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INTERNATIONAL ONLINE CONFERENCE ON ENGLISH AND EDUCATION

Theme : rEviTalizing English and Education At Post -Pandemic
Sub-theme: TEFL and Teaching Methods. Teching Media. Material Developments.
Assessment and evaluation. Linguistics and Literature. and Technology for teaching.

FLIPGRID: ONLINE PLATFORMS AS A CREATIVE AND INTERESTING TOOLS FOR SPEAKING IN BLENDED CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

In this study, 20 second-year English Education Department of STAIN Mandailing Natal students were introduced to Flipgrid, an online video discussion platform, as a means to facilitate communication and discussion with students in the absence of traditional face- to-face communicative activitie including speaking lesson. This paper presents how the students' responses to the use of flipgrid as a creative and interesting tools in blended classroom that focuses on speaking. The research method is used qualitative method. The instruments used in this study were questionnaires and interview. The result from this study was found that 16 positive responses from the accessibility, internet connectivity, psychological fulfillment, the interactive features and 8 negative responses of students to the use of the Flipgrid application ranging from competitiveness, equipment, and originality. The most positive responses that arise are that this application is easy to use, while the most negative responses are difficulties in uploading process is quite long. It can be concluded that the flipgrid provides creative and interesting tools for speaking in blended classroom.

Keyword: *Flipgrid, Speaking, Blended Classroom*

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INTRODUCTION

The effect of pandemic Covid-19 had made schools and universities are forced to change their learning education from offline setting into online. This has been forced the educators to create and find alternative solution to improve communicative environment particularly in speaking class. Meanwhile in speaking course, students need to interact with their classmates due to conversation practice. Because of this limitation and social distancing students are unable to interact with each other. This consideration need tools or new method where students can enhance their speaking skill.

Online tools probably didn't suit the offline classroom setting but they give a platform to do online (Blake, 2005). This study is aimed how is Flipgrid, an online video-based discussion to improve students' interaction and explore student perceptions of the application as a creative and interesting tools for speaking in blended classroom.

The use of technology had been integrating interaction into online or blended classroom (Hammond, 2005). The students can interact and communicate about the course with their classmates through online discussion. This platform is vey useful for both EFL and ESL student. They can talk and share about their opinion and also develop their connectedness during online classrooms section (Birch & Volkov, 2007). Goda and Yamada (2013) stated online asynchronous discussion boards prefer the social presence rather than the text-based one for communicative environment in EFL classrooms. If we compare to the text one, online video can improve students' authentic interaction and perception such as emotions, mental connections and facial expression through sound. (Clarket al., 2015). Furthermore this type of discussion give positive effect to the improvement of language ability and interaction (Svokos, 2019).

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In addition, it also has some benefit for those who are major in language department. There are many features in this application such as privacy features, library features and so on. Flipgrid tries to address some of these problems that teachers and students have. Flipgrid is an online video discussion tool that offers students a platform to talk and communicate about their opinion with their friend, and practice their language, presentation and conversation skills. It has been famous among educators that it is easy to use and offer to class and students can directly can record the conversation video from the teacher's grid. We can access this application through smartphone or laptop.

There are many researches which are related to the use of flipgrid such as the use of text-based discussion boards (Green & Green,2018), How to evaluate students' speaking skills (McLain, 2018), enhancing students' presentation skills (McClure & McAndrews, 2016), increasing student engagement (Bartlett, 2018), and practicing English communication skills (Petersen et al., 2020). The research abou the use of Flipgrid in language classrooms is still limited, this is become alernative solution to answer challenges during this pandemic and distance learning setting.

English commmunication actually should be based offline setting where the students can interact each other due to the pandemic. It is greatly affected the learning opportunities particularly in STAIN Mandailing Natal where English is assumed as the foreign language. The aim of speaking course is to improve students' speaking skill with various topic conversation. However due to the classroom restriction a decision should be made to create a creative and interesting tool in blended classroom through flipgrid.

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METHOD

The research of the study is qualitative research which shows detail information related to the students' responses towards flipgrid as creative and interesting tools for speaking in blended classroom. This also shows us about students' point of few after operating flipgrid. In addition it can be used as an information for teacher whether this application is suitable for the students or can be used to help the teacher to anticipate the issues that may emerge during the use of flipgrid.

Totally sixteen meeting in applying Flipgrid. In this study the researcher also act as a teacher in explaining how the use of flipgrid. After the students know how to operate this application, it will used in the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 10th, 12th, and14th meeting. Every meeting students were asked to upload their speaking project to Flipgrid, the teacher also asked the students to use all features form such as like, comments, video comments, reaction and others.

Besides doing speaking project, students also need to fill the google form as an online questioner. Some students also were asked to aswer an open-ended question. This is as a validation of data collected through questioner. All data from the questioners were then classified, identified and extracted using Microsoft excel, while the interview were conducted using WhatsApp call and was recorded so that the researcher can re- analyze the content of the interview.

This research was conducted in the English Language and Education study program of STAIN Mandailing Natal by involving 20 2nd semester students who took speaking courses as participants. The data were collected using questionnaires and interview in order to have a valid and reliable information related to the students' positive and the negative responses in the use of Flipgrid.

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Data analysis will be carried out by coding processes regarding student responses and experiences during the learning process and calculating student questionnaire scores indicating perspective in the form of tabulated data. The presentation of the data is designed to fully describe the responses, experiences and perspectives of students on the use of the flipgrid as a creative and supplementary tools in blended classroom.

RESULTS AND FINDING

The result of the study showed that students have more positive than negative responses. 16 positive responses on the use of Flipgrid such as the accessibility, internet connectivity, psychological fulfillment, and the interactive features. The complete positive response can be seen in figure 1.
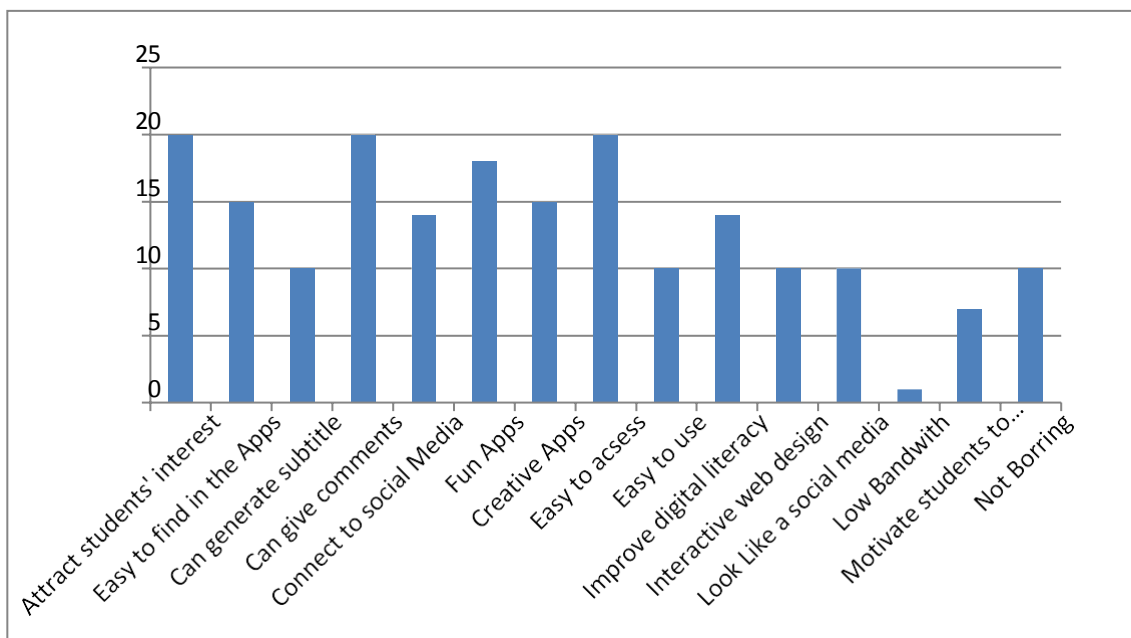

Figure 1
Positive Response on Flipgrid

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Meanwhile 8 negative responses such as competitiveness, equipment, and originality. The detail information can be seen in figure 2.
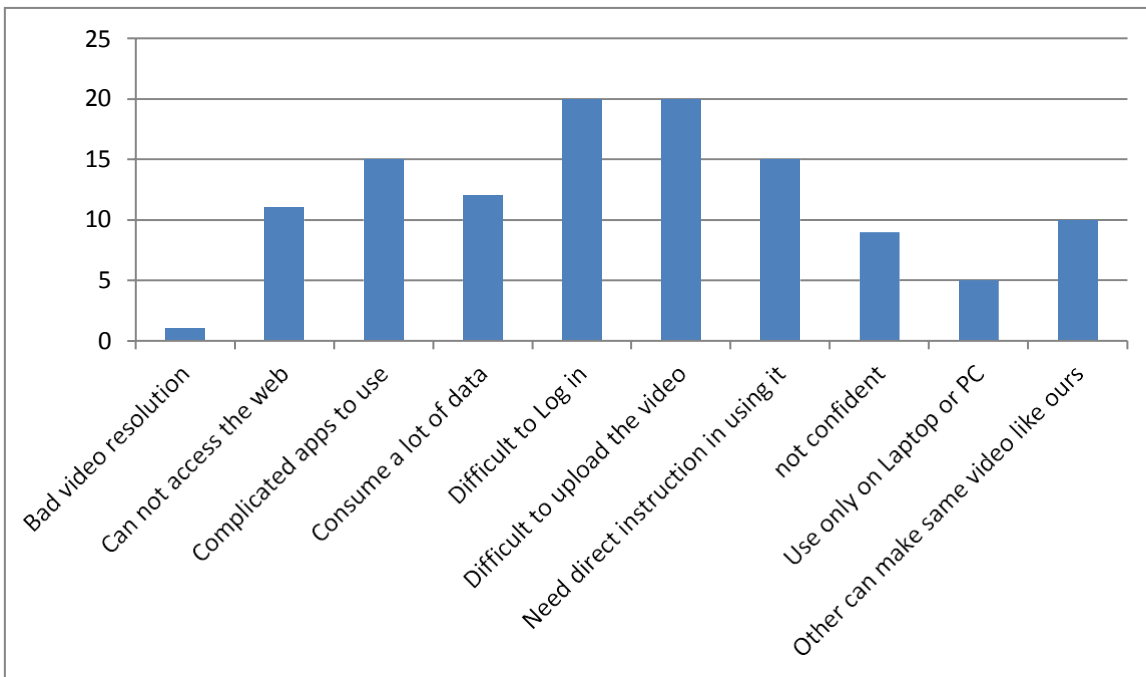

Figure 2
Negative Responses on Flipgrid

DISCUSSIONS

The figure above shows that positive responses to the use of flipgrid which is easy to use and it can motivate them in speaking course. Flipgrid is also compatible application is another reason. It is comfortable application to upload their speaking project. It is also can integrate other media social media platform (Carrie & Timothy, 2020). 20 students said that this tool is very easy to utilize and so does three interviewees. They can understand limited instruction from the teacher. Besides, they only can click the web link that shared by the teacher even though they don't have an account (Stoszkowski, McCarthy, & Fonseca, 2017). The design and the features of the web application are very attracttive is other positive response. They can design their video by their own and apply some stickers that make their speaking project looks more colorful. This make students

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more creative in creating creative video.

The second figure shows us a detail information about negative responses of flipgrid. Being competitive is the first negative response. Generally media social or video can be liked or dislike to show on agreement or approval. It can lead to the competitiveness. Some students are confident if their video get some likes meanwhile they feel uncomfortable if they get fewer like because of their assumption if they get some likes means they will have great score. So, it is important for the teacher to explain the funtion of like isn't the standardization of scoring in the grid of flipgrid. In correlation with this a few students were uncomfortable about being "on screen", with some voicing concerns that their appearance would be "judged" by their mates. Consideration should therefore be given to the suitability of the platform for introverts, although research has suggested that introverted students prefer communicating via social media and in person (Voorn & Kommers, 2013)

CONCLUSION

The result from both questioners and interview shows that the students shared both negative and positive responses. 16 positive responses such as accessibility, internet connectivity, psychological fulfillment, the interactive features of Flipgrid. The easiness on using this application and we can operate through smartphone and laptop. From psychological sector they are happy to apply various feature such as filters and stickers in their video. Furthermore, this tool is useful to do peer-feedback and self- evaluation in the same time, where they can improve the quality of their speaking projects. Using Flipgrid also allows them to communicate and collaborate with other students by using the comments features in both text and video.

Meanwhile 8 negative responses on the use of flipgrid. The sense of competitive and uncomfortable being on screen is two of negative responses.

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Moreover, limited internet data, and limited supporting devise make them face a lot of difficulties in uploading the video, maintaining the quality of the sound, and having a good resolution of the video. These conditions cause their phone to lag and cause a domino effect to their speaking activity. In case of originality, they afraid their video will be duplicated.

These two kinds of responses show that Flipgrid has more positive rather than negative responses. By this the teacher can use this tool to support the learning process especially in the speaking class because it provide effective online platform as creative and interesting tool in blended classroom

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