

## **Flipping a Language Subject to Teach English Grammar and Oral Skills at Tertiary Education**

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University education must respond to social demands and adapt to the needs of students in the teaching-learning process. This article reports on a study that focuses on how a teaching proposal based on the flipped classroom has an impact on grammar learning and on the development of oral skills at tertiary education. The main objectives of this article are the following: 1. To observe how flipping a grammar and a speaking class allow students to acquire grammar content, improve their speaking skills and develop social competences and 2. To know students' opinions about the methodology used in the teaching-learning process. The study uses a mixed-methods research design (qualitative and quantitative) by observing the students' performances in grammar learning and oral presentation and by using a questionnaire at the end of the semester. The results of the questionnaire indicate that most students were satisfied with the proposed methodology and are aware of its benefits in their learning process.

*Keywords:* flipped classroom, grammar teaching, oral skills, *Kahoot*, social competences, active methodologies.

### **Introduction**

Innovation, technological development and the teaching of English as a foreign language have been the focus of debate among academics and language specialists in the last decade. This has been due to the need to update English teaching in order to motivate students and adapt teaching to the demands of the new times (Gabarrón Pérez et al., 2020; Martínez Navarro, 2017).

The development of active learning strategies is relevant to making students direct their own learning. Consequently, students are given a central role so that they can improve their performance and understanding in the classroom (Arjomandi et al., 2018; Lumpkin et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important to explore methods that engage students in the teaching-learning process. In this sense, the choice of methods of active learning improves students' learning and the acquisition of competences (Khan et al., 2017; Vygotsky, 1978).

The flipped classroom is an innovative learning model that has been used in language learning mainly in the past decade (Bergmann & Sams, 2012, 2014; Marshall & Kostka, 2020; Talbert, 2017). The Flipped Learning Network defines flipped learning as “a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting

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group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter” (Flipped Learning Network, 2014a, p. 1).

This model is useful for students to work on individual and group activities outside the classroom. Activities based on the flipped classroom methodology were chosen due to the uncertain situation caused by the pandemic when the academic year 2021–2022 started. Although all the students were in the classroom at the beginning of the semester, the possibility of having new waves of COVID-19 made the teacher frame the teaching-learning process in a model that promoted autonomous learning. In addition, the fact that the students registered in the subject had received dual instruction in the previous academic years (2019–2020 and 2020–2021) meant they had autonomy in the teaching-learning process. In fact, having received dual instruction could be taken as a positive aspect that would benefit students in accomplishing the activities framed in the flipped methodology presented in this article.

This study is justified because framing the teaching-learning process in the methodology proposed by the flipped classroom to teach grammar and oral skills means that students can learn in a more autonomous way at tertiary education. This is due to the fact that they can organise their time in the individual learning space. Moreover, group space becomes more dynamic and interactive because students are able to apply what they have already learned. This way of teaching favours the acquisition of some social competences such as leadership and communication. Thus, the different activities used in an advanced English class in higher education (see section 4) would not only contribute to the acquisition of the content and skills of the subject but also to the enhancement of social competences that will be useful for the subject and for other aspects of students’ lives.

Bisquerra and Pérez (2007) define these competences in the following way: “[...] la capacidad para mantener buenas relaciones con otras personas. Esto implica dominar las habilidades sociales, capacidad para la comunicación efectiva, respeto, actitudes pro-sociales, asertividad, etc.” (p. 27).<sup>1</sup> I concur with Tallón and Sikora (2011) in that these competences include: understanding others, political consciousness (it makes reference to power influence in groups), communication, cooperation, leadership, influence and conflict solving.

The main hypothesis of this article is that the flipped classroom methodology favours the development of autonomous learning and the acquisition of social competences in university students. Thus, the objectives of this study are the following: 1. To observe how flipping a grammar and a speaking class allows students to acquire grammar content, improve their speaking skills and develop social competences and 2. To know students’ opinions about the methodology used in the teaching-learning process. The main research question in this article is the following: is the methodology proposed by the flipped classroom appropriate to help students acquire grammar content and improve their speaking skills at the same time that they develop social competences?

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<sup>1</sup>Translation by the author: “[...] the ability to maintain good relationships with other people. This implies mastering social skills, effective communication skills, respect, pro-social attitudes, assertiveness, etc.” (Bisquerra & Pérez, 2007, p. 27).

This article is organised as follows: section 2 is the literature review. This is followed by the methodology used in the study (section 3). Section 4 presents a practical proposal for flipping a language subject, specifically the sections devoted to grammar and oral skills. Section 5 offers the results of the questionnaire and the rubric used in this research. The article finishes with a discussion and some conclusions based on the study.

### **Literature Review**

The flipped classroom model has been developed in the last decade in order to use the classroom time for discussion and for cooperative activities once students have worked at home (Bosch-Farré et al., 2024; Crespo Fernández, 2021; Goodwin & Miller, 2013; Milman, 2012). Thus, the flipped classroom involves blended learning; i.e., a combination of learning in the classroom and distance learning facilitated through a range of technological resources. This asynchronous approach means that the time in the classroom can be devoted to student-centred synchronous learning activities (O’Flaherty & Phillips, 2015).

The concept of flipped classroom was introduced by the high school chemistry teachers Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). They emphasized that teaching should focus on motivating students to learn in an autonomous way and on observing students’ learning process, which involved making adjustments if necessary and offering students different ways of learning content (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Consequently, teachers do not have a central role in the teaching-learning process because they mainly supervise students’ work and guide them to work with the materials that they have before the lectures.

The Flipped Learning Network (2014b) has articulated four pillars of flipped learning: flexible environment (F), learning culture (L), intentional content (I), and professional educators (P) (F-L-I-P). In fact, ‘F’ involves diverse learning styles and gives students the opportunity to reflect on their own learning, including the main difficulties that they have.’ L’ highlights that the responsibility is on the student in the flipped learning model, which contrasts with traditional education where the teacher had a central role and was the main source of information. This means that teachers are guides, coaches or supervisors in the teaching-learning process. Therefore, ‘I’ involves the importance of students’ development of conceptual understanding with materials that favour autonomous learning. Finally, ‘P’ concentrates on the importance of teachers in the process of flipping a subject because they have to monitor the teaching-learning process and to offer continuous and relevant feedback while students learn. This means that teachers have to be well prepared before the class so that they can guide students and reply to their needs (Baepler et al., 2014). Following Marshall and Kostka (2020): “As a professional educator, the teacher creates a flexible learning environment, conducts regular formative assessments both in and out of class, and shares ideas and reflects on teaching with their colleagues” (p. 3).

The methodology proposed by the flipped classroom means that students and teachers develop digital competences (Pozo Sanchez et al., 2020), which is an area

that requires further development and exploitation, following Singay (2020): “Flipped learning is an educational approach where learning moves from classroom to home, likewise group to an individual. The classroom materials are presented to learners using smartphones, videos, podcasts, and handouts in advance to read, watch, and listen at home” (p. 666).

In addition, flipped learning encourages innovative teaching at the same time that the classroom time is used for practising concepts that are introduced before in-class instruction (Cheng et al., 2020; Santikarn & Wichadee, 2018). In fact, flipping the classroom contributes not only to fostering active learning but also to increasing motivation (González Mujico & Lasagabaster, 2019; Hung, 2015). This method also increases interaction and active learning (Roach, 2014) and influences cooperation, innovation, autonomy and task orientation (Evseeva & Solozhenko, 2015; Strayer, 2012).

Chen et al. (2017) examined 46 articles on the effectiveness of flipped classrooms in medical education with different learning outcomes. Generally, studies agree on the positive effects of this methodology, such as the self-efficacy and responsibility of the students in these classrooms (Lai & Hwang, 2016). Self-efficacy is associated with students’ academic success because students obtain better results than in traditional instruction at the same time as they improve their learning outcome (Abedi et al., 2019; Haghghi et al., 2019).

There are studies that focus on students’ perceptions of the flipped classroom and on the reasons why they prefer the flipped methodology to the traditional one (Amiryousefi, 2019; Kostka & Marshall, 2017). The main advantages students see include working in their own way and having the possibility of watching the videos or working with the materials several times before class so that there can be more in-class practice (Alsowat, 2016). Students also emphasise that this methodology favours the development and integration of the different skills (Wu et al., 2017) at the same time that it promotes active and effective learning (Nouri, 2016). There are very few studies that apply the use of the flipped classroom in undergraduate linguistic courses (Martyniuk, 2019) or in grammar instruction in higher education (Almazán Ruiz et al., 2020).

## **Methodology**

### **Course Description**

This study is based on a core subject called English Language V that is taught during the first semester of the third year in the English Studies degree program at a Spanish university. The purpose is for students to develop the five skills in English in order to acquire an advanced level of English, level C1 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2020). There are four hours per week: one to work on reading and writing, another for grammar, and the last two hours for speaking and participating in oral presentations and debates. Of the three main sections in which the subject was divided, the second and third were flipped in order to give students opportunities

to be autonomous while they learned grammar and prepared oral presentations and debates. Consequently, the classroom was used to ask questions, to share the work previously done and to be involved in discussions.

### **Participants**

During the academic year 2021–2022, 87 students were registered in the English subject mentioned. They were divided into two groups by administrators, considering alphabetical order, 50 in group A and 37 in group B. Sixty-nine were female and 18 were male. All of them had studied English in the previous academic years of the degree, and all had level B2. They were asked to use the platform provided by the university to have access to the online materials (grammar points on PowerPoint, list of videos and documents to prepare effective oral presentations) and to follow the instructions provided by the teacher to learn in a flipped way.

### **Research Instruments**

The research instruments consisted of a questionnaire investigating students' opinions on the flipped classroom. The purpose of using the questionnaire was to see if the methodology was considered effective by students after their participation in the different activities (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire allowed obtaining some quantitative data and was completed at the end of the semester by all the students enrolled in the subject, i.e., the participants in this research. It consisted of nine questions: six multiple-choice questions and three open-ended questions. The data obtained from the questionnaire were statistically analysed using Excel software (Microsoft Office), in order to obtain univariate statistical parameters.

Another instrument was a rubric used by the teacher while students were giving the oral presentation in the classroom (see Table 2). Students' answers to the same rubric that the teacher had used while observing the oral presentations were also part of the data. Students completed the rubric in a group tutorial. The teacher manually analysed the data of all the groups at the end of the semester, to compare the results of students' evaluations once the oral presentation was done with her own while students were sharing the presentation in the classroom (see section 5).

### **Procedure**

Different activities were planned during the first semester of the 2021–2022 academic year to work on grammar and speaking in the subject English Language V, following the principles of the flipped classroom (see section 4). At the beginning of the semester the teacher prepared *PowerPoint* presentations in which the main aspects that would be revised in each of the grammar classes were outlined (see section 4.1). Then, students were asked to revise the *PowerPoints* and the explanations given in the grammar book (Hewings, 2013) before preparing the exercises. The teacher also provided students with a list of videos to reinforce

grammar. Thus, the teacher applied the principles of the flipped classroom in different ways: 1. By giving the students the following materials before the class: a calendar with a list of topics and the weeks they would be studied, a list of videos on grammar topics and *PowerPoint* presentations with a summary of the two weekly topics of English grammar. 2. By insisting on the need to reflect and write down the main difficulties they encountered in the weekly grammar topics before coming to class. Therefore, the teacher promoted prior critical reflection and logical deduction by the students about the grammar topics under study each week. Once the grammar exercises were corrected in the classroom and students asked questions, the teacher prepared some questions in *Kahoot* to revise the topics under study and to motivate students by introducing gamification in the classroom.

In addition, the section of the subject devoted to speaking and participating in oral presentations and debates was flipped because students were given instructions on how to prepare effective oral presentations at the beginning of the semester so that they could work autonomously. Then, the teacher asked them to organise themselves in groups of five people, and a distribution of the groups was done so that they could present one oral presentation and debate per week. In fact, this section has three stages: a pre-class stage where students have to organise the oral presentation, an in-class stage where students give the oral presentation in front of the teacher and their classmates and a post-class stage where students reflect with the teacher on the way the oral presentation can be improved and on the main strengths of the presentation.

When students were giving the oral presentations they had prepared in groups, the teacher used a rubric (see Table 2) to observe several aspects associated with their performance in the oral presentations and their development of social competences. The same rubric was also completed by the group in charge of the presentation every week, so that the teacher could contrast students' answers with her own at the end of the semester. Finally, the questionnaire that the students completed at the end of the semester provided information on their opinion about the activities in which they had participated and their relationship with the flipped classroom.

### **A Practical Proposal for Flipping a Language Subject**

This section presents the main steps followed to flip the section of the subject English Language V devoted to grammar. In addition, section 4.2 explains how the section on speaking was flipped.

### Flipping a Grammar Class

Students were given a calendar at the beginning of the semester with the assignments they had to prepare during the semester. This document also had the list of the two grammar topics they had to prepare each week during the semester from the book *Advanced Grammar in Use* by Hewings (2013). In most cases, the two grammar topics that were explained each week were related, as can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Grammar Topics Covered in English Language V

| Weeks   | Grammar topics  |
|---------|---|
| Week 1  | 45, 87: Articles and connectors                               |
| Week 2  | 53, 54: Relative pronouns                                     |
| Week 3  | 40, 41: Subject-verb agreement                                |
| Week 4  | 42, 43: Subject-verb agreement and compound nouns             |
| Week 5  | 46,47: Articles   |
| Week 6  | 32, 33: Reported speech                                       |
| Week 7  | 66, 67: Adjectives  |
| Week 8  | 68, 69: Adjectives  |
| Week 9  | 70, 71: Adjectives +to inf., ing, etc. Adjectives and adverbs |
| Week 10 | 22–23: Passive voice  |
| Week 11 | 74, 75: Adverbs   |
| Week 12 | Writing exams in the classroom                                |
| Week 13 | 76, 99: Adverbs and inversion                                 |
| Week 14 | 77, 100: Adverbs and inversion                                |
| Week 15 | Revision and doubts   |

During class time, the teacher started the lecture by asking if the students had any questions about the PowerPoints of the topics that were studied that week (students had them in advance). She also asked them about the list of difficulties they had prepared at home, and they were discussed. The teacher offered examples on the blackboard so that students could apply their knowledge. After reviewing the grammar in this way and answering the possible questions, the exercises in the book were corrected in order to put into practice the aspects already revised theoretically.

It should be noted that the teacher could focus on the most important grammatical points or could complete some aspect that was not sufficiently explained in the book because students had the grammar outline beforehand. In addition, the objective of giving students a list of videos related to the grammar topics under study (see Table 1) was that both students who had a higher level and those who had a lower level of English could go deeper into the revision of the grammatical aspect outside the classroom. Moreover, the videos offered the opportunity to work on listening, a fundamental skill of the subject.

The last five minutes were used to revise the main aspects of the lesson using *Kahoot* so that students could choose between a correct and an incorrect sentence, which allowed the teacher to see if the grammatical aspect under revision was understood or if further revision was needed. *Kahoot* was chosen because it is a gamification tool well known in teaching and it increases students' motivation by

making the classroom dynamic interesting while revising the main grammatical points in each class. In addition, this tool is free and easy to use.

*Kahoot* can be used from any cell phone, and it allows students revising or putting into practice what they had learned in a playful way. Thus, it integrates games, learning and new technologies in the teaching-learning process. *Kahoot* promotes competition in the classroom because the student who wins is the one who chooses the right answer in the shortest possible time. The right answer is given after each question, the results that each student has and the mark obtained.

### **Flipping a Speaking Class**

Students had to prepare cooperative oral presentations on social topics of their choice, following the guidelines given by the teacher at the beginning of the semester. The teacher chose cooperative oral presentations to evaluate students' oral skills, due to the high number of students registered in the subject. This activity was framed in a flipped methodology because students had to distribute tasks in the group, manage time, take decisions, distinguish relevant from secondary information and be co-responsible so that the final task was successful outside the classroom.

In order to make this cooperative activity successful, the teacher explained the main characteristics of effective oral presentations and how to quote in-text references at the beginning of the semester. She also explained how to write an entry in the bibliography following the APA system of citation. This was essential to avoid plagiarism in the PowerPoint presentation and in the outline that students had to give to the teacher with the following information: a summary of the presentation, the main vocabulary they have learned, a text on the topic of the oral presentation and the references used.

The teacher also insisted on the importance of time management and on the equal distribution of tasks during the teaching-learning process. Students were free to choose a topic of their choice. The only guidance that the teacher gave students on the selection of the topic was that they had to work on a social topic and it was essential to use advanced vocabulary in the *PowerPoint* presentation and in their oral discourse.

At the same time that the teacher evaluated each presentation, there was a group of students that also evaluated their classmates. In this way, students were given an opportunity to be empowered with self- and peer assessments, to develop social competences such as leadership and communication and to have the opportunity to speak in the classroom. The group that was evaluating had to give feedback to their classmates before the teacher did. Then, the teacher offered her feedback. Finally, once the oral presentation was given, students had a group tutorial with the teacher to discuss some specific aspects such as the main grammatical mistakes or the difficulties that the group had in preparing the presentation. Moreover, students had to self-evaluate and justify their grade, taking into consideration the rubric whose analysis is presented in section 5.

The cooperative oral presentations that the students prepared offered them a global vision by giving them the opportunity to delve into a social issue of their



choice. They were normally related to a social situation that needed to be improved in society. Consequently, the presentations were associated with certain social realities and with cultural issues that could arouse in students not only interest but also the need to assume a commitment in order to improve or transform the realities present in the selected topics. Examples include animal rights, ecology, integration of immigrants or the need for education to be a fundamental right in all countries. In this way, social responsibility is increased, which can be associated with responsible social behaviour (Porto, 2015).

This activity also helped students to have a broader vision of the world and a more open mind regarding the subject of study, by offering the possibility of better understanding of other realities, thanks to the research on the subject, before giving the presentation in class. Thanks to this activity, students acquired social competences such as communication, leadership, empathy, conflict resolution and understanding realities other than their own. They had to negotiate the topic of the presentation, make decisions about the organization and search for information. In addition, students acquire knowledge and vocabulary on the selected topic.

### Results of the Rubric and of the Questionnaire

The teacher prepared a rubric with a Likert scale where 5 as the highest score. She completed this while observing students' participation in oral presentations. It was also completed by the students in charge of the oral presentation and debate every week in a group tutorial. Once all the groups had presented their work, the teacher analysed the results of her answers and compared them to the students' answers to the same rubric. There were four general aspects under observation. The percentage in the first line in Table 2 indicates the teacher's evaluations of the students' oral presentations, and the second line shows the students' evaluations.

*Table 2.* Rubric Used by the Teacher in the Classroom

| Aspects under observation  | Likert scale results |          |                 |                  |                  |
|--|----------------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
|  | 1                    | 2        | 3               | 4                | 5                |
| 1.Students' participation and engagement with the task   | 0%<br>0%             | 0%<br>0% | 12.08%<br>6.59% | 32.96%<br>21.97% | 54.94%<br>71.42% |
| 2.Constructive interactions and discussions in the classroom based on the materials provided/oral presentations prepared | 0%<br>0%             | 0%<br>0% | 8.79%<br>8.79%  | 39.56%<br>34.06% | 51.64%<br>57.14% |
| 3.Management of social conflicts in the groups/classroom   | 0%<br>0%             | 0%<br>0% | 6.59%<br>6.59%  | 49.45%<br>36.26% | 43.95%<br>57.14% |
| 4.Social competences observed such as communication, cooperation or leadership   | 0%<br>0%             | 0%<br>0% | 6.59%<br>8.79%  | 43.95%<br>47.25% | 49.45%<br>54.94% |

The results presented in Table 2 show that the average of the answers of the teacher and the students are sometimes quite similar. This is the case in items 2

and 4. The number of answers 4 and 5 on the scale offer a similar percentage. The students offer a slightly higher number of answers in number 5 on the scale in the four items, whereas the average answers of 4 in the scale in items 1, 2 and 3 are a bit higher than those proposed by students. These differences are justified because the said items could only be observed and evaluated by the teacher while students were giving the oral presentation in the classroom and were participating in the debate that followed it. For instance, considering item 3, the only times the teacher was aware of conflicts in the group were when students sent tutorials and informed the teacher about a conflict associated with the lack of involvement of group members. That happened only twice during the semester. The rest of the time, the teacher could only observe conflicts when there were differences of opinion while students were participating in debates.

Thus, students' answers in the rubric focus on the whole teaching-learning process, whereas the teacher concentrates on the implementation of the activities in the classroom. The last item on the acquisition of social competences was essential so that students could see that by preparing oral presentations and debates they were not only working on oral skills, but they were also acquiring competences that are essential in the labour market and in life, such as communication, cooperation and leadership.

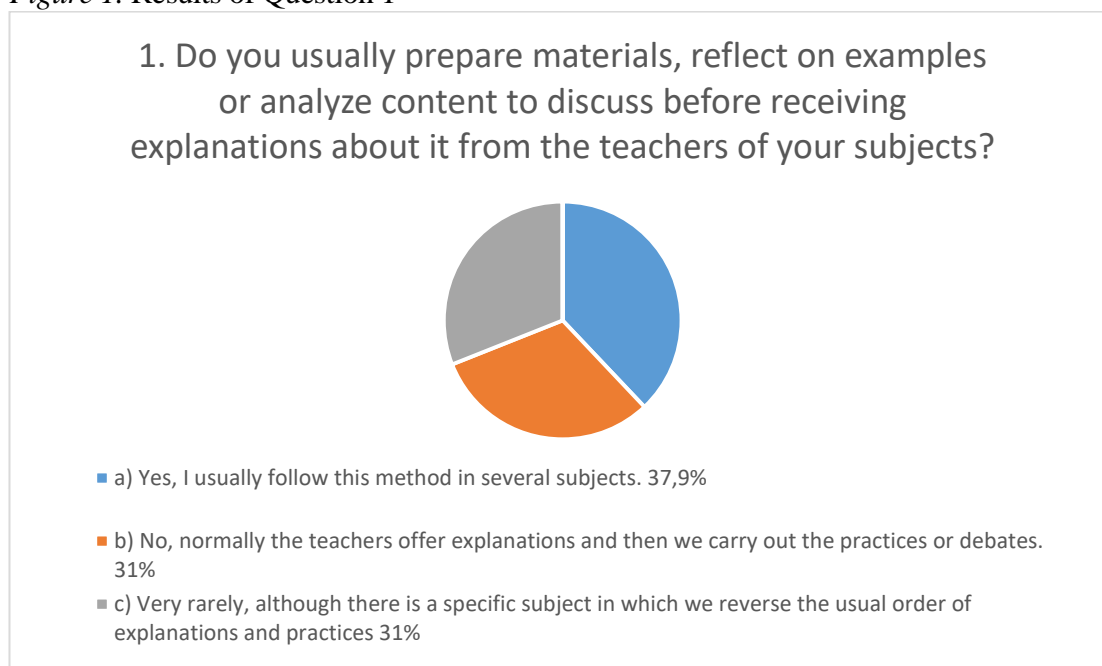
The results in Table 2 show that numbers 1 and 2 on the scale were not selected by the teacher or by the students in any of the items, and the higher percentage in number 3 is 12.08%. This shows that both students and teacher can observe their/students' progress in the items under observation during the teaching-learning process remarkably well.

As mentioned in section 3.3, apart from the rubric, a questionnaire was carried out anonymously. The aim was to discover university students' opinions about some aspects of the flipped classroom. For this purpose, nine questions were formulated to configure the questionnaire. It begins with a general reflection on the identification of the method known as flipped classroom. Next, it delves into more specific aspects of the real application in autonomous learning and other aspects (see Appendix 1). The last three questions are open so that students can express their own opinions freely.

The first question refers to the habit of analysis and reflection on the contents studied prior to the explanations provided by the teacher. The equal nature of the three responses is still surprising, probably due to the "coexistence" of methodologies that surely converge in the degree in which the inverted classroom has a role in some subjects. However, the flipped classroom is not a method so much in other subjects because the traditional methodology was more common.

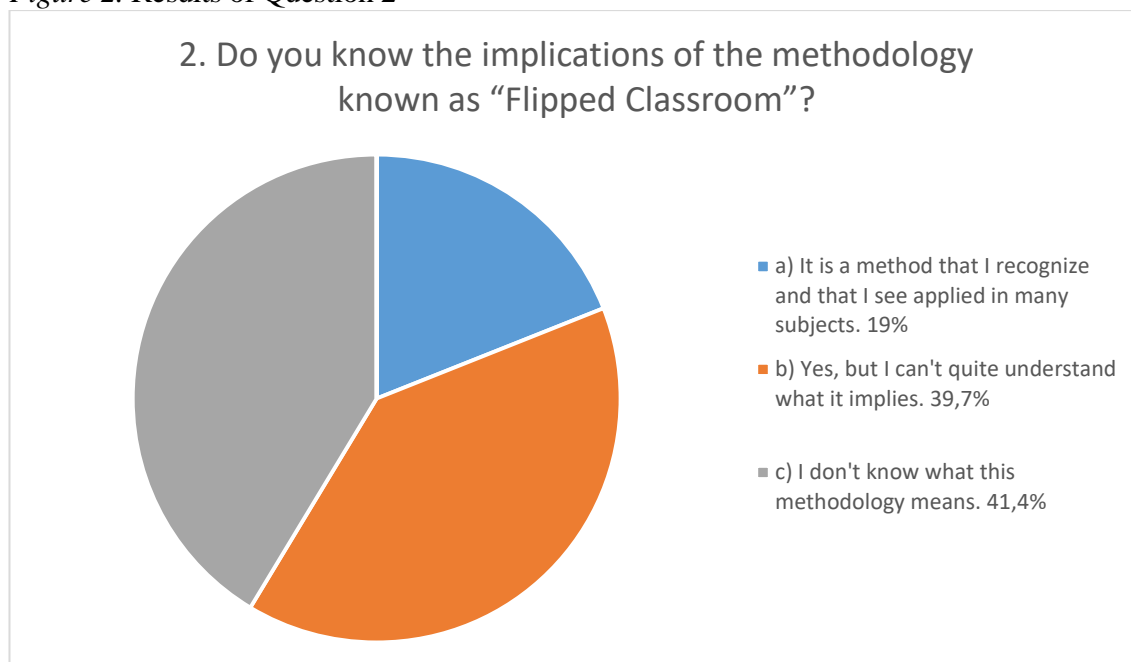
Thus, 37.9% identify this methodology in several subjects (with a slight majority over the two remaining percentages), but 31% do not perceive the approach as such, and 31% of the students rarely see reflected this method in their regular classes, in which reversing the conventional order between teachers' explanations and students' reactions is not common in their opinion, as can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Results of Question 1



In question 2, however, most of the students do recognize this methodology and do perceive it in its practical application with respect to many subjects. Specifically, 41,4% of those surveyed confirm this, while 39,7% know the method but do not quite understand what it implies. Finally, for 19% of the students, this methodology is quite opaque, because they claim not to know what it really means, as can be seen in Figure 2.

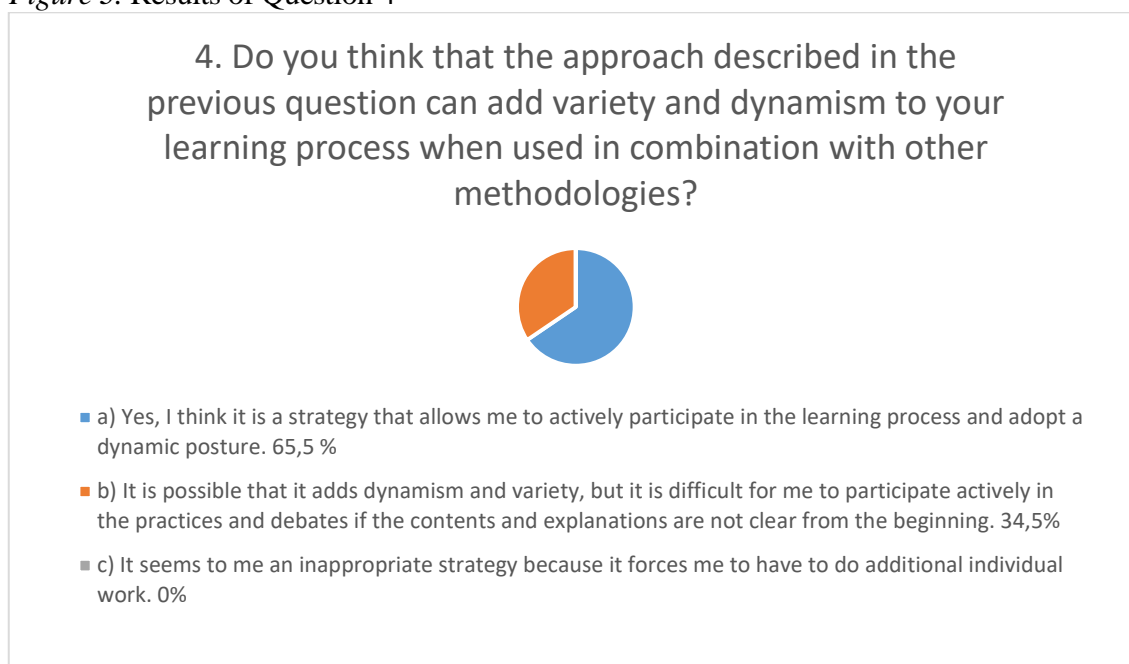
Figure 2. Results of Question 2



I also wanted to determine if the initial reflection prior to the teacher's explanations facilitated autonomous learning, problem solving and critical thinking (question 3). On this occasion, curiously, an overwhelming 87.9% of the students answered affirmatively and thereby ratified the value and usefulness of this method along with other approaches. However, 10.3% admitted that it may be an effective option, but they expressed distrust of this methodology because it moved away from the more traditional approaches. A tiny 1.8% of the respondents did not find a useful application of this methodology by ensuring that the learning process could only start from the teachers' explanations.

Moreover, in question 4, this didactic strategy provided a certain variety and dynamism to the learning process in combination with other methodologies for 65.5% of the students. The fact that students are active and dynamic in the teaching-learning process is essential so that authentic learning takes place. In this regard, it is still significant that the majority conceive this method as an accurate and dynamic formula in combination with other approaches. However, the remaining 34.5% admitted the latter, but they mentioned the difficulties involved in active participation in debates if there were many initial doubts regarding the content discussed. In any case, none of the participants chose to consider this strategy as inappropriate in itself (answer c). Therefore, with these data we can consider ways to rethink some aspects of this methodology if applied in the future according to the didactic circumstances of each session or specific content (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Results of Question 4



Regarding the usefulness of the methodology attributable to the flipped classroom as a guide to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in order to guide them in an autonomous learning process (question 5), students considered in

63.8% of the responses that the reflections and practices prior to the theoretical explanations of the teachers can guide the teaching-learning process, thanks to the fact that the initial autonomous analysis allowed identifying preliminary knowledge on the subject at the same time as it can be adapted to students' circumstances.

Nevertheless, 31% of those surveyed admitted the convenience of this autonomous analysis in advance but also alluded to the lack of time to continue with subsequent actions when taking an active role in the teaching process. A small percentage of students, 5,8%, did not consider this methodology to be useful, considering that it did not provide relevant information for teachers, who will ultimately only assess the final results. However, although in the latter case, answer c, there were not many students who shared this opinion, the teacher could consider undertaking methodological changes in the future so that most students can benefit from it.

The answer to question 6 shows that for 84.5% of the students, the contribution of *PowerPoint* presentations and written materials on grammatical content at the beginning of the semester had been helpful to revise grammar for the weekly sessions. However, for 12.1% of those surveyed, this reference material had not been useful, whereas 3.4% indicated that it had been useful for them to some extent. It is not known how thoroughly all respondents had been able to revise these grammar presentations. It probably depended on their level of English. In fact, the level was heterogeneous although all students had studied English in the degree program.

Analysing answers to the first open question (question 7) gives the impression that students saw the usefulness of the inverted classroom because they believed that grammar was taught in the right way. Students refer to possible strategies that could be implemented to optimize the grammar sessions in the subject and to promote the achievement of level C1. Some students suggested that there should be more opportunities to discuss problematic examples and to prepare debates on grammar teaching at different educational levels. In addition, some students mentioned the convenience of including more playful activities in the sessions so that the gamification strategy proposed is not based only on *Kahoot*. In general, students considered very positive the inclusion of active methodologies that add dynamism and variety to the teaching-learning process.

Regarding question 8, students considered the following advantages of the methodology proposed by the flipped classroom: the possibility of organising their own time before the lecture. In fact, many students mentioned that having the materials in advance was very useful to prepare the grammar exercises. They also highlighted that they felt active and dynamic while they were learning, i.e., they were the protagonists of the teaching-learning process. In addition, they commented that they had improved working autonomously and that this methodology helped them see the teaching-learning process as a whole, because lectures were not effective if they did not prepare what was requested in advance.

Finally, regarding question 9 and the main disadvantages of the flipped classroom, many students mentioned that they had more responsibility in their learning, whereas the teacher had less responsibility. In this sense, they said that the teacher's explanations did not have a relevant role in the classroom and that they

missed some detailed explanations sometimes. Moreover, some students mentioned that they had difficulty organising their own time, which was not beneficial for this methodology. In fact, there were students that needed help to develop autonomous learning.

In summary, after analysing all the answers in the rubric and in the questionnaire, the results show that students developed social competences at the same time as they acquired grammar contents and improved their speaking skills with activities framed in the flipped classroom methodology. The number of answers 4 and 5 provided by the teacher and by students on the Likert scale used to evaluate the aspects under observation in the rubric (see Table 2) showed that both were aware of the acquisition of social competences, the engagement of the task and other aspects. Similarly, the results of the questionnaire also showed that students considered the flipped classroom methodology a useful and effective method in the teaching-learning process.

The questionnaire has been a useful instrument in giving students the opportunity to assess the extent to which the inverted classroom methodology, in combination with other methods, approaches or strategies, contributes to facilitating students' learning. Therefore, thinking about the usefulness of combining different teaching methodologies is already a step forward towards methodological innovation as a global academic topic.

## Discussion

The flipped learning experience described in this article involves engagement with the contents and interaction between students and teachers (Cavage, 2019). The use of activities framed in the methodology proposed by the flipped classroom allows students to organise their own learning, which helps to give them autonomy in the teaching-learning process (Bergmann & Sams, 2012, 2014). In fact, this active methodology contributes to the engagement of students in meaningful activities without the teacher having a central role while they were learning. Thus, they were active and became the centre of the teaching-learning process. Consequently, the main teacher's roles were that of supervisor or facilitator.

By flipping the speaking and the grammar class, students developed autonomous learning because they had to manage time to prepare the tasks and effectively use the different resources provided. Consequently, the activities presented in this article make the most of the classroom time in order to promote active learning (Roach, 2014). This requires the materials and activities before the classroom time to be very well designed so that the teaching-learning process is effective and students acquire significant learning (Santikarn & Wichadee, 2018).

Classroom discussion is promoted as a way of giving students a central role in the teaching-learning process, which is one of the key ideas in the methodology proposed by the flipped classroom (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Thus, active relationships are encouraged so that students acquire different types of competences while they learn, which favours making the teaching-learning process dynamic and adapted to students' needs. Consequently, social competences such as cooperation,

communication, conflict solving and leadership are developed during the teaching-learning process in different ways: firstly, in a speaking class, by dividing the tasks to prepare the oral presentations in an equal way, by making decisions on how to organise the topic, on how to select the references and the multimodal resources used to prepare the presentations, on preparing the questions for the discussion that took place in every class after the oral presentation, among others. In fact, students benefited from working autonomously because they had to take decisions and organise their learning process, which involved the acquisition of the said competences.

Secondly, social competences were reinforced in the grammar classes. Students had to discuss problematic examples in the classroom and then distinguish correct and incorrect sentences with *Kahoot*, providing an explanation with the reason for their answers. Therefore, this task goes beyond grammar, because students interact and engage with the task by having to explain the reason for right answers. The discussions also consisted of thinking of the possible reasons why students could choose the wrong answer and on deciding the best ways to explain the problematic examples so that nobody had doubts.

The fact that the grammar topics were prepared individually and the oral presentation was prepared in a cooperative way proves that the flipped classroom is useful and effective in both cases. The flipped activities presented in this article show that this methodology goes beyond watching videos, because it promotes autonomous learning, gives students an active role in the teaching-learning process and adapts to different learning styles (Crespo Fernández, 2021). Consequently, this methodology gives students opportunities to evaluate, apply, analyse and summarize; it goes beyond the acquisition of content (Lee & Wallace, 2018).

*Kahoot* is a very good tool to check students' understanding of grammatical aspects. Thus, *Kahoot* was considered a useful tool for the teacher and students because it showed if the grammatical point under revision was properly understood or further explanation was necessary. For instance, the day the topic subject-verb agreement was revised in the classroom, the teacher explained that when the subject follows the verb, it must agree with it as we can see in this example: "Among the important researchers was a friend of mine". Students said that they understood the theory associated with the example. However, when students were asked at the end of the class to answer using *Kahoot* which of the following sentences was correct: a) Among the politicians was a friend of mine and b) Among the politicians were a friend of mine, it was surprising that one-third of the students in the classroom chose sentence b) because they understood that 'Among the politicians' was the subject.

Using *Kahoot* framed in the principles of the flipped classroom made it possible to use more lecture time for the application of content. Consequently, the teacher used to ask the students who had chosen the right answer to explain the reason for their choice to the other students. The explanation provided by students to justify their answer is very important in confirming that significant learning had taken place and that they were able to explain to other students the grammar topics under study. Moreover, the teacher reinforced grammatical aspects using other examples whenever necessary. Thus, *Kahoot* allowed the addressing of

grammatical aspects that were not clear immediately, because students had to choose one of the examples, and the results showed if students had understood the topic under study or if further explanation or practice was needed.

The fact that students had PowerPoint with the main ideas of each topic and videos does not mean that flipping the subject consisted only of reading and watching them before class. These materials were given importance because they were based on the theory required to prepare the exercises that students had to complete every week. In fact, the PowerPoint presentations had a key role in knowledge transmission because they included essential information for the practice. However, the list of videos was prepared by selecting them from the internet, and some went beyond the grammatical point under study.

The main limitations of this study are the following: firstly, the results are limited because they are based on the students enrolled in only one subject during one academic year. Secondly, the rubric could have more items to be evaluated; similarly, more questions could be added to the questionnaire so that students could offer more opinions on the methodology proposed by the flipped classroom. In this sense, some recommendations for future research are the following: it would be convenient to organise focus groups or interviews with students for future studies so that students could explore more aspects of the flipped classroom methodology. Moreover, other studies could explore if apart from social competences, personal competences were also developed with the proposed methodology.

## Conclusion

The flipped learning experience presented in this article emphasises the importance of using classroom time for the application of knowledge. Thus, knowledge transmission takes place outside the classroom using the materials provided by the teacher in advance, using the university platform. The preparation of homework is essential so that students can apply theory to practice and identify questions before the lecture. In this way, the methodology is student-centred because students acquire knowledge through assignments before the class (for instance preparing oral presentations or grammar exercises), they manage their time and they use the resources provided at their own pace. Consequently, in-class time is used to ask questions, to discuss and to work in a cooperative way.

The proposed methodology adds dynamism to the classroom. The time devoted to introducing content during the lectures is substituted by having students study before class. In this way, they can apply knowledge to the practical activities that they have to prepare as homework. Also, having gamification through *Kahoot* adds dynamism to the classroom, because the questions in *Kahoot* contribute to having discussion in class, problem solving and analysis of examples.

In this sense, it is considered that framing the teaching-learning process in the principles of the flipped classroom, as suggested in this article, favours students' empowerment by offering them the opportunity to manage their time outside the classroom so that they can make the most of the lectures. This is essential in the oral presentations because students are responsible for teaching on a social topic



of their choice to the rest of the students, which involves working hard before the day of the presentation. This was also crucial in the grammar lectures because their effectiveness depended on students' revision of the grammar before class and on having done the exercises for each topic in order to put what they learned into practice, to apply the theory to the practice and to observe possible difficulties or questions that may arise in class.

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### **Appendix 1. Questionnaire Conducted with English Language V Students on Aspects Related to the Methodology Proposed by the Flipped Classroom**

1. Do you usually prepare materials, reflect on examples or analyze content to discuss before receiving explanations from the teachers of your subjects?
  - a) Yes, I usually follow this method in several subjects.
  - b) No, normally the teachers offer explanations and then we carry out the practices or debates.
  - c) Very rarely, although there is a specific subject in which we reverse the usual order of explanations and practices.
  
2. Do you know the implications of the methodology known as “Flipped Classroom”?
  - a) It is a method that I recognize and that I see applied in many subjects.
  - b) Yes, but I can't quite understand what it implies.
  - c) I don't know what this methodology means.
  
3. Do you think that reflecting on grammar issues before receiving the relevant explanations from the teachers is an appropriate formula to develop autonomous learning, problem solving and critical thinking?
  - a) Yes, I believe that this option and other methods can be helpful.
  - b) It is possible that it is an effective option although I mistrust methodologies that are not traditional.
  - c) I do not think that this option will be of help to me at all, because I can only begin to work or analyze concepts from the explanations of the teachers.
  
4. Do you think that the approach described in the previous question can add variety and dynamism to your learning process when used in combination with other methodologies?
  - a) Yes, I think it is a strategy that allows me to actively participate in the learning process and take a dynamic posture.
  - b) It is possible that it adds dynamism and variety, but it is difficult for me to participate actively in the practices and debates if the contents and explanations are not clear from the beginning.
  - c) It seems to me an inappropriate strategy because it forces me to have to do additional individual work.
  
5. Do you think that with the activities, reflections and practices prior to the explanation of the theory and the contents, the teacher can identify your strengths and/or the aspects that you should reinforce to guide you in your learning process?
  - a) Yes, because the conclusions of my autonomous analysis provide information on the degree of knowledge and understanding I have on the subject.
  - b) Sometimes my participation and my autonomous analysis can give information about the level of understanding or confusion that I have, but sometimes there is no time to prepare the material well and the previous practices are not meaningful.

c) I do not believe that the previous practice, the preliminary debate or my personal analysis provide useful information to the teachers, because in the end they will evaluate me by my final results.

6. Has it been useful for you that the teacher of the subject shared the grammar *PowerPoint* presentations with you at the beginning of the semester so that you could study/consult them before the weekly grammar class?

- a) Yes, it has been useful to me.
- b) No, it has not been useful to me
- c) To some extent it has served me.

7. How else do you think grammar classes can be taught in the subject so that you get the most out of them? (Keep in mind that the C1 level grammar is a review of the aspects studied in previous courses).

8. In your opinion, what are the main advantages of the methodology known as “Flipped Classroom”?

9. In your opinion, what are the main disadvantages of the methodology known as “Flipped Classroom”?