

## The flip side of the flipped classroom model: A study of EFL learners' hindrances

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### Abstract

Flipped Classroom Model is reported in research studies to bring in numerous benefits to learners in comparison to conventional, teacher-dominated language pedagogy. However, some researchers believe that most of the FCM success stories reported in research are anecdotal and based on hearsay. The present research study investigates the efficacy of FCM to teach English as a foreign language in the Saudi Arabian context. In a quasi-experimental study, a selected group of twenty students was taught through the conventional as well as FCM approaches. Marks obtained by the control and treatment group participants were compared and t-test was applied to mark the significance of difference, if any. The findings showed a significant difference ( $t = 3.889$ ; significant at  $\alpha = .001$ ;  $df = 38$ , two-tailed test) between the marks of the same group of students taught using different approaches. Participants performed better under conventional lesson delivery approach. The study concludes that FCM as a teaching practice is unsuitable for some EFL learners, especially with teacher-intensive language elements, such as reading and writing.

Keywords: Flipped Classroom, language pedagogy, reading comprehension, teaching strategies, TEFL

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## 1. Introduction

Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) of language teaching is gaining ground around the world. The approach has got a boost during the Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic, as the disease has crippled the traditional classroom, whereas online teaching/virtual classroom greatly relies on the elements of FCM. A vast research base has been established in this engaging field of study, and further research works can rely on this database for support as well as to place the research related to FCM in an appropriate context. However, even being a vast resource for information, the existing literature lacks on two significant aspects of knowledge on FCM. First, most of the empirical studies on testing the efficacy of FCM as a pedagogical approach to enhance learner experience are focused on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related subjects of study (Lyddon, 2015) and lack sufficient research on language teaching. Second, the majority of research works provide only positive feedback on the efficacy of the model, which, in the words of Lyddon (2015), "is mostly anecdotal" (p. 382). Thus, there are not many studies on the adaptation of the model to (foreign) language teaching for enhanced learner experience; and additionally, a reappraisal of the existing body of research on FCM applied to the teaching of English shows that almost all the studies paint only success stories. The researchers' experiment with FCM as a pedagogical approach to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses to Saudi undergraduate students, however, showed mixed results. The approach enhanced the language learning experience of a large number of students, whereas there were some students who failed to cope with the demands of the approach leading to a decline in their performance compared to what they were capable of in the conventional classroom setup (Alfaifi & Saleem, 2022). The results obtained thus (i) cast doubts on the assumptions that FCM is universally applicable to all pedagogic situations, to teach all types of courses of study including foreign languages, with sure success in enhancing learner achievements, and (ii) raise the controversy whether FCM as a pedagogic approach marginalises some learners who fail to cope with the required pace.

### 1.1. Theoretical framework

As mentioned above, the results obtained from experimenting with FCM in an EFL class with Saudi students revealed that the model may not bring all-round success in enhancing learner achievement in foreign language teaching scenario, especially where some learners feel left out and marginalized owing to the general pace of teaching assumed in FCM. The issue prompted the thought that there may be some pedagogical features missing in FCM that are otherwise helpful to some foreign language learners to better comprehend the elements of the target language. Learners differ in competence, pace of learning, motivation to learn a foreign language, anxiety towards a new teaching method, use of the Internet and access to online sources to enhance their learning, and comprehension strategies as regards online material. All these factors affect language learning in FCM. The model does not differentiate between learners in terms of the instructional input; it treats all students at one level. However, the researchers' experience refutes the assumption that all learners stand at one level at the beginning of any course. There always are individual differences, and therefore, individual pace of learning. Even learning styles do differ, and as a result, some learners fail to cope with FCM. Some students essentially need face-to-face interaction with teachers to process the input. Simple video recording of lectures, online interaction with the teacher or peers, or accessing materials from the Internet, etc. always fall short of their purpose for such students, and therefore, generate insufficient learning. The teacher in conventional classroom adjusts his/her modus operandi in accordance with the needs of learners, which is ruled out in flipped classroom model.

### 1.2. Related research

A fully flipped classroom approach requires reversal of in-class and at-home activities for students. Therefore, learners attend online or on-campus lectures and gather information from the materials and sources of information provided by the language instructor and from online sources, if required. Hence,

learners are expected to be prepared for discussion in the class followed by problem-solving (Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Lage et al., 2000; Strayer, 2012). FCM is being implemented for different courses at several institutions of higher education and is often referred to as the future pedagogy (Hoffman, 2014; Kaur, 2016; Kim et al., 2017; McNally et al., 2017; Tu & Liu, 2016).

### 1.2.1. Pros and cons of flipped learning

The positive features of flipped classroom/blended learning are highlighted in numerous research works. Kim et al. (2017), for example, discern that flipping the classrooms can successfully enhance higher-order thinking resulting in students' satisfaction. Findings of other studies such as Beatty & Albert's (2016) are in line with Kim et al.'s findings. Kaur (2016) lists several positive aspects of flipping the classroom, such as enhanced learning effectiveness, extending the learning environment, better content delivery in a speedy manner, increased customization and flexibility as per students' learning preferences, and so on (pp. 230-31).

### 1.2.2. Flipped classroom and learner engagement

Research studies on the effectiveness of FCM in enhancing learner engagement in language and other subjects of study have reported positive results. The model is implemented at higher education institutions, and research studies are being conducted to evaluate the efficacy of the model to bring about desired changes in learners' behaviour, motivation, and academic performance in the courses that are flipped (Ali & Säberg, 2016; Graziano, 2017; Güvenç, 2018; Hamdan et al., 2013; Han, 2015; Herreid & Schiller, 2013; Hsu, 2017; Jia, 2017; Johnston, 2017; Kim et al., 2014; Kong, 2014; Koponen, 2019; Lage et al., 2000; Nouri, 2016; Ray & Powell, 2014; Roehling et al., 2017; Soliman, 2016; Tanner & Scott, 2015). Findings from most research studies show a favourable effect of fully flipped classroom pedagogic approach on learners' academic output (Elmaadaway, 2018; Gross et al., 2015; Hoffman, 2014; Siegle, 2014; Smallhorn, 2017; Song & Kapur, 2017; Strayer, 2012; Sun & Wu, 2016; Talley & Scherer, 2013; Toto & Nguyen, 2009; Tu & Liu, 2016). For instance, McCormick et al. (2013) emphasize that the development of student engagement in the learning process has now shifted towards teaching and learning and, to that end, education through flipped classroom model is a helpful step forward.

Research works in English language teaching and applied linguistics have shown that FCM as a pedagogic practice can be associated with several learner benefits (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015; Ali & Säberg, 2016; Farah, 2014; Karaaslan & Celebi, 2017; Kvashnina & Martynko, 2016; Lee & Wallace, 2017; Santikarn & Wichadee, 2018). As an example, Al-Shabibi and Al-Ayasra (2019) explored the effectiveness of FCM in learning outcomes and reported favourable results. Qayoom and Saleem (2017a) observe that the personalised learning climate created in FCM brings about significant improvement in student achievement in English. In yet another study, Qayoom and Saleem (2017b) report that students in lower grades favour partially flipped classroom strategy. Smallhorn (2017) believes that FCM has proved helpful in overcoming certain learning barriers and improving overall learner achievements in almost all fields of study. The effects of flipped classroom on ESL learners' achievement and enhanced learner engagement have been evaluated by several researchers (Al-Harbi & Al-shumaimeri, 2016; Basal, 2015; Doman & Webb, 2016; Hsieh et al., 2017; Karaaslan & Celebi, 2017; Kvashnina & Martynko, 2016; Lee & Wallace, 2017; Santikarn & Wichadee, 2018; Soliman, 2016; Thang et al., 2012; Tomlinson & Whittaker, 2013; Turan & Akdag-Cimen, 2019; Zhonggen & Wang, 2016). The results obtained from these studies have been encouraging.

However, FCM as a pedagogy approach may not be suitable for all types of teaching-learning situations, and to some learners a conventional classroom provides a better comfort-zone for learning (Alfaifi & Saleem, 2022).

### 1.2.3. Flipped learning: Preconditions

Researchers report that the success of the Flipped Classroom approach depends on several preconditions, which, owing to various reasons, may function as hindrances for teachers as well as for learners (Asef-Vaziri, 2015; Ha et al., 2019; Jiang et al., 2020; Ramazan, 2017; Tu & Liu, 2016). Learners' prior online learning experience is the first and foremost requirement for the success of the approach (Zhai et al., 2017). Learners' prior learning experience, especially with technology utilization, affects their perception of the approach and its success (Zhai et al., 2017). In most cases of resistance to the model, it is its novelty that leads learners to form a negative perception of the model (McNally et al., 2017; Tu & Liu, 2016; Zhai et al., 2017). One of the preconditions of the model for learners is pre-class learning, which not many students seem to prefer. Learners dislike being quizzed at the beginning of class on content made available to them before the class (McNally et al., 2017). FCM needs creation of personalized learning climate. Personalized learning climate is understood as a pedagogical approach, which can be customized as per students' learning style and pace (McNally et al., 2017) and in practical terms it means the facility to access the teaching material as and when students like it, such as replay of lessons at home, move back and forth in it, pause, and retrieve information, etc. Yet, the facility may work both ways, negatively as well as positively since students' attention may be easily diverted by other unproductive activities such as computer games (Zhai et al., 2017). Many youngsters get addicted to the Internet and since Internet browsing does not require long attention span, they develop attention deficit (Cheng et al., 2016; Tateno et al., 2016) leading to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Such students fail to cope with situations where enough concentration is required, like online lessons or quizzes. Flipped learning also requires online collaborative learning, especially for pre-class activities, while many students find collaborative learning stressful (Jung et al., 2012). McNally et al. (2017) express their dissatisfaction with FCM that despite the model becoming increasingly popular, "its effectiveness in achieving greater engagement and learning outcomes is currently lacking substantial empirical evidence." Låg and Sæle (2019) also report that introduction of FCM into classroom brings only a small effect on students' leaning achievement. The researchers say that FCM may have slightly more positive impact on learning if testing students' preparedness is included in its implementation.

### 1.3. Purpose of the study

However, apart from the hindrances in the path of EFL learners discussed above, which all learners are supposed to overcome with time and more practice, there seem to be a few other insurmountable difficulties with EFL pedagogy employing FCM, specifically encountered by some learners who fare better in conventional language teaching classroom. Based on the observation that these learners relied to a large extent on immediate feedback and on-the-spot readjustment in instructor's teaching strategy, the researchers formulated the following hypothesis.

#### 1.3.1. Research hypothesis

Immediate feedback, on-the-spot adjustment, and modification in teaching approach according to learners' need help EFL learners overcome hindrances in language learning. Therefore, to test this hypothesis and to answer the following question, the current research was designed.

#### 1.3.2. Research question

Does immediate feedback, on-the-spot adjustment, and modification in teaching approach help EFL learners overcome hindrances in language learning?

#### 1.4. Research objectives

The primary objective of the current study was to investigate whether face-to-face interaction with the instructor is essential for some learners to process the input. The secondary objective of the research was to investigate whether immediate feedback, on-the-spot adjustment, and modification in teaching approach help some EFL learners overcome hindrances in language learning, especially in teacher-intensive language elements, such as reading comprehension.

## 2. Research design: Method & materials

In order to answer the above-mentioned research question, a small-scale quasi-experimental study was conducted with undergraduate EFL learners. The experiment was conducted online as virtual classroom sessions since, owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, actual classrooms teaching was off. The research design included three steps: (i) selection of students who underperformed in English taught to them using FCM as an approach, (ii) teaching the selected group of students using both conventional and FCM approach, and (iii) testing the students at the end of each experimental teaching session. The tests scores were compared to see if there was any significant difference in their marks obtained at the end of teaching sessions using each approach.

The experiment involved teaching reading comprehension passages to the selected group of learners. The first approach was based on conventional, top-down mode of lesson delivery where the teacher guided the instructions and learner activities and clarified any confusion along the way. The learners' progress was tested through comprehension questions. The second approach was based on FCM in which the learners were provided with the reading passages, a glossary of difficult words, and a few guidelines to approach the text. Only comprehension-based exercises were done in the virtual class sessions. At the end of the teaching sessions using each pedagogic approach, the degree of learners' comprehension of the passages was measured separately and the results were compared.

Content Validity of the experiment were ascertained by (i) accurate ascertainment of cases, that is, determining that the experimental teaching and the tests were focused on reading and writing, (ii) non-biased selection of participants, (iii) diagnostic testing procedures applied to the group. The researcher was aware that the participating students failed to perform well in reading and writing, and (iv) response rate.

### 2.1. Data collection

#### 2.1.1. Reading passages

Four reading passages used as teaching units in the classes were used as quantitative data collection instruments. Two passages were taken up for study for the conventional classroom and the other two for FCM guided classroom. The reading passages were excerpted from Advanced Reading course prescribed for English Major stream at King Abdulaziz University. The passages were selected keeping in mind the difficulty level for the selected group of learners. The primary teaching and testing focus for the passages was global comprehension and summarization, while the secondary focus was grasping new word meaning in context. (See Appendix A)

#### 2.1.2. Tests

In the conventional teaching mode, the learners did silent reading of the passages in the class and doubts regarding sentence and word meanings were clarified. After they finished reading, the learners were given four comprehension-based questions to solve, which were marked for record. In FCM guided teaching/testing mode, the learners had to read the passages at home using the glossary and other

reading guidelines provided to them, and in the class, they were given to solve four comprehension-based questions, which were marked for further record. In each case, the questions contained five parts, one mark assigned to each part—thus making a total of 20 marks. The validity and reliability of the test instruments were determined by calculating Cronbach's Alpha, which measured .748, which was more than the minimum acceptable value, .61). The objective of the test-exercises was to mark the difference, if any, in the learners' comprehension of written English taught using different pedagogic approaches.

### 2.1.3. Participants

Twenty students were selected from four different classes to participate in the study. The criterion for selection of these participants was marks obtained by them in Advanced Reading module. They displayed a sharp decline in their performance, especially in Advanced Reading module, after FCM was introduced as English pedagogy approach in the classes in the beginning of the semester. The participants were undergraduate students majoring in English. They were 5<sup>th</sup> semester students in an 8-semester programme, and Advanced Reading is one of their course modules. In the previous semesters, they had studied several core modules, including Reading I. All of the participants, aged between 21 and 24 years, were male students due to the gender-segregated education system in the kingdom.

### 2.1.4. Procedure

The study was conducted at King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. The reading passages selected for teaching and testing were part of the prescribed units. Some of the test exercises were pre-given in the units, while a few of them were prepared by the researchers. The exercises were printed on separate sheets of paper with enough spaces to write answers. The participants were asked to do the exercises in the class, along the lines of a class-test, to maintain integrity and avoid malpractices. Each complete and correct response was given a full mark (1), whereas zero (0) mark was given for every wrong answer. Thus, participants' marks obtained for each exercise ranged from 0 to 20.

## 3. Data analysis

The figures obtained from the test-exercises were analyzed statistically. First, the figures were tabulated to calculate Cronbach's Alpha, Means of scores, Standard Deviation and Variance. Second, the participants' scores obtained in the tests related to the two different modes of teaching were compared to measure the difference, if any. Independent-samples t-test was applied to measure the significance of difference in the scores. The values obtained from the statistical analysis were used for qualitative interpretation. The participants obtaining higher marks in the test related to a particular pedagogic practice were interpreted to favour that particular practice.

For ease of comparison of scores obtained by the participants in the tests conducted at the end of different pedagogic approaches, the FCM guided class participants were called the control group, whereas the same participants taught using the conventional pedagogic approach were termed as treatment group participants.

### 3.1. Results

For each exercise, the participants were given the tasks to (1) find synonyms for the selected words, (2) use the given words in sentences, (3) answer comprehension questions, and (4) write a summary of the given passage.

### 3.1.1. Results obtained from the control group participants

Scores obtained by the control group participants are presented in Table 1 below. The participants scored almost similar marks in the two exercises, so, only marks obtained by them in one exercise are given here. Table 1 presents mean, standard deviation, variance, and Cronbach's Alpha for the test assignment scores.

Table 1. Analysis of Raw Data: Mean, SD, Variance, and Cronbach's Alpha for Control Group Scores (N = 20)

	A	B	C	D	E	
1		<b>Q. 1</b>	<b>Q. 2</b>	<b>Q. 3</b>	<b>Q. 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
2	<b>1</b>	2	1	4	2	9
3	<b>2</b>	2	4	4	4	14
4	<b>3</b>	3	3	3	1	10
5	<b>4</b>	1	2	1	1	5
6	<b>5</b>	4	2	4	2	12
7	<b>6</b>	4	4	4	3	15
8	<b>7</b>	2	4	2	3	11
9	<b>8</b>	1	2	1	2	6
10	<b>9</b>	2	1	2	1	6
11	<b>10</b>	2	3	1	2	8
12	<b>11</b>	2	4	4	4	14
13	<b>12</b>	4	3	4	4	15
14	<b>13</b>	2	2	2	1	7
15	<b>14</b>	2	3	2	2	11
16	<b>15</b>	2	4	4	4	14
17	<b>16</b>	2	2	3	2	9
18	<b>17</b>	4	2	4	4	14
19	<b>18</b>	1	3	2	2	12
20	<b>19</b>	2	2	2	1	7
21	<b>20</b>	3	2	4	2	11
22	<b>Total</b>					
23	<b>Mean</b>	2.35	2.65	2.85	2.35	10.5
24	<b>SD</b>	.988	.988	1.182	1.136	3.252
25	<b>Var.</b>	.9275	.9275	1.327	1.227	10.05
26	<b>Data Distribution</b>	1-2: 14 3-4: 6	1-2: 10 3-4: 10	1-2: 9 3-4: 11	1-2: 13 3-4: 7	
27	<b>K</b>	4				
28	<b>Σ var</b>	4.409				
29	<b>Var.</b>	10.05				
30	<b>α</b>	0.748				

### 3.1.2. Results obtained from the treatment group participants

Similarly, the scores obtained from the treatment group participants are given in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Analysis of Raw Data: Mean, SD, Variance, and Cronbach's Alpha for Treatment Group Scores (N = 20)

	A	B	C	D	E	
1		<b>Q. 1</b>	<b>Q. 2</b>	<b>Q. 3</b>	<b>Q. 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
2	<b>1</b>	3	2	5	3	13
3	<b>2</b>	3	5	5	5	18

4	<b>3</b>	4	4	4	2	14
5	<b>4</b>	2	3	2	2	9
6	<b>5</b>	5	3	5	3	16
7	<b>6</b>	5	5	5	4	19
8	<b>7</b>	3	5	3	4	15
9	<b>8</b>	2	3	2	3	10
10	<b>9</b>	3	2	3	2	10
11	<b>10</b>	3	4	2	3	12
12	<b>11</b>	3	5	5	5	18
13	<b>12</b>	5	4	5	5	19
14	<b>13</b>	3	3	3	2	11
15	<b>14</b>	3	4	3	3	15
16	<b>15</b>	3	5	5	5	18
17	<b>16</b>	3	3	4	3	13
18	<b>17</b>	5	3	5	5	18
19	<b>18</b>	2	4	3	3	16
20	<b>19</b>	3	3	3	2	11
21	<b>20</b>	4	3	5	3	15
22	<b>Total</b>					
23	<b>Mean</b>	3.35	3.65	3.85	3.35	14.5
24	<b>SD</b>	.988	.988	1.182	1.136	3.252
25	<b>Var.</b>	.9275	.9275	1.327	1.227	10.05
26	<b>Data Distribution</b>	2-3: 16 4-5: 6	2-3: 10 4-5: 10	2-3: 9 4-5: 11	2-3: 13 4-5: 7	
27	<b>K</b>	4				
28	<b>Σ var</b>	4.409				
29	<b>Var.</b>	10.05				
30	<b>α</b>	0.748				

### 3.1.3. Results obtained from the t-test analysis

In order to investigate whether or not there was any significant difference between the two groups (control vs. treatment), the gathered data was imported into SPSS to perform a two-tailed t test. Table 3 below shows the results of the t-test test and includes information regarding each group (control vs. treatment), the degree of freedom, SD and the t value.

Table 3. Significance of Difference in Marks Obtained by Participants: Summary of Results Obtained from Independent-samples t-test

N	t**	df	Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	95% confidence interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
CG = 20				CG = 3.252		
TG = 20	3.889	38	4.0	TG = 3.252	1.9178,	6.0822

\*\* Significant at  $\alpha = .001$ ; df = 38, two-tailed test



As can be seen, the results indicate that there indeed is a significant difference ( $t= 3.89$ ,  $p<.05$ ) between the conventional mode of lesson delivery and the Flipped Classroom approach, which is discussed in detail in the following section.

#### **4. Discussion: Research findings**

The primary objective of the present study was to determine whether FCM as an approach to teach EFL creates some hindrances in learning, especially concerning the element of lack of face-to-face interaction in the model. The results obtained hint that FCM does create learning hindrances, particularly to those learners who are more comfortable with face-to-face interaction with a teacher.

A quick glance at Table 1 and Table 2 shows that the mean scores of the control group participants (when the participants were taught the reading passages employing FCM guided pedagogic approach) is 10.5, i.e., on an average, they scored roughly 50% marks in reading comprehension. The means of their scores in each of the four questions (on vocabulary, word usage, global comprehension, and summarization) are 2.35, 2.65, 2.85 and 2.35, respectively. On the other hand, when taught in conventional manner, the mean scores of the same participants (called 'the treatment group') rises to 14.5, i.e., 4 marks (40%) higher than their previous mean scores, and the means of their scores in the four questions also rise constantly, to 3.35, 3.65, 3.85 and 3.35, respectively. The obtained value of t-test analysis, displayed in Table 3, is 3.889, which is significant at  $\alpha = .001$ ;  $df = 38$ , for a two-tailed test.

The results obtained from the analysis indicate that in comparison to the FCM guided teaching approach, the selected group of participants derived more benefits from a conventional classroom where the language instructor explained the lessons in detail, addressing their confusions on the spot. The results can be taken as a proof to answer the research question, "Does immediate feedback, on-the-spot adjustment, and modification in teaching approach help EFL learners overcome hindrances in language learning?" in the affirmative since immediate feedback, on-the-spot adjustment and modification in the teaching strategy were part of the pedagogic techniques employed by the instructor in the conventional mode of lesson delivery. The observation is also based on the fact that all other aspects of teaching being the same in the two pedagogic approaches, the above-mentioned pedagogical elements were the only missing features in FCM guided teaching. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that these features in the conventional mode of lesson delivery made all the difference to the language grasping power of the concerned participants. The obtained results also prove the research hypothesis "Immediate feedback, on-the-spot adjustment, and modification in teaching approach according to learners' need help EFL learners overcome hindrances in language learning" true. The present research findings corroborate the findings from a few previous research works. Li (2018) reports that FCM as a teaching approach is bound to fail in some teaching/learning contexts because of so many prerequisites involved in the model. Tanner and Scott (2015) say that FCM has its limitations with students who fail to take charge of their own learning, though the researchers do not discuss why some students fail to take charge of their own learning. One of the reasons behind learners' disinterest in FCM is difficulty of finding quality videos (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Herreid & Schiller, 2013; Nederveld & Berge, 2015). Du et al. (2014), on the other hand, note that the model relies heavily on student self-motivation, while there are always a few students in any class who may not be as self-motivated as others, and so, they lag behind the others.

#### **5. Conclusion**

To sum up, the primary objective of the present research was to investigate whether, to process the input, some foreign language learners are more comfortable with the conventional mode of lesson delivery where the basic pedagogic feature is face-to-face interaction with the instructor who provides immediate feedback and makes on-the-spot adjustments and modifications in the teaching approach. The objective of the study has been achieved by finding answer to the research question and accepting the research hypothesis on the strength of obtained results and other documentary evidence. Why FCM

as a language pedagogy approach cannot work in some EFL teaching contexts is that some students essentially need clear and well-structured explanations and frequent revisions, especially in instructor-intensive language skills, such as reading. FCM, despite its flexibility in learning with pause and replay options built in it, remains a top-down approach as regards the level of learners. Additionally, the instructor in the conventional classroom may provide some unexpected but related information that proves helpful to learners and comes up at the spur of the moment but that may be lost for time lapse, even if the learner records it for further clarification or posts it to the instructor for clarification and feedback in FCM teaching. This information cannot be built in the materials to be used by learners at home since it is unexpected.

## 6. Suggestions for Further Research

Almost all the previous research works on the application of FCM to language teaching reviewed in the present study dealt with English language as whole system. To the researchers' understanding, however, learners may face differing degrees of challenges in different linguistic skills, i.e., reading, writing, listening and speaking. Therefore, to narrow down the analysis, the focus of the present research was on the reading skill. Further research studies on the subject may take up the other language skills for investigation, like writing, or speaking.

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