

The Effect of Flipped Classroom on Iranian EFL Learners' Learning Self-Efficacy, Learning Satisfaction and Willingness to Communicate

1. Introduction

Parallel to the growth of the interest in online education, innovative teachers and instructors have not ceased to come up with new instructional pedagogies that can help enhance learning (Johnson et al., 2014). One of these new approaches that has been made available owing to the growth of online technology is flipped classroom. According to Bergmann and Sams (2012), by whom this pedagogy was pioneered, the concept of flipped classroom is basically this: “that which is traditionally done in class is now done at home, and that which is traditionally done as homework is now completed in class” (p. 13). This suggests that the classroom time must be allocated to focus on the assignments and the tasks that were usually done at home, and deliver the instruction outside the classroom by means of recorded videos presenting the new content (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

Since the popularization of flipped classroom, different studies have attempted to examine its advantages and shortcomings from various perspectives. Bergmann and Sams (2012) contend that flipped classroom helps struggling students as well as those who are busy, and it helps students of different abilities to excel all alike. They suggest it increases student-student interaction, and enables teachers to get to know their students better. Moreover, research shows that using flipped model improves students' learning performance in addition to their satisfaction and engagement (Akçayır & Akçayır, 2018).

Learners' self-efficacy also seems to be affected by Flipped Classroom Model (FCM). According to a study carried out by Namaziandost and Çakmak (2020), the students who received instruction using flipped model indicated an increase in their self-efficacy compared to their counterparts, which could be attributed to the features of FCM, such as more group discussions, problem-solving activities,

collaboration and so on. Furthermore, another study by Kenna (2014) revealed that, in terms of self-efficacy, not only did the students who belonged to the intervention group receiving flipped instruction performed better but also those of the control group showed a decrease in their self-efficacy. Nevertheless, in another study, it was shown that when it comes to the students at the advanced level in the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) classes, there is no significant improvement in their self-efficacy (Namaziandost et al., 2020).

In addition to self-efficacy, learners' satisfaction has also been an area of interest in terms FCM. In 2020, Martínez-Jiménez and Ruiz-Jiménez aimed at examining the effect of flipped classroom on students' satisfaction and learning performance. The study was carried out in two different management courses in Spain, and the results revealed that the students generally have a positive opinion about FCM. In spite of that, in another study conducted in technical and vocational colleges in Taiwan, the effect of flipped classroom on learning effectiveness using learning satisfaction as a mediator was examined, and the results unveiled that even though the students of the first half of education believed flipped classroom has a positive effect on learning satisfaction, their counterparts in the second half reckoned the opposite to be the case, that is, flipped classroom has a negative effect on learning satisfaction (Lin & Chen, 2016). The contradictory results of these studies may be attributed to how they were conducted. Therefore, systematic reviews and meta-analyses can be fruitful. Interestingly enough, in 2019, Låg and Sæle searched and meta-analyzed studies in which flipped classroom was compared with traditional lecture-based teaching in order to extend the insights of the previous research. The results of their study showed that, on average, student satisfaction may be influenced little by flipped classroom interventions. However, it's important to note that sometimes students may dislike an educational intervention despite the fact that it improves learning.

Unlike learning self-efficacy and learning satisfaction, Willingness to Communicate (WTC) has not been looked at much in the realm of FCM.

In this study, the answers to the following research questions are sought:

Question 1: Does flipped classroom have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' learning self-efficacy?

Question 2: Does flipped classroom have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' learning satisfaction?

Question 3: Does flipped classroom have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' willingness to communicate?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Participants

In the present research, there were 54 students, including 13 males and 41 females, whose ages ranged from 16 to 35. They all spoke Persian as their mother tongue, and were studying English as their second language at a private English language academy. Their proficiency level was between upper-intermediate and advanced; B2 to C1.

2.2 Instruments

The instruments used to collect the data needed to carry out the present study were a self-efficacy questionnaire (Greene et al., 2004), the Learning Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by Lindenwood University associates and overseen by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (Manion, 2019) and a revised version of WTC questionnaire developed by McIntyre (2001).

3. Results

Question 1

The first research question of the study aimed at examining the effect of flipped classroom on Iranian learners' learning self-efficacy. In order to make sure of the homogeneity of the groups in terms of their baseline learning self-efficacy, the researcher made use of an independent-samples *t*-test whose results proved no significant difference between the mean scores of the CG and the EG, suggesting that both groups were homogenous in terms of their learning self-efficacy on the onset of the study. After the treatment, another independent-samples *t*-test functioned as a post-test for both the CG and EG so that the mean scores of the aforementioned groups would be compared. The statistical reports did not indicate any significant difference in the mean scores between the CG and EG. It was shown that those who received the instruction traditionally within the classroom performed very much similarly, if not identically, to those who received the same instruction following the FCM approach. Thus, the first research null hypothesis was confirmed.

Question 2

The second research question of the present paper was an endeavor to shedding some light on the effect of flipped classroom on Iranian learners' learning satisfaction. The classes opted to function as the CG and the EG both took an independent-samples *t*-test as a pre-test, which testified the homogeneity of the participants of both groups in terms of their learning satisfaction in advance of starting the course. After 16 sessions of instruction, the groups took another independent-samples *t*-test in order for the mean scores to be compared. After selecting appropriate *t* value based on Levene's test for equality of variances, the results presented no significant difference between the CG and EG, which complies the second null hypothesis of this study; flipped classroom does not have any significant effect on Iranian learners' learning satisfaction.

Question 3

Ultimately, the last pursuit of the present paper was to investigate the effect of flipped classroom on Iranian learners' willingness to communicate. Firstly, the homogeneity of the CG and the EG was made sure of by means of utilizing an independent-samples *t*-test. Then, after 16 sessions of following the FCM approach for the EG, and the traditional in-class instruction for the CG, all of the participants took a post-test so that their means scores would be compared with regard to their WTC. The results of the independent-samples *t*-test unveiled the fact that there was no significant difference between the control and the experimental group as long as their WTC was concerned. This finding supports the last null hypothesis of the research which stated that flipped classroom does not have any significant effect on Iranian learners' willingness to communicate.