Flipped Classroom Instruction Model to Enhance Listening Skills

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Abstract
This study is aimed at delineating the effectiveness of implementing flipped classroom learning models and analyzing the impact of this learning model on students' listening ability. This study was conducted in the second year BBA class, at St. Mary's Centenary Degree College, Secunderabad. The participants of this study were 45 students of general English Class. This study is designed as a descriptive qualitative research. The data obtained were based on observation, questionnaire and interview. Initially, observation techniques were used to gain information on how flipped classroom learning models were implemented. Secondly, questionnaires consisting of 15 open-ended statements were given to each participant to gain information about the impact of flipped classroom learning model toward students' satisfaction. Finally, an interview was administered to strengthen the data of the questionnaire. The results of this study were that the flipped classroom learning model has been well - implemented in teaching the poem "As I grew Older" implicitly enhancing the listening skills. In addition, it was also found that this learning mode broke the physical limitation between students and lecturers. Another important result of this study was the improved motivational level and satisfaction from the end of the students and lecturers. Moreover, it was also found that flipped classrooms were difficult to implement in this classroom. However, it promoted self-directed learning and resulted in improved listening ability of the ESL learners once the learners were motivated.
Keywords: Flipped Classroom, ELT, Blended Learning, Teaching Poem and Hybrid Teaching Methodology.

Introduction

In India, English is considered as lingua franca, which drives the students to learn English as a second language from their kindergarten. English is neither a subject nor a language, but a tool, a weapon, and a vehicle for employment criterion (Igawa, 2008). However, in spite of learning the language for more than 10 years, the students lack interest and motivation in using the language or learning the language. Getting acquainted with all the four skills and enhancing those skills seems to be outdated. Being second language learners, the students have problems in pronouncing and speaking fluently, in addition to the writing and reading comprehension barriers. Listening skill, though being the primary and significant skill for oral communication and education process, has been often ignored as a passive skill.

With the exhaustive use of technology in education, listening skill and comprehension can be well attained through the internet technology (Kuo et al., 2014; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). With the onset of innovative technologies, globally, the instructors and learners are fascinated with the internet and technology- based communication.

The diverse student populace and the extensive use of technology has made higher education challenging to a greater extent. These heterogeneous learners delve in diverse learning styles, with manifold levels of motivation, which eventually challenges the university lectures and tutors. They are expected to provide education that develops the optimal performance for each individual student (Abeysekera and Dawson 2015; Cruzado and Román 2015). These changes in the educational system, challenges the existing traditional model of teaching by lecture method. Flipped learning or blended learning being a new and unique teaching strategy, caters these changes and challenges.

The inverted or flipped classroom is an instructional strategy and an innovative pedagogical approach, which has the ability to meet the needs of students by shifting the process of learning from direct group instruction to individual learning space ((Flipped Learning Network, 2014), Abeysekera and Dawson 2015; Cruzado and Roman 2015; O'Flaherty and Phillips 2015). Flipped classroom, thereby, labels a new instructing technique, where the instructors upload video lectures to preview before the class and the class in-time is dedicated to active learning through participation in discussion and analysis. In flipped classrooms, the knowledge is disseminated through the utilization of recorded lecture videos, Powerpoint lectures and tailored materials that are also accessible remotely. In addition, through flipping of the learning process, the students are prepared for the classes by the employment of the online/offline videos, games, MOOC courses and Power Points, which permits students to learn in a reflective and self-paced scheme (O'Flaherty and Phillips 2015). Subsequently, the class time provides the learners with the space to apply the materials through discussion, peer interaction and active learning of the concepts (Gajjar 2013; O'Flaherty and Phillips 2015; Strayer 2012; Tucker 2012).

In divergence with a traditional constructivist classroom, flipped classroom encourages the learners to collaborate the variety of online/offline resources presented to them, before the class, to construct clarity over the concepts by self-learning and communicating. Permeating beyond the assignment and projects, the learners accumulate additional information detouring to a new arena of topics, shaping their learning experience.

Literature Review

Listening skill, as the potentiality to comprehend a message delivered by a speaker, is an essential power skill. For the acquisition of any language, listening skill is a prerequisite to obtain comprehensible input from a speaker/communicator. Efficient comprehension ability signifies efficacy in active participation in class (Lin 2002). Despite the significance of comprehending the spoken language, the challenge of comprehending the academic learning information may be due to the negligence in teaching listening skills out of the four language skills (Otte, 2006; Gonen, 2009; Brownell, 2013). According to Steil (1997), listening skills refers to the following process.
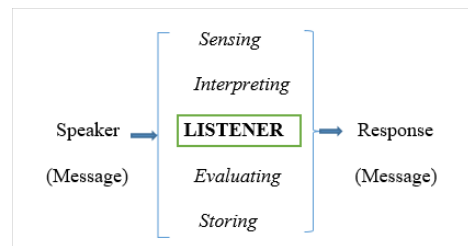

In this paper, listening ability refers to the overall comprehension of the primary ideas shared or expressed through the online videos, related to the lessons in sequence with the real-life circumstances and conditions, by puzzling out the word meanings through the context, conceptual summarization of ideas as a reflection on the videos.

Flipped Classroom

Flipped classroom, basically is an innovative, instructional, and contemporary teaching strategy, which is also referred to as a reverse (Halili & Zainuddin, 2015), backwards (McLaughlin et al., 2014), inverted (Bates & Galloway, 2012), and upside down (Zhang, Ma, & Liu, 2014) classroom. It is a teaching model that inverts the lecture + homework scheme (Arnold-Garza, 2014) into technological assignments on lecture videos + class discussion/ projects. In other words, in a flipped classroom, the tasks performed in the class are done prior to

the classes, thereby preparing them for the in-class discussions and activities. With the onset of internet and technology, the pre-class video-lessons enables the learners to consolidate and apply the concepts on hands-on activities as a form of real workshop, facilitating direct learning of the curricular content (The Queensland Government, 2012; Abeysekera& Dawson, 2015; Johnson, 2012; Boyer, 2013; Ash, 2012; Demski, 2013; Horn, 2013).
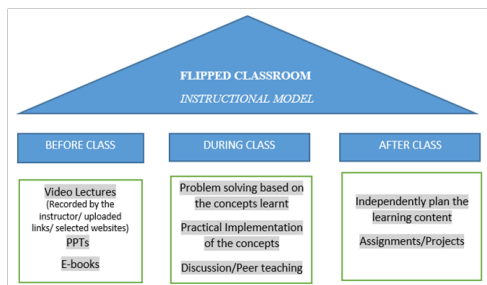
In flipped classrooms, the time is thereby regulated pre- and post-class and the managerial power of learning is relinquished by the teachers shifting it to students. Teachers are no longer information providers, rather they execute the role of facilitating and guiding the learners to gain knowledge to a greater extent with the technology. Here in this case, even the slow learners are provided with the option of obtaining maximum knowledge at their own pace, which the traditional teaching method fails to impart. The privilege of watching video lectures, reading e-books and blogs, accessing the materials on the learner's convenience, and later discussing it with their peers on the internet, has made flipped classroom models atypical. As this age of internet bestows the learners with a plentitude of online resources, the flipped classroom model, thus, aims to personalize and individualize tailored content for the learners to receive more of the real practical learning.

Flipped Classroom in an ESL Classroom to Enhance Listening Comprehension

Flipped classroom instructional models can be significantly productive in enhancing English listening skills. In a flipped classroom, learners can listen to authentic materials, such as podcasts, interviews, news broadcasts, or interviews, outside of class, and then practice their listening comprehension skills during class time with the guidance of the instructor(teacher/ facilitator in other words). This allows for a more interactive and personalized learning experience as the instructor can furnish targeted feedback and help the learners overcome specific challenges they may face in listening to spoken English.

In addition, flipped classroom approach is an effective way to enhance English listening skills when teaching a poem. By having students listen to an audio or video recording of the poem before class, they can better familiarize themselves with the poem's language, tone, and rhythm, which can aid in comprehension and interpretation.

During class time, the teacher can lead a discussion or activity focused on the poem's meaning and literary elements, while also integrating listening exercises to enhance students' understanding and appreciation of the poem. For example, the teacher can play an audio recording of the poem and ask students to identify and discuss specific words, phrases, or literary devices used in the poem, or to compare and contrast different recordings of the poem. Overall, the flipped classroom approach can help students develop their listening skills and build a deeper understanding of the poem, while also promoting more active and engaging learning.

Research Objectives

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of the Flipped Classroom instructional model in an English class during a unit on the poem "As I grew Older" (Hughes,) inside and out of the classroom. The following research questions helped to inform the study:

- How does flipping affect listening skills in an ESL classroom?
- How can a poem be taught in a flipped classroom?
- How does a poem taught in a flipped classroom model enhance listening ability?
- How do students respond to flipped strategies in their general English class?

Methods

This study examines a flipped unit based on the poem "As I grew Older" (Hughes,) implemented during a two-week period in January 2023. The

researcher (instructor) investigated flipped teaching methods in relation to 45 sophomores in the general English course, and the activities inside (and outside) of an ESL classroom.

Research Design and Data Sources

The study aimed to explore the effectiveness of the flipped classroom in enhancing SMCDC sophomores' English listening skills and investigate the students' opinions on the flipped classroom to enhance English listening comprehension. There were 45 second year student participants. Their age-range was between 17 to 20 years old. Out of which, 28 students were boys and 17 students were girls.

Initially, to investigate and evaluate the expectations of the learners in a structured and systematic process, a needs analysis was done by the instructor that helped her to understand the likes and dislikes with respect to the teaching methods. Out of 45 students 21 liked to listen to a ppt presentation, 8 were interested in doing projects and assignments and 16 students preferred audio-visual methods of learning. Out of 45, 32 students liked self-learning browsing through the internet. Hence, based on the analysis, the instructor tailored a lesson plan, which consisted of videos that implicitly immersed the students to listen to the native speakers. Involved in the themes of discrimination, racism and similar social issues that they had experienced, during the class, the students were involved in active participation of language listening and transcription of the videos, in the process of answering the questions.

In the present study, observation, questionnaire and interview methods were applied. The study involved a listening test with summary writing from videos. The students had the poem "As I grew older by Langston Hughes" as a part of the curriculum. However, based on the initial observation, the instructor found that the learners were demotivated and disinterested in reading/listening to the poem. Hence the instructor opted for a flipped classroom model. Thereby, the students were exposed to the pre-planned tailored materials related to the poem and the poet, through Google forms. And the in-time class was dedicated to group discussions. During the class the students were asked to answer a series of questions (short and long answers), which they had

to answer based on the videos shared. However, they were allowed to check their books or internet to answer the questions. The questions were based on the videos, which consisted of the poem theme (slavery and discrimination). Another poem by the same poet and a video that explains the poem itself was also included, to be transcribed.
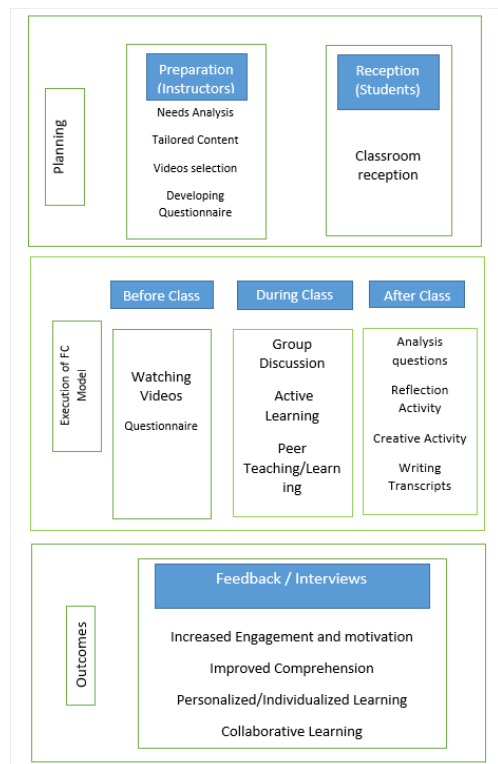
Implementation of Flipped Classroom Model

The Flipped classroom instructional model involves three phases:
• Before Class
• During Class
• After Class

The figure below elucidates the process in which the study was implemented in the general English class of BBA sophomores, at SMCDC.
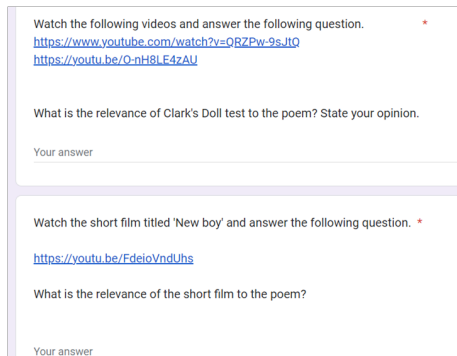
Before Class

In teaching the poem "As I Grew Older" using the flipped classroom approach, the students were asked to read and analyze the poem on their own time. Most importantly, based on the needs analysis conducted, the instructor designed a plan that

included a Google form with the instructional videos attached to it. Thereby, the learners were exposed to instructional videos, which were tailored to those learners specifically, according to their interest and need. Since the videos were made available to them prior to the classes, the learners had the choice to go through the videos in their own time and pace prior to the class.

In addition to the poem video link, the videos shared to the learners included the following.

Watch the following videos and answer the following question.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRZPw-9sJtQ
https://youtu.be/O-nH8LE4zAU

What is the relevance of Clark's Doll test to the poem? State your opinion.

Your answer

Watch the short film titled 'New boy' and answer the following question.

https://youtu.be/FdeioVndUhs

What is the relevance of the short film to the poem?

Your answer

Hence, the learners had to draw a parallel between these videos (which consisted of an experimental study – Doll's Test, about predetermined notions of skin color and a short film titled 'New Boy') and the poem based on the theme of discrimination, racism and stigmatization of skin complexion. In particular, as Elian and Hamaidi (44) suggested, the videos ranged from 5-10 minutes. In contrast to the traditional model of teaching, here, the short videos was added to the repository of instructional resources, which any learner can access at any desired time in the future. Additionally, these resources and Google forms were shared in the Google Classroom as it has a function repository to retain all the resources. Besides, it is effortlessly accessed by the learners to download the resources anytime and anywhere, with a vital avenue for peer learning and interaction outside the classroom.

During Class

When the study was implemented for the first time, the instructor had a challenge. Since the students were hardly motivated, they hardly did their homework of watching the videos before the class. Hence few classes were dedicated to introduce them to this model of teaching. Moreover, the learners were given time during the class hours to ensure that they watch the videos followed by completion of the questionnaire. Eventually, they came to class ready to discuss their interpretations of the poem and participated in activities such as group discussions, writing exercises, and multimedia presentations. Two students were also allowed to do peer teaching with PowerPointpresentations, which resulted in active participation of the students, in contrast to the traditional instructional model of teaching/learning.

Furthermore, during the class time, the instructor also provided additional guidance on the poem's meaning and structure, facilitating a deeper discussion on themes such as overcoming oppression, the power of dreams, and the role of poetry in inspiring change. The flipped classroom approach allowed students to engage with the poem more deeply and to have a more active role in their own learning process.

After Class

Enhancing listening ability through the poem was further enhanced by assigning after-class listening tasks to the students. The following listening tasks were assigned for this poem:

1. Analysis Questions: After listening to the poem, students were asked to answer analysis questions such as "What is the central theme of the poem?" or "What literary devices are used to convey the theme?"

2. Reflection Activity: After listening to the poem, students were asked to reflect on the idea of discrimination and oppression, and how the message of the poem relates to their own lives. This helped the students to connect with the poem on a personal level and develop a deeper appreciation for its themes and motifs.

3. Creative Activity: Students were asked to upload a picture or create their own poem or piece of creative writing inspired by the themes in "As I Grew Older". This helped students develop their own creative expression and engage more deeply with the content.

4. Writing Transcripts: Students were also asked to listen to one other song-poem titled 'A Dream Deferred' and were asked to write the transcripts for it.

This is yet another poem written by Langston Hughes. Listen to it and write the poem lines below. *

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6JXHzyX60M

Your answer

Overall, after-class listening tasks were found to be an effective way to promote active learning and deepen students' understanding of the content, while also encouraging them to take ownership of their own learning.

Results and Discussions

Implementing flipped classroom instructional models to enhance listening skills, by teaching the poem "As I Grew Older" yielded positive results. The instructor observed and found the following changes emerge in the attitude and behavior of the learners. This was based on semi-structured interviews and students' feedback.

Increased Engagement

The flipped classroom approach encouraged students to take ownership of their own learning, which increased engagement and motivation. By using multimedia resources and online tools to deliver content, teachers created an interactive and engaging learning environment that promoted active listening and participation.

Improved Comprehension

By providing students with access to a range of multimedia resources, such as audio and video recordings, students were exposed to authentic English language listening materials. This helped them develop their comprehension skills and their ability to decode meaning from spoken language.

Individualized Learning

As the flipped classroom model allowed students to learn at their own pace, it was beneficial, especially for those who struggle with listening skills. It was also found that the students could review the materials as many times as needed to understand the content, leading to better outcomes.

Collaborative Learning

Further, the flipped classroom approach also promoted collaborative learning by encouraging the students to work together on listening tasks, such as analysis questions or discussion activities. This helped the students in developing their listening and speaking skills, as well as their ability to work in teams.

Conclusion

To conclude, the flipped classroom approach was an effective method for teaching the poem "As I Grew Older", thereby, aiding the enhancement of listening skills. By using multimedia resources, encouraging individualized and collaborative learning, and providing opportunities for reflection and creative expression, students were able to deepen their understanding of the poem's themes and develop their critical thinking skills. It was also found that teachers can also use assessments, such as analysis questions or quizzes, to measure student progress and identify areas that require further instruction or reinforcement. Accordingly, flipped teaching modelshave been found to have positive outcomes in acquiring English language listening skills. In a nutshell, by combining traditional classroom instruction with online resources and multimedia materials, flipped classroom instructional modelscreate an interactive and engaging learning environment. The results of this study could be a great help in guiding teaching of English listening to ESL teachers and improving English listening comprehension of ESL learners. Through a variety of instructional strategies and activities, the flipped classroom can thus offer chances to adapt the learning process to the diversity of students' subject matter expertise and learning preferences.

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