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Let's Start!

Flipped Classroom: Pakistani ELF Teachers' Perceptions

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Abstract

The study explores English language teachers' perceptions regarding the flipped classroom approach in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It examines the benefits and challenges associated with its implementation and is grounded in Active Learning Theory (Ansori & Nafi', 2019). The research aimed to understand how the flipped classroom approach fosters active learning and enhances the teaching and learning process. The study employed a qualitative research design involving seventeen English language teachers from the English department at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, and UOS Thatta campus. Semi-structured interviews, as well as classroom observations, were used to gather data. The result showed that teachers carry positive views of the flipped classroom, recognizing its potential to increase student involvement, promote self-directed learning, and make better use of in-class time for collaborative activities. Future research is suggested to investigate students' perceptions of the flipped method and examine its long-term effect on learning outcomes.

Keywords: Flipped classroom, active learning, English language teachers, EFL

INTRODUCTION

In the present day, teaching and learning English requires technology (Ma et al., 2024). Students find traditional teaching techniques less appealing and favor innovative teaching methods (Yang & Chen, 2020). Teachers must be creative and imaginative to captivate students and ensure excellent learning results (Li & Akram, 2023, 2024). The flipped classroom, a teaching style that fosters student-centered learning in the classroom, is gaining popularity worldwide. Information is delivered outside class in this new classroom setting, while in-class time is dedicated to more student-centered activities (Jeong et al., 2018). Learners must review the contents before attending the lecture. As a consequence, more time in the classroom is dedicated to more meaningful learning, such as hands-on learning, problem-solving, games, and other engaging and collaborative activities (Wang, 2020).

Students' interests and learning are crucial aspects of the teaching process. Teachers should focus their lessons on student involvement and active learning (Akram & Abdelrady, 2023, 2025). The flipped classroom is becoming increasingly popular in many countries, and several academics have investigated instructors' and students' opinions and attitudes about this paradigm (Khaled, 2019). Hence, this study will explore the perceptions of English Department teachers from the University of Sindh, Campus Thatta.

The existing literature also shows limited research conducted in the context of English language teaching (ELT) and has not been widely explored. Moreover, according to Ali et al. (2021), there are limited studies on flipped learning in Pakistan than worldwide. In the context of Pakistan, the majority of the research is experimental (2021). As a result, the current study attempts to provide light on the conceptual understanding of Pakistani ELT teachers in the context of Sindh concerning flipped classrooms, and it also investigates the challenges that they face while implementing flipped classrooms for effective English language teaching and learning. Hence, the current study will employ a qualitative research design to explore ELT teachers' perceptions of flipped classrooms in teaching EFL. The objectives of this study are twofold: first, to explore a deeper understanding of ELT teachers' perceptions about flipped classrooms. Second, what challenges do they face while implementing flipped classrooms in English language teaching at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, and UOS, Thatta campus?

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Using a qualitative research approach, the study applies active learning theory by Ansori and Nafi (2019) as a theoretical framework, aiming to explore ELT teachers' perceptions regarding the flipped classroom, particularly in Sindh. Moreover, this study will also investigate the challenges they face while practicing it in teaching EFL classrooms at the university level.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to address the following research questions:

1.   What are ELT teachers' perceptions about flipped classrooms in teaching EFL?

2.   What challenges do ELT teachers face while implementing the flipped classroom in English language teaching?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

➢   To explore the ELT teachers' perceptions about flipped classrooms in teaching EFL.

➢   To know about some challenges ELT teachers face while implementing the flipped classroom in English language teaching.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will benefit the English teacher at UOSCT, other English teachers at UOSCT or other universities, the English department students, and the researcher herself.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ali et al. (2021) studied the use of flipped classrooms for teaching English as a second language to 5th-grade pupils in a Pakistani school. The study employed a quasi-experimental design. The results revealed that students taught using the flipped classroom technique obtained higher grades than those taught using the traditional way. Aneela Alam et al. (2020) examined students' and instructors' impressions of the flipped classroom teaching technique in Pakistan. They employed a qualitative study approach with 8th-grade students and instructors. The study's findings revealed that both students and teachers valued the student-centered approach in the flipped classroom, which encouraged the usage of ICT. They acknowledged the usefulness of the flipped classroom in improving student performance. They also agreed that the flipped classroom model could be used in Pakistani schools. What is required is its correct

application or execution. Fathi and Rahimi (2020) did research at an Iranian institution. In terms of overall writing performance and fluency, they observed that EFL students in the flipped classroom outperformed those in the non-flipped classroom substantially. Ansari and Nafi's (2019) study on "English teachers' perceived benefits and challenges of flipped classroom implementation" employed a mixed-method design. According to their findings, this technique promotes active learning, boosts student collaboration, and develops independent learning.

Furthermore, the participants in their study also noted that the hurdles in applying this technique include the lack of supporting facilities, technical and technological issues, and the difficulty of generating flipped learning materials. Khaled et al. (2019) conducted a study in Palestine to examine EFL instructors' perceptions of the flipped classroom model. They employed a quantitative research design. The data acquired demonstrated the model's good attributes. In interviews, teachers stated that it made students more responsible for their studies outside class. Some professors thought the technique would help them better organize, lecture, and communicate with students utilizing technology. Goedhart et al. (2019), "The flipped classroom: supporting a diverse group of students in their learning." The study collected data at the master's level at the Vrije University Amsterdam in the Netherlands using a mixed-methods approach. The results suggest success based on positive comments from teachers and students on the flipped classroom, which fostered individualized pre-class study and peer-learning classroom activities. Much research is conducted in various contexts (Bux et al., 2019; Abbasi et al., 2024; Gopang et al., 2015). A shift in English language teaching research emerged, and this was to address teachers' perceptions towards the latest approaches in methodology. This study explores Pakistan ELT teachers' perceptions of a flipped classroom.

Research methodology

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs a qualitative approach to properly comprehend teachers' perspectives and experiences with the flipped classroom technique in EFL classrooms. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate because it enables a thorough investigation of teacher attitudes, beliefs, and challenges related to their teaching processes. Through observations and interviews, this method allows for gathering detailed, descriptive data that sheds light on the intricate dynamics of teaching and learning in the flipped classroom paradigm.

RESEARCH TOOL

Data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) methodology, thematic analysis was used to evaluate the data gathered from interviews and classroom observations. Thematic analysis is a technique for finding, interpreting, and reporting patterns (themes) in qualitative data.

PARTICIPANTS

The study involved seventeen English language teachers from the University of Sindh's Jamshoro and Thatta campuses. These teachers were chosen based on their expertise in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) and awareness of or usage of the flipped classroom model. Purposive sampling was the sampling strategy utilized since the study specifically

searched for instructors who had experience using the flipped classroom approach in their teaching methods.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study's research approach is based on the Active Learning Theory. According to Ansori and Nafi (2019), the flipped classroom approach promotes deeper learning and more involvement with class activities by encouraging students to engage with the topic actively. The objectives of the flipped classroom, which alters the old method teacher-centered paradigm with one in which students participate more actively in their education, align with this philosophy. Since teachers may concentrate on leading conversations, answering questions, and giving feedback during in-class sessions, incorporating active learning activities into flipped classrooms would increase the efficacy and authenticity of the teaching process. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis approach was used to systematically identify, code, and interpret thematic patterns in the selected texts.

FINDINGS

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM APPROACH

Three main themes were generated from interviews.

1.   Positive Views of the Flipped Classroom
2.   Increased Autonomy and Responsibility in Students
3.   Enhanced Teacher-Student Interaction

A) POSITIVE PERCEPTIONS OF THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM

All teachers expressed positive views toward the flipped classroom model, citing its potential to enhance student involvement and promote active learning. According to them, "The flipped classroom creates an interactive environment in which students are more prepared and motivated to participate in classroom activities." A few teachers said, "Students come to class ready to engage because they have already gone through the materials at home. This makes in-class time more productive and focused on applying what they have learned."

B) INCREASED AUTONOMY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN STUDENTS

Students' increasing autonomy and responsibility

Another important theme from the interviews was students' growing independence and accountability in their education. According to some educators, one of the best features of the flipped classroom is that it gives students more authority over their own education. Students have an obligation to arrive at class prepared, which promotes self-reliance and accountability. As students efficiently manage their time and prepare for class discussions by reviewing assigned readings, videos, or other materials beforehand, the flipped model helps them develop self-regulated learning skills.

C) ENHANCED TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION

It has also been noted that the flipped classroom method improves communication between teachers and students. Some educators noted, "We have more time to interact with individual students during class when we use the flipped model. We can concentrate on attending to their particular requirements and clearing up any confusion they might be experiencing." All the

teachers agreed that increased interaction was one of the main advantages. Some educators said, "I can shift from lecturing to more problem-solving activities and discussions thanks to the flipped approach. More chances for one-on-one conversations with students are thus created.

CHALLENGES OF THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM

Notwithstanding the encouraging feedback, teachers noted several difficulties implementing the flipped classroom model. Three primary themes emerged from the interviews.

a) Student Preparedness: Ensuring students regularly engaged with the pre-class materials was challenging. According to T2, "Students' readiness to prepare before class is essential to the flipped classroom's success." However, not all students finish the pre-class assignments, which can reduce the effectiveness of the in-class activities. This worry was echoed by T5, who said, "Students who arrive at class unprepared find it difficult to participate in class discussions, and the learning process suffers."

b) Technology and Resource Constraints: The teachers mentioned the flipped classroom's technological requirements as challenging. T1 clarified, "The flipped model necessitates consistent access to technology for both students and teachers to access and create pre-class materials. Accessing these resources can occasionally be challenging for students, especially those from remote locations with poor internet connectivity."

c) Classroom Management: Another issue raised by T4 was classroom management in the flipped classroom. Different classroom management techniques are needed when implementing a student-centered approach instead of a teacher-centric one. Keeping students focused and involved during in-class activities is crucial," T17 stated. Instructors observed that it could be more challenging in a flipped classroom to oversee group projects and guarantee that every student participates actively.

DISCUSSION

This study's results align with previous research on the flipped classroom methodology and how it affects instruction (Akram et al., 2021, 2022; Ramzan et al., 2023, 2025). The teachers' favorable opinions align with the advantages of the Active Learning Theory (Ansori & Nafi', 2019), which highlights student participation and engagement as essential elements of successful learning (Abdelrady & Akram, 2022; Khanam et al., 2022). The findings demonstrate that the flipped classroom improves student autonomy, meaningful teacher-student interactions, and time spent in class on cooperative learning activities.

Nonetheless, the difficulties mentioned, especially regarding student readiness and technological limitations, are consistent with the results of earlier research, which indicate that student dedication and resource availability are critical to the flipped classroom's success (Al-Adwan et al., 2022; Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Chen & Ramzan, 2024). Concerns among teachers regarding how to run the flipped classroom also emphasize the necessity of institutional support and professional development to guarantee the successful adoption of this strategy.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study suggest that the flipped classroom model holds great potential for enhancing the teaching and learning process in EFL classes. Teachers claim that the flipped paradigm improves student participation, promotes active learning, and maximizes class time. However, the success of the flipped classroom model depends on the students' preparedness, the availability of technology, and effective classroom management.

Teachers must improve their technological proficiency, implement strategies to guarantee student accountability, and, when needed, combine the flipped model with conventional teaching techniques to fully promote the flipped classroom. Institutions are also essential in providing the tools and opportunities for professional growth that teachers need to successfully adopt the flipped classroom model.

The flipped classroom approach is a promising alternative to traditional teaching methods, as it can create more dynamic, interactive, and student-centered learning environments. By addressing the challenges identified by this study, educators and educational institutions can fully reap the benefits of this innovative teaching method.

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