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Flipgrid and Second Language Acquisition Using Flipgrid to Promote Speaking Skills for English Language Learners

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Flipgrid and Second Language Acquisition

Using Flipgrid to Promote Speaking Skills for English Language Learners

A Thesis Presented

By

ANNELISE DIFILIPPANTONIO-PEN

MAY 2020

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Flipgrid and Second Language Acquisition

Using Flipgrid to Promote Speaking Skills for English Language Learners

A Thesis Presented

By

ANNELISE DIFILIPPANTONIO-PEN

Submitted to the College of Graduate Studies
Bridgewater State University
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In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

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ABSTRACT

Integrating twenty-first century skills within the classroom has become a global driving force within the educational field. While schools have adopted models of one-to-one technology or digital formats for native English speakers, addressing the twenty-first century skills for English language learners have been absent. Given that the present global society is driven on bilingualism and multilingualism, English language learners need to be given the equitable digital opportunity to build their twenty-first century skills. The purpose of this mixed methods research study is to explore the influence and use of the digital application, Flipgrid, on the oral, English development for foundational, beginning, English language learners. Students completed four Flipgrid videos, with each video increasing in the level of complexity and difficulty, as measured by Bloom's (1984) taxonomy, and decreasing the level of scaffold and support the students received. Students' recorded Flipgrid videos were assessed through the speaking rubric as designed by WIDA, and the data was triangulated with an outside ESL teacher. The results revealed that the use of digital video applications can increase student second language acquisition fluency when presented with proper scaffolds and supports. It was concluded that digital video applications do not replace physical scaffolds, and scaffolds should not be pulled from students unless prepared, presented, and practiced.

Keywords: Flipgrid, technology, ELLs, communicative skills, scaffolding, motivation, speaking, second language acquisition

Flipgrid and Second Language Acquisition

Using Flipgrid to Promote Speaking Skills for English Language Learners

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Twenty-first century learning and the integration of technology into curriculums across the world has become a normalized standard within today's education. Within their study, Ledward and Hirata (2011) highlight that students reside in a global context. Therefore, they need to develop a skill set to access, synthesize, and communicate information collaboratively through a variety of multiple technologies (Ledward & Hirata, 2011). Yet, while twenty-first century learning is a constant presence in education systems and curriculums across the nation for native English-speaking students, the need to develop such skill sets is not as equally addressed nor discussed with an English language learner in mind. Fandiño (2013) states that little has been done to integrate twenty-first century learning skills in an English as a Second or Foreign Language context. According to Fandiño (2013), multilingual learners are more interested in achieving an academic command of their second or third language rather than using the language within a social context. While the presence of using technological mediums to develop second language proficiency has increased in university settings, little research or studies have been conducted applying these concepts to primary or secondary school contexts. This present study is designed to investigate the effect of the integration of twenty-first century skills into an ESL middle school classroom. Specifically, this study will determine if the use of Flipgrid, an audio and video recording application, will

influence foundational level English language learners' development and proficiency of speaking skills and fluency in English.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods research study is to explore the effect and influence of digital applications, specifically Flipgrid, on the development of English fluency for foundational level English language learners at an inner-city public school with a high demographic of English language learners. With the increase of twenty-first century learning skills and the implementation of technology and digital applications within standards-based curriculum, a surplus of free applications geared towards the development of language fluency have been at the educational forefront. Additionally, the implementation of technology has been embedded into curriculums and required within classrooms, across the nation, to develop the need for twenty-first century learning skills. The use of technology and the increase of student motivation have been an influential factor in teachers' usage of technology within the classroom. Ledward and Hirata (2011) state that twenty-first century skills "establish new learner standards by integrating core subject mastery and contemporary, interdisciplinary themes" through project-based or problem-based learning (p. 1).

However, minimal research studies have been developed and investigated with the English learner in mind. Thus, the need and intention of this study was born as its aim is to investigate if the digital application of Flipgrid will increase student motivation whilst also affecting student communicative skills in the domain of speaking. Through continual assignments with heavy scaffolding presented upon the introduction of Flipgrid and minimal scaffolding at the end of the research study, this study will garner an

analysis of how the use of digital applications can affect student motivation, communicative skills, and lower the affective filter in a digital context. The research study will give language teachers a scope and sequence of the implementation of a digital learning platform to increase language proficiency, according to the WIDA rubric, while also presenting any potential hindrances so as to ease the use and transition of this application into other contexts. The present research study will aim to answer the following questions:

1) *How does Flipgrid affect ELs' motivation to improve oral language development?*

2) *How does the Flipgrid tool affect ELs' oral communicative skills?*

3) *How does scaffolding of Flipgrid activities influence ELs'oral language performance?*

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Research Studies Selection

The research studies reviewed focus on the concepts of motivation and scaffolding in the development of communicative skills for English language learners, or learners of English as a Second or Foreign Language, through the use of digital applications as a medium of instruction. The research studies have been selected and sorted through the library-based databases of EBSCOHost and ERIC. Discussed in the proceeding paragraphs, research studies were selected from the publications of the following journals: The International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature, Teaching English with Technology, the Journal of Language Teaching and Research, the Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, and the CATESOL Journal.

The essential keywords used in the search and exploration of the research studies were ESL, ELs, motivation, communicative language, and digital applications. Initially, scaffolding was not used within the search of relevant and appropriate case studies tied to the present research study. However, throughout the research and review process of the present studies, technology used as a scaffolding tool was a consistent theme. Scaffolding then became a relevant and key concept within the review of the past studies as well as the development of the current study and became included within the search.

The research studies selected explore the use and effect of a digital application on the second language learner's motivation, and the effect of using technology as a scaffolding tool to develop proficiency in a second language. Some of the digital applications explored and specified within the research studies include but are not

limited to Fakebook, video recording software, and digital graphic organizers. A thorough exploration in the effect of the use of past digital applications on language development within the four domains of language acquisition: speaking, listening, reading, and writing, will inform the implementation of digital tools and scaffolding instruments in the development of English as a Second Language within this present mixed methods research study. As previously stated, the research studies have been categorized into the subtopics of digital applications as a means of language scaffolding and the role of digital applications in learning motivation due to the implementation and investigation of the present research study.

Digital Applications as a Means of Language Scaffolding

One area of focus in the research studies investigated is the use of digital mediums as a scaffolding strategy for language teaching. According to Brown (2014), scaffolding is defined as the "process of simplifying tasks for learners, of making critical features of language, and structuring a task for success as opposed to failure" (pp. 295-296). As this will be demonstrated through the proceeding research studies, digital applications are instruments that can be used as great instructional scaffolding tools for students to develop their second language acquisition. More importantly, scaffolding is a collaborative tool and process between teachers and students, and the use of digital applications as scaffolding facilitates this collaborative technique (Brown, 2014). Wei, Chen, and Adawu (2014), Kurose (2019), and Liu (2013) used digital applications as a scaffolding strategy to increase second language proficiency.

Wei et al. (2014) conducted a mixed-methods design study exploring the use of digital graphic organizers as a pre-writing scaffolding technique to strengthen the

writing skills, and metacognitive thinking, for two beginning English language learners in writing. The participants included in the research study were two beginning adult college-level English language learners who did not meet the English language requirements for enrollment in the regular academic classes (Wei et al., 2014). Both participants' mother tongue languages were that of East Asian languages. Wei et al. (2014) used quantitative analyses of the students' writing during the pre-tests and post-tests and evaluated them using the TOEFL writing rubric which is based on a scale of 0 – 6. The researchers' scores of the students' writing was additionally triangulated with other independent researchers, as well as the instructor of the course, to eliminate any potential bias or discrepancies amongst the writing evaluations.

Additionally, Wei et al. (2014) completed qualitative analyses on the success of using the scaffolding of digital graphic organizers to promote metacognitive thinking through student reflections and teacher observations. The researchers compiled detailed notes and an on-site record of the participants' moment to moment usage of metacognitive thinking whilst completing the digital activities (Wei et al., 2014). To better apply and observe the effect and usage of the Cognitive Academic Language Approach (CALLA) on metacognitive thinking, Wei et al. (2014) used digital graphic organizers as a scaffolding tool and approach to discern if the participants' second language abilities in writing and metacognitive thinking would improve.

Prior to the use of the digital applications and writing software, Wei et al. (2014) first introduced the participants to the concepts, modelled an example using the writing strategies through the graphic organizer software, and provided an opportunity for students to practice with the digital graphic organizer tool. Essentially, Wei et al.

(2014) used an adaption of the five-model approach (prepare, present, practice, evaluate, and extend) in the instruction, modelling, and practicing of the digital graphic organizers as a scaffolding technique. The researchers provided models and scaffolds to support learning in an independent and digital context.

Pre- and post-test data was collected to examine the effect of the scaffolding technique of digital graphic organizers on the participants' writing performance throughout the study. The first prompt used as the pre-test in Wei et al. (2014) research study was selected by the participants' regular instructor as the researchers believed they would have the best knowledge of the participants' writing proficiency level; however, the participants were not able to complete the pre-test independently due to its high level of difficulty of the students' generating and brainstorming their own ideas. In order to generate a base-line of the participants' writing abilities from the pre-test, researchers had to alter it to a speaking-to-write task by having the participants interview the researchers and then write a descriptive essay based on the interview (Wei et al., 2014). The post-test proved to be more challenging for the participants' in the study as they had to brainstorm ideas independently rather than rely on the responses of the researchers and simply reorganize them, as done in the pre-test (Wei et al., 2014). By the end of the ten-week study, Wei et al. (2014) reported an increase in those two students' metacognitive abilities and overall improvement in the quality and complexity of writing and composition through the use of digital graphic organizers as a scaffolding tool.

Kurose's (2019) study targeted Chinese students learning Japanese in a UK university setting and used digital applications as a scaffold to improve their second

language learning in Japanese. While not explicitly stated within the study, it can be presumed that Kurose's (2019) study is a quasi-research study that still contributes to the literature review on the effect of using digital applications as a scaffolding technique in the second language acquisition process. Kurose's findings directly influence the development of the present study.

To improve the target language, Kurose (2019) implemented authentic tasks by using the digital applications of Fakebook, Padlet, Storyboardthat, and Powerpoint video to scaffold, facilitate, and develop oral communication in the target language. Unlike Wei et al. (2014), where the digital applications were pre-taught, modelled, practiced, and then used independently by the participants, Kurose (2019) explicitly used the digital applications of Fakebook, Padlet, Storyboardthat, and Powerpoint as a scaffolding technique while also facilitating instructor and peer feedback to increase fluency and linguistic development in the target language. Therefore, students were given the opportunity to return to their digital assignments completed through the above mediums and edit and improve the content based upon feedback. To collect data, Kurose (2019) used surveys completed by the participants, the module evaluation (evaluation of the course), and instructor feedback to demonstrate the importance of digital scaffolding. Surveys and the model evaluation demonstrated that there was improvement in the students' use of grammar and vocabulary in the target language, Japanese, while also increasing their confidence in speaking the target language (Kurose, 2019). The instructor reported that the intensive activities conducted by scaffolding, through the digital applications, motivated the participants to make the content more comprehensible for their peers and instructors, which is outside the scope

and expectation of the assignments.

While Wei et al. (2014) and Kurose (2019) used digital applications as a scaffolding tool, Liu (2013) used explicit instruction through technology as a scaffold to improve language development through the model of blended learning. Blended learning is defined as a combination of face-to-face and online instruction in order to "customize the learning experience for each student, while making the content more accessible" (Pierce, 2017, p. 18). Liu (2013) used the blended learning format and the Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) approach in an Academic English Writing course in a university in Beijing. The research study by Liu (2013) does not explicitly state the number of participants; however, due to the nature of it being an undergraduate course, it was estimated that ten to twenty students are enrolled in each term. The students enrolled were advanced learners in English that cross multiple disciplines. Liu (2013) notes the difficulty of designing a pre and post-test due to the advancement of the participants' English as a Foreign Language.

Liu (2013) explored the effectiveness of the blended learning model as a scaffolding technique through the course design, material development, assignment grading, student involvement, teacher reflection, and students' evaluation of the course. According to Liu (2013), in this Academic English Writing course, participants were required to attend one 90-minute face-to-face class per week and spend at least one hour in the computer lab or dormitory completing CALL assignments. The different activities presented online used various scaffolding techniques. Participants were able to submit multiple drafts of essays and the essays were read and commented through a tracking system that was based upon the sentence level, paragraph level, and discourse

level.

Though it was not a key finding, the results from the study did indicate a positive effect on the participants' language development. Liu (2013) states that the use of the digital learning platform enabled the participants and instructor to track the submission of assignments and revisit past drafts. Though this is only one task presented through the digital learning context, the instructor employed other tasks such as online dictionaries, scholarly articles, and video viewing in the implementation of course material. The different tasks and activities presented through the blended learning format used scaffolding techniques for students to acquire the content and improve their academic writing in English. The instructor reported that the format of the class increased student motivation, lowered student anxiety in writing in a second language, and encouraged autonomous learning and student to student and student to teacher interactions in every stage of the learning process (Liu, 2013). Overall, the instructor noted an increase in the students' academic writing in English due to the blended learning format of the course (Liu, 2013).

Though it was beyond the scope of Liu's (2013) research study to use quantitative data, the participants' course evaluation questionaire and instructor reflections reported the benefit of using the blended learning approach in developing and strengthening their writing and development of academic English. Liu (2013) states that participants reported that they valued the teacher and reported that the digital platform garnered more communication with others. Overall, the participants' reported that their academic English improved. Thus, Liu's (2013) research study emphasizes how a blended learning format can be used as an additional scaffold in second language

instruction.

      The research studies of Wei et al. (2013), Kurose (2019), and Liu (2013) support the use of digital tools as a scaffold in language instruction for second language learners. All the research studies concluded positive results and improvement in the target language by scaffolding the language through a digital context. This too also promoted confidence in the participants' second language abilities. Ultimately, using digital tools as a scaffold were beneficial in the language development for second language learners.

The Role of Digital Applications in Learning Motivation

      According to Brown (2014), motivation can be defined through a behavioral perspective of the positive reinforcement of acquiring a reward. Brown (2014) also defines motivation through a cognitive lens of the choices people make as to "what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid" (p. 159). Brown (2014) further elaborates that motivation in the perspective of a second language learner is the reward and value of communicating in a language. Within the context of the proceeding research studies, extrinsic motivation is first used which is acquiring a reward from the outside (Brown, 2014). However, the intention of the research studies is to shift students' extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation which is where there is no external reward except the activity itself (Brown, 2014). In this case, the research studies central focus was that of a grade and investigated if the use of digital applications fueled an intrinsic motivation of language learning within the participants. According to the proceeding studies, the use of digital applications has the potential to increase student intrinsic motivation whilst learning a second language.

The research study conducted by Sevy-Biloon and Chroman (2019) used video chat applications to improve the English language fluency for students in Ecuador in a teacher preparation program for English as a Foreign Language teachers. To fill the deficit of EFL teachers in Ecuador, the Universidad Nacional de Educacion (UNAE) created a new major for EFL teachers; however, the students within this program had little to no exposure in English. Sevy-Biloon and Chroman (2019) sought to investigate if the use of digital applications would increase student intrinsic motivation while also improving oral communication in the target language, English. The research study is a mixed methods approach and tracked seventeen participants in this five-week program.

Sevy-Biloon and Chroman (2019) created a video chat experience for students to practice English through the digital mediums of WhatsApp, Skype, Facebook, or Facetime with university students in the United States. Sevy-Biloon and Chroman (2019) also utilized authentic tasks to increase motivation while improving oral communication. Through pre and post questionnaires, monitoring of meeting minutes, and oral pre-tests and post-tests, the researchers concluded that students were more intrinsically motivated to participate and increase communicative fluency through the use of the authentic medium of video chats. While only two students of the seventeen students did not complete the activity fully due to internet issues and conflicts with schedules, majority of the participants reported positive results using a digital medium to improve fluency. As reported through the post questionaire, participants stated that the digital application of video chats helped them in developing positive experiences with native English speakers, increased motivation, and improved their oral English communication skills. The post-test results also reported that the participants improved

their overall oral communication skills in English. Several participants were intrinsically motivated to continue the video chats with their United States peer after the completion of the program.

Ahmad (2016) employed a mixed methods approach to investigate the effectiveness of Technology Assisted Language Learning (TALL) on language development and student motivation as opposed to the traditional methods of EFL instruction. The twenty-five Saudi participants placed in an intensive English program completed tasks focused on listening, reading, and speaking. The two groups, a controlled group using traditional and non-TALL methods and the primarily TALL method-oriented group, confirmed that the students using a variety of digital applications, such as matching words with pictures, listening to native English speakers through CD-ROMs, and using translation digital sources outperformed the traditional methods group significantly in each test (Ahmad, 2016). Participants displayed increased motivation through the use of digital applications. Students were assessed on each domain and it was reported that students using the TALL approach were more adapt in understanding the speaking and intonations of native-speakers than using the non-traditional method. The TALL experimental group were intrinsically motivated to take full advantage of the digital sources in their English language development which led to high performances on the four tests implemented throughout the research study. While Ahmad (2016) did not explicitly explain the EFL instruction for the non-experimental group, the research study reiterates the resounding belief from the past studies that digital platforms increase student intrinsic motivation in the acquisition, fluency, and development in the participants' second language.

Yet, oppositions do exist in the influence of digital applications in promoting student intrinsic motivation and influencing language development. Topacio (2018) investigated the effect of the development of writing abilities through an online learning program. In the quasi-experimental study, Topacio (2018) utilized a control and experimental group. The control group consisted of twenty-two participants who received traditional face-to-face instruction on writing, while the experimental group was composed of twenty-three students who received writing instruction through a digital Learning Management System, LMS, program.

All the participants within Topacio's (2018) research study were first year post-secondary students majoring in Electrical Engineering with little to no knowledge of the writing process. Additionally, the participants selected were given a pre-survey about the writing process. The results concluded that there was no significant difference between the traditional method and digital medium in improving English language learners writing skills in a college setting. However, a by-product of the use of a digital LMS program in instruction was the increase of the participants' motivation in the development of their writing which may lead to an overall positive effect in the participants' continued writing progress. Topacio (2018) reported that students using the digital medium expressed lower anxiety towards the writing process. Yet, Topacio does state that the overreliance of Internet resources can contribute to the lack of development in building content skills that then influences the students' in acting independently in the writing process (Topacio, 2018). This in turn could be a potential effect and reason as to why the participants' writing skills showed no significant improvement.

Summary

While the reviewed research studies rely heavily on the population of university students or adult-learners, the results significantly contribute to the understanding of the role of digital applications and using technology as a form of instruction on the development of a second language. As identified and explored through the past research studies, the use of digital applications as scaffolding tools and the explicit instruction through a digital context increases students' intrinsic motivation while also improving their second language development. Still, there remains a lack of research studies on younger aged students and whether the use of digital applications and instruction will influence their second language development and increase their intrinsic motivation. This present study will aim to investigate this gap by focusing on the digital application of Flipgrid on the development of middle school aged English language learners. Utilizing the information acquired from the past research studies will further hone the targeted scaffolding techniques and tools facilitated through the digital application of Flipgrid, while also creating an optimal learning environment to potentially increase student intrinsic motivation and improve their overall English language development in oral communication.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Design

The research design was a mixed methods research study approach with a case study design. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), "Mixed methods involves combining qualitative and quantitative research and data in a research study" (p. 14). While qualitative data tends to be open-ended responses and quantitative data represents closed-ended responses, a mixed methods approach allows for the collection of both data forms in order to provide ample and expansive data collection with minimal errors (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A mixed methods approach "neutralizes" the bias presented in qualitative data and weaknesses found within the quantitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 14). Thus, the mixed methods approach is the most ideal research design for the following case study.

The present case study has a concentrated focus on eleven participants. While it follows these participants over the course of four weeks with a Flipgrid video being completed each week with increasing complexity of the task by utilizing the functions of Bloom's (1984) taxonomy, it provides an in-depth analysis on the activity of the implementation of Flipgrid on the development, or lack thereof, of the participants' second language fluency, primarily in speaking. As the researcher is the direct ESL teacher of the participants, it provided the case study with multiple sources of data, a natural setting, and a more reflective personal role in the study. Additionally, due to the nature of the study and student participants, the qualitative and quantitative approach allowed for an emergent design in which the process and use of Flipgrid could be shifted and changed as the data was collected. The mixed methods research design proved a

more ample analysis and investigation of Flipgrid and its influence on second language

acquisition and fluency.

Flipgrid

A digital, social learning environment designed by Microsoft, Flipgrid is a video

discussion platform where educators can create virtual communities by posting

discussion prompts that students will then generate responses through short video

recordings ("Getting Started with Flipgrid," 2020). Flipgrid enables every student to be

active participants in the classroom discussion within a virtual context, since the educator

can see and hear every students' response ("Getting Started with Flipgrid," 2020). To

facilitate this virtual discussion format, educators can post a "grid," a discussion prompt,

and students will compose their response through recording and posting a video ("Getting

Started with Flipgrid," 2020). While teachers have the authority to control editing

abilities within the students' video, designate time frames, and curtail if the student

videos are accessible to the class, the students have the ability to re-record their videos, as

needed, as well as use various functions within Flipgrid to hide their appearance within

the video. Thus, Flipgrid creates a safe and secure digital environment that the teacher,

and the students, can control while also lowering the affective filter for all students. As

educators can create and post recorded lessons within Flipgrid, it facilitates an

autonomous and independent digital learning environment for students that can be

synched within Google Classroom for easy student access.

Within this mixed methods research study, Flipgrid was administered as a tool,

integrated with additional scaffolds and supports dependent upon the video and

discussion prompt, in order to facilitate and promote English language learners' oral

language. Throughout the course of the four Flipgrid videos that students completed, the additional supports and scaffolds were slowly lifted which will be further expanded upon in the data collection and procedures section.

Context

The study took place at an inner-city, Title I middle school located in Massachusetts, as designated by the District Analysis and Review Tool (DART) and compiled by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the 2018-2019 school year. In the 2018 school year, 527 students were enrolled within this middle school. Within this student population, 38% of students are listed as not having English as their first language, 29% of students are listed as English language learners, and 23% of students are identified as students with disabilities. Overall, 86% of students are identified as high needs and 75% are listed as economically disadvantaged. The middle school, in which the study took place, houses the largest foundational English language learner student population within the district. The 2018 MCAS analysis report identified the students as either partially meeting achievement level expectations or not meeting achievement level expectations in both English language arts and math.

Participants

The participants for the present research study are eleven, seventh grade middle school students in an SEI foundational ESL classroom, as well as one ESL teacher colleague to triangulate the speaking scores data. A SEI foundational student designation is English language learners who scored an overall English language proficiency level of 1.0 – 3.1 and a literacy level of 1.0 – 2.8, as determined by the students' WIDA ACCESS scores. The eleven students, whom parents consented to the research study, first

languages are either Spanish or Portuguese and have been within the United States for at least one year, with the exception of one student, as presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Student Demographics
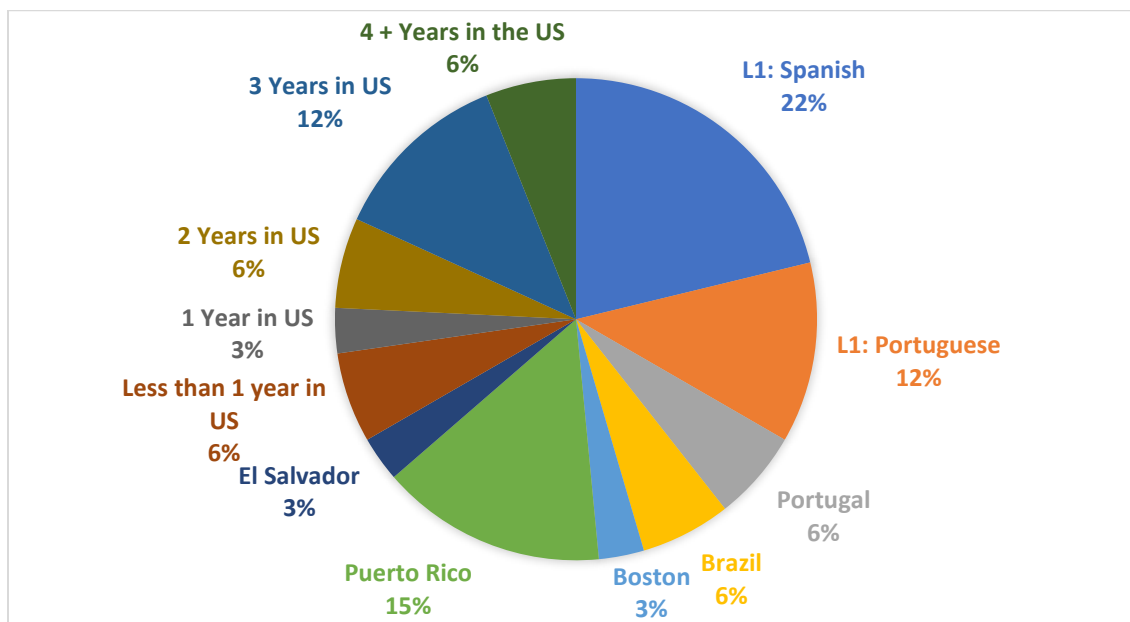
In addition to receiving ESL support, four of the participants also receive Special Education services and have an IEP. These students received additional time for their Flipgrid recordings as well as additional explanation, as indicated by the accommodation sections within their IEP. The researcher of the present study is the ESL teacher of the students; therefore, recruitment was unnecessary for the scope of this mixed methods research study. The participants, as dictated by their 2019 WIDA ACCESS scores, are assessed between the overall English language proficiency level ranges of 1.8 – 2.9 with their oral English language proficiency level being assessed between the ranges of 1.0 – 3.5 as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Student 2019 WIDA ACCESS Scores

Student	IEP	2019 ACCESS Speaking Scores
Student 1	X	2.9
Student 2	X	1.0
Student 3	X	3.2
Student 4		N/A*
Student 5		2.9
Student 6		N/A*
Student 7		2.3
Student 8		N/A*
Student 9		2.9
Student 10		3.5
Student 11	X	2.3

Note. N/A refers to students who did not take the 2019 WIDA ACCESS test.

The parents / guardians and participants were provided with a consent form for voluntary

participation in the Flipgrid study, as shown in Appendix A. The parent consent form was

available in three different translations dependent upon the students' home language:

English, Spanish, and Portuguese. An English translation was made available as some of

the students' parents are bilingual. Additionally, as some participants are designated as

having an IEP, they had the appropriate accommodations necessary to complete the

Flipgrid video tasks.

Data Collection Tools and Procedures

Data was collected through qualitative observations, qualitative interviews,

audiovisual and digital materials through the form of Flipgrid, and speaking was assessed

using the WIDA speaking rubric. To triangulate the data and to ensure its validity and

reliability, an ESL teacher colleague viewed and assessed Flipgrid video one and Flipgrid

video four by using the same WIDA speaking rubric as the researcher. Flipgrid was used

as a digital medium to illicit and measure improvement, or lack thereof, in the students'

second language oral proficiency. Students completed four Flipgrid videos, with each

video increasing in the level of complexity of the task and questions asked and answered,

as derived from Bloom's (1984) taxonomy. Over the course of four weeks, students

completed four phases of videos with each increasing in the level of complexity and

decreasing in the use of scaffolds and supports as represented in Table 2. The Flipgrid

activities were assignment-based grades to increase participation.

Table 2

Flipgrid Assignments

Flipgird Video No.	Task	Student Preparation Time	Video Time Length	Scaffold	Bloom's Taxonomy
1	Explain one cultural tradition that is important in your country and/or culture.	5 minutes	1 minute	- Teacher Launch - Sentence Stems / Frames - Examples	Knowledge
2	Answer text-dependent questions based on the memoir "The Right Words at the Right Time."	7 minutes	1 minute 15 seconds	-Teacher Launch - Sentence Stems - Student Friendly WIDA rubric	Comprehension
3	*What influences how you act?* Think about all the stories we have read, "The Experiment," "Building Bridges," and "The Right Words at the Right Time." Answer this question by using examples from the stories we have read.	Self-directed	1 minute 30 seconds	- Teacher directions and instruction recorded using Flipgrid - Examples and explanation provided through recording.	Application
4	Reflect on the writing of your children's story. -*What is your children's story about?* -*How did you come up with this children's story?* Make sure you reflect on your children's story and explain why you wrote about it.	Self-directed	2 minutes	Teacher directions and instruction recorded using Flipgrid - Examples and explanation provided through recording.	Evaluate / Create

Qualitative Observations

Qualitative observations were utilized through the collection and coding of focused observations of student recorded videos. The focus observations provided the researcher with data on the participants' motivation by using Flipgrid as an oral language medium, as well as it monitored the student usage of scaffolding within the Flipgrid activities and its influence on the participants' speaking proficiency in English. The focused observations were then compiled and sorted into three essential themes in regards to the students' oral language development:

1) *What has improved?*

2) *What has stayed the same?*

3) *What has become less effective?*

Student Interviews

An additional qualitative data collection tool was the interview of three students, with linguistic levels ranging from low, medium, and high, at the conclusion of Flipgrid video two and video four as shown in Appendix B. The qualitative interviews were to provide the present case study with open-ended data about the participants' view on the use of Flipgrid, its effect on their oral language development in English, and their overall motivation of completing the Flipgrid assignments. However, the case study was unable to proceed with this data collection tool due to school closures. Please refer to the limitations section for additional information.

Scoring of Student Flipgrid Videos

As Flipgrid is a digital audio and visual recording software, the recorded voices of the participants' speaking English enabled the researcher to track and determine if the

participants' second oral language acquisition improved during the duration of the study.

Student videos were assessed using the WIDA speaking rubric for English language

learners as presented in Figure 2. The student speaking scores were then coded and

tracked in tables and figures, as compared to their 2019 WIDA ACCESS speaking scores,

to monitor the student progress, or lack thereof, in their oral language development in

English.

Figure 2

WIDA Speaking Rubric

Can Do Descriptors: Grade Level Cluster 6-8

For the given level of English language proficiency and with visual, graphic, or interactive support through Level 4, English language learners can process or produce the **language** needed to:

	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 Reaching
SPEAKING	• Answer yes/no and choice questions • Begin to use general and high frequency vocabulary • Repeat words, short phrases, memorized chunks • Answer select WH-questions (e.g., "who," "what," "when," "where") within context of lessons or personal experiences	• Convey content through high frequency words/ phrases • State big/main ideas of classroom conversation • Describe situations from modeled sentences • Describe routines and everyday events • Express everyday needs and wants • Communicate in social situations • Make requests	• Begin to express time through multiple tenses • Retell/rephrase ideas from speech • Give brief oral content-based presentations • State opinions • Connect ideas in discourse using transitions (e.g., "but," "then") • Use different registers inside and outside of class • State big/main ideas with some supporting details • Ask for clarification (e.g., self-monitor)	• Paraphrase and summarize ideas presented orally • Defend a point of view • Explain outcomes • Explain and compare content-based concepts • Connect ideas with supporting details/ evidence • Substantiate opinions with reasons and evidence	• Defend a point of view and give reasons • Use and explain metaphors and similes • Communicate with fluency in social and academic contexts • Negotiate meaning in group discussions • Discuss and give examples of abstract, content-based ideas (e.g., democracy, justice)	Write in grade-level Speaking expectations below:
NAMES						

The Can Do Descriptors work in conjunction with the WIDA Performance Definitions of the English language proficiency standards. The Performance Definitions use three criteria (1. linguistic complexity; 2. vocabulary usage; and 3. language control) to describe the increasing quality and quantity of students' language processing and use across the levels of language proficiency.

Scaffold Usage and Duration of Flipgrid Videos

Students' use of the scaffolds presented in Flipgrid video one and two were tracked and monitored to conclude its effect on the participants' oral language proficiency and development. This data collection tool measured students' on-topic and off-topic responses to the Flipgrid discussion prompts based upon the scaffold used within the Flipgrid videos. Additionally, the duration of each students' Flipgrid video was monitored over the course of the four videos to assess the effect of scaffolds and the complexity of task on the students' oral language.

Phase 1: Flipgrid Video 1. The first Flipgrid video centered on the stage of knowledge within Bloom's (1984) taxonomy and tasked students to describe a cultural tradition within their country as shown in Appendix C. Students were presented with the additional scaffold and support of sentence stems as well as an in-person mini-lesson explaining the assignment and brainstorming a list of potential cultural traditions that students could choose from. To assist students in the preparation of their Flipgrid video, students were given five minutes of planning time to complete the sentence stems and compose their response. The maximum duration of their video was one minute. The teacher was made available throughout the task for any additional support or further explanations, as needed by the students.

Phase 2: Flipgrid Video 2. The second video was specifically tailored and aligned to the ESL curriculum through the reading of a memoir, "The Right Words at the Right Time." The second video increased in Bloom's (1984) taxonomy by focusing on comprehension of the memoir by answering text-dependent questions as shown in Appendix D. Similarly, to the first video, the teacher introduced the assignment and

discussed each question with the class. Students were given sentence stems for each question and seven minutes or longer, dependent upon the student and their designation of receiving Special Education accommodations, of preparation time to draft their responses. The written and completed responses were a requirement in order for students to record their videos. Prior to submitting their video, students then completed a self-assessment of their speaking by using a student friendly WIDA rubric, as presented in Appendix E, based upon the WIDA (2016) Can Do Descriptors.

Phase 3: Flipgrid Video 3. For the third Flipgrid video, the physical scaffolds of sentence stems and a live in-person mini-lesson were lifted from the assignment. The third video increased in the level of complexity of Bloom's (1984) taxonomy as students were tasked in the function of application. The lesson was pre-recorded through Flipgrid and student preparation time was self-directed. The third video also coincided with the curriculum as students were tasked to answer the essential question of the unit, what influences how you act, and provide evidence from the short stories and memoirs read as shown in Appendix F. The instructions and directions were recorded digitally, through Flipgrid, and students had to view the teacher video prior to completing the assignment. Students had a time limit of one minute and thirty seconds for the duration of their Flipgrid video. Examples and explanations were only provided within the video, unless the student requested clarification during the time of recording.

Phase 4: Flipgrid Video 4. The fourth and final video coincided with the end of the unit assignment of writing a children's story with the Flipgrid video task focused on the function of Bloom's (1984) taxonomy of evaluate and create. The only supports provided were in the form of a digital video recording in which the assignment was

explained and examples were provided. Similarly, to video three, the instructions and directions were recorded digitally, through Flipgrid, and students had to view the teacher video prior to completing the assignment. For the final video, students had to explain their reasoning for the choice of the topic of their children's story as presented in Appendix G. Students were given self-directed time to plan their response but were not required to complete any type of pre-writing or brainstorming prior to the recording of their video. Students had a time limit of two minutes for the duration of their Flipgrid video, and the teacher facilitated around the room for additional support, if needed.

Triangulated Data

The researcher triangulated the data of the Flipgrid video recordings by having a third party, an additional ESL teacher, assess the participants' Flipgrid speaking abilities utilizing the WIDA ACCESS speaking rubric for video one and four. The student speaking scores assessed by the researcher and the additional ESL teacher were compiled and compared to monitor the students' oral language development over the course of the four Flipgrid videos.

Data Analysis and Procedures

The qualitative data was analyzed through focused observations of the Flipgrid videos that were then transcribed and coded for consistent themes. The themes were then compiled into an additional table and analyzed based upon the students' oral language development in the categories of improvement, stayed the same, and became less effective.

Student levels of support and overall performance on each Flipgrid video was quantified and correlated into bar and line graphs to monitor student progress, or lack

thereof, in their oral language development in English. Student Flipgrid responses were then designated as on-topic or off-topic and tracked within a table to measure students' complexity of language through the Bloom's (1984) taxonomy function. In addition to students' oral language being assessed through the WIDA speaking rubric, the duration of each student recorded Flipgrid video was tracked and presented through a bar graph to monitor the effect of the complexity of a task, with limited scaffolds present, on the students' overall oral language proficiency.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

Findings

Qualitative Observations

The qualitative observations of student videos revealed students' attempts to provide elaborated responses to the Flipgrid discussion prompts, when not presented with the scaffold of a sentence stem or a live in-person mini-lesson as presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Focused Observations */ Video Analysis*

Flipgrid Video: 1 No. of Student Videos: 9		
What has improved?	*What has stayed the same?*	*What has become less effective?*
Students … • used the sentence stem provided. • Some limited students completed pre-writing prior to recording. • For most recordings, students completed a "because statement" as an explanation.	Rather than explaining and elaborating on why the tradition is important, students … • completed the sentence frame with no explanation. • used the sentence stem and did not change the sentence structure or make it their own.	Since students did not assess their own speaking, some of the videos … • were cut off and incomplete. • The lack of self-assessment affected the overall quality and completeness of the video.
Flipgrid Video: 2 No. of Student Videos: 11		
What has improved?	*What has stayed the same?*	*What has become less effective?*
Students … • utilized the sentence stems and completed the pre-writing prior to recording. • able to answer the text-dependent questions and showed comprehension of the general plot, conflict, and comparing characters. • remained on task and on topic. • self-assessment provided more complete and accurate videos. • 3 students elaborated off the provided sentence stems and provided their	Similar to video 1, students … • did not elaborate or make the sentence stems by altering wording or phrases. • read off the paper and did not elaborate. • Some continued to struggle in comparing two characters from different stories. • relied on them being children as the main similarity rather than providing any type of defining characteristics that they share.	Students … • used teacher-provided language and did not utilize their own reservoir of academic language. • relied heavily on the teacher mini-lesson and provided sentence stems.

own and utilized past sentence stems discussed in class and used specific examples / language from the text.		
Flipgrid Video: 3 **No. of Student Videos: 9**		
What has improved?	*What has stayed the same?*	*What has become less effective?*
Students … • were more fluid, with less or limited pauses, as ==explaining using their own words==. • Only 3 students explained a personal connection and then connected it to the story. Therefore, ==some were higher on Bloom's taxonomy.== • Most students used ==key words from the question== and rephrased / turned it around when answering the question.	Since no scaffolds were provided, students … • ==did not elaborate nor provide supporting details on their explanations==. • Most students ==misinterpreted the question and applied it to themselves== rather than connecting it to the past readings, as	• There was an increase in students being ==off-topic== and not answering the question correctly. • Though it was explained in the digital video, students did not answer the question and connect / provided explanations from the stories. • ==Accuracy of the student answers== and utilizing academic language and the content decreased.
Flipgrid Video: 4 **No. of Student Videos: 11**		
What has improved?	*What has stayed the same?*	*What has become less effective?*
• If students chose a memoir as their children's story, providing ==explanations and reasons for their choice of memory were stronger==. • ==Fluidity== in the use of language and using it socially improved.	• Students did not incorporate any ==academic language==. • Some continued to struggle in sequencing their story when explaining it and provided ==rambling about their story== then an organization explanation. • Students still ==needed scaffolds== and might have benefited from an academic word bank to use in their speech.	• Providing no sentence stems, starters, or word bank ==increased use of pauses== whilst speaking. • Lack of pre-writing also produced moments of heavy pauses while students searched for the appropriate words. Providing the mini-==lesson digitally did not increase student output but decreased it.==

When a Flipgrid video was supported with a sentence stem, as in Flipgrid video one and video two, students completed the provided sentence stem with minimal elaboration.

However, when a sentence stem was not provided, as in Flipgrid video three and video four, students attempted to provide their own explanations with a minimal number of students succeeding in using key academic language as posed within the discussion prompts. Yet, these responses tended to be off-topic or incomplete. Similarly, in Flipgrid video three and video four, students' overall fluidity increased in their oral language and the use of pauses decreased as students relied more heavily on social language as opposed to academic language. In Flipgrid video one and video two, with the presence of sentence stems, there was a slight increase in pauses as students struggled in the usage of the academic language.

Based upon the qualitative data, the focused observations were then compiled into the specific themes of the students' oral language performance as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Themes

Themes		
What has improved?	*What has stayed the same?*	*What has become less effective?*
• Motivation / Task Completion • Use of Scaffolds (Teacher Provided / Student Created) • Fluidity in overall speaking	• Lack of elaboration from the scaffold (student view: completed scaffold = completed assignment) • Little to minimal use of academic language • Struggle in language functions (explain, recount, compare)	• Off-topic due to lack of scaffolds • Over-reliance on teacher supports • Less accuracy/ incomplete student responses

Over the progression of the four Flipgrid videos and the increase of complexity in Bloom's (1984) taxonomy, students' oral language proficiency increased in the fluidity of their speaking, overall motivation to complete the task, and the usage of scaffolds. When presented with the Flipgrid assignment, every student that was present for the case study

completed the task without hesitation or the need for the teacher to extrinsically motivate them. Students also utilized the supports that were made available to them. Though there was no access to sentence stems or frames for video three and four, students attempted to work through the discussion prompt independently and did not ask for additional supports, with the exception of the four IEP designated students being provided with language frames. However, students lack of elaboration, minimal usage of academic language, and overall struggle in utilizing the intended language functions of the prompts did not improve. Students would only use the academic language or attempt to use the language functions if it was presented within the sentence stems, which was only present in video one and video two; however, students made minimal to little attempt within these areas for video three and video four. Additionally, students were more likely to be off-topic and off-task in their responses if they were not guided with the sentence stems and the live in-person mini-lesson.

Scoring of Student Flipgrid Videos

Table 5 represents the speaking scores for each student's Flipgrid video, as assessed by using the WIDA speaking rubric.

Table 5

Student WIDA Speaking Scores

Student	IEP	2019 ACCESS Speaking Score	Video 1		Video 2	Video 3	Video 4	
			TR 1*	TR 2*			TR 1*	TR 2*
Student 1	X	2.9	1.6	2	1.7		2.9	2.9
Student 2	X	1.0	2.4	2.8	2.8	3	2.5	2.9
Student 3	X	3.2			2.6	3.1	2.5	2.9
Student 4		N/A	2.9	3	3	3.5	3	3

Table 5 cont.

Student WIDA Speaking Scores

Student	IEP	2019 ACCESS Speaking Score	Video 1		Video 2	Video 3	Video 4	
			TR 1*	TR 2*			TR 1*	TR 2*
Student 5		2.9	2	2.7	2.5	3	2.5	2.6
Student 6		N/A	3.5	4	4.2	3.5	3.5	2.9
Student 7		2.3	2.4	2.3	2.6	3	2.5	2.5
Student 8		N/A	3.7	4	4.3		3	3.2
Student 9		2.9	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.7	3.2	3
Student 10		3.5	2.9	3	2.9	3.6	2.4	2.4
Student 11	X	2.3			2.5	2.9	2.5	2.8

Note. TR 1 refers to the teacher researcher and ESL teacher of the said students.
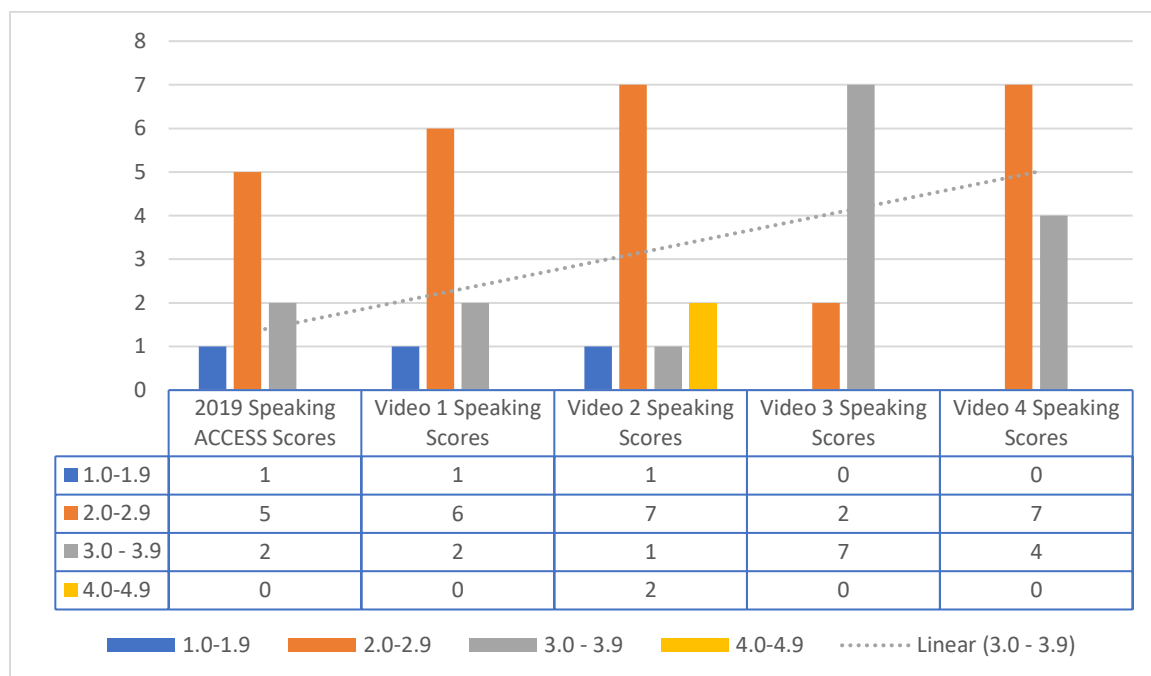*Note.* TR 2 refers to ESL teacher colleague.

The students' 2019 ACCESS speaking scores were additionally included and used as a baseline to measure the increase or decrease in the students' oral language proficiency in English over the progression of the four Flipgrid videos. The numbers highlighted are only based upon teacher one, the teacher researcher, scores. It is also important to note that the shaded gray boxes represent students who did not complete the Flipgrid video.

If students' scores are highlighted green, their oral language proficiency increased. If students' scores are highlighted red, their oral language proficiency decreased. And, if students' scores are highlighted yellow, their oral language proficiency remained the same. For Flipgrid video one, two, and three, there was a steady increase in students' oral language proficiency in English as compared to their 2019 ACCESS speaking scores. However, when students were tasked with the highest level of Bloom's (1984) taxonomy with the lowest scaffold or support built into the assignment, all students' oral language proficiency decreased, with the exception of two students.

Figure 3 quantifies the students' speaking scores for each video and shows their designated level of oral language proficiency, as determined by the WIDA speaking rubric. Figure 3 only represents teacher one speaking scores.

Figure 3

Flipgrid Videos: Speaking Scores

	2019 Speaking ACCESS Scores	Video 1 Speaking Scores	Video 2 Speaking Scores	Video 3 Speaking Scores	Video 4 Speaking Scores
■ 1.0-1.9	1	1	1	0	0
■ 2.0-2.9	5	6	7	2	7
■ 3.0 - 3.9	2	2	1	7	4
■ 4.0-4.9	0	0	2	0	0

Legend: ■ 1.0-1.9 ■ 2.0-2.9 ■ 3.0 - 3.9 ■ 4.0-4.9 ········ Linear (3.0 - 3.9)

Majority of the students were assessed within the level range of 2.0 – 2.9 for their 2019 WIDA ACCESS speaking scores. For Flipgrid video one, most of the students remained within this oral language proficiency level. However, in Flipgrid video two, while most students continued to remain within the oral language proficiency level of 2.0-2.9, some students began to increase in their oral language with one student achieving a level range of 3.0 – 3.9 and two students achieving a level range of 4.0 – 4.9. In Flipgrid video three, where students received minimal supports and scaffolds, majority of the students continued to be scored within the level range of 3.0 – 3.9. When compared to their 2019 WIDA ACCESS speaking scores, this shows an increase in the students' oral language

proficiency in English and is additionally represented by the trendline within Figure 3. However, at the completion of Flipgrid video four, seven of the eleven participants returned to their original oral language proficiency range of 2.0 – 2.9 with four students continuing to retain their new oral language proficiency level of 3.0 – 3.9.
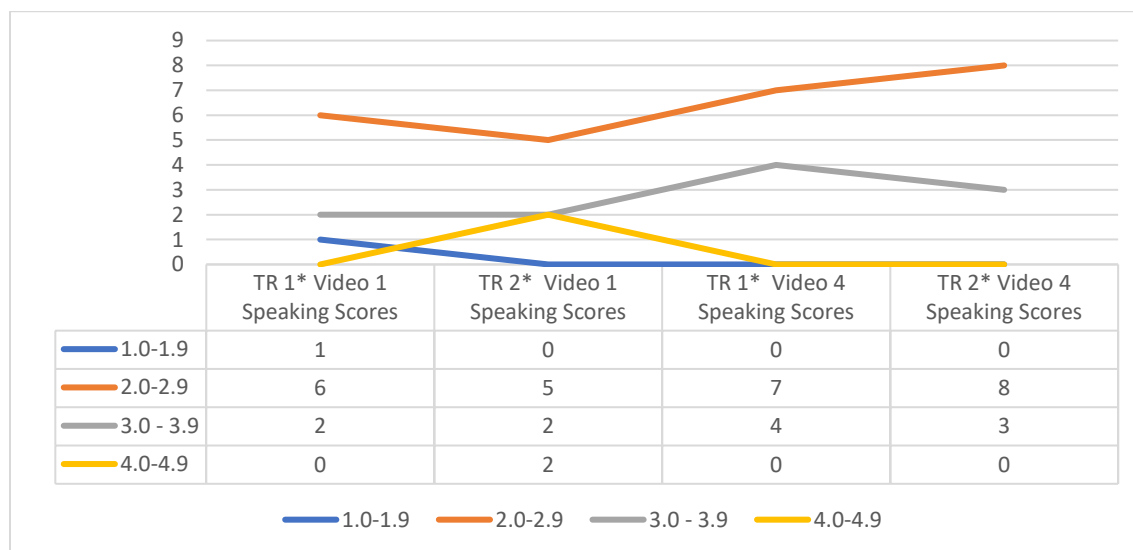
The results conclude that with the presence of additional scaffolds and supports, combined with a digital context, students began to slowly achieve a higher oral language proficiency level. However, when the complexity of the task increased and the students' supports decreased within the digital context, their oral language proficiency began to decrease or return to their baseline speaking score.

Triangulated Data

To increase the validity and reliability of the speaking scores for the Flipgrid videos, Flipgrid video one and video four were additionally assessed by an ESL teacher colleague and compared with the teacher researcher's scores as presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Triangulated Data: Flipgrid Video 1 and 4

	TR 1* Video 1 Speaking Scores	TR 2* Video 1 Speaking Scores	TR 1* Video 4 Speaking Scores	TR 2* Video 4 Speaking Scores
1.0-1.9	1	0	0	0
2.0-2.9	6	5	7	8
3.0 - 3.9	2	2	4	3
4.0-4.9	0	2	0	0

Note. TR 1 refers to the teacher researcher and ESL teacher of the said students.
*Note.* TR 2 refers to ESL teacher colleague.

When the speaking scores for Flipgrid video one and video four were compared against the ESL teacher colleague's scores, the data shows that both teachers mainly scored within the same proficiency level. With the exception of two students in video one, the ESL teacher colleague assessed these students' higher in their oral language than the teacher researcher. Similarly, to the speaking scores represented in Figure 3, the ESL teacher colleague also too assessed the students' oral language proficiency within their baseline level of 2.0 – 2.9 in video four. The triangulated data also too represents that the students' oral language decreased or returned to their original baseline score when physical scaffolds and supports were not present, as in video four.

Scaffold Usage and Duration of Flipgrid Videos

Figure 5 represents the students' use of scaffolds for Flipgrid video one and video two.

Figure 5

Student Use of Scaffolds
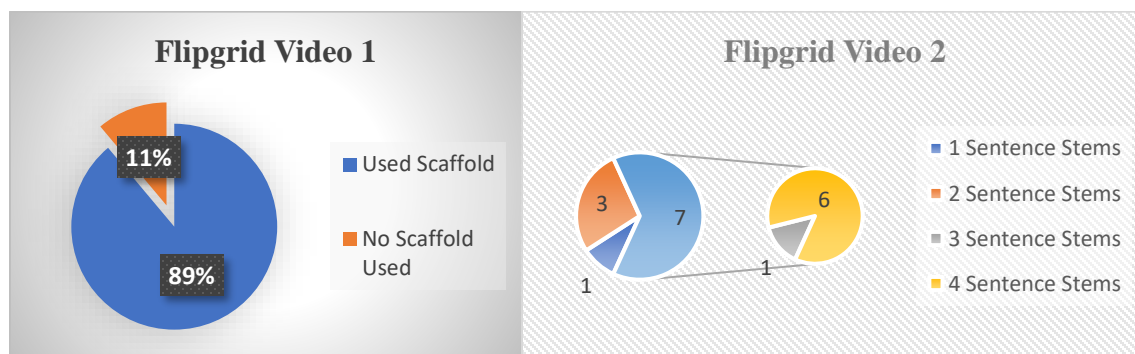
Nine students completed Flipgrid video one and eleven students completed Flipgrid video two. As shown in Figure 5 for video one, 89% of students used the scaffold of sentence stems and frames, only 11% did not use the provided sentence stems and rather created their own. Whereas in Flipgrid video two, students were provided with four sentence stems, one for each of the four discussion prompt questions, six of the eleven students

used all the sentence stems provided, and all students used at least one of the sentence stems. When students utilized the sentence stems scaffold, they were more likely to be on-task and their responses were all on-topic as shown in Table 6.
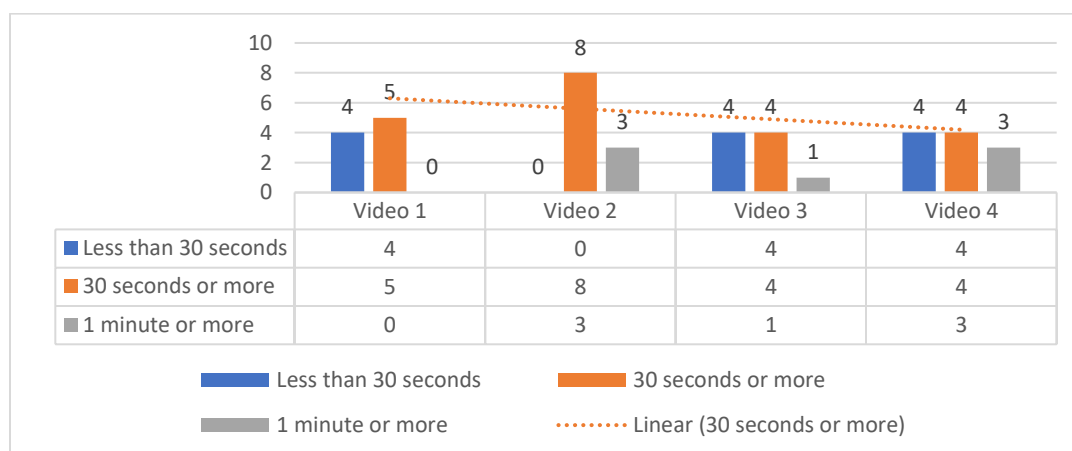
Table 6

Flipgrid Videos: On-Topic vs. Off-Topic

Video	Student Total	On-Topic	Off-Topic
1	9	9	0
2	11	11	0
3	9	6	3
4	11	9	2

All students were on-topic and accurately answered the discussion prompts when presented with the sentence stems, allocated preparation time, and the live in-person mini-lesson for Flipgrid video one and two. However, when these supports were absent and the mini-lesson was converted to a Flipgrid video recorded lesson, as in video three and four, there was an increase in students being off-topic and providing inaccurate or incomplete responses. Additionally, the students' duration of the Flipgrid videos were also influenced, as represented in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Length of Time: Flipgrid Videos

	Video 1	Video 2	Video 3	Video 4
Less than 30 seconds	4	0	4	4
30 seconds or more	5	8	4	4
1 minute or more	0	3	1	3

As the complexity of discussion prompts increased, students' allocated duration of time for each video also increased. However, as shown in Figure 6, in actuality, students' videos decreased in time in response to the complexity of the task. By video four, where students were given the time limit of two minutes within their Flipgrid video, four student videos were less than thirty seconds, four students recorded videos that were more than thirty seconds, and only three students recorded videos that were at least one minute. This data coincides with the students' lack of elaboration within their responses and decrease in their oral language proficiency scores. As the complexity of the task increased and the scaffolds and supports provided to students decreased, students spent less time in answering the discussion prompts. Flipgrid video two was the only video in which students' speaking time slightly increased.

Discussion

The purpose of this mixed methods research study was to measure the effect of Flipgrid on the development of oral English language fluency for foundational level English language learners. The utilization of the Flipgrid tool increased the English language learners' oral communicative skills. Through the progression and complexity of the Flipgrid video tasks, as represented in the qualitative and quantitative data, students' oral language fluidity increased with a decrease in pauses when speaking the target language. Student pauses mainly derived from the academic language presented within the sentence stems for Flipgrid video one and video two. However, when these supports were not provided for students, students continued to show a low affective filter and an increase in their confidence in their attempts to provide their own explanations to the discussion prompts. While these responses tended to be off-topic or inaccurate, there was

an increase in confidence in the students speaking the target language and student motivation in completing the communicative tasks, similar to Kurose's (2019) conclusions. Additionally, students became more autonomous and independent in utilizing the English language orally within the Flipgrid medium.

The scaffolding of Flipgrid activities greatly influenced English language learners' oral language performance. When students were presented with the scaffolds of sentence stems, allocated preparation time, and a live in-person mini-lesson, their Flipgrid responses reflected accuracy and overall comprehension of the discussion prompt. Again, it is important to note that Flipgrid video one and video two also were on the lowest hierarchical scale of Bloom's (1984) taxonomy. Their oral language proficiency additionally increased, with some students achieving scores higher than their 2019 WIDA ACCESS speaking scores. When these supports were absent and the mini-lesson transitioned to a Flipgrid recorded video, students' oral language performance slightly decreased in video three and drastically decreased in video four. Some students performed lower in their oral language performance as compared to their 2019 WIDA ACCESS speaking scores. Though Flipgrid video three and four had the highest levels within Bloom's (1984) taxonomy, students struggled in usage of academic language and accurately completing the task. While the Flipgrid medium is a scaffold in itself to promote oral language development in English, students struggled in accurately completing the discussion prompts when additional supports were absent.

While measuring Flipgrid's effect on English language learners' motivation to improve their oral language could not be fully investigated (please see the limitations section), it is important to note that all students were motivated to complete the Flipgrid

tasks. Students' whom typically refrain from speaking within class, spoke more in their Flipgrid video. Through this minimal data, utilizing Flipgrid did increase motivation in their oral language development in English.

Limitations

Due to the world health crisis of COVID-19 and the unprecedented prolonged school closures, student interviews were not able to be conducted. The lack of this qualitative data impeded and halted the investigation of Flipgrid on English language learners' motivation to improve their oral language in English. Additionally, the student absences and the school closures prevented a few participants from completing all four Flipgrid videos, as well as accurately preparing the secondary ESL teacher colleague for scoring and triangulating the data for all four videos. Finally, some technology issues also too hampered and interfered with the students' Flipgrid videos.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications

Conclusion

With an increase in the development of twenty-first century learning skills, Flipgrid provided an equitable opportunity for English language learners to develop this skill set while also increasing their oral language development in English. The use of digital video applications as a medium to promote oral language development in English can increase English language learners' oral fluency, if combined with the appropriate scaffolds and supports. Digital video applications can also lower English language learners' affective filter while increasing their motivation to practice and acquire the target language. However, digital video applications should not be used in place of teacher-directed, in-person lessons as well as the only scaffold or support to promote oral language development in English within a digital context. Digital video applications do not replace physical scaffolds, and scaffolds should not be pulled from students unless they are regularly prepared, presented, and practiced where it becomes independent within the English language learner.

Implications

Digital mediums have the capacity to increase English language learners' communicative skills within all domains: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, additional time needs to be built within the digital assignment for students to practice the scaffold while also using it in conjunction with the digital application. As the complexity of the language increases and students begin to develop independence in utilizing the scaffolds, as well as creating their own, then these supports should gradually be removed.

Flipgrid, and other audio and video recording applications, should be utilized as a tool to monitor English language learners' second language development, rather than an independent scaffold for language acquisition. When digital mediums are further supported with additional scaffolds and supports, it has the powerful potential to build on the English language learners' target language whilst increasing their confidence and lowering their affective filter. Digital applications are an invaluable tool within the English as a Second Language classroom and offers students' opportunities to build a strong connection with their target language. When teachers prepare, present, and practice the scaffolds in conjunction with the digital application, student second language acquisition, and twenty-first century learning skills, have the powerful capacity to increase.

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Appendix A
Parent Consent Form

February 4, 2020

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

My name is Mrs. Annelise Pen, and I am your child's ESL teacher at Talbot Middle School. I am completing a project this semester as part of my degree at Bridgewater State University, and I would like for your child to be included in my project.

All students in class will be completing Flipgrid assignments which is an online audio and video recording application used to help students practice speaking English. Flipgrid is being used as part of regular class activities because I believe it is a beneficial tool which allows to witness and monitor students' progress in improving their speaking fluency in the English language. I would like to do a more systematic investigation by analyzing students' speaking performance on Flipgrid assignments with the help of an English language proficiency rubric and interviews.

The purpose of this project is to analyze the effect of Flipgrid on the development of the students' speaking skills in English. If you allow your child to participate, I will use the speaking assessment results from the scoring rubric in my analysis, and I will interview the student to ask him/her about his/her experience with Flipgrid. I will write a report (Master's degree thesis paper) based upon this data detailing if Flipgrid was a beneficial tool in increasing English speaking skills. The student data will be kept confidential and information will be protected by using a tracking number in place of the students' names. No real names will appear on the report.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at
adifilippant@student.bridgew.edu.

If you **do not** want to include your child's assessment results and interview responses into the analysis, please check off the box that says **NO** and return this form to the student's homeroom teacher. If you **do** want to include your child's assessment results and interview responses, please check off the box that says **YES** and return this form to the student's homeroom teacher.

If I do not receive the form by February___, 2020, I will NOT include your child's data into the research.

Thank you for your time.

YES, I give permission to include my child   NO, I do NOT include my child

Student Name _____ Parent Signature _____

Appendix B

Interview Questions

1. In what ways do you think that Flipgrid help improved your speaking and listening skills in English? Give a few examples from using Flipgrid.

2. How did using Flipgrid affect your speaking skills in English? Did it help or did it not help? Explain your answer by giving a few examples.

3. What are some limitations in Flipgrid? What were some difficulties you had in using Flipgrid?

4. From all the assignments that were completed in using Flipgrid, what assignment was the most helpful in improving speaking in English and what was the least helpful assignment? Why?

5. Would you use Flipgrid for other assignments? Why or why not?

Appendix C

Flipgrid

Video 1

February 10, 2020

Prompt 1

Explain one cultural tradition that is important in your country and/or culture.

Sentence Stems	Examples
• One cultural tradition that is important in my country of _____ is _____. This tradition is important because _____. • A cultural tradition that is important in my country of _____ is _____ because _____.	• **Holidays** • **Family Events** • **Food** • **Celebrations** • **Clothing** • **New Year's Traditions**

5-minute Planning: Write ideas about important cultural traditions in your country. Use the sentence stems to help with your brainstorm.

Appendix D

Flipgrid
Video 2 🎬
February 25, 2020

Directions:
Read "The Right Words at the Right Time" and record your answers in complete sentences. Use the rubric to assess your speaking skills.
1.   Retell the short story, "The Right Words at the Right Time." 💡 *First, …* *Next, …* *Finally, …*
2.   What was John's conflict (problem)? 💡 *John's conflict was …*
3.   How was John's problem solved? 💡 *John's problem was solved by …*
4.   How is John similar to Bebe in "Building Bridges"? 💡 *Both John and Bebe are similar because …*

Appendix E
Student Friendly WIDA Speaking Rubric

I will improve my <u>speaking level</u> from **level _____ to level _____.**

Speaking			
	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**
Content	**I can answer / name / show / respond** **<u>wh-questions.</u>**	**I can state / restate / connect / describe / answer** **<u>main ideas and details.</u>**	**I can relate / connect / demonstrate / critique / evaluate** **<u>main ideas with examples and supporting evidence.</u>**
Form	**I can use** **<u>words / phrases to show my ideas.</u>**	**I can use** **<u>phrases / short sentences to express my ideas.</u>**	**I can use** **<u>simple and expanded/compound sentences that connect ideas.</u>**
Vocabulary	**I can use** **<u>simple vocabulary and expressions.</u>**	**I can use** **<u>specific academic vocabulary.</u>**	**I can use** **<u>specific academic vocabulary, cognates, and expressions.</u>**

Appendix F

Flipgrid

Video 3

March 5, 2020

Directions:

In your Flipgrid video, you will answer the question:

What influences how you act?

Think about all the stories we have read, "The Experiment," "Building Bridges," and "The Right Words at the Right Time."

Answer this question by using **examples** from the stories we have read.

Appendix G

Flipgrid

Video 4

March 13 / 14, 2020

Directions:

In your Flipgrid video, you will **reflect** on the writing of your children's story.

You will answer two questions.

1. What is your children's story about?

2. How did you come up with this children's story?

Make sure you reflect on your children's story and explain why you wrote about it.