TEACHING STRATEGIES IN EFL FLIPPED CLASSROOM: A TREND TOWARDS EDUCATION 4.0

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Abstract

Entering the era of Education 4.0, human is strongly allied with technology to create new possibilities. In the realm of education, the new possibility is the integration of technology into education, creating the new learning approach previously inconceivable. The intention of this paper is to study the teaching strategies in conducting an EFL flipped classroom in the university level. By observing several teaching sessions of the flipped classroom and locating relevant documents, the researchers found four teaching strategies namely (1) making content understandable; (2) eliciting students' responses; (3) checking students' understanding; and (4) encouraging interpersonal communication. The analysis sheds light on the way the flipped classroom is conducted so that it can provide meaningful information for other educators who have yet to transform their traditional teaching.

Keywords: Teaching strategies, flipped classroom, Education 4.0.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the emergence of Education 3.0 in the new millennium, technology has become a vital part of education worldwide. The rising Internet usage and technological advancement clearly characterize this period (FICCI, 2017). The Pew Research Center (2013) found that most of the teachers in the US (73%) adopted mobile technology in their pedagogy. In addition, almost half of the teachers in the US (47%) confirmed that students need to possess digital literacy to succeed academically. Without a doubt, technology enables teachers and students to redefine traditional learning activity. Learning process no longer occurs in the classroom but it occurs anytime and anywhere thanks to digital tools in the hand of students.

The mass investment of technology in Education 3.0, however, remained a crucial problem. In fact, the use of computers in classrooms did not change teaching, learning, assessment, or evaluation approaches (Intelitek, 2018). Technologies were utilized simply to replace the traditional mode of learning. For instance, students in Teacher A's class use a word processor for their writing instead of handwriting (Akerman, n.d.). In this case, there is no change in the teaching and learning approach. The use of technology is only a replacement of the traditional method and tool. The role of teachers remains the same; the center of the learning process. In other words, teacher-centered learning was still commonplace in Education 3.0.

Considering that Education 3.0 was lack of change in teaching and learning approach, and also to adapt with Industrial Revolution 4.0, Education 4.0 has come to existence. In this period, the new possibilities exist due to the linkage between human and technology (Hussin, 2018). Technology is no longer used as a tool to substitute traditional mode of learning, but it is used to modify, augment, and even redefine learning process previously inconceivable. In

Education 4.0, students have more chances to learn anywhere and anytime. Thanks to the Internet, the traditional classroom can be flipped enabling students to learn theoretical part outside the classroom, whereas practical part can be learned inside the classroom, face to face with teachers (Fisk, 2017).

Dealing with the flipped classroom approach, educators should comprehend it first to effectively flip the classroom. The flipped classroom is a learning approach created toamplify the classroom period (Ozdamli&Asiksoy, 2016). It is a teaching method that delivers videoed contents accessible by students at home, and uses classroom period for practices (Arnold-Garza, 2014). As a form of blended learning, the students usually learn new contents in the form of videos outside the classroom, and what used to be homework is now done inside the classroom with teachers,shifting   lecturing method onto the personalizedlearning (Nwosisi, Ferreira, Rosenberg, & Walsh, 2016).Based on the underlying concept of the flipped classroom, it is evident that the role of teachers in the flipped classroom has changed from the center of the learning process into the facilitator of the learning process. Simply say, in the flipped classroom, a teacher-centered approach is replaced with a student-centered approach.

Flipped classroom approach offers plenty of advantages to educational practices. Firstly, students can learn at their own pace in the flipped classroom (Bergmann &Sams, 2014; Chilingaryan& Zvereva, 2016; Du, Fu, & Wang, 2014; Soliman, 2016). Secondly, a flipped classroom creates a positive atmosphere of the learning process which makes classrooms more welcoming, comfortable, and motivating (Bergmann & Sams, 2014; Chilingaryan & Zvereva, 2016). Thirdly, in the flipped classroom, the amount of interaction between teachers and students is enhanced (Bergmann & Sams, 2014; Chilingaryan & Zvereva, 2016). The teacher-student interaction takes place anytime and anywhere thanks to the Internet and digital tools. Fourthly, flipped classroom allows for differentiation (Bergmann & Sams, 2014). It is impossible to have students with the same characteristics. In the case of English learning, for instance, students might differ in language competence, learning style, and language learning pace (Soliman, 2016). With regard to this, flipped classroom comes to rescue– teachers are able to individualize instruction to meet the individual needs of learners (Bergmann & Sams, 2014). Last but not least, the flipped classroom allows students to learn content at a deeper level (Soliman, 2016). While contents are delivered through videos easily accessible at home, the difficult concept can be learned with the teachers' assistance in the classroom (Bergmann & Sams, 2014).

Nowadays, the Internet and digital tools are commonplace – everyone can use it for diverse purposes including education. It is easy to find teachers who are highly knowledgeable about technology in their lives. The problem, however, lies in this occurrence – many teachers are illiterate in usingtechnology for education. It is important to note that using technology without proper teaching strategy does not affect students' learning outcomes – the combination of technology and suitable teaching strategy does. Therefore, before deciding to adopt technologies, teachers should understand what teaching strategies that match with specific technologies. Van Olphen, Hofer, & Harris (2012) recommend several teaching strategies that support the integration of technology in English learning. These are (1) communicating clearly; (2) making content understandable; (3) checking students' understanding; (4) eliciting students' responses; (5) demonstrating and modeling; (6)encouraging interpersonal communication; (7) grouping students to assist their learning; and (8) promoting cross-cultural awareness.

Several studies have been accomplished dealing with the conceptand operationof the flipped classroom. In the realm of language teaching, Chilingaryan & Zvereva (2016) examine the promise of the flipped classroom in language teaching. They suggest several advantages of the flipped classroom including the increase of interaction between the teacher and the student; space for each student to govern their learning; the increase of motivation of students; and enhancement of positive ambience in the classroom. Evseeva & Solozhenko (2015) report the running of the flipped classroom in language learning. Results revealed that most of the students

liked the flipped classroom approach. Problems in the flipped classroom approach included the Internet access, insufficient time for accomplishingvirtual tasks, and difficulty in organizingstudents' work properly. Webb, Doman, & Pusey (2014) studied the intermediate level EFL classes at a university in Macau, China. Results revealed that students called for supplementary flipped materials, and they are more contented with a flipped classroom model.

Although the concept and implementation of the flipped classroom have been studied, little has been written concerning the practical teaching strategies that support the flipped classroom. Information about applicable strategies in conducting flipped classroom is beneficial for teachers who have yet to transform their traditional teaching. This study investigatesthe teaching strategies in EFL flipped classroom implemented by an EFL instructor in the context of university level.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study explores the teaching strategies in implementing EFL flipped classroom at the university level. The data were collected by observing five teaching sessions of Advanced Listening course, consisting of 23 students enrolled in the third semester of a private university in Blitar. The method of the listening course was extensive listening, which allowed freedom of selecting the preferred listening materials outside the classroom. In addition to the observation, relevant documents were also collected to enhance triangulation.

An EFL instructor was purposefully selected as the main subject of this study. The criteria of selection were mastery of educational technology as well as the background of education and research. The instructor must have sufficient knowledge and experience of using digital tools in teaching. Additionally, the instructor must hold a relevant background knowledge – Master of English Education, and pertinent track record of research – research dealing with technology-enhanced language learning to clarify his expertise in educational technology.

The listening materials adopted TED Talk. The process of listening began with selecting and downloading the videos available at www.ted.com/talks. The instructor asked the students to select videos with four to six minutes long. There was no limitation of topic – the students were free to choose topics they were interested in. Once the videos have been selected, the students must comprehend the contents of the video. They could repeat the videos many times until they really understand what the talk was. In the classroom, the instructor asked the students to summarize the talk orally using their own words. Before presenting, they played the video first to catch other students' attention. After presenting the video, the students expressed their reaction (personal opinion) towards the talk. The classroom activity was then followed by classical discussion allowing other students to ask questions to the presenter.

The entire data was analyzed by doing some steps including (1) categorizing different types of teaching strategies based on van Olphen et al. (2012); (2)analyzing how the teaching strategies were implemented in the flipped classroom as well as collecting relevant documents; and (3) drawing conclusion based on the recorded findings.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigates teaching strategies implemented in EFL flipped classroom in the context of university level. It explores types of teaching strategies employed by an EFL instructor to create an effective flipped classroom and thus enhance the effectiveness of the learning process.

3.1 Types of Teaching Strategies in EFL Flipped Classroom

A series of observations in this study results in the discovery of four teaching strategies that are effectively implemented to support the flipped classroom. Those strategies include making content understandable, eliciting students' response, checking students' understanding, and encouraging interpersonal communication.

3.1.1 Making Content Understandable

According to van Olphen et al. (2012) making content understandable helps teachers foster students' understanding of the content being learned. In this study, the instructor set two activities to make content understandable namely (1) activating the students' interests, and (2) providing alternative forms of materials (e.g. video).

To activate the students' interest in the listening course, the instructor assigned the students to choose their own listening materials. The instructor suggested the students to explore TED talks since it provides diverse topics they could choose based on their interests. The instructor considered TED talks because it is suitablefor the flipped classroom, providing access to the videoed lectures and other interactive materials (Arnold-Garza, 2014). The instructor said that allowing the students to choose their own materials aimed to make the students have a habit of listening. Also, by selecting the materials they were interested inat home, the students could learn at their own pace (Bergmann & Sams, 2014; Chilingaryan & Zvereva, 2016; Du, Fu, & Wang, 2014; Soliman, 2016). They could adjust the difficulty of the materials to their English proficiency levels.

When it comes to the learning activity in the classroom, the instructor assigned the students to present the contents they have learned at home. In presenting the videos, the students seemed enthusiastic since they have already comprehended the contents. The problem appeared in the presentation activity was the students' limited knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, hindering the students to speak fluently (Chen, 2013; Li & Renandya, 2012). This problem, however, could be managed by the instructor since he always provided assistance and guidance to the students in the classroom (Bergmann & Sams, 2014).

3.1.2 Eliciting Students' Responses

Eliciting students' responses assists teachers in doingregular informal language assessments (van Olphen et al., 2012). In implementing this strategy, the instructor set two activities; that is, asking the students to summarize the video in the form of a listening journal, and asking the students to do an oral presentation.

Summarizing was a kind of out-of-class activity. The students wrote the journal consisting of the summary of the video, personal reaction to the video, and the process of listening. The instructor made use of Google Classroom to provide virtual assistance to the students. This finding is along the same vein with Petty (2018) suggesting that Google Classroom is a suitable tool for the flipped classroom. It facilitates the instructor to distribute the instructions and accommodates the student to submit their tasks. Figure 1 depicts the example of instruction delivered via Google Classroom.

Figure 1. The Instruction Delivered through Google Classroom

In the classroom, the instructor asked the students to practice public speaking and generated a classroom discussion. The students learned the technique of delivering a good presentation in front of the classroom. Other students were also invited and guided to make immediate responses by asking questions to the presenter. The difficult concept that the students did not understand was also discussed in the classroom. This finding is consistent with the findings of Bergmann & Sams (2014).

3.1.3 Checking Students' Understanding

Checking students' understanding is vital in performing ongoing assessment and keeping the students engaged in the learning process (van Olphen et al., 2012). Teachers need to frequently check the students' understanding of a particular topic before moving to the next materials to make sure that the students comprehend every concept. In the classroom, the instructor regularly checked the students' understanding of the contents both for the presenters and the audiences by asking questions. The instructor also encouraged the students to ask questions to the presenters. The audiences repeatedly asked questions about the new contents they learned. This way, the classroom conditions were more positive. The instructor and the students had much interaction in the learning process (Nwosisi et al., 2016). This finding shows that a positive atmosphere is created in the flipped classroom, making the students feel more comfortable and motivated during the lesson (Bergmann & Sams, 2014; Chilingaryan & Zvereva, 2016).

In addition to asking questions, the instructor also provided supportive feedback through Google Classroom. Sometimes the students got confused about some difficult concepts when the class was over. The instructor, therefore, used Google Classroom to provide

supportive feedback. Figure 2 shows the example of feedback provided by the instructor via Google Classroom.

Figure 2. Feedback Provided by the Instructor via Google Classroom
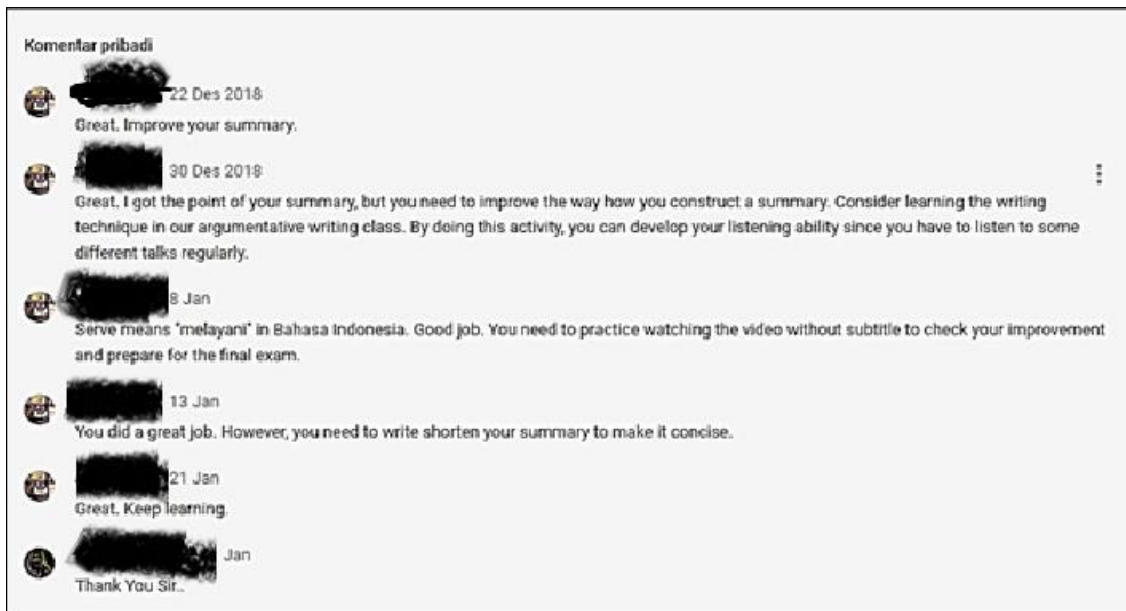

Figure 1 shows that the instructor provided supportive feedback as well as guidance to the students virtually. This way, teachers and students can have an extended learning process. The learning process no longer occurs in the classroom; instead, teachers can keep in touch with students using technology anytime and anywhere. This finding is consistent with Fauzi (2017) stating that teachers and students can conduct a more effective and sustainable learning process by benefiting e-learning tools.

3.1.4 Encouraging Interpersonal Communication

Another strategy implemented by the instructor in conducting the flipped classroom was encouraging interpersonal communication with the students. Van Olphen et al. (2012) stated that students need to interact with peers and teachers to enlarge their knowledge of subject matter. To encourage interpersonal with the students, the instructor used Google Classroom to provide tutoring/mentoring. Figure 3 shows an example of the interaction between the instructor and the students.

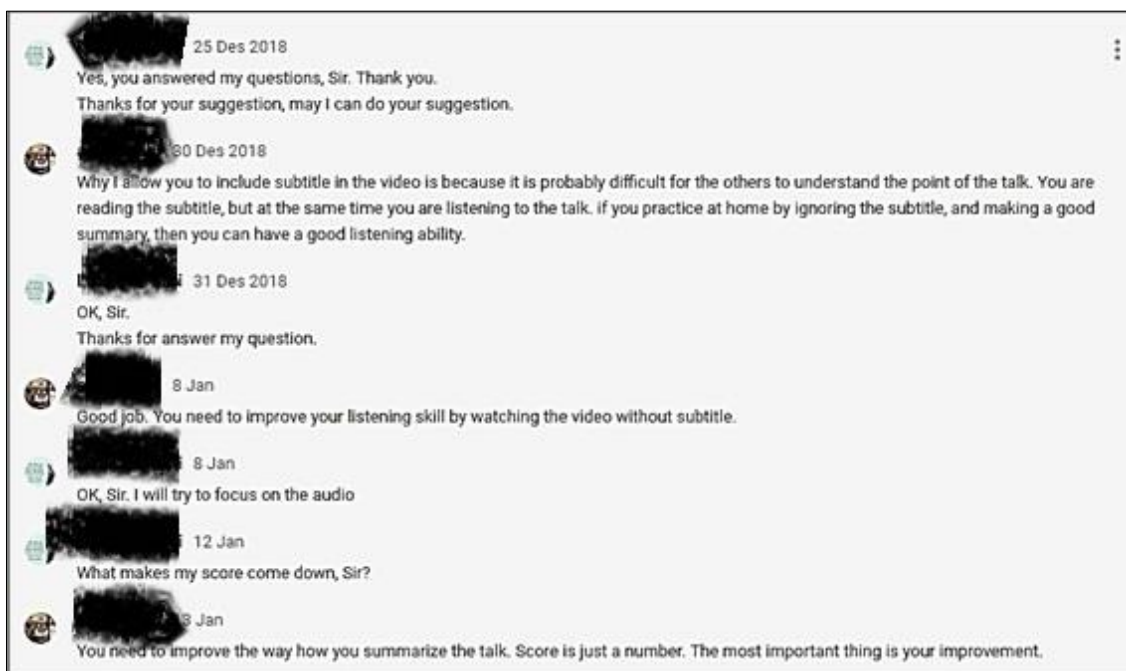Figure 3. The interaction between the Instructor and the Students in Google Classroom

Figure 3 explains that the instructor allowed the students to ask questions beyond the classroom. The students freely asked anything they were confused about. It seems that the online environment is much comfortable for all the students since those who are shy in the classroom can actively participate in the virtual learning process. This finding is closely linked to a study by Fauzi, Rochsantiningsih, & Tarjana (2018) revealing that teachers can make use of e-learning tools to provide the students a space to ask questions outside the classroom.

4. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have presented the effective teaching strategies to conduct an EFL flipped classroom. We have shown that it is possible to implement four strategies namely (1) making content understandable; (2) eliciting students' responses; (3) checking students' understanding; and (4) encouraging interpersonal communication. These strategies can be implemented both in the classroom and beyond the classroom with the help of an e-learning tool namely Google Classroom. Although the description of the learning activities is presented, the instructor's motives related to the implementation of the teaching strategies remains unexplored. In any case, we believe that these results indicate that the teaching strategies we have explored are informative, providing clear guidelines for teachers who have yet to adopt the flipped classroom. Future works should give priority to (1) the report of the teachers' experiences in conducting a flipped classroom; (2) the development of a teacher's guidebook to implement an effective flipped classroom; and (3) the innovation of teaching strategies/models that can effectively support a flipped classroom.

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