

Bridging the Proficiency Gap: Vlogging as a Pedagogical Tool for Vocabulary Development and Speaking Skills of Thai EFL Pre-Service Teachers

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Abstract

This study investigates how video blogs (vlogs) serve as an educational tool to enhance vocabulary learning and speaking skills among Thai EFL students. Situated within the growing field of Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), it tackles the ongoing challenge of developing active vocabulary and spoken fluency in Thai higher education. A mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design was employed with a single group of 60 pre-service computer-teacher undergraduates at a university in Northeastern Thailand. Participants, initially assessed at A2 level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), participated in a 14-week program focused on creating and peer-reviewing vlogs related to their fields. Quantitative data indicated significant positive trends in performance. Participants showed increased mastery of vocabulary bands and improved speaking scores ($M_{\text{pre-test}} = 52.33$, $M_{\text{post-test}} = 81.17$; $d = 4.11$). Based on the course rubric, the participants' performance shifted from a level consistent with A2 descriptors to one aligning with B1–B2 descriptors. The findings suggest that integrating vlogs into the EFL curriculum is a motivating approach that supports vocabulary engagement and speaking confidence. Qualitative results revealed that vlogging fostered learner independence, lowered communication anxiety, and provided meaningful, real-life contexts for practicing vocabulary and speaking. Ultimately, this technology-enhanced method proved effective in bridging the gap between theory and fluency for pre-service teachers, aligning with global trends in digital language pedagogy.

Keywords: Vocabulary development, speaking skills, vlogs, Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), Thai EFL context, pre-service teachers

Introduction

In the era of global connectivity, proficiency in the English language serves as a crucial *lingua franca* for international academic, professional, and scientific communication. Even in countries where English is not the first language, developing English-language skills is essential for economic growth and technological progress. Especially in Southeast Asia, the significance of English has increased due to economic integration through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), where English is the official working language. Like other ASEAN member countries, Thailand has prioritized the English proficiency of its citizens.

Despite decades of mandatory English education in Thai schools and higher education, a noticeable gap persists between national policy goals and learners' actual proficiency. This disparity is highlighted by the 2025 EF English Proficiency Index, which ranked Thailand 116th out of 123 countries and territories, placing it in the "Very Low Proficiency" band, significantly behind its regional ASEAN peers (EF Education First, 2025). This shortfall is particularly acute in productive skills such as speaking, where performance levels often fail to meet regional standards. This deficiency is frequently imputed to teaching methods that prioritize grammar-translation and rote memorization for high-stakes exams; while such approaches build passive knowledge, they often hinder learners' ability to communicate effectively in real-world situations (Noom-ura, 2013).

Beyond these systemic pedagogical constraints, learners face distinct psychological and environmental hurdles. Similar to students in other EFL contexts, Thai learners encounter obstacles such as low motivation, limited practice opportunities, and difficulties in applying skills outside the formal classroom (Lestari, 2019; Loreto, 2022). A lack of vocabulary significantly impairs speaking skills in both general EFL and specific Thai contexts, disrupting fluency and heightening psychological barriers to communication. As Wilkins (1972) noted, communication is impossible without vocabulary, and a deficit in this area leads learners to frequent hesitations and pauses as they struggle to retrieve words, effectively breaking the flow of speech (Kilic, 2019; Nation, 2001). This limitation often compels learners to oversimplify complex ideas (Schmitt, 2010) and induces foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). In the Thai context, these challenges are exacerbated by a significant gap between receptive and productive vocabulary (Sukying, 2025) and a pedagogical reliance on mental translation, which delays speech production (Jeharsae, 2012). Furthermore, insufficient exposure to communicative contexts (Noom-ura, 2013), combined with a distinct cultural fear of "losing face" over lexical errors (Khamkhien, 2010; Sriussadaporn, 2006), further discourages Thai learners from actively speaking. Consequently, speaking English proves difficult, with learners often struggling to maintain fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary in real-time conversations (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020; Yanti, 2024).

The effect is especially evident in Thailand's northeastern region, Isaan. Known for its unique cultural and linguistic traits and for historical disparities in educational resources compared with central

urban areas, students in Isaan generally have fewer opportunities for authentic English exposure outside the formal classroom. This lack of exposure is further substantiated by local research; for instance, a study of Northeastern University students found that “limited vocabulary” and “lack of opportunity to use English in daily life” were the primary causes of high speaking anxiety (Bhattachaiyakorn & Phettakua, 2023). Furthermore, Okoye and Ambele (2023) observed in a Mahasarakham-based study that the scarcity of natural English environments in Isaan forces students to rely heavily on mental translation and their native dialect (Isaan/Lao) for scaffolding, further evidence that the lack of communicative exposure acts as a fundamental barrier to acquiring productive speaking skills. For university students in this region, such as the pre-service computer teachers in this study, this environment presents a significant obstacle. They must bridge the gap between their classroom-based learning and the advanced, dynamic English required for real-world interaction, such as delivering technical presentations at international conferences, conducting demonstrations, and collaborating with cross-border teams. Therefore, the challenge is to find and apply innovative teaching strategies that are both effective and tailored to the context. Using accessible technologies like video blogging (vlogging)—the creation and sharing of video content, often personal or informational, online (Baran, 2007; Lestari, 2019; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019)—has catalyzed a broader movement toward student-generated content, in which learners use technology to construct their own linguistic artifacts. Within this framework, vlogging—the creation and sharing of video content—emerges as a powerful tool, enabling students to rehearse and refine their vocabulary in ways that mirror authentic digital communication. Vlogging can offer authentic practice opportunities that are frequently absent in the local environment (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019), thereby aiding the enhancement of oral communication skills, fostering increased motivation, and boosting confidence among Thai students (Loreto, 2022).

Statement of the Problems

The main issue addressed by this study is the large gap between the current English proficiency of pre-service computer teacher students in the Thai EFL setting (usually A2 level on the CEFR) and the communication skills required for their future careers. This ongoing A2 proficiency level mainly results from previous educational experiences that focus on a curriculum emphasizing receptive skills (reading, grammar) for exams, limited chances for active language use and real speaking practice, and teaching environments (often large classes) that can cause communication anxiety (Loreto, 2022; Yanti, 2024). As a result, students lack the active vocabulary and fluency needed for natural, coherent English conversations and often struggle to express ideas clearly and accurately (Yanti, 2024).

This deficiency stands in sharp contrast to the national goal outlined by the Thai Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation. The 2024 guidelines specify that university graduates must achieve a B2 (Upper-Intermediate) level of English proficiency to remain globally

competitive. The A2 level, which involves only fundamental interactions on familiar topics, is fundamentally insufficient for B2 standards, which demand understanding complex texts, communicating fluidly and spontaneously, and producing detailed discourse. Therefore, an innovative teaching approach is urgently needed—one that helps narrow the significant gap between current A2 capabilities and B2 expectations by directly enhancing active vocabulary and practical speaking skills within a motivating, authentic, and technology-friendly framework such as vlogging (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020). This approach must also address the limited practice time, low motivation, and speaking anxiety often seen in traditional settings (Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent does a vlog-based pedagogical intervention impact the vocabulary acquisition of Thai pre-service computer teacher undergraduates, as measured by pre- and post-intervention Vocabulary Levels Tests?
2. How does the vlog-based intervention impact learners' CEFR-aligned speaking proficiency when implemented as a form of multimodal mediation tailored to the principles of SCT and CTML?
3. What are the perceptions and attitudes of the pre-service teachers towards using vlogs as a tool for reducing cognitive load (CTML) and mediating social interaction (SCT) in the context of their English vocabulary learning and speaking development?

Literature Review

Sociocultural Theory (SCT)

Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory views learning as a fundamentally social process, in which cognitive development, including language learning, results from social interaction prior to internalization. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)—the gap between what a learner can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance—is key. Vlog creation aligns with SCT because the task pushes learners into their ZPD, requiring them to use language beyond their independent abilities. Instructor and peer feedback serve as scaffolding from More Knowledgeable Others (MKOs), supporting knowledge co-construction (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). This social interaction through sharing, commenting, and peer review helps create a community of practice where learning is mediated (Lestari, 2019). Loreto (2022) explicitly connects vlogging and peer feedback to Vygotsky's ZPD, emphasizing how learners collaborate and support each other's development through technology-enabled interactions. The vlog itself becomes a tool that mediates the social learning process.

Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)

Mayer's (2009) CTML explains vlog effectiveness through cognitive science, outlining how humans process information through dual channels (auditory/verbal and visual/pictorial) with limited capacity, which requires active processing (selecting, organizing, and integrating information) for meaningful learning. Vlogs inherently engage both channels by combining spoken language with visual elements (images, gestures, text overlays). More importantly, the creation process transforms learners into active processors. They must consciously select relevant vocabulary and visuals, organize these elements into a coherent script and video sequence, and integrate the verbal narration with the visual presentation (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019). This active cognitive engagement, involving selection, organization, and integration across both channels, promotes deeper processing, reduces cognitive load compared to single-channel input, and fosters more robust learning and retention than simply consuming multimedia content (Mayer, 2009). The vlog task compels learners to actively construct meaning through multimedia, aligning directly with CTML principles.

The integration of SCT and CTML provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the pedagogical mechanics of vlogging. While SCT emphasizes the role of social mediation and scaffolding through peer interaction, CTML elucidates the internal cognitive processes—selecting, organizing, and integrating—required to construct meaning from multimodal input. In this study, these theories function synergistically rather than in isolation. The social imperative to communicate clearly with an audience (SCT) drives the learner to engage in deeper 'active processing' of linguistic and visual elements (CTML), thereby transforming passive vocabulary knowledge into active, generative use. By combining the external support of the ZPD with the internal benefits of dual-channel processing, the vlogging task creates a robust environment for enhancing both lexical retention and speaking fluency.

Vocabulary Acquisition

Vocabulary knowledge is a fundamental part of communicative competence, including not just form and meaning but also appropriate use in context (Nation, 2013). Effective vocabulary learning goes beyond simple memorization, requiring learners to engage with words deeply, repeatedly, and meaningfully in real-life contexts (Schmitt, 2010). Important conditions that support this include noticing (paying conscious attention to new words), retrieval (actively recalling word forms and meanings), and generative use (using words creatively in new contexts) (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

The vlog creation process naturally incorporates these conditions. During the research and scripting phases (conceptualizing, brainstorming), learners encounter and notice new vocabulary relevant to their chosen topic (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019; Yanti, 2024). The subsequent stages of scripting, practicing, recording, and editing require repeated retrieval of these terms. Finally, producing the vlog itself constitutes generative use, as students must incorporate the target vocabulary into their own original discourse to communicate their message effectively (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019). This cycle of noticing, retrieval, and generative use provides the depth of processing essential for transferring

vocabulary from passive recognition to active, long-term mastery (Fraik & Lockhart, 1972). Student testimonies often highlight this benefit, emphasizing that the need to explain concepts in their vlogs compels them to truly understand and remember vocabulary through practical application (Lestari, 2019; Loreto, 2022).

Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL)

TELL uses digital technologies to improve language teaching and learning. The field has evolved from early Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), which mainly focused on drills and practice, to include now Web 2.0 tools that emphasize communication, collaboration, and real content creation (Chapelle, 2009). This change in approach empowers learners, turning them from passive recipients of information into active creators and publishers of their own language content (Lestari, 2019).

Vlogs as Authentic and Multimodal Input

Vlogging demonstrates the use of technology for producing genuine, student-created content. Defined as a video blog that combines video, sound, images, and text to share information, opinions, or experiences (Lestari, 2019; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019), vlogging turns language practice into an engaging task. As one of the latest technologies, it has opened new ways of communication through public created media (Baran, 2007). This aligns with Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which aims to achieve a meaningful communicative outcome by using language as a tool (Ellis, 2008; Willis & Willis, 2007; Yanti, 2024). Making a vlog is a challenging, authentic task that requires integrating various language skills (vocabulary choice, grammar, pronunciation) and digital skills (recording, editing) (Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019).

Furthermore, vlogs are inherently multimodal (Kress, 2010). Learners must coordinate verbal content with non-verbal cues, such as tone of voice, facial expressions, and gestures, as well as with visual elements, such as on-screen text and images. This creates a holistic communicative performance that more closely mirrors real-world interaction than traditional, decontextualized speaking exercises or conventional classroom role-plays (Choi & Sinwongsuwat, 2024; Loreto, 2022). Engaging with multiple modes enhances the learning experience and offers practice in managing the complexities of face-to-face communication. The accessibility of platforms like YouTube makes vlogging a convenient and widely available tool for language practice (Lestari, 2019; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019).

Research on Vlogging in EFL/ESL (2021–2025)

Empirical studies consistently show the pedagogical benefits of incorporating vlogging into EFL/ESL instruction, particularly in improving speaking skills. Research reveals that smartphone-based and collaborative vlog assignments lead to notable improvements in learning engagement and various aspects of speaking performance, including fluency, pronunciation accuracy, grammatical control,

vocabulary use, and content organization (Choi & Sinwongsuwat, 2024; Huang, 2021; Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020; Yanti, 2024). These improvements are often linked to increased opportunities for practice, the motivating nature of the task, and a focus on authentic communication (Lestari, 2019; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020).

A key advantage often highlighted is vlogging's positive effect on learner affect, especially confidence and motivation. The ability to prepare, practice, record, review, and re-record in a non-threatening, asynchronous environment helps students overcome speaking anxiety and shyness (Lestari, 2019; Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019; Sari, 2017). Creating content for an audience (even if just peers) and receiving feedback builds a sense of achievement and encourages students to put effort into their performance (Loreto, 2022). Overall, students tend to see vlogging as a fun, engaging, and effective way to learn that boosts their motivation and confidence to speak English (Lestari, 2019; Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019).

The process of creating a vlog generally involves distinct stages, such as conceptualizing (planning, topic selection), brainstorming (scripting, vocabulary gathering), articulating (rehearsing, recording), monitoring (self-review), evaluating (self-correction, peer feedback), reporting (sharing with instructor/peers), and uploading (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019; Burns, 2012). This structured yet flexible process promotes self-regulated learning, reflection, and iterative improvement (Loreto, 2022). Integrating vlogging within a Project-Based Learning (PBL) framework further highlights student autonomy, teamwork, and problem-solving, anchoring language practice in a meaningful project (Yanti, 2024). While challenges such as technical issues, time constraints, initial anxiety, and varying levels of student participation can arise (Lestari, 2019; Loreto, 2022; Yanti, 2024), the educational benefits—especially for improving speaking skills and learner engagement—are well supported.

The Thai EFL Context and the Research Gap

The Thai EFL educational system often faces challenges in developing learners' productive skills, often due to factors such as large class sizes, a teaching focus on grammar and receptive skills rather than communicative practice, and cultural factors that contribute to communication apprehension (Loreto, 2022; Noom-ura, 2013; Wiriyachitra, 2002). These issues not only limit opportunities for authentic language use but also slow the growth of speaking fluency and confidence.

Technology-enhanced approaches, especially those involving student-generated content such as vlogs, offer a practical strategy to address these challenges by providing flexible, motivating, and authentic practice opportunities beyond traditional classroom limits (Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019). Recent studies in Thailand confirm the potential of such methods. Loreto (2022), for example, demonstrated notable improvements in hospitality students' oral communication skills—including nonverbal, verbal, and content-organization aspects—through a vlogging intervention. Other research in Thailand also highlights the effectiveness of technology-mediated tasks in boosting speaking and vocabulary (Tachom, 2021).

Further supporting this, recent investigations into asynchronous video discussion platforms—which share the multimodal and generative characteristics of vlogging—have shown significant pedagogical benefits for Thai learners. For instance, Kamaraj (2025) found that integrating Microsoft Flip significantly improved the vocabulary retention of Thai business English undergraduates by providing a contextualized, engaging platform for lexical practice. Building on this framework, Kamaraj et al. (2026) demonstrated the positive effects of such video tools on the overall speaking skills of undergraduate students. These studies reinforce the value of asynchronous video communication in the Thai context, highlighting its capacity to mitigate speaking anxiety and foster active vocabulary use.

However, despite increasing evidence supporting vlogging's benefits (Lestari, 2019; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020), a specific research gap remains. Few studies have comprehensively and quantitatively examined the combined effect of a sustained vlogging intervention on both vocabulary acquisition (measured through standardized tests like the VLT) and overall speaking ability (assessed against established frameworks like the CEFR). Additionally, the unique needs and learning environments of pre-service teachers in technical fields, especially within the educationally distinct region of Northeastern Thailand, have received limited focus. This study aims to address this gap by implementing a semester-long, vlog-based intervention for pre-service computer teachers in Isaan, carefully evaluating its dual impact on vocabulary knowledge and CEFR-aligned speaking skills, and exploring its potential to support the crucial A2-to-B2 progression mandated by national educational policy.

As illustrated in Figure 1, these theoretical perspectives are not merely abstract principles but are directly mapped to specific variables within the study's conceptual framework. Sociocultural Theory (SCT) serves as the foundation for the intervention's social processing variables, specifically the peer feedback and sharing stages, where interaction scaffolds performance within the Zone of Proximal Development. The Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) governs the vlog creation process (scripting and recording), ensuring that the multimodal processing of visual and auditory inputs minimizes cognitive load and maximizes retention. Finally, principles of Vocabulary Acquisition—specifically 'generative use'—link the production task directly to the study's dependent variables, framing vocabulary acquisition and speaking proficiency not as static knowledge, but as dynamic outcomes resulting from active contextual application.

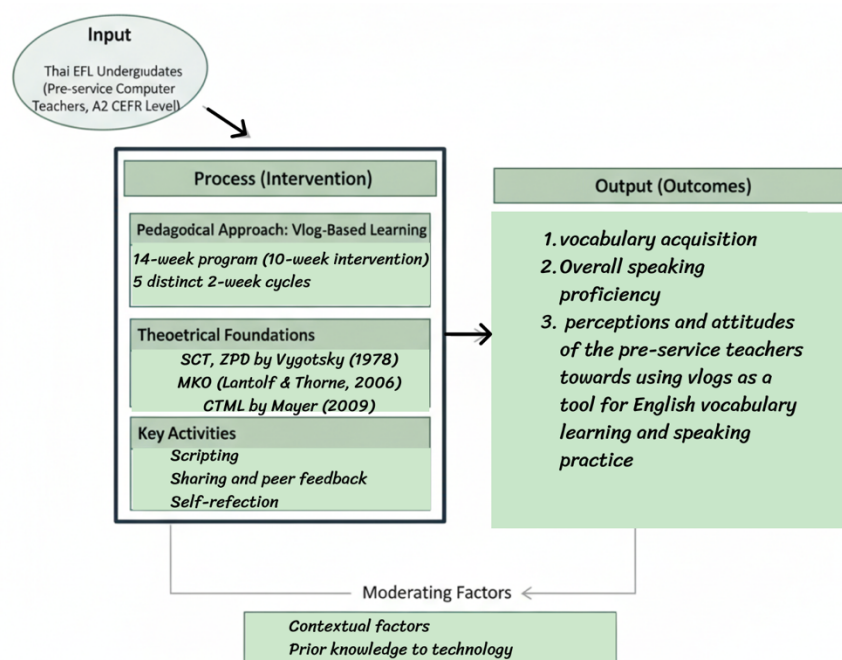


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework: Vlog-intervention

Methodology

Research Design

A mixed-methods, one-group pre-test/post-test quasi-experimental design was used (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). This approach is often used in educational research to evaluate the effect of an intervention on a single, intact group when random assignment or a control group is not possible (Yanti, 2024). It is important to acknowledge the inherent limitations of this design, specifically the absence of a control group. Without a parallel group for comparison, this design cannot isolate the intervention as the sole cause of improvement, as it does not control for confounding variables such as maturation (natural growth over time), the 'test-retest' effect (familiarity with the instrument), or learners' external exposure to English outside the classroom. Consequently, the study focuses on describing the trends and experiences of the specific cohort rather than establishing definitive causality. The quantitative part involved administering assessments before (O1) and after (O2) the vlogging intervention (X) to measure changes in the targeted variables (O1 → X → O2). The qualitative part, conducted alongside and after the main study, used semi-structured interviews and reflective journals to gather detailed, contextual data on participants' experiences, perceptions, and the learning process itself (Lestari, 2019; Loreto, 2022). This combination allows for measuring the intervention's effects while also exploring the underlying reasons and nuances through participants' perspectives (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

$$O1 \rightarrow X \rightarrow O2$$

Participants

The participants in this study were 60 first-year undergraduate students enrolled in a required English for Communication course at a public university in Thailand. All participants were majoring in computer education and were considered pre-service computer teachers. The group included 38 males and 22 females, aged 19 to 21 years. An initial placement test, administered by the university's language institute at the beginning of the academic year, placed all 60 students at the A2 (Waystage or Elementary) level on the CEFR. The participants were selected through convenience sampling since they represented an intact class assigned to the researcher-instructor. All participants provided informed consent before the study began.

Research Instruments

Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT)

To assess participants' vocabulary size, the revised Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) by Schmitt et al. (2001) was used. The VLT is a widely recognized and validated tool for evaluating written receptive vocabulary at 2,000-, 3,000-, and 5,000-word levels, as well as the academic word level. In this study, to assess the participants' vocabulary trajectory, the 2,000-word level was administered as the pre-test to establish a baseline of high-frequency word recognition consistent with A2 proficiency. For the post-test, the 3,000-word level was administered to assess learners' progress into the 'threshold' vocabulary band required for B1/B2 independent use. It is important to acknowledge that these are not parallel forms of the same test; rather, they represent distinct lexical strata. This design choice was intended to avoid ceiling effects on the 2,000-word level at the end of the semester and to specifically measure the students' ability to engage with more complex vocabulary. The analysis of these scores is therefore treated as descriptive of proficiency-band progression rather than as a linear gain score. Consequently, the analysis compares students' ability to clear two hurdles (baseline vs. threshold) rather than measuring linear gain on a single scale. The reliability and validity of the VLT are well supported in second-language acquisition research (Schmitt et al., 2001). The test uses a matching format (words to definitions) to provide an objective measure of vocabulary recognition.

CEFR-Aligned Speaking Test

To assess changes in overall speaking ability, a performance-based test was developed that aligns with CEFR descriptors for levels A2, B1, and B2. The test involved a one-on-one interview between the participant and the researcher, lasting about 6–9 minutes. This format allowed for the evaluation of interactive speaking skills in a semi-controlled environment. The interview had three sections: (1) a quick warm-up and general introductory questions; (2) a brief individual talk

(monologue) on a familiar topic related to their field (e.g., “Describe your favorite software”), and (3) a follow-up discussion based on the topic in part two.

All interviews (pre- and post-intervention) were audio-recorded. The recordings were then independently evaluated by two experienced EFL instructors (one of whom was the researcher) using an analytical scoring rubric. The recordings were then shuffled and independently evaluated by two experienced EFL instructors (one of whom was the researcher). Consequently, the raters were blind to the student’s identity and, crucially, to the pre- or post-test status of each recording. This rubric, adapted from official CEFR guidelines, assessed speaking performance based on five key criteria: (1) Fluency (smoothness, speed, hesitation); (2) Lexical Resource (vocabulary range and accuracy); (3) Grammatical Range and Accuracy (sentence structure); (4) Pronunciation (intelligibility, stress, intonation); and (5) Coherence (logical flow, organization). It is important to note that this rubric was developed for internal course assessment and did not undergo formal psychometric standard-setting (e.g., Angoff or Bookmark methods). It is also important to note that this instrument is an in-house measure designed to align with course objectives and has not undergone formal psychometric standard-setting for national certification. Consequently, the score ranges assigned to CEFR levels (A2: 40–59, B1: 60–79, B2: 80–100) serve as a descriptive reference frame for interpreting student performance relative to course goals, rather than a validated certification of global proficiency. Inter-rater reliability was established using Cohen’s Kappa, yielding substantial agreement ($k = 0.88$), ensuring consistency in the scoring process.

Semi-Structured Interviews and Reflective Journals

To gather qualitative data, two methods were used. After the 14-week program intervention ended, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a randomly selected sample of 15 participants (25% of the group). The interviews aimed to thoroughly explore their experiences, focusing on their perceptions of the vlog project, its challenges, its benefits for vocabulary learning, and its impact on their speaking confidence.

Throughout the semester, all 60 participants were asked to keep a biweekly reflective journal. They received prompts like, “What new vocabulary did you learn this week and how did you use it in your vlog script?” and “Describe a challenge you faced during recording this week and how you solved it.” These journals provided long-term data on the students’ learning processes, challenges, and evolving attitudes.

Data Collection Procedure

The vlog-based intervention (the independent variable, X) was systematically carried out over a 14-week academic semester as a key part of a mandatory 3-hour weekly English for communication course. The design focused on a recurring vlog creation project, using elements of Project-Based Learning (PBL) to boost engagement and independence. The semester progressed as follows:

Weeks 1–2: Orientation and pre-testing. The initial phase focused on orientation and pre-testing. The VLT and the speaking assessment (O1) were administered to establish baseline proficiency. Students were then introduced to the concept and purpose of vlogging within the course context. This included viewing examples of relevant educational vlogs, receiving instruction on basic video recording and editing techniques using easily accessible smartphone applications (e.g., CapCut, InShot – popular choices mentioned in similar contexts), and becoming familiar with the chosen online platform Google Classroom, which would serve as the central hub for vlog submission, peer viewing, and feedback exchange.

Weeks 3–12: The Vlog Creation Cycles. The core of the intervention consisted of five repeating 2-week cycles, each focused on producing one vlog. This cyclical setup offered regular opportunities for practice, applying learned concepts, and gradually building skills, following the stages outlined:

- *Week A (Planning & Production - Conceptualizing, Brainstorming, Scripting, Articulating):* The instructor assigned a thematic focus for each vlog, ensuring relevance to the students' major in Computer Education (e.g., "Explaining a Programming Concept," "Reviewing a New Gadget," "Tutorial on Using Software"). Students undertook the necessary research (conceptualizing), identified key vocabulary, and planned their content (brainstorming), then developed a written script for their 3–5 minute vlog. Scripts were submitted for instructor feedback, focusing mainly on lexical choice, grammatical accuracy, and clarity, and guiding the recording phase. Students then rehearsed and recorded their vlogs (articulating), often taking multiple takes to self-correct. Basic video editing was also done during this stage.
- *Week B (Sharing & Feedback - Monitoring, Evaluating, Uploading, Reporting):* Students finalized and uploaded their vlogs to the designated class platform. A significant part of the in-class session was then dedicated to structured peer feedback. Students, working in small groups, watched each other's vlogs (monitoring) and provided constructive feedback using a guided worksheet. This feedback focused on specific criteria, such as clarity of explanation, appropriate vocabulary use, intelligible pronunciation, fluency, and overall engagement, encouraging collaborative learning and reflection (evaluating). Students also implicitly shared their work by sharing it.

Week 13: Culmination and Synthesis. Students engaged in a final project, creating a slightly longer vlog that required them to synthesize topics or skills developed throughout the semester. This served as a summative application task. They also completed their final reflective journal entries, providing an overall summary of their learning experience and perceptions.

Week 14: Post-Intervention Assessment. The final week was dedicated to post-testing. The VLT and the speaking assessment (O2) were re-administered to measure changes in proficiency

following the intervention. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected participants to gather summative qualitative data.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data

Quantitative data from the VLT and speaking tests were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were calculated to summarize the participants' performance. Prior to conducting inferential statistics, the assumption of normality for the paired difference scores was assessed using the Shapiro-Wilk test. The results indicated that the data were approximately normally distributed ($p > .05$), justifying the use of parametric paired-samples t -tests. To address the research questions, paired-samples t -tests were used to assess the significance of differences between pre- and post-test scores. Additionally, for the speaking assessment, effect sizes (Cohen's d) and 95% Confidence Intervals (CI) were calculated to estimate the magnitude and precision of the intervention's impact.

Qualitative Data

Audio recordings from the semi-structured interviews were transcribed word-for-word to ensure data accuracy. The resulting transcripts, along with the collected reflective journal entries, were analyzed thematically following the steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), a method also used by Loreto (2022) and Lestari (2019). This iterative analytical process commenced with familiarization, wherein the researcher repeatedly engaged with and reviewed the transcripts and journal entries to cultivate a deep, comprehensive understanding of the participants' accounts. Following this period of immersion, the data underwent initial coding. During this phase, basic segments and salient features of the data that directly addressed the research questions were systematically identified and tagged throughout the dataset. The analysis then progressed to searching for themes, which involved collating these relevant codes and organizing all associated data extracts into broader, candidate thematic categories.

Subsequently, the researcher reviewed the themes to verify their validity and coherence. This involved checking if the potential themes accurately reflected both their specific coded extracts and the entire dataset. This step also included creating a thematic map to visualize relationships, enabling themes to be critically evaluated, refined, combined, or discarded as needed. The chosen themes then moved on to the defining and naming stage. This required ongoing, deeper analysis to capture the core narrative and details of each theme, ultimately leading to precise definitions and definitive labels.

Finally, the analytical process concluded with the production of the report. This stage involved integrating the thematic findings with the research questions and existing literature to build a strong academic narrative. To ensure the findings were genuinely rooted in the learners' experiences, vivid

and compelling excerpts were carefully selected, using direct participant quotes to support and verify the identified themes.

To ensure the rigor and credibility of these qualitative findings, trustworthiness was systematically maintained throughout the process. This was accomplished through member checking, in which preliminary interpretations were shared with selected participants to confirm accuracy, and peer debriefing, which involved collaborative discussions of the codes and emerging themes with a research colleague to reduce individual bias.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does a vlog-based pedagogical intervention impact the vocabulary acquisition of Thai pre-service computer teacher undergraduates, as measured by pre- and post-intervention Vocabulary Levels Tests?

To address the first research question, a paired-samples *t*-test was conducted, and the results are shown below. The first research question examined how the vlog-based intervention affected vocabulary acquisition. A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the VLT mean scores before and after the 14-week intervention. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1.

Paired-Samples T-Test Results for the Vocabulary Levels Test (N=60)

Test	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> -value
Pre	41.50	5.82	25.14	59	<.001
Post	78.67	6.91			

The results indicated a significant shift in the participants' lexical capabilities. A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the impact of the vlog intervention on students' vocabulary acquisition. There was a statistically significant increase in scores from the 2,000-word level baseline pre-test ($M = 41.50$, $SD = 5.82$) to the 3,000-word level threshold post-test ($M = 78.67$, $SD = 6.91$), $t(59) = 25.14$, $p < .001$. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference was $[-40.13, -34.21]$. As noted in the methodology, because these tests measure different frequency bands (constructs), a standardized effect size (Cohen's *d*) was not calculated to avoid misrepresenting this shift as a linear gain on a single scale.

Research Question 2: How does the vlog-based intervention impact learners' CEFR-aligned speaking proficiency when implemented as a form of multimodal mediation tailored to the principles of SCT and CTML?

To address the second research question, a paired-samples *t*-test was conducted, and the results are shown below. The second research question explored how the intervention affected overall speaking proficiency. Speaking assessments were scored on a 100-point scale, with proficiency levels aligned with CEFR categories (A2: 40–59, B1: 60–79, B2: 80–100). The average scores from the pre-test and post-test were compared using a paired samples *t*-test. The results are displayed in Table 2

Table 2.

Paired-Samples T-Test Results for the Speaking Assessment (N=60)

Test	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> -value
Pre	52.33	4.15	31.89	59	<.001
Post	81.17	5.03			

Speaking performance also showed a positive trajectory. A paired-samples *t*-test revealed a statistically significant improvement in overall speaking proficiency from the pre-intervention assessment ($M = 52.33$, $SD = 4.15$) to the post-intervention assessment ($M = 81.17$, $SD = 5.03$), $t(59) = 31.89$, $p < .001$. The mean increase in speaking scores was 28.84, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from [27.04, 30.64]. Furthermore, the analysis yielded a very large effect size (Cohen's $d = 4.11$). While this magnitude suggests a strong association between the vlog project and speaking performance, it should be interpreted in light of the internal course rubric and the one-group design.

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions and attitudes of the pre-service teachers towards using vlogs as a tool for reducing cognitive load (CTML) and mediating social interaction (SCT) in the context of their English vocabulary learning and speaking development?

The third research question explored participants' perceptions and attitudes toward using vlogs for language learning. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts and reflective journals revealed three main themes: (1) increased learner autonomy and motivation, (2) reduced communication anxiety, and (3) contextualized and engaging vocabulary learning.

Theme 1: Improved Learner Autonomy and Motivation

A pervasive theme across the dataset was the profound sense of psychological ownership and intrinsic motivation that the vlog project cultivated. Traditional, textbook-bound language exercises often position learners as passive recipients of isolated linguistic forms. In contrast, the vlogging tasks repositioned these pre-service teachers as active creators and domain experts. By allowing them to

tether their English practice to their major (Computer Education), the task inherently increased its relevance and reduced the extraneous cognitive load associated with learning abstract, disconnected content.

This shift from passive reception to active creation was vividly captured by Participant 12, who contrasted their past experiences with the vlogging intervention:

“Before, English class was just... boring. Memorize words, do grammar. However, with the vlog, I chose my topic, my words. I made something that is mine. I enjoyed researching new apps and creating a video to explain them. I shared it with my friend... he said it was good.”

(Journal Entry, Participant 12)

This excerpt emphasizes a significant sociocultural aspect: the vlog functions as a mediating artifact that connects individual cognitive effort with social validation. The student is not merely memorizing words for a teacher; rather, they are constructing knowledge intended for sharing within a peer network, which aligns directly with SCT principles of social mediation learning. This transition from “student” to “creator” fundamentally altered their professional identity, as articulated by Participant 18:

“I liked that I didn’t have to talk about ‘my favorite hobby’ again. I chose to review a new coding software. I felt like a real tech reviewer, not just an English student. It made me want to find the exact right words to sound professional.”

(Interview, Participant 18)

From an SCT perspective, taking on the identity of a “tech reviewer” allows the learner to operate within a simulated community of practice. The desire to “sound professional” acts as a powerful intrinsic motivator, pushing them to refine their linguistic output voluntarily. This autonomy encouraged students to invest deeper cognitive effort (germane cognitive load) into the learning process. As Participant 45 reflected:

“Making the script was hard, but I feel I learn more. I searched Google for the correct terms for ‘user interface’ and ‘algorithm’. I need to understand it in order to explain it. It is not like the teacher gives us a list to remember. I am in control.”

(Journal Entry, Participant 45)

This high level of personal investment often resulted in students dedicating significantly more time to the task than traditional assignments would dictate. Participant 31 noted:

“When the teacher assigns a worksheet, I just want to finish it fast. But with the vlog, I spent three hours editing and adding graphics. I wanted it to be perfect because it had my face on it and my classmates would watch it.”

(Journal Entry, Participant 31)

In this context, the participant explicitly recognizes the cognitive difficulty (“making the script was hard”) not as an obstacle but as a constructive, self-guided process. The locus of control transitioned from the instructor (“the teacher gives us a list”) to the learner. This sense of autonomy transformed the learning experience into a personally meaningful pursuit, thereby fostering sustained engagement and motivation.

Theme 2: Reducing Communication Apprehension

For numerous Thai EFL learners, spontaneous face-to-face L2 speaking elicited significant anxiety, which subsequently overloads working memory and impedes production. The data indicated that vlogging served as an effective psychological and cognitive scaffold. The asynchronous characteristic of video recording offered a “safe space” where participants could script, rehearse, make errors, and self-correct without the immediate stress of an audience.

Participant 9 vividly described the physiological relief provided by the asynchronous format:

“Standing in front of the class makes my mind go blank, even if I know the vocabulary. My hands shake. Recording in my bedroom was different. It was just me and the camera. If my mind went blank, I just pressed pause, breathed, and looked at my notes.”

(Interview, Participant 9)

From a CTML perspective, public speaking anxiety is a major source of extraneous cognitive load. By allowing the student to “press pause,” the vlog removes this affective filter, freeing up the working memory required to retrieve vocabulary and formulate syntax. Participant 28 further articulated how this environment helped dismantle their speaking anxiety over time:

“I am very shy about speaking in class. I am afraid of making mistakes. However, with the vlog, I can record many times. If I say a word wrong, I delete it and do it again. So, the final video, I feel confident. After a few weeks, I no longer feel so shy, even during peer review.”

(Interview, Participant 28)

This iterative practice led to visible proceduralization and increased automaticity. Importantly, the process of self-recording also functioned as an exercise in self-regulation and error-noticing. Participant 42 reflected on this self-monitoring process:

“At first, I hated watching myself on the screen. It felt awkward. But checking my own video before posting it let me catch my pronunciation mistakes. When we did the peer feedback in class, I wasn’t scared because I knew my video was already my best effort.”

(Journal Entry, Participant 42)

This tangible evidence of growth served to systematically lower communication apprehension, integrating private, low-stakes practice with a polished, public performance. The physical video files allowed students to objectively witness their own progress, as Participant 7 noted:

“My first vlog was terrible! I recorded almost 20 times. However, by the third vlog, I only needed 3 or 4 takes. I learned to speak without many pauses. Watching my old videos has shown me that I am getting better, which makes me less afraid.”

(Journal Entry, Participant 7)

This reflection is especially powerful because it shows how the vlog functions as a reflective tool for self-regulation. The physical video files enabled the student to objectively see their own progress, moving from 20 takes to just 3 or 4. This tangible evidence of growth helped systematically reduce their communication apprehension, connecting private, low-stakes practice with a polished, public performance.

Theme 3: Contextualized and Meaningful Vocabulary Acquisition

The final theme highlights how vlogging facilitated deep, generative processing of new vocabulary. Participants consistently reported that traditional rote memorization failed to result in long-term retention. However, the necessity of utilizing target vocabulary within the practical, communicative context of a video dramatically altered their acquisition.

Participant 51 emphasized the cognitive demand of conceptual explanation:

“When you need to explain something, like ‘data encryption,’ in a 3-minute video, you really have to understand what it means. You need to find the right words. I remember these words now because I did not just read them in a book; I used them to teach someone.”

(Interview, Participant 51)

This quotation succinctly captures the sociocultural concept of learning through teaching. The vlog's communicative objective compelled the learner to progress beyond mere surface recognition toward semantic mastery. To “teach someone,” the learner must thoroughly internalize the concept. Furthermore, the process of video creation inherently engages multiple sensory channels, aligning harmoniously with the principles of the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML). This deep processing leads directly to superior retention, as Participant 22 observed:

“Normally, I memorize ten words for a quiz on Friday and forget them by Monday. But the words from my networking vlog, like ‘bandwidth’ and ‘latency’, are still in my memory. I had to use them so many times to get the sentences right for the recording.”

(Journal Entry, Participant 22)

Moreover, the video creation process naturally engaged multiple sensory channels, aligning seamlessly with the principles of CTML. The Multimedia Principle posits that individuals learn better from words and pictures than from words alone. Participant 33 described this multimodal integration:

“This week, the topic was ‘Cloud storage’. I learned words like ‘virtualization’, ‘scaling’, and ‘infrastructure’. I used them in my script and practiced by saying them. When I edited my video, I put subtitles on these words. Now, I will never forget them because I made the whole video around them.”

(Journal Entry, Participant 33)

These comments demonstrate the principles of generative use (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). By actively selecting, integrating, and repeatedly practicing new vocabulary to achieve a communicative goal, participants engaged in deep processing, which supports long-term retention.

Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that a vlog-based pedagogical intervention is associated with improvements in vocabulary engagement and speaking skills. Although the lack of a control group precludes definitive causal claims, the quantitative data—showing higher post-test means across both measures—appear to support the premise that regular, multimodal production tasks facilitate language development.

The shift observed in Vocabulary Levels Test scores—from a baseline of high-frequency words (2,000-level) to engagement with the threshold band (3,000-level)—is illuminated by the theme of

Contextualized and Meaningful Vocabulary Acquisition. The statistical difference is not merely a result of rote memorization but appears to be driven by what Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) term ‘generative use.’ As reflected in the journal entries (e.g., Participant 33’s struggle with technical terms such as ‘virtualization’), creating a coherent vlog forced students to actively search for, retrieve, and employ complex vocabulary. Thus, the quantitative ‘shift’ closely tracks the qualitative experience of Learner Autonomy, in which the task’s necessity drove the expansion of the lexicon.

The significant improvements observed in CEFR-aligned speaking tests provide strong quantitative evidence of the intervention’s effectiveness. The substantial improvement in the speaking assessment aligns directly with the qualitative theme of Reduced Communication Apprehension. The qualitative evidence suggests that the surge in speaking scores (from $M = 52.33$ to $M = 81.17$) reflects not merely a gain in linguistic competence but the removal of affective barriers that typically depress performance in face-to-face testing. As participants noted, the asynchronous nature of vlogging allowed them to “record many times” and “delete and do it again,” enabling self-correction without the immediate pressure of a classroom audience. This format effectively lowered the affective filter, unlocking learners’ latent proficiency by creating a safe space for private practice before public performance. Consequently, the high post-test scores reflect “performance competence” facilitated by newfound confidence to mobilize existing resources. These improvements align with expanding research that emphasizes the positive effects of vlogging on various aspects of speaking, including fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content organization, and overall confidence and motivation (Lestari, 2019; Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020). These observed improvements align with previous research indicating that vlogging provides a platform for enhancing fluency and motivation (Lestari, 2019; Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020). However, rather than viewing the ‘A2 to B2’ shift as a definitive leap in global proficiency, it is perhaps more accurate to interpret it as a realization of potential. As the qualitative data reveal, the reduction in speaking anxiety likely allowed students to demonstrate competence at a level (B2-aligned) previously inhibited by fear and a lack of practice opportunities. The intervention did not solely cause the linguistic gain; rather, it created the conditions—autonomy and safety—under which such development could manifest.

The significant gains in vocabulary acquisition align closely with the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) proposed by Mayer (2009). By requiring learners to actively select, organize, and integrate linguistic and visual elements, the vlog creation process engaged dual processing channels, thereby reducing extraneous cognitive load and fostering deeper semantic retention. Furthermore, the necessity to incorporate target vocabulary into self-generated scripts mirrors the conditions of “generative use” advocated by Laufer and Hulstijn (2001). Instead of relying on rote memorization, students internalized technical terminology by teaching it to a peer audience, thereby transitioning passive knowledge into active mastery. This outcome closely aligns with Kamaraj (2025), who found that similar asynchronous video platforms (Microsoft Flip) significantly enhanced vocabulary retention among Thai undergraduates by providing meaningful, contextualized practice.

Regarding speaking proficiency, the findings support the growing consensus that TELL and student-generated content significantly improve oral output. Consistent with an expanding body of prior research (Choi & Sinwongsuwat, 2024; Huang, 2021; Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020), the present study found that the iterative nature of vlogging—scripting, rehearsing, recording, and self-correcting—provided a non-threatening environment that dismantled psychological barriers to communication. These results also parallel recent findings by Kamaraj et al. (2026), who highlighted the substantial benefits of video-mediated platforms on the speaking skills of Thai university students. Thai EFL learners frequently experience high levels of foreign language anxiety and fear of “losing face” (Horwitz et al., 1986; Khamkhien, 2010; Sriussadaporn, 2006). The asynchronous format of vlogging acted as a crucial affective scaffold, allowing participants to proceduralize their speech and reduce hesitation before public sharing.

Additionally, the structured peer feedback cycles aligned with Vygotsky’s (1978) Sociocultural Theory (SCT). The vlog served as a mediating artifact that enabled students to operate within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) through collaborative social validation, ultimately repositioning them from passive students to active, autonomous content creators (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Lestari, 2019).

Pedagogical Implications

From a pedagogical standpoint, these outcomes strongly advocate for a systemic shift in EFL curricula, particularly within higher education, away from decontextualized textbook drills and toward authentic, student-centered TELL tasks. By utilizing asynchronous video technologies as affective scaffolds, educators can dismantle the communication apprehension that stifles productive skill development. Furthermore, the success of this intervention was inextricably linked to learner agency; therefore, instructors must transition into the role of facilitators, empowering students to select topics that resonate with their professional trajectories. For pre-service teachers, participating in this intervention offered a profound dual advantage: it not only rapidly accelerated their own linguistic proficiency but also provided experiential training in a modern, multimodal pedagogical approach that they can seamlessly integrate into their future classrooms.

Limitations of the Study

While the study offers valuable pedagogical insights, several methodological limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study used a one-group pretest/posttest design. Without a control group, we cannot definitively rule out factors such as maturation or external exposure to English as contributors to the observed progress.

Second, the intervention took place within a broader ‘English for Communication’ course. It is difficult to fully disentangle the impact of the vlogging project from other course components, such as lectures, textbook exercises, or interactions with the instructor that occurred independently of the vlog tasks. Third, a constraint exists regarding the VLT. To avoid ceiling effects and measure expansion, the

2,000-word level was used for the pre-test and the 3,000-word level for the post-test. Because these forms measure different lexical constructs, the scores are not psychometrically equivalent, and the results should be interpreted as a shift in lexical capability rather than a direct linear gain.

Fourth, the speaking assessment relied on a locally developed analytic rubric mapped to CEFR levels without external psychometric validation (e.g., standard-setting procedures). Therefore, references to ‘A2 to B2’ progression refer to student performance meeting the specific learning outcomes of this course, which were designed to mirror B2 descriptors, rather than a confirmed global proficiency certification. Future research should employ parallel test forms, validated standardized exams, and control groups to corroborate these findings.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research could strengthen the evidence base by using experimental designs with control groups. Comparative studies examining vlogging alongside other TELL tools (e.g., podcasting) or teaching methods (e.g., traditional presentations versus vlogs) could pinpoint specific benefits. Long-term studies are essential to assess the enduring effects of proficiency gains and attitude shifts. Research could also broaden to explore vlogging’s impact on related skills, such as writing (scripting), listening (peer feedback analysis), and intercultural communication competence. Repeating the study across different fields, proficiency levels, and cultural contexts would help verify the stability and relevance of the vlog-based approach (Loreto, 2022; Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020). Investigating the most effective methods for incorporating feedback (peer, instructor, and automated) into vlogging tasks offers another valuable avenue for enhancing teaching.

Conclusion

The integration of asynchronous video technology into the EFL curriculum marks a significant paradigm shift, going well beyond simply digitizing traditional oral presentations. This study shows that vlogging serves as a crucial, transformative bridge between theoretical linguistic knowledge and real-world communication skills. By providing a psychologically safe environment that tolerates mistakes, encourages repeated practice, and affirms students’ identities, vlogging effectively breaks down the deep-seated emotional and cultural barriers that have long silenced Thai EFL learners. The real value of this teaching approach isn’t just in the measurable growth of technical vocabulary or the steady improvement in CEFR-aligned rubric scores, but in the profound transformation of the learner’s sense of self. Through digital creation, pre-service teachers no longer feel anxious or passive recipients of a foreign language limited by geography and education. Instead, they become independent, confident digital communicators and content creators, fully prepared to navigate, express, and contribute their expertise to the complex, interconnected global community landscape.

Declaration of Generative AI in the Writing Process

The author employed GRAMMARLY to proofread the sentence structure and flow during the preparation of this work. Following its use, they carefully reviewed and revised the content to ensure accuracy, coherence, and alignment with the intended purpose. The author takes full responsibility for the final version of the publication.

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