

The Impact of the Flipped Classroom Teaching Model on EFL Learners' Language Learning: Positive Changes in Learning Attitudes, Perceptions and Performance

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Received: April 18, 2022

Accepted: May 18, 2022

Online Published: May 18, 2022

doi:10.5430/wjel.v12n5p136

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n5p136>

Abstract

Instruction in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning is a priority around the globe, but instructional methodologies have not always kept pace with the changing needs of learners. The traditional teacher-centered EFL classroom teaching model can no longer meet the needs of college EFL learners to strengthen and improve their language ability. For years, the flipped classroom teaching model has been widely recognized as an innovative and effective instructional method by language educators. Based upon the analysis of the current EFL teaching and learning situation and the flipped classroom teaching model, the author took two Artificial Intelligent classes from a Chinese public college as the participants in the experiment to explore the impact of the flipped classroom teaching model on their language learning. One Artificial Intelligent class, the Experimental Group (EG), adopted the flipped classroom teaching model in EFL class, and the other Artificial Intelligent class, the Control Group (CG), adopted the traditional teacher-centered method in EFL class. After the survey, implementation of different teaching models, pre-test and post-test comparison, learning time changing curve analysis, and analysis of learners' acceptance of the new model, the study aims to find out the impact of the flipped classroom teaching model on college EFL learners' language learning attitudes, perceptions and performance, providing some references for college EFL educators on their EFL teaching to a certain extent.

Keywords: language learning, flipped classroom, experimental group, control group, college EFL learners

1. Introduction

The traditional teaching model emphasizes teachers over students, classroom over extracurricular, and knowledge over ability, which makes students less eager to communicate in English and less engaged in English language class, and seriously hinders the improvement of their language ability. Traditional teaching is almost teacher-centered which conflicts with the constructivist approaches to teaching and learning (Brooks, 2002). There are few opportunities for English as a foreign language (EFL) learner to drill their language skills (Lin et al., 2018). For EFL teachers, how to teach language courses effectively with distinct positive effects on EFL learners' language learning has become a hot topic. The motivation of learners is considered as an important prerequisite for their ability to regulate their learning process (Boevé et al., 2017). A mismatch between an instructor's teaching and a student's learning can result in negative effect (Lage, Platt & Treglia, 2000). The flipped classroom model reduces the teaching time in class and enhances the interaction between teacher and students, and students and students without reducing the amount of knowledge and skills acquisition. Besides, the flipped classroom model greatly increases the opportunities for students to communicate in English. As can be seen, EFL speakers usually have difficulty acquiring good English communicative skills and are hesitant when speaking English out loud (Wu, Hsieh, & Yang, 2017). In addition, there is a higher level of learner engagement in the flipped classroom. Learners are much better prepared for class (Musib, 2014; Sengel, 2014) when they are given videos and materials learning than when they are only given textbook readings (De Grazia et al., 2012). The flipped classroom can promote learners' deeper understanding of knowledge and concepts, and make them successful in learning (McLaughlin et al., 2014). In the EFL flipped

classroom, teachers no longer focus on explanation in class, but encourage learners to discuss and explore the main points with each other, which greatly strengthens and improves their English language ability.

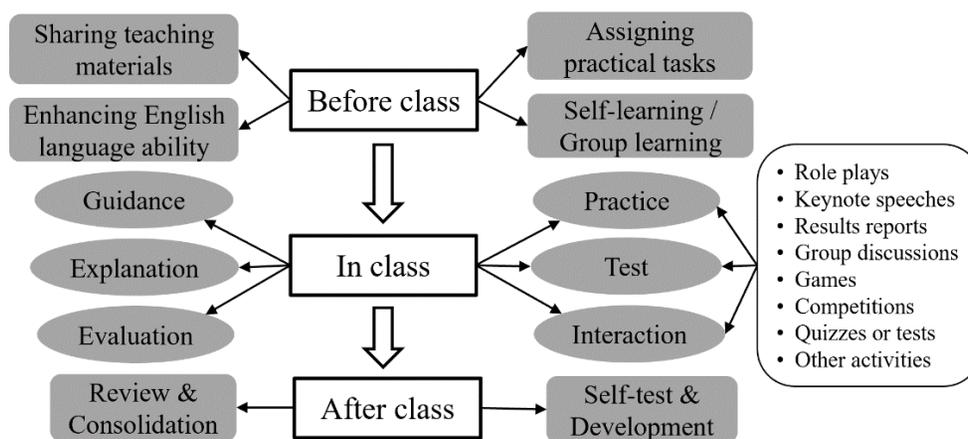
As can be seen, several issues are thought to be correlated with the effect of the EFL flipped classroom teaching, including appropriate assessment criteria of EFL teaching, effective English learning environment, proper application software or supplementary materials (Chen & Chang, 2017; Crosthwaite et. al., 2015; Hwang, Lai & Wang, 2015; Yang, 2017). There are some typical characteristics of EFL teaching in Chinese colleges, such as large-scale classes and fixed textbooks, thus the research on exploring effective teaching methods and reasonable arrangement on each before-class, in-class and after-class activity in the EFL flipped classroom teaching are of great significance.

The paper conducts an experimental study on college EFL students' English language ability cultivation with the flipped classroom model, and discusses the overall implementation effect of the flipped classroom teaching model in the college English language class.

1.1 Definition and Explanation of the Flipped Classroom Model

In the Flipped Classroom (FCM), learners view video lectures or read materials online before attending in-class sessions where they will participate in more interactive and efficient activities (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Ferreri & O'Connor, 2013; Gilboy et al., 2015; Young et al., 2015). In the Flipped Classroom setting, teachers usually produce video, audio, and electronic teaching plans before class by integrating key points with new content. Rotellar (2016) states that a simplified description of the flipped classroom is a reversal of the traditional order of content delivery (for example, lectures) and homework. Kara (2016) describes flipped classroom as an approach whereby course material is first presented to students before class, usually via online learning management systems. Cole and Kritzer (2009) indicate that having students come to class prepared to employ what they've learned from an electronic lecture is useful for simulating real world activities. Class time is then used for each learning-centered activity that is built on the pre-class work, rather than the traditional instructor-led lecture sessions. Cross and Board (2014) claim that the flipped classroom is not a synonym for online videos; it is the interaction and the meaningful learning activities that occur during the face-to-face time. It is an environment where students take responsibility for their own learning and are engaged in their learning and get a personalized education. In flipped classroom, the teacher is often viewed as a facilitator who works side-by-side with students to assist in framing questions and structuring authentic and meaningful tasks while providing critical feedback to the students (Bender, 2012; Hussey, Fleck, & Richmond, 2015). The teacher distributes the teaching materials to the students, and the students finish the tasks with independent learning, gaining the important and difficult points and new knowledge to some extent before class, so that part of the knowledge can be acquired in advance. Students should also complete the online test of the specified content according to parts of the teaching materials, so as to absorb and internalize the new knowledge. With the knowledge and questions acquired in the process of independent learning, students then participate in the actual classroom led by the teacher, and participate in the interaction, cooperation, sharing and discussion between teacher and students, so as to achieve a complete understanding and mastery of new knowledge and difficult points, and complete the learning process in the end.

1.2 Framework of the Flipped Classroom Model



Learner-Centered Model

Figure 1. The Flipped Classroom Model of English Language Teaching

1.3 Process of the Flipped Classroom Teaching Model

The flipped classroom teaching usually consists of the following sections.

1.3.1 Before-class

- 1) Theme discussion and materials learning
- 2) Knowledge preview and preparatory group activities
- 3) Assessment or test in advance

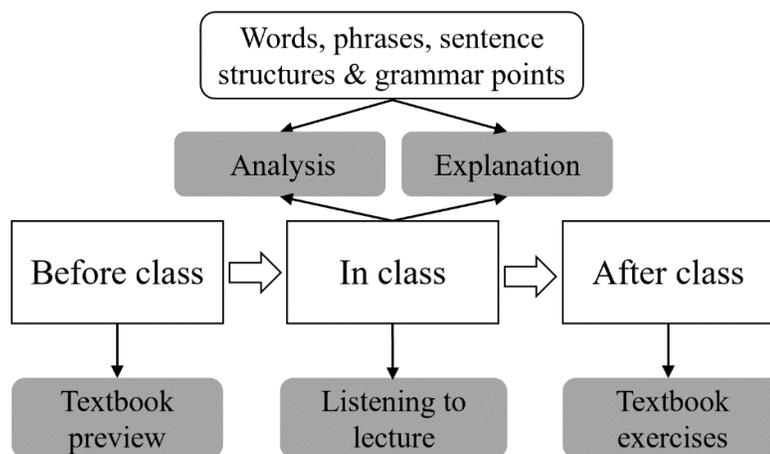
1.3.2 In-class

- 1) Classroom activities (group report, results show, group PK, games, etc.)
- 2) Students peer feedback
- 3) Teacher evaluation and explanation
- 4) Summary and reflection with critical thinking

1.3.3 After-class

- 1) Assessment or test after class
- 2) Knowledge review and consolidation exercises
- 3) Further activities

1.4 Framework of the Traditional Classroom Teaching Model



Teacher-Centered Model

Figure 2. The Traditional College English Language Classroom

1.5 Statement of the Problems

The study focuses on developing and evaluating the impact of the flipped classroom teaching model on college EFL learners' language learning. Specifically, it tries to answer the following problems.

- 1) What is the current situation of college EFL learners' English language learning?
- 2) What are the difficulties and problems experienced by college EFL learners (participants in the study) in EFL classes?
- 3) What strategies, techniques and activities are employed in a flipped classroom setting?
- 4) What is the pre-test level of English performance of the participants? What is the post-test level of English performance of the participants?
- 5) Are there any significant differences in the pre-test and post-test results in the level of English performance of the participants?

6) What instructional materials using the flipped classroom model could be proposed to increase the level of English performance of the participants?

7) Are there any positive changes in the participants' English learning attitudes and perceptions? Are they more satisfied with the flipped classroom teaching model?

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants of the Study

In the experimental teaching process, 72 students from Class 2104 (36 students) and Class 2105 (36 students) of Artificial Intelligent major of 2021 in a Chinese public college were selected as the participants of the study. Class 2104 of Artificial Intelligent major, the Empirical Group (EG), adopted the flipped classroom teaching model in EFL class. Class 2105 of Artificial Intelligent major, the Control Group (CG), adopted the traditional teaching model in EFL teaching. The traditional teaching model is that teachers explain the key and difficult points in class time, and students memorize the answers and points independently in class and after class.

2.2 Research Design and Procedure

2.2.1 Preliminary Investigation Stage

"College Students' EFL Learning Questionnaire" was issued to all the freshmen in the School of Information Technology to fully investigate their learning attitude, interest in English language learning, independent learning ability, the way and time arrangement of English language practice, and the use of mobile terminals and other basic information. (368 valid questionnaires were received. The details of questionnaires will be discussed in the part of "Results and Discussion".)

2.2.2 Experimental Stage

The experiment was carried out from the 5th to 12th week of the first semester in 2021 (November to December 2021). The experimental class and the control class used the same learning materials to complete 4 theme units within 8 weeks. Each class had 2 lessons per week, and each lesson lasted two consecutive teaching hours.

2.2.3 Data Collection and Results Analysis Stage

The whole experiment focuses on analyzing the influence of the flipped classroom teaching model on students' language ability improvement through the test results in the early stage of the experiment and the final stage of the experiment.

The pre-experiment test was carried out in the 4th week of the first semester in 2021 (October 2021). The test paper was selected from 10 sets of volume A in the simulation test bank of "Practical English Test for Colleges" published by a Chinese publishing house with a full score of 100 points.

The post-experiment test was carried out 2 months after the completion of the experiment. The test paper was also selected from 10 sets of volume A in the simulation test bank of "Practical English Test for Colleges" published by a Chinese publishing house with a full score of 100 points.

In order to test the true level of the participants, the test papers were totally new for them without being taught or learned beforehand.

Before the end of the experiment, students of the experimental class were organized to participate in "Flipped Classroom Evaluation Survey and Interview" to investigate their satisfaction with the flipped classroom model, and the collected information was processed and analyzed.

2.3 Experimental Tools

In the research, questionnaires and interviews were used to conduct qualitative analysis, in order to understand the current situation of students' English language learning, discover the characteristics of the two teaching models and find out the influence of the flipped classroom model on their English language ability improvement and their acceptance of the flipped classroom model.

By comparing the pretest and posttest results of the Empirical Group (EG) and the Control Group (CG), the author made a quantitative analysis of the reliability and validity of English language courses with the flipped classroom model in helping students improve their language competence.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Broad Questionnaire Results of College EFL Students' Language Learning before the Experiment

A total of 368 valid questionnaires were received through the Questionnaire Star Platform. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Statistical Results of the English Learning Attitudes, Perceptions and Performance of College EFL Students

Questions	Options				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Part I					
1. The language proficiency test often makes me anxious	32(8.70%)	99(26.90%)	40(10.87%)	157(42.66%)	40(10.87%)
2. There are too few opportunities for me to practice my language skills in EFL class	24(6.52%)	103(27.99%)	128(34.78%)	105(28.53%)	8(2.17%)
3. I'm afraid to memorize the text and the answers	25(6.79%)	89(24.18%)	111(30.16%)	106(28.80%)	37(10.05%)
4. I have good self-control ability	12(3.26%)	97(26.36%)	72(19.57%)	162(44.02%)	25(6.79%)
5. I have strong independent learning ability	16(4.35%)	130(35.33%)	92(25.00%)	112(30.43%)	18(4.89%)
6. I am willing to independently study the teaching materials provided by the teacher and finish the exercises	7(1.90%)	35(9.51%)	102(27.72%)	177(48.10%)	47(12.77%)
Part II	Yes			No	
7. Do you have a smartphone with internet access	355(96.47%)			13(3.53%)	
8. Are you willing to download online teaching videos offered by the teacher and other online learning materials	315(86.00%)			53(14.00%)	
9. What do you like to do to improve your English language proficiency:	Select the Options				
-- a Various English resources learning	217(58.97%)				
-- b Micro movie shooting or dubbing	91(24.73%)				
-- c Watch the micro video and finish tasks before class, and discuss and practice in class	180(48.91%)				
-- d Listen to the teacher and memorize points in lessons	230(62.50%)				
-- e Study in real situations or do theme activities	152(41.30%)				
-- f Learn through games	138(37.50%)				
-- g Group discussion	177(48.10%)				
The number of valid participants for this broad questionnaire	368				

As can be seen from Table 1, 53.53% of the students felt anxious about the language proficiency test. 29.62% of the students lacked confidence in their self-control; 39.68% of the students showed their lack of independent learning ability. In terms of preferred learning methods, 62.5% of the students preferred "the teacher-centered lectures with attending lectures and taking notes", which shows that a large number of students still relied on the traditional lecture-style teaching and lacked enthusiasm for independent inquiry. 38.85% of the students said that "I am afraid of memorizing texts and answers", showing their anxiety of learning language. 30.7% of the students thought that "there are too few opportunities to practice my language skills in EFL class", indicating that they hoped to use English more in class. As can be seen, almost all the students had smart phones with internet access, and 86% of the

students were willing to download online learning materials including online teaching videos offered by teachers, which provides necessary conditions for the implementation of the flipped classroom teaching in language class.

The problems existing in the traditional teaching model in English language practice of EFL learners involve the following points.

- 1) The class size of language courses is usually relatively large. Taking the author's college as an example, there are usually around 40 students in one class.
- 2) The language courses are not offered enough. Taking the author's college as an example, the Public English course is offered for two semesters, with three hours per week on average. The teaching and learning time in class is limited.
- 3) Students have few opportunities to practice English language skills. Because of the exam-oriented education in some high schools, some students don't get enough opportunities to practice their language skills, resulting in a weak foundation of their English language ability. After entering college, they are still not aware of the importance of English communication, and it is difficult for them to communicate in English confidently and freely. Those students who are particularly weak in language ability are even tired of learning English.
- 4) The traditional classroom teaching model is relatively simple. In most cases, English teachers explain the courseware step by step, and the language ability exercises set in class are not diversified enough. Students tend to listen passively, and the time for in-class practice is extremely limited. In addition, there is a lack of extra-curricular practice of language learning after class.

3.2 Questionnaire and Interview Results of College EFL Students' Language Learning Attitudes and Perceptions after the Experiment

After the experiment, a flipped classroom evaluation questionnaire survey was conducted in the experimental class. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Statistical Results of Flipped Classroom Evaluation Questionnaire Survey

Questions	Options				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Part I (Single Choices)					
1. I know the flipped classroom model	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	14(38.89%)	22(61.11%)
2. I accept the flipped classroom model	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	1(2.78%)	10(27.78%)	25(69.44%)
3. In the flipped classroom, my English language ability has been improved	0(0.00%)	2(5.56%)	4(11.11%)	8(22.22%)	22(61.11%)
4. In the flipped classroom, I spend more time learning English	0(0.00%)	1(2.78%)	4(11.11%)	11(30.56%)	20(55.56%)
5. In the flipped classroom, I have acquired the ability to search and collect English resources	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	2(5.56%)	16(44.44%)	18(50.00%)
6. By doing flipped class assignments, my vocabulary has been extended	1(2.78%)	1(2.78%)	5(13.89%)	15(41.67%)	14(38.89%)
7. Compared with the traditional classroom model, I prefer the flipped classroom teaching model	0(0.00%)	1(2.78%)	3(8.33%)	14(38.89%)	18(50.00%)
PART II (Multiple Choices)	Select the Options				
8. My favorite activities in flipped classroom are:					
——a. Role plays	27(75.00%)				
——b. Keynote speeches	30(83.33%)				

—c. Results reports	32(88.89%)
—d. Group discussions	36(100.00%)
—e. Games and competitions	29(80.56%)
—f. Quizzes or tests	21(58.33%)
—g. Other activities out of class (micro movie, dubbing, etc.)	24(66.67%)
The number of valid participants for this questionnaire	36

According to the questionnaire survey results, students in the experimental class had a good understanding of the flipped classroom teaching model. 88.89% of the students thought that they preferred the flipped classroom model to the traditional classroom model. 83.33% of the students said that their English language ability had been improved through flipped classroom. According to the part II survey results, students tended to accept various personal or group activities in flipped classroom setting. More students became interested in role plays, speeches, group discussions, games and competitions, and some of them even accepted quizzes and tests during the flipped classroom learning process. Besides, other out-of-class activities were more acceptable including micro movie shooting and dubbing, showing that students became more willing to take challenges in English learning.

An interview survey on students' attitudes towards the flipped classroom teaching model and their language learning perceptions of the flipped classroom model was also conducted in the experimental class. According to the interview survey results, we can see the influence of the flipped classroom teaching model on their attitudes towards learning language, and their language learning perceptions and relevant learning effect. In the interview, student A said, "In flipped classroom activities, I can express my opinions in English with my partner in a relaxed environment, which reduces my anxiety in answering questions." Student B said, "Compared with the traditional class, I prefer the flipped class, because the teacher can provide some video materials before class, and I can learn and watch them repeatedly, which can deepen my understanding of the key points." Student C said, "We can discuss the questions before class and in class with our teacher online, and the teacher can answer questions anytime. That is very nice." Student D said, "Through the flipped classroom teaching model, I have improved my language ability a lot with various tasks before class, in class and after class." Student E said, "With the flipped classroom, I found that English language learning is not done behind closed doors. Through cooperative activities, I can communicate with my peers in English as much as possible, and correct mistakes, share learning results and exchange learning experience with each other." Student E believed that the flipped classroom could increase the opportunities to express ideas in English and improve the accuracy of using language. Her attitude towards English language learning became positive. In addition, in the flipped classroom, students' classroom participation is greatly improved, and their enthusiasm for language communication is also enhanced. Student F said, "The pre-class demonstration is very helpful to expand vocabulary, and enhance language organization and expression skills. During the preparation stage, I often use English to communicate with my peers. During this process, I am not only better at communicating with my classmates in English, but also improve my language communicative ability to some extent." Students generally expressed their hope that the flipped classroom teaching model could be adopted more in language class in the future.

As can be seen, through the cooperative activities of the flipped classroom, students are more enthusiastic about learning, and their attitudes towards language learning can be changed positively. Under the traditional teaching model, students cannot actively participate in the classroom language activities, and some of them are even too shy to speak a few words in English in public. However, under the teaching model of flipped classroom, teachers provide students with a relaxed, free learning environment, which offers students great space for self-expression, increases their opportunities to use English language, and thus improves their enthusiasm in language learning as well as their communicative language ability in various aspects.

3.3 The Impact of the Flipped Classroom Teaching Model on Students' Language Learning Performance

3.3.1 The Impact of the Flipped Classroom Teaching Model on Students' Language Learning Time

According to the survey results (as shown in Figure 3), students' language learning time under the traditional language teaching model is less than 2 to 4 hours per week, except for 2 hours in class each week. Only 10% of the students' learning time is more than four hours per week. The web-based flipped classroom enables students to overcome time and space constraints. As can be seen, more free learning time and flexible learning space are offered,

thus the language learning is no longer limited to in-class environment. The independent learning tasks assigned before class and the tasks in the consolidation stage after class have been increased as effective language learning practice. According to the survey results (as shown in Figure 3), the extracurricular language learning time of the experimental class implementing the flipped classroom teaching model is around 4 to 8 hours per week, and some students even spend more than 8 hours per week.

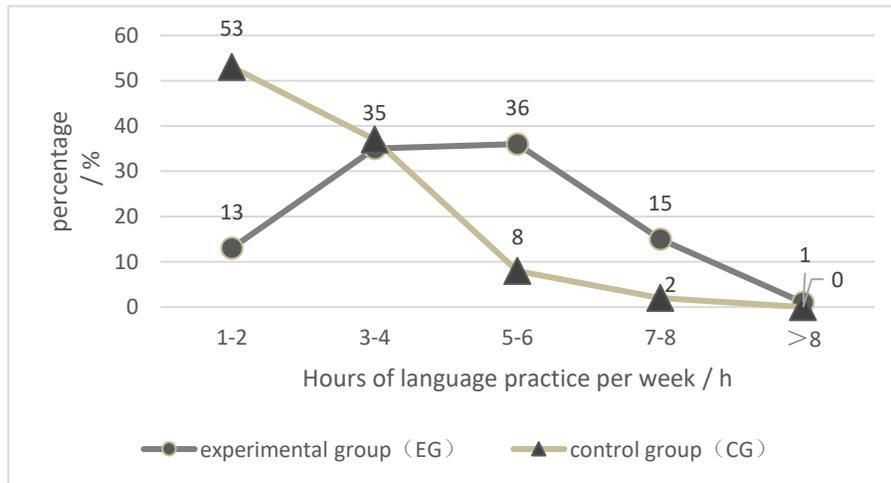


Figure 3. Statistical Chart of Weekly Language Practice Time

3.3.2 The Impact of the Flipped Classroom Teaching Model on Students' Language Test Results

Independent sample T test was used to compare the average score between the experimental class and the control class in the pre-experiment test and the post-experiment test, and the results were summarized as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Statistics of the Average Scores of Students in the EG & CG in Pretest & Posttest

	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	EG	56	65.8750	4.89921	0.65468
	CG	57	65.1579	3.14410	0.41645
Posttest	EG	56	76.8214	5.13847	0.68666
	CG	57	69.1930	3.45087	0.45708

Table 4. Independent Sample Test of the Average Scores of Students in the EG & CG in Pretest & Posttest

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	2.638	0.107	0.928	111	0.356	0.71711	0.77303	-0.81471	2.24892
	Equal variances not assumed			0.924	93.482	0.358	0.71711	0.77591	-0.82360	2.25781
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	5.218	0.024	9.279	111	0.000	7.62845	0.82209	5.99941	9.25748
	Equal variances not assumed			9.248	96.023	0.000	7.62845	0.82488	5.99109	9.26581

The author made statistics on the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental class and the control class, and input the relevant data into the SPSS 25 system for detailed statistical analysis. The results were summarized in Table 3 and Table 4. In the preliminary test of the experiment, there was little difference in English language proficiency between the two classes, with an average difference of 0.73 points. Meanwhile, in Levene's Test of the variance equation of the independent sample test (as shown in Table 4), the p-value of the pretest was 0.356, showing that there was little difference in English language proficiency between the two classes. In the post test, the average score of the experimental class was 76.82, which was 10.94 points higher than that in the preliminary test. In contrast, the control class scored 69.19 points in the post test, which was 4.04 points higher than that in the preliminary test. On a scale of 100 as a full score, the flipped classroom learning results are significant. Through the classroom observation in the experimental process, it can be found that in order to get higher scores in the two tests, the students in the control class basically adopted the single methods of memorizing words, phrases and fixed sentences. Although great progress was made, many students still felt anxious and afraid of speaking or communicating in English. Meanwhile, according to Levene's Test of the variance equation of independent sample test (as shown in Table 4), the p-value of the posttest is 0.000, indicating that the difference in academic performance between the two classes was very obvious. It can be seen that the learning effect in the experimental class was better than that in the control class.

3.4 Students' Overall Acceptance of the Flipped Classroom Teaching Model

According to the survey results, students in the control class do not know much about the flipped classroom teaching model, and the proportion of students willing to try flipped classroom is relatively small. The flipped classroom is widely known and accepted by students who adopted it. In terms of the survey results (as shown in Figure 4), 38% of the students in the control class were ignorant and unwilling to accept the flipped classroom model, 32% were ignorant but willing to try the the model, 24% were aware but unwilling to accept the model, and only 6% were aware and willing to accept the model. However, students in the experimental class generally understood the model. 19% of them understood but were unwilling to accept it, while 81% of them understood and were willing to accept it. See FIG. 4 for details.

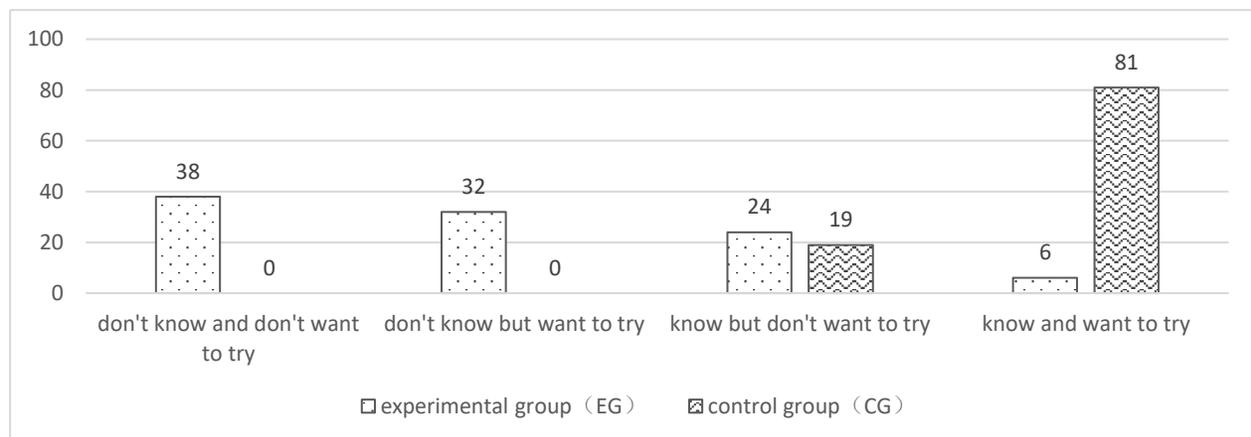


Figure 4. Statistical Chart of Acceptance of the Flipped Classroom Model

According to the above information, the impact and advantages of the flipped classroom model on college EFL students' language learning can be concluded as follows.

In the flipped classroom teaching process, students need to complete learning tasks before class, ask questions in class, and consolidate and internalize knowledge points after class. All of these need to be completed by enough communication with teachers and classmates, which effectively increases teacher-student interaction and student-student interaction. Davies, Dean and Ball (2013) state that students' attitudes towards the topic, their willingness to refer the course to others, and the likelihood that they would take were considerably lower than those of students in the flipped classroom situations. According to the survey, in the language competence practice under the flipped classroom model, students are usually willing to work with different partners, which is conducive to multi-object, multi-channel and multi-level language competence communication among them. In addition, in the process of language ability practice, students often encounter many problems. For example, their language for communication may not be appropriate enough in business setting or they may have some difficulties on how to express ideas clearly because of the lack of vocabulary and background knowledge. In this case, they usually consult

their teachers and classmates immediately online or offline to obtain the timely solution. In addition, during the Question-and-Answer Session in class, teachers will answer questions in a concentrated way for some common problems. For individual problems, teachers and students usually communicate with each other through social networking software like WeChat. Furthermore, in order to consolidate knowledge after class, the teacher assigns cooperative activities to the EFL students of different levels. In this way, students can overcome the difficulties and improve their language ability together.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

College EFL learners are in urgent need of a flexible and effective teaching method to improve their English language ability, and change their own habits and learning attitudes. However, the traditional teaching model has certain disadvantages such as large class size, fewer class hours, single teaching method and fewer opportunities for them to use English language effectively. Teamwork can stimulate their interest in learning English, increase the opportunities for them to communicate in English, help them keep high participation and overcome classroom anxiety, and improve their English language communicative competence. Unlike the traditional classroom, EFL learners in the flipped classroom do not just listen to the teacher, but instead, they have a discussion first, and teachers encourage them to express ideas in English boldly and solve problems with peers, which not only greatly improve the learning effect and the knowledge understanding, but also enhance their consciousness of using English language for real communication.

In the flipped classroom model, in order to complete the homework before class and the language tasks in class, EFL learners need to look up the dictionary by themselves, and obtain information with the help of translation software and some search engines, which greatly improves their autonomous learning ability. Their language learning time in the flipped classroom has been generally extended, and their learning methods have been improved. When they encounter problems in the learning process, they can get timely guidance from teachers, which is conducive to their reflection and error correction. Therefore, the learning effect has been significantly improved.

As for the recommendations, college teachers need to provide a real situation in order to encourage EFL learners to use language creatively and naturally. They can get to know how to use language accurately in some theme activities instead of spending a lot of time listening to grammar lectures or memorizing vocabulary. "Learning by doing" needs to be fully encouraged. The flipped classroom model discussed in this paper enables learners to study background knowledge and language points before class, provides them with broader space and more time for using and exploring language through step-by-step activities in class, and triggers group cooperation and in-depth critical thinking, so as to make them more confident and better in language communication as well as language ability tests.

It is worth mentioning that the real purpose of the flipped classroom is to transform teachers from the role of lecturers into guides and organizers of deep learning, so that there will be more opportunities for learners to participate in various effective activities focusing on improving their language ability, and they will no longer be passive listeners but active constructors of knowledge and skills. Nevertheless, if the teaching sequence is just changed mechanically without careful design, learners will still be less than satisfactory in their English performance. Only when the overall structure and deep ideas of the flipped classroom are established, and learners do participate in language communicative activities initiatively and actively with in-depth exploration, can learners' language ability be truly improved to a large extent.

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