

## Conference Paper

# Vlogs in University EFL Speaking: Student-Teachers' Perceptions

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**Abstract**

Vlogs increase significantly in the contexts of English learning especially in the context of English as a Foreign Language education. Yet, little has been reported how university EFL students perceive vlogs for their English learning, e.g. speaking activities. Thus, this paper is aimed at investigating student-teachers perception toward vlog-mediated English speaking activities. From 99 EFL student-teachers, 49 students of English department of a private university were recruited and they willingly participated in this study. After a week classroom project of vlogging in speaking activities was implemented, questionnaires were distributed. After the results of the questionnaire had been tabulated, a semi-structured interview was conducted to explore further students' perception of vlogging activities. The findings show that vlog-mediated EFL speaking successfully stimulates students for speaking English in the out-class activities. Students enjoyed vlogging activities. Students' learning motivation was also improved. Some implication of the vlog-mediated EFL speaking activities were presented and discussed. Students' speaking engagement and challenges were also sought to elaborate.

**Keywords:** *EFL speaking, learning motivation, self-directed learning, vlog-mediated speaking*

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## 1. Introduction

In the last five years, there is a massive growth of information and technology application as tools for education (Aldukhayel, 2019; Hsu, 2016). Video blogging, in this case, is perceived still new things for student-teachers as they have been already familiar with YouTube. However, as life style changes, easy-go application is getting customized. The student-teachers are addicted for being social-media for showing their existences. Thus, video blogging is recently well-known as the third generation for having blogged.

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The student-teachers are easily presenting their arguments and thought in video ways of blogs instead of writing and listening blogs.

In the context of English as A Foreign Language, student-teachers have to acquire several skills for enhancing their speaking skills. They have to optimize resources they have, instead of having fun only with them. Having smartphone with them, they like to edit and share their video for public channels, e.g. YouTube, Instagram, website, and other channels. To this, editing and sharing video for public spaces or social media will be beneficial for them as they are directed in such ways, e.g. given fruitful and measurable instruction—how to edit, post and evaluate. This is important to provide them as student-teachers, they can learn and have fun on the other hand.

In the university settings, speaking courses were offered in each semester from year 1 to year 2 during their studies. Vlogs have been well-recognized practices to provide the student-teachers' experiences for improving their speaking abilities, not only in the courses related matters but also in the space of public speaking practices. However, in spite of all these practices, research-undertaken vlogs as media for speaking enhancement is still rarely reported. Thus, this current research is aimed at discovering how student-teachers perceive English vlogging as a tool for their speaking enhancement.

## 2. Literature Review

A number of studies related to blogging as English learning media have been reported, in listening activities (Aldukhayel, 2019), writing class (Vurdien, 2013), and also speaking activities (Hsu, 2016). Aldukhayel (2019) investigated how the impact of using voice vlogs for listening practice in the contexts of higher education. The results show that using voice blogs facilitate students to have friendly listening sources as well as listening tools. Different from Aldukhayel, Vurdien (2013) conducted another research related to blogs. In this research, written blogs were explored to promote students' ability in English writing. This research successfully demonstrates how English department students used blogs-mediated English writing for developing their writing skills. The results show that the students not only improve their English writing skills but also build their writing motivation.

In the area of speaking, the initiated study was conducted by Hsu (2016). Even though this research was undertaken in the area of English speaking voice, only blogging was implemented. By recruiting the students of English department of the university, Hsu shows that voice blogging successfully promotes students' speaking skills, e.g.

fluency and accuracy. This research fruitfully provides enlightenment that by doing regular recording activities, the students can learn what weaknesses of their speaking ability.

Overall, the previous studies give an outline that vlogging is a potential language use and exposure to develop both listening and speaking abilities. The reported studies have also show different media for blogging—from audio texts to voice text blogging. Hence, it shows that video blogging (vlogging) is still a burden. Therefore, this research is addressed to shed light on the impact of video blogging on students of English department in the higher education.

### 3. Research Method

A case study was employed to carry out current research to describe how vlog activities are perceived by the student-teachers for speaking practices. This project was taken place in an English department of a private university in Indonesia. From 99 EFL student-teachers recruited, 49 students of English department of a private university willingly participated and involved in this study. All students—aging from 19-20 year old, sat in the second year, which had already completed basic speaking courses. After a-two week classroom project of vlogging was implemented, questionnaires were distributed. After the results of the questionnaire had been tabulated, a semi-structured interview was conducted to explore further students' perception of vlogging activities.

#### 3.1. Procedure

The participants were grouped into 16 different targeted places. They had been tutored how to make live vlogging. In this project, they had to observe and find 5-10 interesting phenomena to be lively reported. The recording was about 3-10 minute length. This limit was set up due to the easy of uploading processes. After two weeks, all students were invited to participate in the alive survey through edmodo—their learning management system. Having completed filling the online questionnaires, selected participants were interviewed to have a point of views how their perception after joining this project, vlogging-mediated English speaking projects.

### 4. Results and Discussion

#### 4.1. Vlogs as tool for empowering EFL student-teachers

Using vlogs in speaking activities is perceived positively by the student-teachers. Vlog activities are perceived as empowering strategies to foster their speaking abilities and other subskills to be good language learners. Relating to empowering and empowered learners, diagram 1 is presented.

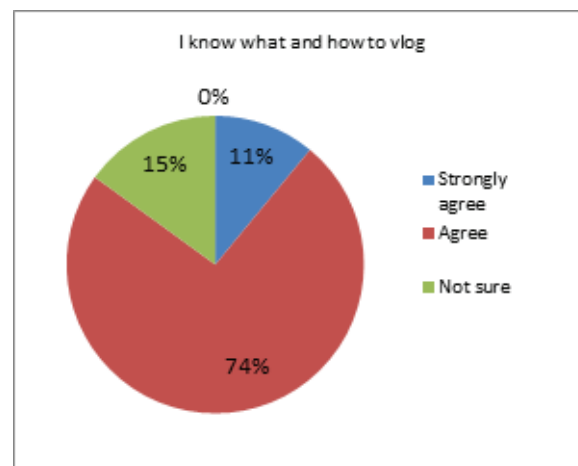


Figure 1: vlogs and student empowerment

The results of the student-teachers' show 74% of the student-teachers know what and how to vlog activities. This is important to know as they have to clearly comprehend the instruction of their tasks. In short, the student-teachers are getting empowered learners who realize their capacity for performing the task (Misdi, Rozak, Mahaputri, & Rozak, 2019).

#### 4.2. Promoting English speaking enhancement

The impact of vlog activities in promoting the student-teachers' speaking skill is presented in the following diagram 2.

Vlogs activities positively perceive 86% improving student-teachers' speaking skills. This is interesting as speaking is often regarded as the most demanded skills among other English skills.

*Dengan semua kegiatan yang menantang ini, saya semakin terpacu untuk speaking English dan semakin termotivasi untuk mengulang-dan mengulang speaking saya. Dengan ini, kemampuan bahasa Inggris saya semakin meningkat (Cintiara).*



Figure 2: Vlogs and speaking enhancement

From these challenging activities, I become more enthusiastically to speak English and tend to be highly motivated to speak again-and-again. From here, I found my English speaking skill is getting improved (Cintiara-pseudo).

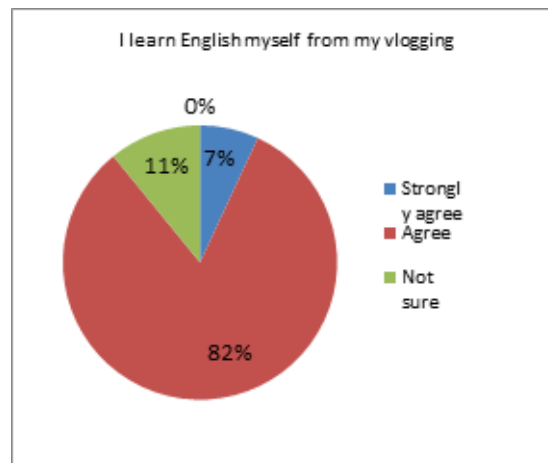
All vlogging activities provide the student-teachers' experiences promoting for English speaking practices again-and-again (Hsu, 2016). These speaking exposures are perceived as motivating strategy for getting better and better English speaking. Therefore, it is reasonable that English vlogging serves students best practices of improving English speaking skills, especially in the public space for wide audiences (Lai, Hu, & Lyu, 2018; Lee & Liang, 2012).

### 4.3. Self-directed Learning

EFL student-teachers felt for having self-directed learning learn speaking through vlogs activities. The result of the questionnaire shows that 82% student-teachers felt they learn English themselves from their vlogging activities. The finding suggests that vlog is potential for self-managed English learning, e.g. speaking activities. This finding supports Ozkan's (2017) proposal that blogging maintains students' motivation and self-reflected learning.

Sedangkan bagian yang tersulit sendiri adalah menentukan bahan atau apa yang harus saya laporkan. Dari sinilah saya merasakan sebagai pembelajar bahasa Inggris yang mandiri. Saya mengecek pengucapan dan penggunaan kosakata yang tepat, mengevaluasi kembali vlogs yang saya buat (Citiara-pseudo).

...and the most difficult process of vlogging is selecting the material to be lively reported. From here, I felt as a self-directed EFL learner—checking my



**Figure 3:** Vlogs and self-directed English learning

pronunciation and relevant expression. I also have to ensure all my posted videos are well shared (Cintiara-pseudo).

Since the projects are alive report, the students felt challenging to decide the correct and relevant contents for their vloggings. This is not the end to make them self-directed English learners. They have to make sure that vocabularies and expression as well as their pronunciation are controlled and correct. These processes, of course, naturally develop their self-directed learning—becoming autonomous language learners.

#### 4.4. Students' learning motivation was also improved.

The results of questionnaire show 87% students felt more motivated to learn speaking using vlog activities. This is not surprisingly; however, this tool is rarely reported as instructional tool. The detail results of the questionnaires are presented in the following diagram 4.

Dengan semua kegiatan yang menantang ini, saya semakin terpacu untuk speaking English dan semakin termotivasi untuk mengulang-dan mengulang speaking saya. Dengan ini, kemampuan bahasa Inggris saya semakin meningkat (Cintiara-pseudo).

From these challenging activities, I become more enthusiastically to speak English and tend to be highly motivated to speak again-and-again. From here, I found my English speaking skill is getting improved (Cintiara-pseudo).

As the student-teachers found the vlogging is challenging, their motivation is getting boosted to try again-and-again. This feeling of being highly motivated in vlogging is

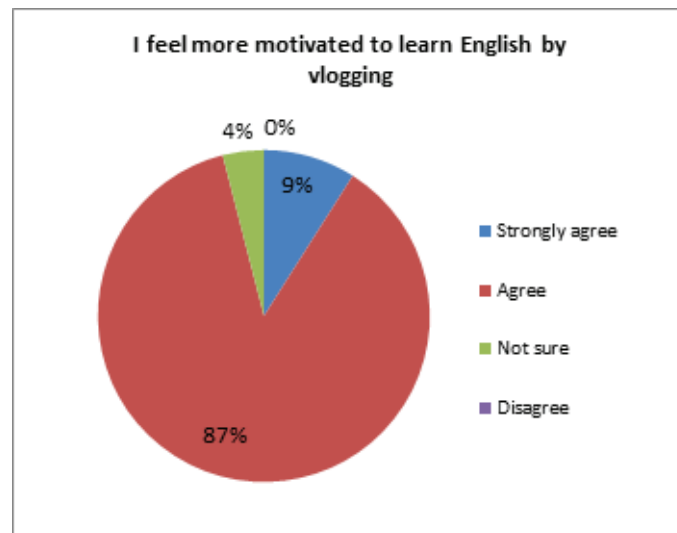


Figure 4: Vlogs and learning motivation

an important factor for being success in English learning (Ekalestari, Putri, & Hasibuan, 2019).

#### 4.5. Issues encountered in vlogging

As the evaluation of the vlog-mediated speaking activities, diagram 1.5 shows how student-teachers perceive their speaking through vlog activities. The results suggest that 76% reveal vlog activities are challenging. Again, this is a predicted. VLog-mediated speaking activities are still new for them. Despite the positive perceived impacts, students felt vlogging needs special skills. At the same time, the student-teachers revealed vlogging as fun activities—what an interesting it is. The detail responses as perceived by the student-teachers are presented in the following diagram 5.

Some evidence of being challenging, material selection to be reported through vlogging is the most difficult stage for the student-teachers. The following excerpt shows it.

Vlog itu penuh tantangan karena pertama, saya harus menentukan topic apa yang harus saya sampaikan. Menyiapkan bahan dan mengontrol kalimatnya juga, baik itu kalimat pembuka dan penutup untuk me ngundang orang tertarik menontok video tersebut. Dan yang lebih penting lagi adalah saya harus memperhatikan penggunaan bahasa Inggris saya termasuk pronounciationnya. Sedangkan bagian yang tersulit sendiri adalah menentukan bahan atau apa yang harus saya laporkan (Citiara-pseudo).

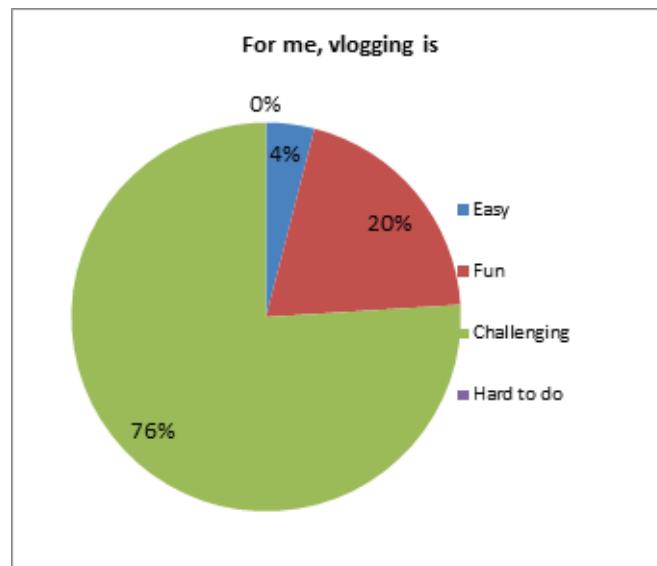


Figure 5: Vlogs and students' perceived activities

Vlogging is really challenging for me. **First, I have to decide the interesting topic for the material of my vlogging.** Then, I have to manage the tone of my utterances both for the opening and concluding remarks in order to attract people to watch the video posted. The more challenging is how I have to pay full attention to the English I use especially its pronunciation. Overall, **the most difficult thing is the material selection for my live report** (Citiara-pseudo).

It is reasonable that material selection is the most important one in the process of English vlogging. Provoking content will attract more people to watch and give appreciation. From their comments or likes, they indicate that the posted videos are attractive and assumed as qualified postings. Since formal assessment is given at the end of the projects, student-teachers, of course, control what they post and share on the social media, i.e. Instagram groups. Vlogging activities, as Okan & Ula (2013) found out, can be attractive practices to foster student-teachers' positive engagement toward their English speaking enhancement.

## 5. Conclusion

In spite of the challenges experienced in the process of the vlogging, the findings of the current research have successfully demonstrated how English vlog-mediated speakings are beneficial for empowering student-teachers as English teacher candidates in the 4.0 English education. English vlogging not only promotes self-directed learning but



also builds the sense of learning motivation among the students, e.g. speaking English in the public area. Despite the fruitful experiences demonstrated, further research urges to undertake to investigate other aspects of vlog activities. The results of this research may be bias due the limitation of data collection and subjectivity of the analysis and interpretation.

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