

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief description of the general outline of the research, which is divided into several parts, namely the background of the research, research questions, the aims of the research, significance of the research, the scope of the research, clarification of terms and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Research

In the beginning of 2020, the novel coronavirus outbreak, has expanded to touch every sector across the globe. One of the most affected sectors is education (Abidah, Hidaayatullaah, Simamora, Fehabutar, and Mutakinati, 2020; Alghamdi, 2021; Mahapatra and Sharma, 2021). Particularly, due to physical distancing policy to prevent the spread of the corona virus, routine activities at schools such as face-to-face meetings in class, and academic guidance processes become obstructed. In response to that problem, UNESCO recommended teachers and schools to use distance education programs and educational platforms to reach the students regardless of the distance (UNESCO, 2020). Accordingly, Indonesian government also applies the same policy established by UNESCO.

During the pandemic, it is common that educational institutions are now starting to use technology and implementing online learning systems to support learning activities that can be accessed anywhere. Online learning now can be carried out synchronously like a traditional class or a face-to-face meeting in the classroom even though it is through an online platform. Online learning utilizes many technologies to support education such as email, web, new groups texts, chat, audio, and video conferencing, which are connected through a computer network or the internet (Dhull and Sakshi, 2017). For example, a study especially in Indonesian context, applied the system where the learning activity was conducted online by using some platforms such as, Google Classroom, Edmodo, Flipgrid, WhatsApp and many more (Damayanti and Sibarani, 2020)

While some other platforms can be used for classroom purposes in general, Flipgrid is a platform that aims to help teachers teach speaking. According to MacIsaac (2020), Flipgrid is a free platform made for educational purposes, that is

for students to post a video response to teacher questions. Flipgrid is used because teachers can create a grid in which they or their students publish topics and have other class members participate. Moreover, Flipgrid also has other features to give feedbacks for students. The opportunity created through Flipgrid to provide daily written or video feedback, with the ability to develop custom rubrics for the lecturer, is in accordance with the principle of helping the students take responsibility for learning (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Feedbacks given by the lecturer are submitted individually to the students directly via email, so that only the students' receiving the email can see the feedback.

Several international studies have analyzed Flipgrid's effectiveness in online learning and students' perceptions and attitudes toward the use of Flipgrid in the language classroom (Keiper, White, Carlson, and Lupinek, 2020; Lowenthal and Moore, 2020; and Mango, 2019). Furthermore, a study within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) scope has explored the use of Flipgrid to help EFL high school students reduce their anxiety about learning English and evaluate the students' attitudes towards Flipgrid (Tuyet and Khang, 2020). As in Indonesian context, some studies have been focused more on analysing the students' attitude towards Flipgrid in learning English speaking skills (Budiarta and Santosa, 2020; Syahrizal and Pamungkas, 2021). There are only a few studies which discuss the use of Flipgrid in online learning, especially in the EFL context. Thus, this research focuses on how the features in Flipgrid support students' learning to improve their speaking skills.

1.2 Research Questions

The study will identify the following question:

1. How is Flipgrid used to support the students' speaking skills?

1.3 Aims of the Research

Based on the question formulated, this study aims to:

1. Describe how the Flipgrid used in speaking class and how it supports the students speaking skills.

1.4 Scope of the Research

This study focuses on how the use of Flipgrid could support students' learning in order to improve their speaking skills. The data were collected from undergraduate students who are majoring in an English Education program in one public university in Bandung.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The result of this study is expected to give some contributions to education, not only for the writer but also for English teachers and other researchers. For teachers, the result of this study is expected to make them use Flipgrid to teach in online learning. For other researchers, hopefully, this study may be a reference to those who want to study the use of Flipgrid in online learning.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding of the research findings, there are key terms that are used in this research.

1.6.1 Speaking

Speaking is a productive skill in which people produce words and orally send messages. Speaking skill is closely linked to receptive skills. As Harmer (2001) stated, productive skills are combined with the receptive skills in many situations. A two-person conversation or more is a combination of speaking and listening skills where each person needs to understand what has been said. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning in a variety of contexts by using verbal and non-verbal symbols.

The speaking course in this research is a Speaking for General Communication class. In this class, the students learned how to deliver places description. The topics used in each learning activity are Describing Places, Language Features for Sharing Tips, and Getting around a Public University and Bandung

1.6.2 Online Learning

The definition of online learning in a more general way as formulated by Cheng (2006) is everything that is provided, enabled, or mediated through electronic technology for the explicit purpose of learning. Furthermore, Fee (2005) defines the term of online learning as any learning that includes the use of the internet. According to Dhull and Sakshi (2017), online learning covers many technologies to support education such as email, web, new groups and texts, chat, audio and video conferencing which is connected through a computer network or the internet. Online learning in this research included the use of Learning Management System (LMS) namely SPADA, Zoom, YouTube and Flipgrid.

1.6.3 Flipgrid

Flipgrid is a free platform made for educational purposes, for students to post a video response to teacher questions (MacIsaac, 2020). Flipgrid is a smooth and easy-to-use tool that is useful for building a student-centred learning community (Theoris, 2017). The main advantage of Flipgrid is that teachers have the ability to create a grid in which they or their students publish topics and have other class members participate.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

- **Chapter I: Introduction**

This chapter presents the background of the research, research question, aims of the research, scope of the research, significant of the research, clarification of terms, and organization of the research.

- **Chapter II: Literature Review**

The research provides knowledge related to the topic which is taken from previous research findings in order to keep validity and reliability of the research. This chapter explains theories, ideas, and issues related to the research.

- **Chapter III: Research Methodology**

In this session, there would be research questions, research design, site and respondents, data collection, research procedures, and data analysis. Some relevant data that are needed by this study are collected and analyzed in this part.

- **Chapter IV: Findings and Discussions**

The findings display all results of data analysis. The research question meets the answer in this chapter. To make it clearer for the readers, this study conveys discussions of the findings.

- **Chapter V: Conclusion and Recommendation**

What can be gained from the research is shortly described in this chapter. Thus, this is the end of the paper.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

The introductory part of the research was discussed in the present chapter. It includes a brief overview of the background of the research, research question, aims of the research, scope of the research, the significance of the research, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper. The following chapter will review the relevant literature of the study. It contains the definition of speaking, the elements of speaking, macro and micro-skills of speaking, online learning, Flipgrid, and previous studies related to the use of the platform in online learning in order to improve students' speaking skills.