INTEGRATING 'FLIPGRID' TECHNOLOGY TOOL AS INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY IN ESL CLASSROOMS

Alina Dilshad*[1], Khushbakht[2], Dr. Muhammad Arfan Lodhi[3]

[1,2]M.Phil Scholar Department of English NCBA&E University Bahawalpur; [3]Dr. Muhammad Arfan Lodhi Higher Education Department (Collegiate Wing) Punjab, Pakistan

[3]samaritan_as@hotmail.com

Corresponding authors*

ABSTRACT

This study is projected to investigate the perspectives of ESL undergraduate teachers and learners about Flipgrid technology in ESL classroom in Pakistan. It also aims to check how effective Flipgrid technology can be proved in enhancing learners' overall language skills.. A modern technological tool named 'Flipgrid' has modified the course of teaching and learning shifting from synchronous to asynchronous learning which promotes ESL learning. This research employed two-phase study by conducting a consultative workshop for teachers first and then collecting their experiences through a quantitative data collection approach. Data was collected through questionnaires separately designed for teachers and students to determine the perspective and teaching English through Flipgrid technology. In data analysis, the results of questionnaires were analyzed through IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. The results showed that around 70% of undergraduate level Pakistani ESL learners, teachers found Flipgrid technology an effective tool in ESL teaching, and learning, yet the challenges outdated the effectiveness like internet connectivity and cost, lack of technological awareness and failure to integrate technology in ESL classrooms at university level. This study implies that more awareness of Flipgrid is essential at the high school and university level to enhance learning and teaching and the government should provide facilities to implement modern technological tools like Flipgrid to promote virtual learning along with on-sight classes.

Keywords: Interactive Technology Tools; Flipgrid; Technology Competence; Instructional Technique; ESL learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Modern Technology is the gift of 21st century, which accompanies internet and mobile networks. The role of technology has become crucial in various arenas of life like health, education, media and entertainment. The technological advancements have been introduced, and implemented in all the spheres of life. Nevertheless, specifically in the educational context, it has changed the course of learning. In the higher educational institutions of the developing countries including Pakistan, the classrooms have integrated the use of technology. Due to its usage, we have overcome a lot of problems such as an instant and frequent interaction between teachers and pupils through online platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, and emails. Technological advancement has provoked online learning by using electronic digital devices like laptops, computers and now mobile phones that aid learning without any time and place constraints (Acosta-Tello, 2015). Yang and Li (2018) stated in their research that virtual teaching and learning environment can increase students' learning with the aid of variable digital devices, modern advance technological tools, and the internet to facilitate online learning experience. It is widely acknowledged that integrating technology into language classrooms helps in an effective language learning skills. This tendency has been further promoted with the rise of Covid-19 pandemic, which shifted the classes from on sight to online classes. Technology has become the

part and parcel of teaching and learning specifically after Covid-19 breakout. Consequently, teachers are seeking out the ways and effective tools to cater the interest of students and promote their learning experiences successfully in a remote environment. This keen interest in technology is important for today's learners and educators because it has ease our lives. The quality of Language Teaching is greatly improved by the introduction of Information Communication Technology (ICT) (Chapelle, 2001). Today's virtual classroom environment is fostered by technology. Online learning platforms allow the educators to make use the full range of electronic digital devices, which promote an effective learning.

1.1 Background of the study

In today's modern world, for many teachers the integration of technology along with traditional teaching is a complex task, especially when a majority of teachers is able to manage an online classroom in Pakistan. (Hammett, 2021) . Teaching English as second language requires the teachers to employ different English language teaching methods that can be proven successful in online learning context. These methods are collaborative learning, communicative language teaching, and communicative task-based language teaching. Le et al. (2014) defined collaborative learning as activities, which are subjected in accordance with individual's own learning and with others in the form of groups to gain common motives. Nosheen et. al. (2024) mentioned that in online language teaching and learning, communicative language teaching promotes social interaction with the aid of using dialogue, discussions, and role-playing. Amir & Anggitasari (2021) in their research showed that CLT can be used in many ways to facilitate language teaching and learning. These are building up vocabulary, promoting efficient communication among learners and teachers, and argumentative skills of learners through discussion. With the use of these approaches, the students learn in an interactive way and perform tasks effectively (Yumnam, 2021). There are various methods and online learning platforms, which involves social interaction and student-led learning with various software like Flipgrid, Zoom, Google Classroom, WebEx, and Microsoft teams. Flipgrid is a technique, which promotes student

involvement and foster social interaction as this tool offers features like record the video, share it within the group, and receive feedback across devices.

1.2 Rationale of the Study

Teaching English by using online platforms like Zoom, Google Classroom, Kahoot and Flipgrid etc. can facilitate effective teaching and learning among teachers and students. To make online language teaching beneficial the teachers and students must be technology friendly. There has been a very less research work is done on using Flipgrid. The Flipgrid technology can enhance various English competency skills. This study is aimed to elicit the usefulness and productivity of using Flipgrid and the challenges the teachers and students face while using this. Flipgrid has been implemented as instructional technique to teach English skills to the students, consequently the effectiveness of this technology based instructional manipulation was examined by the researchers.

1.4 Research Questions

The very small portion of literature is confined to provide information about teachers' experiences with Flipgrid in the classroom. In particular, no study has considered exploring teachers' perceptions of using Flipgrid especially in Pakistan. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate teachers' perceptions and experiences using Flipgrid for specifically during online learning. The study was based on following research questions:

1. What are the teachers and learners' perspectives of using 'Flipgrid'?
2. What are the challenges faced by teachers' and students' while using 'Flipgrid' in the classroom?
3. How effective 'Flipgrid' technology may prove in teaching and learning English at secondary level?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study was conducted on Pakistani premises. This is because within the Pakistani context ESL learners have weak speaking skills. The curriculum and classrooms are not supportive of ESL learning. Therefore, the main objective of this research is to elicit the general attitude of university ESL Teachers and graduate students about the role of

Flipgrid in delivering their lectures and learning respectively and to determine its efficacy in ESL classrooms.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Role of Information Technology in teaching English

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is regarded as the major outcome of modern technology's progress and is growing and evolving to become integral in our daily lives (Sahin, 2014). The use of technology is now an essential element in colleges and universities. These technologies pave new pathways for collaborative and interactive learning, which lead to shared ideas and knowledge. The use of mobile devices, social media platforms are becoming an integral part in the field of education. Technology has influenced the student learning and perceptions in many ways. Using technology, students can search diverse and helping materials by various apps within seconds. ESL students can improve their vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation by downloading various apps and games provided by the modern technology. Now, connecting with native speakers is not a cause of concern for ESL students. They can collaborate with native speakers through video conferencing. In case of feedback and assessment, Grammarly app has made the life language students pretty much easier. Students can access and use that app to check their writing errors and mistakes. University learning environments are continuously modifying and the faculty is encouraged to use technological tools in the classrooms (Taylor & Hinchman, 2020). There are numerous ways and methods modern technology is offering for the teachers. Now, teachers can use interactive apps like Kahoot, Flipgrid, whiteboard etc to engage students in diverse activities. It is easier for the teachers to plan the lesson. They can attach various website links, videos, and games related to the topic, which can boost up students' learning and understanding. From the past years and now, the use of contemporary technology in language teaching demonstrates some serious attention. Learning is not effective until and unless it is administered by an effective teacher. Language teachers are in great trouble because of handsome work pressure, inability to manage time, and fulfilling various jobs. Due to technological tools, teaching and learning processes are not confined to face-to-face classrooms.

2.1.1 Role of an Instructor in Online Teaching

A teacher is the main proponent in the implementation of any learning approach. Just as on-sight class, the success of an online course depends upon how well a teacher can adapt himself to online mode (Comas-Quinn, 2011). Therefore, for the successful implementation of integration of technology in classrooms, the teachers need to master the ICT skills and adopt the competences themselves (Nosheen et.al., 2024). In this way, it will enable them to acquire new knowledge and apply this knowledge in their teaching. An online teacher must have dual competency not only he should be equipped in subject but also he needs to have appropriate skills. Online language teacher has diverse role than traditional-mode teacher. This transition leads importance on teacher's ability to deliver the content/material, transformation from teacher-led approach to learner-led approach, preferable communicative competence and integration of technology.

2.2 Flipgrid

Flipgrid provides a digital and social friendly environment. Microsoft designed it in 2014. It is an audio-visual online platform where teachers can post discussion topics and then students record a short video on the assigned topic and post it in the group. Flipgrid was initially designed for educational professionals and it was used for the following purposes:

(a) to engage the learners in their curriculum by using different and new ways of learnings
(b) to encourage the students to participate during lectures
(c) to build up students' receptive skills; and
(d) to ease the teacher in getting feedback of student's progress (McClure & McAndrews, 2016)
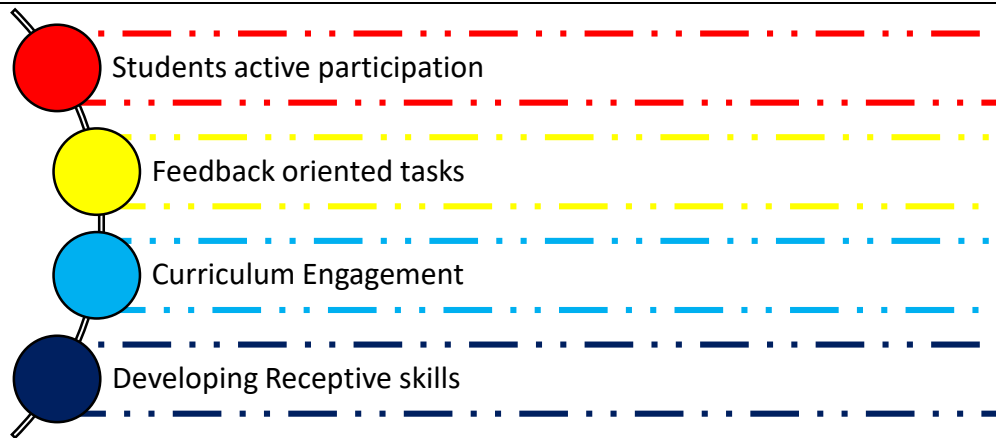
Figure 1: Educational integration of Flipgrid

Flipgrid provides an opportunity to every student to participate in the classroom discussion and the teacher can see and hear his or her responses. To run this online discussion platform, teachers can introduce a "grid" and students will respond to that grid by recording and posting a video. The teachers can edit the videos, add a description with the video for further elaboration and set a video recording period. After posting the grid, the students can access it and record their response. They may hide their face while recording the video by flipping the camera. Thus, Flipgrid ensures safety and security of the users where teachers can create new videos or post recorded lessons. The students can access this material by sync with Google Classroom. Difilippantonio-Pen, A. (2020) employed mixed methods research study, found that Flipgrid was proven an effective tool, which facilitated English language learners' oral skills.

2.2.3 Usefulness of Flipgrid
With the growing years, the emerging trend of video-based learning can be seen. The increased usage of social media platforms has greatly moved the public, especially youths who have become more inclined to consume and communicate information through videos. So it is easy for the teachers to introduce video based learning in the classroom without putting so much effort as everyone is already familiar with it. Stoszkowski

(2018) regarded Flipgrid an easy-to use tool whether you are at home or in the class. Flipgrid, a modern technological gadget, has changed the course of learning through the provision of modified teaching and learning methods from traditional to nontraditional, which promotes ESL learning (Nafeesa, Naseem, & Aslam, 2023). Hashim et al. (2018) in his study demonstrated that learners and teachers gave satisfying remarks regarding the use of Flipgrid asynchronically as it increased their confidence. With the help of FG, Fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary of the learners have been improved (Amirulloh et al., 2020).

Green et al. (2021) conducted a macro level survey by employing questionnaire as a tool conclude that teachers percieved Flipgrid as a valuable tool to facilitate teaching and learning and It helped them in formative evaluation of students' progress.

Despite of the immense popularity of Flipgrid, still it has caught a little attention from the research point of view. There exists a lot more to explore about this technology. The recent researches on Flipgrid has focused on the role of FG in enhancing speaking skills on a small scale. These studies have been only fruitful in specific contexts. The goal of conducting this research was to investigate the usage and effectiveness of Flipgrid from teachers' perspectives.

Table 1. Review of the previously conducted studies

No	Author/s	Year	Topic	Findings
1	McClure & McAndrews	2016	Using innovative technologies in ESL classrooms	The study investigated the purpose and advantages of using Flipgrid in ESL classrooms. Flipgrid can be proven helpful in boosting student's learning and engagement. For teachers, it can be effective in giving feedback.
2	Stoszkowski	2018	Using Flipgrid to enhance social learning	This study implied that Flipgrid is an easy tool to handle either synchronically or asynchronically.
3	Difilippantonio-Pen	2020	Flipgrid and second language acquisition to enhance learners' oral skills	This study showed Flipgrid as an effective tool to enhance speaking skills of ESL learners.
4	Green et al.	2021	Educators perception of using Flipgrid in classroom	The results of macro level studies revealed that Flipgrid is beneficial in formative assessment of students.

3. Research Methodology

The selection of research design and data collection tool was determined in accordance with the research questions. To determine the perspectives of teachers and learners' of using 'Flipgrid' technology, the researcher employed a quantitative method by using questionnaire as a tool. This research was conducted in two phases. In phase one, the researcher for the demonstration of the Flipgrid technology conducted one, a consultative workshop for teachers and then in the next phase they were asked about their perception of implementing that technology in ESL classroom. The teachers collected the responses and learners both by employing separately designed questionnaires for both as a tool. A researcher should clearly demonstrate the target population based on logic and argument. The researchers, in the current study, chose graduate level university teachers and pupils in Bahawalpur as a target population. To check the effectiveness and reliability of Flipgrid technology in ESL classroom, the researcher selected 30 English language teachers including 17 Females and 13 Males and around 100 students of department of English from The Islamia University of Bahawalpur.

A good research tool is the backbone of any research. Therefore, the questionnaire was employed to collect the data. The researcher with the consultation of her supervisor designed the questionnaire by herself. The questions were designed by using 5 point Likert Scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). To check the reliability and validity of the instrument SPSS was used. The Cronbach alpha reliability came out 0.841. There were 15 close-ended questions for teachers and 20 questions for learners in their separately designed questionnaires. The majority of the participants filled the questionnaire physically and some filled it through Google forms. Unluckily, the researcher could not do pilot study due to time constraints.

4. Data Analysis

After collecting the data from the research participants and analyzing the statistics from SPPS, this chapter discussed its detailed explanation and implications resulted from the data. This research quantitatively investigated the perspectives of graduate level Pakistani ESL teachers and learners about Flipgrid and its effectiveness. For this purpose, the researcher conducted a consultative workshop and utilized the Questionnaire. The data was collected from teachers and pupils by separately designed questionnaire and analyzed. The results of the analysis is displayed in the form of graphs using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. The results were portrayed in two folds. First, one is about teachers' questionnaire responses, and the

second is about learners' questionnaire responses. Data was collected in two phases to answer the research questions. In the phase 1, a consultative workshop was conducted in which 25 out of 30 teachers participated. The remaining 05 teachers could not attend the workshop due to some personal reasons. After that workshop, the teachers and learners' responses were recorded by using questionnaire. The two questionnaires were designed.

Phase 1: 'The Consultative Workshop
In the workshop, the teachers were demonstrated by the ways and methods of using 'Flipgrid' technology in ESL classrooms. They were also informed about the importance and usefulness of the 'Flipgrid' technology. The ways to use 'Flipgrid' technology were presented through power point presentations followed by constructive feedback and discussions sessions.

Phase 2: Questionnaire for Teachers and Learners:


Teachers responses to Flipgrid Technology
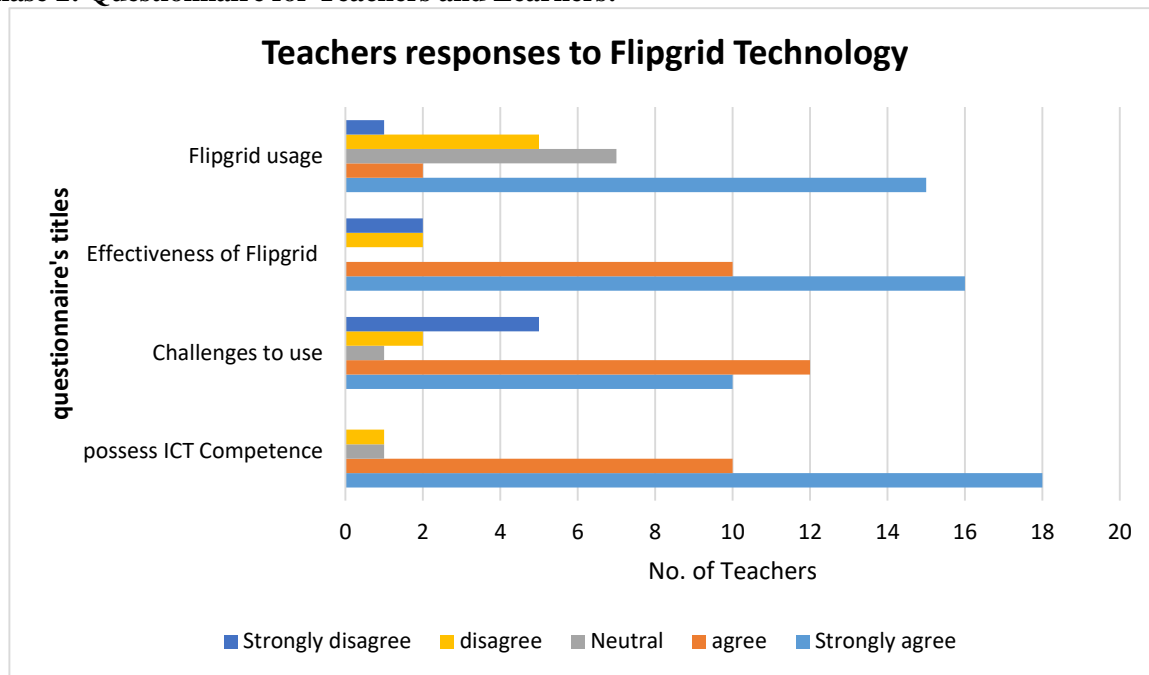
Part 1: Teachers' Responses:

A considerable number of the teachers had ICT competence. They all had been acquainted with how to use online learning platforms like Zoom, Google classroom, Webnar etc. during Covid-19 pandemic. Out of 30, 60% English Language teachers of the Islamia University had ICT competence. They knew how to operate and handle online language learning platforms. Only 2% teachers did not know how to operate computers due to lack of technological resources. After the consultative workshop, they all acknowledged the role of Flipgrid but they faced many challenges to use it. Around 70% teachers acknowledged the various challenges being asked in questionnaire about implementation of Flipgrid technology in ESL classrooms. The challenges are internet connectivity problem, lack of awareness among students about Flipgrid, lack of technological equipped classrooms, and lack of administrative support. While asking about how effective Flipgrid has been proved for teachers, 16 out of 30 teachers were strongly agreed, 10 teachers agreed and only a small fraction of teachers disagreed about its effectiveness. About 1/3rd of the participants implemented Flipgrid technology in ESL classroom which greatly enhanced the teaching and learning experience.

Part 2: Learners' responses to Flipgrid

Upon asking from the learners' experience, they enjoyed this technological modification in ESL classroom. They found it a fun activity to be administered and it eventually enhanced learners' speaking skills.
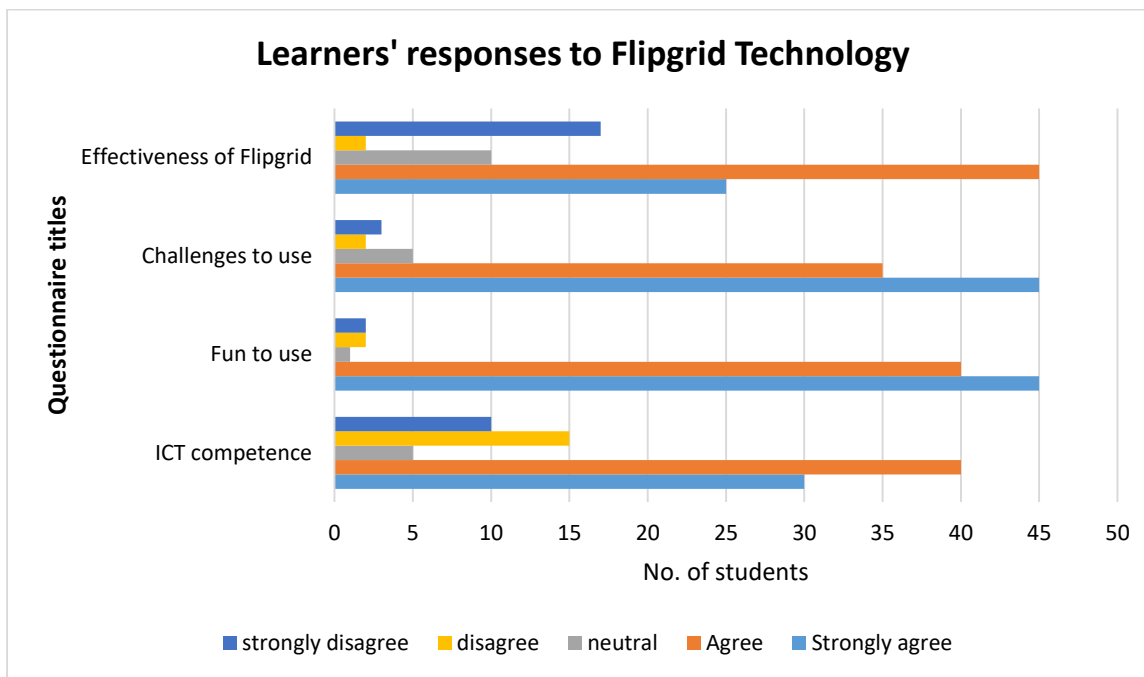
Upon analyzing the collected data from questionnaire, the researcher found that 70% of the students had ICT competence. They all had been using online platform since Covid-19 pandemic but Flipgrid was an innovative technology for them. 15% were not technology friendly as they belonged to remote areas where they had no internet facility. Around 10% students were not aware of the technological tools, as they could not afford laptops or computers. Moreover, the high proportion of about 95% students found flipgrid a fun activity to use. They loved recording their videos and listening and watching their peers' videos. Data indicates that, 45% of the students strongly agreed that they faced challenges like internet connectivity problem, not able to respond instantly and not clear about how to use it. It was also found that, only 3% students out of 100, disagreed that Flipgrid is not effective in learning. While, while 45% strongly agreed that learners experience a considerable enhancement in their speaking skills.

5. Discussion
5.1 Analysis of consultative workshop
In the consultative workshop, the ways of using Flipgrid technology in ESL classroom were demonstrated through power point presentation.

1. You can share lecture reviews: With Flipgrid's technology classrooms and associated classroom libraries the students can share lecture reviews by using the QR code of the video provided by the instructor on video conferencing platform. The teacher can share the student's review by sharing the link of QR code and highlight it, and then other peers can use their digital gadgets to scan the code and watch the review.

2. It can help to improve speaking skills: Through the use of Flipgrid technology, teachers can connect to various native countries to collaborate. For English language teachers, this widens the arena for students to improve their speaking skills by connecting native English speakers that is not possible in on-sight classes. In this way, they can increase their proficiency in English speaking and also it increases their confidence as they connect to the world other than their regular physical class.

3. It is easily accessible to all the students: Flipgrid has its accessibility features to all students' participation. The close captions are available for the sudents when they watch any video, in this way they can avail the full transcript for a video.

4. You can invite guests' speakers: By Using Guest Mode feature of Flipgrid, teachers can invite guest speakers to participate in classroom discussions. Guests can watch student videos and post their own videos in response or as a feedback. This feature enable the experts to share their views and provide feedback through an online mode where they cannot be available physically.

5. You can build portfolios of students: For student's portfolios, a teacher can make a grid. In the grid, the teacher assigns each student a topic, and students then post videos demonstrating their ideas and views about the particular topic. The teacher can also provide an instantaneous feedback to student and sharing his/her performance to their parents by sharing the link of students' grid. The other students' can also see their classmate work.

6. You can add annotations: When students record a video, they have the option to write a caption or add a sticky note which provides additional information.

7. You can share the work and learn together: Sometimes, you cannot celebrate the achievements of completed projects and assignments in a physical classroom as there is a lot of things going on to do, but Flipgrid is a quickest solution to this problem. The teacher can allow the students to comment upon each other videos so that they can appreciate the concerned students' work.

8. You can connect with the absentees: Flipgrid technology makes it easy for students to connect to the class when they cannot be physically present. The teacher can post a topic regarding a work that has been done in class, and if a pupil cannot make it into the class, one of his/her classmate can inform about the completed assignments in class by posting a quick video. Therefore, the absent student can have a quick access to what had been done in the class.

5.2 Effectiveness of Flipgrid
5.2.1 Learners' perspectives
This study elicits that Flipgrid is easy to handle as it offers very promising features. It encourages the students to practice their language skills more efficiently. This study's results demonstrate that Flipgrid is an easy video recording tool and the provision of instantaneous feedback from the teacher by notifying errors in their speaking that help them improve their speaking. Before sharing the video on the assigned topics, the student can review and access his work, edit it and re-record it. The findings reveal that Flipgrid enhances teaching and learning English without the limitations of space and time. They enjoyed learning because of the Flipgrid's features like using stickers and emojis.

5.2.2 Teachers' perspectives
The teachers were relieved in providing an instant feedback to each student on hearing the recorded presentations, which was not possible in face to face classrooms. This study identifies that the major count of ESL teachers regarded Flipgrid as an effective English language-teaching tool. It plays an important part to guide and teach students to enhance vocabulary and word choice according to the topic and increases the speaking skills of students. One of the best features of Flipgrid that teachers felt is the opportunity to engage those students who hesitate to speak in face-to-face classrooms activities by recording videos. They had observed a positive attitude of their students in language learning, which was seen previously as boring and hectic activity for students. This study demonstrates that majority of university lecturers believe that Flipgrid c,an be regarded as a major source of increasing oral efficacy of students. They would prefer to use it in future by themselves and recommend others too.

5.3 Challenges faced by Teachers and Learners on using Flipgrid
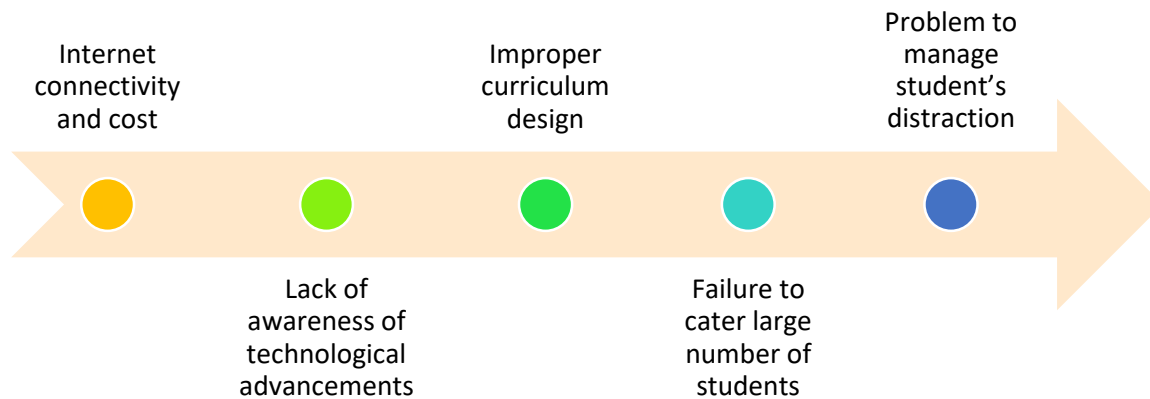
1. One of the major concern that teachers and students faced was the internet connectivity problem and the emerging cost associated with it. The majority of the students and teachers' internet connection lost while using flipgrid. They could not got into the details and record videos. Moreover, some of the students with destitute background cannot afford the internet packages to remain connected with the class.

2. The teachers and students had not been aware about this technology. They had not used it before. This is the flaw of many under developed countries, who are lagging behind in technological innovation.

3. This study also reveals the flaw of Pakistani course designers to include asynchronous learning apart from face-to-face teaching. The teachers had not been encouraged or instigated to use technology and connect with the students apart from teaching on-sight.

4. The technology tool Flipgrid failed to administer a larger population of students. The instant videos from many students increased the noise level and distracted many students. It eventually made it difficult for the teachers to provide feedback.

5. On one hand, technology has made our lives easier, while on the other hand, it has also potential hazards. While students were connected through using internet, sometimes, they were indulged in browsing other resources during learning. The teachers had to devise some strategies to stop students distracting

from their lecture in an online session. To keep the students engage in learning, the teachers had to devise some strategies, which was seem another hindrance.

6. Conclusion

This study makes the final word that Flipgrid has been proved beneficial at increasing English language teaching and learning of Pakistani ESL teachers and learners in universities. ESL teachers who participated in the study implied that Flipgrid is an effective teaching gadget in the modern IT driven world that instigate ESL learners to modify their oral competencies according to the needs. Moreover, the data reveals that at the graduate level, Flipgrid enables the teaching and learning process a very exciting one because of shifting from asynchronous to synchronous learning. Nosheen et. al. (2024) in another such study highlighted the role of TedTalk when they used it as instructional plan for language teaching purposes. According to survey results, the majority of the teachers and pupils thought Flipgrid was an easy-to-use tool that lead to instigated learners' autonomous learning. Moreover, the students can get an instant feedback from their teachers, which helps them to revise and modify their speaking abilities. Apart from the pros there were also some cons that the participants experienced like internet connectivity cost and issues, lack of technological tools in classrooms etc. In conclusion, apart from challenges, Pakistani ESL teachers and students had an amazing exposure with Flipgrid learning

and they would consider using it in the future for enhancing language skills specifically speaking.

7. Recommendations

This study demonstrate the following recommendations based on data analysis and consequent result:

1. Based on the findings of the study, it is soundly proposed that ESL classrooms must use Flipgrid in their classroom for recording and sharing videos on different areas of linguistics especially phonetics and phonology which will greatly aid students to work on their pronunciation and speaking skills.
2. This study suggests that further research is required to determine the obstacles encountered by ESL teachers and students on using Flipgrid with a larger sample size in Pakistan.
3. On the top of that for the enhancement of vocabulary and receptive skills of ESL leaners, researchers may focus on the usage of Flipgrid in ESL classrooms.

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