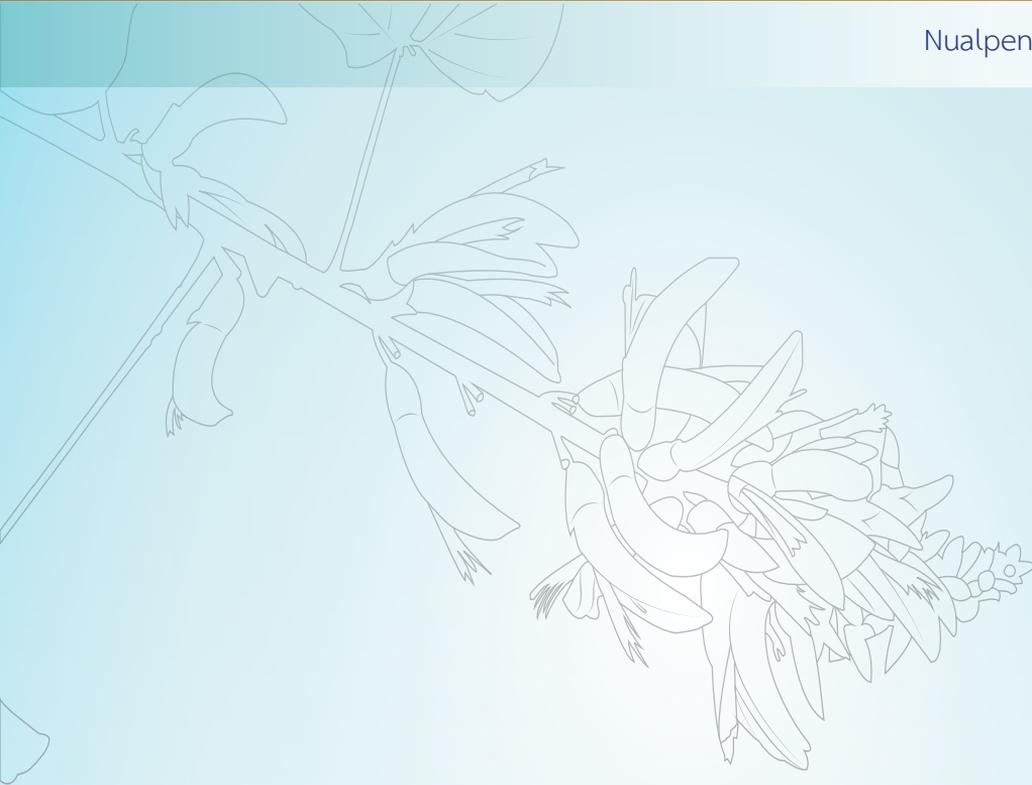# Efficacy of Flipgrid App as an Assistant for Speaking Skill Development in EFL Classroom

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Abstract

This study purposed to investigate whether the use of Flipgrid app can develop the speaking performance in an English class. It also examined the students' perception towards the use of Flipgrid in an improvement of English speaking. Through purposive sampling, 17 university students who were not majoring in English agreed to participate in the experiment. Data obtained from the four speaking tasks assigned to assess the development of speaking skill were analyzed using a paired sample *t-test*. Mean and percentage were used to interpret students' perception of the use of Flipgrid in the current study. The study found difference of speaking score between speaking TASK1 VS TASK3 (p=0.0139) and also revealed significant difference between TASK1 and TASK4 (p= 0.0001). It can be concluded that Flipgrid is a promising tool for assisting students in the development of English-speaking performance. In addition, students expressed the high level of satisfaction (M=3.909) with the use of Flipgrid in English speaking development and verified the benefits they received from the use of Flipgrid (M=4.091), namely the increasing of confident in speaking English (M=4.394) and engaging the presentation skill (M=4.176). In conclusion, Flipgrid can be a beneficial tool for enhancing speaking skill and encouraging the positive learning environment to students which are the important factor for learners.

Keywords: Flipgrid app, English Speaking, Feedback, EFL Classroom

Introduction

When smartphone is ubiquitous equipment among global citizens, it freely opens the gates to connect a number of technologies and information in any fields. In term of education, majority of learners are part of a screen-based society, it allows their lives more comfortable and convenience to interact with peers and/or family members. This might be the reason why an instructor should plan and decide for the most available technology to promote learning process and develop the 21st century skills [1]. In addition, online technology becomes the essential tools to support both teaching and learning activities in the today classroom environment. A study found that the use of technology in teaching and learning may improve learning-teaching activities by providing access to more students, facilitating self-paced online learning, offering an individual path of learning, making teaching and learning more student-center, promoting learners' autonomy and increasing the willingness to learn effectively [2-3]. In addition, the integrated technology provides opportunities to access the authentic language learning resources that exposes learners to the real-world language use. An integration of online technology in the classroom is beneficial for both teachers and students. When using educational technologies, the motivation in learning increases and the cognitive interest of students is stimulated, and the effectiveness of independent work improved [4].

Significantly in a language classroom, varieties of technology platform such as Facebook, Twitter, Wikis, Quizizz, Kahoot, and Flipgrid are introduced by the EFL instructors to their learners. A technology integrated language classroom usually allows students to experience more fruitful environment through the learning activity and it highly responses to the nature of Z Generation learners who are naturally familiar with technology and talented in digital competence [5]. Many experts in education have shown that an implementation of the following technologies indicated the beneficial feedback of the online technology platform usage had a good impact on learners' performance because they improved their language skills, teamwork building, collaborative learning, and critical thinking and assist them in practicing language skills, acquiring new vocabularies, and improving their understanding on the lesson [6-7].

English in Thailand is described as foreign language that is mentioned as fundamental subject among Thai students. Most Thai students mainly experience an English-speaking environment only in the classroom situation which is around 2-3 hours per week, however, when the class ended, L1 is preferable and majority of them feel awkward to speak English to others. That is why speaking is often considered as the toughest skill among EFL learners. Additionally, some of them are nervous to speak English for communication purposes outside the classroom. Besides, the difference of language structure and content sometimes decreases the confidence in speaking since they are afraid of making a mistake and the feeling of nervousness. In EFL classroom, students often confront some problems related to pronunciation, fluency, grammar and vocabulary. Moreover, in a speaking class, those students face the problem that related more to psychological factors such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, unwillingness and fear of negative evaluation than those linguistic factors like the lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, insufficient knowledge of grammar rules, reading and oral presentation [8-9]. Such difficulties prevent EFL learners to use the language in communication frequently, especially in speaking skill.

Owing to the capability of online technology in promoting effectiveness in learning and enhancing the positive learning environment, an adoption of Flipgrid - a free video discussion platform was introduced to examine its role in developing English speaking skill in the current study.

Objectives

This study proposed to 1) investigate the result of using Flipgrid app, an online video-based discussion platform, in enhancing students' speaking skill, and 2) to figure out the students' perception towards the role of the app in development of speaking performance.

Literature Review

Integration of Flipgrid platform in English speaking

Speaking skill is identified as an active skill that requires students to utilize both psychological and linguistic factors in order to produce the language and perform to specific situation. EFL teachers should be acutely aware of the creation of classroom environment and teaching styles to support the factors in learning. This is crucial because learning attitude has the most significant influence on student's intention to make effort in learning [10]. For significant benefits in managing classroom environment to engage the effective English speaking, many modern technologies, including online apps are implemented into the classroom today. One which is easy to access and friendly to user is the Flipgrid app. Flipgrid is a free education tools which is known as an asynchronous video-based online platform that allows students to practice the learning skills. [1]. In an EFL classroom, Flipgrid plays the role as a platform that enables students to experience the use of language, especially in communication skills. The app is accessible to the user by using only a smartphone/a computer, both in form of website or downloaded application. It also works as a free platform for students to communicate with classmates/teacher, present information, discuss, and express the ideas to certain topic. According to a study, it noted that Flipgrid is utilized mainly for two reasons: first is to improve oral skill, mainly in EFL and ESL and second is to initiate discussion that contribute community building [11]. For the results of using Flipgrid, it revealed both positive and negative impacts to students [12]. The significant positive impacts were stated by many educators. For instance, it promotes the motivation in learning English, works as an effective platform for interaction and communication, develops oral presentation, increase student second language acquisition, improve social presence, speaking performances and the 21st century life skills [12-18]. Furthermore, the speaking anxiety and students' negative experiences have been overcome by the implementation of Flipgrid [19]. Notwithstanding educators have been studying the effect of Flipgrid usage in classroom and most of them reveal the positive findings, the continuous study is still remain important for pedagogues who are looking for the most appropriate and optimum teaching strategy to propose an achievement in learning goal.

Methodology

Participants and sample

Totally, 17 students (6 males and 11 females) who enrolled an English course in academic year 2/2022 were purposively selected as the participants of this study. Participants were non-English major students in a public university in Thailand. The students' proficiency in English varied from A2 to B1 level, compared to standard of CEFR. All participants agreed to do the assigned tasks on a voluntary basis. Before the activity started, participants were informed in class that their speaking performances and responses to a questionnaire would

be used for the research purpose only. Otherwise, it is assured that the grading scores from speaking tasks would not interfere the scores/grades of the enrolled course.

The current study was committed to obtained the participants' consent before the study. The ethical consideration was approved by Research Ethics Committee for Human Behavioral Sciences of Silpakorn University Research, Innovation and Creativity Administration Office (SURIC) in 2022.

Data collection

Research Instruments

The two instruments were used to gathered data in current study. First major instrument is a speaking rubric. The rubric was used to evaluate the student's performance in each speaking task. This rubric was adapted from the IELTS Speaking Band Descriptors (Public Version) (https://www.ielts.org/-/media/pdfs/speaking-band-descriptors.ashx) to match the objectives of the current study, therefore, the scoring criteria to evaluate students' speaking ability would focus on fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammar rules and accuracy and pronunciation. Second, a questionnaire consisted of check-list items, 5-point Likert scale and an open-ended question was used to survey the participants' perception towards the application of Flipgrid. The questionnaire was sent to participants through Google Form anonymously at the end of last speaking task.

Instructional Design

This study lasted 15 weeks of semester 1/2022 (3 hours per week). At the beginning of the course, class instructor introduced Flipgrid to students and demonstrated how they utilize the app in making a VDO and providing the comments to the classmate's VDO. The introduction to the app is necessary because only 35.96 percent of the respondents are familiar and used to experience with Flipgrid. Whereas, 64.70 percent of them stated that Flipgrid is definitely challenge them to use it. As a result, the instructor needed to explain what students were expected to perform during the class time and assured them that the scores from speaking tasks were not calculated as a part of the course's grade. Then, the Flipgrid virtual classroom was created and used as the platform for English speaking activities and respondents were asked to join the class via the invite link.
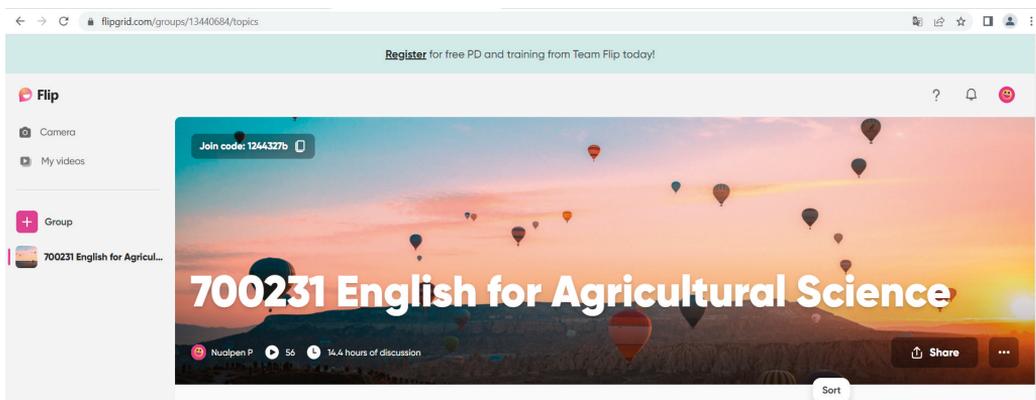
Figure 1. Flipgrid class

As speaking tasks was the most important part of this study, hence, four topics of speaking assignments related to the class lessons were assigned to students in order to encourage them to practice English speaking skill. Each task aimed to approach students to express the ideas and/or give a brief presentation to a certain topic. Then, they would ask to research the information and prepare a presentation, 1-3 minutes video presentation to demonstrate how well they perform English on each speaking task. While students were shooting a VDO presentation, he/she had the freedom to create their own presentation style. This is because some students were more relaxed to hide their faces from the presentation. It can be said that it is acceptable if a student put the sticker, emoji, photo or blur his/her visual in the presentation. Only clear speaking performance was required throughout the VDO presentation. Before assigning each speaking task, am example guideline questions would be provided to assist students in brainstorming the ideas and plan for a certain speaking presentation. The speaking topics assigned to students were "Future work", "My favorite food", "The Healthy menu", and "Dream farm" which was assigned to students monthly. All of the assigned speaking topics related to lessons and content they learned in the common classroom.

In addition, each VDO presentation was evaluated for speaking performance using the rubrics which was adapted from IELTS Speaking Band Descriptors (Public Version) (https://www.ielts.org/-/media/pdfs/speaking-band-descriptors.ashx). The main criteria in the current speaking evaluation put the focus on how could student perform the speaking ability on the basis of fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammar rules and accuracy and pronunciation. When a video clip was handed in, feedback and comments from the instructor were sent back privately to each student. Namely, students would be able to study the received feedback and suggestion (each speaking assignment was one month apart), then improve for the better speaking. Finally, after the last VDOs were uploaded, a questionnaire included check-list items, 5-point Likert scale and an open-ended question was sent to students online anonymously for their feedback on the use of Flipgrid as a platform in

developing speaking skill. In this step, instructor would assure students that they can express the honest opinions on how Flipgrid can be used to develop their speaking skill and their provided answers would not affect the scores of this course.

Data analysis

To examine the effect of Flipgrid in enhancing the speaking skill, data obtained from students' speaking tasks evaluation and a questionnaire were carried out by MS Excel 2010 version. Firstly, a sample paired *t-test* was used to evaluate participants' improvement of different aspects of speaking performance. Each speaking task was evaluated through the speaking scoring rubrics. To answer the second objective of this study, information gathered from the survey questionnaires were carried out for descriptive statistical analysis (mean scores and percentages) and interpreted into the level of students' perception towards the use of Flipgrid. And, a description of respondents' opinions on the problem faced in the use of Flipgrid which was an open-ended question was analyzed qualitatively.
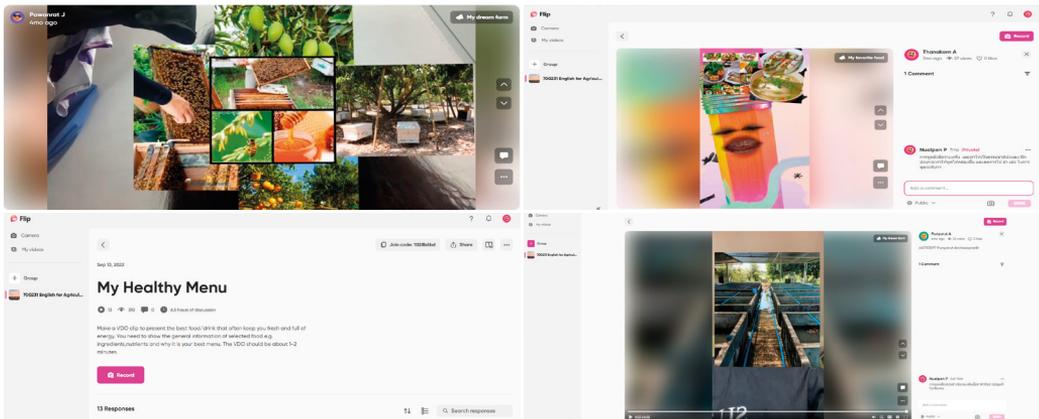

Figure 2. Examples of speaking tasks on Flipgrid platform

Results

The findings of current study were organized into two sections, according to the objectives of current study: 1) to examine the effect of Flipgrid to develop the speaking skill and 2) to reveal the students' perceptions towards the use of Flipgrid in the speaking activity.

1. Efficacy of Flipgrid app in the development of speaking

According to the four speaking tasks assigned to practice speaking skill through Flipgrid monthly, speaking scores were carried out to study whether the application of Flipgrid allows students to improve the speaking skill. The results of comparison are shown in the below table.

Table 1 Result of comparison between speaking performances through the use of Flipgrid

	Comparison of Speaking Performance		
	Task 1 – Task 2	Task 1- Task 3	Task 1 – Task 4
t-test	1.00	2.68	8.00
p-value	0.173^{ns}	0.0139^{*}	0.0001^{**}

As shown in Table 1, there was no difference in the comparison between speaking task 1 and task 2. However, the difference was shown in the second month of experiment, comparison between Task 1 and Task 3, and it also indicated significant difference between Task 1 and Task 4. This means that the use of Flipgrid as a platform showed the gradual effect in the development of English speaking skill. According to the result, the improvement of speaking ability was indicated in the comparison between Task 1 and Task 3 (p=0.0139), in contrast, there was no improvement in the comparison between Task1 and Task2 (p-value=0.173) . Obviously, it showed the improvement of speaking ability in the last speaking task when compare to Task 1 (p-value = 0.0001).

Additionally, each participant was asked to ranked the speaking task he/she agreed that it was his/her best speaking performance through Flipgrid. Overall, "My Favorite Menu" was voted as participants' most satisfied topic (64.75%) among respondents, followed by "My Future Work" and "My Dream Farm", respectively. Respondents stated the reasons for the most satisfied VDO presentation that the topics related to their background, thus, it can be effectively applied knowledge, vocabularies and languages to the VDO presentation.

2. Perceptions towards the use of Flipgrid in developing speaking skill

Table 2 Students' perceptions towards the use of Flipgrid

List of Items	Percentage	Mean
1. The overall satisfaction towards using Flipgrid in speaking activity	-	3.91
2. The benefits obtained from using Flipgrid in speaking activity	-	4.09
3. Benefits perceived from using Flipgrid		
3.1 I felt more confident when I have to speak English.	82.35	4.39
3.2 I could develop the vocabulary skill.	64.70	4.12
3.3 I improved the pronunciation in an English word.	52.94	3.94
3.4 Flipgrid encouraged the critical thinking skill.	64.70	4.00
3.5 Flipgrid motivated better presentation skill.	70.58	4.17
3.6 Flipgrid promoted better skill in searching information.	52.94	3.94

The table presented the participants' feedback towards benefits obtained from using Flipgrid in speaking development activity. Based on 5-Likert Rating Scale on participant's

satisfaction towards Flipgrid in speaking activity, participants revealed the overall satisfaction skill at the moderate (mean=3.91). In addition, they agreed that they perceived the advantages from recording speaking video through Flipgrid at high level (mean = 4.09).

It also found that 82.35% of participants indicated that generating speaking assignment via Flipgrid application arouse the better confidence in speaking English (mean = 4.39). Furthermore,70.58 % of participants revealed that the application engaged them to develop presentation skill (mean = 4.17). This is because they have to research for further information to the assigned topic and prepared before giving a presentation through selected application. Also, 64.70% agreed that Flipgrid empowered the ability to use appropriate word/expression in delivering the messages to audiences (mean = 4.12) and also motivated critical thinking skill throughout the process (mean = 4.00). Meantime, 52.94% of respondents showed that they could improve better pronunciation (mean = 3.94) and information searching skills (mean = 3.94).

2.1 Obstacles in using Flipgrid

In order to survey the problems students encountered while using Flipgrid, an opened-end question was included as the final part of a questionnaire. This questionnaire was sent to respondents to gather information about the obstacles they experienced on speaking tasks through Flipgrid application. To obtain precise details in their responses, the question was asked in Thai. Apart from 17, three students pointed out the problem they encountered while producing the video presentation. Student A stated that his/her major issue was the limited capabilities of a smartphone and a weak internet connection, that caused difficulties with the video. Student B mentioned the feeling shy and nervous about speaking English at the beginning of the experiment. And, student C identified the challenge of accurately using word, expression and language structure when communicating the idea from Thai to English.

Discussion

1. Efficacy of Flipgrid app in developing English speaking

The major purpose of the current study was to study an efficacy of Flipgrid as a tool to promote the development in English speaking skill. According to the study, it obviously revealed the positive results that Flipgrid could promote the improvement in English speaking performance. From the four months of an experiment, the improvement of speaking ability was recognized through the better score of students' speaking performance. Even though, the improvement of speaking was not found during the first month of the experiment, significant development was indicated in the second and third month (Task 3 and 4), respectively. Based on the result of current study, it can be inferred that consistent practice and sufficient duration of time significantly influence the development of language skills acquisition. Furthermore, the implementation of Flipgrid app as a virtual EFL classroom could

enhance the positive attitude and reduce the feeling of stressful and anxiety in learning. This means that it is crucial to create a virtual language learning atmosphere that can be effectively demonstrated and actively engage students in continuous language skill activities. Present, teaching and learning have been changed dramatically since the advancement of technology. A number of studies found that modern technologies could play an effective role as the classroom assistant to oblige student with academic achievement and life skills. To illustrate this, the teaching model, Think-Pair-Share with Flipgrid, has successfully improved the EFL student's speaking performances [15]. In addition, most respondent agreed/ strongly agreed that Flipgrid assists in development of speaking and listening skills and promoted better confidence in public speaking [17]. Especially, in speaking skill, Flipgrid also improves other related skills, such as fluency, pronunciation and gesture in giving a presentation [20]. Furthermore, some language educators have investigated that Flipgrid has the potential to foster other language skills learning, not only speaking skill [13-14]. With respect to Flipgrid, it can be one of alternative online tools for language instructors who are searching for an assistant, both online and blended -classroom environment.

One more important factor for the development of students' performance in English speaking is the feedback from class instructor. The feedback could play the role in engaging better speaking performance because students had an opportunity to study the comments from previous task and learned to improve those mistakes for the next speaking task. This promoted development in each speaking task. Since the feedback was provided online, students are able to review the comment as much as they can. A study concluded that Flipgrid could be an assistant for students to complete speaking activities as part of formative assessment which promote successful outcomes in learning [21].

In language skill acquisition, being confident in the use of language influence the achievement in learning. It can be said that the students who are more confident often perform better skill than those who do not. A result from the questionnaire indicated that utilizing Flipgrid in English speaking task could encourage students to be more confident while they were speaking via the app. This finding is useful for the EFL teachers because many students of them are afraid of speaking English and they are often nervous in the speaking time. It is not only the foreign language learning, but Flipgrid can be also used in various field of study. Flipgrid provides the positive effects in an English-speaking class, however, teacher is still important for the class as the role of classroom facilitator who provides the comment and suggestion to assist students in their speaking development.

2. Students' perception towards the use of Flipgrid in developing speaking skill

Figuring out the benefits and obstacles experienced in using Flipgrid was another main purpose of this study. In accordance with the survey, participants expressed the positive attitude towards the way that Flipgrid acted as a platform for speaking practice. To illustrate,

the benefits which are expressed by a number of participants were recording a speaking video through the application could increase the better level of confident in speaking English. Due to the nature of many EFL learners, they are somewhat worried and scared to speak English in the class or shy to use English in communication. The integration of Flipgrid in learning process might help students more comfortable in interacting the language and create friendly environment for language learning [1,12-13,16-17,23-25]. Likewise, other benefits were observed through the use of Flipgrid also. As Flipgrid is a video platform, before recording any video, the procedures, like searching for information, expressing the language, pronunciation and giving a presentation ought to prepare carefully. Not only Flipgrid app that play the significant role in the classroom, but other social medias also bring the positive perceptions to the students. A study showed that doing communication language teaching (CLT) activities engaged self-confidence, motivation, interaction, a possibility of learning from anywhere, and most importantly, eliminating speaking anxiety from learning speaking [22]. In addition, the positive feedback towards usage of technology-mediated oral task was noticed both in term of academic engagement and in the improvement of speaking and listening skills [26]. It can be concluded that the integration of online platform in language learning does not only provides students an opportunity in acquiring language skills virtually, but it also improves the social presence and other skills accompanied by learning process.

On the other hand, the obstacles are sometimes found both at the beginning and working stages on Flipgrid [16,24]. The highlight problem which sometimes distracts students from the application of modern technology in learning is knowledge insufficiency in a particular technology. Some users are not familiar to the application, hence, principle introduction of the app need to be provided to students in order to assure that the problem from the app is not the major obstacle of learning. Another problem is from low capability of language ability that cause the negative learning environment to students and lower ability in language performance. In accordance with a study, it reported the most that limited internet data and limited supporting devices caused the difficulties in making and uploading the video [27]. Sufficient knowledge and preparation could assist in the creation of positive learning attitudes and influence learning achievement.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigated the role of Flipgrid app in assisting learners to improve the speaking skill and also studied the learners' perception towards the utilization of the app. Throughout the period of this study, Flipgrid was used as the main platform to develop their English speaking.

Based on the finding, it found the improvement in English-speaking ability observed from students' performance and it also indicated the positive feedback from the users. Consequently, it can be referred that the use of technology, Flipgrid, in an English-speaking

activity provided the positive results to both teachers and students. As for teachers, the advancement of technology allows teacher to design the classroom environment to closely match real life situations. Moreover, the technology has promoted friendlier environment in learning than the conventional one. Meanwhile, students who are commonly the citizens of this digital generation would be more relaxed and motivated in taking part of learning activity, especially in an EFL classroom where many students somewhat lack of confidence and feel shy in using the foreign language. In accordance with the result, conducting the English-speaking tasks through Flipgrid capably decrease the nervousness and increase higher level of confidence in speaking rather than the common classroom environment. Flipgrid is one of today worthwhile technology which should be introduced to the pedagogic situations because it is not only benefit in academic achievement purpose. Students with the technology in leaning also learn to develop their psychomotor and social skills in the current globalization.

From the study, it is noteworthy that the improvement of speaking skill is gradually increase. Therefore, an appropriate range of time and continuous practice should be primarily concern. Moreover, the practical feedback from class instructor is another significant key in enhancing better speaking performance. It can be said that the feedback of the early speaking task would influence students to create an improvement in the second and following tasks. Consequently, teachers should focus on delivering the meaningful and practical comments and suggestion to each an individual speaking.

Regarding the learners' participation, it revealed the positive attitude towards the use of Flipgrid in speaking activity. Besides, the high level of satisfaction towards benefits obtained from Flipgrid was figured out in this study. It is noteworthy to say that Flipgrid is not only effective to an academic achievement, but it also motivates students to the world of learning. Likewise, the utilization of Flipgrid in this speaking activity could enable learners to develop not only language skill, but also other involved with other related skill. For instance, presentation skill, information searching skill and critical thinking skill are integrated into the stages of planning and preparing for the video presentation. Furthermore, Flipgrid promotes independent learning among students as they are responsible for the video presentation independently, along with the 21st century skills that are relevant to assigned speaking tasks. Further studies with a larger number of participants may shed light on the alternative teaching strategy which could address the problems in education.

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