the lesson objectives. According to Woerkom [6], reflection is a mental activity aimed at investigating one's own action in a certain situation and involving a review of the experience, an analysis of what happened; why it occurred; anticipating what can be resulted in and how to adapt it. Meanwhile, Ghaye [7] articulates one another component of the reflection process in addition to "review". It is projection, one of the foremost components of reflective practice, in

which teacher predicts and looks forwards to the plans in future in order to make some suitable changes.

Schön [8] suggests two types of reflections: reflection-in-action and reflection- on-action. Reflection-in-action refers to immediate adjustments or improvisation in the midst of the action or in a particular context, while reflection-on-action involves making sense of an event after its occurrence. Analogously, Hatton & Smith [9] mention reflection-in-action as an ongoing process of critically examining past and current practice to facilitate the development of future action. Regarding reflection-on-action, Farrell [5] through classroom observations manifests that reflective practice in post-class discussion made the teacher more aware of her teaching. Sykes and Dean [10] mention the significances students can receive from reflection-on-action such as opportunity to evaluate their actions in the workplace, encouragement to "think about various concepts, events, or interactions over a period of time for the purposes of gaining insights into self-awareness and learning" [11]. Particularly, Gibbs [12] suggests a model of reflection with 8 phases: Initial experience, description. reaction, evaluation, analysis, general conclusions, specific conclusions, and personal action plan
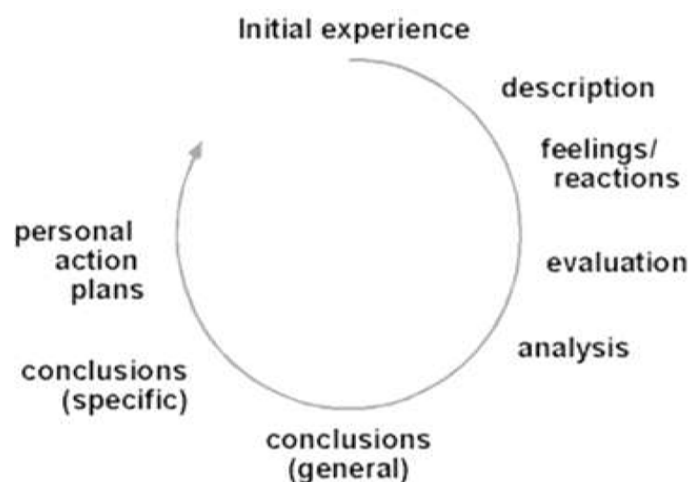

Fig. 1. Reflective model by Gibbs (1988)

The model figures out the specific process of reflection in which a pure description (not judgements) about the object and phenomena comes first, then the practitioner expresses the feeling or reaction to what are happening. Next is the evaluation- good or bad about the experience. After that, an analysis on situation is made to brainstorm the ideas; the general and specific conclusions appear and the last step is planning the appropriate actions in future

In general, reflective practice plays an important role in language teaching "better student learning and more efficient performance" [13]. Thanks to reflection, teachers and learners can realize the gaps between theory and their practices, then take action to handle the problems and "become aware of discrepancies between their immediate

interpretations about what transpires in their classrooms and their retrospective analyses" [14]. Branch & Paranjape [15] manifest that learners get a lot of remarkable benefits from reflective practices such as: knowing their own strengths and weaknesses, in the process of learning and reflection they will find out the constraints, challenges and fears. From that, they will orient their learning methods appropriately and effectively.

In short, reflective teachers may get greater self-awareness about their teaching style and bring about positive changes in their teaching practices. Larrivee & Cooper [16] observe reflective practice as a potential teaching assisting tool with the specific functions such as: contributing the facilitors to decrease the influence of the gap between their own cognition and practices; enhancing the reaction ability to situations from students, improving personal beliefs influencing students. In this paper, the speaking teaching and learning process was attached to both types of reflection: reflection-in-action and reflection- on-action.

2.2   Smart teaching and learning environment

Information technology has changed global education optimistically and offers learners additional opportunities to diversify the pedagogical approaches. Thanks to the outstanding functions of technological devices, traditional classroom turns into smart classroom with the momentous implications going beyond four walls of classroom. Smart education represents the effectiveness in performing technical activities in various fields. In teaching and learning language, the application of information and communication technology (ICT) makes positive changes in knowledge acquisition and teaching methodology. Activities are able to be performed in a virtual or physical learning environment or blended one. Teachers have more opportunities to flexibly design lessons and address the pedagogical problems that the traditional approach could not figure out. Smart education encompasses many teaching and learning methods that enhance the student learning experience "met with changes in the overall education system such as pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, and teacher."[17]. Collis and Moonen [18] suppose that the applications used in education are divided into three groups: Learning resources (including training software, online learning resources, English videos); Teaching aids (such as software, teaching tools, course management, and computer testing system); communication applications (email, interactive websites). According to Nguyen T.T.H., Nguyen T.M. [19], three groups of technology devices can be used in teaching and learning: Smart software systems, Smart hardware systems and smart technologies. The New Medium Consortium [20] demonstrated that IT brings about a lot of benefits in English teaching and learning such as: proactive communication tools stimulation for learning, quick searching and learners' interest. According Uskov et.al [21], there are a number of benefits in 6 levels learners can get from instructors with technological assistance in smart educational environment such as: Adaptation, Sensing, Inferring, Self-learning, Anticipation and Self-organization and Restructuring.

2.3 The need to increase reflection in smart education environment

Recently, the role of learners has changed from passive side to active one with a focus on autonomy so they must be in control of their own learning process from acquiring knowledge, practicing skills and reflection. In the traditional teaching method, students mostly receive the feedbacks from their teachers and sometimes from peers, however with a large number of students in class, teacher cannot cover all. There is a consensus that the goals of learning do not emphasize on the results, but on the process or how they perform the activities in classroom. Reflection is an imperative step in helping learners to have an overview and deep insight into what they did in order to modify and make the factual decisions for learning plans in future. Thanks to the prominence of smart devices, reflective practice obtains the accuracy, quickness and efficiency, which can tackle the constraints in RP and assessment from the traditional learning setting. According to Zhu et al. [22], "the objective of smart education is to improve learners' quality of lifelong learning. It focuses on contextual, personalised and seamless learning to promote learners' emerging intelligence and facilitate their problem-solving ability in smart environments".

Researchers and educators have a great interest in the practice of reflection as a framework for critical thinking. Peter Brown [23] argues that reflection is undertaken as a demanding process in which students gasp the knowledge, retain them in mind and improve what they learnt through reflective activities. Besides the benefits for students, RP also contributes the remarkable advantages for teaching process. Teachers will assess the strong points and weakness of their teaching subjectively and make analysis of emotions, experience, or consequences of actions to improve their practice better in the future. Burton [24] reveals the similar perception that reflective process has been considered as optimum avenue in lifelong professional development.

In the research by Lorna M Dreyer [25], the postgraduates assess the value of reflective practice through digital storytelling in which the data was collected from individual written reflections, and group reflections. The findings showed that pedagogical knowledge alone is not adequate for teachers to offer valuable learning opportunities for all learners. It is integrating digital storytelling in teacher training programmes that can foster the culture of reflective practice for professional development. Yongjiang Zhang [26] argues that WebGL architecture platform is adjacent for users to create interaction, cooperation and reinforces students' skill practice. Zhuang Zhou [27] has a study on Cross Talk and concludes that the integration of the new distance learning model into the teaching of Cross Talk can enhance the teaching effect and improve students' learning attitude. R.M.K. Nambiar & S.M. Thang [28] examined Malaysian teachers' online blogs for reflective practices towards teacher professional development. The findings demonstrate that using blogs brought about some benefits as well as constraints.

3 Method

3.1 Participants

The study was carried out in the speaking classroom (the 2nd course) with 80 English major juniors at Hanoi law university whose English proficiency was at the pre-intermediate level. They were joining the course of speaking 2 in the second semester of the second year. The survey was also delivered to 6 teachers who have taught English speaking subject at Hanoi Law university. Most of them have taught English speaking skills for more than 5 courses.

3.2 Instruments

To collect the data for the study, the author implemented a mixed research method (qualitative and quantitative) with a set of instruments including questionnaires, teaching project, reflective journal and interview as follows:

Questionnaires were directly administered to 80 tertiary English major students in the course of speaking subject from February 2019 to June 2019. The participants were delivered with the questionnaires consisting of the items related to the students' and teachers' perspectives on the appropriateness and effects of using IT in practice reflection for teaching speaking skills in both the previous and current courses (traditional and IT-based sessions). The questionnaires were designed on five- point Likert's scale.

Teaching project: In the course of the subject (10 weeks), the author designed a 5-week IT- assisted teaching project in which social networks, media, software, webs are used to support teaching speaking skill (five first weeks for traditional teaching method). It is aimed to explore students' experiences and perspectives toward using IT for RP in teaching speaking skills.

Reflective journal: Students had a chance to express their attitudes and reflections on how using IT effects on speaking skills by writing an individual journal at the last course with the suggested question "How do you think about the effects of using IT for RP in teaching speaking skills in comparison with the traditional teaching approach?". After writing their opinions, they scored the effect of two approaches based on 10-point scale.

Interview: An interview was conducted to consider the teachers' perceptions towards using IT in teaching English speaking skills and to inquire how to apply IT in RP and teaching speaking skills effectively. From these interviews, the pedagogical strategies were recommended.

3.3 Procedures

In this 10 weeks English speaking skills course, the instructor divided the course into two stages: the first five weeks for the traditional teaching approach and the later 5 weeks for IT – assisted one in which social networks, media, soft wares, webs are

used to support teaching English speaking. In the first five weeks of the course, in the traditional teaching method, students were asked to read the materials to brainstorm ideas for the topics, then present their speech in front of class. In the later five weeks, students were taught with the assistance of IT in which the instructors used the IT-assisted strategies. After finishing the course, the students were asked to keep reflective journals about the learning experience and answer the questionnaires about the previous and current approaches. In the teaching project, the teacher performed the teaching activities with the assistance of IT including:

Designing lessons through IT devices and media. Teacher applied the flipped and blended teaching approaches to teach speaking skill instead of the traditional approach. The students were asked to read the material, search information and make a presentation involved in the topic before class, then when teaching, teacher spent more time for students showing films and videos which contained the situations and scenes related to the speaking themes. Next, the students found out the content and the supported ideas for lesson from the films, analyzed and made some extended comparison with their own previous preparation. For example, when teaching the topic "intercultural communication: problems and solutions", the teacher offered the films such as: "The Silent Truth"- a short film about racism; "The Gods must be crazy" – about cultural conflicts and biases; "Mr. Baseball" – about cultural shock and high low context; a HSDC advertisement and "The Eels". After that, student made a comparison with their presentation to broaden more knowledge and made a reflection-self-assessment for suitable changes.

Using social network to share knowledge and multiply assess. The instructors set up a Facebook group for all the members in class to establish a knowledge exchanging collaborative community. Students were divided into groups. After each lesson, one group posted a summary of what they have learnt about the information in the lesson by PowerPoint and uploaded one video, an article or a film related to the content of the topic they have learnt. After posting, they explained the terms or situations, and the other groups posted the questions to acquire more knowledge. Meanwhile teacher both managed the page and could pose some questions to check understanding of students. When using social networks, besides the teacher's own assessment, teacher based on the number of "like", and "comment" from other viewers to score. Teacher encouraged all the members to give comments and choose 'like' for the best performances. At the end of the course, teacher gave student a list of assessment rubric including the criteria such as meaning of content, the creativeness in presentation, the impact level on communication competence, the number of views, good comments, "like", frequency of attendance or participations in groups. Then, they scored or gave some feedbacks to the other groups' performance

Using some soft wares to create the clips. The clips made by students were related to communication situations and relevant to the contents of the topic. Throughout the course, each group of students were assigned to make two clips at the mid-course and the last-course time. The teacher instructed students to practice speaking themes by asking them to make videos or short films, stories, talk shows about the topics such as: playing role of the visitors visiting another country and they had to face the cultural shocks, conflicts, barriers or intercultural situation in communication. In

addition, students could be asked to make clips to introduce the cultural identities of each areas. Students presented them by posting them on social networks or group network for the other people to watch and give comments to assess and reflect.

Recording is a reflective way for students and teacher to self-assess. In the process of learning, teacher asked students to record all the presentations they and the other groups showed in front of class. (Before each new lesson, students had 30 minutes to review the old lesson by presenting summary through slides.). For teacher, she recorded the lessons and reflected what she and her students performed to make the suitable adaptation for the next lessons

Using online communication tools as platforms for interaction, discussion and reflection. Throughout the course, teacher sometimes facilitated students to have interaction with a lot of peers and teachers from variety of nations thanks to Skype and Zoom, Vclass. After completing, the students will correct each other and that is the opportunity for learners to self-assess their performance.

Using software to reflect knowledge and increase interest. At the end of each lesson, to check the knowledge, teachers designed a set of questions to check the understanding of student. Besides Kahoot, teacher used Hot potato, Socrative as the alternatives. Teachers then assessed or responded based on the number of questions and duration of responses and ask the students to reflect on their knowledge.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

The data was collected from the answers to the questionnaires, interviews and personal journals through emails, answer sheets and recordings. The data was analyzed by means of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. To investigate the frequency and effects of using IT in the speaking classroom from the questionnaire, the writer calculated and synthetized the data based on percentage rate and mean value statistics. The comments in the students' journal entries were arranged in themes that reflected participants' thoughts and attitudes on applying the IT- assisted approach. The scores in the personal journals the students gave to assess the effects of two approaches at the end of the course were collected, calculated, and compared basing on T-test system. The records from the interviews were analyzed and grouped in themes such as: teaching strategies, drawbacks and their experiences in teaching process.

4 Findings and Discussion

This section focuses on the teachers and students' experiences and perceptions towards using IT in teaching English to enhance speaking skills and reflection capacity of Vietnamese tertiary students of English at Hanoi law University.

After analyzing the results from the questionnaires, interview and the personal journal the findings of the paper are synthetized in five main themes:

- Frequency of using IT for RP in speaking skills
- IT-driven activities used for RP in learning speaking skills
- Effects of technology applications on RP in learning speaking skills
- Technology-based strategies to enhance RP in learning speaking skills
- Drawbacks in applying IT in RP of speaking skills.

4.1 Frequency of using IT for RP in teaching speaking skill

The data from frequency of Using IT for RP in teaching speaking skill in the previous class collected from the questionnaires are showed in figure 2. When asked about the frequency of using IT for the activities of learning in classroom, only 2 participants answered that they never use IT for reflection in speaking class. 13% chose the option "seldom" while 60% respondents said that IT is sometimes used in RP and their teachers tried apply it as often as possible. 20% considered IT as a frequent teaching tool in classroom for RP.
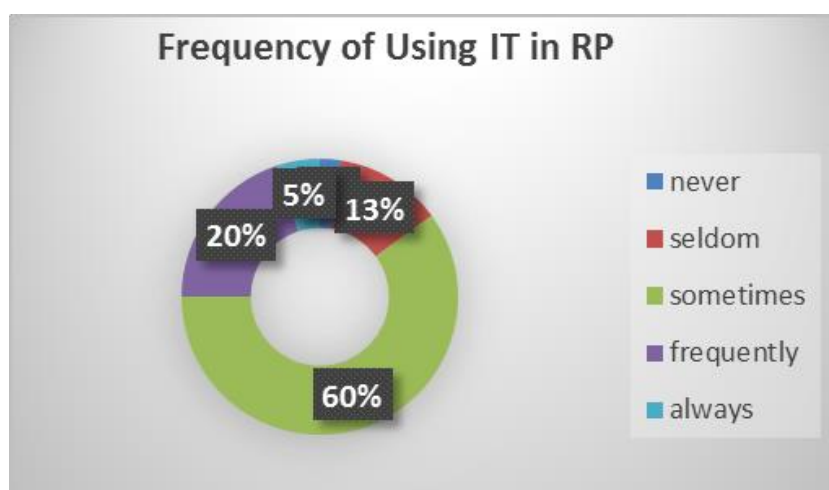

Fig. 2. Frequency of Using IT for RP in speaking skills

It is obvious that students and teachers do not consider applying IT in RP as a frequent activity with 60% for the option "sometimes". There is someone who never or seldom uses IT in reflection. In addition, the teachers interviewed also assumed that their students in the previous speaking courses do not spend much time accessing to the Internet in order to enhance RP and communication ability because they preferred to work in pair or group directly to practice their speaking lesson and assess their performance. Students were not acquainted to communicating and evaluating online through the IT applications.

4.2 Activities of using IT in practicing speaking skill and reflection

One of the most critical things in teaching English speaking is identifying how to use IT to help students practice and reinforce their reflection. It is the reflection that help themselves recognize how they performed through the performance and how the others assessed their implementation. The table 3 describes the frequency of using IT for the activities of speaking in the current course from participants. With the highest rate, 90% students showed that they took advantages of IT mostly in making clips or videos and self-assessing the performances by software as frequent activities in classroom. These are two most frequent activities students participated with the assistance of IT in which reflection is considered as a main component. The other effective way for RP is talking about lessons with teachers online that took only 25% for "sometimes" and 10% for "frequent". Not many students (30%) took interest in the activity of participating in English learning forums, although this is one of the best functions for learners to get feedback and reflection from the others. More than 80% respondents replied that they used technology tools for reflection through activity "Recording their own speaking" while 15% responded "seldom,". 100% participants said that IT was sometimes used in RP with the activity "Preparing design presentations" as often as possible. 9% considered IT as a frequent teaching tool in classroom for RP. Two people didn't give any answers. 10 respondents indicated that they sometimes used technology for reflection and two members considered IT as a frequent teaching technique.

Table 1. Activities used in Practicing Speaking Skills and Reflection

No	Activity	N%	Se%	So%	F%	A%
1	Recording their own speaking	0	15	40	45	0
2	Designing presentation, lectures	0	0	55	45	0
3	Watching videos and learning phonics	0	0	80	10	10
4	Searching ideas for speaking topic	0	5	20	60	15
5	Learning vocabulary by topic	0	20	70	10	0
6	Making clips or video	0	5	90	5	0
7	Chatting with friends via email, Zalo, Viber, etc.	10	5	30	45	10
8	Participating in English learning forums	20	50	10	17.5	2.5
9	Learning online English-speaking courses	40	32.5	12.5	15	0
10	Searching, downloading English materials for speaking task	0	0	85	10	5
11	Talking about lessons with teachers online	15	50	25	10	0
12	Self-Assessing/scoring performance by software	0	0	90	10	0

(Note: N-Never, Se- Seldom, So- Sometimes, F- Frequently, A- Always)

4.3 Effects of using IT in RP for speaking skills

To investigate the effects of using IT in RP for learning speaking, a questionnaire with 11 items was delivered to the students. The items were answered basing on 5-point Likert scale of agreement- Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neither agree nor disagree (NAD), Disagree (DA), Strongly disagree (SD). The table 2 shows the data

collected from the questionnaire. In addition, the data for this theme was collected from the personal reflection journals.

Table 4 illustrates that majority of participants acknowledged that applying IT in RP brings about a lot of effects in supporting speaking skills, some of which were agreed and strongly agreed by a highest number of respondents such as "Boosting intercultural awareness and competence in the process of learning speaking skill" and "Using Skype and Zoom in teaching to offer unlimited interaction in the world" with the mean value 4.4 and 4.5. An account was taken is that thanks to the worldwide interaction through the virtual trips or online forums, students could learn and get feedbacks about the knowledge and information from their foreign friends. Some of the respondents in the similar statements were uncertain about their responses, and disagreed. In terms of developing skills, the students manifested the agreement with the statement "promoting students'ability of critical thinking and problem-solving" with the mean value 3.5. Some students interviewed revealed that due to the comments and reflection on what they presented in class, they had a chance to rethink and resolve the problems.

With a great number of agreement and strong agreement (mean=4.0) "self-evaluating activities and improvement: phonics, fluency, ideas" and "Recordings is an effective way for students to self-assess their progress in learning and self-study" are considered as the significant benefits of using IT in RP, however, there are still some students showing the disagreement. In short, most of participants admitted the advantages of IT in RP (mean>3.0)

Table 2. Effects of Using IT in RP for Speaking skills

No.	Statements	Mean	Stdev
1	Creating more effective online learning and assessment methods	3.5	0.82
2	Promoting critical thinking and problem-solving skills through peer correction and self-reflection	3.5	0.32
3	Enhancing collaboration and interactive assessment through group's speaking activities;	4	0.84
4	Boosting intercultural communication awareness and competence in the process of learning speaking skill	4.4	1.03
5	Producing clip, videos and recordings to enhance reflection and communicative skills.	4.4	0.812
6	Posting speaking products on social network for open assessment and reflection for all members	3	1.51
7	Recordings is an effective way for students to self-assess their progress in learning and self-study	4.0	0.82
8	Increasing self- evaluating activities and improvement: phonics, fluency, ideas through online discussion	4.0	0.52
9	Using Skype and Zoom in teaching to offer exchanges, reflection in an unlimited interaction over the world	4.4	0.84
10	Using the networks such as Blog, Face book Twitter… to build an online community of learning to reinforce communication and reflection	3.5	1.08
11	Using soft wares and webs with games as a formative assessment to check knowledge and increase students' interest in learning	4.5	1.51

The scores given in the personal journal clarifies the evaluation on the effects of using IT in RP for learning speaking English from the students' perspectives. The effectiveness of IT-assisted approach in comparisons with the traditional methods from students' perspective is illustrated through the table 3. After having joined in both the traditional and IT-assisted classes, students revealed their assessment about the effects of these approaches in RP to practice their speaking skills by giving the scores. There is a remarkable difference in mean scores between the Traditional teaching approach and the IT-assisted teaching approach with scores 6.25 and 7.5 (out of 10) respectively. This means that participants appreciated the new method thanks to its significant benefits. The p-value 0.00 in Independent-samples T- test from the data is lower than 0.05, which indicates that there is a significant difference in the assessment on the effects of teaching approaches between participants after and before applying IT.

Table 3. Effectiveness of IT-assisted approach in comparisons with traditional one

	Effectiveness of IT-assisted approach			
	Number	*Mean*	*Mode*	*Stdev*
Traditional teaching approach	80	6.25	6	0.92
IT-assisted teaching approach	80	7.5	8	0.75
P-value	0.00			

It could come to conclusion that there is a preference in teaching speaking skills by the online communicative approach to the traditional one. Although little consensus about the scores among students is presented (Stdev below 1.0), generally, the findings prove that students approves the IT-assisted approach due to the effectiveness.

4.4 Drawbacks in using IT for RP in teaching speaking skills

When the respondents wrote about the challenges of computer-mediated interaction, most of them agreed that technical difficulties are considered as the biggest challenges the teachers had to face. Using IT in teaching is considered as a two-edge sword in which it can bring about a lot of positive impacts if the teacher are competent in technology. If not, it will turn the teaching process into a mess with many pauses and external disturbs. Some respondents argued: "I am a teacher of linguistics, not technician, so we have many troubles with the IT devices."; "To have a good learning condition, we need to an IT assistant to instruct us how to implement steps"; "Normally, if the quality of the technology is reliable enough, Skype or zoom access smoothly". It is not easy to connect two classes from two different countries for online learning forum. Sometimes, there were some problems leading to bad impacts on the time, teaching process, content of the lesson. One other drawback is that when using IT in classroom, teachers take too much time for technological errors that should have been spent on the content of the lessons: "Sometimes, it was too time-consuming". One more complaint mentioned is due to the difference in class time, for which it is not convenient to arrange a suitable schedule for two classes

connecting at the same time. The other challenge was related to students' lack of willingness to communicate with the foreigners: "At first, we were passive to talk to the experts. My teacher must urge us to pose the questions or prepare the talk carefully at home to be more confident". Thanks to the collaboration with the English-speaking learners, students have more opportunities to practice speaking skills, enhance communication competence and reflective practice. From this interaction, students get the practical experience and confidence to make their speech in front of the others. This effect is really meaningful to the students who never talk to foreigners and only know their partners as the classmates.

4.5 Suggested IT-based pedagogical strategies used in RP for speaking skills

To create an active and modern learning environment and to enhance not only language competence but also reflection skills, there will be a variety of appropriate strategies for teaching speaking skills, depending on each pedagogical approach teachers use in classroom. Table 6 summarizes the suggestions selected from the teachers' interviews for learning speaking skills and practicing reflection. Together with the smart learning environment, smart pedagogy is also designed, including experiential learning, collaborative learning, learning analytics-based learning, crowdsourcing-based learning, flipped classroom, gamification-based learning, project-based learning, and other types of innovative teaching strategies and learning approaches. These are the strategies teachers can apply to enhance effectiveness in using IT to fit with the pedagogical approaches suggested. The strategies were referred from the recommendations of the teachers to contribute to the success of RP in Speaking skills.

Table 4. Suggested IT-based Pedagogical Strategies

No.	Strategies	Suggested tools	Smart pedagogy
1	Engage students in problems to enhance solving-problem and critical thinking skills by playing roles or communicating with foreigners and record them to assess.	, Window Movie Maker, iMovie or photo-to-video as Proshow Producer,	Experiential learning, Collaborative learning
2	Encouraging students to be engaged in online experience and join local virtual field trips outside classroom through the software and webs as an experience and reflection	Microsoft OneNote, Google earth VR, Flyover	Experiential learning,
3	Letting students join in the activities as a team or club with the same ideas and purposes to together implement a plan, or a project, etc. for more collaboration and (self)assessment.	Todoist, Social network: Face book, Zalo, Intagram, twitter,	Social Learning, Project-based learning
4	Asking students to take part in social activities using English as main language and call the participation from the other group or via social networks as a channel for exchanging experience, training skills and practicing reflection.	Social network, Moodle, Soundtrap, Skype, Class craft, zoom, Newsela, Pear Deck, Facebook, Padlet, Microsoft teams,	Social Learning
5	Using the visual aids such as clips, advertisements, films to explain and introduce the topic and knowledge related to lesson to build a diverse learning environment and have lively reflection.	Notability, online lecturing systems, projectors, Moodle, Vclass, Teachertube, Haikuteds,	Evidence-Based Teaching

		Teded	
6	Through IT devices, Students can automatically learn material at home as a pre-class of theory before class time, then do exercises and practice at school to increase time for performance and assessment at class	google drive/ google class, FlowVella, Flipgrid, Stixy, whiteboard space, Google groups, or Mikogo	Flipped pedagogy
7	Holding the competition to irritate the students to think about the topics and brainstorm the ideas to solve the problems via quizzes, performance ability through role-plays, presentation skills and spontaneous responses as formative assessments.	Word Mover, Vclass, Quizizz, Newsela, Google form, Wheelofgames, Classjodo, Plicker	Inquiry-based instruction
8	Recording the lesson and performance to present in front of the others, provoke the inquiry from the others, assess and reflect.	Adobe Premier, Filmora 8.2.2, Youtube, Sony Vegas Pro, Proshow Gold,	Inquiry-based instruction, Gamification-based learning
9	Gather student feedback, reflect on what they learn and share their thoughts	Plickers, Socrative, Polieverywhere	E-learning

5   Conclusion

This study involved a group of 80 students at Hanoi Law Universities to look into their perspectives on using IT in teaching English communication skills. The results of quantitative and qualitative data indicated that although the participants appreciated the importance of IT for RP in teaching speaking and believed that there are suitable strategies for teaching, it is still challenging them to integrate IT in teaching language. Through the journal entries and questionnaire, the writer demonstrated that using IT had positive effects on RP in learning English speaking skills with a high number of agreement and strong agreement in terms of acquiring knowledge, developing of skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving; boosting motivation and interest in investigating new language and culture; and reflection. Basing on the results of scores students gave to assess the effect of using IT on teaching and learning speaking skill, it can be seen that the score for the traditional teaching approach is lower than the score for IT-assisted teaching approach. This reveals a fact that students take more interest into IT than the previous method. These finding are coincided with the conclusion of the previous authors such as Liddicoat and Scarino [29] who asserts that what they called social technology, as opposed to information technology, can be extremely beneficial in developing language learning within a reflective design orientation. Use of technology-mediated communication has become a high priority for foreign language education [30] and was effective for communication and collaboration. Social media platform is considered as a community in which people of other cultures can interact. Accordingly, to turn the knowledge in the textbook into skills and competence in learning process, learner must take time to look back to the process of generating the final product that is mentioned as a self-assessment or reflection. With the development of IT, RP in classroom is significantly supported. However, to integrate IT into education effectively, teachers imperatively know how to manage, control and adapt the activities and IT devices appropriately to engage students in learning process successfully. To have the smart classroom, it is necessary

to have smart teachers. Becker [31] reminds that the effectiveness of integrating technology into education is largely dependent on its ability to engage students in learning. While the term engagement has several definitions and explanations, it essentially "entails some kind of mindfulness, intrinsic motivation, cognitive effort, and attention" [32].

It can be seen from the study, the majority of teachers are aware of incorporating IT in teaching and a lot of teachers have applied Internet -based technologies for RP in class. More significantly, students actively participated in the interesting creative activities and did the real projects effectively in the online community. Refection practice is always important in teaching and learning process to build a bridge between theory and practice which helps students obtain their objectives effectively. Organizing the activities in online classroom can create challenges for teachers. However, thanks to its significance, teachers have more motivation to design the suitable lessons, know how to manage and draw attention from the students. A strict compulsory learning policy and suitable encouragement is put on priority when applying IT in classroom in order to build an effective smart learning environment.

6   References

[1] G. Wilson, T. Walsh, and M. Kirby, "Reflective practice and workplace learning: The experience of, MSW students," Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives, 8(1), 1–15, 2007. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623940601138840

[2] Che Ghani Che Kob, Kannapiran, Shangeetavaani and A. Shah, "The Usage of Mobile Learning: Comparative Studies among Technical and Vocational Education Students in Selected Universities," International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies. 2020, Vol. 14 Issue 5, p203-209, 2020. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v14i05.13355

[3] C. Johns, "Framing Learning through Reflection within Carper's Fundamental Ways of Knowing in Nursing," Journal of Advanced Nursing, 22, 226-234, 1995. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1995.22020226.x

[4] DA. Schön, the reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action. New York, NY: Basic Books, 1983.

[5] T. S. C. Farrell, "Keeping SCORE': Reflective practice through classroom observations," RELC Journal, 42(3), 265–272, 2011 https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688211419396

[6] M. Woerkom, "Critical Reflection at Work. Bridging individual and organizational learning", PhD thesis, University of Twente, Print Partners Ipskamp, Enschede, 2003.

[7] T. Ghaye, Teaching and learning through reflective practice: A practical guide for positive action (2nd ed.). Abingdon: Routledge, 2011. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203833322

[8] D. A. Schön, Jossey-Bass higher education series.Educating the reflective practitioner: Toward a new design for teaching and learning in the professions. Jossey-Bass, 1987

[9] Hatton and Smith, "Reflection in teacher education: Towards definition and implementation," Teaching and Teacher Education, 11(1), 33–49, 1995. https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051x(94)00012-u

[10] C. Sykes and B. A. Dean, "A practice-based approach to student reflection in the workplace during a work-integrated learning placement," Studies in Continuing Education, 35(2), 179–192, 2013. https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037x.2012.736379

[11] K. Thorpe, "Reflective learning journals: From concept to practice," Reflective Practice, 5(3), 327–343, 2004. https://doi.org/10.1080/1462394042000270655

[12] G. Gibbs, Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. Further Education Unit. Oxford Polytechnic: Oxford, 1988

[13] R. Akbari, "Reflections on reflection: A critical appraisal of reflective practices in L2 teacher education," System 35, 192–207, 2007. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2006.12.008

[14] M. Cochran-Smith, S. L. Lytle, Inside/Outside Teacher Research and Knowledge. New York, New York: Teachers College Press, 1993.

[15] Branch and Paranjape, "Feedback and reflection: teaching methods for clinical settings", Acad Med, 77 (12 Pt 1), 1185-1188, 2002. https://doi.org/10.1097/00001888-200212000-00005

[16] B. Larrivee, and Cooper. J. M., An educator's guide to teacher reflection. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006.

[17] Renfeng Wang, "Massive Open Online Course Platform Blended English Teaching Method Based on Model-View-Controller Framework," International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET), vol 14, No 16, 2019. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v14i16.11151

[18] B. Collis, and J. Moonen, "Flexible learning in a digital world," Experiences and expectations. London, 2001.

[19] T.T.H.Nguyen and T.M. Nguyen "Information Technology and Teaching Culture: Application in Classroom," in Smart Education and e-Learning 2019. Smart Innovation, Systems and Technologies, Uskov V., Howlett R., Jain L. (eds). Springer, Singapore, 2019. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-8260-4_32

[20] New Media Consortium, "A global imperative: The report of the 21st century literacy summit," 2005. Available: from http://www.nmc.org/summit/TheNewMediumConsortium [Accessed April 25th, 2019].

[21] V.Uskov, J. Bakken, C. Heinemann, R. Rachakonda, V. Gudure, A. Thomas, andD. Bodduluri, "Building smart learning analytics system for smart university", in Smart Education and e-Learning, Uskov, V., Howiett, R. andJain, L. (Eds). Springer Cham, pp.191-204, 2017. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-59451-4_19

[22] M. Zhu, H. Yu and P. Riezebos, "A research framework of smart education," Smart Learning Environment, 3(1), 1–17, 2016.

[23] Peter Brown, Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning. Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press; 1 edition, April 14, 2014.

[24] A.J. Burton, "Reflection: nursing's practice and education panaceda," Journal of Advanced Nursing, 36(4):512–519, 2000.

[25] Lorna M Dreyer, "Digital storytelling to engage postgraduates in reflective practice in an emerging economy,", South African Journal of Education, Volume 37, Number 4, November 2017. https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v37n4a1475

[26] Yongjiang Zhang, "Development of WebGL-based Virtual Teaching Platform for Mold Design," International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET), vol 13, No 06, 2018. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v13i06.8581

[27] Zhuang Zhou, "An Interaction Theory-based New Distance Teaching Model for Cross Talk," International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET), vol 13, No 06, 2018. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v13i06.8588

[28] R.M.K. Nambiar and S.M. Thang, "Examining Malaysian teachers' online blogs for reflective practices: towards teacher professional development, Language and Education," Examining Malaysian teachers' online blogs for reflective practices: towards teacher professional development, D.25, 2015. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2015.1071386

[29] Liddicoat and Scarino, Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning. Canberra: DEST.18 February 2013. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118482070

[30] Ware and Kramsch, "Toward an intercultural stance Teaching German and English through telecollaboration," The Modern Language Journal, 89, 190-200, 2005.

[31] H. J. Becker and M. M. Riel, "Teacher professional engagement and constructivist-compatible computer use. Teaching, learning, and computing: 1998 national survey,". Report # 7, Center for Research on Information Technology and Organizations, 2000.

[32] Sadik Alaa., "Digital Storytelling: a meaningful technology-integrated approach for engaged student learning," Educational Technology, Research and Development, 56, 487-506, 2008. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2005.00274.x

7 Author

Hong-Thu Thi Nguyen is currently working as a lecturer of English at Hanoi Law University. Her teaching areas of interests are English Literature, Intercultural communication Competence, Reflective practice, Teacher development, CALL. Postal addresses: 87 Nguyen Chi Thanh, Dong Da, Ha Noi, Viet Nam. Telephone numbers: +84 94348436. Email addresses: thuvicnguyen@gmail.com