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Main Researcher

Dr. Khaled Abdel Jaleel Dweikat

Second Researcher

Dr. Ahmed Awad Amin Mahmoud Raba 2

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers' Perceptions of Flipped Classroom Model in Palestine

¹ University Name & City (Main)

² University Name & City (second)

Faculty of Educational Sciences/ Al-Quds Open University/Nablus

Faculty of Educational Sciences/ An-Najah National University

* Corresponding author:

E-mail address:

kdweikat@qou.edu

Abstract

Teachers everywhere are constantly working hard to invest in technological innovations to improve the educational standards and create new models and strategies of teaching and learning. One of these models that seems to rely heavily on technology is the “flipped learning or flipped classroom” model. This model is gaining attention among educators from all levels and fields around the world. The present study aimed to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers of the flipped classroom model in the Palestinian context in addition to identifying the effect of gender, qualification, and experience on teachers' perceptions. The sample of the study consisted of 79 EFL teachers attended in Teacher Education Improvement Project (TEIP)-Additional Financing. The quantitative results showed that the total degree of teachers' responses was (3.85) which suggested a high level of perceptions and there were no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on the total degree of perceptions between teachers due to gender, qualification and experience. The qualitative results revealed three major themes with regard to teachers' perceptions and that teachers were somehow divided into two groups. The first group was in favor of using the flipped learning model but with mature students and after providing the required infrastructure. The second group was not in favor of using the flipped learning model because it might add more responsibilities and tasks to the overloaded teachers and it might distract students as well. In light of the results of the present study, the researchers offered some recommendations.

Keywords: Flipped Learning, Flipped Classroom Model, Teachers' Perception, Teacher Education Improvement Project (TEIP).

تصورات معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حول نموذج الصف الدراسي المقلوب (المعكوس) في فلسطين

الملخص

يعمل المعلمون في كل مكان بجد على الاستثمار في الابتكارات التكنولوجية لتحسين المعايير التعليمية وخلق نماذج واستراتيجيات جديدة للتعليم والتعلم . ومن هذه النماذج التي تعتمد بشكل كبير على توظيف التكنولوجيا هي "التعلم المقلوب" أو "نموذج الصف الدراسي المقلوب أو المعكوس ". ويكتسب هذا النموذج اهتماماً من جميع المستويات والحقول في جميع أنحاء العالم، وقد هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على تصورات معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حول نموذج الصف الدراسي المقلوب في السياق الفلسطيني ، إضافة إلى التعرف على تأثير الجنس (النوع الاجتماعي) والمؤهل والخبرة على تصورات المعلمين. تكونت عينة الدراسة من 79 معلماً ومعلمة لغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية كانوا ملتحقين بمشروع تحسين وتدريب المعلمين - التمويل الإضافي . وأظهرت النتائج الكمية أن الدرجة الكلية لاستجابات المعلمين كانت (3.85) والتي أشارت إلى مستوى عالي من التصورات ولم تكن هناك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى الدلالة ($0.05 \leq \alpha$) على الدرجة الكلية لتصورات المعلمين تعزى لمتغيرات الجنس والمؤهل والخبرة ، بينما كشفت النتائج النوعية عن ثلاثة مواضيع رئيسة فيما يتعلق بتصورات المعلمين وقد أنقسم المعلمين إلى فئتين: الفئة الأولى تؤيد استخدام نموذج التعلم المقلوب ولكن مع الطلاب الناضجين الأكبر سنًا وبعد ت توفير البنية المطلوبة ، والفئة الثانية لم تؤيد استخدام نموذج التعلم المقلوب لأنه قد يضيّف المزيد من المسؤوليات والمهام على المعلمين المتقلين أصلًا بأعباء إضافة إلى أن مثل هذا النموذج يشتت الطلاب. وفي ضوء نتائج هذه الدراسة، قدم الباحثان بعض التوصيات.

كلمات مفتاحية: التعلم المقلوب (المعكوس)، نموذج الصف المقلوب (المعكوس)، تصورات المعلمين ، مشروع تحسين وتدريب المعلمين .

Introduction

The 21st century has witnessed a rapid technological revolution that has influenced the educational systems in most countries all over the world. This unprecedented revolution can be seen in the spread of the Internet, the personal computers, the smart phones, and social media. Educators and researchers are looking forward nowadays to use these technological innovations to improve the educational standards and create new models and strategies of teaching and learning. This means the current educational system is now inextricably intertwined to technology, whether through teaching with smart boards, smart phones, or even social networks.

Hence, one new model that seems to rely heavily on technology is the “flipped learning” or “flipped classroom” model. This model is gaining attention among educators from all levels and fields around the world. Bergmann & Sams (2012) defined the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) as “a blended learning model, which aims to facilitate teachers to make better use of the face-to-face sessions through minimizing teacher lecture and increasing students’ active learning, collaboration and scaffolding”. Tucker (2012) considered flipped classroom as a format in which students learn necessary contents at home and apply the knowledge in the classroom. Such characteristics helped the flipped classroom to gain great attention as an effective method for English language teaching since it can be effective for enhancing learner’s responsibility and interaction. In this regard, Heinerichs et al., (2016) maintained that the flipped classroom is an educational approach that has become popular in higher education because it is student-centered. In such flipped classroom, primary knowledge acquisition occurs before class, which creates a space for students to practice applying the information with their peers. Hence, one rationale for using flipped learning is to keep pace with the changing needs and interests of the 21st century students who are equipped with a variety of technological tools for communication.

Flipped learning has recently gained a growing interest in many countries and therefore has triggered many researchers either to investigate teachers’ or students’ perceptions and attitudes towards this new model of learning (e.g. - Galway et.al., 2015; Long et al., 2016; Sletten, 2017) or to examine the effectiveness of using such a model at school or university levels (e.g. Ahmad, 2016); Al-Harbi1 & Alshumaimeri, 2016; Clark, Kaw and Besterfield-Sacre, 2016). Heinerichs et al., (2016) maintained that the flipped classroom is an educational approach that has become popular in higher education because it is student-centered. Chang (2016) highlighted the idea of shifting instruction to students before the class and using class time for assignments, believing that such shift allows students to learn the basic concepts on their own and explore the concepts in depth during the class. Upon this expected significance of the flipped classroom model, this study aims to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers of the flipped classroom model in the Palestinian context.

Literature Review

A great deal has been written to investigate the perceptions and attitudes of both teachers and students towards flipped learning in several communities. One recent study carried out by Sletten (2017) examined the relationship between students' perceptions of the flipped model and their self-regulated learning (SRL) behaviors and the impact that these variables have on achievement in a flipped class. For the study, 76 participants from a flipped introductory biology course at University of North Dakota, United States were asked about their SRL strategy use and perceptions of the flipped model. SRL strategy use was measured using a modified version of the

Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ; Wolters et al. 2005), while a survey was constructed to investigate students' perceptions. Student letter grades were collected as a measure of achievement. It was found that students' perceptions of the flipped model positively predict students' use of several types of SRL strategies. However, the data did not indicate a relationship between student perceptions and achievement, neither directly nor indirectly, through SRL strategy use.

To examine the effect of applying the flipped classroom strategy on teaching English grammar on secondary school students' performances, perceptions, and attitudes toward learning English independently, Al-Harbi & Alshumaimeri (2016) selected videos based on the students' textbook and uploading those videos on the Edmodo site before each lesson to provide opportunities for active learning interactions. This site is an educational technology company offering a communication, collaboration, and coaching platform to K-12 schools and teachers where teachers can share content, distribute quizzes, assignments, and manage communication with students, colleagues, and parents. The study was conducted on 43 female English as a Foreign Language learners in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The students of the experimental group ($n=20$) were required to watch the videos to learn by themselves and to come to class prepared to ask for clarification, if needed. They also practiced what they had learned under the teacher's supervision by completing collaborative and competitive tasks in groups or pairs. Meanwhile, the control group students ($n=23$) received in-class only traditional teaching. They learned the grammatical lessons without the help of any videos. The statistical analysis of the post-test results showed that adopting the flipped classroom strategy appeared to play a role in enhancing students' performance in English language grammar. The students' responses to the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews indicated that their attitudes towards using the flipped classroom were positive.

With regard to using the flipped learning for teaching EFL, Alsowat (2016) aimed to explore the effect of a EFL Flipped Classroom Teaching Model on graduate students' English higher-order thinking skills (HOTs), engagement and satisfaction. The study sample consisted of (67) graduate female students who were divided into an experimental group and a control group studying in an English course at Taif University, Saudi Arabia. The study used mixed method design; a pre-post HOTs test was carried out and two 5-Likert scale questionnaires had been designed and distributed; an engagement scale and a satisfaction scale. The results revealed statistically significant differences between the two groups in HOTs in favor of the experimental group. Also, there was significant difference between the pre and post administration of the engagement scale in favor of the post administration. Moreover, student' satisfaction on this model was high. Finally, there were high significant relationships between HOTs and student engagement, HOTs and satisfaction and between student engagement and satisfaction.

Ahmed (2016) investigated the effect of the flipped classroom model on Egyptian EFL students' listening comprehension using one-group pre-posttest design with 34 EFL students at the Faculty of Education, Suez University. Using the flipped classroom model went through three successive stages: planning (where content was prepared and participants were oriented to the flipped classroom process), implementation (that included the pre, during, and after class parts of the flipped classroom model), and evaluation (where group projects were presented and evaluated). Paired-samples t-test revealed a statistically significant improvement in participants' listening comprehension between the pretest and the posttest in favor of the posttest. Therefore, it

was concluded that the flipped classroom had a significant effect on the listening comprehension of Egyptian EFL students.

These findings are comparable to those of Zainuddin and Attaran (2016) who aimed to evaluate a class in University of Malaya where flipped learning was applied, and to examine students' perceptions and feedback towards flipped classroom. Data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods, i.e. survey, focus group and individual interviews. The results indicated that most students had positive perceptions towards the use of flipped classroom and most of them would recommend flipped learning for other courses and other students. Also, flipped learning generated positive impacts for shy and quiet students, international students who were not fluent in English language and full-time students who had more time for learning.

Hibbard, Sung and Wells, (2016) carried out a five-year cross-sectional study to compare the flipped learning format with a more traditional lecture format in a college general chemistry. Students' conceptual knowledge was examined through the use of American Chemical Society (ACS) standardized exam scores and analyzed using one-way ANCOVA. Students' motivation and learning perceptions were assessed using the Chemistry Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ-II) and an in-house Blended (Flipped) Learning Survey. Statistical analysis indicated that students' perceptions regarding flipped learning were mostly positive and reflected motivation to succeed.

Long, Logan and Waugh (2016) used a survey to examine students' attitudes and preferences regarding the pre-class learning experiences in an undergraduate science course that utilized a flipped classroom model. The participants were 55 students who were studying a course titled "Water and Civilization" in the Department of Biosystems Engineering and Social Science at the University of Tennessee in USA. A survey was used to gather information about students' perceptions and attitudes. Findings demonstrated that students had positive attitudes towards using pre-class videos in the flipped classroom. Students had different perceptions towards the four types of pre-class learning materials used in this course, including three types of videos and text-formatted materials.

Porcaro et al (2016) investigated the impact of flipped approach to teaching a haematology 'major' class at RMIT University in Australia and the students' attitudes and preferences for the teaching materials. The curriculum design was explicit and involved four major components (1) the preparation of the students; (2) the weekly pre-class work; (3) the in-class active learning strategies and (4) closing the learning loop using formative quizzes. Several different sources of information and several freely available software tools to engage the students were used. One hundred-sixteen students enrolled in Haematology 2 and Advanced Haematology courses were surveyed both prior to and after the semester using a questionnaire via Qualtrics. The majority of students (93%) came to the class prepared, after viewing the screencasts and engaged fully with the activities within the face-to-face time. The students perceived that solving case studies (93 %) was the most beneficial activity for their learning and this was closely followed by the production of essay plans (71 %). The majority of students recommended that this approach be repeated in the following year (75 %).

Perfume (2016) examined the impact of a flipped classroom approach in a Japanese language classroom to evaluate its effectiveness and feasibility. A concurrent embedded strategy of mixed methods was employed to study two sections of the introductory Japanese language courses at a private university in Texas. The experimental group (EG) involved 19 students while the control group (CG) involved 20 students. A flipped classroom approach was implemented in the EG

with six types of instruments including questionnaires, measures of learning outcomes, class observation, oral production rating scale, Blackboard statistics tracking, and instructor's daily journal. Results found that delivering instruction outside of class with lecture videos increased active classroom learning time, which in turn increased the number of classroom interactions. While quantitative statistics found no statistical difference between the EG and the CG in the students' learning outcomes, descriptive analysis showed learning gains in the EG. In addition, qualitative data revealed that students expressed favorable attitudes towards the flipped classroom approach.

Unruh, Peters and Willis (2016) intended to compare the beliefs and attitudes of teachers using the flipped classroom versus the traditional class model. Survey and interview data were collected from a matched sample of 12 sixth- through 12th-grade teachers (six flipped; six traditional) within a large suburban school district located in southeastern Texas selected for participation. Additionally, one-on-one interviews further explored the teacher beliefs and attitudes associated with the impact of technology on student engagement. Findings suggested that flipped classroom teachers have higher technology and teaching efficacy, greater comfort levels using technology, higher frequency of involvement in technology, more positive attitudes toward technology, and greater levels of students' engagement.

Galway, Berry and Takar (2015) aimed to investigate students' perceptions and lessons learned from flipping an environmental and occupational health course with 42 students of at a Canadian university. Using data collected from a post-course survey, focus group sessions, and classroom observation, data indicated that students had largely positive perceptions towards the flipped classroom instructional model although there is some diversity across students. Students had particularly positive views towards the diversity of activities across the course as a whole, and those specific activities that gave them the opportunity to practice skills potentially relevant to the workplace.

Chen et al. (2015) intended to identify students' perspective of using cooperative learning in a flipped statistics classroom by utilizing Q-methodology. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods was used with forty-five Taiwanese students (25 male and 20 female) participated in a 16 week training programme for an introductory statistics course, at a university in Hsinchu. The students were interviewed and asked to rank 30 statements according to their relative importance. The findings of the qualitative data found evidence that all the students had a positive attitude toward the pre-recorded instructional videos and all groups identified cooperative learning as an effective instructional strategy in flipped classrooms.

Thompson & Ayers (2015) investigated student engagement, professional relevance and peer interaction with active learning techniques used in a flipped classroom format conducted within the lower extremity orthopaedic assessment course at a large public university in the midwestern United States. 17 students enrolled in the lower extremity orthopedic assessment course in the athletic training program. A mixed-method analysis and quantitative questionnaires were used. Results revealed that participants reported a high level of course preparation, perceived content relevance, and value of peer interaction, all of which are indicators of student engagement. Participants indicated a high level of support for the flipped classroom despite the greater effort required by the emphasis on student responsibility and the active learning nature of the course.

Touchton (2015) aimed to evaluate whether flipping the classroom alters students' applied problem-solving performance and satisfaction relative to students in a traditional classroom

environment (the control). Thus, a quasi-experiment using 92 undergraduate Political Science majors in statistics classes at Boise State University in USA was used to evaluate whether flipping the classroom (the treatment) alters students' applied problem solving performance and satisfaction relative to students in a traditional classroom environment (the control). Results indicated that flipping the classroom gives students statistically significant advantages in difficult applied areas emphasized in class. Furthermore, students in the flipped classroom felt they learned more and enjoyed the course more than those in a traditional classroom.

Jensen et al., (2015) aimed to provide quantitative and controlled data about the effectiveness of flipped learning model study at a university in the western United States with nonmajors enrolled in a general education biology course. Two classes with 53 students in the nonflipped condition and 55 students in the flipped condition were included in the final analysis. Using a quasi-experimental design, the researchers compared an active nonflipped classroom with an active flipped classroom. Results showed that both low-level and deep conceptual learning were equivalent between the conditions. Attitudinal data revealed equal student satisfaction with the course. Interestingly, both treatments ranked their contact time with the instructor as more influential to their learning than what they did at home. Results indicated that the flipped classroom does not result in higher learning gains or better attitudes compared with the nonflipped classroom when both utilize an active-learning, constructivist approach and propose that learning gains in either condition are most likely a result of the active-learning style of instruction rather than the order in which the teacher participated in the learning process.

Engin (2014) aimed to examine students' interest and experience of technology and multimodal environments to develop their academic writing skills and second language learning using the flipped classroom model. The sample consisted of 18 Emirati female learners at Zayed University who were taking their third and final composition class before they started major requirements. Feedback from students suggested that there was tension between students as producers, and students as consumers. Student-created videos promoted second language learning through research, simplification, explanation, and encouraged more focus on form, promoting accuracy in English. However, it was also noted that students prefer a teacher explanation than a peer explanation and there were concerns over the "trustworthiness" of a peer produced video tutorial.

The aforementioned literature review revealed that using flipped learning had positive effects on the achievement of students in different subjects in many countries including some Arab countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia and foreign countries including USA, Japan, Malaysia, Australia, and Canada. Moreover, most studies indicated that students had positive perceptions and attitudes towards flipped learning. The researchers of these studies used quantitative and qualitative methods including questionnaires, surveys, focus group, individual interviews, experimentation, achievement tests, class observation and quasi-experimental design. However, less research has been devoted to the flipped learning in the Palestinian context to explore its potential impact. Thus, this particular study employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods including a questionnaire, focus group sessions, face-to-face interviews, online interviews using Facebook (text messaging and calling). The use of these tools enabled the researchers to validate study results, and hence get more reliable findings.

Statement of the Problem

A great deal of research has been carried out to explore the advantages of flipped learning model worldwide in addition to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of both teachers and students. Furthermore, there is increasing evidence suggesting that flipping the classroom may be an effective alternative of teaching in the coming years, thanks to technology. However, to the researchers' best knowledge, little attention has been given to this issue in the Palestinian context and some teachers might claim that such flipping is difficult to apply with young learners who might lack the required abilities and skills to pre-learn the material at home. It is worth mentioning here that passive learners may resist this model since students who are expected to participate in activities have to watch important videos prior class. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the perceptions of in-service EFL teachers of the flipped classroom model.

Questions of the Study

Given the potential advantages and positive attitudes towards the flipped classroom model, the present study was guided by the following research questions:

1-What are EFL teachers' perceptions of the flipped classroom model?

2- Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of EFL teachers' perceptions due to the variables gender, qualification and years of experience?

Significance of the Study

As this study aimed to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers towards the flipped classroom model, there is an apparent necessity to uncover the potential attitudes and perceptions of a group of EFL teachers who are participating in TEIP-AF (*Teacher Education Improvement Project-Additional Financing*). Therefore, teachers of the English language in Palestine represent one major beneficiaries of this study in addition to the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOHE) that can benefit from the results to plan for training courses and workshops to publicize the effectiveness of flipped classroom model. Curriculum designers, researchers can make use of the results to contribute to this field as well. Employing such model can promote student-centered approach, active learning, lessen teachers' load, and improve students' self-confidence. Al-Quds Open University (QOU) can benefit from this strategy since it adopts open distance learning and employs a variety of technological advancements to compensate the lack of face-to-face meetings. Schools can benefit since the Ministry is applying this year a project titled e-schools with 1000 schools.

Methodology and Data Collection

Participants and Context

The participants of this study were 79 EFL teachers who were attending a project funded by the World Bank entitled **Teacher Education Improvement Project (TEIP) - Additional Financing** in the year 2017/2018 in Palestine. Table (1) shows the major characteristics of the participating teachers.

Table (1): Distribution of Sample According to Study Independent Variables

Variable	Class	Frequency	Percentage %
1- Gender	Male	22	27.8
	Female	57	72.2
2- Qualification	Diploma	8	10.1
	B.A	61	77.2
	M.A	10	12.7
3- Experience	Less than 5 years	25	31.6
	(5-10) years	36	45.6
	More than 10 years	18	22.8
Total		79	100%

Table (1) shows that 57 of the participants were female teachers, while 22 were male teachers. The teachers had between 5 and 15 years of teaching experience which means that they ranged from novice to experienced teachers and from major to non-major in the area of English language teaching . The table also reveals that the majority hold B.A (61 teachers) while 8 teachers had diploma and 10 teachers had MA.

Instrumentation and Data Collection Procedure

To achieve the objectives of the study and to collect the required data, multiple research tools were used including a questionnaire, focus group sessions, face-to-face interviews, and online interviews using Facebook (text messaging and calling).The use of these tools enabled the researchers to validate the study results and get more reliable findings.

With regard to the quantitative data, the researchers used a 32-item questionnaire developed by the two researchers using the previous literature (Al-Harbi & Alshumaimeri, (2016); Chang , 2016; Chen et al., 2016; Galway et.al, 2011) and the researchers' own experience in the field of teaching several courses at two Palestinian universities. The questionnaire consisted of two sections; the first focused on demographic profile such as gender, qualification and experience, whereas the second consisted of 32 items that covered the topic of flipped classroom. The scores of responses to each item were calculated through a five-point Likert scale (Very Satisfied =5 points, Satisfied =4 points, Undecided = 3, Dissatisfied = 2 points and Very Dissatisfied = 1 point).

To evaluate the questionnaire content and face validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by five university professors with different specializations, including educational technology who contributed their recommendations for improving the content. The questionnaire, then, was piloted on 15 teachers with a similar level of proficiency. The purpose of this step was to determine whether the questions were comprehensible and can be interpreted by the teachers to measure what they are intended to do. Therefore, the respondents' comments and the jury's suggestions were taken into consideration to modify and improve the questionnaire's content and wordings by omitting, adding or rephrasing items bringing the number of items from 36 to 32. Meanwhile, the reliability of the questionnaire as calculated through Cronbach Alpha formula was (0.93) which is acceptable for the purpose of the study.

The final draft of the questionnaire was distributed among the participants during the workshops in three locations of **TEIP**: Jenin, Nablus and Hebron. The trainers in these three locations with the presence of the two researchers explained the objective of the questionnaire and the study as well and they were ready to answer any question regarding the questionnaire items.

Being a trainer in one of the workshop locations, one of the researchers was able to conduct two focus group discussions in Jenin and Hebron training locations. The two focus groups involved 20 teachers. Furthermore, the researchers were able to conduct online interviews via the Facebook using text messaging and live calls with 10 participating teachers. This was attainable because all participating teachers were asked to join a Facebook group titled **(Teacher Education Improvement Project 1-4th Graders (TEIP)-launched by the project administration at QOU.** The aim of these interviews and discussions was to collect detailed data on the possible benefits of the flipped classroom model so as to validate study results, and hence get more reliable findings.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Means, frequencies, standard deviations, t-tests for independent samples, and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to find out descriptive statistical analysis. To analyze the findings, the researchers used the following scale to represent the estimation level of teachers' responses.

1-1.8	1.81-2.6	2.61-3.4	3.41-4.2	4.21 -5
Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very High

Results and Discussion

The current study aimed to identify the perceptions of EFL teachers towards (FC) and identify the effect of gender, qualification, and experience on the teachers' perceptions. To achieve these objectives, the data were analyzed quantitatively in accordance with the study questions and qualitatively in accordance with the focus group sessions and interviews.

Quantitative Results:

1-Results related to the first question "**What are EFL teachers' perceptions of the flipped classroom model?**". To answer this question, the researchers used means and standard deviations as shown in Table (2).

Table (2): Means and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Perceptions of Flipped Classroom (FC) in a Descending order.

No.	Rank	Item	Means	Standard Deviations	Estimation Level
1.	20	In FC, teachers become organizers, mentors and facilitators.	4.11	0.89	High
2.	17	In FC, primary knowledge acquisition occurs before class which helps students practice knowledge with their peers.	4.08	0.73	High
3.	25	FC involves less lecturing and more activity in the classroom.	4.02	0.90	High
4.	26	FC allows the teacher to broaden and deepen students' learning.	4.01	0.75	High
5.	19	FC makes face-to-face class time for actual application.	4.00	0.78	High
6.	5	FC enables students to watch videos about the topic at home and then doing activities about them in class.	3.97	0.81	High
7.	18	FC makes each student responsible for coming to class with basic understanding of the subject.	3.96	0.75	High

No.	Rank	Item	Means	Standard Deviations	Estimation Level
8.	28	FC enables students to construct knowledge through gathering and synthesizing information.	3.94	0.73	High
9.	27	FC helps teachers to provide differentiated instruction.	3.93	0.70	High
10.	1	In FC, the teacher can communicate a lot with students.	3.93	0.58	High
11.	15	FC enables students to construct knowledge outside of class.	3.92	0.76	High
12.	29	FC reverses the role of the students from passive observer to an active participant .	3.91	0.81	High
13.	31	FC promotes computer literacy skills.	3.91	0.85	High
14.	23	FC allows class time to be more productively used for higher – level engaging activities	3.87	0.86	High
15.	30	FC strengthens students preparedness before the class.	3.87	0.97	High
16.	12	FC means that students can make connections between classroom learning and the outside world.	3.86	0.95	High
17.	21	FC provides a digital solution to the lack of time that hinders teachers in classroom.	3.84	0.84	High
18.	6	FC requires a supportive teacher to promote learning during class sessions.	3.84	0.84	High
19.	2	During FC, students can communicate better with each others.	3.82	0.74	High
20.	16	FC has the potential to facilitate active learning during class.	3.82	0.81	High
21.	7	FC promoted when students have a choice in the activities they do.	3.79	0.77	High
22.	32	FC enables teachers to act in response to students ' needs.	3.78	0.88	High
23.	22	In FC, more learning can be done outside the classroom.	3.77	0.86	High
24.	4	During FC, students can explore their own strategies for learning.	3.77	0.81	High
25.	10	Motivated language learners are more likely to benefit from FC than those who are not motivated.	3.75	0.92	High
26.	24	FC allows collaborative and problem- based learning.	3.74	0.79	High
27.	3	FC enables students to work in real life applications.	3.74	0.74	High
28.	9	Confident language learners are more likely to benefit from FC than those who are less confident.	3.72	1.02	High
29.	14	FC helps students identify their own needs and interests.	3.69	0.89	High
30.	11	FC means that learners are responsible for their own learning.	3.67	0.99	High
31.	13	In FC, students can monitor their progress when learning the content.	3.64	0.84	High
32.	8	FC requires students to be independent of the teacher.	3.54	1.09	High
Total Degree			3.85	0.47	High

Table (2) shows that the total degree of teachers' responses was (3.85) which suggests a high level of perceptions. This result is in line with some previous studies; for example, (Al-Harbi &

Alshumaimeri, 2016; Zainuddin and Attaran ,2016; Hibbard, Sung and Wells, 2016; Galway, Berry and Takar, 2015)who found that the participants of their studies had positive and favorable attitudes and perceptions towards flipped learning. Nevertheless, this result seems to be partially inconsistent with Jensen et al., (2015) who found that flipped classroom does not result in higher learning gains or better attitudes compared with the regular classroom when both utilize an active-learning constructivist approach. The result of this high perception might be due to the fact that the participating teachers in the study were all teachers who teach in the elementary stage (1-4th graders) and therefore may believe that their young pupils may like to work on their own at home prior to lesson when the lessons deal with a foreign language like English especially when videos are used. One possible interpretation might that the teachers believe that such model which emphasizes student-centered learning may relieve them of some responsibilities and burden.

With regard to the questionnaire items, the highest mean was given to the item "***In FC, teachers become organizers, mentors and facilitators***" which scored (4.11) and this means that teachers in the flipped classroom model seek to relinquish their traditional roles as the main giver and the major source of knowledge and information to allow for more student –centered participation. The teacher then is not the center of the classroom learning experiences. Such idea goes in parallel with Heinerichs et al., (2016) who maintained that the flipped classroom represents an educational approach that has become popular in higher education because it is student-centered. It also agrees with Bergmann & Sams (2012) who found that flipped learning facilitates teaching and makes better use of the face-to-face sessions through minimizing teacher's lecture and increasing students' active learning, collaboration and scaffolding especially when the flipped classroom model has established less lecturing and more activities in the classroom. On the other hand, the lowest mean was given to the item "***FC requires students to be independent of the teacher***" which scored (3.54) and this means that the teacher is a necessary component of the teaching-learning process. Regarding this result in particular, it seems to contradict one of the basic foundations of the flipped classroom given by Ahmed (2016) which is the student-centered approach when moving learners away from a teacher-centered learning environment to another environment where teachers become real organizers, mentors, and facilitators. Again, this contradiction might be interpreted by stating that the participating teachers in the study were all teachers who teach in the elementary stage (1-4th graders) and therefore they may believe that their young pupils are unable to work on their own at home prior to lesson when the lessons deal with a foreign language like English.

2-Results Related to the Second Question.

To answer the question "***Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of EFL teachers' perceptions due to the variables gender, qualification and years of experience?***", the researchers divided this question into four sub-questions as follows:

A- "Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of EFL teachers' perceptions due to gender? To answer this question, t-test for independent samples was used; table (3) shows the results.

Table (3): T-test for Independent Samples of Teachers' Perceptions of Flipped Classroom due to Gender

Teachers' Attitudes Towards Flipped Classroom (FC)	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	T	Sig.*
Total	Male	22	3.81	0.50	-0.491	0.625
	Female	57	3.87	0.46		

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Comparing the means and standard deviations of teachers' perceptions with regard to gender shows apparent differences between the males and the females in their perceptions of Flipped Classroom but these are slight differences. To examine if these differences are statistically significant, t-test for Independent Samples was used and Table (3) shows no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on the total degree of perceptions between teachers' perceptions of Flipped Classroom due to gender since (0.625) is more than (0.05). This result might be interpreted by saying that all participating teachers regardless of their gender work for the same Ministry of Education mostly take the same training courses and work under the same conditions. Furthermore, they teach the same grades 1-4th.

B- "Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between teachers' perceptions of Flipped Classroom due to qualification? To answer this question, One-Way ANOVA test was used; tables (4 and 5) show the results.

Table (4): Frequencies, Means and Standards Deviations of Teachers' Perceptions of Flipped Classroom Due to Qualification

Teachers' Attitudes Towards Flipped Classroom (FC)	Qualification	N	Mean	S.D
	Diploma	8	4.03	0.49
	B.A	61	3.81	0.47
	M.A	10	3.97	0.44
	Total	79	3.85	0.47

Comparing the means and standard deviations of teachers' perceptions of Flipped Classroom with regard to qualification shows apparent differences between the teachers. To determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between these means, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used and the results are shown in table (5) below.

Table (5): Results of One-Way ANOVA for Teachers' Perceptions of Flipped Classroom Due to Qualification

Attitudes Towards Flipped Classroom (FC)	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Total	Between Groups	0.544	2	0.272	1.217	0.302
	Within Groups	16.976	76	0.223		
	Total	17.520	78			

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (5) shows no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on the total degree of teachers' perceptions of Flipped Classroom due to qualification. The significant level is (0.302) which is more than (0.05). Again this result might be due to the fact that all participating teachers regardless of their qualification (Diploma, BA, MA) work for MOHE mostly take the same training courses like (TEIP) and also work under the same conditions where they teach the same grades (1-4th).

C-"*Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between teachers' perceptions of Flipped Classroom due to experience?*". To answer this question, One Way-ANOVA test was used; tables (6 and 7) show the results.

Table (6): Frequencies, Means and Standards Deviations of Teachers' Perceptions of Flipped Classroom Due to Experience

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Flipped Classroom (FC)	Experience	N	Mean	S.D
Total	Less than 5 years	25	3.70	0.42
	(5-10) years	36	3.90	0.49
	More than 10 years	18	3.95	0.45
Total		79	3.85	0.47

Comparing the means and standard deviations of teachers' perceptions of Flipped Classroom with regard to years of experience shows apparent differences between the teachers. To determine whether these differences are statistically significant, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used and the results are shown in Table (7) below.

Table (7): Results of One-Way ANOVA for Teachers' Perceptions of Flipped Classroom Due to Experience

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Flipped Classroom (FC)	Source of variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Total	Between Groups	0.852	2	0.426	1.944	0.150
	Within Groups	16.667	76			
	Total	17.520	78	0.219		

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (7) shows no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on the total degree of teachers' perceptions of Flipped Classroom due to experience. The significant level is (0.150) which is more than (0.05). This result might be due to the fact that the majority of teachers in the focus group sessions, and in the interviews as well indicated that the issue of flipped classroom is a new concept for them and never practiced it especially with their pupils in grades 1-4th. Thus, whether the teacher is somehow novice or experienced, they had the same level of knowledge about the flipped classroom except three male teachers who are currently taking MA in methods of teaching English as a foreign language.

Results of Qualitative Data

To validate study results and get more reliable findings, two focus group sessions, five face-to-face interviews, 13 online interviews using Facebook (text messaging and calling) were also used as supplementary tools. With regard to the focus group sessions, they were carried out in the learning circles of the project in Jenin and Hebron to gather additional qualitative data. The first was in Jenin training site and involved six teachers. It was managed by one of the researchers who was a trainer there and with the help of two teachers. The second focus group involved five teachers and it was held in Hebron and managed by the trainer there. Meanwhile, the two focus group sessions centered around three main questions as follows:

1-Do you think that the flipped classroom model is a suitable choice for teaching in Palestine?
Why?

2-Do you think that the flipped classroom model can encourage students to be more active and more responsible for their learning? How?

3-Do you think that using the flipped classroom model helps teachers or adds more responsibilities to their profession? How?

Additionally, the researchers conducted five face-to-face interviews and 13 online interviews through the Facebook group of TEIP with the teachers using the three questions above. The interviews as well as the focus group sessions were all in the Arabic language. The aim of conducting the interviews and the focus group sessions in the teachers' native language (Arabic) was to encourage more detailed responses. The researchers translated the responses into the English language to be analyzed qualitatively.

For the whole qualitative section of this study, teachers' responses were coded and analyzed thematically. Thus, qualitative thematic analysis of the focus group data and the interviews identified three major themes in relation to perceptions of the flipped classroom model and learning experiences. Each of these themes will be briefly discussed below in accordance with the questions.

The first open-ended question was "***Do you think that the flipped classroom model is a suitable choice for teaching in Palestine? Why?***" Teachers' responses to this question either in the focus groups or in the interviews showed that most teachers responded positively to the idea of using the flipped classroom model in Palestine especially when this model aims at enabling the target students to be responsible for their own learning at home with or without the help of their parents. However, the majority of these responses indicated that such model does not suit young pupils in the grades 1-4th since it needs some technological resources at school and at home, especially the Internet services which might not exist in some villages and remote areas. Furthermore, the majority of the teachers stated that students in the elementary and preparatory stages greatly depend on the teacher as the main source of knowledge and they cannot work on their own at home. Besides, five teachers noted that flipped classroom model requires high speed Internet connection which might not be available all the time in schools or at homes of the students. A female teacher noted that some parents do not allow their young children to browse the Internet for watching videos on the YouTube or even joining an educational Facebook group. These attitudes might work against the success of flipped classroom model. In this respect 12 teachers noted that such model is expected to be more suitable and more applicable with university students more than school students in general, since most university students nowadays have their own smart phones with wireless Internet connection anytime anywhere.

Compared with the teachers' responses to the questionnaire items, the qualitative results seem to be consistent with these results since the total degree of teachers' responses scored a moderate level of perceptions. This might be due to the teachers' belief that the flipped classroom model does not suit young learners although it seems helpful especially when it involves less lecturing and more activity in the classroom, allows the teacher to broaden and deepen students' learning, and enables the teachers to become organizers, mentors and facilitators.

One female teacher mentioned that the English language supervisor asked her to use the flipped classroom model with her 4th grade students after creating a Facebook group, but she refused claiming that the students are unable to be involved in such model and they are not allowed to have Facebook accounts. Another female teacher stated that she tried a semi-flipped classroom with 8th grade students and it was partially promising especially with the use of some YouTube clips that covered grammatical issues. This indicates the importance of using well-chosen videos that suit students' interests and needs.

The second question addressed to the participating teachers was "***Do you think that the flipped classroom model can encourage learners to be more active and more responsible for their learning? How?***" Responding to this question, seven teachers out of 29 stated that this model gives the students more freedom to search for knowledge and use available information in a new way. Accordingly, the students will be more confident and more responsible for their learning when they were asked to prepare the teaching material before coming to the classroom. However, one teacher added that not all students are expected to watch the videos and benefit from them except the high achievers who can prepare the teaching materials at home. On the other hand, one teacher enthusiastically commented that flipped learning model motivates students to be small researchers outside the classroom in addition to be small teachers in the classroom.

Another male teacher showed a pessimistic point of view when he stated that flipped learning seems to decrease students' motivation and distract their attentions especially when it requires students to work on their own and without teachers' and parents' supervision. These contradicting points of view seem to be consistent with the quantitative results which revealed a moderate level related to the items "***FC makes each student responsible for coming to class with basic understanding of the subject***" "***FC reverses the role of the students from passive observer to an active participant***", "***FC has the potential to facilitate active learning during class***" which scored a moderate level.

The third question was "***Do you think that using the flipped classroom model helps teachers or adds more responsibilities to their profession? How?***". Here, teachers' responses varied and seemed to be divided into two groups. The first group (nine teachers) stated that the flipped classroom model adds more duties and responsibilities to the teachers' load, especially when teachers in this model are supposed to provide a suitable environment using technological resources such as videos, PowerPoint presentations and worksheets which all in all demand a lot of efforts and time. The problem here, according to this group, that teachers who are almost overloaded with long hours of teaching, and with lots of paper work and computer work, attending too many workshops and training sessions (TEIP is one of them) in addition to their family responsibilities.

The second group was more optimistic when they stated that the use of flipped classroom model can help teachers a lot when it gives some of the responsibilities to the students, and makes use of technologies that can encourage students to search and learn outside the classroom. This

model, according to these optimistic teachers, is expected to help teachers plan better, teach better and communicate effectively with students using technological advancements. This will be possible if students share the responsibility as expected from this model and when required resources are available; otherwise, it will certainly fail.

These diverse opinions on the impact of flipped class model seem to be in parallel with teachers' responses to the item "***In FC, teachers become organizers, mentors and facilitators***" which means that teachers need to play new roles in addition to their traditional roles especially when the flipped learning model requires a supportive teacher to promote learning during class sessions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The present study aimed at investigating the perceptions of EFL teachers of the flipped classroom model in the Palestinian context. It also aimed at identifying the effect of gender, qualification, and experience on the teachers' perceptions. The quantitative results showed that the total degree of teachers' responses was (3.85) which suggested a high level of perceptions and there were no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on the total degree of perceptions between teachers' perceptions of flipped classroom due to gender, qualification and experience. On the other hand, the qualitative results revealed three major themes with regard to teachers' perceptions and that teachers were somehow divided into two groups. The first group was in favor of using the flipped classroom model but with mature students and after providing the required infrastructure. The second group was not in favor of using the flipped learning model because it might add more responsibilities and tasks to the overloaded teachers and it might distract students as well.

In light of the results of the present study, the researchers recommended the following:

- 1-Organizing training workshops by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to train teachers on how to employ flipped learning for teaching English.
- 2-Providing teachers with adequate opportunities to practice the flipped classroom model in their classes.
- 3- Encouraging teachers to conduct action research studies that examine the impact of the flipped classroom model on the achievement of EFL learners along different skills.
- 4- Encouraging researchers to investigate EFL learners' attitudes towards using the flipped classroom model, and the impact of this model on EFL learners' self-directed learning.

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