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**EFFECTS OF TEACHING GRAMMAR TO ADULT EFL LEARNERS USING
THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM TECHNIQUE**

MA thesis

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore whether adult EFL learners prefer to receive grammar explanations in class or via short videos watched as homework as the flipped classroom model suggests. Drawing upon the existing STEM studies the learners were assessed using short tests to determine the difference in knowledge of applying grammar rules of learners who received grammar instruction in class and those who received it via videos. It has often been many years since adult EFL learners last regularly learned something before beginning to study again, at a language school. They might not be aware of more innovative approaches to learning. With the rise of the popularity of the flipped classroom, the aim of the author was to introduce it and request feedback from the students in order to better prepare grammar explanations in the future. As many adult EFL learners have limited amount of time to take part in face-to-face instruction, being occupied with work, the author wishes to learn how adult EFL learners study outside of class, make learning materials more available to learners wherever they may be and make the valuable time spent in class more beneficial in terms of student progress.

The thesis consists of two chapters. In the first chapter, background information on the use of the flipped classroom model and the use of it in language lessons is provided and the benefits and hardships of the implementation of the flipped classroom model as well as studies that have been carried out so far, are discussed. There has been limited research on the flipped classroom topic in Estonia, even less so in EFL lessons. In the second chapter, the use of the flipped classroom technique in teaching grammar to EFL students is discussed and illustrated with the methodology of the study. The materials and activities created for the study and the use of them are discussed, quantitative and qualitative data analysis is provided. The aim of this paper is to comment on the use of teaching grammar to adult EFL learners using the flipped classroom model and the learners' perception of it. The review of the results of the study is followed by a discussion and conclusion.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ELLS 2020 – Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

STEM – Science, technology, engineering, math

1. INTRODUCTION

In Estonia any other language but the state language and Estonian sign language is considered a foreign language according to the Language Act (2016). It is common for students in Estonia to learn two foreign languages. According to the National Curriculum, these languages include a choice between Russian, German, French or English but taking into account the opportunities of different schools and preferences of students, the Estonian National Curriculum for basic schools (2014) enables schools to teach other foreign languages as well. Due to the history of Estonia, not all adults in Estonia have had the opportunity to study other foreign languages at school, besides Russian or German. English, Russian and Estonian are taught in almost every language school in Estonia (Saarmann 2013). When visiting the websites of language schools mentioned in the article by Saarmann, it is evident that a variety of English courses are currently offered which refers to English being a popular foreign language learned among adults. It is not only the surrounding media that motivates adult learners to begin their English studies; it is also due to cross-cultural relationships, communication with immigrants, increased opportunities for traveling, and most of all, requirements for employment. The time of participating in English face-to-face teaching for working, as well as not working adults is limited, so it is a joint venture for the teacher and learners to understand how this in-class time can be spent in the most beneficial way. It is also not only the millennial students who need to be approached in an innovative way and through technology, as adults can also be very open to new ways of learning.

1.1. The flipped classroom model and life-long learning

Most educators are by now at least familiar with the term flipped (or inverted) classroom if not having thought of using or having used the technique themselves. Brame

(2013) defines flipping the classroom as follows: “Students gain first exposure to new material outside of class, usually via reading or lecture videos, and then use class time to do the harder work of assimilating that knowledge, perhaps through problem-solving, discussion, or debates“. The flipped learning concentrates on assuring that students come to class more prepared than they would otherwise (Hung 2015). The idea itself has been increasing in use since the 2000s (Lage et al 2000) when educators started to draw attention to the different learning and teaching styles that fail to match ever so often and how this could be changed in order to enhance student engagement. Since 2007 the term flipped classroom has been gaining popularity thanks to Bergmann and Sams (2012), the former considered a pioneer of the Flipped Class Movement and the latter a co-founder of the Flipped Learning Network. Eliminating the difficult task of matching teaching styles of educators with the learning styles of their students, with using the flipped classroom technique, it is found possible for educators to implement different ways of teaching in order to reach more of their students (Lage et al 2000: 30). A review by Pashler et al (2008) shows no evidence that matching instruction to the preferred learning style of students in any way promotes their learning, whereas Kvashnina and Martynko (2016) consider taking different learning styles into account to be important when creating video content. Flipping lessons is believed to provide just one opportunity to reach students in an innovative way, not directly aiming to match a certain learning style.

According to the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020 (hereinafter ELLS 2020) (2014), the number of people participating in lifelong learning has increased. Teaching adults differs from teaching children as they often have very limited time for learning as well as clear goals on what they wish to achieve during that course (Dubovičienė et al 2014). The ELLS 2020 (2014) states, that adults consider learning relevant only for the young and as a

result, adults are not as motivated to learn. In addition, the aforementioned strategy states that there are not enough digital learning materials available for adults to learn on their own. Adult English as a Foreign Language (hereinafter EFL) learners are seen being faced with this problem, as they are often not at a high enough language level in order to differentiate between reliable and unreliable sources. They might also not feel confident in choosing between the variety of online sources. Thus, it is important to create quality sources that are easily accessible and understandable for the adult EFL learners. Adult learners need to be taught taking into account their particular needs. They have gained life experience, know their reason for learning, are often intrinsically motivated and prefer to learn at their own pace (Dubovičienė et al 2014). Adult EFL learners who continue their studies at, for example, language schools, often do so alongside working. This means finding the time for participating in face-to-face teaching, as well as doing homework assignments, is especially complicated. The time in class needs to be spent efficiently. Learning alongside work should definitely be fun, at least to some extent, as it is likely to increase the learner's motivation. In their study on motivating language learners, Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) comment according to information received from two hundred English teachers in Hungary, that a syllabus and good teaching without student motivation is not sufficient basis for students to achieve their goals. At the same time, lessons themselves should involve aspects of learning that would be either very difficult or too time-consuming for the adult to perform on their own. This kind of course structure would motivate learners to do home tasks in order to perform better in class.

These more difficult tasks are often categorized as higher level cognitive tasks according to Bloom's taxonomy (Brame 2013). Bloom's taxonomy (see Appendix 7, left side of Figure 1) is a categorization of educational goals commonly represented in a pyramid:

knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Armstrong 2015). Bloom's taxonomy was revised in the 1990s into categories of verbs: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating, as illustrated on the right hand side in Figure 1 (see Appendix 7). This taxonomy aims at shifting classroom time from the remembering and understanding levels of the pyramid to the higher levels, i.e. higher cognitive levels of learning (James 2014). Sams and Bergmann (2013) suggest flipping to be most appropriate with classes that are more didactic and contain a fair amount of content which can be categorized under the low end of Bloom's taxonomy. EFL learners have the advantage of often not having first exposure to new content in the form of a lecture, so the transition of implementing the flipped classroom technique with them might be smoother than say with students of history or economics – them being more used to lengthy in-class lectures. They might not be used to performing higher cognitive tasks which involve practising new skills and ability to analyze this information in class. As students vary in different learning styles and different teachers use various ways of instruction, it is reasonable for teachers to test new ways of teaching and realise whether and to what extent these suit their learners. An approach that works well with one class or subject might not do so with another.

The flipped classroom technique is intended to motivate and engage students in an interactive way, presenting new information outside of class and focusing on higher level cognitive learning together with the teacher, in class (Kvashnina and Martynko 2013:71). For example, an instructor presents a grammar topic in video as homework which is intended to prepare students to subsequently execute tasks in class, that might be too difficult to do on their own. Flipping the whole classroom or course might not be beneficial so it is for the teacher to decide on the amount of flipping, making terms like *flipped learning* or *flipped*

lessons more appropriate at times. Ash (2012) suggests in an evaluation report on flipping the classroom, to continue flipping classrooms but deciding on the volume according to the needs of students. A selective use of videos rather than using them for all instruction is considered more beneficial for students (Sams and Bergmann 2013). As there are students with different learning styles in any class, it is important for the instructor to use various methods and techniques of teaching in order to reach everyone. Using flipped learning enables students to communicate more in class and receive immediate feedback from the teacher (Hung 2014: 91). The main idea behind the flipped classroom model is to decrease the teacher talking time in the classroom and provide students with opportunities to engage in discussions with peers (Doman and Webb 2016). Sams and Bergmann (2013: 16-20) as well as Berrett (2012: 2) emphasize that the pedagogical technique of the flipped learning dates to centuries back. Teachers have asked students to come to class prepared having read a text or a section from it for a long time. Today this preparation is made more convenient for students with the advances in technology providing an audiovisual component. Thanks to technological innovation, it is easier for educators to compile and distribute study materials that are also engaging for learners (Berrett 2012).

1.2 Thesis overview

The aim of this study was to explore the effect of learning grammar through videos based on the flipped classroom technique on learners who had never before learned a language by using instructional videos. The research was structured around three main research questions. First of all, how do adult EFL learners knowingly learn outside classroom time? Then, whether adult EFL learners prefer to receive initial explicit grammar instruction via video as homework or in class? And finally, whether the results of applying grammar

rules differ between learners who received explicit grammar instruction via video as homework or by the teacher in class. These research questions are of relevance as adult learners spend their valuable time going to class usually alongside work – this means the time spent in class needs to be of high value and the little amount of homework they are capable of doing should support the activities carried out in class. This thesis aims to determine whether using instructional grammar videos, as the flipped classroom model suggests, justifies itself in better test results for adult EFL learners. It also discusses learners' perceptions of this technique.

2. EFFECTS OF THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM TECHNIQUE WHEN TEACHING GRAMMAR TO ADULT EFL LEARNERS

Most of the research on the flipped classroom model has been carried out on university level students, as it is more common for them to learn independently than for younger students. The same is expected from adult EFL learners and, thus, the research studied was considered appropriate for background information. On the one hand, recent studies on flipping the English classroom by Hung (2015), Doman and Webb (2016) show positive results of student performance and Basal (2015) discusses the perceptions of the flipped classroom of trainee teachers in Turkey to be positive. On the other hand, there are researchers such as Ash (2012) and Nielsen (2011) who also draw attention to the possible drawbacks of using this technique. There is still little research on the effects of the flipped classroom and especially on its effect in a foreign language or EFL classroom.

2.1 Benefits of using the flipped classroom technique

The popularity of the flipped classroom depends on various factors. The learning culture of the flipped classroom changes in-class time to be spent on issues students are struggling with. Help can be received from peers as well as instructors during the lesson (Creative Classrooms Lab, n.d.). Though it is difficult to match the learning styles of all learners, the flipped classroom poses an opportunity to teach in a way that engages learners from a wide range of learning styles (Lage et al 2000: 41). Learners choose how and when they watch the video, as well as how they attain the information received. Adult EFL learners, when adopting this technique, can benefit from gained learner autonomy, having the choice of suitable learning time and being able to go through the instruction as many

times as needed and in a way suitable for them, while taking notes and forming questions they might want to ask from the instructor in class.

Berrett (2012) as well as Bergmann (2013) believe flipping enables large institutions reach out to a larger audience and allows to spend valuable class time doing higher level cognitive tasks (Forehand 2010). Though Berrett (2012) mentions a talk with a teacher at University of Michigan saying class size is not the imperative factor in teaching like this – the teacher states the teaching factor to be more important. Thanks to the accessibility of information, less is needed to be memorized (Bormann 2014) but the more instructors need to help learners navigate in this pool of information to find relevant sources. Flipping can be suitable for different classrooms and subjects as long as the aims are carefully considered.

The flipped classroom is more available to learners than ever before. This technique enables teachers connect the pre-class task with activities in class that focus on higher cognitive skills (Mehring 2016) which are appreciated by the learners as well (Kvashnina and Martynko 2016). In Kvashnina and Martynko's (2016) study most of the university students asked, perceived the flipped classroom technique as positive especially as they could work at their own pace when learning new content, and then apply the knowledge when doing activities in class. The choice of pace is considered as a true benefit of the flipped learning (Bloom 1968, Sams and Bergmann 2013). This model accommodates well to students with special needs as well as just learners of different acquisition paces.

Advances in technology and easy access to creating high-quality content make flipping the classroom attractive for language teachers (Moranski and Kim 2016: 831). There are various free video creation tools available like Screencastomatic, Camtasia, OfficeMix, Educreations or, for example, Panopto for University of Tartu students and faculty, that are considered quite easy to master and are all available online. Once instructors learn the basics,

the creation of videos is not as time consuming as initially feared. The ELLS 2020 (2014) also states that training for improving one's knowledge in the use of information and communication technology should be more available for teachers. As a new, technology-wise, generation of teachers has started work, the use of technology, when drawing up syllabi and lesson plans, is taken into account more often than it used to. Instructors testing the inverted classroom technique admitted that overall preparation time for lessons decreased as the lecture time of class was reduced and a lot of preparation work was done before the semester started (Lage et al 2000: 39).

The amount of technology use and the form of it has to be carefully considered. Technology-free classrooms are found to be more interesting by both students and teachers, as this is when lively discussions take place (Young 2009). Bloom (1968) supports small "group study procedures" in which students can help each other understand difficult parts and work together in supporting the advancement of each other. The flipped classroom technique in language learning moves technology out of the classroom and enables students to use lesson time for communication and discussions with peers – the time of which would be decreased if new information was presented in class.

Studies show that while both the control group and experimental group (in which the flipped technique was employed) expressed increased self-confidence in a topic, actual achievement was measured seemingly higher only for the experimental group (Doman and Webb 2016, Kvashnina and Martynko 2016). Lankford (2013) illustrates the benefit of the flipped classroom with an example of a chemistry lesson: instead of a child coming home to do difficult high cognitive tasks, they are asked to watch a video or read a chapter and then go to class the next day to execute these more strenuous tasks and receive immediate help from their teachers. Adult EFL learners are in a similar position when they go home to do

high level cognitive tasks but it is often their children they turn for help to – who might know how to fill gaps in a task but are unlikely to be able to explain or answer any of the learner’s questions beginning with *how* and *why* – these questions are answered in the classroom. Therefore, it seems more reasonable to address these high-level cognitive tasks in class with the help of peers and the instructor.

Research carried out at Tomsk Polytechnic University in Russia shows that the benefits of the flipped classroom in an ESL classroom include increase in overall student performance as well as in autonomous learning skills and level of motivation of students (Kvashnina and Martynko 2016). The university students who participated in the study expressed the positive side of being able to use their own learning strategies when getting acquainted with new materials, which also meant developing a more independent learning experience. Students who were at lower language levels or less confident in their skills, experienced an increase in confidence when first, working with the material independently, and then attending the lesson. There are factors such as noise, anxiety, peers interrupting each other or the instructor with questions in class, which might distract learners from attaining new information received in class. It is convenient for learners to implement their own learning strategies for getting acquainted with new material.

2.2 Concerns of using the flipped classroom technique

There is an increasing number of advocates of the flipped classroom technique and more educators are showing interest in the topic, yet it is commonly feared among teachers whether using this technique will result in success. There is, also, little research on the use of flipped classroom in language lessons. In science, technology, engineering and math (hereinafter STEM) lessons, flipping lessons has given contrasting results (Moranski and

Kim 2016: 832). Some of the studies reviewed, show positive results in student engagement and satisfaction of their learning process, while other studies present learners being less prepared for their courses and being less motivated to learn. Not all foreign language classes can be flipped and it is up to the instructor to decide what their students would most benefit from (Kvashnina and Martynko 2016). Teachers wonder whether students will actually do their pre-class tasks, i.e. watch the assigned video. Even though there are various programs available to preassess student involvement (Mehring 2016), teachers see the possibility of learners not watching the video to affect the following in-class activities so much that they abandon the idea before implementing it. The planning and creation of videos involve careful consideration and are, thus, quite time-consuming (Davis 2016: 229). The process of creating accessible materials might also require additional skills that many teacher do not have.

Learners who are taught according to the flipped classroom technique are expected to independently process grammar explanations without their instructor's support (Moranski and Kim 2016: 832). Depending on the level of language used, examples provided and tasks to be done as part of the instructional video, it might be difficult for the learners to understand grammar explanations independently. Flipping lessons can provide a means for engaging more students with different learning styles, but choosing the appropriate level of language used in videos, as well as suitable in-class activities after having watched grammar explanations independently, are crucial.

As students vary, there are learners who adopt the flipped learning technique and those who do not prefer to learn in such a manner. Students who are resistant to learning this way are those who are used to being a bit more passive in class – this is possible while listening to a lecture (Young 2009). During a lecture without any extension activities, it is possible for learners' engagement level to decrease, which can also result in being less

attentive to processing the information received. It is necessary to engage students while they watch the provided homework videos, or otherwise they might not benefit from the activity (Ash 2012). The presence of introductory slides, topics being declared and titles of slides were appreciated by students in a study that focused on different instructional videos (Morain and Swarts 2012). This helps learners understand the structure of the video and what is expected of them. As it may be the first time for adult EFL learners to study using videos, some guidance might be needed on how to approach this activity. The knowledge of the teacher may serve as the basis for new knowledge formation for the student (Ohta 2005: 509) but instruction needs to match the learning styles of students to better engage them in learning (Gilakjani 2012). The act of transferring one part of teaching into video does not automatically result in increased student performance or make the in-class lesson itself more engaging for students. Flipping a class or lesson needs to be a well thought-through decision.

Nielsen (2011) argues that students might not have access to technology and lecturing does not always equal learning. Nielsen (2011) and Ash (2012) believe that if flipping means continuation of poor teaching methodology being used in class, then adopting this technique should be carefully considered. Flipping a lesson also means changing ordinary in-class activities. These activities should support applying knowledge received from the video.

The average educator might not be easily able to adapt with this new format, neither might the students (Davis 2016: 229). Yet Young (2009) states that once students understand how this new way of learning works and the benefits of it, they accept this new approach.

2.3 Why flip an adult EFL lesson?

Using the flipped classroom technique leaves room for the growth of learner autonomy (Kvashnina and Martynko 2016), gives the opportunity to listen to instructions more than once, enabling slower students to pause and repeat how ever many times needed (Bloom 1968). Foreign language classes are usually filled with interactive activities and the idea of spending less class-time on giving explicit instruction appeals to language teachers. The purpose of flipping the classroom is to allocate more time for target language use in the classroom by doing more meaningful tasks (Moranski and Kim 2016: 832). This means the teacher talking less in class and learners having the opportunity to practise what they have learned at home. Even the Estonian *digipööre* or shift towards using more digital materials is an attempt at raising the quality of studies in all levels of education by creating digital materials that are easily accessible and raise the quality of independent studies (ELLS 2020 2014).

Research carried out by Kongi (2015) revealed that adult students often feel anxious in foreign language lessons due to level of the rest of the classroom and fear of being judged by classmates. Learners suggested small group work to be a great way to reduce learner anxiety. Being aware of one's learning style may result in learners being less frustrated in their studies (Gilakjani 2012). Receiving new information prior to class helps adult learners prepare independently at their own pace and in a way suitable for them, possibly making coming to class less stressful. In addition to students having scored higher in a flipped classroom setting, Mehring (2016) concludes that some learners experienced less stress, were more engaged in the subject and found the time spent in lessons more rewarding.

Gaughan (2014) found some of her students struggling to even manage the reading which was given as homework, so she saw flipping her history classes as an opportunity to

reach more of her students and change her classrooms into more communicative spaces. The author of this paper has also noticed learners' reluctance to work with reading material individually and believed video instruction to be more engaging. Instructional techniques that help some learners may not do so for others, they may help in understanding certain steps, yet not all (Bloom 1968).

The task of the 21st century teacher is to develop their learners' critical thinking through teamwork and support them in learning independently and becoming responsible for their own development (ELLS 2020 2014). The flipped classroom technique supports learners in developing and using their own learning strategies. As the technique suggests learners to prepare for lessons by working with videos independently, it is expected of students to attend class having worked with the videos. Failing to do so might result in having more trouble doing tasks in class. The guilt of not having done one's homework which would have supported the student's progress in class, might motivate them to do their homework the following times.

2.4 Teaching grammar

Teaching grammar is a large part of the work of many language teachers and there is no single correct way in conveying this knowledge to students. Being a native speaker or having a wide range of knowledge about the grammar of a language alone do not make a person a great language teacher. It is how the teacher makes this knowledge comprehensible to the learners that makes a great teacher (Krashen 1982). It is up to the teacher to choose the most appropriate way of presenting grammar to each group at a specific moment (Clandfield et al 2011).

Grammar teaching can be inductive or deductive. The deductive approach being more teacher-centered in the sense that it is the teacher who tells students the rules and information on grammar. The inductive approach involves students figuring out rules with the help of the instructor. Often these approaches can be mixed and both be used in the same classroom (Clandfield et al 2011), but the deductive approach is more common in textbooks and classrooms (Ur 2012: 81). Whether in class or using the flipped classroom technique to give grammar instruction, grammar presentation needs to be memorable, clear, effective and appropriate in order for it to engage learner attention and increase the chance of learners remembering the explanations (Clandfield et al 2011).

As learners' cognitive abilities change over time, it is important to bear in mind whether explicit or implicit grammar instructions should be considered (Williams 2013). Ur (2012: 79) states that according to a survey carried out by Norris and Ortega in 2000, students who had received some explicit grammar explanations did better than those who had not. It is determined in that study that grammar instruction is important especially in the EFL classroom setting, and even more so for adult EFL learners, as classroom instruction is often the only input these learners receive in grammar teaching.

Though teachers try to express themselves as clearly as possible in class, use common vocabulary and emphasize important notions, it might take a different amount of time for a learner to comprehend what the instructor is trying to convey (Krashen 1982). There are some aspects of learners receiving explicit grammar instructions via video that compensate for the shortages that might occur in the classroom, including the option to pause, stop and rewind according to the pace of the learner.

Kvashnina and Martynko (2013) believe much of the ESL class content can be flipped, including vocabulary, instructions for writing tasks and grammar explanations.

According to Krashen (1987) and the acquisition-learning distinction, there are two ways for adults to learn a language: one is language acquisition which means acquiring a language like a child in an indeliberate manner, and the other is what he calls learning the language in the sense of being aware of and able to talk about the rules of the second language. According to the first, an adult develops their knowledge of a language similar to a child and in the latter mentioned an adult consciously learns a language, being aware of language rules or grammar – both may be present when learning a language as an adult. The students of the author of the present thesis are not on a daily basis exposed to the language environment, so in addition to language acquisition in class, students need to put effort into consciously learning as well. Providing them with grammar explanations via video enables them to consciously learn in an innovative way. If it proves to be of interest and beneficial for the learner, they might watch the videos again, being repeatedly exposed to the language.

2.5 Video creation

Flipped learning is often thought of in connection with the use of videos, though Sams and Bergmann (2013: 16-20) also clarify the stress should equally be placed on how this in-class time is used. Videos are thought to be an excellent tool for flipped classroom technique as they can be paused, fast-forwarded, rewind and learners have the opportunity to listen to them as many times as needed. Some learners might understand instructions the first time they hear them, others might need many repetitions and more examples (Bloom 1968). Prior to creating course material some key elements of the flipped classroom have to be taken into account. As Brame (2013: para. 4) and Forehand (2010) state, gaining first exposure to content prior to the lesson, gives an opportunity to prepare and, thus, provides

an opportunity for assessing comprehension and focusing on higher level cognitive activities in class.

According to the Flipped Intitute, there are some simple guidelines to follow in order to create video content for the flipped classroom. These include options of using a camera to record a teacher explaining in person, making use of computer screen software to display one's screen and using a microphone to comment activities on screen, using presentation software with teacher voice commentary. Attention is drawn to the importance of the quality of sound when recording, use of illustrations and keeping the video short and engaging (Flipped Institute, n.d.).

It is important to keep videos short – from one to one and a half minutes per grade level. For a 10th grader that would mean 10-15 minutes per video (Bergmann 2013). Guo (2013) analysed optimal video length for student engagement with edX math and science course videos and concluded the video length in which learners were 100% engaged to be six minutes. With videos ranging from 9-12 minutes, learner engagement dropped to 50%. Bergmann (2013) also warned not to transfer the in-class lecture to video format, which would make a video from between 45 minutes to an hour and a half long. Videos created for this study ranged from six to sixteen minutes estimating that an adult could be engaged with a video for a little longer than a tenth grader. The instructional message needs to hold the attention of the learner, help clarify the message and help create structures for information acquisition in order for it to advance the knowledge of the learner. Failing to do so concludes in the learner not being engaged (Bishop and Cates 2001: 9-10).

The teacher needs to show concern whether and how their learners will have access to video content and provide different means: links, possibilities to download, transfer to flashdrives, etc. The key to ensuring that students watch the videos before class is not to

lecture in class. Students who fail to expose themselves to new content prior to class can do so at the back of a classroom with sets of headphones while others already have the opportunity to ask questions and get assistance from the teacher directly (Bergmann 2013). In the long-term, students who do not watch the assigned videos at home, have less opportunities to receive explanations to parts they had not fully understood. This, in turn, can result in poorer test results. Therefore, students will start realizing the benefit of doing their home assignments and active participation in the following classes.

The instructional videos used in this study were created with Debut Video Capture and Screen Recorder software for recording on-screen Prezi presentations, while the mainly bottom right corner positioned images of the teacher were recorded separately with a camera. Thus, both sound and image were incorporated in these instructional videos. Sound makes learning more engaging and helps decrease distractions. In order for instructional videos to relevantly improve student engagement and material acquisition, the instructors must be aware of the effect of such media presentation to their learners (Bishop and Cates 2001: 5-7). Sound is known to have an attention demanding role and unlike eyes, ears can not really be shut. Some sounds might alarm us (babies crying), some might be soothing (ocean waves). Educators can well use different sounds in order to engage learners: paying attention to their register, timbre and pace of speech to name a few, as well as the volume of speech increasing and decreasing at places of emphasis (Treasure 2013). It might also be a good idea to use some background music in the instructional videos or certain slide shifting sounds in order for certain rules to be remembered better.

There are, however, limitations to information processing which people often fail to realize. Bishop and Cates (2001) explain that the cognitive system is unable to receive all information presented at once, and subconsciously, makes decisions which information to

concentrate on. This is why the use of videos is considered beneficial as it is up to the learner when and how many times to watch the content.

Gagne's (1992) nine instructional steps were taken into account by the author of the present thesis when creating instructional videos. Attention was drawn with the use of video content, learners were informed of the objectives at the beginning of each video, recalling of prior knowledge was used when necessary, grammar content was presented, learning guidance was provided by giving hints and providing both examples and not-examples. The latter meaning examples of how not to form sentences and drawing attention to some commonly made mistakes. Learners were able to practice answering multiple choice questions within the video – gapfill exercises are good to start with (Ur 2012). Students were given feedback in the format of being provided correct answers accompanied with explanations, performance was assessed by pre-tests and post-tests, retention of new information was assured by class activities in the following lesson.

Though in class the teacher might also repeat instructions and try to articulate as clearly as possible, use high frequency vocabulary and short sentences in order to make oneself better comprehensible (Krashen 1982), the instructor has more control over these aspects when preparing an instructional video, which learners can then watch at a suitable time for them, at a suitable pace and volume.

Krashen (1982) discusses how even Roger Brown states that a great teacher should expect their students (similar to a parent from their child) to understand more than they can say. Teachers try to use ever more English as they make progress with their students, yet it is emphasised that L1 should be tolerated when students want to check their comprehension of the grammar topic (Clandfield et al 2011). L1 was not used in the videos created for this study as the teacher tried to use common vocabulary, articulate speech and appropriate pace.

Furthermore, the learners have the chance to watch the video however many times needed in order to understand the explanations by the instructor. Any clarification needed can be done in the following lessons.

2.6 Learning styles

Learning styles can be categorized in different ways. Cassidy (2004) defines learning style as the way individuals “choose to or are inclined to approach a learning situation.” Felder (2000) categorizes learners as active vs reflective, sensing vs intuitive, sequential vs global and visual vs verbal. The Grasha-Reichmann questionnaire divides learners into being avoidant, collaborative, competitive, dependent, independent and participant – a variety of these styles being present in each learner (Rollins 2015). Barbe and Milone (1981) refer to modalities of vision, audition and kinesthesia as most investigated learning styles. The most common three main learning styles of how learners take in information actually are visual, auditory and kinaesthetic commonly referred to as VAK (Li et al 2016).

Visual learners are dependent on images and even the body language of their instructor, while attaining information for auditory learners depends on listening. The instructor can play with pitch, speed and intonation for emphasis. Kinaesthetic learners appreciate practical hands-on approaches with high interaction rate (Ldpride, n.d.). As the students of the author of this paper enroll in considerably short language courses, it is vital for learners to take responsibility for their learning (Gilakjani 2012). Thus, it is essential for both the instructor and student to be aware of learning styles and act accordingly in order to achieve their language goals. Being aware of different learning styles helps instructors tailor their courses in which they use a variety of techniques, making lessons more engaging for a larger number of learners (Gilakjani 2012). While Gilakjani (2012) explains that all senses

are used for attaining information, students often prefer one style to another and are aware of how they learn best, Barbe and Milone (1981) argue it is not definite adolescents or adults will knowingly use this modality for learning. Educators should take the mentioned factors into account when preparing different teaching materials and using different techniques. There is a variety of learning styles – the instructor’s teaching styles might or might not match those of the students. According to Felder (2000), most people are visual learners and while some languages, e.g. Chinese, in addition to auditory comprehension, rely largely on the visual learning style (Guanxin 2013), many topics can be approached focusing on more than one, or all three, learning styles. Barbe and Milone (1981) conclude in their study that visual and mixed learning styles both account for 30 per cent of learners examined, 25 per cent to be auditory and 15 per cent kinaesthetic learners. It is also determined in their study that the preference for learning styles changes with age and varies among people, but there are more mixed learning styled learners among adults than there are among children, as adults are better able to integrate different modalities of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning. Receiving grammar explanations via video provides an opportunity for learners to see the image, listen to the sound of the instructor and be able to apply any kind of preferred kinaesthetic learning, which can vary. As learners are expected to take responsibility for their learning in the flipped classroom model, learners can feel comfortable taking notes at their own pace, remembering some grammar rule connected with a certain body movement or anything alike in the confines of their safe learning space.

3. STUDY OF THE BENEFITS OF THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM TECHNIQUE

The aim of this study was to investigate how adult EFL learners knowingly learn outside of class and whether they benefit from having received explicit grammar explanations using the flipped classroom technique. The subjects of the study were twenty-two adult EFL learners in three language learning groups who had not learned a language using instructional videos prior to this study. Prior to making videos available to learners, no additional instructions were given as to how to watch the videos. The results and perceptions of receiving grammar explanations via videos or in class were measured by using a self-evaluation scale from one to ten, performing short pre-tests and post-tests to assess the results of applying grammar rules and conducting semi-structured group interviews as a form of subjective feedback.

The following section gives an overview of the methodology and procedure of the study. The description of the methodology is followed by the results of the study and discussion with regard to how these adult EFL learners describe studying English outside of class and whether they feel having benefited from receiving grammar instructions via videos as homework tasks. In addition, the results of pre-tests and post-tests are discussed, commenting on whether having received grammar instructions via video or in class shows a difference in applying grammar rules in practice. The results of the study are discussed in connection with the research questions: how adult EFL learners study the language outside of class and whether receiving grammar instruction via video would benefit the learners. The hypothesis of this thesis was that receiving grammar instruction via video using the flipped classroom technique would benefit adult EFL learners in acquiring knowledge of applying grammar rules.

3.1 Methodology and procedure

A trial of the flipped classroom model was implemented with three adult EFL groups. Quantitative data collected from 22 and qualitative data from 18 adult EFL learners were utilized to examine how adult EFL learners study English, prefer to receive grammar and whether receiving grammar explanations via video is evident in improved test results. The relationship between test results and the way students had received grammar explanations, as well as their self-evaluation on how confident they felt in applying grammar rules, were examined. Three learners were not present at the group interview lesson and one did not give their consent to have the interview recorded, so the latter remained silent during the group interview. The sample consisted of three adult EFL groups: group A, group B, group C who began their EFL studies in January at equal English language basic user level A2 (CEFR). The language proficiency level was determined by the online language level test, according to which learners are divided into suitable learning groups at the language school where the study was carried out. The range that the test results provide for forming language learning groups, has for years proven to be efficient in practice. Thus, the three language groups at A2 level, that the author taught from January to May 2017, were chosen to participate in the study. The number of learners in each group was nine, seven and six, respectively. The project consisted of three 90-minute lessons for each group. Within these lessons three different grammar topics were taught: present simple and present continuous, present continuous and *be going to* for future, past simple and present perfect. For each of these topics an instructional video was created by the author, numbered one, two and three, accordingly (see links to the created videos in Appendix 5). Grammar topics were taught to each group using a different set of videos. For group A, videos one and two were used, for

group B videos two and three, and for group C videos one and three. In case a group did not receive instruction via video, they received the grammar explanations in class followed by the same exercises and extension activities as groups receiving grammar explanations from the video as homework. This was done to create equality between the groups but still maintaining the opportunity for fair judgement on whether learning grammar using the flipped classroom technique would benefit the learners or not. Berrett (2012) states that when using the flipped technique, the learner cannot passively just receive material but needs to work actively. The author of this paper believes this to be an appropriate technique with adult EFL learners as they come to language courses voluntarily and are largely responsible for their own progress. The research measurement involved learners who received explicit grammar instruction via video, evaluating their understanding of a certain grammar topic on a scale from one to ten in class after having watched the video, then filling in a multiple choice test on applying these grammar rules, then further dealing with the topic in class doing different higher level cognitive exercises and practising with fellow learners. Very often the usefulness of a pedagogical approach is measured with test scores, but many studies have also taken into account student perceptions and how they evaluate their engagement (Lage et al 2000, Gaughan 2014). At the end of the lesson the learners once again marked their position on the self-evaluation scale from one to ten and filled in the same multiple choice test from the beginning of the lesson to see whether the results had changed. The order of the post-test questions was shuffled to create the possibility for truthful results, illustrating the actual knowledge of learners. Bishop and Cates (2001: 19) conclude in their research that comparison between pre-test and post-test results may grant information about the structure of information formed in the synthesis phase, which is the last phase of learning and reflect on knowledge gained by the learners. The results of post-tests should, thus, depict

whether doing higher cognitive level tasks in class further improve the skills of applying grammar rules. In case of receiving initial grammar explanations in class, the grammar topic was represented to the students in the early stages of the lesson. After having dealt with the same kind of in-class activities and extension tasks as the experimental groups, students marked their position on a self-evaluation scale from one to ten and answered the same multiple choice questions as the experimental groups. As the flipped classroom technique suggests, the video content and in-class activities should form a whole in which both parts are equally important.

Approaches to the use of video vary from creating one's own, using already available videos or co-operating with another teacher in order to create video content (Sams and Bergmann 2013). The signal sent to receiver must be accurate but however accurate the message, it is up to the receiver to decode the message and comprehend it (Bishop and Cates 2001: 7). Learners' active participation and responsibility for one's studies were key factors in developing the life-long learning strategy (ELLS 2020 2014) and are of substantial importance in the progress of adult EFL learners based on the teaching experience of the author. It has also been researched whether the emotions, beliefs and experiences are in accordance with those of the receiver so that the receiver would be able to comprehend information provided by the instructor (Bishop and Cates 2001: 8). Due to this, the author decided to create original video material so the learners receive information in videos from the same instructor they are used to working with in class. Bloom (1968) states that a vast majority of learners are able to master what the instructor teaches, yet it is the task of the instructor to use appropriate means in order to reach more learners. The learners in language schools are divided into groups according to their test results and, although they might have different backgrounds in language learning, there is a common denominator – they have all

come to the course willing to learn. It is the job of the instructor to understand how their students learn and receive information best.

3.2 In-class activities

Motivation certainly plays a huge role in achieving any learning goals, but student motivation is considered even more important in achieving success in the flipped classroom technique, as learners are expected to do independent work outside of class which, in turn, determines the success of following in-class activities (Zainuddin and Halili 2016). Adult EFL learners are even more responsible for their studies as failing at a language school test does not succeed in being expelled or not being able to continue their studies, as it might for learners in general education.

Learner agency or the belief of one's actions making a difference to one's learning at a certain time is heightened, when learners teach peers and debate with each other (Mercer 2012, Moranski and Kim 2016: 832), thus learner motivation is increased. It is important for adult EFL learners to experience success – teaching peers about topics they feel more confident in can result in exactly that. Debating with each other helps improve communicative skills, express one's opinions and experience a sense of success in using the language in a real-life situation.

The activities carried out in the classroom after watching an instructional grammar video at home are aimed towards developing the communicative skills of students (Kvashnina and Martynko 2016). Having learned about forming sentences in present simple and present continuous, students come to class placing bets on whether provided sentences (see an example task in Appendix 2) are grammatically correct or not. Once the bets are placed, answers checked and mistakes corrected with the help of the instructor, learners

continue to ask grammatically correct questions from each other having the task to give grammatically correct answers and also express their opinion on certain matters. This helps learners practise what they have learned, as well as develop their communicative skills at the same time applying rules they have learned as their homework assignment. As for another example, after learning about forming the past simple and present perfect tense, for one in-class activity (see an example task in Appendix 3) students were expected to form grammatically correct questions on the basis of their knowledge and give true answers about themselves. An extension activity to this was to ask for further information using the appropriate tense and, later, share some of the interesting information with the rest of the class. Each of the videos watched as a homework task also included an assignment of forming sentences. Learners would come to class having prepared five to ten sentences using the learned grammar rules and would receive feedback on how well they had understood the rules from both the instructor and their peers.

3.3 Results and discussion

The results gathered in the study are presented in this section. The results will be presented and discussed having the research questions posed in the introduction in mind. The first research question enquired how adult EFL learners consciously learn the language outside class. The second research question concerned learner perceptions in regard to receiving explicit grammar instruction via video as homework or in class. The third and final research question concerned the results of applying grammar rules and the difference in results comparing pre-test and post-test results as well as self-evaluation scales of learners having received grammar instruction via video or in class. As the post-tests were done at the end of the lesson, after further dealing with tasks connected to the specific grammar topic, the importance of the in-class activities also needs to be considered.

Pre-test, post-test and self-evaluation scale results (see Appendix 8 for the table with results). The mean values of self-evaluation scales for groups A, B and C were 5; 8 and 7.7 out of a possible 10 points accordingly, which show student confidence in applying grammar rules on questions related to the grammar topics, for which they received initial explanations in class and not via video. The mean values for their post-test results were 4.4; 5 and 5 out of a maximum of 5 points accordingly, with everybody in groups B and C receiving maximum scores on the post-test. This shows that all students seemed to be able to understand initial grammar explanations presented in class well enough in order to apply the rules at the end of the same lesson, with all but three students out of 22 receiving a maximum score on the post-test.

The mean values of self-evaluation scales and test results for group A, with the topics where grammar explanations were received via video, are presented and discussed as

follows: for topic one, the mean value was 8.6 for the first self-evaluation, and 9.6 out of 10 for the second self-evaluation. The mean value of test scores was 4.9 on the pre-test and 5 points on the post-test, showing a slight increase of 2%. This suggests that students' self-confidence had risen by 11.6% after having dealt with the topic in class and test results improved in the case of all students receiving maximum scores. For topic two, the mean value was 8,4 for the first self-evaluation, and 8.1 out of 10 for the second self-evaluation scale. This is a decrease of 3.7% and also the only decrease in the results of the quantitative data. Test results, however, increased from a mean value of 4.4 to 4.8 points. Even though the level of the self-evaluation of learners had decreased, the mean value of their test scores increased by 9%.

The mean values of self-evaluation for group B with grammar topics that were explained via video also witnessed a positive trend from a mean value of 4.4 on the first self-evaluation scale of the second grammar topic, to a mean value of 6.3 after further dealing with the grammar topic in class. This is an increase of about 43%. The test results support this with an increase from mean value of 3.6 to 4.3, or 19.4%. With topic number three, the increase on the self-evaluation scale was from 7.4 to 8.9 – this is an increase of 20%. The test scores support this with a rise from a mean value of 4.6 to 5 points, or 8.7%.

For group C the results for self-evaluation scales and test results are as follows: on applying grammar rules of topic one received via video, students' self-evaluation mean value moved from 6.5 to 7.2, which is just over 10%, and test results increased slightly from 3.5 to 3.7 (5,7%). For topic number three, the self-evaluation mean value increased from 8.3 to 9, or 8%, and test results from 4.8 to maximum scores of 5 for all students (an increase of 4% in overall mean value).

To compare the differences of having received grammar explanations in class or via video, and students' perceptions on how confident they feel about applying these grammar rules, the comparison of all mean values was carried out. Results with topics for which explanations were received via videos, show a tendency of increase in the mean value of self-evaluation from 7.3 to 8.2, which is an overall increase of 12%. The mean value of test results increased from 4.3 to 4.7, which is a slight rise of 9% in test results. The mean value of self-evaluation of learners, who received grammar explanations in class was 6.7 out of 10 and the test results resulted in a mean value of 4.8. Test results of learners who received initial grammar explanations in class, thus, tend to be at a slightly higher level than those of the post-test results of students, who received the same explanations via video. The self-evaluation scale, however, reached the mean value of 8.2 out of 10 when asked to mark after further dealing with the grammar topic in class and before taking the post-test. Whereas, the mean value of self-evaluation of those having received initial grammar explanations in class, was just at 6.7. This shows that students tend to feel more confident, when they have individually worked with the topic as much as needed, not only alongside peers in class.

The overall mean value for three groups of self-evaluation for grammar topics taught in class was 6.7 out of 10, and the mean value of the post-test was 4.8 out of a possible 5 points. The improvement in test results having implemented the flipped classroom technique, ranged from a mean value of 2 percent to 19.4 percent. The mean values of self-evaluation ranged from a decrease of 3.7 percent to an increase of 43 percent. Test scores for groups receiving grammar explanations via videos improved in every case, self-evaluation mean value decreased in the case of just one group, proving the flipped classroom technique tends to be efficient in improving test results. It is, however, relevant to bear in mind the influence of in-class activities on self-evaluation scales and test results. As watching video content is

just part of the flipped classroom technique that prepares learners for the upcoming lesson, it is essential to emphasize the value of higher level cognitive tasks carried out in class before taking the post-test.

Group interview results. The pre-formulated questions used in the semi-structured interviews, gave insight to different ways of learning English and allowed for comments as to how learners appear to do it (see Appendix 1, questions 1, 2, 4). Another aim of the interviews was to receive information about students' perceptions on receiving grammar explanations via videos (see Appendix 1, questions 5-7). This was the first time for all interviewees to learn grammar and moreover language via videos (see Appendix 1, question 3). This was enquired by the author before beginning the study as well as in the group interviews where it was once more confirmed.

The object of content analysis were audio files of three group interviews, which were transcribed (see Appendix 6 for quotes from the group interviews). Categories for analysis were developed inductively. Content analysis was carried out in order to classify and summarize the data as it enables larger volumes of data, such as group interviews, to be analyzed in a systematic manner, and allows to describe the focus of an individual as well as a group (Stemler 2001). Emerging categories were developed by going through the transcripts repeatedly and considering the possible themes they would fit into. A coding frame was developed and some segments of the transcripts were coded accordingly. The answers were categorized into themes, according to which analysis was carried out.

The interviewees mentioned twelve different, in their opinion best, ways of learning English. Out of these, activities connected with our current language lessons involved doing provided grammar exercises and other homework tasks, but also being active in class. Activities mentioned, which happen outside of class, were talking to foreigners and general

practise – speaking the language in class, as well as chatting with friends online and speaking English while travelling. Reading books, news and articles in English, watching films with either English or Estonian subtitles, writing professional e-mails, writing in ones diary, helping their children with their English homework and playing games which use English, were also mentioned. Learners are conscious about different ways of learning the language but admit to not having enough time to learn in each of the mentioned ways. The fact that learners mentioned watching films with Estonian subtitles, refers to them wanting to understand the content of films better and check whether they are able to understand the meaning of sentences and words. Those learners who use English subtitles for films in English wish to check how words are spelled, as the spelling of many words in English cannot be deduced from the pronunciation. One of the essential parts of the flipped classroom model are in-class tasks and activities. Learners mentioned constant practice to be one of the best ways to learn English so it can be suggested, that saving the time of introducing a new grammar topic in class can benefit learners in having more time for practice.

Most of the conscious learning of the interviewees was said to be connected with current English class homework, which involves doing vocabulary (also on the Quizlet platform) and grammar tasks, some reading assignments, watching grammar videos provided by their instructor. Though very different ways for learning English were mentioned just one question earlier, students do not actually seem to use all of these opportunities to learn the language. In addition to regular English homework, watching the videos created for this study was also mentioned by the interviewees as conscious studying. This might indicate that not having created the videos, learners probably would not have put extra effort into looking for sources on the grammar topics. In addition to attending English class, which for group A is four, for group B is three and group C is two study hours a week,

all of the interviewees estimated the time they spend studying English not to be sufficient. This time ranges from an average of one to two hours a week, with an exception of S16, who claimed to spend four hours a week learning English, in addition to attending English class. All students admitted having spent more time (from a couple of hours the previous day to half a day) studying before the test at the end of the course. S13, S15 and S19 see homework as an obligation they have committed to. S9 even said they feel embarrassed coming to class without their homework done. It can be interpreted that the more homework is given to students, perhaps the more time they spend on learning. Adult EFL learners participating in this study do not seem to actively look for more information or tasks to do on their own but rely on the homework assigned by their teacher. The teacher might take into account the suggestions of some learners expecting more homework but needs to determine how these tasks would be checked if not all students can manage doing them.

About half of the students admitted to having been intrigued by the idea of receiving grammar explanations via videos as homework tasks (“It sounded exciting!”; “I thought it was a fun idea.”; “It’s different from us learning grammar on paper[with the course materials as the basis]”). Grammar is often considered as something difficult and not too exciting to learn (“I hate learning grammar – it’s like Math”; “I feel I do grammar exercises better when I don’t think about the rules”). Some students mentioned not knowing what to expect from the videos, as they had no prior experience to learning in this way. It was also said that the videos being only in English scared some of them slightly, as to whether they could understand everything. As the face-to-face teaching with these groups takes place using mainly English, the author did not have any concerns on whether the content of the video would by and large be understandable. The same student who was hesitant about whether they would understand everything without the teacher being by their side, was encouraged

to look for other instructional videos online and was astonished by how many helpful and easily understandable videos they could find online. It was evident, that receiving homework or English grammar explanations via videos was an innovative way of learning for all of the participants in the interview. It is also possible that their perception of learning grammar slightly changed from being boring and tedious to more exciting.

The interviewees were pleased with the opportunity to watch the videos at a time suitable for them. It was considered positive to watch the videos however many times needed and not only for the upcoming English lesson (“When doing some other, not video-related, grammar task, I would re-watch segments of the videos“). They were also viewed again when studying for the final test of the semester (“I can never make sense of notes I take in class, so I made use of watching the videos again and again“). All the interviewees had watched the videos at least twice. The videos were often first watched all the way through and then started again to allocate time for note-taking. Students would pause the videos where necessary in case something was left misunderstood or they wished to take notes. Others tended to watch the video continuously and only paused and rewound in case something was not clear. One student found it convenient to be able to pause the video in order to find new vocabulary from a dictionary and then continue the video. The videos were also found useful later on for doing homework tasks, or to check whether they had done some tasks correctly. One student mentioned watching certain parts of the videos again when they were doing grammar exercises and they remembered where the rule was explained in the video. Without being given guidelines on how to watch the videos, students were able to choose the most convenient way of watching for them. As the flipped classroom suggests creating greater learner autonomy, it is largely up to the learner to decide how much time and how they spend watching these videos. Thus, it was not surprising that the students who

seemed to be more active and willing to learn in class, also admitted to spending more time and effort on dealing with the videos. Students were deliberately not given any prior instructions on how to watch the videos, as the videos included self-check tasks (see Appendix 4) as well as a homework assignment for them to present in the following lesson. The comment from one student about not being able to understand their notes and descriptions of watching the videos without taking any notes, refer to a need to educate adults on how to take notes and watch instructional videos. Perhaps the author should consider providing some guidance on how to watch the videos in the case of using them again with some other group.

Many learners were of the opinion that initial grammar explanations should be given in class, so they would be familiar with the idea before watching a video. The students who prefer receiving explanations in class do so, because of the option to immediately ask questions and clarify what is said by the instructor. None of the interviewees seemed to see receiving initial grammar explanations via videos as a bad idea, as long as there would be the opportunity to attend class afterwards and receive answers to the arising questions. Receiving these explanations via video was found to be useful for revision as they are easily accessible at any time. Learners expressed the wish to receive initial grammar explanations in class and have the grammar videos as a means for revision and clarification. This, however, is not the aim of the flipped classroom model. After clarifying the aim of the flipped classroom to students (which is to present new material as a homework task and then having the opportunity to attend class, ask questions and apply the information they receive from videos), most of them agreed on it being a great idea, while three students still stated their preference as receiving explanations in class first and having the video present as a kind of support mechanism outside of class.

The author concludes that employing the flipped classroom technique proved to have a seemingly positive effect on the majority of learners. Implementing the technique resulted in the improvement of test results and most self-evaluation ratings. Students seemed to perceive receiving initial grammar explanations via videos as homework tasks to be positive and a way they would like to continue learning. The excitement was visible among learners when told they would receive their next homework task as a video. In order for the student perception not only to be based on excitement of learning in a new way, two videos were used with each group. Low rating marked on self-evaluation did not mean scoring low on the test, nor did rating a high score on the self-evaluation mean receiving high test scores.

The data collected from the interviews confirmed that learners liked this new technique to learning grammar, even if having been a little hesitant about it at first. Interviewees stated that they preferred seeing their own teacher in the videos instead of a stranger. As in-class activities were highly appreciated by the students and video content being just one part of the flipped classroom technique, the experiment can be considered a success in introducing the model to adult EFL learners based on self-evaluation scales, post-test results and students' perceptions.

4. CONCLUSION

The idea of the flipped classroom is not new in its meaning, but quite recent in the increase of popularity of the term. Nowadays, the flipped classroom usually means the instructor recording some video content and sharing it with their students as a homework task. This homework is a preparatory assignment for the following lesson, in which higher level cognitive tasks are tackled. As it is not only the millennial learners who need to be engaged by using technology, but also adults who are open to learning in innovative ways, the flipped classroom technique was implemented in this study on three groups of adult EFL learners in order to teach them grammar.

The aim of the thesis was to study the efficiency of using the flipped classroom technique according to the perceptions of receiving initial grammar explanations in class or via video as homework, the changes in the results of pre-tests and post-tests, and any changes in the self-evaluation of students. The study moved linearly from analyzing quantitative data, continued to comment on general information received on how adult EFL learners in the sample learn English and grammar, then moved towards the perceptions of how learners prefer to receive initial grammar explanations, and the reasons for such preferences.

It is found in many studies carried out in STEM as well as language lessons, that flipping the classroom can have contrasting results (Moranski and Kim 2016, Bishop and Cates 2001). There are many positive examples of learners appearing to achieve better results and seem to be more confident during in-class activities (Kvashnina and Martynko 2016) and those who haven't witnessed the benefit (Ash 2012, Young 2009, Lage et al 2000). It depends on the group of learners as well as the teacher how the flipped classroom is implemented and whether the results are positive or negative. Flipping the adult EFL classroom can have a positive effect, as it might be an innovative way of learning for the

adults – this can motivate them to study harder during their English courses. The higher cognitive tasks that Bloom's taxonomy refers to, are also easier to be dealt with in class with the help of the instructor and peers.

An empirical study was conducted in order to explore whether evidence from the theoretical overview would be supported by the findings from the study with this specific group of students. The learners evaluated their confidence in applying grammar rules before taking a short multiple choice test which assessed their knowledge. In case of learners receiving initial grammar explanations via videos, the differences in results of pre-tests and post-tests were compared as well as with the post-test results of learners who received explanations in class. The data were collected through both quantitative and qualitative methods, and then analysed.

The results of the study confirmed the hypothesis that implementing the flipped classroom technique seems to benefit the progress of students, which was evident in all but one of the sets of results of the pre-test and post-test. The perceptions of students revealed having found the instructional grammar videos useful, and though some students expressed their wish for initial grammar explanations to be presented in class, the same students also felt, that it would be nice to receive the explanations via videos nevertheless. Students seemed to feel more motivated by learning grammar through videos than they had before by different means, and would like to continue their studies implementing some characteristics of the flipped classroom technique.

This study indicates that using the flipped classroom model with adult EFL learners can have a positive effect on their self-confidence in applying specific grammar rules. Learners tended to achieve better results on tests having been taught using the the flipped classroom technique. Participants in the study were generally positive about the use of videos

for receiving initial grammar explanations and would clearly like to continue in this way. As the sample was quite small, no conclusions that are general for adult EFL learners, could be made. This study aimed to explore whether these groups of adult EFL learners would benefit from this way of learning and how the teacher could better prepare grammar explanations in the future. The importance of in-class activities, in addition to video content, needs to be taken into account when measuring the effect of the flipped classroom model, as an essential part of this technique.

The author believes they will continue creating video content for their adult EFL groups and aims at improving the quality of these videos. If learners continue achieving positive results, the author might also share these videos with colleagues to use. Adult EFL learners seem to prefer to spend more of their in-class time on practising the language – this indicates implementing the flipped classroom technique with at least some lessons to be beneficial.

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Appendix 1**Group interview questions**

1. What are the best ways to learn English?
2. How much time do you spend on learning English outside class? What do you consciously do in order to learn English?
3. Was it your first time learning English/English grammar through videos? If no, then how have you done it before?
4. How do you learn grammar? What helps you to understand grammar topics better? Or do you trust your gut feeling when faced with decisions on the use of grammar?
5. What did you think when I said you will receive some grammar explanations via video?
6. Describe how you watched the provided videos (pause, rewind, watch again, take notes, etc).
7. After working with the videos and having received grammar explanations in class, which do you prefer and why?

Appendix 2

In-class activity to practise the use of the present simple and present continuous tense

TRUE OR FALSE?

Bet between 10 and 100 points for each statement.

<i>Statement</i>	<i>True</i>	<i>False</i>	<i>Bet</i>	<i>Loss</i>	<i>Gain</i>
1. Do people in your country work on Sundays?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
2. Are you thinking about going on holiday soon?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
3. What do you usually do to relax?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
4. Do you have many public holidays in your country?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
5. Are you always checking your emails every day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
6. Are you listening to music when you work or study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
7. Are you drinking a lot of tea or coffee?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
8. Are you liking football?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
9. Do you travel more at the weekend or in the week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
10. Do you read a book at the moment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
11. Are you usually sleeping well?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
12. What time do people start & finish work in your country? <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____

Appendix 3**In-class activity on the use of past simple and present perfect tense****STUDENT A**

Find out if your partner has done any of the following things:

- 1) do very badly at exams (as a student)
- 2) work in retail (over the years)
- 3) ride a horse (ever)
- 4) work outdoors (in your life)
- 5) have terrible working conditions (ever)
- 6) have a well-paid job (in 2003)

STUDENT B

Find out if your partner has done any of the following things:

- 1) sing karaoke (ever)
- 2) have a day off through illness (recently)
- 3) have a long lunch break (yesterday)
- 4) do something extremely interesting (this week)
- 5) do any part-time jobs (as a student)
- 6) work nights (ever)

Appendix 4**Video self-check questions****Video I Present simple and present continuous**

1. We _____ (watch) a film right now.

A) are watching

B) is watching

C) watch

2. They _____ (go) to work every day.

A) goes

B) go

C) going

3. A: Is your son a teacher?

B: Yes, but at the moment he _____ (work) in a cafe.

A) works

B) are working

C) is working

4. I usually _____ (wake up) at 6:30 in the morning.

A) waking up

B) wake up

C) wakes up

5. _____ you sometimes _____ (make) dinner?

A) Are ... making

B) Do ... making

C) Do ... make

VIDEO II present continuous and *be going to* for future

1. I _____ (watch) a film tonight.

a) am watching

b) am going watch

c) am going to watch

2. We _____ (have) dinner on Friday.

a) are having

b) are going to have

c) having

3. Mary and Robert _____ (get married) in Las Vegas next summer.

a) getting

b) are getting

c) will be getting

4. Estonia _____ (not win) the Eurovision song contest this year.

a) isn't going to win

b) isn't winning

c) aren't winning

5. She _____ (go) on holiday soon.

a) are going

b) is going

c) go

VIDEO III past simple and present perfect

1. She _____ (live) in Tartu in 2014 but now she lives abroad.

a) lived

b) lives

c) live

2. Maria _____ (drink) two cups of tea today.

a) have drunk

b) drank

c) has drunk

3. They _____ (go) to work yesterday.

- a) goed
- b) have gone
- c) went

4. _____ Ben and Tom ever _____ (meet)?

- a) Did ... meet
- b) Have ... met
- c) Has ... met

5. They _____ (live) together since 2015.

- a) have lived
- b) lives
- c) lived

Appendix 5**Youtube links to videos the author created:**

Present simple and continuous: <http://lingid.ee/6zRr9>

Present continuous/*be going to* for future: <http://lingid.ee/UzBDv>

Past simple and present perfect: <http://lingid.ee/kVCYr>

Appendix 6

Quotes from the group interviews

Best ways of learning English:

- “Watching films with subtitles helps.“ (S13)
- “I have tried watching films with English subtitles but it was too difficult.“ (S20)
- “I learn vocabulary best with the help of Quizlet and dictionaries where I can listen to the pronunciation.“ (S22)
- „Learning vocabulary is important.“ (S12)
- “Speaking with people who speak the language correctly helps.“ (S19)
- “Coming to English class and being in the English speaking environment.“ (S13)

How students consciously learn English/grammar:

- “I hate learning grammar! When I don’t think about grammar rules, the results of the task are better“ (S20)
- “I write new words from every English class into the Quizlet platform.“ (S16)
- “I learn vocabulary on Quizlet.“ (S17)
- “The homework task sentences we did for the videos.“ (S16)
- “I come to English class and do English homework.“ (S14)
- “I read books and take notes of new vocabulary.“ (S16)
- “I do not learn English enough.“ (S13)

Some interviewees stated learning at their own pace and at a convenient time to be positive:

- “I could watch the video at a time suitable for me.“ (S22)
- „It was possible to watch the videos again when I was doing homework and so I could check if I remembered correctly.“ (S12)
- “Even if I didn’t know some word in the video, I could press pause and look it up in the dictionary.“ (S14)

Initial reactions and concerns about receiving initial explicit grammar instruction via video as a homework task:

- “At first I was afraid I would not be able to understand if it was all in English.“ (S19)
- “I was afraid that if the teacher was not there to explain then I couldn’t understand.“ (S16)
- “I liked the idea because I could choose the time when to watch the video.“ (S22)
- “At first I thought it was not a cool idea but when I saw the first video my first thought was that how you can do it all alone and that it was very professionally made.“ (S19)
- “I didn’t know what to expect – no such experience before.“ (S15)

How the videos were watched

- “These videos motivated me to do homework. Explanations on paper are not exciting.“ (S15)

“I first watched the videos all the way through and then started taking notes the second time around.” (S16)

“I watched the videos again before the test and that was very convenient.” (S16)

“When doing grammar tasks later I also rewatched the video to remind myself of the rules.” (S13)

“When I did grammar exercises, I checked the video instruction at the point where I remembered the instructor talking about example like the ones I was facing.” (S13)

Benefits of receiving initial explicit grammar instruction via video as a homework task:

“It is very good to receive them via video because you can watch many times.” (S15)

“If I have more homework tasks then I study more!” (S13)

“I liked that I could choose the pace that was suitable for me.” (S22)

“The rules were explained in a simple way, for example that the only time we see the second principal form is in the past simple positive sentence. I could not get this information from anyone else.” (S8)

“It was good to see you in the videos because I am used to hearing your voice and pronunciation.” (S4)

Benefits of receiving initial explicit grammar instruction in class:

“There needs to be the opportunity to ask questions in class.” (S15)

“I need to ask questions straight away – if I get confused at one point I don’t want to continue studying.” (S6)

“Everybody is together in class and we can ask and discuss the questions that arise.” (S16)

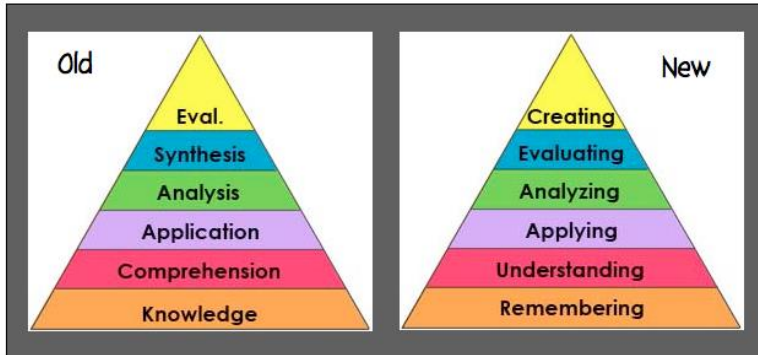
Appendix 7**Comparison of the old and the revised Bloom's taxonomy**

Figure 1: Bloom's Taxonomy and Revised Version

(source: <http://buhlercc.wikispaces.com/Bloom%27s+Taxonomy>)

Appendix 8

Pre-test and post-test results**RESULTS GROUP A**GROUP A, I (present simple/present continuous) **video**

Student	Self evaluation I	Pre-test	Self evaluation II	Post-test
S1	10	5	10	5
S2	7	5	8	5
S3	10	5	10	5
S4	9	5	10	5
S5	8	4	9	5
S6	9	5	10	5
S7	9	5	10	5
S8	9	5	10	5
S9	6	5	9	5

GROUP A, II (present continuous/*be going to* for future) **video**

Student	Self evaluation I	Pre-test	Self evaluation II	Post-test
S1	9	5	10	5
S2	8	4	9	5
S3	10	4	10	4
S4	7	5	8	5
S5	5	4	- Left class earlier	-
S6	9	4	5	5
S7	10	5	10	5
S8	7	5	9	5
S9	7	3	4	4

GROUP A, III (past simple/present perfect) **no video**

Student	Self evaluation	Post-test
S1	6	5
S2	6	5
S3	5	4
S4	7	5
S5	1	4
S6	7	5
S7	5	3
S8	5	5
S9	3	4

RESULTS GROUP BGROUP B, I (present simple/present continuous) **no video**

Student	Self evaluation	Post-test
S10	7	5
S11	8	5
S12	10	5
S13	9	5
S14	5	5
S15	7	5
S16	10	5

GROUP B, II (present continuous/be going to for future) **video**

Student	Self evaluation I	Pre-test	Self evaluation II	Post-test
S10	4	3	5	3
S11	2	3	8	5
S12	8	5	9	5
S13	5	5	8	5
S14	3	2	2	3
S15	5	3	5	4
S16	4	4	7	5

GROUP B, III (past simple/present perfect) **video**

Student	Self evaluation I	Pre-test	Self evaluation II	Post-test
S10	7	4	8	5
S11	8	5	10	5
S12	9	5	10	5
S13	9	5	10	5
S14	5	4	8	5
S15	7	4	8	5
S16	7	5	8	5

RESULTS GROUP CGROUP C, I (present simple/present continuous) **video**

Student	Self evaluation I	Pre-test	Self evaluation II	Post-test
S17	6	4	7	4
S18	8	3	9	3
S19	4	4	7	5
S20	7	3	8	4
S21	7	2	5	2
S22	7	5	7	4

GROUP C, II (present continuous/be going to for future) **no video**

Student	Self evaluation	Post-test
S17	5	5
S18	9	5
S19	8	5
S20	8	5
S21	8	5
S22	8	5

GROUP C, III (past simple/present perfect) **video**

Student	Self evaluation I	Pre-test	Self evaluation II	Post-test
S17	7	5	10	5
S18	9	5	10	5
S19	9	5	9	5
S20	8	4	8	5
S21	9	5	7	5
S22	8	5	10	5

RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Katre Kõiv

Effects of Teaching Grammar to Adult EFL Learners Using the Flipped Classroom Technique/ Überpööratud klassiruumi meetodika kasutamine täiskasvanud õppijatele inglise keele grammatika õpetamisel

Magistritöö

2017

Lehekülgede arv: 67

Annotatsioon:

Antud uurimuse eesmärk oli katsetada überpööratud klassiruumi meetodikat õpetamaks grammatikat kolmele samal keeletasemel olevale täiskasvanud inglise keele õppe rühmale. Empiirilise uuringu käigus koguti andmeid selle kohta, kas ja kuidas õpilaste testitulemused überpööratud klassiruumi meetodika ning kontrollgrupi vahel erinevad, kuidas eel- ning järeltesti tulemused erinevad, ning kuidas õpilased ise sellisesse õppevormi suhtuvad. Kuna täiskasvanud õppijatel võib viimati õppimise ning nüüd taas keeltekoolis õppimise alustamise vahele jääda mitmeid aastaid, siis ei pruugi nad uematest ning innovaatilistest õppevormidest teadlikud olla. Täiskasvanud õpivad keeltekoolis võõrkeelt tihtilugu töö kõrvalt, seega on oluline klassis veedetud aega võimalikult tõhusalt kasutada. Seega soovis töö autor uurida, kuidas õpilased väljaspool keeletundi õpivad ning kas überpööratud klassiruumi meetodika rakendamine võiks nende õppetöö tulemusi parandada.

Töö koosneb teoreetilisest ja empiirilisest osast. Esimeses osas antakse ülevaade überpööratud klassiruumi meetodikast, selle kasutamisest keeletundides koos näidetega meetodika kasutamise probleemidest ja kasuteguritest. Antud teemal läbiviidud uuringute arv on piiratud, seda eriti keeleõppe tundide puhul, kuid sellegi poolest antakse ülevaade tutvutud seni läbiviidud uuringutest. Töö teises osas kirjeldatakse tegevusi überpööratud klassiruumi meetodika rakendamisel. Meetodika rakendamisel ilmnenust järeltunde tegemiseks täitsid õpilased vastavalt teemade läbimisele enesehinnanguskaalad. Hinnang skaalal märgiti selle põhjal, kui kindlalt end grammatikareegli rakendamisel tunni. Lisaks hinnati meetodika rakendamise kasulikkust eel- ning järeltestide läbiviimise põhjal. Õpilaste arvamuste välja selgitamiseks viidi läbi kolm grupiintervjuud, mis näitasid õpilaste suhtumist antud õppevormi kohta.

Überpööratud klassiruumi eesmärk on tunnis veedetud aja tõhusamaks muutmine. Õpilastele esitleti uusi grammatikateemasid autori poolt loodud videote kaudu. Tunnis rakendati saadud teadmisi ülesannete lahendamisel, kommunikatiivsete harjutuste tegemisel, klassikaaslastega arutlemisel. Kuna tööst saadud tulemuste põhjal on autoril võimalik tulevikus grammatikaseletusi paremini ette valmistada, siis sobis antud meetodika rakendamine ning tulemuste analüüsimine just grupiviisiliselt, andes ülevaate õpilaste arengust ning nende endi arvamustest seoses nõnda õppimisega.

Täiskasvanud õpilased, kellel on motivatsioon õppida, saavad iseseisvalt õppimise olulisusest üldjuhul kiiresti aru. Seega ei olnud üheks überpööratud klassiruumiga seotud probleemidest – videote mitte vaatamine – selle uuringu puhul probleemiks. Kõik õpilased

vaatasid videosid vähemalt kaks korda, nende järeltesti tulemused üldjuhul paranesid ning õpilaste enda arvamus ümberpööratud klassiruumi metoodika kasutamise kohta oli vaid positiivne.

Märksõnad: inglise keel, täiskasvanute keeleõpe, ümberpööratud klassiruum, videote kasutamine.

Mina, Katre Kõiv,

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Katre Kõiv