



A research into the influence of flipped classroom assessment preparation on students' achievements in foreign language in one of the UAE colleges

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Abstract. Flipped classroom approach has been recently used in high education institutions in the UAE. The rationale for using the flipped classroom approach is to increase students' self-reliance and encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning. However, the flipped classroom has received some criticisms that argue that this approach does not fit different levels of students nor suits different learning styles. Hence, some teachers started to provide tutorials to help students comprehend the flipped class materials and help them prepare for tests. Therefore, this research aims to examine the influence of flipped classroom assessment preparation on EFL students' achievements in foreign language tests. The methodology used in conducting this research is empirical qualitative methodology. Two types of data were included in this research, primary: interviews with students, and secondary: artefacts collected for analysis purposes. The targeted group were 15 students who took the professional communication and reporting course. Several findings were revealed by analysing the data. The first finding is that a flipped classroom approach does not suit all students' levels and learning styles. When using flipped classroom approach in teaching foreign languages, it is vital to consider students' language proficiency which can be a barrier that prevents students from comprehending the information and negatively influences their achievement. The second finding is that assessment preparation sessions can positively influence students' grades and achievements. However, not all students benefited from the sessions due to different reasons that, unfortunately, were not revealed by the students.

Keywords: Flipped Classroom, English Language, EFL students, Qualitative, Assessment Preparation.

1 Introduction

Content, pedagogy and assessment are essential components in the course design and play a key role in students' learning. Hence, it is crucial for course designers to ensure that course components are designed in an interrelated and systematic framework. Accordingly, content, pedagogy and assessment have become significant areas of interest within the field of Education (Deonovic et al., 2018; Schwarzenberg et al., 2018; William, 2017). According to Deonovic et al. (2018), assessment is a vital part of students' learning; thus, it is important to be closely aligned with course content and pedagogy.

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Additionally, over the past century, there has been a dramatic increase in interest in using different delivery modes to cope with the developments and changes worldwide. Hence, educators started to use different approaches to facilitate students' learning through face-to-face, online and hybrid modes. One approach that is widely used and claimed to suit all delivery modes and content areas is the flipped classroom approach (Muir, 2021; Gren, 2020; Awidi et al., 2019).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

As an English language instructor in one of the UAE federal higher education institutions, I taught professional communication and reporting course to 15 bachelor students as part of their study plan. This course aims to develop students' English written and spoken communication in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). In addition, the course is designed as a flipped classroom where students study the materials before class, do in-class activities to consolidate their understanding, and finally take a test to evaluate their knowledge. While doing the in-class activities and examining students' grades in the concept-checking tests, I noticed that students were facing challenges of miscomprehension of the flipped class materials. As a result, students' grades were affected; therefore, I offered tutorials to help the students prepare for the tests. However, since the tutorials were optional, not all students attended.

1.2 Purpose and Research Questions

As the course teacher and the tutor for the assessment preparation sessions, I decided to explore the influence of the preparation sessions on students' grades. Hence, the main aim of this research is to examine the influence of flipped classroom assessment preparation on EFL students' achievements in foreign language tests. My first rationale for choosing this topic is as a teacher for this course, I believe this research will provide insight into the influence of assessment preparations on students' achievements, which can show to what extent tutorials benefit the students. Furthermore, several studies involving Hrastinski (2021) and Posner et al. (1994) have reported how crucial it is to continuously review and evaluate the appropriateness of the course design to ensure that all its components are closely aligned. Therefore, my second rationale for choosing this topic is my workplace interest. As a member of the curriculum reforming committee, I am expected to evaluate the course, highlight students' challenges and provide recommendations to enhance course design. In the higher education context, students are used to being taught the class's information, followed by consolidation tasks to apply the knowledge they learned. Additionally, since flipping classrooms is recently implemented in some courses in the college, the curriculum reforming committee is required by the administration to investigate the effectiveness of the approach and its influence on students' performance. Hence, this research will provide insight into the influence of flipping a foreign language classroom on students' achievements, allowing me to offer recommendations for course reformation.

In order to achieve the research aim, this paper intends to investigate the following question:

- How can assessment preparation influence students' achievements in a foreign language flipped classroom?

This research is an empirical qualitative ethnographic research that intends to examine primary and secondary data. Accordingly, the preliminary data will be collected from interviewing 15 students who studied this course; seven attended the assessment preparation sessions, and eight did not. In addition, the secondary data will include artefacts: the course outline, flipped class materials, presentation guidelines, assessment preparation materials and students' grades in the six concept quizzes before and after the tutorial sessions. Examining students' interview answers will shed light on the influence of flipped classroom assessment preparation on foreign language learners' achievements in the course. Additionally, analysing the artefacts will provide insight into the course design and pedagogy used for teaching and the design of the materials used in the flipped class and the assessment preparation sessions. Finally, examining the students' grades before and after the tutorials and their presentations will shed light on the influence of the assessment preparation sessions on students' performances in the course. At the end of this research, limitations and recommendations for further research will be provided.

1.3 Significance of the Study

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the effectiveness of implementing flipped classrooms in higher education (Al-Samarraie et al., 2020; Namazian-dost & Çakmak, 2020; Nielsen et al., 2018). However, a few studies discussed the influence of flipping a foreign language classroom on learners' achievements in higher education (Afzali & Izadpanah, 2021; Gok, 2021). Hence, this paper will contribute to knowledge by providing an opportunity to advance the understanding of the influence of flipped classroom assessment preparation on EFL students' achievements in foreign language tests. Additionally, this research will attempt to fill the gap in the literature by providing insight into the topic in the UAE higher education context.

1.4 Outline of the research

This research consists of six main sections. The first section is the introduction, which briefly overviews the course, pedagogy and assessment. It includes the research problem, the researcher's rationale for choosing the topic, the context of this study, and the research aims and questions. The second section is the literature review and the theoretical underpinning that presents theories and previous studies examining constructivism and constructivist approaches. Furthermore, it sheds light on literature and previous studies regarding applying the high complexity levels in Bloom's Taxonomy and the flipped class model in higher education. The third section is the methodology which explains the approach and method used in analysing the data collected for this research.

Also, it briefly describes the rationale for choosing this method and ethical considerations. The fifth section presents the analysis of the collected data and the findings. The final section discusses the results, the conclusion, limitations and recommendations.

2 Literature Review and theoretical underpinning

This section presents a historical and theoretical background concerning the theory and approaches used in designing the Professional Communication and reporting curriculum. It discusses the theoretical underpinning of Constructivism theory and its fundamental principles that influence students' learning. Furthermore, it sheds light on the two constructivist approaches to teaching employed in the course: Problem-solving and Discovery learning. Additionally, literature related to the application of high complexity levels in the revised Bloom's Taxonomy and the implementation of flipped classroom model in higher education will be mentioned.

2.1 Constructivism Theory

Constructivism theory has been investigated through a large amount of literature (Brandon et al., 2010; Chen et al., 2021; Clark, 2018; Fosnot, 2013; Suhendi, 2018). These studies defined constructivism as an approach to cognitive development in which students are considered active agents in the process of knowledge acquisition (Barnett, 2018; Chen et al., 2021; Fosnot, 2013). Accordingly, the essence of the constructivism theory, as stated by Clark (2018), is that learners constantly check new knowledge against their prior knowledge in order to construct and build their comprehension of the new information. Constructivism theory encourages a learner-centred approach where learners discover and comprehend new information themselves (Suhendi, 2018). Thus, teachers are encouraged to actively engage learners in learning by allowing them to explore new information and build their own understanding of it. However, that does not disregard the teacher's vital role in facilitating and guiding students in constructing their own knowledge (Barnett, 2018). In addition, the teacher's role in planning learner-centred activities and tasks is essential to ensure the effectiveness of the class and enhance the process of learners' knowledge acquisition. However, it is crucial for teachers to consider that each learner has a different and unique previous knowledge and experience, which they link to and construct upon while learning new information (Chen et al., 2021).

Teachers need to consider the importance of accommodating students' diversities in the learning environment to ensure that learners are actively engaged and continuously constructing knowledge. Accordingly, teachers need to plan tasks carefully, set appropriate objectives and closely align the course content with the pedagogy used in the classroom to promote students' learning and knowledge acquisition. Additionally, it is necessary to highlight the importance of 'constructively' aligning course components to ensure course effectiveness: course learning outcome, materials and activities used in class and course assessment (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Hanstedt, 2018). However, since course design, content, and assessment mostly come from curriculum designing

teams, teachers can choose to determine the best strategies to achieve course outcomes. Biggs and Tang (2011) argued that teachers might not have the option to change or modify the course learning outcomes; however, they have the choice of strategies that can highly influence students' learning. Hence, teachers are encouraged to implement constructivist approaches and allocate time to discover information, solve problems, and interact with peers since learners comprehend new information better when actively engaged and involved in the class (Clark, 2018; Fernando et al., 2017). As Barnett (2018) stated, learners have more responsibility and commitment towards their learning when they are the centre of the class.

2.2 Discovery Learning

What we know about Discovery Learning Approach is based mainly on studies that investigate how it influences learners' thinking and critical thinking skills (Astra et al., 2015; Bernardini, 2016; Mulbar & Hasanah, 2021). Bernardini (2016) defined discovery learning as an approach in which students discover new concepts by being actively engaged with the materials. In discovery learning, students are promoted to explore, investigate, discover, compare and recognise the materials to develop a comprehensible conclusion. According to Siregar et al. (2019), students must discover the information themselves; thus, teachers facilitate and guide the students through the activities. Furthermore, students must be equipped with the required skills to discover knowledge; hence, the teacher's facilitation and guidance are necessary to ensure the approach's effectiveness.

2.3 Problem-Solving Approach

The problem-solving approach is a constructivist approach that encourages students to use their high cognitive skills when encountering a problem. Additionally, it is considered a learner-centred approach that involves the students in a process to improve their critical thinking skills. According to Badger (2018), the process of problem-solving starts with students defining the problem and brainstorming and generating alternative solutions. Next, students evaluate the alternative solutions and select one to implement. Finally, students implement the chosen solution, evaluate it and reflect upon it. Although the problem-solving approach has been mainly used for teaching Math and Science subject, Heine (2010) argued that the problem-solving approach could also be used in teaching languages. Additionally, she stated that teaching linguistic structures such as grammar or types of writing can be done through the problem-solving approach.

2.4 Applications of High Complexity Levels of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy in Higher Education

Arneson and Offerdahl (2018) define the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy as a hierarchal ordering of cognitive skills considered educational objectives. The revised Bloom's taxonomy framework consists of six categories starting with a basic cognitive skill that becomes more complex as you climb the hierarchy. Therefore, it is crucial to note that the revised Bloom's taxonomy framework should be followed to ensure that students master each level before proceeding to the next one (Arneson & Offerdahl, 2018).

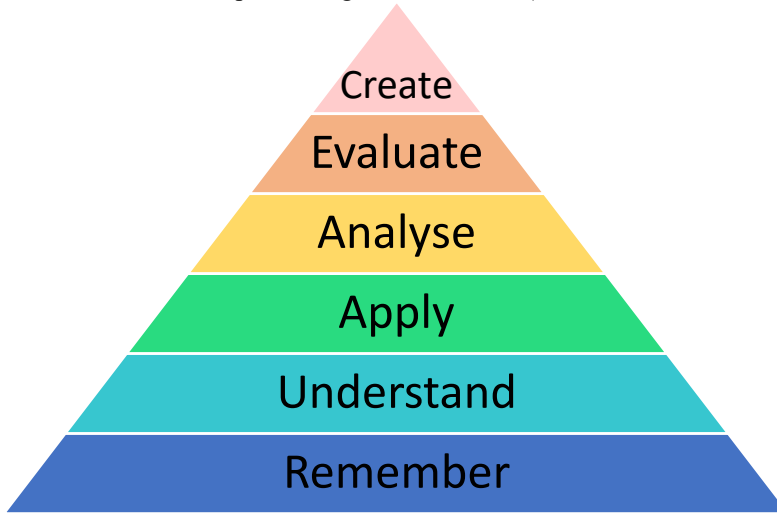


Fig. 1. The Revised Bloom's Taxonomy

The revised Bloom's taxonomy levels start with 'Remember', which involves recognising and remembering facts. The second level is 'Understand', which implies understanding the information from the first level. The third level is 'Apply', where students are encouraged to apply their knowledge and comprehension in certain situations. The three following levels include more complex cognitive skills. First is the 'Analyse', the fourth level in the revised Bloom's taxonomy. It requires students to think critically and break down information into smaller parts. The following level is 'Evaluate'; students judge the information presented to them. The final level is 'Create', where students innovatively combine ideas and information. The revised Bloom's taxonomy has helped teachers organise their learning objectives and plan for their lessons and assessments in a way that helps students learn the most (Morton & Colbert-Getz, 2017). According to Hyder and Bhamani (2016), in higher education, students encounter problems requiring high cognitive skills; hence, starting from the bottom of the revised Bloom's taxonomy hierarchy is not always necessary to achieve educational objectives. Pikhart and Klimova (2019) stated that some learners learn when required to use their high-order thinking skills (HOTS) to attain educational goals rather than starting from lower cog-

nitive levels. In addition, it was argued by Meda and Swart (2018) that curriculum designers and teachers tend to use the high complexity levels of the revised Bloom's taxonomy to assess students' learning.

2.5 Flipped Classroom Model in Higher Education

Much literature has been published on implementing the flipped classroom model in higher education (Al-Samarraie et al., 2020; Namaziandost & Çakmak, 2020; Nielsen et al., 2018). These studies have discussed the ways of implementing the model effectively and examined the impact of implementing the model on students' motivation, achievements and performances. Campillo-Ferrer and Miralles-Martínez (2021) defined the flipped classroom model as a pedagogical model in which the teacher assigns students pre-class materials they need to study independently. As a follow-up and a way to enhance students' comprehension of the pre-class materials, the teacher provides them with in-class activities to put their knowledge into practice. It has been argued that using the flipped class model increases students' engagement and conceptual understanding during classroom activities (Cabi, 2018; Najmi, 2020). Hence, it is vital that teachers carefully design in-class consolidation activities to ensure students' comprehension of the information.

Additionally, Ayçiçek and Yanpar Yelken (2018) claimed that implementing a flipped classroom model in higher education will increase students' self-reliance and encourage them to be responsible for their own learning. On the other hand, flipped classroom model has been criticised for several reasons. As argued by Cabi (2018), the flipped classroom model does not consider students' diversity and learning styles. Furthermore, flipped classroom model does not consider students' diverse abilities and levels, which can negatively impact their achievement (Namaziandost & Çakmak, 2020).

3 Methodology

The current study is empirical research that aims to examine the influence of flipped classroom assessment preparation on EFL students' achievements in foreign language tests. The participants in this research are 15 students who took the course, seven who attended the assessment preparation sessions, and eight who did not. Accordingly, this research will use a one-to-one interview tool to investigate the research aim and question. One advantage of interviewing participants is that it provides the researcher with a deep insight into interviewees' perspectives and ideas (Mills & Gay, 2019). Furthermore, asking the interviewees open questions allows them to elaborate and explain their answers, providing the researcher with a significant amount of information (Cohen et al., 2018). Additionally, this research will conduct an analysis of several artefacts, including the course outline, flipped class materials, and materials of the assessment preparation sessions used by the teacher to enhance students' comprehension and prepare

them for concept-checking quizzes. According to Pauwels and Mannay (2019), analysing artefacts provides the researcher with information and concrete evidence about a specific topic.

This research will examine students' answers in the interview regarding their experience in the flipped classroom and the influence of the tutorials on their achievement in the course. Finally, the research will explore a sample of students' production and grades before and after the tutorials, which will provide insight into the influence of the tutorials on students' grades.

The first justification for adopting this approach is to provide an analysis of different factors that can influence students' learning and achievement. The second justification is determining whether flipping a foreign language classroom influences EFL students' achievements. Another reason is to evaluate the influence of providing students with assessment preparation sessions on their achievement. Furthermore, examining students' grades and production will help shed light on students' level of comprehension of the course.

The data used in this research is a combination of primary and secondary data collected from one of the colleges in the UAE. Primary data is students' answers in the interview that the researcher conducted. However, because of the students' studying timetables and the teacher's teaching load, it was very challenging to conduct face-to-face interviews; hence, a link with the interview questions was sent to the students. On the other hand, secondary data is the course learning outcomes, the flipped class materials, assessment preparation materials, students' production and grades in the concept checking tests. Regarding ethical considerations and to ensure the protection of participants, the name of the institution, participants' identities, and college IDs will be concealed to maintain confidentiality. The limitation of this study is that it includes a small group of students which can provide some helpful information; however, it cannot be generalised. Another limitation is that the teacher cannot access the concept-checking tests as they are centralised. Additionally, not all students provide an explanation for their answers to the interview questions. Thus, a recommendation for future research is to deploy a mixed-method approach to interview a bigger group from different courses. This will provide a more comprehensive image of students' perspectives regarding assessment preparation sessions and their influence on students' achievements. Additionally, I recommend that the researcher is given access to the concept checking quizzes to ensure that they are equal in terms of the complexity level to ensure that the influence on students' grades is from attending tutorials.

4 Data Analysis, Findings and Discussion

The main aim of this study is to examine the influence of flipped classroom assessment preparation on EFL students' achievements in foreign language tests in one of the UAE colleges. Hence, this section will present a detailed analysis of the collected data and shed light on the researcher's findings from analysing the data. Furthermore, the analysis will be linked to the previous literature review, theoretical underpinning, and the

researcher's experience in the Education field. The data analysis, findings and discussion will be interpreted according to the analysis and evaluation of the collected data to answer the research question;

- How can assessment preparation influence students' achievements in a foreign language flipped classroom?

4.1 Foreign language flipped classroom in EFL context

To obtain insight into the topic, the researcher interviewed and asked 15 students various questions concerning their experience with the flipped class. It was necessary first to verify if the students had had a previous experience with the flipped classroom approach; hence, the researcher's first question was whether students had any experience with flipped classroom approach before this course. Table 1 shows that most students did not experience the flipped class before this course, whereas only four students did.

Table 1. The number of students who had experienced the flipped class before this course vs those who had not.

	Do you have any experience with flipped classrooms before taking this course?	
	Yes	No
Student 1	✓	
Student 2		X
Student 3		X
Student 4		X
Student 5		X
Student 6		X
Student 7	✓	
Student 8		X
Student 9		X
Student 10		X
Student 11	✓	
Student 12	✓	
Student 13		X
Student 14		X
Student 15	✓	X

In addition, the analysis of students' answers to the interview question, 'Have you faced any challenges learning the flipped class materials? Please explain' revealed that some students faced learning challenges for various reasons such as language barrier, miscomprehension of the course structure and lack of writing skills. On the other hand, some students found that flipping classrooms made learning accessible and enjoyable.

This is linked to what has been discussed previously in the literature review, that flipped class approach does not suit all types and levels of students.

Furthermore, to better understand the course, the researcher analysed the course outline and a sample of the materials used in the flipped class. As a result, it was evident that the course learning outcomes were designed to correspond to the high complexity levels of Bloom's taxonomy (see table 2).

Table 2. Extracted from the Professional Communication and Reporting course outline

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will demonstrate the ability to:
Learning Outcome

CLO1	Use professional written and oral communication concepts, skills, and language
CLO2	Compose properly formatted professional written correspondence on a given topic
CLO3	Deliver an effective presentation on a given topic
CLO4	Construct a properly formatted and APA-cited formal report using given information

Accordingly, the course learning outcome focused on two primary levels of the revised Bloom's taxonomy: Apply and Create. As previously mentioned in the literature review, for the students to comprehend the information better, courses should be designed to follow the cognitive and thinking skills in the same order mentioned in the revised Bloom's taxonomy model. However, from my experience as a teacher, I have noticed that some students can develop their skills, whereas others struggle if they are not guided through all the thinking skills in the same order. Again, this is linked to what has been discussed previously in the literature review that course designers and teachers need to consider students' diversity in levels and learning styles.

By analysing the foreign language flipped class materials, I found that materials were derived from a book titled 'Business Communication: A Problem-Solving Approach' by Kathryn Rentz and Paula Lentz. The lessons were provided to the students in a PDF format with no explanation added or supporting videos. In addition, by analysing the in-class activities, I noticed that they encourage a problem-solving approach since they present scenarios with problems they need to discuss and suggest alternative solutions (see figure 2).

Employees,

We are cutting our staff by 20% this year. This will happen by the end of December, so you need to start improving your sales rates immediately! From now, your monthly sales records will be checked and recorded. Anyone who is under \$20,000 for the month will get a warning. If you get two warnings, you will be let go.

Rollco Hardware has had a difficult financial year and some serious decisions need to be made. That is why management has decided to reduce staff. I know this will upset and disappoint you, but you need work harder to keep your jobs.

Thanks,
Tim Horton, General Manager

Instructions: Read the email and answer the questions.

1. What are four things that are wrong with this email?
2. If you were the general manager, how would you improve each of those things?
3. Re-write the email as the general manager

Fig. 2. A sample extracted from In-class activities

In Figure 2, students were given an email and asked to identify the unprofessional language used in this email. After that, they were asked how they would improve the email if they were the general manager. Finally, students were asked to rewrite the email as the general manager. From my experience, students are rarely engaged with the materials if they are not interactive; hence, they may lose interest in reading the materials since they turn into passive learners. On the other hand, the use of scenarios can ignite students' imagination and improve their critical thinking skills, resulting in improving their conceptual understanding. Therefore, the analysis reveals that a flipped classroom approach does not suit all students' levels and learning styles. While using flipped classroom approach in teaching foreign languages, it is essential to consider students' language proficiency which can be a barrier that prevents students from comprehending the information and negatively influences their achievement. In addition, as previously stated in the literature review, course designers and teachers must carefully design the materials and the activities to ensure that students are actively engaged and involved in their learning.

Furthermore, the presentation guidelines were analysed to understand the flipped class course design. By analysing the guidelines, I noticed that the students were provided with a document that included instructions on how to create their presentations as well as the topics (see figure 3).

Assessment: 4 - Informative Presentation 10%

Project Presentation

Instructions: Follow these steps to make a presentation of a project from kickstarter.com:

1. Choose one of the following projects:
 - [Misen Nonstick Essentials](#)
 - [Master of the Universe](#)
 - [ELEGOO Jupiter](#)
 - [The Noku Canvas](#)
 - [Velociraptor](#)
 - [American Sikh](#)
 - [Big Ocean Bottle](#)
 - [FLECTR 360 WING](#)
 - [La Mansio](#)
 - [SimpleReal](#)
2. Make 5-8 PowerPoint slides using this format:
 - 1 slide: Product name (and presenters' names)
 - 3-6 Slides: Hook/Background information + Features of your product + Customer rewards (how you can support this project)
 - 1 slide: How to get more information

Fig. 3. A sample extracted from presentation guidelines

In figure 3, it was observable that the course designer chose the topics and were given to the students in the form of website links. The links contain information about a particular topic that the students need to read, understand, summarise and then deliver in the form of an informative presentation. It was noticeable that this assignment encourages students to learn about the topics and discover the information by themselves in order to construct their knowledge. As previously mentioned in the literature review under the Constructivism theory and the revised Bloom's taxonomy model, students build a better understanding when they discover and transform complex knowledge to make their own.

4.2 Flipped classroom assessment preparation in the EFL context

An analysis of the materials used in the session was conducted to better understand the assessment preparation of a foreign language flipped classroom. By analysing a sample of the materials used in the assessment preparation session, it was noticeable that the teacher used a presentation to include the important information, some scenarios derived from the course textbook mentioned previously, and some short consolidation activities (see figure 4).

Instructions: Read these scenarios from p. 25 of *Business Communication: A Problem-Solving Approach*. How would you handle each one? Type your ideas below.

- a. You're the lead student employee of your school's technology help desk. Each day, you field questions from faculty, staff, and students about their email account, the Internet, and other tech topics. The volume of calls and emails is high, so you're worn pretty thin by the end of your shift each day. Today, late in the day, you get an email from a faculty member expressing interest in having her students design a tutorial to help faculty and students learn one of the school's tech tools better and asking which IT person would be best to contact about this idea. You have no idea. How do you answer?

Fig. 4. A sample extracted from the materials used in assessment preparation sessions

By analysing the materials, it was noticeable that the teacher has used some interactive activities to engage the students, such as the scenarios that, as mentioned previously, encourage problem-solving. Additionally, it encourages students to interact with peers to answer certain activities. It was evident that the design of the activities tackles students' critical thinking skills since it asks them to imagine themselves in a particular situation and act upon it. From my experience as a teacher and as mentioned earlier in the literature review, students get actively engaged in the class when they collaborate with their peers and when the materials' design allows them to put their knowledge into practice.

Furthermore, by analysing the assessment preparation materials created to prepare the students for delivering an effective informative presentation, I noticed that the teacher used PowerPoint to present the guidelines, followed by a sample of an informative presentation where students were asked to label the slides with the required information based on their understanding of the guidelines. At the end of the slides, the teacher added a true and false activity using a NearPod link. It was noticeable from the design of the materials that it provided students with the needed information, allowed them to apply their knowledge into practice, and finally evaluated their comprehension. As stated earlier in the literature review, students build and construct their knowledge when they are prompted to put their knowledge into practice. Additionally, the thinking skills used to create the activity were linked to some of the thinking skills in the revised Bloom's taxonomy.

4.3 Students' achievement in foreign language in the EFL context

To obtain an insight into the influence of flipped classroom assessment preparation on EFL students' achievement in a foreign language, I examined students' grades in the six concept quizzes. Three quizzes were taken before the assessment preparation sessions and three after. The analysis revealed that students' grades 1, 3, 4 and 6 increased after attending the assessment preparation sessions. Whereas students 2, 5 and 7 maintained the same level (see table 3). According to my experience, I assume that the students whose grades improved were the ones who were attentive during the sessions. Whereas, I think the students who maintained the same level were either inattentive during the sessions or the design of the materials did not suit their level or style of learning.

Table 3. The grades of the students who attended the assessment preparation sessions

	Before Assessment Preparation Sessions			After Assessment Preparation Sessions		
	Concept Quiz 1	Concept Quiz 2	Concept Quiz 3	Concept Quiz 4	Concept Quiz 5	Concept Quiz 6
Student 1	65%	55%	70%	100%	90%	100%
Student 2	55%	50%	60%	55%	50%	50%
Student 3	30%	45%	35%	65%	65%	65%
Student 4	70%	65%	75%	70%	85%	80%
Student 5	45%	50%	50%	55%	45%	50%
Student 6	50%	50%	65%	75%	70%	80%
Student 7	70%	75%	75%	70%	70%	75%

Furthermore, by analysing the grades of the students who did not attend the assessment preparation, I noticed that students 9, 10 and 13 maintained a medium level of achievement through all the assessments. Whereas students 8, 11, 12, 14 and 15 maintained a high level of achievement through all the assessments (see table 4). I assume that students 9, 10 and 13 had difficulty understanding and studying the flipped class materials independently; hence, their grades did not improve. In contrast, I believe students 8, 11, 12 and 15 had a high level of language efficiency, making it easy for them to study and comprehend the materials independently. From my experience, students with a high level of language efficiency are not influenced by flipping foreign language classrooms because they can easily navigate the materials and comprehend the information.

Table 4. The grades of the students who did not attend the assessment preparation sessions

	Before Assessment Preparation Sessions			After Assessment Preparation Sessions		
	Concept Quiz 1	Concept Quiz 2	Concept Quiz 3	Concept Quiz 4	Concept Quiz 5	Concept Quiz 6
Student 8	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%	100%
Student 9	80%	85%	75%	80%	75%	80%
Student 10	70%	75%	75%	80%	70%	85%
Student 11	100%	100%	100%	100%	90%	100%
Student 12	95%	100%	100%	90%	80%	100%
Student 13	50%	60%	65%	55%	55%	65%
Student 14	90%	100%	95%	100%	85%	100%
Student 15	100%	100%	100%	95%	90%	100%

Furthermore, I examined a sample of students' production of an informative presentation to investigate the influence of assessment preparation sessions on students'

achievement. By analysing the presentation of group 1, consisting of students 1, 3 and 4, it was noticeable that they had created a presentation that included all the requirements mentioned in the guidelines. This provides evidence that they have comprehended the information and were able to put their knowledge into practice. In addition, students were able to navigate, discover and summarise the product information and then work together to create the presentation. On the other hand, by examining the presentation of group 2 created by students 9, 10 and 11, it was evident that the students did not comprehend the project requirements. Students could not follow the guidelines and did not use their thinking skills to discover the information. I assume that students were having a problem understanding the language; hence, it was hard for them to follow the guidelines. From my experience, although assessment preparation sessions were offered to help students, some students feel shy to join them or lack the intrinsic motivation to learn, which can significantly impact their achievement. Based on the analysis of the grades and students' production, I found that the assessment preparation sessions can positively influence students' grades and achievements. However, not all students benefited from the sessions for different reasons that, unfortunately, were not revealed by the students in the interview.

5 Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

The current study aimed to examine the influence of flipped classroom assessment preparation on EFL students' achievements in a foreign language in one of the UAE colleges. The participants in this research were 15 students who studied the Professional Communication and Reporting Course. As a teacher of this course, I have noticed that some students' grades were low; hence, I have offered assessment preparation sessions to enhance students' understanding and comprehension of the information. However, the sessions were optional; therefore, only seven students attended them, and the eight others decided not to. In order to achieve the research aim, I intended to conduct a one-to-one in-depth interview with the students to gain insight into their experience with the foreign language flipped class. However, due to the busy timetable of the students and my teaching load, I decided to send the questions and interviews to them via Google forms, which is considered one of the limitations of this study. I believe students would have given more detailed information regarding their experience if they had been interviewed face-to-face.

Nevertheless, the analysis of several artefacts, including course outline, flipped class materials, presentation guidelines, assessment preparation materials, students' grades and products, have provided me with a better understanding of the influence of flipping foreign language classroom and the influence of the assessment preparation sessions on students' achievement. The flipped class approach is considered convenient for teachers; however, it does not suit all students' language proficiency levels and learning styles, which can negatively influence students' achievements (Al-Samarraie et al., 2020). In addition, this study shed light on the influence of assessment preparation on students' achievements. It is vital for course designers and teachers to design the materials carefully to benefit the students; however, it is more important that students

have an intrinsic motivation to learn in order to make use of those materials (Najmi, 2020).

The researcher's recommendation for further research is to use a mixed-method approach to include a bigger group of students studying different flipped classroom courses to have different perspectives and insight into other students' experiences. In addition, investigating the achievement of the students who attend assessment preparation sessions in various courses is recommended to evaluate the influence of the sessions on students' achievements. Finally, another recommendation is to grant the researcher access to the quizzes to evaluate the difficulty level and eliminate it as a factor that can influence students' achievement.

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