

EXPLORING THE USE OF FLIPPED LEARNING APPROACH IN TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS

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Abstract. *Defined as an inverted method of teaching and learning, a flipped learning approach is conducted when students deliver the content at home and practise during class time (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Sohrabi & Iraj, 2016). Although it is widely known among tertiary-level students, its use has now been extended to primary and secondary school students.*

With the support of technology and the resources available in schools, the flipped learning approach can provide school students with ample opportunities to engage in English classes, particularly with regard to reading, writing, listening, speaking, and grammar. Thus, this study aims to highlight the advantages of using the flipped learning approach in English classes, particularly for teaching grammar, and to identify the drawbacks that hinder its maximum use.

Key words: *Flipped classroom, speaking, English classes*

Introduction

The flipped learning approach is an effective teaching and learning method as it promotes student-centred instruction (Hamdan, McKnight, McKnight & Arfstrom, 2013). Applying this approach allows students to take control of their learning. The approach is intended to prepare students before they come to class for lessons. Students are responsible for previewing the materials prepared by teachers before the lesson begins (Hao, 2016). Additionally, the flipped classroom has been found to be useful for learning grammar, as it enables students to practise grammar content. Kang (2015) claims that the flipped classroom led to statistically significant improvements in students' grammar and vocabulary knowledge. Thus, this study aims to examine the advantages of the flipped classroom approach in teaching grammar and to identify common issues faced by teachers when executing it.

Literature review

The flipped approach introduces a new, inverted method of delivering content. According to Bergmann and Sams (2012), the flipped model is an emerging approach involving an improved allocation of teaching time, with the aim of increasing students' active learning, collaboration, and scaffolding during the learning process. The authors also state that the application of this strategy reflects the idea that lectures and explanations will no longer take place in class, but at home. In order to understand the subject matter, students need to preview the online videos or recordings of lectures, internet resources and slide

presentations with audio narratives before class (Hamdan et al., 2013). Evseeva and Solozhenko (2015) state that, with the implementation of the flipped classroom approach, teachers are no longer tasked with delivering knowledge to students, but with facilitating the learning process instead. Finn and Zimmer (2012) argue that students engage in active learning, problem solving and critical thinking when they learn outside of the classroom. This enables students to connect with their teachers, promoting learning and academic performance. The implementation of the flipped classroom approach helps teachers attain their learning outcomes, making teaching and learning more engaging, active and student-centred (Jamaludin & Osman, 2014; Trucano, 2005).

Several studies have found that students benefit greatly from flipped learning, particularly in language learning. By adopting a flipped learning approach, students will transition from passive listeners to active learners (Davies, Dean & Ball, 2013). Kang (2015) concluded that implementing a flipped classroom could maximise class time and provide students with ample opportunities to communicate in class. Zhang (2015) stated that students had more opportunities to practise speaking English. Marsh (2012) revealed that flipped learning boosted students' confidence levels. Kang (2015) reported that the flipped classroom approach significantly improved students' grammar knowledge. Similarly, Al-Harbi and Al-Shumaimeri (2016) found that the strategy played an important role in enhancing students' English grammar knowledge in an analysis of improvements in this area. Khanova, Roth, Rodgers and McLaughlin (2015) claimed that the flipped learning approach could encourage active learning among students. Additionally, Sohrabi and Iraj (2016) reported that students communicated more with instructors. Soliman (2016) supported this view, writing that the flipped classroom strategy fosters student-teacher interaction.

However, data from several studies suggests that there are some challenges in implementing the flipped classroom strategy from a teacher's perspective. Evseeva and Solozhenko (2015) found that recording lectures, developing learning materials, and sourcing additional resources is time-consuming and requires considerable skills and effort from teachers. Additionally, Osman, Jamaludin and Mokhtar (2014) concluded that the flipped learning approach requires a greater amount of effort and time for the development of video resources and the planning and implementation of classroom activities than traditional methods do. Furthermore, Akcayir and Akcayir (2018) cited several disadvantages experienced by teachers, including increased workload (Sage & Sele, 2015) and time-consuming processes (Wanner & Palmer, 2015).

Together, these studies indicate that the flipped learning approach has a positive impact on students' confidence levels and grammar knowledge. It is also apparent that it can strengthen teacher-student rapport. However, there is some evidence to suggest that teachers face several challenges when using this method, such as time constraints and an increased workload.

In conclusion, this study attempts to corroborate the idea that teachers perceive the flipped learning approach as an effective method for students to learn grammar, as it enables active engagement in the lesson.

Smit, Brabander and Martens (2014) argue that a student-centred learning approach can lead to increased learner autonomy, performance and motivation. Thus, more strategies for using the flipped learning approach should be identified.

The flipped learning approach allows students to take control of their learning style with minimal teacher assistance. Nevertheless, teachers should be able to find enough time to prepare the flipped learning materials for their students.

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