

**THE EFFECT OF FLIPPING CLASSROOM STRATEGY ON THE ATTITUDES OF THE IRAQI 6TH PREPARATORY STUDENTS TOWARDS ENGLISH SUBJECT**

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**Abstract**

This study aims at investigating the effect of flipping classroom strategy (FCS) on the Attitudes of the 6th Preparatory Students towards English Subject. The 70 participants of the study are chosen from Himreen secondary school for boys/ the representation of ministry of Education in Erbil. The aim was to study the effect of flipping classroom strategy. To achieve the aim of the study, the two groups were statistically equalized in some variables. The experiment lasted two weeks during which the experimental group was taught by adopting FCS while the control group was taught by the ordinary method. The instrument of the study was a scale constructed by the researcher to measure students' attitudes towards English Subject. By using t-test formula, the results have showed that there is a significant difference in the students' attitudes between the experimental group and the control group in favour of the experimental one. This difference can be attributed to the use of FCS.

**Keywords:** Flipping Classroom, 6th Preparatory Students, Attitudes, English Subject

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## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The rapid growth of approaches and methods is a prominent characteristic of contemporary language teaching (LT). However, the field of LT has not reached the point of the one superior method over another for all teachers and students. Consequently, TL should vary according to the environment in which the teachers and students find themselves are working. So, it is the job of the researchers to prove the efficiency of a certain strategy to teach certain students in a certain classroom situation.

Salasar (1999:31) states that "LT has achieved a higher level of efficiency than before, but one thing has remained stagnant that is the teaching of literature". Harrison (1973:46) adds that "the teaching of literature is a difficult task since literature is a manifestation of verbal culture and cannot be filtered out or separated from language".

Most of the students consider literature as a boring lesson full of facts, information and events. Therefore, they do not show serious attention in their studies and it affects passively on their attitudes. Ryan (1963:1) asserts "all literary forms have most conspicuously been neglected. The reason for this neglect seems clear: most of them have gained a more or less permanent place in the study of English and are difficult". Through the study of Al-Temimi (2000:42), it has been found the only dominant way in teaching literature is the lecture or the extended-controlled presentation in which there is a little interaction between the teachers and the students. This means that the students have no chance to express themselves or to show any literary tendencies. Finally, since this study has not been conducted before, it comes to be justifiable.

### **1.2 Significance of the Study**

This work is thought worthy to study since:

1. It provides theoretical and empirical contribution to the field of ELT by detecting the impact of the teacher-learner interaction.
2. It serves as a contribution in facilitating the process of teaching English as a foreign language because it is still in its infancy in Iraq and in solving problems related to teachers, learners, and material.
3. It strongly calls the teachers of English in search for better teaching strategies, techniques, and methods utilized in teaching English in general and short story in particular.
4. It provides empirical evidence on some aspects of teaching literature as educational debate because literature-teaching methodology is placed on more secure empirical footing as it is always said that an experiment is the only way for setting disputes regarding educational practice.

### **1.3 Aim of the Study**

This study aims at finding out the effect of FCS in developing the 6th preparatory students' attitudes towards English subject in general and short story in particular.

### **1.4 Hypothesis of the Study**

There is no statistical significant difference in the 6th preparatory students' attitudes between the mean scores of the experimental group and control group.

### **1.5 Limits of the Study**

- 1- The sample of the study is limited to the 6th preparatory students enrolled in the representation of ministry of Education in Erbil / morning studies.
- 2- The Material of the study is derived from the textbook (English for Iraq) prescribed to be taught to the 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory students. The researcher focuses on one short story (The Swing by Mohammed Khudair).
- 3- The study is conducted during the first course of the academic year 2015 – 2016.

## **Section Two**

### **2.1 Background of Flipping Classroom**

The initial steps of the learning process through direct instruction involved going over notes in a book before class, but due to the development and availability of technological tools for today learners, the learning material can be provided before class time through intentional content in direct instruction (Brame, 2013:11). FL is seen as an alternative to direct instruction and it is a pedagogical model in which the typical lecture and homework elements are reversed. Short video lectures are viewed by students at home before the class meeting, while the time of class is devoted to exercises and discussions.

*The classroom flip is usually motivated by a desire to learn through active participation in the classroom. Piaget says that learning occurs not when a person merely copies an idea, but when a person acts on it (ibid: 45).*

During class meetings, teachers function as advisors, encouraging students in individual inquiry and collaborative effort. It is widely used to describe almost any class structure that provides prerecorded lectures followed by in class exercises. They suggest various approaches, clarify content, and monitor progress. They might organize students into a workgroup to solve a problem that some students are struggling to understand (Al-Khalifa and Mutawa', 2015:8).

In a traditional lecture, students often try to listen and write what the teacher says. They may miss significant points because they are trying to transcribe the teacher's words. By contrast, the use of video and other prerecorded media puts lectures under the control of the students: they can watch, replay, and fast forward as needed. When FC becomes more popular, new devices emerge to support this kind of learning outside of the class. In particular, the ongoing development of powerful mobile devices will put a wider range of educational resources into the hands of students, at times and places that are most convenient for them. FC constitutes a change for teachers' role, who gives up their position in front of the class into a more cooperative contribution to the teaching process. There is also a concomitant change in the role of students where instruction is served to them. FC puts more of the responsibility for learning on the shoulders of students while giving them great experience (Bishop & Averleger 2013: 14).

### **2.2 Principles of Flipping Classroom**

FC implies a reversal of the normal class set up and the switch between class instruction and homework. What happens through FC approach is that students acquire the basic information outside of class, constructing their learning, enjoying the freedom of watching for further learning. They "pause to reflect on what is being said, rewind to hear it again, and view the lecture on a mobile device rather than in a fixed location"(Talbert,2012:101).

FC allows differentiated instruction to help students overcome language learning obstacles and provides learners with opportunities to learn by doing since their learning is more personalized.

### **2.3 Advantages of Flipping Classroom**

This strategy yields numerous potential advantages to both students and teachers, including:

1. Students have more control
2. It promotes student-centered learning and collaboration
3. It increases student & teacher interaction
4. It increases student–student interaction

### **2.4 The Role of the teacher**

The teacher plays an integral role in developing the learning environment. Baker (2000:9) referred to the shift from the “sage on the stage, to the guide on the side”. Johnson & Johnson (as cited in Cooper et al.,1990:7) found that cooperative learning has a more positive impact on student self-esteem than traditional methods of instruction.

### **2.5 Previous Studies**

Ahmed (2016) conducted a study to investigate the effect of FC on writing skill in English as a foreign language and students’ attitude towards flipping. The instruments of the study were a writing test and a questionnaire to measure students’ attitude towards flipping. The experimental group was taught using flipping while the control group was taught using the traditional method. Finally, students in both groups were post tested using the writing test while the questionnaire was applied for the experimental group only. Results of the study showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the post test of writing. Second, there was statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the pre and post application of the questionnaire of the experimental group in favor of the post application. This difference can be attributed to the use of flipping.

Al-Zain (2015) explored the effect of using FCS on the academic achievement of the Students in Department of Education/ Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University. The students were administered an achievement test constructed by the researcher at the end experiment. Based on the findings of this study, some recommendations were drawn by the researcher.

Most of the previous studies emphasized the application of FCS and its effectiveness in developing the academic achievement of the students and increasing their interaction and participation in the lecture as well as their enjoyment in applying this type of strategies. Throughout the long experience of the researchers as teachers, they found out that the necessity of employing modern technologies in the process of learning. It has become popular in educational circles, but it seems to us few teachers have embraced the concept enough to do empirical studies on the topic. Therefore, the current study offers an attempt to fill the gap in the current lack of research into FC, particularly the EFL classroom.

**Section Three**

**Methodology**

**3.1 Research Design**

The current study has utilized the experimental design since the choice of the sample has been intentional and it suits the aim of the research. The researcher has compared the findings of the experimental group by using FCS with the findings of the control group used the ordinary method. The researcher has adopted the table below so as to further explain the design of the study.

**Table (1): The Design of the study**

Groups	Independent Variables	Instrument of the study	Dependent Variable
Experimental	FCS	The scale constructed by the researcher	Students' Attitudes
Control	Ordinary method		

**3.2 The Population and Sample of the Study**

The population of the present study has included the 6th preparatory male students in the secondary schools that belong to the representation of ministry of Education in Erbil / morning studies during the first course of the academic years 2015–2016. The researcher has purposefully chosen Himreen secondary school since the researcher has been one of its staff. The sample of the study consists of (70) students assigned to two groups: group(A) represents the experimental group which has received FLS and group (B) represents the control group which has received only ordinary method. Therefore, the total number of the sample is as shown in Table (2).

**Table (2): The distribution of the participants**

Groups	Number of Students	Per cent
Experimental	35	50%
Control	35	50%
Total	70	100%

### **3.3 Selection of the Material**

Short story is one of the most important subjects taught to the 6th preparatory students, since it is very rich in expressions and imagination that stimulate the students to think and give their various ideas and interpretations of the story. One short story ("The Swing" by Mohammed Khudair) has been selected from the textbook prescribed to be taught to the 6th preparatory students.

### **3.4 Preparing the Instructional Plans**

One of the successful teaching requirements, the lesson plans has been prepared in the light of the independent variables (FCS and the ordinary method).

### **3.5 Implementation of the plan**

The researcher conducted 3 lessons each week for 3 weeks. The experimental group was been taught by using FCS, directing the students to watch the events at home and activate interaction with the text to answer the activities given by the teacher inside the class. The researcher has provided them with nice videos about the story they need to comprehend and generate new ideas about the indented situation. They could watch them by using any modern technological device such as: mobile phone, laptop, Ipad, etc. Based on their watching the events deeply, the students discuss the story among them and interact with the teacher to explain all the details.

While the control group was taught the same material according to the ordinary way by explaining the short story directly to the students who has been listening and taking notes from the teacher who has clarified and explained the events of the story. And then, the teacher has given them some questions to be answered at home with few discussions among them or exchanging the opinions.

### **3.7 Instrument of the Study**

For measuring the attitude of the sample of the study towards the subject-matter, there must be an appropriate scale to achieve this purpose. The researcher has constructed a suitable scale for measuring the students' attitudes

The scale consists of (32) positive and negative items as an initial form, each one followed by four levels of response (highly agree, agree, disagree, and highly disagree). These items have been distributed on four scopes:

1. The attitude towards the nature of the subject-matter.
2. The attitude towards the value of the subject-matter.
3. The attitude towards learning the subject-matter.
4. The attitude towards enjoying the subject-matter.

### **3.8 Statistical Means**

The following statistical means have been used in this study:

1- T-test for two independent samples has been used to find out the equivalence between the two groups and to find out the significance of the difference between the two groups (Glass and Stanley, 1970:295).

2- Chi-square has been used to find the equivalence between the two groups in their mothers' and fathers' education (AlKubaisi, 2007:44).

3- Cronbach’s Alpha Formula has been used to find out the reliability of the scale constructed by the researcher (Al-Nabhan, 2004:249).

**Section Four**

**Results and Discussion**

**4.1 Results of the Study**

In order to determine whether there are significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups, the researcher has used the mean, standard deviation and "t" test formula. Moreover, data have been treated by using the statistical program called as “SPSS”. To achieve the aim of the study stated at the beginning and verify its hypothesis, the researcher made a comparison in order to find out if there are significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups or not, as follows:

**4.2 Comparison of the Experimental and the Control Groups**

It was found that the mean of the experimental group is (36.2) and the mean of the control group (30.82). 't' test has been used in order to find out if there is any significant difference between the two groups or not. The calculated value has been found 2.936 which indicate that there is a significant difference between the two groups in favour of the experimental one.

**Table (3): The Mean, SD, and t- Value of the Scale Scores of both groups**

Groups	Number	Mean	SD	D F	T-Value	
					calculated	Tabulated
Experimental	35	36.2	8.98	98	2.936	1.98
Control	35	30.82	9.33			

**4.3 Discussion of the Result**

It is apparent that most of the findings drawn in the previous studies show that the used strategy (FC) reveals certain effectiveness on the development of students' abilities in various subject matters. This can be interpreted to mean that teaching short stories with modern activities that promote interaction with the text, and encourage thinking is more beneficial to learning than the ordinary way which does not give the students the chance to discuss and communicate inside the classroom. Therefore, interaction with the teacher is better for learning a language than listening to the teacher's explanation. And the interaction with text by watching its events, gives the students an opportunity to develop their thinking. This is a chance which may not be possible inside the class.

The flipped method of instruction shows great promise .It has the potential to change the entire pedagogical ideas, careful research and analysis is needed. Additionally, a close observation of students should occur if a researcher is evaluating whether a flipped classroom strategy can help develop Iraqi EFL students' speaking and communication skills because it will provide more extensive and more accurate results.

In addition, the researcher investigated students' attitudes and opinions towards the flipped classroom strategy by analyzing students' responses to the test. Generally, students' attitudes were positive as the majority agreed that they liked the routine of the flipped classroom. Students also suggested implementing the flipped classroom in other subjects. Flipping English classes proved to foster students' autonomous learning because they were provided with various and multiple materials to explore and learn from. This implies that additional activities should be used in the future studies.

### Conclusions

Therefore, the results have confirmed that the use of FCS in teaching short stories is expected to have a significant positive effect on students' attitudes.

From a theoretical point of view these results support the point of view that language teaching is communication between the student and the text; Teaching short stories by explaining the material directly to the students without permitting students' participation and without interacting with the text will not permit communication between the student and the teacher or among the students themselves. From a pedagogical point of view the results uphold the importance of watching and interaction between the student and the text, which enables the former to develop attitudes towards the subject. From a practical point of view the results indicate the importance of teacher training both academically and professionally especially in presenting different activities inside the classroom.

The results also indicate the importance of various activities given by the teacher, FCS, therefore, makes the students more active, helps and encourages them to watch and analyze the text developing their ability to read and understand the text, and to be able to appreciate or criticize literary texts. As a result, it helps them to develop their language skills to be creative in learning the foreign language. The students will get benefit from studying stories and their appreciation of them will be enlarged, through their understanding of new ideas which appear in the text.

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