

Google Classroom As A Tool to Enhance English Language Speaking Performance Amid The Covid-19 Pandemic among Primary School Students

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Abstract

After decades of English language learning, speaking in English is still seen as the most difficult skill to master among primary students in the Malaysian classroom. Regardless, Covid-19 made face to face learning impossible. Google Classroom became one of the options that was able to commensurate face-to-face learning. Therefore, this study aimed to analyse teachers' perception towards the usage of Google Classroom in teaching speaking to Primary ESL students and how the tool assisted in producing better speakers of the language during the pandemic. 30 teachers from Penang Mainland were selected to respond towards Google Classroom in teaching English speaking skill. Five from the 30 teachers were interviewed to support the quantitative data. Data analysis was done on 50 primary students' School Based Assessment (SBA) reports to identify their performance level. The results of the research findings prove that Google Classroom had been an effective tool in enhancing speaking performance (CAF) among students where the mean score of 23 teachers, felt Google Classroom was an effective tool to enhance CAF among students. This can be supported with the students' SBA data whereby 72% of them obtained Performance Level (TP) of 4 and higher, compared to their assessment results before the pandemic where only 12% obtained above Performance Level (TP) of 4. The interview data gave new insights into where all five teachers felt that students were more confident in speaking which eventually increased their CAF level. From this research, it had been found that teachers had positive perception on Google Classroom as a significant tool in enhancing students' speaking performance thus this study could be a source of reference for teachers and policy makers to integrate Google Classroom in teaching English speaking skill.

Keywords: Google Classroom, Speaking Skill, Perception, Teachers' Needs, Primary School ESL Students

Introduction

On January 31st, 2020, World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Covid-19 outbreak as a global health emergency and Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin announced a 14-day Movement Control Order ("Covid 19: Situation Update", 2020) Since then, there were series of lockdowns for the country which included closing the schools. During this outbreak, teachers were struggling in finding appropriate platforms to conduct their lessons. This situation is not only prevalent in Malaysia but also the whole wide world. According to Niemi and Kousa (2020), teachers in Finland were left with a big question mark on how to move to a new role and responsibilities during the early stages of the pandemic. Although Google Classroom had been introduced since 2014, Malaysian schools only became familiarised with the tool during the outbreak.

In general, teaching speaking skill and encouraging students to speak are indeed one of the many challenges for English teachers. One of the focuses of teaching speaking skills is to prepare pupils with the ability to use the language comprehensively so that they can communicate well in all kinds of situations (Gudu, 2015). Rao (2019) mentioned in his study that, to achieve perfect communication skill, it can only be possible when the language is used. As, pandemic situations have made learning to speak the language impossible.

According to Manimegalai and Parilah (2020), students in Malaysia are exposed to English language for more than 11 years, yet speaking fluently seems to be a major problem for students. In a news report by the Sun Daily dated 4th January 2018, Malaysian Federation Employment Executive Director Datuk Shamsudin Bardan stressed that many graduates can understand the language, however, it was apparent that they could not communicate their views orally. On a different note, in terms of speaking disabilities, Sarwar et al. (2014 as cited in Gudu, 2015) mentioned that bright students who excelled in written examinations were unable to speak and express themselves proficiently. In a study conducted by Hartshon and McMurry (2020), it was found that speaking skill was deteriorating compared to writing during the pandemic.

When graduates are being bombarded with low speaking proficiency, it is time for language educators to consider ways in upgrading the students' speaking performance. Graduates should not be entirely blamed for their speaking proficiency because policy makers, educators, and researchers should realise that speaking proficiency should be cultivated from primary level. Therefore, speaking proficiency among students needs urgent attention from teachers and researchers. This situation is proven when researchers have found that students in both primary and secondary schools face obstructions and complications in speaking the English language (Nazifullah et al., 2019).

When achieving speaking proficiency via face-to-face learning was already a big problem, the Covid-19 outbreak had added salt to the wound when learning became impossible. For teachers, the COVID-19 pandemic is a quintessential adaptive and transformative challenge, where they have to teach all four skills yet there was no any guidebook at the early stage of the pandemic. This can be supported by Niemi and Kousa (2020) where they mentioned the main challenges teachers faced during the pandemic including non-authentic interaction and a lack of the spontaneity that in-person teaching provides. Besides, Asmara (2020) found that internet connection, students' attendance, and students' English language skills were among the challenges identified from her qualitative study in Sumatera. When we investigated the Malaysian context, accessibility to infrastructure and online resources seemed to be the most significant factors that affected teachers' behavioural intentions in teaching English as found in Yew and Tan's (2020) study.

Realising this, teachers were put in a situation where they had to embrace digital and mobile learning through various online learning platforms. In Malaysian primary schools, Google Classroom has become one of the main platforms of teaching and learning. This can be supported by Julinamary et al (2021) where they asserted in their article that Google Classroom had been identified as one of the significant online learning platforms.

Various studies have been conducted on using Google Classroom as a tool to carry out teaching and learning. Julinamary et al (2021), carried out research on pre-service teachers' responses in using Google Classroom for English Communication. Besides, a study conducted by Hassan et al (2020) identified various challenges faced by higher learning institutions in using Google Classroom as the main learning platform. On the other hand, Izwan et al (2016), explored the effectiveness of Google Classroom's active learning activities under the Decision Sciences program. However, there is no any study conducted in identifying teachers' perception on the usage of Google Classroom in teaching speaking during this outbreak. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyse teachers' perception towards the usage of Google Classroom in teaching English speaking skill among primary pupils and how learning could be improvised despite schools being closed during this pandemic.

As for now there is a scarcity of studies on identifying teachers' perception on the usage of Google Classroom in enhancing speaking proficiency among primary school pupils. Besides, most of the research is more focused on lecturers and experts as research subjects in getting a bigger picture of the perception in the field. Hence, studies are yet to be done to investigate primary school teachers' perception on using online tools in teaching English speaking skill amid Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, this study bridges the gap by identifying teachers' perception in primary school in using Google Classroom.

For this reason, teachers need to be involved as real learning subjects in the area. The necessity of involving teachers is because they are active members in primary education thus the need for them to be included in the process of forming the classroom. This study can also be used to pave ways in integrating Google Classroom as an effective tool during Covid-19 pandemic.

Research Objective

The study is designed to analyse teachers' perception on using Google Classroom in enhancing speaking performance among Year Five students during this Covid-19 pandemic.

Research Question

What is the teachers' perception on Google Classroom as a tool in enhancing English Language Speaking performance amid Covid-19 pandemic among primary school students?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in teachers' perception on Google Classroom as a tool to enhance English Language Speaking performance amid Covid-19 pandemic among primary school students.

Literature Review

Speaking Performance

Most of the researchers chose to conduct research on speaking performance by looking at the activities and how other variables influenced speaking skill. In a study by Abdullah et al (2021) on the effects of flipped classroom, the researchers tested how confidence could

improve speaking activities. The results of this study showed improvement in students' self-confidence in English speaking performance across the time of FCM implementation. Likewise, in a conceptual paper, a study done by Sayuti et al (2020), on the speaking performance of Year Three students was evaluated by looking at the phonological features, rules of language, paralinguistic devices, communicative functions, and social meaning.

According to Abdullah et al (2019), many students who perceive English as their second language encounter different challenges when they are exposed to English speaking in terms of fluency and accuracy. In Malaysia, where English is the second language, the scenario is no different. In a survey conducted among 75 students in primary schools in Nilai, 44% of the students responded that speaking English in a variety of situations was difficult and it was found that students still lacked the complexity in speaking (Fauzi & Shah, 2017). Nevertheless, even fluent speakers are not keen to use English when they communicate with their family members which manifest how mother tongue influences are high and strong (Singh, 2014). Thus, the above studies show that speaking performance has been looked into, however there is no any research that clearly looks into the triad of complexity, accuracy, and fluency especially among primary school students.

Speaking performance can be evaluated by looking into the complexity, accuracy, and fluency, in short, the CAF triad (Ellis, 2008; Larsen-Freeman, 2009). Even though the origins of CAF triad date back to the 1980s, the importance of CAF as a measuring tool could not be replaced. According to Pallotti (2020), there have been bulk of studies conducted on CAF triad, however the results are far from clear. CAF triad has been applied in examining students' oral and written language performance. As for the origin of the three components, in the 1980s, a distinction was made between the fluency and accuracy of language use (Brumfit, 1984). Subsequently, Skehan (1989) added complexity as the third component to the triad.

CAF triad is still being studied to this date and many researchers agree that CAF is the best variable that can assess speaking proficiency among students. In research conducted by Goh and Aziz (2020), the CAF triad had been measured in assessing speaking skill among secondary students in the usage of PULSE 2 textbook.

In research conducted by Mazouzi (2013), the researcher outlined CAF triad as a communication competence paradigm, presenting both a theoretical basis for such an approach together with research findings related to the development of an instructional curriculum. This will hopefully contribute to informed use of CAF components in a range of contexts.

Similarly, in research by Hashemifardnia et al (2020) the effect of MOOC instruction (Skype) was examined on Iranian EFL learners' speaking complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF). As mentioned earlier, it is beyond doubt that there are numerous studies carried out on CAF triad where there are studies done until 2020. Therefore, this proves that, in evaluating speaking performances it is important to investigate this triad as a measuring tool.

Technology in ESL

Technology is not a taboo topic in the education field. With the vast range of web tools, software, and hardware that are available, teachers have many choices to equip their language teaching (James et al., 2019). In English language learning, technology has become vividly useful for students. Students can now communicate, create knowledge, and gather useful information at their fingertips (Soloman & Schrum, 2010). Therefore, in the acquisition of the language, many studies have proven that integrating technology in teaching helps students to grasp the language skill even better than the traditional way.

In a review study averred by Ahmadi and Reza (2018), the researchers concluded that the use of technologies allowed students to learn a language based on their own pace, understand the language better, and increase motivation among the students. The study also revealed that technology paves ways for language acquisition to take place in an interesting, enjoyable, and exciting way.

In a study by Fauzi and Shah (2017), it was found that 89% of the primary students believed that speaking would be more fun with the use of internet resources. Besides, 57% of respondents believed that technology would help improve their speaking skills and 53% of them used internet resources to help them learn to speak. In another study by Manty et al. (2017), the use of Voki was studied among undergraduates and it was found that they were more confident to speak in English. The undergraduates showed positive perceptions with regards to the use of Voki in language learning and agreed that the Voki application had helped them improve their speaking skills. Therefore, myriad of studies on technology proves that the use of technology in teaching English language does more good than harm.

Google Classroom

Google Classroom was initiated in 2014 and used mostly to promote a blended learning environment (Al-Maarof & Al-Emran, 2018). Their research also discovered that the students were able to leverage their learning process using Google Classroom. The students who participated in the study also perceived it as easy and useful, and they were highly motivated towards the use of Google Classroom in their learning process.

Basri et al (2019) mentioned the advantages of Google Classroom in which it offers accessibility, students' scheduling flexibility, and adaptability for working. The authors also mentioned that Google Classroom has been popular in a very short span due to its capability in promoting communication and collaboration. This can be substantiated by research done by Izwan et al (2016), whereby their respondents felt their lecturers were friendly, approachable, and could be easily contacted in Google Classroom. As collaborative learning is one of the elements needed in this 21st century learning, Google Classroom has been one of the prominent tools that is allowing collaborative learning to take place. This has been asserted by a study done by (Latif, 2016).

Interestingly, a study by Heggart and Yoo (2018) showed that Google Classroom managed to increase student participation and learning. Students were found to be more interested in the lesson with the integration of online tools.

Apart from that, Sukmawati and Nensia (2019), investigated by interviewing 16 students on the role of Google Classroom in English Language Teaching (ELT) and found that the students were perceived to have a better understanding of the role of using Google Classroom.

Research conducted consequently proves the importance and prominence of Google Classroom in teaching and learning. The predominance of the research was on the benefits of Google Classroom for educators and students. However, a study conducted by Azhar and Iqbal (2018) found that, teachers felt that Google Classroom acted only as a facilitation tool that can be used for document management and basic classroom management, without having a significant impact on teaching methodologies. Subsequently in another study by Hassan et al (2020), the results of the study displayed that the overall challenges faced by students in online learning were high.

However, there is no study done to identify the needs of teachers based on their perception towards Google Classroom as a prominent tool that can improve speaking performances among Malaysian primary school students. Therefore, this study will identify the needs of

teachers based on their perception on Google Classroom and their take on this tool whether it is a prominent tool in increasing speaking proficiency among Year Five students.

Methodology

Research Method

This research is a mixed method study using both quantitative and qualitative methods. As for quantitative part, questionnaires were used whereby a set of online questionnaires was developed using Google Form and data analysis was done on the students' School Based Assessment reports. In-depth interviews were conducted for the qualitative purpose. The questionnaire was checked by two experts to ensure its face validity and content validity. The set of questionnaires (in Google Form) were sent to 30 teachers around Penang Mainland through mobile applications. Five teachers from the 30 of them were chosen to be interviewed. Data analysis was done on the Year Five students' School Based Assessment (SBA) speaking results and were compared before and after the pandemic. This study used an in-depth study of a small group of people to guide and support the construction of research hypotheses.

Respondents

Since this research was to identify the teachers' perception towards Google Classroom whether it can be a promising tool to enhance speaking performance among students, the respondents of this study were teachers. These respondents were selected using a purposive sampling using predetermined criteria, that is, teachers who were teaching English to Year Five students along with those who had experience in conducting School Based Assessment (SBA). Year Five teachers were selected as they were teaching the first batch of students under the Common European Framework References (CEFR), which was introduced in 2016. Five teachers volunteered to participate in the semi-structured interview. For data analysis, 30 students were randomly selected by their teachers and their SBA results were compared. Simple random sampling was conducted by the teachers as this study was conducted during the pandemic and the researcher could not get hold of the data personally. Purposive sampling aims to choose cases that are rich in information to be able to explain research questions. This can be supported by Etikan et al (2016) in their article on 'Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling' where they defined purposive sampling as selecting respondents based on the qualities that they have, according to the research requirement. In this study, purposive sampling was done to obtain participants' views who were directly involved, and this can add to the validity of the results. This is also to ascertain teachers' perception on teaching speaking skill using Google Classroom.

Instruments

a. Questionnaire

One of the tools used in this study was a questionnaire. This instrument was adapted from several tools used by previous researchers. The first part of the questionnaire is to acquire respondents' demographic information. This questionnaire has three main focuses: 1) Advantages of using Google Classroom 2) Limitations of using Google Classroom 3) Suggestions on using Google Classroom. This questionnaire consists of 20 evaluation items with 5-point Likert scale from (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Not Sure, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. All the evaluation items in this questionnaire were adapted from a study by Zuhodi and Yunus (2018) on Blended Learning Module in teaching second language

grammar. The questionnaire was developed by Abdul Wahed Al-Zumor and Eyab Bader for their study entitled "EFL Students' Perceptions of a Blended Learning Environment: Advantages, Limitations, and Suggestions for Improvement" 2013. The questionnaire was adopted and adapted from these studies as Google Classroom was one of the tools used in the blended learning module, which is suitable for this study. Since this questionnaire was adopted and adapted, there have been some changes made to suit the study and a pilot test was conducted. The result of the pilot study on 30 respondents indicated a high degree of reliability as the Cronbach Alpha was 0.89 which means that the reliability is good. To ensure the content validity of the questionnaire, the instrument was verified by two senior teachers with 15-20 years of teaching experience in the English language department. One of them is also the head of UPSR (2019) marking team for national level. The items in the questionnaire were reviewed and checked by them before it was used for the pilot test. Besides that, the content validity index, a CVI-I was computed of all the 20 items according to the three constructs. According to Yusoff (2019), where the acceptable cut off score of CVI for two experts is at least 0.80 based on the universal agreement (UA).

Table 1
Content Validity Index of the questionnaire

CONSTRUCTS	S-VI/UA
ADVANTAGES	0.8
LIMITATIONS	0.8
SUGGESTIONS	1.0

b. Semi-structured Interview

Besides the questionnaire, a semi-structured interview was also conducted. The questions for these semi-structured interviews were structured based on the literature review and past studies. The questions covered various aspects of Google Classroom including effectiveness, familiarity, awareness, and impact of using Google Classroom towards the development of English language speaking skill among primary students. As for the interview questions, five questions were drafted to identify the themes of this interview.

Table 2

Semi-structured Interview Questions

No	Questions	Research
1	How effective is Google Classroom in teaching speaking skill among Year Five students?	Effectiveness of Google Classroom: Teachers' Perceptions by Kaukab Abid Azhar & Iqbal (2018)
2	How was students' participation in this platform compared to face-to-face learning?	Effectiveness of Google Classroom: Teachers' Perceptions by Kaukab Abid Azhar & Iqbal (2018)
3	How is speaking skill assessed? Is there any improvement in CAF triad?	Added based on relevancy
4	Is Google Classroom a suitable tool that can be used in assessing students' speaking skill?	Google Classroom in 21 st century teaching and learning in tertiary education by Julinamary Parnabas, Vincent Paranabas & Antoinette Mary Parnabas (2021)
5	What is the difference in their behaviour during speaking lessons?	Added based on relevancy

According to Glesne and Pleskin(1992), semi-structured interview is a type of dialogue which is broadly used in qualitative research due to its flexibility in collecting data. Participants will be free to express their views and it will also allow the researcher to get in-depth information. The interview process was conducted among five out of 30 teachers who responded to the survey. Jacob and Furgerson's (2012) interview protocol was used as a guide in conducting the interview. According to the authors, these protocols are not only a set of questions but a procedural guide for the researcher. Teachers' perceptions on Google Classroom as a tool that can enhance speaking performance were analysed to add further explanations to the quantitative data. The interview data were thematically analysed based on Braun and Clarke (2006) approach. According to them, first, semantic themes will be identified via surface messages told initially by the teachers. After analysing the main themes, latent level research will be conducted. Here, the interview results will be looked deeply and concluded. According to the authors, the interview responses will be examined for the underlying ideas and assumptions into shaping the semantic content of the data.

c. SBA results

To further support the quantitative and qualitative data, 50 Year 5 students' School Based Assessment (SBA) results were gathered and attached. SBA or Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah (PBD); a formative assessment that is carried out three times a year at least to assess the students' language skills (Goh & Abdul Aziz, 2020). Their speaking assessment results were compared before and after the pandemic. Here, before the pandemic, SBA was carried out during face-to-face learning. During the pandemic, pupils were assessed through Google Classroom.

Ethical Considerations

The study had been conducted with prior permission from the selected schools' authority. In this study, to obtain the data, consent letters were sent to schools in Penang Mainland. Schools which participated allowed the researcher to contact their teachers and obtained their permission to participate in the study.

Data Analysis

All 30 forms were analysed after the teachers had submitted their response. For the qualitative part, five teachers volunteered. These teachers were given interview questions prior to the interview session. The interview was conducted through mobile phone, due to some restrictions during the pandemic. Each interview session took around 15 minutes. Their conversations were recorded, analysed, and categorised into five themes. To further support this study, Year Five students' SBA results were compared and analysed by percentage. These results were obtained from schools that participated in this study. Teachers who participated in the interview randomly chose ten students' SBA results by using simple random sampling to avoid bias from their respective schools and shared the results to the researcher.

Findings

All the findings for the survey are discussed in terms of their percentage and average percentage. From the questionnaires, 30 respondents who were primary school teachers responded that 97% used Google Classroom as the main tool in teaching and learning English during the Covid-19 pandemic. Of the 30 respondents, the majority, 63.4% of them had more than 10 years of teaching experience. As this was a purposive sampling, the questionnaire was circulated among teachers who were teaching Year 5 during the pandemic.

Questionnaire Results

Table 3

Mean Score on Advantages of Using Google Classroom (GC) In Teaching Speaking Skill

Item	Strongly Disagree%	Disagree %	Not Sure %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
1			2 (6.7%)	3 (10%)	25 (83.3%)
2			2 (6.7%)	6 (20%)	22 (73.3%)
3		1 (3.3%)	2 (6.7%)	6 (20%)	21 (70%)
4		1 (3.3%)	2 (6.7%)	5 (16.7%)	22 (73.3%)
5		2 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)	4 (13.3%)	23 (76.7%)
6		2 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)	3 (10%)	24 (80%)
7		1 (3.3%)	2 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)	25 (83.3%)
8		2 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)	3 (10%)	23 (76.7%)
9		2 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)	3 (10%)	23 (76.7%)
10		2 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)	4 (13.3%)	23 (76.7%)
Mean Score		1.3	1.7	3.9	23.1

Based on the table above, the second set of questions focused on teachers' perception on Google Classroom as a tool in developing speaking skill among pupils by looking at the advantages of Google Classroom in enhancing speaking performance among students. From Table 2, the mean score of teachers choosing "Strongly Agree" for all the benefits of using Google Classroom for speaking activity during the pandemic is 23.1 which shows the majority agreed to the advantages of using Google Classroom. Items from number five to ten contribute to statements on Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency enhancement. For the statements (Item 5 and 6) on Complexity being enhanced with the usage of Google Classroom, 23/30 and 24/30 chose "Strongly Agree". 83.3% strongly agreed to the statement (Item 7) "By using GC my students were able to use the correct words and sentences during speaking task" and 76.7% chose strongly agree for the statement (Item 8) "By using GC my students were able to speak accurately on the topic given". Items from nine to ten prove that Google

Classroom is an efficient tool in enhancing fluency in speaking among the students. 76.7% of teachers strongly agreed on both these statements.

These quantitative findings on teachers' perception concur that Google Classroom has advantages and also prove that the teachers believed that the tool could enhance students' CAF triad in English Language Speaking skill.

Table 4

Mean Score on Limitations of Using Google Classroom (GC) In Teaching Speaking Skill

Item	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Not Sure %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
1		1 (3.3%)	3 (10%)	14 (46.7%)	12 (40%)
2		5 (16.7%)	4 (13.3%)	15 (50%)	6 (20%)
3	10 (33.3%)	12 (40%)	2 (6.7%)	3 (10%)	3 (10%)
4	20 (66.7%)	4 (13.3%)	2 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)
5	21 (70%)	4 (13.3%)	2 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)	2 (6.7%)
Mean Score	10.2	5.2	2.6	7	5

Since this study was to identify teachers' perception and to not to be biased in getting the correct data of perception, five statements on limitations in using Google Classroom were included. Items, as in, hindrances that teachers faced during the usage were highlighted. From the findings, internet connectivity (Item 1) was the main concern of the respondents in using the tool for speaking skill, where 46.7% agreed and 40% strongly agreed that students had poor internet connectivity. Similarly, for the question on internet access (Item 2), 50% of the respondents agreed that not all the students had the access to the internet to join Google Classroom, added with 20% of the respondents who strongly agreed to this.

However, for the statement, *I think there were students who were quiet during the speaking skill lesson*, 33.3% chose "Strongly Disagree". This proves that active participation could be done via Google Classroom. Subsequently, 66.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed for the statement that they preferred to teach speaking skill face to face compared to using Google Classroom (Item 4), which proves the hindrances did not stop teachers in using Google Classroom to teach speaking. Finally, for the statement on not using Google Classroom for the technical issues, 70% of the teachers chose "Strongly Disagree".

Table 5

Mean Score on Suggestions on Using Google Classroom (GC) In Teaching Speaking Skill

Item	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Not Sure %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
1				2 (6.7%)	28 (93.3%)
2			2 (6.7%)	3 (10%)	25 (83.3%)
3			1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	28 (93.3%)
4		1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)		28 (93.3%)
5			1 (3.3%)	2 (6.7%)	27 (90%)
Mean Score		0.2	1	1.6	27.2

The last set of questions were more on suggestions for teachers. All 5 statements received positive responses as the majority chose “*Strongly Agree*” scale which the mean score is 27.2. 93.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that students should be provided with good internet connectivity to allow them to join Google Classroom. For the statement, teachers should use Google Classroom for teaching speaking skill, 83.3% of them strongly agreed, with remaining 10% agreed and only 2% was not sure. Since Google Classroom was still new among many teachers, the findings for the statement to inaugurate adequate training for teachers achieved 93.3%. Besides, 93.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that Google Classroom should be used as an assessment tool for speaking skill. Apart from that, 90% of the respondents in this study agreed that it is important for teachers to have positive mindset to integrate new teaching methods for students. Mean score of 27.2 of teachers chose strongly agreed scale for the items under suggestions.

Interview Results

The results of the interview brought more insight into the quantitative data obtained. Five out of 30 teachers who responded to the questionnaire were interviewed. All these five teachers were from different schools in the same district and all of them were teaching Year Five in their respective schools. Furthermore, three of them had more than 10 years of teaching experience. There were five questions prepared and asked. As this study was conducted during the pandemic, there were some restrictions in meeting the respondents personally. Therefore, this was done in a phone interview. Teachers who were interviewed were named Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Teacher 3, Teacher 4, and Teacher 5. The interview was recorded, and notes were taken by the researcher. The teachers’ interview responses were compared with the notes taken and triangulated to identify the themes. Thematic analysis

was conducted based on (Braun & Clarke's, 2006). There were four steps taken in identifying the themes from the interview data. First, the data was read several times to identify suitable phrases. Then, those familiar phrases which suited the research question were highlighted as open coding. For example, phrases like effective tool, suitable platform, active students, increased participation, and interested to answer were collected. Thirdly, these meaningful chunks were grouped and finally merged to identify the themes. There were five themes identified from the interview results which are Overall Effectiveness, Students' Participation, Improvement In CAF, Google Classroom as An Assessment Tool For Speaking Skill, and Increased Level of Motivation.

Overall Effectiveness

As to add to the quantitative data, all five teachers agreed that Google Classroom is an effective tool in teaching and learning the English language. Teacher 1, Teacher 3, and Teacher 5 mentioned that they felt Google Classroom had helped them in making teaching speaking skill more convenient, *"...it was easy to use Google Classroom as all the notes and activities can be kept and sent there for the students."* Whereas, Teacher 2 and Teacher 4 added that the usage of Google Classroom was a great help for them during the pandemic as they still had to continue with lessons from home, *"...we could actually give more interactive activities using Google Classroom compared to face-to-face learning, for example, I can upload a video on a dialogue which I am going to assess the students later, that will be used as guidance."* Subsequently, the teachers agreed that Google Classroom is a great platform for social interaction because it allows students to communicate with teachers and their friends, *"...in this platform, I noticed that students were using the language more compared to being in the classroom, that was a great improvement."*

Students' Participation

According to Teacher 2, her Year Five students were very eager to give ideas and points during the lesson.

"...I can agree that GC helps to improve students' participation because most of my students were the reserved type and will usually become silent speakers in the classroom." Teacher 3, Teacher 4, and Teacher 5 concluded that students seemed to be more confident in speaking during the speaking lessons using Google Classroom. On the other hand, Teacher 1 gave a new insight on her students' participation where she mentioned that her students participated in the lesson after seeing other students' active participation.

"...some were very quiet at first, but looking at their friends they tried to copy the vocabulary used and came up with a sentence, that was indeed a very good improvement, for me."

Improvement in CAF

All the teachers agreed that to measure students' speaking performances, Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency should be investigated. Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 agreed that, overall, CAF were achieved by the students during the pandemic, *"...students seem to be more interested with speaking activities, especially for online discussions and they were able to speak correctly."* Teacher 3 added that, Google Classroom gave them space to assess the students' speaking performances, as some of the activities were asked to record and send, *"...when the students were able to record their speaking activity, for example having a holiday destination conversation, they were able to see for themselves whether they can speak fluently."*

Teacher 4 mentioned that her students were motivated to speak with complexity. They were interested in conversing using new vocabulary items and complex sentences, *"...during speaking lessons, some students were able to use conjunctions and were able to converse lengthy sentences"*. Finally, Teacher 5 concluded that, she believed students' speaking performance had increased compared to face-to-face teaching, *'...perhaps, students feel less threatened in this platform, compared to face to face speaking activities. Therefore, they speak with complexity, more accurate, and fluently.'*

Assessment tool for Speaking Skill

For the question should Google Classroom be used as a tool to assess speaking skill among primary students, all the respondents had strongly agreed. Teacher 2 mentioned that *"...even after the pandemic, Google Classroom should be used as an assessment tool as there are many benefits and it makes our students perform better."* Teacher 3 and 4 added that, confidence is an important element in speaking. Therefore, it is for the students' benefit to use Google Classroom and teachers to assess as they seem to be more confident in speaking. Consequently, Teacher 5 mentioned that Google Classroom is a good tool to assess as students appear less anxious when there is an online platform, *"...Google Classroom is a great interactive platform to be used for speaking lessons."*

Increased Level of Motivation

Teachers were asked their overall opinion on the need to use Google Classroom in teaching speaking skill. Consequently, all teachers agreed that they needed Google Classroom in teaching and learning due to the increased level of motivation among students during the lessons. Teacher 1, described that her students who were reluctant to speak, looked motivated to speak in this platform, *"...I used information gap activities for students as it will be easy for them, students who were always quiet, were motivated to interact with me and also to their friends."* Teacher 2 mentioned that her students seemed to be more motivated in participating speaking lessons, due to the interactive elements, *"...students in this particular class, will request for videos to be played first as in role play activities, then I could see how motivated they are to answer and take part in the activities."* On the other hand, Teacher 3 and 4 shared a similar opinion where they found students in their class were not reluctant to participate in more complex activities using Google Classroom compared to face to face learning, *"...as usual, I will give a simple activity to allow them to participate and there are students who will ask for more activities for them to try," "...compared to face to face learning, students in my class were motivated to try complex activities, where usually they will give up when conducted in the classroom."* Teacher 5 mentioned that her students had positive mindset and she could see there was positive relationship between teacher and students, *"...there is a positive relationship between the students and the teacher, where they seem to be more interested in participating in speaking tasks after using Google Classroom, where usually the students prefer reading lessons."*

School Based Assessment (SBA) Results

To add more insight to this research, data analysis was done. Students' SBA results were collected to identify their progress and improvement. Year Five students' results were collected which were before the pandemic and during the pandemic. As aforementioned, before the pandemic teachers assessed students' speaking skill in the classroom and they had to use Google Classroom during the pandemic.

Table 6

English Speaking Performance Descriptors for Year Five students

Tahap/Performance Level	Tafsiran/Descriptor
1	Can respond to a given stimulus but with a very limited level of complexity, fluency, and accuracy.
2	Can respond to a given stimulus but with a limited level of complexity, fluency, and accuracy.
3	Can respond to a given stimulus with a satisfactory level of complexity, fluency, and accuracy.
4	Can respond to a given stimulus with a good level of complexity, fluency, and accuracy.
5	Can respond to a given stimulus with a very good level of complexity, fluency, and accuracy.
6	Can respond to a given stimulus with an excellent level of complexity, fluency, and accuracy.

Table 7

School Based Assessment Report Before the Pandemic

School	Category	District	Year	Number Of Students						Total
				TP 1	TP 2	TP 3	TP 4	TP 5	TP 6	
			YEAR							
School A	SK	PPDSPS	5	0	5	3	2	0	0	10
			YEAR							
School B	SK	PPDSPS	5	2	6	1	1	0	0	10
			YEAR							
School C	SK	PPDSPS	5	1	9	0	0	0	0	10
			YEAR							
School D	SK	PPDSPS	5	2	4	3	1	0	0	10
			YEAR							
School E	SK	PPDSPS	5	0	6	2	1	1	0	10
Total				5	30	9	5	1	0	50

Table 8
School Based Assessment Report After the Pandemic

School	Category	District	Year	Number Of Students						Total
				TP 1	TP 2	TP 3	TP 4	TP 5	TP 6	
School A	SK	PPDSPS	YEAR 5	0	3	2	4	1	0	10
School B	SK	PPDSPS	YEAR 5	0	1	2	6	1	0	10
School C	SK	PPDSPS	YEAR 5	0	0	0	8	1	1	10
School D	SK	PPDSPS	YEAR 5	1	0	1	6	2	0	10
School E	SK	PPDSPS	YEAR 5	0	1	3	4	1	1	10
Total				1	5	8	28	6	2	50

Table 6 shows the English-speaking skill performance descriptors used for the first assessment in Year 5. There are six performance levels and teachers are provided with the descriptors. Teachers will be responsible in conducting speaking assessment and evaluate based on the given descriptors. The satisfactory level of performance level starts with Performance Level 3 or TP3, and it gradually increases with good, very good, and excellent. As shown in Table 6, complexity, accuracy, and fluency are one of the main measurements used in evaluating speaking skill in primary schools. Therefore, this proves that CAF triad is prominent in speaking proficiency among students.

Table 7 shows school-based assessment report before the pandemic, which was conducted in the face-to-face English classroom. Table 8 manifests students' results of English-speaking assessment during the pandemic where Google Classroom was used as the main teaching and learning platform.

These results were obtained from five different schools in the Mainland of Penang. This report of analysis was obtained from the English teachers who also participated in the study. Each school submitted the results of speaking assessment of 10 students who were randomly picked. Each student will be evaluated during the lesson and categorised to the performance level or Tahap Penguasaan (TP) as stated in the reports. The highest performance level in primary school in speaking will be TP6 and the minimum will be TP1. Performance level 4 and above are considered above average as students can communicate with less guidance.

Table 7 shows the performance level of students in Year 5, whereby their speaking assessment was conducted in the classroom. From the table, there were only six students out of 50 who obtained performance level 4 and higher. There was no student who achieved TP6 during face-to-face learning. Most of them were of those 30 students who obtained performance level 2 (TP2).

Table 8 shows the results obtained by the same students during the pandemic where all of them were assessed using Google Classroom. The total number of students who achieved TP4, TP5, and TP6 were 36 out of 50 students. There is an increase of 60% in the students' achievement level. 72% of them managed to obtain performance level 4, 5, and 6.

Discussion

The analysis of the data collected shows that teachers had positive perception on the usage of Google Classroom in teaching English-speaking skill, which enhances CAF triad among students. Firstly, the quantitative data proves that teachers agreed that it had many advantages and eased their usage. These results are similar to Shaharane et al (2016) where many felt satisfied with Google Classroom because of its effectiveness and efficiency. Their study on Google Classroom initiated teachers should have perception that this platform is useful in helping the teaching and learning process where they also added that, Google Classroom can be elevated from teacher-centered classroom to student-centered classroom. These results can also be supported by Tahir et al (2021) where in their research, slightly more than 60% of the respondents who were secondary school teachers in Malaysia seemed to feel 'positive' with using Google Classroom. Iftakhar's (2016) findings proved that Google Classroom had been used as a platform that students utilised to submit their work, and this allowed teachers to easily assess and grade.

Besides investigating teachers' perception on the usage of Google Classroom, the core of this study was to prove the advantages of using Google Classroom where teachers agreed that this platform could be used to increase students' performance level in speaking skill. Therefore, this study investigated CAF triad as the measurement scale used to evaluate the students' performance level. As found from the data, teachers agreed that students were performing well in speaking where CAF was measured. These results were even more concrete by looking at the School Based Assessment results where there was an obvious increase of 60% in the students' performance level. These findings can be supported with the study done by Syakur et al (2020) where their study proved that Google Classroom Online Media was the right media to help facilitate the fast and accurate delivery of information in English language education courses for tertiary level students at Brawijaya universities. Sukamawati and Nensia (2019) also proved this via their qualitative study that Google Classroom was a prominent platform for English Language teaching.

In addition to that, the quantitative data also brought some new insights where teachers felt that there was a need to have adequate training in using the platform. Teachers agreed that there are a few challenges in using Google Classroom as a teaching tool. This data can also be supported by the study conducted by Kaukab and Nayab (2018) where in their study, teachers felt that Google Classroom was merely a platform to facilitate managing documents and learning system. Therefore, to know more about the benefits, teachers suggested to be provided training for them to maximise usage. Besides, all teachers agreed that internet connectivity was an important element for the students to participate and follow the distance learning. This view was also supported by researchers like Tahir et al (2021) who concluded in his survey study that teachers were willing to use interactive tools if the students had good internet connectivity.

Apart from that, the interview results from this study gave a new discernment where all five teachers were positive in using Google Classroom as a prominent tool in teaching English speaking skill. There were five themes identified and the teachers' answers were in favour of the benefit of the students. These findings can be supported by Sukmawati and Nensia (2019)

where their interview results were all positive, like this study. These findings revealed that Google Classroom was able to encourage communication in teaching and learning process in line with 21st Century Classroom learning. The findings in this study are similar to the findings obtained in studies completed by (Ya, 2013). Ya reported that some of the students who did not often participate in face-to-face classroom discussion were more comfortable in participating in the online discussions. This can also be supported by looking at the research done by Paskaliana (2019), where it was found that Google Classroom enhanced writing and speaking skills in the form of assignments. This study also proved that Google Classroom is a tool that can be used to increase motivation to speak in English among primary school pupils. This can be supported by Ambarwati and Mandasari (2021), where in their research they found that Google Classroom is the prominent tool in increasing motivation in learning the language.

Subsequently, these findings prove that the use of technology in language teaching like Google Classroom is fundamentally practical for teachers to use in teaching speaking as well as an assessment tool. This can be supported by a study conducted by Abdullah et al (2019), where in their study there were a few pedagogical implications. As this study found this online tool increased speaking performance among students, their study showed that there was a noticeable development in learners' speaking performance in teaching using Google Classroom. In another study done by James et al (2019), their findings gave hope that teachers could possibly use technology as a prominent tool in their teaching strategies and enhance students' motivation to speak in the language. Therefore, teachers believed that Google Classroom is a suitable speaking platform as it was proven during this pandemic that the students' speaking skill was enhanced. As for the suggestions, teachers can use Google Classroom by uploading sample speaking videos for students with TP1 to TP3 to follow and speak. For students who are in TP4 to TP6, teachers can provide more interactive activities such as communicating with native students to test their speaking ability and proficiency.

Conclusion

This study aimed to analyse the teachers' perception on the effectiveness of Google Classroom as a tool that enhances speaking performance among Year Five students. Teaching English speaking skill is important for all teachers in the Malaysian classroom. Nevertheless, speaking skill is least prioritised compared to other skills, due to its formative assessment. However, on last 28th April, the Ministry of Education (MoE) announced that the Primary School Achievement Test (UPSR) for Year Six students will be abolished starting this year and students will be assessed on all four skills. Therefore, hopefully, this decision may shed some light on where students' speaking skill and lessons will be given importance. The findings from this study revealed that teachers found Google Classroom could be used as speaking skill enhancement tool. This can be supported with the supportive interview answers and students' speaking skill assessment data. Therefore, this study can be a major contribution the English-speaking skill teaching methods where teachers can use different teaching strategies in teaching speaking skill. In conclusion, it is hoped that these findings can present detailed teachers' perception on the practicality of Google Classroom as a tool to enhance speaking performance among primary students. Hence, the positive impacts of using Google Classroom for the learners at primary level have proven its worth and teachers on maximising the usage of this platform. Finally, this paper opens a gateway for further research on using Google Classroom in English teaching and learning, probably on how motivation correlates in teaching speaking skill using Google Classroom. Further studies could be conducted by

comparing the effectiveness of Google Classroom in teaching other skills as in listening, reading, and writing in English teaching and learning. Due to that, it would have more impact if there were further studies conducted with larger sample of students and teachers as the limitation of this study is the small sample scale used.

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Appendix 1**Advantages of using Google Classroom (GC) in teaching speaking skill**

NO	QUESTIONS					
		SD	D	NS	A	SA
1	I think that using GC improved students' understanding on certain topics					
2	I think that using GC increased students' interest in speaking skill					
3	I think that using GC is more convenient in teaching speaking					
4	By using GC I notice my students were able to speak proficiently					
5	By using GC my students were able to use new vocabulary while speaking (complexity)					
6	By using GC my students were able to speak on a topic longer (syntactic complexity)					
7	By using GC my students were able to use the correct words and sentences during speaking task					
8	By using GC my students were able to speak accurately on the topic given					
9	By using GC my students were able to speak without too much of pauses					
10	By using GC my students were able to speak without hesitations (fluency)					

Limitations of using Google Classroom (GC) in teaching speaking skill

NO	QUESTIONS					
		SD	D	NS	A	SA
1	I think poor internet connectivity was the major problem in using GC					
2	I think not all students will have internet connection to join GC					
3	I think there were students who were quiet during the speaking skill lesson					
4	I think I prefer to teach speaking skill face to face than using GC					
5	I think I would like to avoid using GC due to its technical issues					

Suggestions of using Google Classroom (GC) in teaching speaking skill

NO	QUESTIONS					
		SD	D	NS	A	SA
1	I think students should have good internet connectivity					
2	I think all teachers should use GC in teaching speaking skill					

3	I think all teachers should be given adequate training in using GC					
4	I think all teachers should use GC in assessing students' speaking skill					
5	I think all teachers should have positive mindset to integrate GC in teaching English speaking skill					

Appendix 2

Semi structured interview questions

1. How effective is Google Classroom in teaching speaking skill among Year Five students?
2. How was students' participation in this platform compared to face to face learning?
3. How is speaking skill assessed? Is there any improvement in CAF triad?
4. Is Google Classroom a suitable tool that can be used in assessing students' speaking skill?
5. What is the difference in their behaviour during speaking lessons?