

Exploring Practices and Teacher Voices on the Use of Engoo in Online Speaking Classrooms

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Abstract:

Incorporating digital media into education has shifted how language is learned. This study aims to explore how Engoo can potentially be utilized in EFL learning to teach speaking skills and find out teachers' voices on its perceived usefulness in an online context. Observations in online learning classrooms and interviews with the five teachers in two English course institutions were conducted to collect the data. The results of this study show that Engoo serves as an effective platform for teaching EFL speaking skills that consists of information in the forms of written text, pictures, and audio. This platform can be a resourceful material to teach speaking for the students across level. Additionally, the majority of the teachers had positive impressions and experiences towards the use of Engoo for their EFL instructions. As a result, future research can expose the students' voices in using Engoo and the effectiveness of that online learning media.

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Introduction

Incorporating digital technology into recent education has greatly impacted language learning methods. The conventional teaching approach transformed into more interactive and flexible environments. Cummins' study (2024) revealed that digital technology had significantly influenced language learning from traditional teaching methods to more dynamic and collaborative ways. These digital platforms offer a wealth of information, instructional scaffolding and self-directed learning encouragements which can enhance students' English language skills.

Among receptive and productive skills, speaking skills are important for effective communication. Speaking skills not only improve language fluency, but also increase students' confidence to engage in learning language (Arroba & Acosta, 2021). Today, the practice of teaching speaking has required a digital platform that develops language learning. Mobile applications and online platforms can develop students' speaking (Rofii & Syarifah, 2024). A mixed-method study also revealed that technology not only rises student interest but also demands a student-centered approach and teacher training that is effectively implemented (Camacho et al., 2024). Thus, innovative teaching strategies need to be developed in order to effectively develop language skills, particularly the use of technology in language learning.

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has promoted numerous technological tools to develop speaking fluency. Some previous studies have investigated the technology use for enhancing the students' communication abilities. Benlaghrissi and Ouahidi's (2022) research also clearly shows that students' speaking performance significantly improved with the MALL tools. Then, Suryana et al.'s (2020) study highlighted that teaching speaking using the web www.englishclub.com and www.esllab.com can effectively enhance the students' English-speaking skills and the students give positive reactions regarding this method. Asratie et al.'s (2023) research has reported that beginners who used tools like FORVO and YouGlish significantly outperformed their speech fluency and accuracy than those who employed more traditional techniques. Dorji and Sakulwongs (2024) proved that MALL applications provide excellent opportunities for students, leading to increased engagement and self-confidence when speaking English.

Furthermore, Artificial Intelligence (AI) can facilitate the students to learn speaking. CoolE Bot significantly promoted EFL speaking skills (Tai & Chen, 2024). AI-powered speech recognition technology can develop the students' pronunciation and general speaking abilities. A study by (2024) discovered that students were interested in using these tools for speaking. Imran et al. (2023) also analyzed that the teachers at university shared their positive views in using AI for adaptive learning in speaking classrooms. Thus, it is inevitable that AI technology promises to create creative and highly engaging educational experiences (Mannahali et al., 2021).

Some previous studies have analyzed MALL and AI in EFL classrooms for students' speaking exposure. This research is intended to investigate the teachers' experiences on the teaching of speaking skill by using Engoo. It is because Engoo is a platform which shares informative materials to the readers and contains AI-powered

technology. Secondly, this research aims at identifying whether Engoo is beneficial to be an online material seen from Chapelle's (2001) theory.

Method

This study used descriptive qualitative. Observation was done by seeing the speaking activity and checking the Engoo website <https://engoo.com/app/daily-news>. Then, interviews with five teachers from two language institutions "*Jago Bahasa*" and "*Kin's English*" located in Pare-Kediri, East Java and in Semarang, Central Java were done. The teachers told their experiences in using Engoo to teach English speaking skill. Further information of the participants enrolled in this study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Information on the selected participants

Teacher	Length of teaching	Using Engoo	Grade of Teaching Class
T1	<2 year	1 year	TEYL
T2	>2 years	1 year	TEYL, Beginner, and Intermediate
T3	>2 years	1 year	TEYL, Beginner, and Intermediate
T4	<2 years	1 year	TEYL
T5	<2 years	1 year	Beginner, and Intermediate

Table 1 shows that the selected participants can be categorized as novice teachers due to the length of teaching and they have taught speaking skill by using this platform more than one semester. These participants told their teaching experiences in speaking classrooms by using Engoo and how Engoo met the learning activities. The obtained data from these interviews were thematically identified to find out the trends in teaching speaking and how Engoo aligns with Chapelle's (2001) theoretical framework. This theory comprises some aspects, such as learning potential, learner fit, meaning focus, authenticity, positive effect and practicality.

Results and Discussion

Engoo Practice for Speaking Activities

The result of interviews with the teachers shows that Engoo can be used to teach speaking in different levels, such as TEYL, beginner, and intermediate. They utilized Engoo for conversation and vocabulary exposure. This is because Engoo provides reading texts and materials to discuss. Besides, the materials vary into beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. So, the teachers can match the ease and difficulty of material with the students' proficiency levels. The result of observation when using Engoo is presented in Figures 1-3.

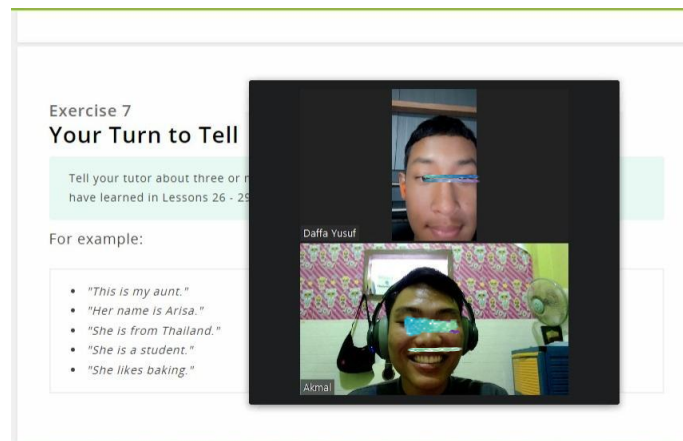


Figure 1. Engoo for beginner level

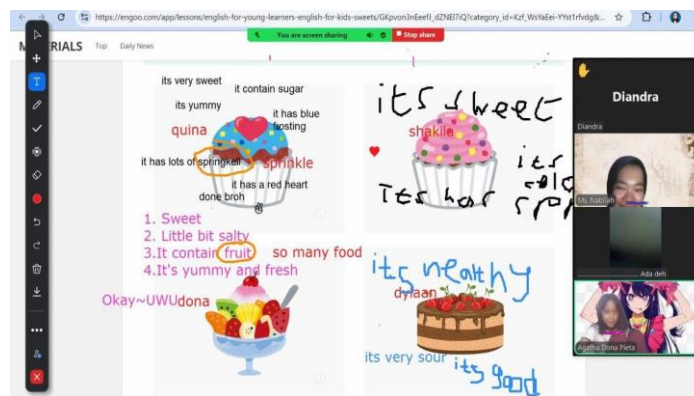


Figure 2. Engoo for TEYL

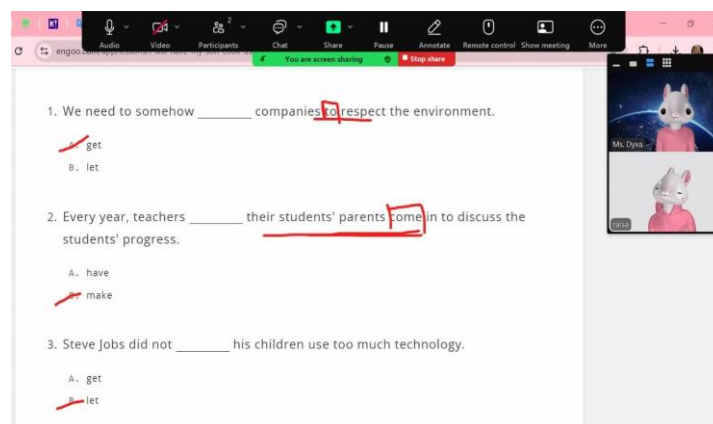


Figure 3. Engoo for grammar

Commonly, all teachers taught Engoo for a thirty-minute-activity or a whole classroom activity in sixty minutes because the materials can be used for brainstorming, discussion, and reinforcement. For example, T2, T3 and T5 explained that they scaffolded the students by some questions or pictures available on the website. These three teachers mostly used news for speaking materials because it is updated as presented in Figures 4-5.

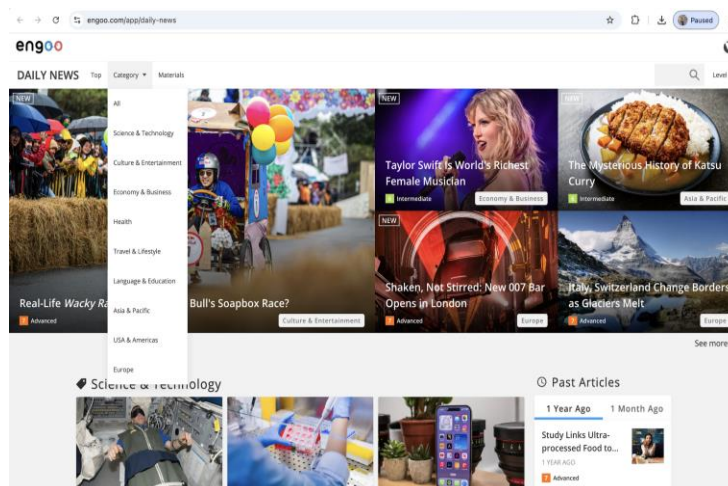


Figure 4. Kind of news in Engoo

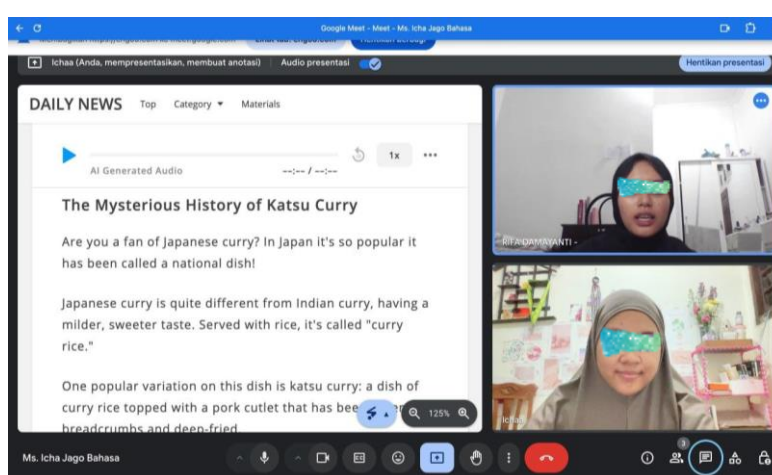


Figure 5. Teaching speaking for intermediate level in Engoo

The teachers initially asked the students to read. After reading, the students learned new words in a glossary that contains word list, meanings in context, phonetic symbols, and audio so that the students can read and listen to have a clear pronunciation. For post reading, the teachers and students do a conversation activity for speaking exposure. Then, they add the further discussion that boosts the students' critical thinking because the questions are beyond the reading texts. Thus, the students and the teachers can keep interactive due to the materials in Engoo. Rizqiyanti's (2023) research promoted the student-led activities such as presentations and discussion for students' oral fluency. However, this current research did not find the teachers who utilized AI-powered communication available at Engoo. It is important to employ AI-powered technology for the students to explore their awareness on language exposure and subject matter.

Engoo Based on Chapelle's Framework

This part explains the teachers' perspectives on the Engoo to ensure the students' speaking skill. Firstly, the teachers showed their views on Engoo's potential for language learning. They said that,

"The material is adequate for the grade and facilitates students to improve their speaking skills" (T1)

"Very good, especially in the gradual completeness of the material at various levels" (T2)

"Very good, especially in providing a glossary as a warm-up to be applied in conversation" (T3)

"The Engoo platform is very helpful because this platform provides a variety of materials according to the student's level" (T4)

"This platform can really help the English language skills of students and tutors" (T5)

Based on the result of the interviews, the resourceful materials are capable of promoting language acquisition (Chapelle, 2001). It is because the material is appropriate for the student's proficiency level, providing a glossary that supports the conversation activity, and consisting of various topic materials. Innovative teaching strategies, such as integrated approaches and contextual learning

Secondly, the teachers exposed their views on Engoo's features that meet the students' needs. The students can choose topics that attract them or adjust the difficulty level according to their proficiency. Because Engoo provides vocabulary support through glossaries, phonetic symbols, and audio, students can easily choose the topic of speaking that can increase their understanding of the material and their speaking fluency. Xu (2024) argues that vocabulary is fundamental for students' comprehension and pronunciation, so innovative teaching strategies that integrate approaches and contextual learning are necessarily implemented. The participants told that,

"Engoo can adjust students' backgrounds to material or topics at the appropriate grade, and students are also more motivated and even enthusiastic when using the game features on Engoo" (T1)

"Excellent, students prefer having a glossary that fits their background that they didn't know before. Students are more engaged in class when using Engoo than other websites. They can improve their vocab and practice listening by using it" (T2)

"More than 80%, because Engoo provides several options (daily news, conversation, TEYL, ESP etc.) that are appropriate based on the student's level and background" (T3)

"Engoo is quite helpful to students because it can meet the needs of students from different backgrounds and proficiencies. With the image feature in each material, students are very actively involved in learning" (T4)

"Beginner level students are more actively involved in class when using the Engoo platform in conversation material than other websites" (T5)

Engoo also encourages the students to focus on meaningful communication. This is important for the students to obtain meaning focus from the various texts in Engoo, such as descriptive and news texts. The descriptive text consists of seventy-two topics, while the news is updated almost everyday. The teachers stated that,

"The presence of a glossary helps students to understand language use, but there must be a tutor's role to help interpret vocabulary" (T1)

"By receiving new material contextually, especially the vocabulary available in the glossary, students are asked to make sentences and interpret them" (T2)

"Students can understand the meaning, because at the beginning they have been given an understanding regarding the focus of using English, especially grammar, there are explanations and various good examples provided" (T3)

"It's very easy to understand, especially for basic students, and the presence of pictures in the glossary also makes it easy for students to understand the meaning" (T4)

"Provides long-term understanding, because the vocabulary is often repeated, and the teacher's role is to help interpret only at the beginning because it is full English (beginner), but even without the teacher's role, sometimes students can also understand the meaning on their own because of the pictures provided in the glossary" (T5)

Furthermore, the vocabulary in Engoo has an academic tone seen from the structure parallelism and the dictions. Beside a monologue text, the students can expose their speaking ability in dialogue activity. Thus, teachers can stimulate discussions from news to enhance students' critical thinking and speaking fluency (Williams, 2021).

Then, Engoo provides authentic materials that resonate with real-world contexts, fostering practical language use. Mamba (2024) highly suggested the use of authentic materials to improve the students' understanding. The teachers said that,

"It is relevant, because the content is in accordance with the real life of native speakers" (T1)

"World News is quite up to date because it corresponds to real life." (T2)

"Yes, because the dialogue given is really like a real context and relevant, not just fiction but can be applied in everyday life" (T3)

"Yes, the material reflects real life usage and is relevant, and the material is quite up to date" (T4)

"Yes, very much because the developer of Engoo is not Indonesian but from Singapore, and also Engoo is not the Indonesian version of English because Engoo provides English in real life. 8 per 10 for up-to-date material (daily news)" (T5)

Additionally, all teachers agreed that Engoo shared a positive impact on the students' speaking abilities and confidence to communicate in English. The teachers can create interactive learning environments for the students due to interesting materials. The result of interviews corresponds with Shi's (2024) study which suggested that teachers use multimedia resources and authentic texts to help students adjust real-life communication situations. The teacher said that,

"Development of vocabulary acquisition through games. Students respond more positively if after lessons they are given games" (T1)

"Beginner students are more confident in producing sentences, and they give positive responses such as idiom development, interesting material, etc." (T2)

"Students understand and easily accept a lot of vocabulary. Members often ask to use the Engoo website to study because the material is interesting and consistent" (T3)

"Students find it easier to learn and understand the material and there is significant progress" (T4)

Finally, teachers considered Engoo user-friendly, accessible, and free resources. Although a participant shared the challenge in using Engoo for listening, she can have a strategy to deal with the problem. The teachers told that,

"No problems happened because Engoo is user-friendly" (T1)

"The problem with Listen and Repeat is that it doesn't have audio, but it can be overcome with the creativity of the tutor. For its convenience, Engoo is more suitable for use in online classes and is flexible" (T2)

"The problem is, there are no instructions for grammar exercises, the solution comes from the tutor's creativity. The convenience is that everything can be accessed for free, printable, no advertising, audio is available" (T3)

"There are no obstacles in the learning process at elementary level. The convenience is very easy to use and apply in online classes" (T4)

"There are no obstacles. "The convenience is, almost everything provided by Engoo is free and flexible" (T5)

Overall Engoo can meet the criteria of language learning materials to support the students' language acquisition in speaking activities.

Conclusion

The result of the study revealed that the teachers have utilized Engoo for students' speaking ability exposure. Additionally, this platform is a beneficial web-based English learning material that aligns with Chapelle's theoretical criteria. Therefore, Engoo can be highly recommended to be a learning resource. Because this research was only focused on the teachers' experiences, further research can investigate students' satisfaction and learning outcome for their English language learning.

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