

# The Benefits of Creating English Vlog (Short) for Korean College Students: Focusing on Speaking Skills and Learner Autonomy

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## 한국 대학생들을 위한 영어 브이로그(숏폼 영상) 제작의 장점: 말하기 능력과 학습자 자율성을 중심으로

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**Abstract** This study investigates the impact of creating vlog (short) on English language learning among Korean EFL learners. Specifically, the study aims to examine the benefits of making short films on learners' speaking skills and autonomous learning. The sixteen-week study employed a qualitative data approach derived from a mixed-method study involving pre- and post-survey, and in-depth individual interviews. Overall, the findings have shown that the creation of vlog (short) in English language learning helped learners: (i) to enhance language skills, particularly speaking proficiency; (ii) to foster learner autonomy including interest, self-responsibility, motivation, and willingness to communicate; and (iii) to have benefits from group collaboration, that is, active learner engagement. The analysis also points out some challenges learners faced in the learning process. Despite the benefits, on-off basis vlog or short video production within a semester may offer limited insight into the development of learners' English proficiency and affective dimensions. Considering that, further research is encouraged to investigate process-based vlog production, where students repeatedly revise and refine their videos, rather than producing one-off content.

**Key Words** : Creating an English vlog, English communication skills, Learner autonomy

**요약** 본 연구는 한국 대학생 영어 학습자(EFL learners)를 대상으로 영어 브이로그(숏폼 영상) 제작이 영어 말하기 능력과 학습자 자율성에 미치는 영향을 탐색하고자 하였다. 특히, 단편 영상 제작 활동이 학습자의 언어 능력과 자율적 학습 태도에 어떤 긍정적 효과를 확인하는 데 목적이 있다. 연구는 16주간 진행되었으며, 사전 및 사후 설문조사와 개별 심층 면담을 포함한 혼합연구 방법 중 질적 분석에 중점을 두었다. 연구 결과, 브이로그(숏폼) 제작은 학습자의 영어 말하기 능력 향상뿐만 아니라, 흥미, 자기 책임감, 동기, 의사소통 의지 등 자율성 증진에 기여한 것으로 나타났다. 또한, 그룹 활동을 통한 협업은 학습자의 적극적 참여를 유도하는 데 긍정적인 역할을 하였다. 그러나 학기 내 단발성으로 이루어지는 영상 제작 활동은 학습자의 영어 능력 및 정의적 영역의 지속적 변화를 충분히 반영하기 어려운 한계가 있다. 이에 따라, 향후 연구에서는 학생들이 반복적으로 영상을 수정하고 발전시키는 과정 중심의 브이로그 활동에 대한 연구가 요구된다.

**Key Words** : 브이로그, 숏폼 영상, 영어 말하기, 학습자 자율성, 협동 학습

\*This work was supported by Hanshin University Research Grant

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접수일 2025년 05월 20일 수정일 2025년 05월 31일 심사완료일 2025년 06월 13일

## 1. Introduction

In South Korean university general English courses, many students exhibit a strong fear of speaking English, leading to low confidence and a lack of willingness to communicate. This reluctance results in limited class participation and, consequently, insufficient development of their English communication skills. This issue has been widely discussed as an area for improvement in English education. However, recent studies on general English courses indicate that while students experience negative affective responses toward English speaking, they nonetheless recognize its importance and prioritize the improvement of their speaking skills[11]. Similarly, Wang [37] found that first-year EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students identified speaking as the skill most in need of improvement, emphasizing the need for educators to provide instruction that enhances learners' communication abilities.

Among the various general English courses offered, classes such as Communication in English or English Communication are designed to improve students' practical language use. In particular, teaching English presentations as part of general English courses has been reported to be beneficial for fostering students' speaking skills[1]. According to Park and Kim[27], English presentations are an essential spoken genre for university students, as they are commonly required in standardized English proficiency tests and professional settings. Effective presentation skills encompass various components, including writing scripts, verbal delivery, visual aids, gestures, facial expressions, and voice projection. Despite the importance of these skills, traditional presentation courses have largely relied on a limited instructional model in which students write a script, memorize it, practice, and deliver their presentation for assessment. Due to the lack of diversity in teaching methods and tools, there has been little research on alternative

approaches that could enhance the effectiveness of English presentation instruction [27].

In recent years, the integration of digital media in language education has garnered increasing attention, particularly in the context of learner-centered approaches that emphasize active participation and self-expression. Among various digital tools, vlogs (video blogs) have emerged as a powerful medium for enhancing students' engagement, motivation, and communicative competence in foreign language learning [22][38]. Vlog creation, which involves planning, filming, and editing personal narratives, provides learners with an opportunity to practice language use in authentic and meaningful contexts [19]. Learners today spend more time watching videos on YouTube, TikTok, and other social media rather than relying on web searches for information[15]. This generation is particularly accustomed to short-form video content (the terms short-form video, vlogging, short, and short film were used interchangeably in this study) that delivers compressed information quickly.

Moreover, they are not just passive consumers of videos but also active content creators. In response to this trend, recent research in English education has explored how language learning is improved by using video-based contents, and how video-based learning, particularly short-form content, can be integrated into language learning to create a more engaging and familiar learning experience. Studies have also examined how video-based activities impact on students' affective factors such as interest, communication confidence, willingness to communicate, anxiety, learner autonomy as these psychological variables play a central role in second language acquisition [9]. However, as Jin[16] pointed out, research on the impact of creating vlog by students on language proficiency and affective factors has been limited in scope, and there has been little classroom-based research on pedagogical methods that could positively influence Korean

EFL learners' affective aspects.

Previous research has predominantly examined the use of vlogs and YouTube Shorts as pedagogical tools in English language classrooms, rather than creation their vlog production by learners themselves.

Moreover, existing literature has predominantly focused on individual vlog creation rather than collaborative production, and few have conducted in-depth qualitative investigations into learners' perceptions [16]. Given that communication involves interaction with others, it is crucial to explore how learners develop communicative competence through collaborative activities rather than individual tasks. Effective communication is not merely about speaking fluently but also about delivering one's message clearly and understanding others in real-time interactions. Based on this perspective, this study proposes a shift from individually created vlogs to group-produced vlogs, where students collaborate and communicate throughout the production process.

Thus, this study aims to investigate the impact of vlog creation in a general English course, on learners' speaking proficiency and their autonomous learning. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What is the perceived impact of creating vlog on learners' speaking ability?
- 2) How does the process of creating vlogs for English learning influence learners' autonomous learning (confidence, interest, willingness to communicate, and anxiety)?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Perspectives on Vlogging in Language Learning

The effectiveness of vlogging in language learning can be understood through several theoretical frameworks. The Cognitive Load Theory[33] suggests that multimedia learning reduces extraneous

cognitive load and enhances retention by engaging both visual and auditory channels [25]. This aligns with vlogging, which provides learners with multimodal input and output, reinforcing language acquisition. Additionally, Sociocultural Theory[36] highlights the importance of interaction in language development, suggesting that vlogging, particularly collaborative vlogging, fosters meaningful communicative exchanges. Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) Theory [40] also supports the use of vlogging, as it enables learners to take ownership of their learning process, engage in self-monitoring, and reflect on their progress.

The Collaborative Learning Theory[8] also posits that learning occurs most effectively when learners engage in co-construction of knowledge. When applied to vlogging, this theory suggests that students working in groups may benefit from increased interaction, shared responsibility, and diverse language input. Despite its potential advantages, few studies have examined how group vlogging influences speaking development compared to individual vlogging.

Unlike spontaneous in-class speaking activities, vlogging allows learners to rehearse, edit, and refine their spoken output, thereby reducing anxiety and improving fluency. Furthermore, when conducted collaboratively, vlogging encourages peer interaction and feedback, which are essential for communicative competence development [8]. Given these theoretical foundations, incorporating vlogging into ELT classes presents unique advantages over traditional speaking tasks.

### 2.2 Empirical Studies on Vlogging for Learner Autonomy

Much literature [7][17][37] argued that incorporating short film production into English Language class provides dynamic, learner-centered environment that promotes both speaking proficiency and autonomous learning including a sense of responsibility, active engagement, and confidence

among students. While findings generally support its effectiveness, research gaps remain in methodological approaches and the focus on collaborative learning. Jin [14] conducted an experimental study to compare vlog-based speaking tasks with traditional classroom speaking activities among first-year university students. The experimental group ( $n = 25$ ) created weekly vlogs on topics of personal interest and shared them on an online platform, receiving both peer and instructor feedback. The findings indicated that vlogging significantly reduced speaking anxiety and improved learners' confidence in English communication. Similarly, Jin[15] found that vlog-based instruction enhanced self-directed learning and engagement, though improvements in grammar and pronunciation were not statistically significant.

Lazo and Kim [21] compared traditional in-class presentations with vlog-based presentations among ten high school students. Their study revealed that vlog-based presentations led to greater improvements in grammar, speech rate, and nonverbal communication. Interestingly, while the classroom presentation group initially showed higher confidence levels, the vlog group demonstrated increased confidence over time. These findings align with Wang and Chen [38], who reported that digital tools, including vlogging, provide a low-pressure environment conducive to oral language practice.

However, these studies exhibit several limitations. First, most existing research has relied on quantitative data, particularly surveys, without incorporating qualitative insights from learner interviews or case studies. This limits our understanding of how learners perceive and experience vlog-based speaking tasks. Second, while individual vlogging has been extensively studied, research on collaborative vlogging remains scarce. Given that peer interaction is a fundamental component of communicative language learning [24], further investigation into

group-based vlogging is warranted.

A key area requiring further exploration is the distinction between individual and collaborative vlogging in EFL learning. Fitria [11] surveyed 119 university students and found that while the majority preferred individual vlogging, a subset of learners (17%) opted for group-based vlogs, citing enhanced peer support and reduced performance anxiety. This suggests that collaborative vlogging may hold unique benefits, particularly in fostering negotiation of meaning and peer-assisted learning [32]. Despite the growing interest in vlog-based speaking tasks, there remains a lack of qualitative research into learners' experiences and perceptions; notably, the potential of collaborative vlogging to enhance communicative competence through peer interaction has yet to be fully explored. In this respect, the present study offers a distinctive contribution compared to previous research, providing deeper insights and thus yielding meaningful implications."

### 3. Research Method

This study adopted a qualitative, mixed-methods approach, incorporating survey questionnaires, interviews, and students' final project vlog (short video clips over a sixteen-week period to explore participants' experiences with creation of short films, and to examine the impact on students' speaking ability and autonomous learning. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the research design sought to enrich the depth and breadth of the findings. Data collection was undertaken through multiple channels, including pre- and post-survey questionnaires, nine semi-structured individual interviews, and student-generated video clips.

#### 3.1 Context

The course, Essential English (speaking), was offered at a university as a compulsory module

for all major students, aiming to help students to develop English speaking and presentation skills. In order to build English speaking presentation skills as the purpose of the course, students were asked to present three times during a semester: individual, pair, and group presentation. As for the group presentation, students were asked to make a YouTube short or vlog with their group members. Also, to enhance speaking skills, AI-powered tool (ChatGPT) was incorporated into writing a vlog (short) script and correcting pronunciation.

### 3.2 Participants

This study involved 90 students, all freshmen, majoring in various subjects. All participants were enrolled in the 'Essential English' course at the university. Since this course is a required subject, students varied in both their English proficiency levels and interest in English learning. According to the students' self-reported results, the majority identified themselves as being at a pre-intermediate level. Among the participants (n = 90), nine students took part in in-depth individual interviews.

### 3.3 Research Process

This study utilized a qualitative mixed-method design to explore the impacts of creating short videos or vlogs on students' English-speaking proficiency and autonomous learning. A combination of sampling methods was employed: (i) 'homogeneous sampling' for the questionnaire survey, selecting participants from a specific group relevant to the study [10]; and (ii) 'convenience sampling' for in-depth interview sessions based on participants' availability and accessibility [26].

All students (n = 90) took part in pre- and post-survey questionnaires and among them, nine students were interviewed individually. The research was conducted in the following stages.

At first, pre-survey was conducted regarding personal backgrounds of participants such as age, year, gender, English proficiency level, and expectation from English learning by creating short or vlog.

Prior to the midterm examination in week 8, students participated in a series of various speaking activities (e.g., Tablo, Readers' theatre) to enhance their oral communication skills. Following the midterm, beginning in week 9, they started to be involved in creating short videos or vlogs for a final project. The teacher-researcher provided three topics: two extracted from the textbook, one free topic. To facilitate this process, the teacher-researcher designated approximately one-third of each class session (roughly 25 minutes) for open discussions related to the final project. During this time, the first 10 minutes were strictly conducted in English, while the remaining 15 minutes allowed for discussions in Korean.

During the project, students took ownership, independently determined their project topics, and assigned roles, which are fundamentally able to enhance their autonomous learning [3]. During the scriptwriting phase, students utilized AI (ChatGPT) to review and refine their own work, engaging in a self-revision process.

Survey questionnaires were developed and modified based on the purpose of the study, drawing from previous studies [14][15]. Lastly, semi-structured in-depth interviews of nine students were followed and recorded in order to investigate learners' experiences of creating vlog (short) and their autonomous learning involving motivation, confidence, interest, and willingness to communicate.

To investigate the participants' affective domains, pre- and post-questionnaires were administered to all students at the beginning and end of the experiment. The questionnaires were developed based on Jin [14-15]. They consisted of 20 closed-ended items categorized into four sections:

interest, confidence, willingness to communicate, and anxiety. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used. Paired samples t-tests were conducted to compare the results of the pre- and post-questionnaires. In addition, in-depth individual interviews were conducted to obtain detailed descriptions of how the participants perceived the effects of vlogging in speaking class.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The researcher thoroughly analyzed survey and interview data, utilizing multiple sources for data triangulation to deepen their findings. Survey data underwent both quantitative and qualitative analysis, while interview data was examined qualitatively and inductively. Through coding, recurring themes and patterns were identified and organized [4][26]. These themes were re-examined for consistency with survey data, and the researcher cross-checked the analysis with a colleague to enhance reliability.

## 4. Finding and Discussion

This section explores potential factors that enhance English speaking skills and learner autonomy by creating short forms or vlogs in English based on the survey questionnaire and in-depth interview data. Specifically, three primary factors were identified from the data: (i) improvement effective speaking skills by using real life English; and (ii) enhancement of self-responsibility, autonomous learning; and (iii) the benefits from group collaborative work in the process of making their own short films.

### 4.1 Improvement of Speaking Skills

In survey questionnaires, items with mid-range scores (around 3.90-3.97) included statements related to speaking improvement. For instance,

students responded positively to items like and “Short-form vlogs help me communicate with others” ( $M = 3.94$ ). The findings indicate that students recognized the educational value of short-form vlogs and their contribution to developing speaking skills.

Meanwhile, relatively lower scores were found in items related to affective challenges, such as anxiety and stress reduction. “Short-form vlogs make me feel more comfortable speaking in English” ( $M = 3.40$ ), “help reduce my stress to speak in English” ( $M = 3.47$ ), and “help reduce my anxiety when speaking in English” ( $M = 3.59$ ) received the lowest means, although still above the neutral point. This suggests that while the overall perception of vlogging was positive, its effect on reducing speaking-related discomfort may be limited. Nonetheless, all responses indicated general support for the use of short-form vlogs in English learning.

As for the interview data, the following interview data illustrates how students utilized real-life English while creating vlogs (shorts), and how this process contributed to improve students’ speaking skills.

“We spent a lot of time trying to use natural English while writing the script. I think that really helped. We tried to avoid overly formal English and instead used more everyday expressions, aiming for a more conversational tone. I think that approach was super helpful” (S1, interview).

“The English we used here was different from the formal English (in traditional classroom) we usually study, which tends to follow strict rules and structures. And that made me want to keep going, even writing scripts and filming more enthusiastically. (S7, interview).

The interview data above illustrate how students utilized real-life English while creating vlogs (shorts), and how this process contributed to improve students’ speaking skills. Another student mentioned:

“In high school, we mostly focused on reading comprehension to prepare college entrance exam. Once the test was over, we forgot everything. But with the vlog, we need to use real-life English, and it was more practical so that I can use it abroad. (S5, interview)

As Rao [29] highlighted that “the classroom provides an ideal environment for developing strong communication skills (p. 17)”, the creation of English vlogs or shorts encourages the use of genuine English by incorporating everyday language. Such opportunities are rarely found in traditional classroom settings.

While ready-made YouTube videos or vlogs serve as valuable educational resources by providing engaging and informative content, the process of creating short videos by learners themselves has a more positive impact on the development of their speaking proficiency through active language production.

#### 4.2 Increased Learner Autonomy: Interest, Self-responsibility, Confidence & Willingness

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and t-test results for changes in attitudes before and after the vlogging-integrated class. Overall, as shown in Table 1, participants’ responses indicated positive changes.

<Table 1> Changes in Attitudes before and after Vlogging Classes

Items	Pre-Survey		Post-Survey		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Interest	4.16	40	4.37	.36	-6.84	.000
Confidence	3.19	22	2.95	.53	1.60	.170
Willingness to communicate	3.22	15	3.45	.21	-3.31	.045
Anxiety	2.81	41	2.48	2.30	4.30	.050

Participants showed an increase in interest in learning English, with a higher mean score of 4.37 in the post-survey. Although confidence showed a slight decrease in the mean score (from

3.19 to 2.95), it is important to note that in this section, a lower score indicates greater confidence, implying a positive change. Similarly, the willingness to communicate increased from 3.22 to 3.45, indicating improvement. Lastly, anxiety levels decreased, with a lower mean score of 2.48 after the intervention.

To determine whether these differences were statistically significant, paired samples t-tests were conducted for each category. The results revealed that the increase in interest ( $p = .000$ ), the improvement in willingness to communicate ( $p = .045$ ), and the reduction in anxiety ( $p = .050$ ) were statistically significant. However, the change in confidence was not statistically significant ( $p = .170$ ), although the direction of change suggests improvement.

Short-form vlogs provide a positive English learning experience” ( $M = 4.15$ ), and “I would recommend using short-form vlogs for English learning to others” ( $M = 4.12$ ). These were followed closely by items highlighting enjoyment and perceived usefulness, such as “short-form vlogs are enjoyable and interesting” and “I believe short-form vlogs are appropriate to be used for English learning” (both  $M = 4.02$ ). These results also suggest that students viewed vlogging activities as enjoyable and meaningful, motivating them to engage and even recommend them to peers.

According to Little [23], engaging in short film production involves learners in meaningful tasks—such as idea generation, scriptwriting, role allocation, rehearsal, and performance—that promote autonomy and a sense of responsibility. Likewise, participants reported that the process of creating vlogs or short videos had a positive impact on their confidence, autonomy, and sense of responsibility. Students said:

“The free-topic format supported our autonomy by letting us choose topics we are interested in and recreate real-life situations in English. This freedom led to more engaging discussions, greater participation, and improved overall

quality of the vlog” (S3, interview).

“I wanted to use more natural and authentic expressions commonly used in English-speaking countries. To achieve this, I started watching American videos to listen and understand how English is used in real-life situations. This became part of my self-directed learning. Through this process, my speaking skills improved significantly, and I became more motivated. Such progress wouldn’t have been possible in a traditional English classroom, where the focus is often on translation, grammar forms, and reading comprehension” (S4, interview).

As seen from the interview data above, students were naturally able to develop a sense of responsibility and ownership over their learning, which are central to autonomous learning. The process of vlog creation encourages learners to use authentic English in meaningful contexts, while also providing enjoyment and motivation. As a result, learners are more likely to be driven by intrinsic motivation rather than relying on external incentives. This supports Benson’s [3] view that students naturally take on responsibility for their final production and thus, this creative vlogging (filmmaking) project allows learners to express themselves, make meaningful language uses, and reflect on their progress, strengthening their sense of agency.

The following interview data also show that increased motivation appeared to challenge a student to develop further students’ English learning.

“Creating English vlog made speaking English fun without focusing too much on grammar. That’s probably what got me more interested in English. It made me really want to go to an English-speaking country and actual use the English I’ve been learning” (S8, interview).

“In middle and high school, I lacked confidence in English and was hesitant to speak with foreigners, fearing they wouldn’t understand me. However, filming short with my group helped me feel more comfortable using English.

Therefore, when exchange students from the UK visited my university, I was able to speak with them naturally” (S9, interview).

This process demands decision-making, collaboration, and self-regulation; the essential components of autonomous learning.

### 4.3 Benefits of Group Collaboration

In a typical short film project, English language learners collaborate to develop a script that represents the target language content. The film’s themes and scenes are largely shaped by group members’ ideas and decisions. The final version of the script is given feedback by the teacher, who was a mentor, helper, monitor of the learners throughout the process. The group members co-write, revise, and proofread the script before moving on to rehearsal and performance stages [2]. This group collaboration not only provided learners with more opportunities for authentic communication, but also made students engage in negotiation of meaning, clarification, and reformulation, which are key elements in second language development [24][32]. The following data show this well:

“Team projects are common in other classes too. Those usually follow the same structure: research, making ppt, presentation—done. However, this one was different. We had to meet several times, brainstorm, plan, film—it really stood out and made the class more fun and engaging” (S2, interview).

“I was genuinely surprised—in a good way—by the ideas my group came up with. They thought of things I never would’ve considered myself. It wasn’t just challenging; it was really helpful and inspiring, too” (S5, interview).

“Before this vlog project, I used to think working alone would be better. However, soon after I realized working as a group made the process smoother and the final product more polished. I learned lots of unexpected insights from group members”. (S4, interview)

This finding is supported by Hafner and Miller [13], who argued that collaborative group projects create socially interactive learning environments that provide ample opportunities for peer support, both in language learning and in developing technological skills.

#### 4.4 Challenges in Creating a vlog(Short)

Creating short films in ELT classrooms can be a highly engaging and beneficial activity, but it also has some challenges. Participants in this study also broadly identified two constraints throughout the vlog process: (i) lack of English proficiency; and (ii) consuming too much time for technical skills such as editing, inserting background music, and putting subtitles. The lack of skills resulted in confusion, frustration, or distraction from the task. Participants expressed that speaking English naturally was very difficult, which could act as a barrier to advancing their learning. For example:

“We tried using Papago and GPT to help make the script sound more natural, but even with that, the dialogue was not natural. It was hard to capture the right tone and nuance” (S1, interview).

“Even though I can memorize lines from a script, I struggle to say them naturally. I think there should be teacher feedback session.” (S4, interview).

Learners also expressed frustration with technical issues and constraints of making vlog (short). Most of participants in this study said that “they spent a lot of time on the vlog due to a lack of technical skills needed for its production”. For example, they had to learn new editing techniques and install unfamiliar apps to complete the editing process. While all of this was a learning experience, it took significantly more time compared to a typical English presentation. This issue can hinder the learning process and may deter students from engaging in the material. Hafner and Miller [13] mentioned

that learners may face barriers related to the technical aspects of video production, limiting the educational benefits of such tasks.

## 5. Conclusion

The study found that creating vlog (short) in English class significantly enhances English language learning, particularly in speaking. The making short film project also promoted learner autonomy by increasing learners’ interest, motivation, confidence, and willingness to communicate.

However, some challenges were identified in the process of creating the vlog. Participants noted that, because they had learned English primarily through teacher-centered instruction using textbooks, it was difficult for them to suddenly use the language in a natural and spontaneous way. In addition, a lack of technological knowledge—such as video editing, adding background music, and inserting subtitles—resulted in the task taking significantly more time. The challenges led to discomfort and confusion among participants, which might hinder their learning process.

Despite its potential benefits, there are some limitations. While the teacher acted mainly as a facilitator, students expressed a need for more guidance and feedback during scriptwriting to ensure natural English usage. This highlights the importance of more active teacher involvement, especially for learners used to reading-focused, teacher-centered, and top-down approaches in traditional classrooms.

Also, one-off vlog creation project in a semester offers limited insight into students’ language development and affective growth. Such an isolated task may not fully capture the depth of students’ learning processes. In this light, further research is recommended to explore process-based vlog production, in which students

engage in ongoing cycles of creation, reflection, and revision. This may promote deeper learning and greater learner autonomy.

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<관심분야>

영어교육, Intercultural competence, 에듀테크 등