TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE USE OF FLIPPED LEARNING APPROACH IN LEARNING GRAMMAR

Aisyah Hanum Abu Bakar,
hanum@ump.edu.my
Noor Azlinda Zainal Abidin,
azlinda@ump.edu.my
Zuraina Ali,
zuraina@ump.edu.my
Nursyaheedah Muhammad Isa,
syaheedah@ump.edu.my
Nor Suhardiliana Sahar
liana@ump.edu.my

Universiti Malaysia Pahang

Abstract: *Flipped learning approach in the teaching and learning is defined as an inverted method, in which activities such as the delivery of the content are done at homes, and activities normally constituting homework and practices are done during class time (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Sohrabi & Iraj, 2016). The method is not only applicable to tertiary level students but also to primary and secondary school students. With the help of technology, it can also assist in English classes, particularly in reading, writing, listening and speaking and also grammar knowledge. This study aimed to examine teachers' perceptions towards the application of flipped learning approach in preparing the students for Get into Grammar (GIGvaganza) program and to identify the problems that hindered the maximum use of flipped learning approach in a classroom. This study employed quantitative data enquiry involving 51 teachers from three districts in Pahang. The results showed that the approach appeared to play a significant role in motivating the students to learn and apply the grammar knowledge as well as to engage in the activities conducted. The findings implied that flipped learning approach is very much important in assisting the students to be active in English classes, particularly in grammar lessons and should also be applied to other skills.*

Keyword: *Flipped learning, grammar, English classes*

Introduction

Flipped learning approach is an approach which is in trend nowadays because of its effectiveness. It is known as an effective approach in learning as it promotes students centred instruction (Hamdan, McKnight, McKnight & Arfstrom, 2013). It will allow students to empower autonomy in learning. Flipped learning is designed for teachers to prepare students before coming to class for lessons. Materials are prepared by teachers and then previewed by the students before class (Hao, 2016). In learning grammar, flipped learning is used to practice

grammar contents. Kang (2015) argues that the flipped classroom displayed statistically significant changes to both grammar and vocabulary knowledge. This study therefore sets out to answer these research questions:

RQ1: What are teachers' perceptions in using the flipped learning approach in teaching grammar?
RQ2: What are the problems that may hinder the effectiveness of a flipped learning approach?

Literature Review

Flipped approach introduces a new or an inverted method in delivering content. According to Bergmann and Sams (2012), the flipped model approach is an emerging model through an improved allocation of teaching time with an aim to increase students' active learning, collaboration and scaffolding during the learning process. The authors also state that the application of the strategy echoes the idea that lectures and explanations are no longer done during class time but at home. In order for the students to apprehend the content of the subject to be discussed, they will need to preview the provided online video or video recordings of the lectures, Internet resources, together with slide presentations with audio narratives before the class (Hamdan et al., 2013). Evseeva and Solozhenko (2015) state that "the role of the teacher is shifting from delivering ready-made knowledge to students to facilitate their learning" (p.207). As a result of the implementation of flipped classroom, it helps instructors to attain their learning outcomes and thus make teaching and learning more engaging, active and student-centered (Jamaludin & Osman, 2014; Trucano, 2005).

To date, several studies have found that students gained a lot of advantages from flipped learning, particularly in language learning. Kang (2015) concluded that the implementation of flipped could maximize class time and give students ample chances to communicate in class. Zhang (2015) stated that students had more chances to practise speaking in English. Marsh (2012) revealed that flipped learning boosted the students' confidence level. Kang (2015) reported that flipped classroom displayed significant changes to students' grammar knowledge. Similarly, in an analysis of the improvement in relation to English grammar, Al-Harbi and Al-shumaimeri (2016) found that the strategy plays a role in enhancing students' grammar knowledge. Bergmann and Sams (2012) observed that students were more engaged in classes. This view is supported by Khanova, Roth, Rodgers and McLaughlin (2015) who wrote that flipped learning could engage students in active learning. In addition, Sohrabi and Iraj (2016) reported that the students had more communication with the instructors. In the same vein, Soliman (2016) concluded that the flipped classroom strategy fostered student-teacher interaction.

However, data from several studies suggested that there are some challenges in implementing flipped classroom strategy from a teacher's perspectives. In a study investigating teachers' perceptions on the flipped classroom, Webb, Doman and Pusey (2014) reported that there was too much work for preparing pre-class materials, for instance in creating videos. Akcayir and Akcayir (2018) cited many drawbacks faced by the teachers that are associated with time consuming (Wanner & Palmer, 2015) and an increase of workload (Sage & Sele, 2015).
The studies presented thus far provide evidence that flipped learning approach has a positive impact on students' confidence level and grammar knowledge. In addition, it is also evident that it can strengthen the teacher-student rapport. However, little is known about what problems may hinder the effectiveness of this approach from a perspective of a school teacher, especially in Malaysian context.

Methodology
Research Design and Context
This quantitative study employed a questionnaire survey to collect data. The procedure was carried out in three different locations namely Kompleks Rakan Muda Bera, SMK Lepar and SMK Kampung Belukar. These were the locations of which GIGvaganza Bera, GIGvaganza UPSR and GIGvaganza SPM & PT3 were organised on 3rd, 5th and 10th July 2018 respectively.

Context: GIGvaganza
GIGvaganza is an English programme which was first initiated by Centre of Modern Languages and Human Sciences (CMLHS) Universiti Malaysia Pahang. GIGvaganza requires the students to creatively and independently prepare Grammar components based educational games. Some of the grammar components used were Noun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction, Simple Present Tense, Simple Past Tense, Present Continuous Tense, Past Continuous Tense and many more. Apart from hosting the grammar games, the students were also required to play the games designed by other groups from other schools involved. GIGvaganza did not only test the students on their teamworking skills, it also tested them on their communication skills as the students need to actively give instructions and award points to their friends throughout the games. Prior to the students designing their grammar games, their English teachers were instructed to provide grammar inputs for their students via flipped learning method.

Sample Population
In total, 51 respondents were received. The respondents consisted of English teachers from all the participating schools. There were 11 male respondents, 40 female respondents. Fifteen (15) of respondents were from the schools in the Pekan district while another 26 was from Pekan and Kuantan districts. All of them are used to using technology in classrooms.

Table 1: Respondents' Levels of Teaching and Years of Teaching Experience

Levels of Teaching	Frequency	Percentage (100%)	Years of Teaching	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
UPSR	34	66.7	**0-10 years**	29	56.9
PT3	6	11.8	**10-20 years**	20	39.2
SPM	6	11.8	**20-30 years**	1	2
PT3 &SPM	5	9.8	**Not stated**	1	2
Total	51	100	**Total**	51	100

According to Table 1, a majority of the respondents who responded to the questionnaires are teaching UPSR students (66.7%). A similar percentage of the respondents (11.8%) are teaching PT3 and SPM respectively while 9.8% of them teach both PT3 and SPM. When asked to state the duration of their teaching experience, 56.9% reported that they have been teaching around 0-10 years old. 39.2% claimed that their teaching experience is ranging from 10-20 years old. Finally, 2% stated that they have taught for around 20 to 30 years and another 2% did not state the duration.

Research Tool
A survey questionnaire was designed and employed to investigate teachers' perceptions of the use of flipped learning approach in learning grammar. The questionnaire consists of 14 questions and has three sections. The first section consists of four items. The first section was designed to elicit respondents' demographic background such as gender, years of teaching, levels that they are currently teaching as well as their level of comfortability in using

technology in the classroom. The second section comprises of five items designed to extract information pertaining to the teacher's perceptions of the use of a flipped learning approach for students' grammar input. The Likert scale items were used to gauge students' responses and they ranged from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. The third and last section comprises of 5 items aimed at eliciting information on the problems that teachers may hinder the effectiveness of a flipped learning approach.

Results and Discussion

Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of a Flipped Approach for Grammar Input
Table 2 illustrates the teachers' perceptions towards the use of flipped approach. In response to the statement 'The students have more time to practise using grammar in speaking activities through flipped classroom', 82.4% of the respondents agreed that their students had ample time to use grammar components in speaking activities whereas 5.9% stated that they disagreed. The second statement asked the respondents to evaluate their students' confidence level in using grammar structures in speaking activities. In general, the respondents agreed that their students had a boost in confidence level (70.6%). 11.8% of them strongly agreed that their students' confidence level increased whereas 17.6% disagreed. Regarding the students' ability to use grammar accurately, 35 of them (68.6%) agreed that the flipped approach strategy encouraged their students to be able to use grammar with correct manner. 13.7% strongly agreed and 17.6% disagreed. Statement 4 evaluated the respondents' perceptions on whether the flipped classroom approach had helped their students to become more active in learning grammar. In this statement, the respondents generally agreed (70.6%) that their students could engage actively in the activities conducted. Surprisingly, only a minority of respondents (3.9%) disagreed. The next question asked the respondents whether the flipped approach classroom had given them greater opportunities to communicate with their students. Whilst a minority of them (2%) disagreed, 80.4% agreed to that statement.

This finding is consistent with several studies about the significance of flipped learning activities towards students' English grammar in classrooms. Al-Harbi and Alshumaimeri (2016) found that adopting flipped classroom strategy plays a role in enhancing students' grammar knowledge. These results further support the idea of Kang (2015) who stated that students were able to demonstrate significant changes in grammar knowledge through the implementation of flipped classroom. In addition, Kang (2015) believed that flipped learning approach enhanced students' engagement in classroom activities and nurtured interaction between teachers and students. Overall, these results indicate the teachers' perceptions towards the flipped approach were mainly positive and they agreed that the approach has enhanced their students' participation and confidence level in classroom activities.

Table 2: Teachers' Perceptions on the students' participation, grammar accuracy and confidence level in speaking activities

		Students have more time to practise using grammar through flipped classroom	Students feel more confident in using the grammar structures	The students can use the grammar more accurately	Flipped classroom could help my students to become more active	The flipped classroom gives me greater opportunities to communicate with my students
Percentage	Strongly Agree	11.8	11.8	13.7	25.5	17.6
	Agree	82.4	70.6	68.6	70.6	80.4
	Disagree	5.9	17.6	17.6	3.9	2.0
	Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	100	100	100	100	100

Problems That Hinder the Effectiveness of a Flipped Approach Classroom

Table 3 discusses findings on problems that hinder the effectiveness of flipped approach. Classroom. About 43.1 % of the respondents agreed that the facilities at schools are conducive for flipped classroom. However, 33.3 % disagreed to this statement. When respondents are asked about the students' readiness in having flipped classroom, 70.6 % of the respondents agreed that students are ready for flipped classroom. None of the respondents or 0% of them strongly disagreed that the students are ready for flipped classroom. In the third statement, about 56.9 % of the respondents agreed that they have ample time to carry out flipped classroom with their students. In contrast, only 2% of the respondents strongly agreed that they have ample time in carrying out the flipped classroom. 62.7% of the respondents disagreed that they need technical assistance to carry out flipped classroom. 80.4 % of the respondents agreed that the availability and access to technical support and resources had helped them improve my lesson.

The findings of the problems reveal that the problem which may hinder the effectiveness of a flipped approach is time. This is supported by Webb et al. (2014) which found that flipped learning materials require the teachers to have more time in preparing class materials. They also discovered that flipped learning requires adjustment time for the teachers. Howitt and Pegrum (2015) argued that further time commitment is needed in designing suitable quiz questions and activities which will be used not in class. Wanner and Palmer (2015) reported that preparing the course materials for flipped learning can reach up to six times compared to preparing materials for traditional course.

Table 3: Problems in Flipped Approach Classroom

		The facilities at schools are conducive for flipped classroom	My students are ready for flipped classroom	I have ample time to carry out flipped classroom with my students	I need technical assistance to carry out flipped classroom	Availability and access to technical support and resources have helped me improve my lesson.
Percentage	Strongly Agree	11.8	2	2	31.4	15.7
	Agree	43.1	70.6	35.3	62.7	80.4
	Disagree	33.3	27.5	56.9	5.9	3.9
	Strongly Disagree	11.8	0	5.9	0	0
	Total	100	100	100	100	100

Conclusion

This study shows that flipped learning approach in learning grammar is perceived by teachers as an effective method for students to learn grammar. It also shows that students can be actively engaged in conducive grammar learning environment sets for flipped learning. Student-centred learning approach can lead to an increase of learner autonomy, performance and motivation (Smit, Brabander & Martens, 2014). Thus, more strategies in using flipped learning should be identified.

Additional studies on the flipped learning strategies are needed to ensure that flipped learning is used effectively in the classroom. Studies on students-centred activities, especially those which are on trend, should also be conducted to promote the effective use of flipped learning. Since technology is widely used nowadays, the researcher may also investigate at technology-based activities for students to use in flipped learning classroom.

The flipped learning approach allows minimal teachers assistance, howbeit students own control on their learning style. However, teachers should be able to find enough time for them to prepare the flipped learning materials for students. With ample time and preparation, learning grammar by using flipped learning approach can be carried out effectively.

References

Akyacir, G., & Akcayir, M. (2018). The flipped classroom: A review of its advantages and challenges. *Computers & Education*, 334-345.

Al-Harbi, S. S., & Alshumaimeri, Y. A. (2016). The Flipped Classroom Impact in Grammar Class on EFL Saudi Secondary School Students' Performances and Attitudes. *English Language Teaching, 9*(10), 60-80.

Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. (2012). *Flip your classroom: Reach every student in every class every day.* Washington, DC: Internal Society for Technology in Education.

Evseeva, A., & Solozhenko, A. (2015). Use if Flipped Classroom Technology in Language Learning. *XV International Conference "Linguistic and Cultural Studies: Traditions and Innovations"*, (pp. 205-209). Tomsk.

Gilboy, M. B., Heinerichs, S., & Pazzaglia, G. (2015). Enhancing Student Engagement Using Flipped Classroom. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, 47*(1), 109-114.

Hamdan, N., McKnight, P., McKnight, K., & Arfstrom, K. M. (2013). *A white paper based on the literature review: A review of flipped learning.* Retrieved from http://flippedlearning.org/cms/lib07/VA01923112/Centricity/Domain/41/WhitePaper_ FlippedLearning.pdf

Hao, Y. (2016). Exploring undergraduates' perspectives and flipped learning readiness in their flipped classrooms. *Computers in Human Behavior, 59*, 82-92.

Howitt, C., & Pegrum, M. (2015). Implementing a flipped classroom approach in postgraduate education: An unexpected journey into pedagogical redesign. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 31*(4), 458-469.

Jamaludin, R., & Osman, S. Z. (2014). The use of a flipped classroom to enhance engagement and promote active learning. *Journal of Education and Practise, 5*(2), 124-131.

Kang, N. (2015). The Comparison between Regular and Flipped Classrooms for EFL Korean Adult Learners. *Multimedia- Assisted Language Learning , 18*(3), 41-72.

Khanova, J., Roth, M. T., Rodgers, J., & Mclaughlin, J. E. (2015). Student experiences across multiple flipped courses in a single curriculum. *Medical Education, 49*(10), 1038-1048.

Marsh, D. (2012). *Blended learning - Creating Learning Opportunities for Language Learners.* London: Cambridge University Press.

Osman, S. M., Jamaluddin, R., & Mokhtar, N. E. (2014). Flipped Classroom and Traditional Classroom: Lecturer and Student Perceptions between Two Leaning Cultures, a Case Study at Malaysian Polytechnic. *International Education Research, 2*(4), 16-25.

Sage, M., & Sele, P. (2015). Reflective Journaling as a Flipped Classroom Technique to Increase Reading and Participation with Social Work Students. *Journal of Social Work Education, 51*(4), 668-681.

Smit, K., Brabander, C. J., & Martens, R. L. (2014). Student-centred and teacher-centred learning environment in pre-vocational secondary education: Psychological needs, and motivation. *Scandinavian Journal of Education Research, 58*(6), 695-172.

Sohrabi, B., & Iraj, H. (2016). Implementing flipped classroom using digital media: A comparison of two demographically different groups perceptions. *Computers in Human Behavior, 60*, 514-524.

Soliman, N. A. (2016). Teaching English for Academic Purposes via the Flipped Learning Approach. *International Conference on Teaching and Learning English as an Additional Language, GlobELT 2016*, (pp. 122-129). Antalya, Turkey.

Trucano, M. (2005). Knowldege Maps: ICT in Education. Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://www.infodev.org/infodev-files/resource/InfodevDocuments_8.pdf

Wanner, T., & Palmer, E. (2015). Personalising learning: Exploring student and teacher perceptions about flexible learning and assessment in a flipped university course. *Computers & Education, 88*, 354-369.

Webb, M., Doman, E., & Pusey, K. (2014). Flipping a Chinese University EFL Course: What Students and Teachers Think of the Model . *The Journal of Asia TEFL, 11*(4).

Zhang, L. (2015). Teaching model design of business English based on flipped classroom case study. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Education, Management and Computing Technology*, (pp. 176-181). Hong Kong.

Appendix

Flipped Style Grammar Lesson Questionnaire

Dear teachers,
Thank you for participating in GIGvaganza 2018!
We are running a questionnaire on Flipped Learning in the learning of Grammar for GIGvaganza. We appreciate if you can spend a few minutes to answer the questions below. We hope that your response will help to make GIGvaganza more effective in the coming future.

Thank you.
GIGvaganza 2018 team.

Demographic background

1. **Gender**

   [   ] Male   [   ] Female

2. **Which level are you teaching?**

   [   ] UPSR   [   ] PT3   [   ] SPM

3. **Years of teaching**

   [   ] 0-10 years   [   ] 10-20 years   [   ] 20-30 years

4. **Are you comfortable in using technology in classroom?**

   [   ] Yes   [   ] No

What are teacher's perceptions of the use of a flipped approach for grammar input?

1. The students have more time to practise using the grammar in speaking activities through flipped classroom.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Disagree
   D. Strongly disagree
2. The students feel more confident in using the grammar structures in speaking activities.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Disagree
   D. Strongly disagree
3. The students can use the grammar more accurately in the speaking activities.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree

C. Disagree
D. Strongly disagree

4. Flipped classroom could help my students to become more active in learning.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Disagree
   D. Strongly disagree
5. The flipped classroom gives me greater opportunities to communicate with my students.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Disagree
   D. Strongly disagree

What problems may hinder the effectiveness of a Flipped approach?

6. The facilities at schools are conducive for flipped classroom.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Disagree
   D. Strongly disagree
7. My students are ready for flipped classroom.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Disagree
   D. Strongly disagree
8. I have ample time to carry out flipped classroom with my students.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Disagree
   D. Strongly disagree
9. I need technical assistance to carry out flipped classroom.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Disagree
   D. Strongly disagree
10. Availability and access to technical support and resources have helped me improve my lesson.
    A. Strongly agree
    B. Agree
    C. Disagree
    D. Strongly disagree