

Virtual Feedback: Exploring and Analyzing Students' Acceptance as a Tool for Developing English Language Skills

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Abstract—This study aimed to explore the reflective valuable data concerning what the students perceived towards the pedagogy of giving virtual or online feedback applied by the teachers through the virtual or online platforms of Zoom and the ClassStart in developing students' English language skills. The perceptions of implementation of the platforms were, then, investigated through the distribution of the online questionnaires with the open-ended questions asking 134 students who were purposely selected from 250 students as participants, studying at a local university in Thailand, majoring in English Education after taking an Effective Presentation course, considered the compulsory subject. They have been through the course for being investigated their perceptions on giving feedback for enhancing their English skills for 30 hours, conducted 3 hours per week for a semester. The collected quantitative data from the first part of the Likert scale questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively through SPSS and ANOVA while the opened-ended questions were thematically described through the content analysis. The findings showed that applying the pedagogy of giving virtual or online feedback by the teacher through the application of Zoom and the ClassStart platform was advised not only specifically for teaching and learning language, but also for other courses as a mean of an assisted tool the educators can implement in their classes properly.

Keywords—ClassStart, English skills, giving feedback, online or virtual platforms, Zoom application

1 Introduction

English is the most widely taught and learned as a foreign language throughout the regular school system from the primary schools to the university levels as a compulsory subject which is even more important for the degree entrance examination [1]. However, the teaching and learning English has been considered controversial as it has been claimed that traditional learning has slightly disappeared due to the vast changes resulting from technology, impacting dramatically [2]. In other words, the social

networking sites have brought about drastic changes and have revolutionized ways of communication and the exchange of the information over the past few decades not only in the way the people communicate to each other, but also the way the teachers and students interact while teaching and learning throughout the courses [2]. It was, therefore, mentioned that learning English at the university level has been affected by different lifestyle changes derived from the influence of digital convergence, and the social media can act as a source for communication between teachers and students, making it suitable to be applied by the EFL students in developing their English proficiency [3]. On top of that, socializing only in the classroom has been presently changed to taking place in the virtual world or online through different tools invented such as the Zoom application and the ClassStart platform. These can be taken for communication between teachers and students as they were widely used not only for business activities namely meeting and presenting, but for educational purposes such as lecturing and discussing [4]. Though various studies have been conducted regarding the obstacles, problems, and the benefits of applying such platforms, the research of how the teaching methodology of giving feedback specifically for developing students' language skills in the classroom through these platforms have been found limited. This study, thereby, purposively investigated how the students perceived themselves and the giving feedback teaching methods applied by the teachers through the Zoom and the ClassStart platforms can develop their language skills as the following research objectives:

1. To explore the level of students' acceptance of receiving feedback through the virtual or online platforms of Zoom and the ClassStart in the classroom of developing English language skills.
2. To explore the level of students' acceptance of receiving feedback through the virtual or online platforms of Zoom and the ClassStart in the classroom of developing English language skills in terms of its access and the development of the students' language skills.
3. To investigate how the students perceive themselves towards the classroom applied the virtual or online platforms of Zoom and the ClassStart for developing their English skills through giving feedback.

2 Literature review

With reference to teaching and learning, feedback has been considered a beneficial element and has functioned various objectives, including evaluating learners' achievements, development of students' competencies and understanding as well as evaluating learners' motivation and confidence in learning, for instance [4]. With regards to teaching and learning activities in higher education circumstances, feedback can be seen as any information expressed to the learners in consequence of a learning-oriented action [5]. This is in the line with the definition of feedback proposed by [6]. feedback is always an integral component in the process "a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes". Furthermore, feedback has been perceived as a key step in learning, providing information on certain actions in relation to the aim of performance [7]. It has also been defined that

feedback is the information from an agent, such as teachers, peers, or others about one's performance [8]. Considering the form of effective feedback, many scholars agreed that effective feedback means to improve performance by corrective errors, so it must be constructive [9]. Moreover, it was claimed that the act of assessing has an impact on both the assessors and the students. Also, feedback plays a role as a mirror to reflect the students as what their performance looks like. In relation to these definitions, feedback can be seen as a tool to help improve learners' development [10].

According to the trends of teaching and learning nowadays, it is inevitable that online is one of the essential channels to manage teaching and learning processes [11]. Thus, the way the teacher gives feedback has simultaneously adjusted. Traditional feedback through handwritten comments on students' assessed tasks and printed-out paper feedback which are distributed to the learners is inadequate. These traditional ways of giving feedback and communication do not seem to be effective for today's learning. Instead, applying giving feedback through online or virtual platforms, for example, has been advised [3].

Though there were various virtual platforms launched as a tool for assisting teaching and learning, the Zoom application and the ClassStart online platform have been chosen for this matter. To be more specific, Zoom is a cloud-based service which originally offers meetings and webinars and functions as a channel to share contents and videos and not difficult to access as it can be used through smartphones, tablets, and computers [4]. There has been several research investigating the benefits of utilizing Zoom meeting applications. With regards to the study conducted by [11], it has been found that the basic problem of learning through Zoom applications was the failure of internet networks, limited features of online learning applications, and obstacles in terms of learning services. These similar drawbacks have also been found specifically in the research performed by using Zoom meeting application in speaking skills class [12]. The learners must be able to exploit Zoom application appropriately hence the material presented by the lecturer can be understood and applied in life [4]. In addition to Zoom, the ClassStart has also been a choice. This is considered another online platform to support online learning. ClassStart has been developed to promote and encourage student-centered learning because users can use and access easily at any time and place through the internet and computers as well as smartphones. ClassStart was created initially for educators and learners around Thailand without any charge. There have been more than 45,000 members, more than 3,500 classes from more than 200 educational institutes in Thailand. The functions are various including classroom management, announcement, teaching materials, classroom web board, learner group, practice management, learning record, score, and score processing systems [13]. Its features can be applied to comply with the learner styles e.g., collaborative learning and active learning. Furthermore, it can effectively promote an individualized approach towards personal analytics. For instance, it can function like a record for reflective journals of what has been taught and learned. On top of that, teachers can utilize ClassStart as a notebook to keep and track the students' progress on the content learned, continuously monitor student feedback, and manage the lesson to amend the teaching activities to accomplish the learning objectives or develop the students' skills [14].

Thereby, the electronic feedback methods applied such virtual or online platforms mentioned earlier have started from simple techniques such as giving comments

to students to more sophisticated platforms that allow teachers to place comments, ideas, and annotations to electronically submitted work. Electronic feedback methods considered virtual or online are now sharply utilized by teachers now that they enhance feedback production, delivery, and communication [2]. What's more, this online feedback can be verbal and non-verbal communication. Feedback in online setting can be in the form of audio and/or video in the stream live. It may also be in the form of written, audio, video, or in the stream live synchronous web-based conference format. The definition of online feedback is, therefore, information from an educator, peer, or others in an online format, such as the written word, audio file, video, pre-programmed automatic reply, or live web-based conferencing [15]. However, according to the study of [16], it has been revealed that insufficient feedback given by teachers was less than satisfactory in an online course. From these factors, it is necessary to be well-prepared for online feedback in the written, audio, video, or in the live synchronous web-based conference format [17].

3 Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants were 134 students purposely selected from 250 students, studying at a local university in Thailand, majoring in English Education. They have taken an Effective Presentation course which was compulsory for the degree graduation. They have been through the virtual or online classrooms designed by applying the teaching pedagogy of giving feedback through the application of Zoom and the ClassStart platform from time to time, aiming to develop the students' English skills. This designed context classroom has been participated by the students for 30 hours, 3 hours per week in a semester, and the students' perceptions towards the pedagogy of giving virtual or online feedback applied in the classroom for enhancing their English skills were finally investigated.

3.2 Procedure and instrumentation

The instrument for this study was the questionnaire with open-ended questions towards students' perceptions on virtual or online feedback via the application of Zoom and the ClassStart platform. To be more specific, the questionnaire has been divided into two parts, students' perceptions towards given feedback virtually via the ClassStart and Zoom, and Open-ended questions. Before the instrument was employed in the study, the three experts in different fields from English language, education, and technology for education were asked to validate the instrument through the Index of Consistency (IOC) method. Having been checked by the experts, the questionnaire was later distributed online to 134 students to evaluate their satisfaction and answer the open-ended questions.

3.3 Data analysis

To analyze the gathered data, SPSS/PC (Statistical Package for the Social Science on Personal Computer) and ANOVA were employed in the study. After the questionnaire was distributed online to the participants, the collected data of the participants' perceptions was calculated and shown in min, max, means, and SD. The descriptive analysis and the open-ended questions data were, then, analyzed by means of content analysis. The Likert Scale revealed the levels of agreement which the criteria for rating the scale were interpreted as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The criteria for rating the scale

X-Bar	Level of Agreement
4.50–5.00	Strongly agree
3.50–4.49	Agree
2.50–3.49	Neutral
1.50–2.49	Disagree
1.00–1.49	Strongly disagree

Table 1 clearly displayed the criteria employed in this study. There were only five levels of criteria scored in the questionnaire since the aim of the study have been solely investigating the participants' perceptions. To be more specific, the levels of agreements were divided into five levels i.e., strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. All levels were accordant with the X-Bar score. The range of X-Bar score of 4.50–5.00 was considered as the level of strongly agree, and the lower X-Bar score of 3.50–4.49 was considered as agree level. The level agreement of neutral was considered at the X-Bar score of 2.50–3.49 while other two lower mean scores were also implemented in the study. In other words, the level of disagree was equal to the range of the X-Bar score of 1.50–2.49 while the lowest level of agreement as strongly disagree was equal to the X-Bar score of 1.00–1.49. After all the data were elicited from the participants by distributing questionnaire online, they were, then, analyzed by showing some statistic scores and the description to clearly show the meaning of the data in the following sections. Apart from the statistical tools mentioned earlier, the content analysis has been employed for the reason of analyzing the qualitative data collected from the opened-ended section of questionnaire distributed. This method was initially started from reading all the written data collected and categorized the contents divided into different themes before the data were finally described.

4 Results

To explore the level of students' acceptance of receiving feedback through the virtual or online platforms of Zoom and the ClassStart in the classroom of developing English language skills, the online questionnaire has been distributed to the students to be evaluated and the data have been statistically analyzed and shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Level of students' acceptance of getting feedback through the ClassStart platform and the Zoom application

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
The ClassStart Platform	134	3.25	4.83	4.1325	.40955
The Zoom Application	134	3.18	5.00	4.2429	.47660
Valid N (listwise)	134				

We can clearly see that the overall numbers of the students believed that teacher's feedback from both platforms, the ClassStart and Zoom, were considered acceptable as the overall mean scores were at the level of "agree", (ClassStart, 4.1325 and zoom, 4.2429), though the Zoom platform was ranked higher.

To explore the level of students' acceptance of receiving feedback through the virtual or online platforms of Zoom and the ClassStart in the classroom of developing English language skills in terms of its access and the development of the students' language skills, the online questionnaire has been distributed to the students to be evaluated and the data have been statistically analyzed and shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Level of students' acceptance of getting feedback through the ClassStart platform and the Zoom application in terms of its access and development of language skills

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
ClassStart access	134	2.83	5.00	3.8781	.47895
ClasStart language development	134	3.33	5.00	4.3868	.49416
Zoom_access	134	3.20	5.00	4.2567	.45792
Zoom_language development	134	2.83	5.00	4.2313	.59548
Valid N (listwise)	134				

In terms of getting access to both platforms, students ranked getting access to the Zoom was more convenient (Mean = 4.2567) than that of the ClassStart (Mean = 3.8781) which was significantly different, yet the level of agreement was still similar, meaning that they accepted to get access to both platforms for getting feedback from their teachers. In addition, they also ranked both platforms can enhance their language learning after getting feedback at high level of agreement though there was significant difference of agreement that the ClassStart was ranked higher than that of Zoom (Means = 4.3868 and 4.2313, respectively).

To investigate how the students perceive themselves towards the classroom applied the virtual or online platforms of Zoom and the ClassStart for developing their English skills through giving feedback, the content analysis was chosen as a method of extracting discourse from the data collected from the opened-ended section of the questionnaire. This functions as the identification of patterns in the data and the formation of meaningful groupings and themes that capture the issue under investigation. The researchers analysed the data by reading and rereading the data multiple times and looking for

common themes and categorising them across the text. The following themes have been categorized and analyzed the contents as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Thematic categories of the students' perception towards the classroom applied the virtual or online application of Zoom and the ClassStart platform for developing their English skills through giving feedback

Themes	Numbers of Repeated Written Data Found	Samples of Quotations
Convenience	52	"Zoom is easier to login and access" "I like Zoom more than ClassStart" "I found the ClassStart is more complicated to access and find the sections" "Though ClassStart provide more functions than Zoom, but Zoom is easy to access" "I prefer Zoom compared to ClassStart as it is not difficult to login"
Information retention	88	"Of course, I can get back to the feedback the teacher gave us anytime" "The feedback from the teacher will never disappear as it is in the ClassStart" "Though I cannot catch up with the prompt feedback from teacher via Zoom, I can get back to the ClassStart all the time" "ClassStart can help me not losing feedback from the teacher if I do not have much attention while listening to teacher via Zoom"
English development	131	"My speaking is better after I got feedback from the teacher after presentation" "I think I can develop my English skill more because I can get back and study the feedback the teacher wrote in the ClassStart" "Getting feedback right after presentation via Zoom help me found errors and improve my next presentation" "I like getting feedback online personally via Zoom by teacher right after presentation because I will know how I can improve my English skills" "I sometimes cannot catch up with teachers' feedback promptly, but I can get back and read them in the ClassStart online later so I can improve my English"
Free access	128	"I don't need to pay for application and ClassStart" "I like ClassStart and Zoom because they are easy to use and free" "I can keep my exercise and teachers' feedback via ClassStart for free" "Zoom is good because I can use it for getting feedback from the teacher online for free" "Some applications are not free, but these two platforms are good and free"

After all the qualitative data have been categorized, there were four main themes proposed, namely convenience, information retention, English development, and free access. The students found themselves more convenient to use the application of Zoom

compared to the ClassStart platform which was more complicated. Nevertheless, the ClassStart platform benefited them in terms of accessing the feedback given by the teacher online since it was restored and would never disappear. Table 4 clearly displayed that the students have perceived both virtual or online application of Zoom and the ClassStart platform beneficial for them especially in terms of developing the English skills through giving online feedback pedagogy by the teacher. In addition, they found them were valuable tools in assisting learning and developing their English without paid fees.

5 Discussion

5.1 Students' acceptance of getting feedbacks through the ClassStart versus Zoom

In terms of getting access to both platforms, the Zoom application and the ClassStart online platform have been chosen as a mean of learning through the pedagogy of teacher's giving feedback. Zoom is a cloud-based service which originally offers meetings and webinars and functions as a channel to share content and video which is not difficult to access. People have been more familiar compared to other platforms. Furthermore, it can be reached through smartphones, tablets, and computers [4], [18]. Conversely, the ClassStart has not been considered much familiar by the students. Still, the students still agreed at the similar level as Zoom since they considered themselves having digital competency, clarified as the acquisition of information age skills, the cultivation of habits of mind, and the engagement in digital cultures and practices [19]. It is also claimed that the use of ICT in the language classroom influences the increase of students' autonomous learning, motivation, and performance in EFL learning. To illustrate, the students can easily access any virtual or online platforms while learning [20]. To be more specific, there were some students mentioned getting access to the ClassStart was sometimes complicated compared to the Zoom, "I found that finding each category of the ClassStart where the feedback from the teacher posted was quite complicated," some still mentioned that "It was not difficult to get access after trying at the first time". In addition, the students revealed that getting access to both platforms especially the ClassStart can accelerate their digital literacy compared to Zoom as this was new to them, "I found that interacting via the ClassStart can accelerate my technology skills". Nevertheless, some problems while interacting through both platforms were mentioned. To name a few, some students revealed that "I found some problems while upload entries to the ClassStart". Overall, they agreed to enjoy getting access to the platforms as they can learn how to be familiar with the platforms within no time, "It is not taking time for learning how to get access to the ClassStart" since it was described those new technologies have adjusted how we live and communicate, and educators and learners need to be equipped with technologies to prepare them for life in the twenty-first century [21] which consist of information, media and technology skills, or also known as digital literacies, the competency to understand and use information in various patterns from a variety of sources through computers [22].

5.2 Students' perspectives of their English development skills while getting feedbacks through the ClassStart and Zoom

It was found that students have considered their English language development through getting feedback virtually or online positively. To be more crystal-clear, both male and female students had the same opinion level towards these platforms though the male students agreed at the higher level compared to the females' (Mean = 4.2476 and 4.2256, respectively). The electronic feedback methods applied such virtual or online platforms have started from simple techniques such as giving comments to students to more sophisticated platforms that allow teachers to place comments, ideas, and annotations to electronically submitted work. Electronic feedback methods are sharply utilized by teachers now that they enhance feedback production, delivery, and communication [14]. What's more, online feedback can be verbal and non-verbal communication. Feedback in online setting can be in the form of audio, video on in the stream live. It may be in the form of written, audio, video, or in the stream live synchronous web-based conference format. The definition of online feedback is information from an educator, peer, or other in an online format, such as the written word, audio file, video, pre-programmed automatic reply, or live web-based conferencing [15] which the students can develop their skills in the circumstance which is not formal and not supervised by language teachers so the learners can feel more relaxed in teaching and learning [23]. In addition, it was stated that in the future English language digital resources will be implemented for learning of non-native speakers of English online and the teacher plays a vital role in online identified that the role of the teacher is not only crucial in an online learning, but also instructional skills development [24]. To be more specific, students' opinions towards their language development while getting feedback through Zoom were considered high. The students ranked their agreement at the same opinion level towards their English development through the ClassStart. For example, some students expressed that, "I found getting feedback via Zoom was beneficial for me in developing my English-speaking skills as I can get feedback from the teacher individually". Some mentioned that "Teacher's reviews and critiques via Zoom were helpful because I can develop my English skills". Meanwhile, getting feedback via the ClassStart was also considered helpful as the student mentioned that "The ClassStart can develop my confidence in developing my English skills as I can get the individualized feedback from the teacher". It could be clarified that corrective feedback online highlighted specific task content was considered motivational feedback which was concentrated on the individual learner differences can affect their motivation, and these differences affect feedback needs which were crucial in students' skill development [25].

6 Conclusion

The study can be drawn a conclusion that with respect to all points mentioned above, it may be suggested that applying the pedagogy of giving feedback through virtual or online platforms, Zoom and the ClassStart, in the language classrooms was considered significant as helpful tools in developing students' English language skills. Nonetheless, teachers might utilize more than one strategy to correct their students'

errors as feedback is sometimes reflected immediately which means learners need to correct themselves while the others can be done through reformulations taken through the help from teachers whether explicit or implicit feedback is chosen. The explicit feedback is provided when learners make incorrect patterns and the teachers select to elicit it or provide metalinguistic clues, while the implicit feedback attempts to decrease students' anxiety by not giving a direct correction but repeating or requesting identification at the incorrect pattern, for example. Thereby, this pedagogy can be applied not only in teaching and learning language, but in other courses as a mean of an assisted tool the educators can implement in their classes properly.

7 References

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