Supporting Learners' Autonomy and Self-Directed Learning in Flipped Learning Environment
Développer l'Autonomie des Apprenants et l'Apprentissage Autodirigé dans un Environnement d'Apprentissage Inversé

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Abstract

The flipped learning approach is a significant innovation in educational research. The present research paper examines how flipped learning as a learner-centered approach can promote students' autonomy. This descriptive study was conducted to gain deep insights into teachers' attitudes towards the application of the flipped approach, highlight the importance of introducing the flipped instructions into foreign language classes and explore its role in the development of learners' autonomy. A questionnaire has been administered to 26 teachers of English at Batna 2 University to collect qualitative and quantitative information to answer the research questions. The analysis and the interpretation of data revealed teachers' positive attitudes towards the implementation of this model in the EFL context. The present study recommends the implementation of the flipped learning environment as one of the active learning models to support and promote students' self-reliance and prepare them to be lifelong autonomous learners.

Keywords:

Flipped Classroom, E-learning, EFL Class, Educational Technology, Autonomy.

Résumé

L'approche d'apprentissage inversée est une innovation importante dans la recherche en éducation. Les chercheurs manifestent un grand intérêt pour cette approche centrée sur l'apprenant. Cette étude examine comment la classe inversée

peut améliorer l'autonomie des étudiants et réaliser ainsi une avancée considérable dans l'acquisition des capacités en apprentissages. Cette approche descriptive a été menée pour mieux comprendre les perceptions des enseignants sur l'application de l'approche inversée, pour souligner l'importance d'introduire cette méthode dans les classes de langue étrangère et 'explorer son rôle dans le développement de l'autonomie des apprenants. Un questionnaire a été fourni à 26 professeurs d'anglais à l'Université Batna 2 pour collecter des informations qualitatives et quantitatives afin de répondre aux questions de recherche. L'analyse et l'interprétation des données ont révélé des attitudes positives et encourageantes des enseignants envers l'usage de ce modèle dans l'enseignement de l'anglais comme langue étrangère. Les résultats de l'étude confirment l'hypothèse selon laquelle l'apprentissage inversé est l'un des modèles d'apprentissage actif, et qu'il peut soutenir et promouvoir l'autonomie des élèves et les préparer à être des apprenants autonomes et responsables tout au long de leur vie. Cette approche prometteuse doit être conçue de manière appropriée et adéquate pour améliorer les résultats d'apprentissage et atteindre les objectifs soulignés.

Mots clés:

Apprentissage inversée, apprentissage inversée a distance, l'anglais comme langue étrangère, technologie éducative, autonomie.

1. INTRODUCTION

During this global health crisis of the new pandemic COVID 19, educational institutions have been urged to reconsider their educational policies. The majority of them have opted for e-learning strategies in order to curb the spread of the virus. The concepts of self-reliance, autonomy, self-directed learning and self-regulated learning become central in virtual learning environments where learners need to be able to manage and control their learning.

Students at the Algerian universities in general, and in the department of English at Batna 2 University in particular, have been struggling to adapt themselves to the new situation as the educational policymakers decided to reduce the class time and reinforce it through e-learning implementation. They were unable to take responsibility for their learning because they used to fully rely on the all-knowing teacher's instruction. They just passively receive and memorize information and lectures from the teacher without learning how to learn. Furthermore, in such situations, students have not sufficiently practiced what they learned because of time constraints.

Flipped learning is a nascent learning paradigm that has found a strong voice in different universities and institutions at the global level during the outbreak of COVID 19 as an alternative to the traditional classroom. In this study, we investigate the extent to which the flipped classroom can support learners' self-reliance. The present paper aims at gaining insights into teachers' perceptions of the application of the flipped approach in the EFL context, highlighting the necessity to introduce the flipped instructions into foreign language classes and exploring their role in the development of learners' autonomy.

In this study, the following research questions are raised:

- How do English language teachers in the department of English at Batna 2 University perceive the use of the flipped learning model in EFL class?

- Can flipped learning environment improve students' autonomy and self-directed learning?

To answer the research questions, we hypothesize that the well-designed flipped learning environment can help learners and support their self-directed learning and promote their autonomy since this learner-centered model offers a more flexible learning environment than the traditional one, and learners play an active role in taking responsibility for their learning and constructing knowledge.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Flipped Classroom

Flipped learning is a type of blended learning approach. It is an innovative educational model in which online materials replace face-to-face classroom lecturing. Educators' interest in this learning mode is increasing with the emergence of educational technology to enhance the teaching/learning outcomes. Bergmann and Sams (2012, p. 13) define flipped learning as "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." In the traditional classroom, students get the first contact with new information, concepts and theories explained by their teachers inside the classroom. Then, they will be requested to do some tasks as homeworks outside the classroom. In this mode, learners are passive receivers while teachers play the central role in the teaching/learning process since they are the primary source of knowledge. The flipped classroom has brought innovation to the traditional teaching. In this technology-based approach," students gain first exposure to new material outside of class, usually via reading or lecture videos, and then use class time to do the harder work of assimilating that knowledge, perhaps through problem-solving, discussion, or debates" (Brame, 2013). Learners are exposed to the content before the class through online tools while the in-class time is devoted to interactive discussions, activities and assignments. Flipped classroom's main components entail "content being delivered before class begins, while application exercises, in-depth discussions, problem clarification, questioning, and collaborative exercises focusing on the content presented are practiced in class" (Walker et al, 2020, p. 6). Both of collaborative learning and individualization are privileged. The Flipped Learning Network (2014) explains this learning approach as follows:

> flipped learning is a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction
> moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space,

and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter.

Before class time, learners have access to the online learning materials posted by the teacher once they connect to the internet at any time and in any place. The Flipped classroom can individualize students' learning and address their needs. In this regard, Bergmann and Sams (2006, p. 6) state that "flipping the classroom establishes a framework that ensures students receive a personalized education tailored to their individual needs." It offers more opportunities for personalized learning that takes into account learners' styles, needs and interests. According to Jarvis (2010, p. 57), "a flipped classroom is a learner-centered learning environment focusing on the students' experience of learning and not on the delivery of instruction in the classroom. In a traditional classroom where the teacher is the direct source of information and the sage on the stage, the flipped classroom of instruction promotes growth and development of learning." Thus, improving the learning outcome and creating a productive learning atmosphere are the main objectives of the flipped learning model.

Bergmann and Sams (2012) have pioneered the flipped learning model. They were the first proponents who collaborated together and implemented flipped classroom in their chemistry class. In 2007, they have created and posted online video lectures of chemistry for students who could not attend their class because of sports and activities. But even students who did not miss the class could access the online lecture in to expand their understanding, take notes and revise for the exam. On the basis of their educational experience, these educators (2012, p. 5) assert that "this model was more efficient than lecturing and assigning homework"

2.2. Previous Studies on Flipped Learning

Many studies have highlighted the positive effects of the implementation of a well-designed flipped classroom on students' learning experience at the cognitive, affective and behavioral levels. Some researchers concluded that a flipped classroom can promote the interactions between students and teachers, flexibility in the class, students' autonomy (Walker et al., 2020) as well as retention of knowledge (Walker et al., 2020; Sirakaya and Ozdemir, 2018). Other studies have been conducted to prove the important role of the flipped learning environment in the development of motivation, engagement, academic achievement (Evseeva and Solozhenho, 2015; Sirakaya and Ozdemir, 2018), collaborative and communicative skills, self-directness and students involvement as well as the creation of flexible timetable (Evseeva and Solozhenho, 2015). Moreover, the implementation of flipped learning model in which learners learn at their rhythm increases students' preparation and participation in addition to the overcome of class time limitations (Basal, 2015)

2.3. Stages of Flipped Learning

In the flipped classroom, the learning process goes through two main stages: the pre- class meeting stage and the in-class stage (walker et al., 2020).

In the pre-class stage, learners are exposed to a new theory-based content using online resources like video lectures, podcasts, screencasts animations, presentations or textbooks for learners to be learned at home at their own pace before the in-class time using technological tools and applications like Brainpop, Edmodo, Edpuzzle, Educreations, Emaze, Flipgrid, GoClass, Google Classroom, Padlet, Pearltrees, Skillshare (Walker et al., 2020), YouTube, MOOCS or COURSERA.

In the classroom, students engage in activities and interactive tasks based on questioning, synthesizing, analyzing, problem-solving, discussion and collaborative learning, which increase active learning and promote learners' interaction and active participation in these activities (Brame, 2013 ; Bond, 2020;

Walker et al, 2020). At this stage, immediate feedback is important for learners when they put into practice the concepts they learned to correct their misconceptions and clarify difficulties (Brame, 2013).

2.4. The Four Pillars of Flipped Learning

The Flipped Learning Network (2014) set four pillars that teachers must incorporate into their teaching practices

1. Flexible environment: In flipped learning, different learning modes can be used to support individual or group work. Teachers can adjust the learning physical space when needed depending on the objective and the requirement of the lesson. In addition flipped learning needs a flexible environment to address students' various learning styles, needs and interests.

2. Learning culture: flipped learning is a learner-centered approach where learners actively participate in the process of knowledge construction with the support of the teacher during class time.

3. Intentional content: the teacher must select the relevant content and the accessible materials that learners can learn on their own before class time.

4. Professional educators: They observe students' performance, provide feedback when needed and assess their work. Teachers must also reflect on their teaching practices and collaborate with other professional educators to improve the quality of their instructions.

2.5. Students' Autonomy and Self-Directedness in Flipped Learning

Current studies are exhorting to integrate learner-centered approaches, methods and techniques that help students take responsibility for their learning. The remarkable extensive published literature on learners' autonomy in language teaching and learning reflects the growing interest in this subject since the turn of

the 20th century (Berson, 2007). Autonomous learners are those who can "understand the purpose of their learning, accept responsibility for their learning, share in the setting of learning goals, take initiatives in planning and evaluate its effectiveness (Khusnia, 2015, p.54). They can identify and set objectives and plans for their learning, monitor and assess their progress.

Autonomy is one of the most important learning abilities of the 21st century that should be addressed in the digital globe. As learning at one's own pace outside the classroom and collaborative learning inside the classroom are at the core of the conception of the flipped learning model, learners must take responsibility for their learning. They need to be active participants and self-reliant actors rather than passive receivers.   Roehl, Reddy, and Shannon (2013, p.48) support this view by stating that "the flipped classrooms, as well as active learning, require students to assume more responsibility for their individual learning experience." In the traditional approach, learners fully depend on their teachers to solve any problem they encounter during their learning since they often receive the body of knowledge without or with minor active learning. Autonomy can be developed when learning takes place in the appropriate learning atmosphere with the support of the teacher. In this regard, Harris, Harris, Reed, and Zelihic (2016, p. 331) assert that "the flipped classroom strategy places the educational encumbrance upon the student; instructors become the experts who develop the talents of their students and eliminate the codependency."

The flipped learning model is in line with Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism (Ahmed, 2016; Jarvis et al., 2014) where students play an active role in knowledge construction process by relating the new information to the previous experience and attributing meaning to their learning through their interaction with the environment, asking questions and solving problems with the scaffolding and the support of more experienced peers.

This learner-centered model is also grounded in the revised Bloom's Taxonomy (Brame, 2013). The lower levels of cognitive work (remembering and understanding) are done outside the classroom while the higher cognitive work (application, analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation) is addressed in face-to face-activities with the help of their teacher and their peers (Brame, 2013; Al-Zahri, 2015; Alsowat, 2016), unlike the traditional lecturing where the basic skills are developed inside the classroom whereas higher-order skills are expected to be developed through homework activities and assignments since the class time is often devoted to the explanation of the main concepts and theories (Kharat, Badadhe, Joshi & Dharmadhikari, 2015). The development of these higher-order skills along with students' active construction of knowledge and scaffolding are in favor of the promotion of learners' autonomy.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Method

In this study, we investigate teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of the flipped learning model in the EFL classroom and its role in increasing learners' autonomy. Therefore, the descriptive method has been used to collect qualitative and quantitative data which are necessary to answer our research questions and test the research hypothesis.

3.2. Participants

The participants who take part in this study are 26 permanent teachers in the department of English at Batna 2 University. The selected subjects who teach different subjects and have various teaching experiences and different educational backgrounds are specialized in didactics and applied linguistics since they are

concerned with the pedagogical and the educational issues more than the teachers of literature and civilization.

3.3. Data Gathering Tool

To gather the needed information, an online questionnaire has been created using Google Forms and sent to the teachers via their e-mails. The questionnaire aimed at exploring teachers' attitudes towards the flipped classroom and the promotion of learners' autonomy. The respondents were requested to anonymously answer the questions which help us to understand better the issue under study and reach the research objectives. The research instrument consisted of closed-ended questions including yes/no questions and statements using the Likert scale, and open-ended questions. To examine the validity of the questionnaire, it was given to experts in the field who recommended some slight modifications on some items.

3.4. Main results and discussion

The closed-ended questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics by calculating the frequency and the percentage of the occurrence of each answer with the help of the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS. 20). The open-ended questions were textually analyzed and interpreted.

3.4.1.   Section One: Teachers' Background Information

In this section, we collected professional background information related to the teachers' academic qualifications, teaching experience and the subjects they are /were teaching. The analysis of teachers' responses shows that (46.15%) of the

respondents hold the doctorate degree in applied linguistics or TEFL. The remaining (3.85 %) represent the teachers who hold the magister degree. The selected teachers have significant teaching experiences in the department of English. The majority of them (69.23%) have been teaching English for more than ten years. (26.92%) of them have been practitioners in the field from six to ten years. Only one teacher claimed that he has a five-years teaching experience. Moreover, we noticed that the participants have taught different subjects during their professional practices. Some teachers are/were teaching subjects related to language skills like oral expression and written expression. Other teachers are/were in charge of teaching content-based subjects like linguistics and psycholinguistics. The remaining category is /was teaching training subjects that target students' teaching skills like didactics, TEFL and assessment.

The participants of the study seem to have the necessary professional background that adds more value and credibility to the findings of the research.

3.4.2.   Section Two: Teachers Teaching Practices and Experiences

In this section, teachers' teaching practices inside the classroom are addressed to gain factual information relating to the current situation of language teaching in the department of English.

3.4.2.1. Teachers Leaching Practices and Learners' Autonomy

The following table presents teachers' answers about the extent to which they involve learners in activities that encourage them the take responsibility for their learning.

Table 1. Teaching Practices and its Role in the Promotion of Learners' Autonomy

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Always	4	15.38%
Sometime	11	42.31%
Rarely	9	34.62%
Never	2	7.69%
Total	26	100%

The statistical measurement in the table indicates that (42.31%) of the respondents occasionally encourage learners to take responsibility for their learning by involving them in activities like peer assessment, projects, problem-solving activities and discussions. Interestingly, one teacher claimed that he sometimes invited students' to reflect on the objectives of their learning. Such a procedure is considered a significant step towards the production of autonomous learners. Only (15.38%) of the teachers always encourage their students to be responsible for their learning. The remaining subjects do not attribute importance to learners' autonomy in their teaching practices.

3.4.2.2. Teachers' Evaluation of Learners' Readiness to take responsibility for Their Learning

In this item, teachers were asked to evaluate the extent to which their learners are ready to take responsibility for their learning with the spread of COVID 19 pandemic in the country**.**

Table 2. Teacher's Evaluation of Learners' Readiness to take responsibility for their Learning

Options	Frequency	Percentage

Yes	4	15.38%
No	22	84.62%
Total	26	100%

The overwhelming majority of the teachers (84.62%) believe that their students are not ready to take responsibility for their learning. They are not accustomed to plan, set objectives, assess and monitor their learning because they rely on their teachers as the primary and the only source of knowledge. The teachers' responses confirm the problem stated at the beginning of in the research paper.

3.4.3. Section Three: Teachers' Experiences and Attitudes towards the Use of Online and Flipped Learning Modes in their Classes.

3.4.3.1. Teachers' Online Teaching Experiences

Teachers' answers about their online teaching experience are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Teachers' Online-Teaching Experiences

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	26	100%
No	00	00%
Total	26	100%

All the teachers have used their professional accounts on the website of the department to post their handouts and books to support the face-to-face sessions and to facilitate students' access to the content. Only two teachers have reported that they used Google Classroom application as an alternative tool since learners were able to discuss topics and ask questions.

3.4.3.2. Teachers' Experiences in Flipped Classroom

In this item, teachers were asked about their prior experiences in the flipped classroom.

Table 4. Teachers Experiences in Flipped Classroom

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	4	15.39%
No	15	57.69%
It is a new term for me	7	26.92%
Total	26	100%

The analysis of teachers' responses revealed that flipped classroom is not sufficiently practiced in the university of Batna 2 since it is still nascent. The majority of them have never experienced this innovative pedagogical approach. Moreover, seven teachers have stated that have never heard about this model before. Only (15.39%) of the participants have said that they have implemented this model in their classes, and they found it beneficial and helpful for learners.

3.4.3.3. Teachers' Attitudes towards the Flipped Learning Model and its Role in Supporting Learners Autonomy

In this item, teachers were given 10 statements related to the flipped classroom and its potential; and they were asked to express the agreement or disagreements with them using Likert scale (from strongly agree to strongly disagree).

Table 5. Teachers' Attitudes towards the Flipped Learning Model and its Role in Supporting Learners Autonomy

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.Flipped classroom is useful for adequate classroom time management.	26	00%	0	00%	0	00%	0	00%	0	00%
2.Flipped classroom offers students more opportunities to ask questions, actively practice, participate in interactive activities inside the classroom, which increase their understanding and improve their knowledge construction and their performance.	16	61.54%	9	34.61%	1	3.85%	0	00%	0	00%
3.Students become more motivated to learn in flipped classroom than in the traditional one.	10	38.46%	8	30.77%	5	19.23%	3	11.54%	0	00%
4.Flipped classroom improves students' cognitive skills of applying theories, concepts and ideas, analyzing them, evaluating them and creating new things.	12	46.15%	11	42.31%	3	19.23%	0	00%	0	00%
5.Flipped classroom develops students' self-assessment skills and promotes their reflection on their progress.	8	30.77%	10	38.46%	6	23.08%	2	7.69%	0	00%
6.Flipped classroom is an opportunity for students to set learning plans and goals and take the initiative to learn.	10	38.46%	11	42.31%	3	11.54%	2	7.69%	0	00%
7.Flipped classroom helps students quest and solve the problems they encounter with and without the help of the teacher.	9	34.61%	12	46.15%	4	15.38%	1	3.85%	00	00%
8.Exposing students to the content of the lecture before class time and devoting class time for interactive and engaging activities promote learners' autonomy and self-directed learning.	14	53.85%	8	30.77%	2	7.69%	2	7.69%	00	00%
9.Exposing students to the content of the lecture before class time and devoting class time for interactive and	16	61.54%	8	30.77%	2	7.69%	0	00%	0	00%

engaging activities help teachers to identify and address learners' learning styles, needs and interests in their classes.										
10.In flipped classroom, teachers' tasks are to design the appropriate technological materials and interactive activities, guide students, bring support and check their understanding.	19	73.0 7%	7	30.4 3%	0	00%	0	00%	0	00%

The analysis of teachers' responses demonstrates that teachers have positive attitudes towards the flipped learning model. As denoted in Table (5), all informants strongly confirm the important role of the flipped learning in good time management. Thus, the flipped classroom can be an effective learning environment that helps to overcome the problem of insufficient time allocation.

In the second statement, the majority of teachers have expressed opinions that vary between strongly agree (61.54%) and agree (34.61%) with the view that the flipped classroom offers students more opportunities to ask questions, actively practice, participate in interactive activities inside the classroom, which increase their understanding and improve their knowledge construction and their performance whilst one teacher have expressed his disagreement with the statement. According to these answers, the flipped classroom as a learner-centered approach can be an efficient remedy to learners' passiveness in the traditional model.

In the third statement which deals with the effect of the flipped classroom on students' motivation, the answers of the teachers are as follows: Strongly agree (38.46%), agree (30.77%), neutral (19.23%), disagree (11.54%) and strongly

disagree (00%). For the majority of the informants; the flipped classroom is a motivating learning environment. When learners watch instructional videos or read texts at their own pace at home; and engage in collaborative and interactive activities inside the classroom, learners become more motivated to learn. By contrast, three teachers reject this opinion. The remaining teachers have neutral attitudes towards it.

Statement four aims at examining teachers' attitudes towards the development of Bloom's (2002) higher-order thinking skills in the flipped learning mode. As illustrated in table 5, most of the teachers (46.15%) strongly affirm the role of the flipped learning environment in promoting learners' higher-order thinking skills (application of new theories and concepts in new situations, analysis and the identification of the connection between different elements, evaluation of ideas and information, creation of new product). Similarly, (42.31%) of the teachers agree with the statement. On the other hand, (19.23%) of participants are neutral; they neither agree nor disagree with the view probably because the concept of flipped learning is new for them.

In statement five, teachers respectively: strongly disagree (30.77%), disagree (38.46%), are neutral (23.08%), disagree (7.69%) and (00%) Strongly disagree. Again, the majority of teachers positively perceive the importance of the flipped instructions in supporting learners' self-assessment skills and their reflection on their learning progress. These skills are necessary for learners' autonomy which is at the core of our study. The (23.08%) are not sure whether this learning mode is helpful or not while only (7.69%) of the informants refute the idea.

In statement six, most of the teachers strongly agree (38.46%) or agree (42.31%) with the view that the combination of the online delivery of the lecture before class time and engaging activities inside the classroom is an opportunity for learners to be trained to set plans and goals for their learning and take the initiative to learn and construct knowledge with or without the help of the teachers. On the other hand, (11.54%) of the participants are uncertain about this view maybe because they do not have any background information about it. (7.69%) of them reject it.

Teachers' responses in statement seven demonstrate that the majority of the teachers strongly believe (34.61%) or believe (46.15%) that the flipped learning model helps students quest and solve problems they face as classroom activities target their higher-order cognitive skills. A small proportion of the participants (15.38%) are conservative; and only (3.85%) of the teachers are against this view.

In statement eight, teachers were asked to express their views regarding the role of the flipped learning model in promoting learners' autonomy. The overwhelming majority of teachers strongly support (53.85%) or support (30.77%) the claim that exposing students to the content of the lecture before class time and devoting class time for interactive and engaging activities promote learners' autonomy and self-directed learning. The result is in line with previous answers of teachers regarding the role of this model in the development of learners' active learning, cognitive and affective skills, self-assessment and self-reflection skills, setting goals and planning which are necessary for learners to monitor their

learning. By contrast, (7.69%) of the respondents are neutral and (7.69%) of them reject this view.

Item nine addresses individualization and differentiation in flipped learning. Most of the informants strongly agree (61.54%) or agree (30.77%) with the statement that exposing students to the content of the lecture before class time and devoting class time for interactive and engaging activities help teachers to identify and address learners' learning styles, needs and interests in their classes. As the flipped learning model extends learning time and stresses individualized and collaborative learning, learners' needs, interests and learning styles are prioritized. On the other hand, two teachers are uncertain about this issue.

In the last statement, all the teachers either strongly agree (73.07%) or agree (30.43%) with the view that teachers' tasks in flipped classroom are to design the appropriate technological materials and interactive activities, guide students, bring support and check their understanding. Here, we recall the claims that the important factor for the success of the flipped classroom is the '*humanware*' (Warschauer&Meskill, 2000) and that the teacher is a guide on the side who provides support and scaffolding to learners to construct knowledge.

3.4.3.4. The difficulties and the challenges of the Implementation of the Flipped Classroom in the Algerian Universities

In this Item, teachers were requested to cite the difficulties and the challenges that teachers and learners may face when this model is / will be implemented in the Algerian Universities. The answers of the teachers are grouped into the following categories:

✓ Problems related to internet access especially in rural areas.

✓ Problems related to students' financial problems and lack of the necessary technological materials.

✓ Problems related to students' lack of discipline and punctuality.

✓ Problems related to the absence of the teachers' immediate feedback and support to guide students and answer their questions outside the classroom.

✓ Teachers' and students' limited mastery of the technological materials.

3.4.3.5. Teachers' Opinions about the Use of the Flipped Learning Model In their Department during COVID 19 Outbreak

The following table illustrates teachers' opinions about the use of the flipped learning model in their teaching practices during the current health crisis.

Table 6. Teachers' Opinions about the Use of the Flipped Learning Model In their Department during COVID 19 Outbreak

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	24	92.31%
No	2	7.69%
Total	26	100%

Statistic measurements presented in Table (6) indicate the overwhelming majority of teachers (92.31%) recommend the implementation in the department of English during COVID 19 outbreak to help learners who are not able to attend all the sessions and to offer students more time to practice and engage in classroom activities. By contract, (7.69%) of the teachers do not recommend it

because they think that neither teachers nor students are ready. A teacher thinks that the preparation of this model takes a lot of time and energy.

4. CONCLUSION

The present study investigated EFL teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the flipped learning model and its role in enhancing learners' autonomy. The analysis and the interpretation of teachers' responses based on their teaching experiences revealed that EFL teachers in the department of English at Batna University have positive attitudes towards the use of this innovative pedagogical approach to support learners' autonomy and ability to take charge of their learning. Although some teachers are reluctant to implement this approach since they believe that they are unprepared, the majority of them recommended the use of the flipped learning model as an alternative to the traditional one especially during COVID 19 spread to create a motivating learning atmosphere that offers great opportunities to achieve the learning goals and encourages learners to engage and actively participate in classroom activities that foster their learning, increase their involvement in the learning process and prepare them to become lifelong independent learners. Flipped learning is a promising learning approach. Nevertheless, its implementation is still challenging. Creating a flipped classroom cannot be as simple as the inversion of the content delivery time and the homework time. It requires a well-planned design of the flipped course before and during class time. Therefore, we recommend the use of easy and accessible technological tools and platforms that facilitate teacher-students and students-students interactions such as Google Classroom and Edmodo. The online materials and classroom activities should be thoughtfully selected, and they should be

congruent with the learning objectives and the desired outcomes. We suggest exposing teachers and students to educational technology courses to enhance their ICT skills including the use of online platforms. As the present study is limited to the descriptive approach, further experimental studies can investigate better the use of this model in the EFL context, its benefits and the difficulties that teachers and students can encounter.

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Teachers' Questionnaire

Flipped Classroom is a type of blended learning approach. In this pedagogical approach, prevailing in the 21st century, students, are requested to read books, articles or handouts, or watch instructional video lectures prepared by their teacher using a technological tool at their own pace before class time. Class time is devoted to practical activities, engaging discussions and debates. The present questionnaire aims at investigating teachers' stands and attitudes towards the use of flipped instructions in EFL context and its role in the promotion of students' self-reliance. Your answers will be kept confidential and anonymous. Thank you in advance.

Section One: Teachers' Background Information

1. Qualification:

Magister   Doctorate

2. How long have you been teaching English? ....
3. Subjects taught: ....

Section Two: Teachers Teaching Practices and Experiences

4. How often do you use activities and strategies that encourage learners the take responsibility for their learning?

Always   Sometimes   Rarely   Never

5. Do you think that your learners are ready to take responsibility for their learning with the spread of COVID 19 pandemic?

Yes   No

Section Three: Teachers' Experiences and Attitudes towards the Use of Online and Flipped Learning Modes in their Classes.

6. Have you ever experienced online teaching practices?

Yes   No

7. a. Have you ever experienced the flipped learning classroom?

Yes   No   It is a new term for me

b. If yes, how do you evaluate this experience?

....

8. Would you please rate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following statements?

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.Flipped classroom is useful for adequate classroom time management.					
2.Flipped classroom offers students more opportunities to ask questions, actively practice, participate in interactive activities inside the classroom, which increase their understanding and improve their knowledge construction and their performance.					
3.Students become more motivated to learn in flipped classroom than in the traditional one.					
4.Flipped classroom improves students' cognitive skills of applying theories, concepts and ideas, analyzing them, evaluating them and creating					

new things.					
5.Flipped classroom develops students' self-assessment skills and promotes their reflection on their progress.					
6.Flipped classroom is an opportunity for students to set learning plans and goals and take the initiative to learn.					
7.Flipped classroom helps students quest and solve the problems they encounter with and without the help of the teacher.					
8.Exposing students to the content of the lecture before class time and devoting class time for interactive and engaging activities promote learners' autonomy and self-directed learning.					
9.Exposing students to the content of the lecture before class time and devoting class time for interactive and engaging activities help teachers to identify and address learners' learning styles, needs and interests in their classes.					
10.In flipped classroom, teachers' tasks are to design the appropriate technological materials and interactive activities, guide students, bring support and check their understanding.					

9. What are the main difficulties and challenges that teachers and learners may encounter when implementing the Flipped Classroom in Algerian Universities?

....

....

10. a. Do you recommend the implementation of the flipped learning model in the department of English at Batna 2 University?

Yes   No

b. Would you please justify your answer?