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*Email: tcdhsg@sgu.edu.vn ; Website: http://sj.sgu.edu.vn/*

# FACTORS HINDERING VIETNAMESE HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS' IMPLEMENTATION OF FLIPPED CLASSROOM

## *Những yếu tố cản trở giáo viên phổ thông ở Việt Nam áp dụng Lớp học đảo ngược*

Chung Quế Anh
Trường THTH Sài Gòn, Trường ĐH Sài Gòn

**ABSTRACT**

Although Flipped Classroom (FC) has become one of the most widespread delivery modes in education, teachers in different settings may encounter different factors that may facilitate or hinder their implementation of FC. This study investigates Vietnamese high school EFL teachers' beliefs about what constrains their implementation of FC. Data were collected from semi-structured interviews with 12 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers from three high schools in Vietnam. Thematic analysis was adopted to analyze qualitative data. The findings revealed six main factors that hindered Vietnamese EFL high school teachers from using FC. These included insufficient investment of time, inadequate technological competence and IT skills, lack of knowledge and training in FC, inadequate infrastructure and technological devices, lack of parental approval, and students' limited access to technology. The study concludes by recommending constructive changes to policy and practice as an effective means for addressing some of these factors.

***Keywords:*** *flipped classroom, high school, hindering factors, Vietnamese EFL.*

**TÓM TẮT**

Mặc dù *Lớp học đảo ngược* (FC) đã trở thành một trong những phương pháp giảng dạy phổ nhất trong giáo dục, giáo viên ở các môi trường khác nhau có thể gặp phải các yếu tố khác nhau có thể tạo điều kiện thuận lợi hoặc cản trở việc triển khai FC. Nghiên cứu này nghiên cứu về quan điểm của giáo viên tiếng Anh ở cấp trung học Việt Nam về những yếu tố cản trở việc họ thực hiện FC. Dữ liệu được thu thập bằng cách thực hiện các cuộc phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc với 12 giáo viên dạy tiếng Anh từ ba trường trung học ở Việt Nam. Phân tích theo chủ đề đã được dùng để phân tích dữ liệu. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy giáo viên xác định được 6 yếu tố chính cản trở họ sử dụng FC. Những yếu tố này bao gồm không đủ thời gian, không đủ năng lực công nghệ và kỹ năng CNTT, thiếu kiến thức và không được đào tạo bài bản về FC, cơ sở hạ tầng và thiết bị công nghệ không đầy đủ, thiếu sự chấp thuận của phụ huynh và học sinh trung học bị hạn chế tiếp cận công nghệ. Nghiên cứu kết thúc bằng việc đề xuất những thay đổi mang tính xây dựng trong chính sách và thực tiễn như một phương tiện hiệu quả để giải quyết một số yếu tố này.

***Từ khóa:*** *lớp học đảo ngược, trường phổ thông, yếu tố cản trở.*

## 1. Introduction

Thanks to technological advancements, students can now easily access a wealth of knowledge in various areas. Consequently, they may already be familiar with the content that the teacher imparts in the

Corresponding author: cqanh@sgu.edu.vn

traditional classroom (Goodwin & Miller, 2013). Nevertheless, conventional teaching methods tend to be teacher-centered, which contradicts the constructivist principles of teaching and learning (Brooks, 2002). Consequently, contemporary educational trends seek to improve student-centered instruction, wherein students take charge of their own learning in environments that promote participation, collaborative work, and meaningful interactions, rather than relying on rote memorization that results in passive students' incapability of development (Grazzados-Bezi & College, 2015). Blended learning, as one of the alternatives, combines both face-to-face and online interactions. The Flipped Classroom (FC) is a novel and popular instructional model that falls within the realm of blended learning. This entails converting classroom activities, such as content delivery, into home-based activities, thereby allowing classroom time to be allocated to applied learning tasks, such as communicative games (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Gardner, 2012). The FC approach involves a shift in the teacher's role from information delivery to student support, as well as a shift in the students' role to assume responsibility for their own learning process and pace (Lai & Hwang, 2016).

The FC model has been widely adopted across various disciplines in educational institutions worldwide (Hao, 2016). In the context of Vietnam, English is taught as a foreign language (Cao, 2019), resulting in students' limited exposure to the language beyond the classroom setting. Meanwhile, the utilization of educational videos, PowerPoint presentations, audio recordings, and/or the review of course-related papers in the FC facilitates students' exposure to the English language beyond the confines of the classroom. Within the educational environment, teachers take advantage of class time to engage in thoughtful discussions about emerging ideas, promote critical thinking, support collaborative learning, and facilitate a range of student-centered activities. As a result, FC has been acknowledged for its potential to enhance language learning outcomes and has therefore adopted it as an innovative instructional method and adopted as an innovative instructional method.

(Robinson, Scott, & Gottfried, 2019). Research focused on flipped learning in Vietnamese high schools is still limited. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the beliefs held by Vietnamese English as a foreign language (EFL) high school teachers concerning the factors that hinder their implementation of FC. Through the identification of these hindering factors, our aim is to investigate the challenges confronted by teachers in Vietnam and propose recommendations for policy and practice adjustments as potential solutions to these obstacles. By addressing these factors, we can establish a more supportive environment for educators, thereby enhancing the quality of English language education at Vietnamese high schools.

## 2. Literature Review

### *2.1. Flipped classrooms*

FC involves a combination of activities that are reversed from traditional inside and outside classroom settings (Bishop, 2014) (citation?). Students are accountable for outside-classroom activities, which include activities like watching videos, visiting course-related websites, listening to audios, and reading related references. On the contrary, teachers are required to establish

an interactive learning environment within the classroom that promotes collaboration, group tasks, experiential learning, and critical thinking activities. Flipped learning is fundamentally learner-centric due to the integration of differentiated instruction, problem/project-based learning, and inquiry-based study (Bergmann & Sams, 2014). Within this learning environment, students are responsible for their own education, actively participate in their studies, and receive individualized instruction (Cross & Board, 2014).

### *2.2. Benefits of Flipped Classroom*

The FC approach provides substantial benefits through its supportive properties and contributions to the teaching and learning processes. One of the benefits of implementing a flipped classroom approach is that it can increase the learning outcomes because it can help save valuable time for learners to engage in more practice and interesting classroom activities (Anggoro & Khasanah, 2022; Purwanti et al., 2022; Zainuddin & Halili, 2016).

Furthermore, this model possesses the advantage of positively enhancing learner-teacher interactions (Etemadfar et al. 2020; Lin & Mubarok, 2021). FC approach maximizes face-to-face interaction between learners and teachers. Hence, teachers can immediately monitor learners' performance and support struggling learners (Millard, 2012). Hence, learners are more likely to improve their performance (Anggoro & Khasanah, 2022).

Moreover, the adoption of FC approach provides learners with the flexibility to learn at their own pace based on their personalized needs regarding the course content (Li & Li, 2022; Basal, 2015). Different types of learners can benefit from the personalized pacing offered by FC. For instance, instructional videos allow weak learners to pause or rewind, thus helping them to comprehend the content better or correct any misunderstandings. In contrast, quick learners can adjust the pace of their learning to suit their individual schedules.

### *2.3. Drawbacks of Flipped Classroom*

Despite these benefits, certain challenges of FC implementation have been identified in various studies. First, flipped learning necessitates learners to possess motivation to acquire knowledge and strive for success in the classroom (Anggoro & Khasanah, 2022). However, the presence of varied learning styles among learners often prevents many students from effectively acclimating to new instructional approaches (Li & Li, 2022; Shooli et al., 2022). In addition, some learners may not be able to fully comprehend the information in instructional videos by themselves, resulting in difficulties in understanding without explanation from instructors (Samiei & Ebadi, 2021; Chang & Lan, 2021). Thus, low-motivated students may find themselves demotivated in FC adoption (Ghufron & Nurdianingsih, 2021). Third, technical and internet-related difficulties can pose a significant hurdle in the process of FC adoption (Purwanti et al., 2022; Ye, 2022). Difficulties may arise in implementing flipped learning due to the lack of technological resources and limited accessibility to technology among learners from low-income families (Kissi, Nat & Idowu, 2017). Furthermore, in the context of FC adoption, it is possible for learners to engage in both watching instructional videos and playing computer games at the same time, thereby potentially hindering the learning process. Therefore, the

incorporation of FC in secondary schools was faced with parental resistance (Ye, 2022). Finally, the increasing workload for both teachers and learners might restrict the implementation of FC (Fischer &Yang, 2022; Ghufron & Nurdianingsih, 2021; ; Ye, 2022; Zainuddin & Halili, 2016). The implementation of FC necessitates that teachers dedicate considerable time to tasks such as producing high-quality videos and designing effective materials, while students are expected to engage in independent learning and complete quizzes outside of class.

Extensive research has been conducted on the implementation of FC, particularly in the realm of higher education. However, limited research has investigated FC within the Vietnamese EFL high school context. Thus, this study seeks to explore the hindering factors of FC implementation in Vietnamese high schools, as perceived by teachers. The study aims to answer the following question:

*What are Vietnamese high school EFL teachers' perspectives of factors hindering their implementation of flipped classroom?*

## 3. Methodology

### *3.1. Research setting and participants*

The present qualitative study was conducted at three high schools in Vietnam. Participants were selected using convenience sampling, considering their availability and willingness (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A total of 45 Vietnamese EFL teachers, with prior experience in implementing FC in three high schools, received an invitation email. Of these, twelve high school EFL teachers (five males and seven females), aged between 27 and 46, replied and volunteered to participate in the study. All of the teachers were MA TESOL holders and had more than five years in teaching English as a foreign language. For the purpose of maintaining confidentiality, the teachers have been assigned pseudonyms Toan, Tam, Quan, Long, Khoa, Hoa, Hien, Loan, Yen, Diep, Thao, and Xuan.

### *3.2. Data collection and analysis*

Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 12 teachers. The collection of data was carried out within a period of 2 months. Thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the data. The interview data was extensively analyzed using a systematic iterative approach, following the five steps including identifying initial themes through transcribing and reading the transcripts (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). These themes and categories were then iteratively refined through re-reading and refining the thematic categories.

## 4. Results

All the teachers expressed that they lack sufficient time to dedicate to designing lessons with FC when discussing the obstacles to FC implementation in Vietnamese high school EFL education. Their rationale was that FC entails a greater need for classroom activities and instructional materials outside the classroom, thus necessitating a substantial time commitment to design appropriate materials and develop additional activities for each lesson. Nevertheless, the workload of Vietnamese EFL high school teachers was already substantial. To provide an example, Long expressed:

*Designing communicative activities took me a long time. Last year, I spent a whole night designing 3 additional activities due to the textbook's limited options. With traditional teaching, I didn't*

*have to create additional activities, just use the ones in the textbooks.*

The second theme revolves around the assumption made by a majority of the teachers that their limited technological skills hinder their ability to create educational materials for students to use at home, particularly in terms of producing new videos and utilizing online platforms to facilitate student engagement in extracurricular activities. To demonstrate, Toan commented:

*"I'm not skilled with technology, so the videos I created were unattractive and uninteresting. It wasn't effective for my students, and they got bored. Also, I noticed my colleagues using Google Classroom or Moodle to help students study on their own with the given materials. They even set up a discussion forum for students to talk about what they learned from the materials. But I have no idea how to use those platforms."*

Additionally, the teachers reported that their limited knowledge and training in FC implementation might serve as a hindrance to its application in a high school context. They elaborated on their unfamiliarity with the precise implementation of FC and the appropriate sequencing of activities within FC, as evident in Quan's response:

*"I don't know how to appropriately conduct FC in high school and address student needs and interests. We received no training or guidance on applying to FC. So, we hesitate to implement it in our school, despite knowing its potential benefits for my students' English language knowledge and skills."*

An additional hindering factor for the teachers' implementation of FC is the absence of adequate school facilities and technological devices within the classroom. While teachers had an increased amount of class time available for classroom activities, they cannot design a wide range of interesting activities due to the unavailability of school resources, such as Wi-Fi and interactive whiteboards. For example, Tam said:

*"Uh... my school doesn't have much tech stuff for different classroom activities. The only thing it's got is a projector and blackboard. No Wi-Fi or interactive whiteboard in my classroom, so it limits what I can do for in-class activities when doing flipped classrooms."*

In additionFurthermore, the teachers stated that parents' opposition also hinders the use of FC. The parents are generally opposed to the idea of their children having to learn independently at home. They assume that children learn by themselves, leading to misinterpretation of knowledge and taking up their children's time at home. As a result, the parents are not in agreement with the FC implementation. For instance, Hoa commented that:

*"I got calls from parents who were upset because their kids had to stay up late watching videos over and over again. Sometimes, they don't understand and have to ask their parents to explain because it's all new to them. Parents were annoyed that their kids had to spend so much time figuring things out on their own at home."*

, the absence of personal technology devices among students, such as smartphones, poses an additional obstacle to the implementation of FC. In Vietnam, a considerable number of high school students lack access to smart devices due to parental and school concerns regarding the potential exposure to harmful web content and excessive gaming. As a result, their

access to the educational materials provided by the teachers, such as video watching and recording listening at home, as well as participation in interactive gaming activities in the classrooms, is hindered. To illustrate, Xuan explained that:

*"My school doesn't allow us to use smartphones or smart devices without permission. That's why parents avoid buying smartphones or tablets for their children. So, these students had difficulties accessing my online materials and joining the online discussion forum. They can't join or access my online learning materials, so outside classroom activities aren't effective for them."*

**5. Discussion and Implications**

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research conducted on FC. The finding that the teachers perceive the implementation of FC as excessively time-consuming, hindering their ability to dedicate sufficient time to developing suitable activities for FC, aligns with the conclusions drawn by Wanner and Palmer (2015). The main concern identified by the teachers of the present study in relation to implementing FC are the time commitment while having to deal with heavy workloa. This finding is consistent with those of some previous studies conducted bySage and Sele (2015), Han (2015) and Abdelshaheed (2017). Based on this study finding, it is recommended that curriculum designers n Vietnam incorporate additional language practice activities for each lesson. This will ensure that the materials align better with the FC approach and alleviate the teachers' workload.

Moreover, the teachers identified that their limited technological competence and skills could pose an obstacle to the implementation of FC techniques in their classrooms, as these techniques often require the use of technology for tasks such as recording lectures in advance, maintaining student journals, or administering pretests. Instructors are restricted from sharing entire lectures, video clips, online reading materials, screen captures, and audio media online unless they are able to employ various technological tools (Gardner, 2012). The hindrance caused by inadequate technological skills corresponds with the findings of the study conducted by Leo and Puzio (2016). The research suggested that effective FC implementation necessitates teachers' competence in utilizing technology and software to design tasks and materials for both in-class and out-of-class activities. It is highly recommended to incorporate additional technology education for student teachers within the teacher education curriculum. This would enable them to enhance their proficiency in utilizing technology and advanced software to improve the implementation of the FC approach.

Teachers also ascertained that insufficient knowledge and training pertaining to the execution of FC might hinder the integration of FC in their high school classrooms. This finding is in line with previous studies that highlight the challenges teachers face in managing tasks and planning activity sequences (Chen et al., 2015; Schneider & Blikstein, 2016). Due to the lack of proper training in FC implementation, Vietnamese EFL teachers face difficulties in effectively managing tasks and planning the sequence of activities for successful FC implementation with high school students. The study findings suggest

that high school teacher educators should consider providing training on the implementation of FC. This would enhance the ability of high school teachers to apply this approach in teaching EFL.

Besides, teachers have identified inadequate infrastructure and limited technological devices available at school as another hindering factor. The absence of essential devices may restrict the range of indoor classroom activities, as certain activities like online gaming require software and Wi-Fi connection. The study conducted by Porcaro et al. (2016) provides support and explanation for this, as it reveals that implementing FC necessitates specific infrastructure for conducting enjoyable and gamified quizzes (e.g., Kahoot!). The implementation of those activities is essential, as it has been proven that regular in-class quizzes enhance students' performance in examinations (Roediger et al., 2011; Marcell, 2008). Based on this finding, it is recommended that high school institutions should make necessary technological devices accessible in classrooms to enable the successful implementation of the FC approach in classroom activities.

As stated by the educators, the absence of parental consent can impede their utilization of the FC approach due to the belief that their children are incapable of effectively acquiring knowledge independently and that it requires a significant amount of time for activities at home such as watching videos and reading materials themselves. These findings are in agreement with the study implemented by (Hung, 2015) which suggests that the FC approach encourages students to review the learning materials prior to class, resulting in increased in-class engagement, but also requiring additional workload and time commitment from the students. Thus, students are faced with the challenge of not being able to seek help from their teachers during extracurricular activities (Chen et al., 2015), which might explain the parents' concerns of ineffective learning of their children.

The findings of this study also indicate that the limited accessibility of technological devices, like mobile phones, among students could potentially impede the utilization of FC implementation. Students are prohibited from owning personal mobile phones and tablets, possibly influenced by parental biases as documented in Wang's (2016) research. students could not possess smart devices or had restricted access to their mobile gadgets due to parental concerns regarding excessive play rather than learning (Wang, 2016; Ye, 2022). Consequently, the students lacked the necessary conditions to participate in activities for pre-class knowledge acquisition and preparation for in-class activities (Wang, 2016; Ye, 2022). Moreover, they are prohibited from possessing and utilizing smartphones, thus making it challenging to facilitate engaging activities within the classroom, such as gaming on the Quizizz website or engaging in interactive writing on the Classkick website.

Nonetheless, the teachers in this study did not find demotivation among low motivated students hinder FC implementation whereas this was a challenge of FC implementation found in the study of Ghufron and Nurdianingsih (2021). The reason might be because Vietnamese high school students tend to be

obedient and passive when learning with traditional teaching approach (Cao, 2019). Hence, even if they experience demotivation, they are hesitant to openly express their feelings towards their teachers. Thus, the teachers were unable to recognize the demotivation of students with low motivation when using FC.

In short, the study has advanced our understanding about the perceptions of Vietnamese high school EFL teachers regarding the barriers to FC utilization in an Asian high school context. The study findings offer useful information for curriculum designers working in the context of Vietnamese high school EFL education and beyond, along with pedagogical implications for English language instruction and acquisition as a foreign language. These understandings and insights may also be relevant in comparable contexts, such as EFL education in Asia.

It should be noted that the present study is limited by its small sample size, encompassing only a few participants from a specific context of EFL education in Vietnam. Thus, it only presents a restricted perspective on the Vietnamese EFL educators' perception of the obstacles to FC implementation in high schools. Hence, it is suggested that future research be carried out in diverse settings, with the involvement of a larger number of teachers, to draw generalizations and obtain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of FC in Vietnamese high school context.

## 6. Conclusion

This study aims to shed light on teachers' beliefs regarding the hindering factors of incorporating FC into Vietnamese high school EFL education. The findings indicate that teachers identified several main factors that restrict the use of FC at the high school level, including insufficient time investment, inadequate technological competence and IT skills, lack of knowledge and training in FC, inadequate infrastructure and technological devices, lack of parental approval, and limited access to technology by high school students. For better implementation of FC, more activities appropriate for FC application should be incorporated into the national curriculum and comprehensive training on technological skills and FC implementation should be provided to teachers.

## Author

*Que Anh Chung is currently an EFL teacher at Thuc Hanh Sai Gon High School, Sai Gon University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. She holds a Master's degree in TESOL from Edith Cowan University, Australia. She possesses over 5 years of experience in instructing English to EFL learners across various age groups, spanning from children to adults. The areas of research she focuses on include pronunciation, teacher professional development, and computer-assisted language learning (CALL).*

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