

STUDENTS' AUTONOMOUS LEARNING IN FLIPPED CLASSROOM: THE ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIALS AND PITFALLS

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Abstract. The use of technology in teaching has increased significantly and the conventional classroom now can be replaced by providing online teaching-learning. Most of the platforms of online learning focus only on giving assignments and works instead of giving teaching material. Thus, in the teaching and learning process, the students' autonomous learning are not built. In this study, flipped classrooms were the model of online learning used replacing the role of students and teachers in the teaching and learning process and to see how it affected the learners' autonomy. The flipped classroom approach stated to be a shift of the responsibility from teacher to students, thus the students were not passive participants in the classroom and they were given the opportunity to develop their own autonomy in learning. This study aimed to describe the potential and pitfalls of applying flipped classroom as a teaching model in the teaching and learning process. The researchers employed a qualitative research design and the data was collected through an interview and Learner Autonomy Questionnaire. The system logs used in flipped classrooms was also taken as a triangulation data.

Keywords: flipped classroom; e-learning; autonomous learning

I. INTRODUCTION

The speed of modern teaching methods and technology development is very undeniable. Conventional teaching process is no longer suitable regarding the millennial generation. The students we are teaching in this era belong to digital native since they were born with the ease of use of digital technology, including in the learning process (Prensky, [1]). Therefore, educators have no choice but to adjust the teaching method as well as the use of teaching media. The change of teaching and learning process involving the shift of teaching method and media has resulted in the use of technology to be applied in the teaching stages. However, the educators' competence in understanding and applying pedagogical knowledge still plays an important part. The innovation of teaching models and technique has always been a common thing to consider. In addition, they also have to add innovation in technology.

In the early years of 20 century, some linguists and educators proposed a new teaching model combining the use of technology and a conventional teaching model called blended learning. In blended learning, the teaching process is held in two ways; face to face and online teaching. Since then, the use of various online learning platforms has been widespread. Years following the invention of online learning platforms, some educators and language experts found out some challenges in the application of blended learning. There are still gaps in the latest teaching model related to the role of teachers in the teaching and learning process. Some research was conducted dealing with the application of blended learning in teaching and learning process either in quantitative method or in qualitative method (Thorne[2]; Gonzales [3]; Oakley [4])

The experts then tried to flip the use and function of technology in the teaching and learning process. The technology that was previously used only to give supplement for the learning material is then flipped into the main device to give learning resources. The role of teachers was also flipped to become the facilitator only in the teaching and learning process. The students were given full authority to determine their own learning. This kind of teaching model then is acknowledged as Flipped Learning or Flipped Classroom (Bergman [5]). This model is then expected to produce modern graduates that are not only able to gain the knowledge but also are able to apply them in the real field of their study since most of the time, the learners tend to acquire the theoretical materials but they do not acquire the concept of how to apply their knowledge. Moreover, in the teaching and learning process, the students tend to count only on knowledge transferred from the lecturers without having the willingness to gain it by their own decision.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This investigation was a qualitative study set in Bogor, Indonesia. The site of the research was an English language class at Pakuan University in the English Language Education Study Program (ELESP), a department within the Faculty of Education and Teachers Training. The sample of this investigation was students in TEYL (Theory of English for Young Learners) class and two lecturers in charge in that class. This research employed a questionnaire instrument to answer two problem formulations: how this model is implemented in the teaching and learning process, and what are the potentials

and pitfalls of the flipped learning implementation in relation to students' autonomous learning.

The participants in this study were 5 male and 14 female students, aged between 19 and 24. Information was collected by distributing questionnaires, interviews and documentation. The questionnaire, consisting of closed statements was about the students' perception of using flipped learning in the teaching and learning process in relation to their autonomous learning. The questionnaire was distributed to the students after they had experienced the learning process by using flipped learning. There were twenty questions asked to the sample related to the students' perception. The last step, the data was triangulated by using interviews with both the lecturer and students

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The final report of the instruments describes the results of a classroom observation, a numerical questionnaire (from close ended questions) and descriptive (from open-ended questions and interview) to flipped learning implementation in TEYL course and also students' perceptions of the autonomous learning in flipped classroom learning model

A. The Implementation of Flipped Learning in TEYL Class

The investigation was held before the COVID 19 plague; therefore, the face to face sessions were held in the classroom involving all the students and the lecturers. The first step in conducting the study was gaining data from classroom observation. The data was also obtained from the syllabus and class session schedule of the subject. The class schedule session was the description of the activity during the semester in the class. From the documentation, the researcher could see the implementation of the model in the classroom activity. The point of the observation analysis focused on the description of the implementation of flipped learning models. When the course began, the course content or topics remained the same as it was in the traditional course, but the course delivery was completely changed. The students were required to either review the eBooks or videos prior to coming to class. The lecturers gave the students full authority to find the references for the topics that would be discussed during the semester. The activities would initially cover basic knowledge and comprehension, and then moved to more complex application/analysis of the material in a form of group discussion or class discussion. This cycle was repeated for each of the topics covered in a semester. Students had a test after each topic for the evaluation and a cumulative final exam.

B. Students' Autonomous Learning in Flipped Classroom

The definition of learner autonomy has been known as "a capacity – for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action" (Little [6]). It is also stated that the students develop their autonomy through personal skills and social-interactive processes. The personal skills were elaborated as the students' ability to think critically, and

to solve problems with their own basic knowledge as well as their responsibility to manage their own learning. As for the social interactive processes, it can be seen from their opportunity to interact with their peers and also with their lecturers. In the implementation of flipped models, there are significant shifts in the roles of lecturers and students, and it considerably alters classroom management [7]. Students no longer become passive participants in the classroom, where they just sit in rows and listen to the lecture, delivered by knowledgeable and authoritative resources, but they actively participate and engage in the process of learning. They are given the opportunity to develop their own critical, creative and problem-solving skills and autonomy in managing their learning process [8].

The participants were given a close ended questionnaire about their perception of the implementation of flipped classroom in TEYL class. There were 20 statements in the questionnaire and from the data of the questionnaire, we can see that most of the students had positive perceptions toward the implementation of flipped classroom models in the teaching and learning process. The most positive responses were gained in the part of learning autonomy and learning motivation [9]. As from the data of the questionnaire, this point related to autonomous learning were shown in the students' response of these statement:

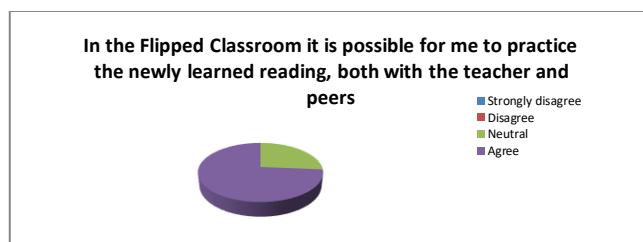


Figure 1. Students' ability in critical thinking and problem solving

Based on the chart, most of the students stated that in FC they had an opportunity to learn and practice the learning material both with the lecturer and also with their peers. It is shown that flipped learning develops not only their personal skill in creativity, critical thinking and also problem solving but also their social skill by having interaction with their teachers and their peers [10]. The second data from the questionnaire that was related to the students' authority in managing their own learning. The data showed that most of the students found it easy to pace through the course.

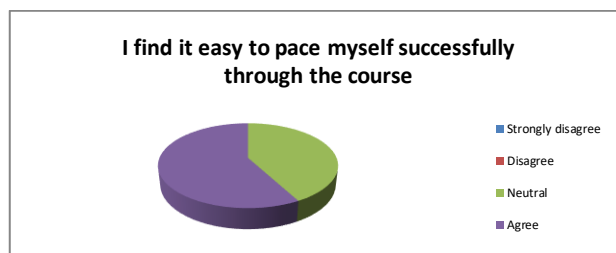


Figure 2. Students' pace control

The students' responsibility was also shown as they had to find their own learning materials and use them for the preparation for face to face meetings.

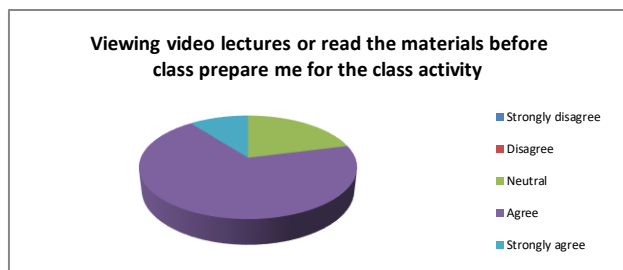


Figure 3. Students' authority in learning method and media

In flipped classrooms, the lecturers can also post lectures and topic-related materials on-line before a face-to-face class session, then the students watch videos recorded or chosen by teachers, and read various materials related to the topic, including tests and online quizzes offering immediate feedback. In this activity, the students' responsibility and honesty are expected to be improved as they had some review sessions in face to face meetings to discuss those references. From the data of the questionnaire, we can see that most of the students had positive perceptions toward the implementation of flipped classroom models in the teaching and learning process. The most positive responses were gained in the part of learning autonomy and learning motivation.

The interview was conducted after the students completed one semester of learning in a flipped classroom. The indicators for the interview data were the same as those in the questionnaire. The lecturer was asked about the students' reaction and perception during the implementation of flipped classrooms. The questions asked were among others: the students' autonomy learning, the students' learning motivation, the students' interaction, the students' score and achievement, and the students' general perception [11]. Based on the result of the interview, the data obtained was that the students' individual achievement in the course was significantly increased and they were also able to work in groups. They seemed not to get any difficulties in understanding the material as well as to read and review the topics independently. Moreover, some of the students found it exciting and challenging to have this kind of learning model.

C. The Potentials and Pitfalls of the Implementation of Flipped Learning in Relation to Learners' Autonomy

Compared to a traditional classroom, when instruction is delivered through a lecture, and that the students are often sent home to apply what they have learned without any assistance in a form of homework or assignment, the implementation of flipped learning may offer some potentials related to the students' autonomous learning. In a flipped classroom, the online sessions at home simply cover the activities like viewing videos reference, or reading learning

materials that they can get online [12]. Later on in a face to face meeting, what the students' do is discuss and the teacher is present to help because the higher-order thinking activities like having exercises and questions and answer sessions are done in class.

Based on the data of the questionnaire and interview, the great potential of the model is reflected in the way the teaching and learning procedures are shifted and flipped. The class time is also reorganised and repurposed. Since the use of technology becomes one of the main procedures in implementing flipped learning, despite the fact that it may discourage students to attend classes, it is proved that the model can enhance the importance and value of face to face communication when the use of technology is properly organised and conducted. It becomes important and it also can be used more effectively and meaningfully because students come to classes to discuss topics and references that they have got outside the classroom [13]. They may ask questions and look for clarifications both from the lecturer and also from their peers. Thus, they can increase their knowledge as well as their language skills.

The second potential is related to the students' interaction with their peers and also with the lecturers. One of most common obstacles in language teaching and learning deals with mastering language skills, particularly the productive ones, lies in students' shyness and feeling of embarrassment when they need to express their thoughts and opinions in a foreign language. During the flipped learning, the students will be actively involved in classroom discussion because they come to class with the information about the content to be covered. This condition is expected to be able to boost their self-confidence and self-esteem as well as the interaction among students that can enhance their communication skills, and build on their emotional and social intelligence.

As it is mentioned before, autonomous learning is indicated by two main points; personal skills and social skills. When we talk about personal skills, including critical thinking and responsibility, flipped learning offers the authority to determine their own learning style. The concept is taken from the theory that the way students learn a foreign language, and how successful they are, is largely determined by individual learning styles, which considerably differ among students. (Oxford [14]). The strategies applied in flipped classes and the use of learning technologies offer great possibilities to cater for a wide range of different learning styles (Lage and Treglia [15]). With so many different learning styles the students have in one class, it will be straining for lecturers to come to each of the students assisting and personalizing their learning process. This problem may be solved in flipped class since flipped classrooms establish a framework that ensures students receive a personalized education tailored to their individual needs. (Aaron and Bergman [5])

Besides those potentials, there are also some pitfalls gained as a result of questionnaires and interviews. A few participants stated that they thought they didn't need to come to face to face meeting class since they have got what they need in an online session while some other participants may

come to class unprepared and without having any information about the topic they will discuss. This means that the concept of flipping the class can be misunderstood, and the students misjudge the real benefits it offers in promoting learning and autonomy [16][17].

Another pitfall may relate to the students' personal skill such as responsibility and honesty. Based on the interview with the lecturers, they found it difficult to control the students' online activity outside the class as they cannot check whether they really watch the video reference or read the learning material sent. Yet, the lecturers may need to find ways to control the students' responsibility and honesty related to the online session in flipped learning. However, the technology development in education may offer some of the solutions for the downsides of the model.

IV. CONCLUSION

For some classes and topics, flipped learning can be effective. Yet, certain learning topics can be best acquired by students if taught directly in a face-to-face, teacher-centred learning context. There are also many different practice styles of this method. Techniques and models may vary depending on different factors. Another thing to consider is that the teacher should make a consideration which procedures to be applied. The teacher also needs to communicate the main concept and purpose of this model to the students since it radically changes the way we taught. Despite the pitfalls identified during the investigation, the researchers believe that there will always be a solution and remedy. The potential of improving students' autonomous learning should become an important consideration to try to apply this method in the teaching and learning process.

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