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The Effect of Face-to-Face Verses Online FLIP Learning on the Speaking Skill of Lower-Intermediate Iranian University EFL Learners

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Abstract

Although FLIP learning has been used as an effective face-to-face and online learning pedagogy, there is a scarcity of research on students' English speaking skill using FLIP learning in these two modalities. Therefore, this study set out to investigate the effect of face-to-face vs. online FLIP learning on the speaking skill of lower-intermediate Iranian university EFL learners. The study was quasi-experimental with 32 participants (18 female and 14 male) whose homogeneity in terms of language proficiency at lower-intermediate level was assured through the administration of Oxford Placement Test. Then, the participants were randomly assigned to two experimental groups, both of which took the pretest and posttest of speaking. One group participated in face-to-face FLIP classroom and the other one took part in online FLIP context using Adobe Connect. The findings revealed that using FLIP learning significantly improved the speaking skill of the two groups since the participants of both groups performed more successfully on the post-test as compered to the pre-test. The findings also indicated that the face-to-face FLIP learning participants outperformed the online FLIP learning participants. This means that using face-to-face FLIP learning in which the students had face-to-face interactions had a positive effect on their speaking skill more effectively.

Keywords: face-to-face FLIP learning, online FLIP learning, speaking skill

Introduction

Speakers of a language are known as people who know that language; therefore, speaking seems to be the most important language skill (Ur, 1996) and probably a priority for most learners of English (Florez, 1999) to keep pace with the modern world (Alam, 2016). Since speaking is the most important and demanding language skill, at least in the EFL or ESL contexts in which English is used as a foreign or second language (Lazarton, 2001), and while English, as an international language, is the medium that opens chances to international opportunities like technology, science, and business (Kachru, 1986, cited in McKay, 2010), enabling English language learners to use English appropriately and precisely in communication seems to be one of the main goals of all English language teaching courses (Davies & Pearse, 2000). However, not all language learners, after many years of studying English at schools, universities, or different language institutes, can communicate fluently and accurately (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Tuan & Mai, 2015).

To help language learners improve their speaking skill, language teaching authorities have employed different methods, techniques, approaches, models, or teaching tools. With the growth of online and distance education and increased interest in implementation of new teaching practices, it seems that, among the challenging practices of teaching the speaking skill, there is a growing interest in using FLIP learning. FLIP learning is an innovative method in which the learning process is *flipped* from its traditional scheme (Roach, 2014). To show the key features of FLIP classrooms, Hamdan, McKnight, McKnight, and Arfstrom (2013) coined the acronym FLIP: "***F****lexible* environment helps create a ***L****earning* culture with ***I****ntentional* content, which requires a ***P****rofessional* educator" (Hao, 2016, p. 83). FLIP learning helps students participate in activities that need cognitive involvement, cooperation, and collaboration (Burch, 2013).

With the technological advances and changes in students' lifestyle during the last decades, classes that were delivered face-to-face are often held online (Kemp & Grieve, 2014). Yet, the outbreak of COVID-19 made online teaching to be the lifelong and (Müller, Goh, Lim, & Gao, 2021) the sole choice; therefore, many scholars set forth various online teaching

modes, such as FLIP learning, to make online teaching and learning more fruitful during the epidemic. (Ma, 2020). The existing studies on FLIP learning mainly focused on its applicability, influence, feasibility, and effectiveness in various courses. However, there is scant research on the effect of FLIP learning on foreign language teaching and learning (Yang et al, 2017, cited in Ma, 2020). Therefore, the current study set out to examine the effect of face-to-face vs. online FLIP learning on the speaking skill of lower-intermediate Iranian university EFL learners.

Speaking Skill

Communication with other countries, nowadays, necessitates having good English language skills. It is vital since participating in a global economy and having access to information and knowledge are the basis for social and economic developments. Therefore, learning the speaking skill is a precedence for most English language learners in EFL and ESL contexts (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).Of the four English language skills, speaking enjoys a superior status since speaking is the main means of human communication and the ability to communicate orally is equal to knowing that language (Lazarton, 2001). Therefore, impeccable speaking instruction is urgent for many students who go to different English classes in order to acquire the ability to communicate naturally with native or non-native speakers of English.

However, literature on speaking skill suggests a number of factors that can potentially influence effective teaching and learning of this skill. It can be argued that achieving proficiency in foreign/second language speaking is not an easy task. There can be unexpected interaction of sources of difficulty that impede the improvement of language learners' speaking skill. Some of these sources that were explored are lack of basic language skills (Baker & Westrup, 2006), lack of exposure to language (Al-Sobhi & Preece, 2018), lack of the motivation (Brown, 1978; Rivers, 1968); the role of risk-taking (Brown, 1978), the role of anxiety (Littlewood, 2007); fears of making errors and being laughed at by classmates (Toth, 2010); inhibition, lack of knowledge, low participation, and the use of mother-tongue (Tuan & Mai, 2015), the role of students (Al-Sobhi & Preece, 2018), and ineffective teaching methodology (Aleksandrzak, 2011; Ur-Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013).

It seems that among numerous and varied internal and external factors that can affect the language learners' speaking ability, the teaching method is highly critical and important. This is witnessed by invention of many different teaching methods which have been changed significantly in the past decade or two - from Grammar Translation to technology-enhanced methods and approaches in face-to-face classrooms to hybrid, online, and virtual contexts.

FLIP Learning

In FLIP classrooms, the learners receive the instructional content online before the class and then, are involved in cooperative group learning and problem-solving activities under the supervision of the teacher (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Herreid & Schiller, 2013); therefore, there is an opportunity for active learning, peer-learning, and inquiry-based learning (Danker, 2015). In FLIP classrooms, students are engaged in activities that need thinking, cognitive involvement, cooperation, and collaboration with their classmates (Burch, 2013).The governing board of the Flipped Learning Network (2014) defined FLIP learning as a:

pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter. (p.1)

According to Yarbro, Arfstrom, McKnight, and McKnight (2014), by active involvement in FLIP learning, different methods can be used in different classrooms by the teachers. They will have more time in class which provide room for more individual and small group instruction.

According to Hamdan et al. (2013), four pillars of F-L-I-P are *Flexible environment*, *Learning culture*, *Intentional content*, and *Professional educator*. *Flexible environment* expresses that there are variety of learning modes such as individual and group work, research, and evaluation. In this context, teachers feel free for the arrangement of the classroom based on the teaching and learning conditions and the students can choose their time and place of study. *Learning culture* signifies that the classroom is student-centered and that the class time is used for in-depth exploration of topics

and richer learning. The students participate in and evaluate their own learning. In this context, the teacher maximizes interactions to ensure for students' comprehension and analysis of the materials. *Intentional content* means that in FLIP classroom, the teacher determines those materials that should be taught inside of the class and the ones that should be studied outside of the class by the students individually. Using intentional content helps the teacher to employ different methods appropriate for efficient learning. Finally, *Professional educator* expresses that skillful and proficient teachers are more important than ever in FLIP classroom. They recognize the appropriate time for shifting the direct instruction from individual learning to group learning, maximizing their interactions with the students, observing students and providing them with feedback, and assessing their work. They are reflective teachers who connect and consult with their colleagues, and are open to criticism.

Face-to-Face vs. Online FLIP Learning

Utilizing FLIP learning, in either face-to-face or online contexts, has many things in common. In face-to-face FLIP learning, students are encouraged to watch video lectures at home and then engage in content deeply inside the (physical) classroom (Soliman, 2016). Face-to-face FLIP learning is considered a type of blended learning in which face-to-face learning and teaching are accompanied with online activities. Evseeva and Solozhenko (2015), giving prominence to the use of blended learning as a whole and FLIP learning in particular, referred to the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) as another factor for the promotion of blended learning.

In FLIP classrooms, when students attend classes, they discuss the subjects that they already had some knowledge about since they had watched (pre-lectured) videos. When students who are working on their homework, encounter problems in understanding some crucial issues but have no access to their teachers' tutorial, the unlimited access to electronic resources (Evseeva & Solozhenko, 2015), visiting websites, reading related references, and listening to audios (Alsowat, 2016), help them to solve their problems. Then, the use of class time for students' discussion, collaboration, cooperation, and problem-solving makes the interaction between the students and the teacher as well as their peers more effective and fruitful.

There, students extend their knowledge by working on authentic tasks and projects, and discussing the related issues (Evseeva & Solozhenko, 2015). They do pair and group work, hands-on activities, and activities that need thinking (Alsowat, 2016).

All activities and practices that are employed in a face-to-face FLIP classrooms are possible in online FLIP contexts with minute changes. In online FLIP learning, inspired by the face-to-face FLIP learning, students also watch video lectures out of the classroom and are prepared for online joint meetings. The time spent in these sessions is not dedicated to lecturing; rather, it is spent on cooperation (Stöhr, Demazière, & Adawi, 2020).

Related Studies

Hamdan et al. (2013) and Yarbro et al. (2014) reviewed a great deal of research on the use of FLIP learning at schools and universities in different fields of study within various countries. They stated that FLIP learning increases active learning opportunities, which in turn, enhances student learning and achievement. Lapitan et al. (2021) also reported the benefits of FLIP learning in different fields of study. In a similar vein, Hamdan et al. (2013) referred to some studies that indicated the positive effect of FLIP learning on English language learners.

One factor influencing the success of foreign language learners is learning opportunity (Rubin, 1975). In FLIP classrooms, students have more opportunities to be exposed to the target language inside as well as outside the classroom because of in-class individualized instruction and technology-enhanced learning of students previews (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

Alsowat (2016) carried out a study on EFL graduate students to search for the effect of FLIP learning on their higher-order thinking skills, satisfaction, and participation. The sample included an experimental and a control group who were studying English at university. The findings of the study revealed that, regarding students' higher-order thinking skills and engagement, the experimental group outperformed the control group. Moreover, all students showed high satisfaction with FLIP learning.

Evseeva and Solozhenko (2015), examining the use of FLIP learning in language learning, referred to some benefits of applying FLIP learning in language classrooms such as introducing significant changes in teachers'

and students' roles. Among the new roles of students, they referred to students' ability in controlling their own learning through managing their time, place, and pace of studies and becoming more autonomous, getting online help from the teacher and peers, having interaction, cooperation, and collaboration with their peers through group and project works, assessing their peers, and receiving feedback from their mates. In this type of classroom, teachers are also shifting from lecturing to fostering students learning, supporting students for time management, and creating an affable online setting.

Bakla (2018) examined whether or not FLIP learning materials produced by learners could have any impact on their active and inquiry-based learning. Additionally, this study tried to investigate whether students could grow positive attitudes towards FLIP learning in general. The findings of this research indicated that the learners showed positive attitudes and viewed the FLIP learning valuable. Meanwhile, those who gained higher scorers were more positive about it. His research also revealed that producing materials by learners is a user-friendly tool and a good option for involving students in doing research in FLIP classrooms.

Similarly, Quarato (2016) tried to investigate the middle school students' perspectives on the FLIP classrooms. The findings of this study showed that this context was beneficial to the students since they could pace their learning, focus more on in class activities and their lessons, and have access to the information they needed to review at any time and place. The results also revealed that, in the FLIP class, students receive more help and support from the teacher.

Ma (2020) investigated the effectiveness of synchronous online FLIP learning when everyone has to stay at home and just rely on online learning because of COVID-19 pandemic. The findings suggested that the learners performed better in synchronous online FLIP sessions. The findings also revealed that in order to achieve notable teaching effects, it is better for instructors to have an exact, strict, and careful organization, design, and implementation of synchronous online teaching and learning. Moreover, they should also take into account the influencing factors such as learners' interest, attention, and needs in online learning contexts.

Thai et al. (2020), in part of their studies, compared face-to-face learning, fully e-learning, blended learning, and FLIP learning regarding to students' learning. In order to create the four learning environments, lecture and discussion groups were built from among 60 third-year undergraduate students. The results of the study suggested a significant positive effect on students learning studying in FLIP learning and blended learning settings.

Although many studies have experimented the effectiveness of FLIP learning based on the students' satisfaction and slightly increased scores (Shani, 2017), one cannot ignore the challenges that students and teachers encounter in the FLIP settings. Some of the difficulties that the teachers face are lack of resources and skills, design gaps, evaluation, time issues (Shani, 2017), and standardized guidelines for the development of FLIP classrooms (Vogelsang, Droit, & Liere-Netheler, 2019). Meanwhile, students encounter design, technical, and resources problems (Shani, 2017). It seems that it is not easy for students to accept the replacement of face-to-face classes with blended and fully online models because of their fear from such factors as unfamiliarity with technology. It is necessary for the teachers to explain their students the concept and elucidate the characteristics of the blended and online learning such as FLIP learning. The instructors are also responsible to inform the learners of additional uses that these courses provide them with like chats and video conferencing which may help them to develop their language skills specially speaking skills which, nowadays, is necessary for being successful both in academic and professional lives.

Hence, regarding the scarcity of studies on FLIP learning in Iranian context, the current study aimed to explore the effect of face-to-face vs. online FLIP learning on the speaking skill of lower-intermediate Iranian university EFL learners. To this end, the following research question was posed:

RQ: Is there any statistically significant difference between the speaking skill of lower-intermediate Iranian university EFL learners in the face-to-face and online FLIP learning contexts?

Method

Participants

The initial participants of this study were 45 EFL students who were studying basic listening and speaking course at university. At first, they were given the Oxford Placement Test, and from among the 45 initial participants, 32 were selected as the main participants of the study who were homogeneous in terms of their language proficiency at lower-intermediate level. These participants included 18 female and 14 male students, aged 19 to 21 who were randomly assigned to two experimental groups. The first group participated in face-to-face FLIP learning classroom and the second group took part in online FLIP learning contexts.

Instruments and Materials

In this study, four instruments were employed: Oxford Placement Test (OPT), Huang and Gui's (2015) Speaking Rubrics, a video clip and a pamphlet on Adobe Connect for those students who took part in online FLIP learning.

Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

In order to determine the students' level of general English language proficiency and ensure their homogeneity, the Oxford Placement Test was used. Hamidi (2015) reported the reliability of the instrument to be .82 using KR-21 formula, with a sample including sixty students. This test consists of 60 multiple-choice-item questions, and the time allotted to complete the test is thirty minutes. Those who answered 28 to 36 questions correctly were considerd to be at the lower intermediate level of language proficiency and were recruited to participate in the study. The following shows the guideline of the OPT:

1-17 Beginner, 18-27 Elementary, 28-36 Lower-intermediate, 37-47 Upper-intermediate, and 48-55 Advanced

Huang and Guie's (2015) Speaking Rubrics

In order to score the speaking of the students on the pretest and posttest, the researcher used Huang and Gui's (2015) speaking rubric. This instrument has four sections: pronunciation and intelligibility, grammar and vocabulary, details of description, discourse length, and organization, and fluency and coherence. Each section has 5 marks; thus, the total number for each student would be 20.

A Video Clip and a Pamphlet on Adobe Connect

To train the students on online FLIP learning, they received a precise video clip as well as a pamphlet on Adobe Connect in order to know how it works. Then, the students were met either face-to-face or online to receive more training and extra help.

Procedure

Having selected the homogeneous participants through the administration of OPT, the researcher randomly assigned them to two experimental groups. The names of all 18 female students and 14 male students were written on two pieces of papers. Then, all odd numbers of male and female were placed in one group, and all even numbers of them were put in the other group. One group was taught face-to-face in the classroom and the other one took part in online class via Adobe Connect.

Then, the researchers hold an oral exam in each class and scored the students' speaking ability. The rubric for scoring students' speaking ability was adapted from Huang and Gui (2015). The rubrics included pronunciation and intelligibility, grammar and vocabulary, details of description, discourse length, organization, and finally fluency and coherence, with a score of five for each. There were twelve sessions of instruction including storytelling (two sessions), group discussion (two sessions), lecture presentation (two sessions), picture and cue-card description (two sessions), and making wallpapers (four sessions). At the end of the treatment, the researchers gave the post-test of speaking and scored the students' speaking skill on the basis of the same speaking rubrics used in the pre-test.

Both groups followed the same procedures. They watched pre-recorded videos and surfed the net for the related topics for more information before each session. Then, in the class either face-to-face or online, they cooperated and collaborated with the teacher and their peers, gave and received feedback, discussed, and asked for clarification when needed. However, the cooperation and collaboration in face-to-face FLIP classroom was more obvious and students were more active. They easily had pair- and group works. However, due to the nature of online teaching through Adobe Connect, this cooperation was limited. For example the number of students

who participated in a group work was three or four. When more students wanted to take part in the activity, it often lead to chaos. Meanwhile, we had only one group to cooperate each time; other students had to listen to their classmates and wait to be called.

Design

The design of the study was quasi-experimental with two experimental groups, having pretest and posttest.

Results

The present study was conducted to investigate whether there was any statistically significant difference between the speaking skill of lower-intermediate Iranian university EFL learners in the face-to-face and online FLIP contexts. In order to answer the above question, the researcher ran one Paired-Sample t-test and one ANCOVA test. Table 1 below shows the descriptive statistics of the speaking scores for the pretest and posttest of the online and face-to-face groups.

Table 1
The Descriptive Statistics for the Speaking Scores of the Two Groups

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Online FLIP Pre	16	10.00	13.00	11.3125	1.07819
Online FLIP Post	16	10.00	14.00	11.8750	1.02470
F2F FLIP Pre	16	10.00	13.00	11.5000	1.03280
F2F FLIP Post	16	10.00	15.00	13.0000	1.50555

As Table 1 shows, the mean scores of the online group, in the pre-test and post-test, are 11.31, 11.87 and the mean scores of the face-to-face group, in the pre-test and post-test, are 11.50, 13, respectively. Table 2 shows the result of the normality test.

Table 2
The Test of Normality for the Selection of an Appropriate Inferential Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Online FLIP Pre	.239	16	.065
Online FLIP Post	.201	16	.082
F2F FLIP Pre	.186	16	.143
F2F FLIP Post	.188	16	.136

The result of the test of normality in Table 2 shows that the data are normally distributed for the two sets of scores (Sig> .05). Therefore, the

appropriate test for the mean comparison within the groups would be the Paired-Samples t-test, the results of which are provided in Table 3.

Table 3
The Paired-Samples t-Test for the Comparison of the Pretests and Posttest

	Paired Differences							
				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1 Online	-.56250	.81394	.20349	-.99622	-.12878	-2.764	15.014	
Pair 2 F-t-F	-1.50000	.96609	.24152	-2.01479	-.98521	-6.211	15.000	

The results of the Paired-Samples t-test in Table 3 show that there is a statistically meaningful difference between the pre-test and posttest of the online group, $t\ (15) = -2.76$, $p < 0.05$. It is also indicated that there is a statistically meaningful significant difference between the pre-test and posttest of the face-to-face group, $t\ (15) = -6.21$, $p < 0.05$.

In order to find whether there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups, the researcher ran the ANCOVA test. The results are represented in Table 4.

Table 4
The Result of the ANCOVA for the Comparison of the Speaking Scores

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	36.372[a]	2	18.186	22.440	.000	.607
Intercept	1.386	1	1.386	1.711	.201	.056
Pretest	26.247	1	26.247	32.386	.000	.528
Group	**7.294**	**1**	**7.294**	**9.000**	**.005**	**.237**
Error	23.503	29	.810			
Total	5010.000	32				
Corrected Total	59.875	31				

The results in Table 4 reveals that there was a statistically significant difference between the online and the face-to-face groups regarding their speaking scores, $F\ (1,29) = 9$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .23$. This means that the face-to-face group, who received FLIP instruction, significantly outperformed the online group.

Discussion

The main aim of this research was to find out whether the speaking skills of Iranian lower-intermediate EFL learners in the face-to-face FLIP learning (a type of blended learning) and fully online FLIP contexts were significantly different after the treatment. As the results of different analyses revealed, using FLIP learning could be a beneficial technique that significantly improved the speaking skills of both experimental groups. In fact, the participants of both face-to-face and online FLIP groups performed more successfully on the post-test than the pre-test. The findings also indicated that the participants who were taught through face-to-face FLIP instruction performed more successfully on the post-test than those exposed to online FLIP instruction. In fact, employing face-to-face FLIP, supported by different techniques had a positive effect and improved the learners' speaking skills more effectively**.**

The findings of this study are supported by the study carried out by Talan and Gülseçen (2018). They showed that in comparison to blended learning (integration of face-to-face classrooms with technology), FLIP learning had a positive effect on students' self-regulation skills development. The results of this study are also consistent with those reported by Liu (2019). She indicated that visualization instruments applied during face-to-face instruction in the FLIP classroom created a full-participating, real-time classroom and provided particular and useful teaching tasks and activities. This improvement could be due to the use of visualization tools, which had a significant impact on increasing the quality of instruction.

The findings also align with the findings of a study carried out by Namaziandost, Neisi, and Momtaz (2019). The participants in the FLIP classroom group that were equipped with Internet, computer, and projector outperformed those in the control group who received audio files once or twice in the class. In the same vein, the results of this study are supported by the findings of a study carried out by Thai, De Wever, and Valcke (2020). They found that in comparison to face-to-face learning and fully e-learning, the learners who were exposed to blended learning and FLIP classroom had better performance. Moreover, the results obtained in the present study are in line with the findings reported by Beason-Abmayr, Caprette, and Gopalan (2021) which indicated the positive effect of FLIP classrooms on students'

achievement. Indeed, FLIP teaching before the pandemic period eased the transition of instruction from face-to-face teaching to online instruction. The findings are also in agreement with those reported by Evseeva and Solozhenko (2015), Flipped Learning Network (2014), Quarato (2016), Alsowat (2016), Stöhr et al. (2020), Ma (2020) which indicated the effectiveness of using FLIP Learning and its integration into students' speaking skill or oral competence in language learning**.**

However, the results obtained are in contrast with the ones reported by Beason-Abmayr et al. (2021) which revealed that online FLIP classrooms were more effective than the face-to-face FLIP classroom and had a constructive effect on students' achievement during the COVID-19 pandemic. This rather contradictory result might be due to the modified activities designed to incorporate more interactive methods through websites and online classes. The findings of this study are not supported by the study carried out by Talan and Gülseçen (2018) either. They showed that in comparison to blended learning (integration of face-to-face classrooms with technology), FLIP learning had a positive effect on students' self-regulation skills development. The outcomes of the present study do not support the findings of Sajid et al. (2016). They found that FLIP learning did not improve students' academic performance, which could be due to the learners' limited interaction with the instructor which was a barrier to their learning experience. However, the majority of the learners had a positive attitude toward these methods and expressed their satisfaction with these methods of learning as new and effective learning approaches.

The findings also are not in agreement with those reported by Heyma et al. (2015). They made an attempt to decrease the face-to-face classroom time through flipping it to solve the teacher shortages in secondary education. The results revealed that the learners in the FLIP classroom performed remarkably worse in terms of learning objectives. This might be due to the learners' inability dealing with more responsibility to adjust their own learning**.** The studies conducted by Chen, Young, and Hsiao (2016), Clark (2015), Desantis, Van Curen, and Putsch (2015), and Kirvan, Rakes, and Zamora (2015) indicated that no significant difference between the FLIP classroom and traditional classroom considering learners' achievement.

The FLIP instruction aims at motivating teachers to give learners personalized guidelines based on the teaching situation through different tasks, such as group discussion, self-inquiry, homework practice, and the like. It develops a constructive learning culture, improves internalization of learners' knowledge, and increases their learning capability. Therefore, FLIP learning completely varies from traditional instruction, which focuses on the transmission of knowledge. Considering the findings of the current research study, it can be concluded that face-to-face FLIP instruction improved EFL learners' speaking skills. This type of instruction needs an evidence-based, real-time, full-participation learning, and learner-centered classroom model. The instructors can adopt different techniques and methods to motivate learners' participation and initiative to make full use of the classroom. In face-to-face FLIP learning, when learners are separated, they acquire the required knowledge while surfing through the Internet individually, and when they get together and work cooperatively, they communicate, practice, share, and attempt to enhance, integrate, and introduce what they have learned**.**

Although face-to-face and online FLIP learning have various advantages, there may be some limitations. For example, not all students have the opportunity to have appropriate technological tools to be engaged actively in the learning process. The students in online FLIP learning may face some technical issues such as Internet interruption, or slow Internet that can prevent watching online videos or active participation in discussions. In some cases, special software for some devices such as smartphones, tablets, etc. is required. Since FLIP learning involves a high level of self-direction and self-discipline, learners with low motivation and poor study habits would be discouraged. This type of learning requires a learn-at-your-own-pace style of education; thus, its success depends heavily on the learners' self-motivation. If they are not self-motivated, it would not work with the less or demotivated learners**.**

Despite challenges posed by face-to-face and online FLIP learning, these methods can play a major role in modern education by freeing time for student-centered activities and encouraging learners to become independent self-learners (Mason, Shuman, & Cook, 2013). Technology supports and not

replaces teachers because they are secondary to humans and therefore they play additional roles in language learning**.**

Conclusion

The findings of this research may be importance for those who are involved in the language teaching and learning area. FLIP learning improves active learning, enhances teacher-learner interaction, increases collaboration among learners, allows flexible learning, develops critical thinking, and increases the IT literacy of teachers and learners. Being taught through FLIP learning, learners can develop their speaking skills since they are exposed to an interactive and reflective learning context in which they appear to be more interested to increase their learning opportunities through practicing and repetition. Teachers should be encouraged to reduce traditional face-to-face learning and pay more attention to adapt new teaching approaches such as technology-integrated learning, FLIP instruction, and learner-centered learning, and involve learners in learning conditions that increase their experiences**.**

Education administrators need to provide rich environments that motivate learners to control their learning time, ways of learning and take responsibility for their learning. The findings of this study may help policymakers in focusing on the importance of applying various approaches to skills instruction. The researchers of the current study hope the findings will have far-reaching conclusions which can be practical and helpful for the researchers interested in FLIP instruction because it provides new literature on the topic.

Declaration of interest: none

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