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Flipped Classroom Implementation in EFL Writing Class

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Abstract

Since writing has become crucial in the English as Foreign Language (EFL) context, teachers should be more creative and inventive in their teaching and learning to help students perform well in writing. One of these alternative approaches is the flipped classroom implementation. Therefore, this study examines the extent of flipped classroom implementation to enhance EFL students' writing skills. The research subject was 34 eleventh-grade students. The research used the principle of classroom action research and consisted of 2 cycles. The data were collected through observation, writing tests, and interviews. The data were analyzed using an interactive model by Miles and Huberman. The result of the study showed that after the flipped classroom implementation, there was an improvement in students' writing skills (both globally and locally). It can be seen from the students' scores on writing tests, which continually increase from pre-research to cycle 2. Besides, the flipped classroom implementation in writing class can enhance the classroom situation during the teaching-learning process. The students actively participated in the class, felt motivated, and engaged in following the teaching-learning process.

Keywords: *flipped classroom, writing skills, classroom action research*

INTRODUCTION

English to communicate with others. In Indonesia, English is classified as a foreign language (EFL) and is formally taught from elementary to high school as determined by Law on the National Educational System (No. 20/2003). English has four basic skills, which each has other sub-skills. The basic skills of English include reading, speaking, listening, and writing.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), writing has become essential. According to research, writing is the most underdeveloped part of English proficiency (Chen, 1997; Tseng, 2008) and still has become an acknowledged difficulty for most EFL

students (Fazilatfar et al., 2018). Generally, students perceived writing as more complex than other language skills since it covers intricate cognitive processes (Xu & Qi, 2017). Cognitive processes in writing include planning, translating, and reviewing (Flower & Hayes, 1981). It is evident that learning to write in English requires more than a handful of easy steps, and mastering it cannot be gained in a short time. In Indonesia, the student's writing skills could be better and better. According to Eliwarti & Aruan (2018), nearly two-thirds of EFL students in Indonesia have a low attitude toward writing skills. Following Taufik & Cahyono (2019), the Indonesian students' average score in English writing was lower than the required passing grade. The main problems that EFL students might encounter in writing are insufficient language skills (including syntax, vocabulary, and grammar), poor structure and organizing skills, and a need for more ideas (Fareed et al., 2016).

Several factors are inhibiting the progress of EFL students' writing skills. One is ineffective English language teaching and learning (Derakhshan, 2020). Fareed et al. (2016) found that most EFL teachers still use traditional approaches in teaching writing. They tend to apply a teacher-centered approach in which the teacher retains complete control of the classroom while the students do not have the opportunity to express and direct their learning. This approach can make the students passive and lower their proficiency in writing. Besides traditional approaches, many EFL teachers need to be more unconcern about feedback (Derakhshan, 2020). They rarely provide proper feedback on students' writing and only emphasize the product of writing rather than the writing process. This situation certainly influences the development of students' proficiency in English, explicitly writing, since feedback from both the teacher and the peers significantly enhances students' learning (Goodwin & Miller, 2013).

Not only ineffective English language teaching and learning but lack of motivation is also a potential reason the students' attitude toward writing skills could be better (De Smedt et al., 2018; Jafari & Ansari, 2012). Wu et al. (2011) further stated that motivation, ability, and confidence are all closely related; having less motivation can eventually lead to having less confidence and less skill over the long term. Several things that cause students to lack motivation are inappropriate learning materials, fear of making mistakes, a lack of resources, poor teaching behavior, and experiencing failure in traditional teaching approaches (Murphrey et al., 2009; Vefali & Ayan, 2015).

To tackle the issue, EFL teachers should be more creative and inventive in their teaching and learning to help students perform well in writing. They can promote new teaching materials and replace the traditional teaching approach to instruction in English writing. Among these alternative approaches is the implementation of a flipped classroom. According to Hamdan et al. (2013), a flipped classroom is an approach in which teachers deliver the learning materials by using technology such as screencast or video recording as well as make it available for students to access outside the classroom as many times as they need to and transform in-class time to a dynamic, collaborative learning space where teachers actively engage students in the process of learning. In a flipped classroom, teachers guide the students since they employ concepts and engage in creative learning activities. The situation is in line with the Ministry of Education and Culture

Regulation (Permendikbud) No. 22 of 2016 stated that the learning process in schools held in a style that encourages active participation from students and is dynamic, inspiring, enjoyable, demanding, and provides enough room for each student's individuality and creativity.

Moreover, flipped classroom establishes a communicative and student-centered learning atmosphere which can be beneficial for students to construct their knowledge and acquire responsibility for their learning (Mehring, 2016). A flipped classroom also provides students with a good fundamental of knowledge. In addition, Teachers can correct students' misconceptions, scaffold individual learning, provide instant feedback, and assist the students in organizing, integrating, and applying their new knowledge throughout class time (Ping et al., 2019). This condition can boost students' confidence and motivation in writing and helps teachers fully uncover students' potential since it focuses more on how students write than on the grammar that needs to be taught. (Buitrago & Diaz, 2018).

Previous studies on flipped classroom implementation in the EFL writing class are currently limited, but there has been an increase in recent years. Wu et al. (2020) found that implementing flipped classrooms improved the students' local and global writing abilities. The finding supported by Fathi & Rahimi (2020) is that the flipped classroom positively impacts the global writing abilities of EFL students and their writing accuracy, fluency, and complexity. Ekmekci (2017) conducted further research on the writing abilities of EFL students in flipped and non-flipped classrooms and discovered that the former significantly outperformed the latter. A flipped classroom not only enhances students writing skills but also promotes meaningful learning, the development of critical thinking, and motivation (Baepler et al., 2014; Hung, 2015; Zou & Xie, 2018). Furthermore, flipped classrooms improve the quality of time spent in class, increase interaction, empower and engage students, provide opportunities for active learning, give them the freedom to review material at their own pace, give them more practice time, and foster group work, collaboration, and social learning (Jamaluddin & Osman, 2014; McLaughlin et al., 2013).

There is some proof that implementing the flipped classroom has the attention of researchers worldwide (Ekmekci, 2017; Fathi & Rahimi, 2020; McLaughlin et al., 2013; Ping et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020). However, studies about flipped classrooms in English writing in an EFL context, especially in Indonesia, still need to be made available. More research is needed to find the most effective instructional models to improve English writing (Keshta & Harb, 2013; Wu et al., 2020). Therefore, this study aims to examine the extent of the flipped classroom implementation to enhance EFL students' writing skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A flipped classroom is an approach that continually raises attention in the field of education. As what had been said by Hamdan (2013), flipped classroom refers to two crucial components, including the use of technology outside the classroom and the involvement of interactive learning activities inside the classroom. Technologies used by teachers for delivering pre-class materials include vodcasts, intelligent tutoring systems,

interactive online modules, and annotated notes which may be locally created or derived from open educational resources. (McLaughlin et al., 2016; Cheng, 2017). While interactive learning activities, the teacher should create in-class learning such as presentations, collaborative activities, group problem-solving, and self or peer evaluation (McLaughlin et al., 2016; O'Flaherty & Phillips (2015). Cheng et al. (2017) further propose that the class activities include authentic learning, collaborative learning, problem-solving, situated learning, peer coaching, group discussions, reflections, and feedback,

In applying flipped classrooms, there are three aspects that teachers must pay attention to (Cockrum, 2014). The first is the learning materials delivered asynchronously. Teachers must deliver the learning materials before the classroom is online. Second, students have prompt and consistent access to the learning materials. They can learn the materials whenever and wherever they need them. In order to make the materials easily accessible, teachers should prepare the tool for learning well (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Mc Laughlin et al., 2016).

Moreover, Baker (2000) states that teachers not only deliver the learning materials but also provide online quizzes to make the students consistently learn the materials and check their understanding. The third is that teachers guide learning and are available during class time. Before the classroom, teachers are responsible for guiding the students to learn the materials independently and facilitating students with problems learning the materials. In contrast, teachers make interactive learning activities in the classroom, guide the learning process, and answer the students' questions.

According to Ping et al. (2019), there are differences between flipped and traditional classrooms that can make writing classes successful. The first is increased preparation. Students get more time to prepare for their writing class because the materials are delivered before the class. It is considered an efficient technique to give students the necessary knowledge for their in-class writing practices. The second is increased in-class practice and interaction. Flipped classroom requires teachers to ensure that class time is specialized to writing practice and actively involves the students in the learning process. It can make students comfortable, confident, and enthusiastic in writing class. The third is immediate feedback. In a flipped classroom, the teacher must give feedback on the students writing. Since not every student has the same difficulties learning to write, students benefit from feedback. Some students may have difficulties in vocabulary, and others may require more assistance with organization and grammar.

In line with Ping et al. (2019), prior studies highlighted that the flipped classroom provides various excellence in EFL writing classes. For instance, using a flipped classroom facilitates establishing an interactive learning environment and student-centered learning, which both allow for active student participation. (Chuang et al., 2018; Ekmekci, 2017). This situation has the opportunity to increase student motivation which can have an impact on students' writing skills. Mohamed and Zouaoui (2014) also state that students can quickly advance their writing skills with high motivation. Moreover, flipped classrooms establish more self-paced and autonomous learning as students must learn the materials themselves before the class (Aghaei et al., 2019; Fathi & Rahimi, 2020; Lee, 2017). The condition will be beneficial for students in improving their writing skills since

they are familiar with the learning materials and boldly commit mistakes in writing practice (Aghaeni et al., 2019). In addition, in the flipped classroom, in-class time emphasizes practice more than listening to the teacher's lectures (Buitrago & Diaz, 2018; Correa, 2015). In this case, the students have more time to discuss while the teachers have more chances to give feedback to the students. This condition may help the students to enhance their writing skills since the students are actively engaging in the learning activities, and it is widely acknowledged that language acquisition, explicitly writing, requires patience, time, and practice (Turan & Akdag-Cimen, 2019).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was held using classroom action research. McNiff et al. (2004) state that Action research is a type of systematic study carried out by a teacher, school administration, or other interested parties in order to gather information on a variety of topics, such as how schools run, how teaching is going, or to what extent students learn. It is either done independently or with the help of researchers. In carrying out the action research, observation and action are needed. The types of action research also vary. This study used action research based on Kemis and McTaggart's model (1988). It was run in cycles until the evaluation was accurate and effective. Each cycle consists of four steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

The participants of this study are 34 eleventh-grade students from various social and economic backgrounds. This classroom action research study utilizes qualitative and quantitative data for data collection. The qualitative data included observation, research diary, and interview. Meanwhile, quantitative data included writing tests. In analyzing qualitative data, this study will use the descriptive qualitative method to analyze the result of observations, research diary, and interviews. The description uses an interactive model from Miles and Huberman (1994). The model consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The quantitative data were analyzed by comparing the mean of writing test scores to assess the differences and changes before and after the action. The improvement emerges when the mean score in the post-test is higher than the mean score in the pre-test. To assign scores to the student's writing test, the researcher uses the "Writing Rubric Score by Brown" (Brown, 2004, pp. 243-246).

Treatment and Procedure

Planning

Planning is the first stage in classroom action research. The planning stage entails identifying the problem, thoroughly analyzing the problem, and formulating a strategic action plan to enhance a specific aspect of the study context. Before planning the action, the researcher did a pre-research observation to identify and analyze the problem. After that, the researcher prepared the plan of action, which included a lesson plan, teaching materials, teaching aids, and test instruments.

Action

The action requires the strategic action plan implementation and some interference or action in the class over time. In implementing the action, the researcher proposed

flipped classroom as an approach to overcome the problem of students' writing skills. The researcher did the teaching-learning process into two stages: pre-class and in-class. The main activity in pre-class was the students learning the materials individually and doing the quiz. While the main activity in in-class was that students practiced the materials they learned by writing a text, and the teacher gave feedback on the student's writing.

Observation

The researcher did observation during the teaching-learning process. It was purposed to observe the action and solve the problems faced during the action. The techniques used were observation which would be noted in the form of field notes and writing tests. Two things had to be observed in implementing flipped classrooms in writing class. They are the teaching-learning process and learning progress that students have achieved. Moreover, at the end of the research, a short interview was conducted to determine students' responses to implementing the flipped classroom.

Reflection

Reflection was done by finding the strengths and weaknesses of the action in each cycle based on the observation. It would be the basis for determining the following action. Moreover, after the whole teaching-learning process had been conducted in the classroom, the students were given a post-test. After that, the test was analyzed by scoring it. It is done to ensure whether there is an improvement in students' writing skills.

FINDINGS

This study was conducted in 2 cycles. Each cycle consisted of 3 meetings, and the time allotment for each meeting was 60 minutes. In cycle 1, the action plans were prepared before implementing the action. The plans included a lesson plan, teaching aids, teaching materials, and test instruments. Lesson plans were based on the syllabus and consisted of 3 main terms. They are teaching goals, teaching activities, and assessments. For the teaching aids, some applications were set up, such as WhatsApp, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and Kahoot!

Moreover, there are two teaching materials which were prepared, including video materials that were taken from YouTube and quiz questions that were sourced from books or the internet. The plans were ended by designing the test instrument. The test instrument was in the form of a writing test of explanation text. In this case, the students were given a writing sheet and asked to write an explanation text. The students can choose their topic for their writing test in cycle 1.

In implementing flipped classrooms, there are two stages in each meeting of cycle 1, called pre-class and in-class. The pre-class activities aimed to prepare the students to understand the materials before attending the class. This stage started the day before class by uploading the video materials and a quiz link in Kahoot! to Microsoft Teams. The materials and the quiz of each meeting were different. After uploading the materials, the teacher gave an announcement through the WhatsApp Group. The announcement contained instructions for students to learn the materials independently and to do the quiz via Kahoot! The quiz function was to check the student's understanding of the material. Moreover, the teacher's duties in this stage are not only to upload the material and ask the

students to learn independently but also to facilitate the students if the students face difficulties related to the learning materials or technical problems.

Meanwhile, in-class activities aimed to review the material and apply the concept of the learning materials. The teacher started the in-class activities by praying, greeting the students, and checking students' attendance. Then, the teacher reviewed the materials shared in the pre-class by asking some questions to the students. The teacher let the students answer freely, but sometimes the teacher pointed the students to answer the question if no one wanted to answer. After the students answered the question, the teacher confirmed the students' answers. This activity aimed to boost students' attention and responsiveness to classroom activities. The next activity in class was the writing process. In cycle 1, the students are asked to write an explanation text with their topic individually. The students started writing in the first meeting. The teacher facilitated the students' writing and periodically checked their progress during the writing process. The writing process took around 30-35 minutes. After that, the students were asked to upload their writing into Google Classroom. The in-class activities ended with the teacher summing up today's learning.

After the class, the teacher checked and gave feedback on the students' writing. The function of feedback was to help the students to revise their mistakes and to make them know which ones were right and wrong. The feedback on students' writing was given at the end of each meeting. Based on the teacher's feedback, the students were asked to finish and revise their writing in the second and third meetings. Cycle 1 ended by giving a writing test to the students. Before implementing cycle 2, the reflecting phase was done to evaluate the teaching-learning process in cycle 1 and prepare the revised plan for cycle 2. The reflecting phase was based on the observing phase, carried out during the implementation of the action, which was noted in the form of field notes.

Cycle 2 was carried out by overcoming the barriers in cycle 1. The activities in cycle 2 were generally the same as in cycle 1. The difference lies in the writing process. In cycle 2, the students were asked to write an explanation text with the chosen topic in pairs. Before writing, the students were required to choose their pair. Then, one of the students in each pair was asked to take raffle topics that the researcher had prepared. The raffle topics, such as biological, cultural, social, and scientific studies, varied.

Furthermore, in each meeting of cycle 2, focus on one part of the text. It means that in the first meeting, the students wrote a writing text focused on the introduction and sequenced statement. In the second meeting, the students focused on making sequenced statements and conclusions. In the third meeting, the students focused on finishing the final draft.

After implementing a flipped classroom in writing class, the student's writing skills have improved. It is proven by the students' scores, which consistently increase from pre-research to cycle 2. The improvement of students' writing scores from pre-research to cycle two can be seen in Table 1. Table 1 below compares students' writing scores from pre-research to cycle 2.

Table 1. The Comparison of Students' Writing Score Test

Aspect of Writing	Pre-Research	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	XC1C2	Improvement
Content	20.87	21.89	23.28	22.59	1.7
Organization	14.24	15.54	16.33	15.94	1.7
Vocabulary	14.47	15.91	17.01	16.46	1.9
Grammar	18.78	19.32	21.02	20.17	1.4
Mechanics	3.18	3.36	4.13	3.75	0.6
Mean Score	71.54	76.02	81.77	-	-

From the table above, the mean score for the post-test in cycle one and cycle 2 was higher than the mean score for the pre-test in pre-research. Moreover, a detailed investigation of each writing aspect revealed that the students' writing outcomes significantly improved. In the purpose aspect, the students could write a text related to the topic. They also could write a text with more detailed information and produce longer paragraphs with sufficient supporting details. In other words, their ideas were concrete, and the students could develop them broadly and variedly. The students also arranged their writing in good organization and paragraphing according to the generic structure of the text. In vocabulary the students had an abundance of vocabulary. They could use variant words to express their ideas and appropriate words in their writing. The students not only could use appropriate vocabulary but also could make the correct sentences in correct grammar. They could understand and use language features of the text correctly, such as simple present tense and passive voice.

Furthermore, the students could make a writing text by using correct writing conventions. The students were able to demonstrate the writing convention and minimize errors and mistakes in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. They paid attention to the punctuation, capitalization, and spelling of the words.

According to the result above, the learning activities in flipped classrooms helped the students improve their writing skills. This finding lent support to previous studies (Ekmekci, 2017; Fathi & Rahimi, 2020; McLaughlin et al., 2013; Ping et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020), which revealed that flipped classrooms implementation has a positive impact on students' writing skills. The students' writing skills improve in both global (organization and content) and local scopes (grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics). It was in line with Wu et al. (2020), which reported that the flipped classroom implementation enabled the students to improve their global writing, such as logical arguments and coherent organization, as well as their local writing, such as word choice and grammar. Furthermore, Fathi & Rahimi (2020) stated that flipped classrooms significantly develop students' global writing performance and fluency. By implementing flipped classrooms, the learning activities were divided into two they were pre-class activity and in-class activity. The pre-class activity was done by delivering learning materials through an online platform. This study delivered the learning materials via video through Microsoft Teams. As has been done by Buitrago & Diaz (2017), Cheng (2017), Tohei (2017), and Wu et al. (2020), the learning materials served as online video lectures as a substitute for the class lecture. After learning the materials, students were asked to do the following task: Baker (2000) and Bishop& Verleger (2013) stated that the online video lecture, together with the following task, is a powerful medium in the learning process. Besides, Cheng

(2017) further explains that the teacher also should be able to facilitate the students when they have difficulties outside and inside the classroom. In this study, the students were asked to do a quiz on the materials through Kahoot! as the following task. The teacher facilitated the students who had difficulties in the group or personal messages through WhatsApp. These activities in pre-class had a good impact on students. The result showed that pre-class activity made the students learn the materials at their own pace and become autonomous learners. This finding parallels Lee (2017) and Aghaei et al. (2019), who revealed that flipped classrooms establish more self-paced and autonomous learning as students must learn the materials themselves before the class.

Moreover, Buitrago & Diaz (2017), in their study, stated that the use of technology in pre-class was meaningful and that the students liked and watched the video materials autonomously. Ambrose et al. (2010) also stated that pre-class activity allows the students to learn at their own pace and provides space for careful reflection. Besides, after the students learned the materials independently before the class, they became more motivated, engaged, and well-prepared to follow the learning activities. The condition will be helpful for students in enhancing their writing skills. The students become more confident and are not afraid of making mistakes in writing practice because they have familiarity with the learning materials. This result supported Hung (2015), Zou & Xie (2018), and Fathi & Rahimi (2020), who reported that the student's writing performance developed due to their motivation and engagement in writing class increased since the use of technology-based learning which occurred before the class time. In addition, Ping et al. (2019) found that the students have greater engagement and interaction in class due to being prepared for the lesson before the class by learning the video materials.

After the pre-class activity, it continued to the in-class activity. Teachers must apply interactive learning activities (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Bishop & Verleger, 2013). In this study, there are three activities in-class stage. They were material review, writing process, and teacher's feedback. The teacher reviewed the materials and asked the students questions or asked them to create the question and answer it in a group. The writing process was done individually and in pairs. Meanwhile, the teacher's feedback was given after the class. As in previous studies, which had been done by McLaughlin et al. (2016), Hsieh et al. (2017), and Cheng (2017), the interactive learning activities design can be collaborative activities, problem-solving, feedback, discussion, and others.

The activities in class also had a good impact on students. The result showed that the students were more active and engaged in learning. Such findings were consistent with prior studies that flipped classrooms bring out the student's active participation, engagement, and responsibility for their task for in-class activity (Arnold-Garza, 2014; Ahmed, 2016; Adnan, 2017; Zou & Xie, 2018; Wu et al., 2020). Chuang et al. (2018) also found that flipped classrooms promote student-centered learning, foster active student participation, and establish an interactive learning atmosphere. This situation causes students' motivation to increase, and it has an impact on students' writing skills. The students were motivated and excited to make a text in a flipped classroom. The students also were open to asking about their difficulties in writing to the teacher in class.

Students' difficulty in writing also decreased from cycle 1 to cycle 2 and resulted in the improvement of students' writing skills. This finding is relevant to the previous research, which said that students with high motivation could quickly advance their writing skills (Mohamed & Zouaoui, 2014; Wu et al., 2020). Moreover, the activities in class helped the students dive much deeper into the learning materials and allowed them to engage in higher-order skills. This result was in line with Ping et al. (2019), who stated that flipped classroom provides an opportunity for students to have a good foundation of knowledge since the teacher uses the in-class time to correct students' misconceptions, scaffold individual learning, provide instant feedback, and assist the students in organizing, integrating, and applying their new knowledge throughout class time. In addition, the in-class activity helped the students to find and develop their potential fully because it focused more on the student's writing process (Strayer, 2012; Buitrago & Diaz, 2018). In the writing process, the students had an opportunity to discuss with friends and get feedback on their writing from the teacher. They felt engaged in class when discussing the writing-related subject, exchanging ideas, interacting with each other, and practicing writing in pairs.

Meanwhile, the teacher's feedback helped the students to write better and correct misunderstandings. This situation made it easier for students to compose a text, reduce errors in writing, and improve their writing skills over time. The result was parallel with the previous study, which reported that feedback has one of the most incredible impact sizes of any instructional practice; more teacher feedback opportunities could significantly improve the students' writing skills (Goodwin & Miller, 2013).

Implementing a flipped classroom, both in pre-class and in-class activities, played an important role in promoting students' engagement in the learning process. This situation helped the students increase their motivation in writing and resulted in the improvement of students writing. This finding supported previous studies that flipped classroom is a practical approach to teaching English writing skills and have the ability to enhance students' writing performance (Keshta & Harb, 2013; Ahmed, 2016; Lin et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study focused on flipped classroom implementation in the writing class of eleventh-grade students in Surakarta. It aims to know to what extent the flipped classroom implementation enhances the students' writing skills. This study found that flipped classroom implementation in writing class can significantly improve students' writing skills. In this case, the students could express and develop the ideas creatively, could organize their ideas better from the introduction to the conclusion following the generic structure of the text, had an abundance of vocabulary and used appropriate vocabulary to express their ideas, constructed the sentences correctly based on suitable grammar, and paid attention to conventions of mechanics such as spelling and punctuation. Besides, the flipped classroom implementation in writing class can enhance the classroom situation during the teaching-learning process. The students actively participated in the class, felt motivated, and engaged in following the teaching-learning process. All the statements are

strengthened by the mean score of the student's writing test, which continually increased from pre-research to cycle 2.

The flipped classroom seemed suitable for students with low writing skills since the flipped classroom activities, including pre-class and in-class, could have aided the students in composing and developing their writing. It also allows the students more time to practice writing, which impacts their writing skills since writing is a skill gained by practicing. Furthermore, the flipped classroom implementation can contribute to the improvement of education as it provides flexibility in the teacher's instructional time. In a flipped classroom, teachers can innovate their teaching by being the "sage on the stage" to the "guide on the side." Future research is suggested to conduct further studies on different levels, skills, and topics. Moreover, further study should base on the difficulties faced by the students.

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