

# The Implementation of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning Through YouTube Vlogging to Boost Students' Speaking Performance

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**Abstract**—Technology has an essential part in the world of education 4.0. Technology integration is needed in teaching and learning processes to successfully achieve the targeted learning outcome. Therefore, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has become an interesting topic for studies related to English teaching and learning processes. Numerous studies suggest that MALL is effective for improving students' skills in learning English at any level and boost their learning motivation. Among the studies, some were conducted on investigating the effectiveness of video blogging in improving students' speaking skill. Some other studies were focused on exploring students' view on the implementation of video blogging. However, there are only a few studies that focus on teachers' practice in implementing video blogging. Therefore, through a reflective practice, this article tries to look at and reflect the practice of implementing YouTube vlogging in teaching-learning speaking for the students of a non-English department in Politeknik Negeri Jember. The results showed that YouTube vlogging activities were conducted through five main stages: preparation, modeling, concept-making, implementation, and review. The results also revealed that student self-assessment is needed after vlogging activities are done to help the students reflect on their speaking practice. It is suggested that video blogging activities are implemented in EFL classes as one of teaching and, at the same time, learning strategies to boost students' speaking performance.

**Keywords**—*mobile-assisted language learning, vlog, video blogging implementation, speaking*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Due to the high intensity of interactions among people, companies, and governments worldwide in this globalization era, there is a tremendous need for communicating in a global language, i.e. English. More and more people try to learn and improve their English-speaking skills for the sake of being able to either communicate well with the world community or settle down with their professions. Speaking has become the center of learning English and is considered the most important skill to acquire in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) since people who learn a language are referred to as the speakers of the language being learned [1]. As a result, today's English Language Teaching (ELT) has given more emphasis on developing learners' speaking skills to help

them to be successful and become competent in their fields whenever they finish their studies [2].

However, speaking is regarded as one of the most difficult skills language learners have to face in learning a language. An incredible number of language students think that it is hard to communicate what they have as a main priority in communicated in language and still can't communicate in English fluidly and fittingly in spite of the fact that they have taken in the language for a long time [3]. The challenges or problems that language students experience in learning speaking may shift. Speaking anxiety, limited background knowledge, low participation, and mother-tongue use are the problems that students frequently face [4]. According to [4], inhibition becomes the first problem that English language learners face in class. Feeling worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism, and ashamed of the others' attention towards themselves are such examples of inhibition problems encountered by EFL learners. The next problem students may face in learning speaking is a lack of topical knowledge, which then makes them feel difficult to remember what to say and have restrictions in their speaking practice [3]. Students experience difficulties to speak in a foreign language probably due that they are lack information or background knowledge related to the topic, unsure which word or vocabulary to apply, or uncertain about the use of accurate grammar. Whenever students face those problems, they may encounter a motivation decrease. Another cause of students' speaking problems can come from a class with a large number of students, which may prompt students' low cooperation and participation in class [5].

A study on EFL students highlighted that students' speaking anxiety is caused by the fear of making mistakes and this feeling is, somehow, related to the students' lack of self-esteem in using English. As a result, they occasionally insert their mother tongue when they speak English. From the natural phenomena that occurred in speaking classes, it can be concluded that psychological factors that may affect students' speaking performance are caused by the fear of making mistakes and the lack of self-esteem which are related to shyness and anxiety [6]. Thus, English teachers should find strategies to assist their students in getting a better speaking performance.

Another possible factor which gives impact on students' speaking performance is the limited opportunity to have extensive speaking practice outside the class. Students merely practice speaking and explore their speaking ability in class. They mostly do not have extensive speaking practice when they are outside the class. As a response to this problem, English teachers should creatively and innovatively employ a supporting media which can enhance their students' occasion to conduct extensive practices and make them get more exposure to speaking practice outside the class [7].

Technological media can be a great response to the above-explained problem since technology innovation has had a significant role in language teaching and learning today through either software or hardware [8]. Besides, integrating mobile devices as the teaching-learning media in language classroom has brought several positive outcomes as it supports collaborative classroom activities and enriches the authentic classroom activities through mobile applications and online sites [9].

Another leading technology innovation allied to an enormous number of technology innovations used as technological media in language learning is what is known as YouTube and Vlog. YouTube is a free online video-sharing or video hosting platform where users can create their profile, upload videos, watch, like, share, and comment on other videos [10]. A vlog is described as a type of blog which contains full of video content. When people have a channel on YouTube, they can create vlogs and upload them to their channels. This phenomenon triggers both language teachers and language learners to employ or create vlogs on YouTube to get them involved and support the language teaching-learning environment [8].

Several studies have explored the use of vlogs in language teaching-learning and showed several results. A study that was conducted in a factorial design analyzed the effectiveness of vlogging in teaching speaking. The researchers also took students' learning motivation into account. The study showed that learning speaking through vlogging strategy is more effective than learning speaking through expository strategy. It also showed that highly motivated students have higher speaking ability than less motivated students. Therefore, the study concluded that there is an interaction between teaching strategies and motivation for teaching speaking [12]. Another study that investigated whether vlog contributed to the students' speaking improvement was conducted [7]. This study was an action research that made use of the Instagram platform as the media for the students to create vlogs. The results pointed out that the implementation of the Instagram vlogs into a basic level of a speaking class improved the students' speaking proficiency, which covers speaking fluency, pronunciation, syntax, vocabulary, and the use of the target language. The study also showed that the employment of the Instagram vlogs contributed to EFL students' speaking skills in enhancing fluency, acquiring vocabulary items, and boosting confidence and motivation. Another study [8] tried to investigate students' experiences of using vlogs to learn English. By conducting an exploratory study, they revealed that the students' experiences in using vlogs to learn English deal with losing words to say, conveying English language expression, expressing identity, and looking for additional information in English. They also indicated that the students learn detailed guideline making, better editing, confidence

gaining, and vocabulary improvement through the use of vlogs in learning English.

From the previous relevant studies and currently available literature, there are only a few studies that focus on the implementation of vlogs in teaching speaking for non-English department students. This article, therefore, tries to look at and reflect the practice of implementing YouTube vlogging in teaching-learning speaking for the students of a non-English department. The focus is on how I can employ YouTube vlogging activities in the teaching-learning process to help my non-English department students practice speaking English effectively. It is expected to enrich the information on the significance of vlog employment in English language learning, especially speaking.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL)*

Industry 4.0 with its advanced mobile technology has brought swift changes in all aspects, including education. The advancement of mobile devices has made them become important tools in education and language learning. Both teachers and students are getting more and more familiarized with the use of mobile devices in their teaching-learning environment to make education as ubiquitous as possible. Additionally, the emergence of the internet strengthens the utilization of mobile devices in such a way that they provide a very effective resource for education and language learning [13]. MALL means that mobile technology is used to assist students' learning. They do not only learn a second/foreign language in a classroom, but also have a chance to explore various independent learning activities outside the classroom.

### B. *Vlog*

A vlog stands for a video blog and is defined as a blog that uses video as the main source instead of texts [12]. Video blogging, well-known as vlogging, is an activity of utilizing social media which is currently popular throughout the world. The term vlog is also used by people who do video stream but do not utilize a blog, yet post their videos through online video hosting like YouTube [11]. Moreover, live broadcasts on Facebook and Instagram are also categorized as vlogs. In other words, a vlog contains either "blogging or streaming activities, with or without others as long as there are self-made, first-person video involved" [8].

### C. *YouTube Vlogging in Teaching-Learning Speaking*

Education 4.0, in which technology and mobile devices play an important role, has made considerable changes and development in language teaching-learning. Years ago, the teaching-learning process could only be done in a classroom setting. In such circumstances, teaching-learning process did not take teachers' creativity and emotional intelligence into account. Nowadays, on the contrary, teachers are highly demanded to be creative and innovative in designing lessons as well as utilizing technology to not only help students achieve the learning outcome but also sharpen their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

In teaching-learning speaking, one of the auspicious strategies facilitating creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving that English teachers can employ is a vlogging activity. Creating a vlog requires students to carry

out several steps through which they can subconsciously shape their creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The implementation of vide blogs in the speaking classroom brings positive feedback from both lecturers and students [14]. Anil [15] asserts that vlog is a good oral communicative application and facilitates learners to improve their speaking skills by practicing their English either inside or outside the classroom, watching others' performances, and getting instant feedback from the teachers, other students, as well as other viewers.

However, vlogging activity cannot be done in any speaking class. Designing a vlog project in a speaking class might be burdensome for students if teachers do not take a suitable topic into account. Topical knowledge refers to knowledge that is stored and structured in long-term memory [4]. It means that topical knowledge is the knowledge of relevant information to the topic that the speakers have. Therefore, certain speaking tasks may be easier for those who have relevant topical knowledge and might be more difficult for those who do not or have limited topical knowledge [16]. Huang, Hung, and Plakans [17] also support the idea for the result of their study indicated that topical knowledge significantly affected speaking test performance.

### III. METHOD

A qualitative research approach was used in this study. Specifically, a reflective practice strategy was conducted since the aim of this study was to look at and reflect the implementation of MALL through YouTube vlogging activities for my students in non-English departments. This article focuses on describing and reflecting the implementation of MALL through YouTube vlogging activities for my students' speaking practice. I carried out the study in a Basic English course offered to 91 undergraduate students, divided into three classes, in the second semester of their study at Renewable Energy Engineering Study Program, Politeknik Negeri Jember. It is a two-credit course containing 60-minute lecturing classes and 120-minute practice classes. The course is designed to provide students basic fundamental knowledge they need to be successful and engage in both spoken and written discourse of daily activity and academic settings. This study was conducted in 6 meetings (1 meeting per week, including lecturing classes and practicum classes) of the second semester academic year 2019/2020. It was not an intervention study that aimed to improve the students' speaking competence or to measure the effectiveness of YouTube vlogging on the students' speaking performance.

The sources of data used in this study were the documents of my teaching practice, i.e. video recordings, teaching records in LMS, and a written reflective diary. The data analysis was done by combining process description and process reflection. Then, for the data triangulation, a fellow lecturer was involved as a co-researcher, who fortified my reflection by doing an additional reflection.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of MALL through YouTube vlogging activities that I conducted was divided into five stages, i.e. preparation, modeling, concept making, implementation, and review. The stages are shown in Figure 1. There were two vlog products created by each student during this study. Thus, the

stages of the YouTube vlogging teaching strategy shown below were applied twice during the study.

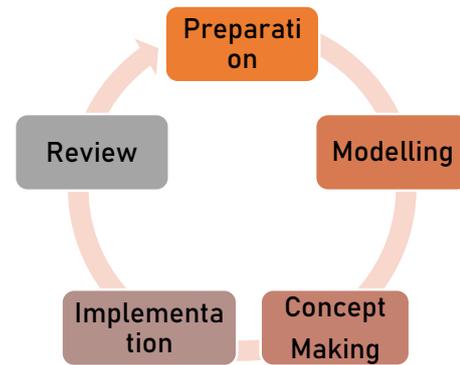


Fig. 1. The Stages of YouTube Vlogging Teaching Strategy

#### A. Preparation

Preparation was the initial stage of the vlogging activities, in which I constructed a teaching scenario. The teaching scenario consisted of choosing a topic to be discussed and preparing a material presentation. There were two topics that I used for the implementation of YouTube Vlogging, i.e. 'All about Me' and 'Covid-19 Pandemic'. The former was chosen as the first topic to ease the students and arouse their convenience as well as their engagement in conducting their first vlog project. Within this topic, they were asked to share such information about themselves as their personal information, their own appearance and personality, family members, their favourite things, what they like and dislike, etc. Meanwhile, the latter topic required them to give a short description of what Covid-19 was, how it could spread, what people could do to avoid it.

The topic selection was done by taking into account such considerations as its relevance, students' interest, and students' topical knowledge. Students' interest in certain topics can highly cause their good topical knowledge on that topic. Moreover, the latest news which is relevant to students smoothly attracts students' interest. Thus, these considerations were interrelated and done in the initial stage since the topic is of the factors affecting students' speaking performance. This is in line with Leong and Ahmadi [3] who suggest that teachers need to identify some factors influencing their students' speaking performance if they would like to help them overcome their speaking difficulties, moreover, topical knowledge is of the factors influencing students' speaking performance. The topic selection done in this initial stage is also in line with the study [17].

After the topic selection was done, the next step was preparing a material presentation. The material presentation preparation covered relevant language focus and vocabulary. Since the students were learning English at a basic level, a clear presentation on relevant language focus and vocabulary would be of high importance. Grammatical competence can help students implement the English structures correctly and may lead to their speaking fluency. Material preparation also covered relevant vocabulary to help the students enhance their vocabulary knowledge, as vocabulary was identified as a great obstruction to EFL students' speaking fluency.

B. Modeling

Modeling was the second stage of the implementation of the YouTube vlogging teaching strategy. In this stage, I employed a PPP (Presentation, Practice, and Production) method, considering that it is one of the good methods for teaching speaking. Introducing the new target language well in the first stage of the lesson, setting several tasks for students to practice the new target language, and providing communicative activities to encourage students to use the new target language can be the effective ways of assisting students to come to the lesson objectives [18]. Therefore, I personally believe that the series of phases in PPP can provide considerable time and space for my non-English department students before they eventually perform their speaking practice.

This modeling stage, conducted in a 60-minute lecturing class, took in mainly two phases, i.e. Presentation and Practice. The first phase consisted of topic delivery, elicitation, and the relevant language focus and vocabulary presentation, while the second covered students' controlled and freer practice.

C. Concept Making

After the modeling stage, the teaching-learning activities came into the next stage, namely concept making. In this stage, the last phase of PPP, i.e. Production, was conducted. First, vlog examples related to the assigned topic were shown to the students. Then, they were given a set of detailed instructions on a vlog creation. The following is an example of the instruction.

**Mini Project - Vlogging**

This mini project is designed to give you the opportunity to apply the knowledge about describing people and things. You are assigned to make a video showing your speaking performance. The following is the list of things you can talk about:

- Personal information (full name, nick name, date of birth, etc.)
- Describing yourself
- Describing your family members
- Describing your idol
- Describing your favourite thing(s)

Edit the recording by inserting Polite logo, followed by your name, in the beginning. You may also add music background before and after the main talk.

When the video is ready, upload it in YouTube. Then, submit the link of the video here.

Happy practicing :-)

Fig. 2. Screenshot of the vlogging instruction

The next step was the students made a concept, in which they were suggested to outline their vlog content. This concept making stage was done in a 120-minute practice class, during which the students could also have a mini-conference with me to consult their concepts.

D. Implementation

This stage was done outside the classroom setting and carried out during a week. In this stage, the students performed speaking based on the assigned topic and recorded their performance at the same time. Then, they did a simple video editing to insert back sound, animations, etc.

After their video products were ready to watch, the next step was the students needed to upload the videos to their YouTube account. When the uploading process was successful, the students were required to copy the video URL and submit the link. To this end, the students were required not only to show their best performance in speaking, but also

to utilize technology for recording, editing, and submitting their video products. Accordingly, these series of vlog production process that the students accomplished could develop their speaking performance, their creativity, and problem-solving as well. It is in line with Taqwa and Sandi [8] who affirm that teachers should be creative in designing lessons and making use of technology to make students able to accomplish the learning outcome and, at the same time, develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

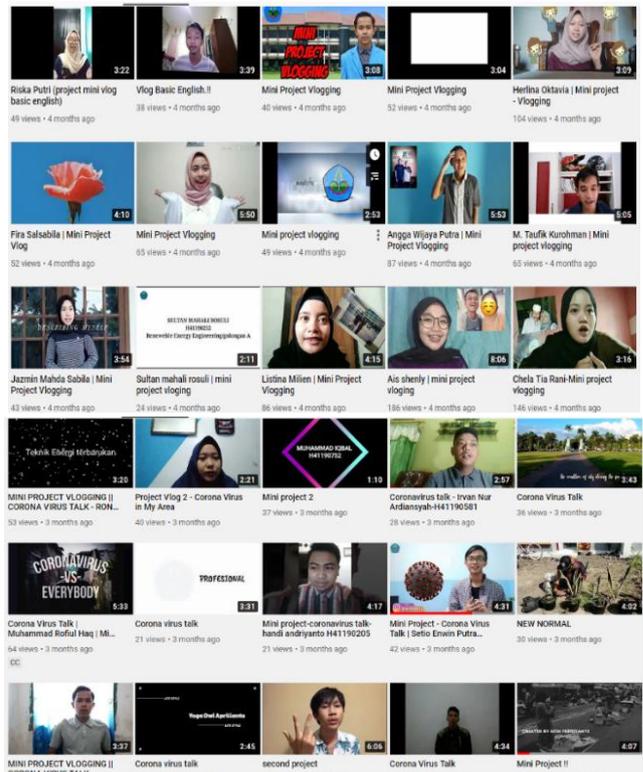


Fig. 3. Screenshots of the students' vlog from the YouTube account

E. Review

The last stage of the YouTube vlogging teaching strategy was review. It was conducted in the following week after the students submitted the links of their vlog. In this stage, I gave the students a guided scoring rubric and asked them to watch their own videos. Then, they needed to review their own performance in the videos based on the scoring rubric provided, adopted from iRubric<sup>tm</sup> (<https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?code=CX87669&sp=yes&>). The scoring rubric consists of five categories, i.e. grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and content. Then, after they were done with the self-assessment, I asked them to do a peer assessment by randomly selecting two videos of other students, giving comments in YouTube, and reviewing them the same way as the self-assessment they had previously done. By watching and reviewing their own and others' videos guided by the provided scoring rubric, the students were expected to be able to identify the areas they need to work on or improve. Besides, I believe that this strategy will boost the students' motivation to practice more and present their speaking products as best as they can since they realize that there are audience responses to their products.

## V. CONCLUSION

To conclude, mobile-assisted language learning can be implemented in teaching-learning speaking by utilizing YouTube vlogs. Teachers may make use of the YouTube vlog implementation as a teaching strategy in which they show the existing vlogs in YouTube as an authentic material in teaching-learning speaking, deliver a topic, and ask students to create their own vlogs. To maximize the implementation of YouTube vlogs in teaching-learning speaking, students are encouraged to do self and peer assessment as well so that they do not only practice speaking by creating vlogs but also learn how to evaluate or review their work. The YouTube vlog implementation may bring such benefits as boosting students' engagement and confidence to speak English, facilitating students' creativity, and increasing students' critical thinking. However, it requires a significant amount of time that teachers need to consider.

As with the majority of studies, the design of the current study is so subject to limitations that the result cannot be generalized; yet it is hoped that it would contribute to the innovative teaching speaking methods or techniques. I also recommend future researchers to conduct a narrative inquiry study on teachers' implementations of video blogging so that deeper and more comprehensive findings can be achieved.

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