
**To Flip or Not? Deciding on Whether to Use a Flipped Classroom Approach With of
Higher-Level Second Language Students**

By

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Abstract

The current project undertakes a review of extant literatures on the use of a flipped classroom model. This review is inclusive of what flipped classroom involves, how to adopt it practically in a school setting and its main elements. This paper mainly discusses the advantages and challenges of using a flipped classroom model in a higher-level language class, especially in an English language-learning classroom. This Project also focuses on the importance of considering students' performance in English classes, especially in collecting student feedback on their learning in a flipped classroom learning environment.

Keywords: flipped classroom, blended learning, higher education level, English language learning

Introduction

New teaching pedagogies and emerging technologies are introducing increasingly popular forms of blended learning in education (Hao, 2016; Johnson, Becker, Estrada & Freeman, 2015). Against this backdrop, one of the newest blended teaching methods that have become increasingly common in educational discussions is that of a ‘flipped classroom.’ ‘Flip’ learning is a type of ‘up-side-down’ learning approach that allows teachers to use multiple methodologies in order to implement their lessons in the classroom. To design a flipped classroom, a blend of e-learning and face-to-face teaching becomes necessary (Thai, De Wever & Valcke, 2017; Yilmaz, 2017). Notably, Bergmann and Sams (2012) define a flipped classroom approach as taking the time when students usually do activities such as their homework to prepare content for classroom teaching; what students normally learn through classroom instructions now becomes their homework. In this manner, the typical pattern of instruction leading to homework is flipped in sequence. James, Chin & Williams (2014) describe flipped classroom teaching as “a pedagogical form of blended learning where the traditional classroom is flipped or inverted by delivering instruction outside the classroom and then bringing the application of learning outcomes into the teaching space” (p. 322).

This approach to teaching is gaining interest. McNally et al. (2017) noted that the term ‘flipped classroom’ is an increasingly popular subject of Internet searches. According to Google Trends (2017), there was not enough data on Internet searches of the term “flipped

classroom” from the years 2004 to 2012, but from 2012 to 2014, the number of searches increased but flipped classrooms are still not as common compared to other education trends. Park and Howell (2014) mentioned that in 2013, the percentage of chief academic leaders who believed that learning online will become a major part of education moving forward reached the highest level in recent years reached 69.1%. As the Google trend’s data states, educators who made the most number of searches on the topic of flipped classrooms tend to be from the USA, Australia, Sweden, Canada and Spain, Singapore and Hong Kong.

According to Faculty Focus (2015), of the 1089 readers of *Faculty Focus* who participated in a survey, more than two-thirds (69.5%) said that they have indeed tried out flipped classroom and are planning to try it again. However, 5.49 percent of participants stated that they did not want to use a flipped classroom method again. In this survey, 70.3 percent of teacher participants along with 64.8 percent of their students hold positive views about their experiences with the flipped classroom approach. According to Kim, Park, Jang and Nam (2017), technological advancements now allow education to easily integrate flipped classroom approaches into the K-12 and higher levels. Also, Kim, et al (2017) also pointed out that the flipped classroom can be applied to education in Grades 4 to 12 as well, although there is not adequate literature to indicate that a flipped classroom approach would work as well with lower level students (K-3). Currently, the use of a flipped classrooms approach seems to be mainly found in higher education.

The first time I became interested in a flipped classroom, I was a freshman at a

university in China. Our English teacher had given homework to all students before we started the class: Our assignment was to watch a movie at home and then complete a worksheet and prepare to perform a play from that movie in-class. The worksheet included some questions that students needed to answer; some blank space was also left for students to ask questions. When compared to a more traditional, lecture-based approach to English class in the high school, I found the flipped teaching approach to be more interesting and attractive. After one semester, it was apparent that students received more chances to work on the literature, either in or out of class. Students in my class appeared to be more positive about working with their partner to conclude assignments and the learning environment was, in my opinion, much more active. One of my friends was lucky enough to actually participate in a “flipped classroom.” Since then, he just did not stop talking about his new experience, but thanks to him, I was able to get feedback on how a “flipped classroom” worked and what would students thought about this teaching approach.

Initially, when he heard that his new course would be taught in a flipped classroom format, he did not know what to expect, but from what he heard, he did not really like the idea of a flipped classroom because he generally did not want his free time being consumed by being overloaded with work. At the initial stages, it seemed as though his prediction was right. His teacher in the flipped classroom required students to watch the video online before every lecture to become better prepared. It took my friend some time to set up his laptop with new technology as part of the course. Then, my friend had to watch the video several times to truly understand the core knowledge that the video had presented. In the

beginning, he was quite unhappy, because he felt like the course required too much time out of him.

When he went to attend the lecture, the different methodology adopted by the teacher also surprised him. In a normal classroom, the teacher prepares lecture notes and demonstrates this knowledge to students. However, in flipped classroom, everything was drastically different. My friend reminiscences that during his first class, the teacher did not present the knowledge to the students right away, rather, the teacher split the class into different groups to discuss what they had learned from the video when preparing for the lecture. The teacher also required the group to come out with questions to ask her. He is a pretty shy person, so he might be the last one to answer his teacher's questions loudly in front of all his classmates. However, even though shy he felt more engaged because he could feel what it like was to participate in a group of students.

As time went on, he fell in love with this course, because he was doing much better in this one compared to his other courses. Before every lecture, he prepared by watching videos, completing online assessments and having discussions with his group online. So when he entered every lecture of this course, he was able to identify and focus on learning areas that he did not understand. As a result, his grade in this course improved dramatically. In the end, he told me that he thoroughly enjoyed this course and hoped that every course in the future could be taught with this approach.

The concept of flipped classroom does not merely mean re-arranging certain activities;

this approach to teaching also entails the extension of the mode of curriculum (Bishop & Verleger, 2013). The teacher also plays a key role: What exactly is the role of teacher and students in a flipped classroom? In my point of view, if the traditional classroom format is that of a 'teacher-teaching' format, then a flipped classroom is more akin to a 'teacher-guiding' format. This format tries to engage students in the class by distributing time for active learning approaches, supported by new technologies in order to make blended learning work effectively (Kim, Kim, Khera & Getman, 2014). Blended learning is an approach that combines with the traditional way of teaching (such as face-to-face teaching method) and online educational materials. This teaching method takes the benefits from both the traditional teaching and online learning to create a new instructional teaching pedagogy. Compared to the traditional teaching methods that most students have experienced, blended learning does not just simply add computers in their classroom, in fact, it requires more changes in methods and the use of digital teaching tool and media formats (Wong, Hamzah, Goh & Yeop, 2016). According to Demski (2014), digitally-based technology is an essential aspect of the flipped classroom, which means that the teacher is responsible for making students familiar with this emerging technology. Getting feedback from students and making an assessment of a class is another responsibility of teachers using the flipped classroom approach. The approach also requires students to coordinate their out-of-class content learning and in-class working.

According to the Flip Learning Network (2014), teachers adopting a flipped approach to teaching follow four pillars, known as F-L-I-P, in their practice when using the flip

learning technology: Flexible environment, Learning culture, Intentional content and Professional educator. In the flipped classroom, students usually arrive to class with their personal learning outcomes after studying the materials or watching related videos outside of class. What they need to do in class is to show and practice their learning achievements, which also improves their study skills. James, Chin and Williams (2014) observed that, “a typical flipped classroom approach provides students first exposure to the topic before class” (p.333). This preview of work before class is the basis of a flipped classroom and this prior work is also a very important aspect of the process when using the flipped classroom approach.

According to McNally et al. (2017), there are 4 key elements that support the notion of flipped classroom. The first element is being exposed to the work prior to classroom instruction; this exposure could be in the form of a video lecture, recorded lecture, digital text materials or some other audio materials. The second element is students’ intention for learning that they brought to the class; for example, students could have a quiz or write a self-test to know how much they have learned outside the classroom in order to develop a clear plan for their in-class learning. The third element of a flipped classroom involves teachers knowing deeply students’ understanding. Under this approach, the teacher assesses their student’s learning outcomes based on grading their quiz, or might conduct a short interview. The fourth element is that of in-class activities. In a flipped classroom approach, teachers can plan activities at a higher level than that of their students’ cognition without stretching it too far, which means the activities should be still understood by students.

Students' first contact with new knowledge without any help from a teacher could be difficult but interesting for students. Students' understanding of a new concept that they first encounter does represent their thinking about this concept. This can be a benefit to teachers, since teachers can access this thinking and thus will be able to better prepare for subsequent classes in ways that specifically encourage student understanding. For example, in class teachers could give students time to work in teams with other peers by using games, labs and other engagement activities that are suitable to students' levels of prior understanding (Herreid & Schiller, 2013). A flipped classroom also gives students more opportunities to conduct one-on-one instruction (Loucky, 2017). Tsai, Shen and Lu (2015) noted that the main purpose of teaching practice in a flipped classroom is not about the teacher creating videos related to the class that can be shown to students, but students interacting in the class based on their study of materials that they first encountered out of class. Therefore, the preparation work is paramount for the class by both the students and teacher, but what determines a good flipped classroom is the level of individual interaction between students and teachers.

Although the concept of flipped classroom is becoming increasingly popular, it is not a new phenomenon (Hao, 2016). In 2000, Lage, Platt and Treglia (2000) mentioned the term 'inverted classroom' as a means of helping students with their personalized learning structure, they also mentioned that the approach of flipped classroom is not a new idea; in fact, even 20 years ago, the attempt to raise students' own learning motivation by attending to different learning styles was already done by some teachers. In their study, they point out

in late 1990s, with web-based technology becoming more available to teachers and students, some professors during that time had already been given out lectures via PowerPoint or online videos, and the professors would require the students to do pre-study before the lecture to improve the effectiveness of lecture time. According to the description by Bergmann and Sams (2012, p.3), during the time that they taught in the rural school students would miss the classes because of other activities and sports. The fact that students took an inordinate amount of time to wait for buses also caused students to struggle. The teacher was frustrated as well. They had to give their students assignments prior to the class to ensure that the latter could have adequate time to focus on their work and not delay their learning—this was why Bergmann and Sams (2012) started to make the change from traditional teaching approach to flipped classroom approach. They also found that using flipped classroom helped teachers to effectively personalize each student’s learning goal.

Research Path and Questions

The sources I used to research the flipped classroom approach included the UVIC online library database, Web of Science database and Google Scholar. When I initiated the research, I used the key words: “flipped classroom” and “inverted classroom.” Results showed that there were over 2000 references related to this topic. Although these empirical studies are primarily concerned with flipped classroom, they are too extensive and broad-based. As a result, I narrowed down my sources by adding the keywords, “higher education” or “college level” and “language learning.” Results showed up nearly 43

studies related to flipped classroom that were used in higher level language classrooms.

Based on the experiences and my discussions with some students, I hypothesized that a flipped classroom approach to second language teaching is indeed acceptable for a number of courses and classrooms. Both students and instructors seem to be willing to experiment with this teaching methodology. I also hypothesized that the learning outcomes would perhaps be better than a traditional classroom-based approach to language teaching.

The search results show that the flipped classroom is not a new concept. Since the topic of flipped classroom has gained prominence, many universities and faculties have stated to explore it and have found that it is a good teaching method that is flexible, active and student-centered. However, many challenges still need to be addressed. For example, not every student can access the required technology; other challenges include preparation time for both teacher and students. It is hence important for instructors and students to understand the advantages and limitations of using the flipped classroom in order to use it more effectively.

This paper mainly focuses on using flipped classroom in higher-level second language classes; against this backdrop, the paper aims to answer two research questions:

- A). What are the benefits and challenges of the flipped classroom?
- B). How can the effectiveness of the flipped classroom be evaluated in a second language learning classroom?

Literature Review

The following literature review examines published literature on the benefits of using the flipped classroom approach and the challenges of this approach. Technological advancement in education is gradually changing the way of teachers' teaching approaches and students' learning habits (Wells, De Lange & Fieger, 2008). The flipped classroom is one of the teaching approaches in the blended learning that contain face-to-face section (in-class session) and online learning (out-of class session). In this approach, students are responsible for their own learning, learn to work with other people and enjoy their time in a flexible learning environment. So more and more teachers and students believe that they will have a good learning experiences in the flipped classroom. According to the report of International Association of Language Centers (IALC), with millions of people learning a foreign language, foreign language learning has become an integral lifelong learning process in 21st century. There were 466 agents from 74 countries took part in the research. Results showed that the target age group of language students were 18 to 25, or 46 percent of all language students. From the year 2012 to 2015, the highest language demands for instruction were English, German, French and Spanish. From 2015 to 2018, the highest demanding language was English followed with German and Chinese, with around 2.28 million language students abroad annually. These statistics show that second language learning is a positive developing trend in the education field. Flipped classroom approach allows students to do more practice and study at anytime and anywhere with their digital devices. So using flipped classroom approach to teach second language can be more effective and interesting compare to the traditional language classroom.

After the general examination of the advantages and challenges of the flipped classroom approach, the project then examines the implications for second language learning giving some suggestions on how to effectively use the flipped classroom into the second language classroom and how instructors might choose their teaching materials for their classes based on this approach.

Advantages of a Flipped Classroom Approach

Since popular teaching pedagogy is commonly discussed in academic circles, the trend of using a flipped classroom is growing. Estes, Ingram and Liu (2015) stated that the flipped classroom has attracted a heated debate in higher education institutions. Meanwhile Gilboy, Heinerichs and Pazzaglia (2014) said that universities and colleges are looking for new and improved ways to help students learn from lectures, and one of the most promising methods is the flipped classroom approach. As digital technology is becoming increasingly important for the newest generation of students, we need to utilize new online technologies to discover new opportunities to teach students, especially in colleges and universities. For this reason, the flipped classroom approach marks a significant improvement over traditional learning (Galway, Corbett, Takaro, Tairyan and Frank, 2014). For example, Tao, Huang and Tsai (2016) pointed out that the use of video games has been a major trend among the students of this generation. The combination of gaming and learning, such as digital game playing in class and video watching, motivates students and helps them pay more attention to their own studies. According to Clark (2015), 42 students

in an algebra course in a rural Grade 9-12 school participated in the data collection process. Results indicated that these students were more involved in the learning process of the flipped classroom than a traditional, lecture-based classroom. Nearly 84% of students participated actively in the flipped classroom, as compared to 76% of students engaged in a traditional classroom. According to Bart's (2013) report on Faculty Focus, a website that publishes academic research on making teaching more efficient at the college level, 29% of the faculties in the survey has already used the approach in their teaching routine, while another 27% of faculty members are planning to use this approach in the following year. According to 57% of the faculty members, the flipped classroom model has been 'extremely successful' or 'successful' enough to be used.

The literature review conducted as part of this project reveals that instructors and researchers are in agreement over the distinct advantages of the flipped classroom approach. It is for these reasons that this teaching approach is gaining popularity. In the subsequent section, I will outline the major benefits of a flipped classroom approach based on a review of the existing research on flipped classrooms.

Provides a good learning environment for students.

Changing the content of the learning materials is not an essential part of the flipped classroom teaching approach; the essential concept is to mould students' thinking into a proper learning process (Galway, Corbett, Takaro, Tairyan & Frank, 2014). According to Tao, Huang and Tsai (2016), good interaction occurs when using a flipped classroom, such

as very high levels of discussion or collaborative work during in-class activities, because in the approach of flipped classroom, students come prepared for the lectures, so they all know what their learning goals are and thus engage at a high level with their peers (Clark 2015; Keetle 2013).

As Tague and Baker (2014) noted, students who are highly motivated in their learning prefer a flipped learning environment to a traditional learning environment. A good learning environment helps students with varied aspects of learning, such as developing problem solving skills and stimulating students to rebuild their knowledge structure, and the best environment for students is a flexible learning environment. How a flipped classroom encourages a more flexible learning situation is discussed in the next section.

Creates a flexible learning environment.

A flipped classroom teaching approach creates flexible conditions for student learning (Fulton, 2012; Herreid & Schiller, 2013), and has emerged as an innovative pedagogy in the context of higher education (Sharples et al., 2014; Wanner & Palmer, 2015).

Estes, Ingram & Liu (2014) suggested that a key benefit of the flipped classroom is in its ability to help students who are struggling to increase their interaction with teachers; a flipped classroom also offers a more flexible learning environment for such interactions. Students who are better prepared for their classes give themselves more freedom to work harder individually, controlling their pace of learning and their learning content (Alvarez, 2011; Davies, Dean & Ball, 2013; Fulton, 2012). According to Tullis and Benjamin (2011),

self-paced learners show better results on more difficult tasks. In addition, completing the pre-work gives students more privacy in their learning which prevents them from feeling embarrassed when they do not understand what the teacher has taught them (Khan, 2011).

Flipped classrooms provide a flexible learning system that is easy to access, well planned, student-centered, inexpensive and efficient for the learner. “A successful flexible learning system involves a systematic process of planning, design, development, evaluation, and implementation to create an environment where learning is actively fostered and supported” (Khan, 2007, p.3). This learning environment can help students successfully meet the challenges of a higher level of learning, because the students will be in a learning system that has easy access, well-designed materials, efficient learning procedures and flexible time-table. The instructor would also feel comfortable enough to share their knowledge and experiences in the course, because having seen learners all enjoy the learning resources without any disruptions, instructors may be motivated to create even more great learning lectures (Morrison, 2003). Since flexibility also requires autonomy and a self-directed learning process to enhance the student’s learning efficiency, these approaches plays a constructive part in the students’ ability to self-regulate and grow as a learner (Chlingaryan & Zvereva, 2017; Sadler-Smith & Smith, 2004).

Flexible learning pays attention to the learning process to facilitate and stimulate the individual learner’s working process (Krauth, 1998). Analogously, Hill (2006) noted that the aim of flexible learning is to promote the quality of the learner’s learning experiences

based on their personal needs and learning habits. The three underlying principles that flexible learning environments are required to follow include, “learner-centered instruction” (p.190), “facilitation” (p.190) and “negotiation” (p.190). Accordingly, in a flipped classroom students can make their own decisions during the course of their learning process and have more chances to collaborate with their instructors instead of being a passive receiver. In other words, students become the master of their own learning process, which is essential to a more student-centered approach to learning.

Emphasizes student-centered learning.

According to Park and Howell (2015), the central framework for the flipped classroom and other blended learning methods is the use of proactive and cooperative ways of creating a learning environment, which can then facilitate student-centered learning (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Greenberg, Medlock & Stephens, 2014; Schultz, Duffield, Rasmussen & Wageman, 2014). This in turn would allow their studies to become more dynamic and personal (Munir, Baroutian, Young & Carter, 2018). A flipped learning environment can also promote students’ higher order thinking, so that they can use their in-class activities more effectively (Bretzmann, 2013).

Thornburg (1995) defined student-centered learning as a method that refers to a group of students interacting as part of their creative learning experiences. In a student-focused learning environment, students play the most significant role in the whole of the learning procedure while the teacher essentially acts as a helper and guide for students’ learning

processes (Thornburg, 1995).

The essence of student-centered learning in a flipped classroom approach is a shift of the responsibility for learning to the students, rather than pedagogies where teachers transmit knowledge to their students. The responsibility for the process of learning now resides more with the student than only the teacher—that responsibility for learning is now shared (Cannon & Newble, 2000). Therefore, active learning is valued over passive learning, emphasizing the students' responsibility to deepen their own knowledge rather than waiting for the teacher's guidance (Khalil, Rania & Fahim, 2017). Though mutual respect and exchanging feedback is necessary between students and the teacher, the primary component of such a learning environment is the focus on self-learning (Lea, Stephenson & Troy, 2003).

Student-centred learning can also enhance students' motivation levels (Felder & Brent, 1996). Since the teaching format of a flipped classroom provides more opportunities for students to interact with their teacher, an increasing number of instructors are using the flipped classroom teaching approach. For example, during a class that uses flipped classroom approach, students come to lecture with knowledge that gained from online resources, so they will actively participate in problem solving with their classmates and teachers. Teachers, on the other hand, will also be able to provide timely and personalized advices, comments or even discussions with the students (Kim, Park, Jang & Nam (2017). Results show that although teachers need more time to prepare for their class, they are

assured that their students are being more self-sufficient and taking responsibility for their own learning (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Sung, 2015).

Promotes collaborative learning.

Flipped classrooms provide more opportunities for collaborative learning (Roach, 2014). This is a key element that teaches students to work well with peers and teachers (Jarvis, Halvorson, Sadeque & Johnston, 2014; Reidsema, Kavanagh, Hadgraft & Smith, 2017). According to Kitchen & McDougall (1988), most students who took part in their research rated collaborative learning highly and enjoyed learning in such an environment. Their satisfaction levels were also higher when compared to the task-oriented approach of a traditional learning environment (Jung, Choi, Lim & Leem, 2002). According to Clark (2015), working collaboratively with other students helps students build their confidence during their learning. In addition they are receptive to deep-level learning, which means that students will begin to think critically and collaborate with others to implement what they've learned (Munir, Baroutian, Young & Carter, 2018). Students who took part in Clark's (2015) research mentioned that they felt pressured to use solid teamwork, but they were also able to be more active and work collaboratively in a flipped classroom, which increased their productivity as opposed to what they could do in a traditional teaching format.

According to Hsu (2015), collaborating with other students means that each individual needs to play an independent role in their working process, and every decision they make

affects the whole process. At the same time, efforts must be made to include all individuals in the task and work cohesively to arrive at a common understanding. Therefore, working together in a small group to attain a shared goal is the main purpose of using collaborative learning (Chew, Cheng & Chen, 2018; Prince, 2004). In a collaborative learning environment, students need to integrate new knowledge, new information and new instructions with regard to their learning materials and share with other workmates in their group (Ku, Tseng & Akarasriworn, 2013; Webb & Doman, 2016). Teachers arrange the in-class content and activities based on students' questions and let them solve problems along with other students, so as to make their learning more collaborative (Webb & Doman, 2016).

Improves teacher and student skills.

By adopting the approach of flipped classroom, both students and teachers can enhance their skills in all facets of life. According to Yilmaz (2017), students need to develop skills such as communication, self-efficacy, the ability to cooperate, self-regulation, management skills and the ability to execute their aim in order to implement the learning of a flipped classroom. Students will also be encouraged to undertake a deeper critical thinking in their learning process (as cited in Khalil, Rania & Fahim, 2017). Hao (2016) said that online learning sources help make flipped classroom more effective for students to acquire knowledge by allowing students to access the learning material at anytime. According to Bergmann and Sams (2012), teachers are able to improve their teaching skills

by designing an attractive and effective lesson to engage their students. Students can also enhance their learning skills by taking responsibility for completing their pre-class online materials and play a more active role during the class. As Loukey (2017) mentioned in his article, students will take on additional responsibility in a flipped classroom. For example, students will push themselves to learn important content either by themselves or as part of groups before the actual lecture. As a result, they will be able to gain knowledge and skills in higher order thinking and apply them to a number of different activities.

Khalil and Fahim (2016) point out that an interactive learning environment provided by flipped classroom will create lots of opportunities for students to actively practice their critical thinking skills. As Sung (2015) showed in his study that he conducted with one English program as foreign language in Korean College, one of the great features of flipped classroom is allowing the students to develop critical thinking. In Mehring's (2014) study of experimenting flipped classroom, consisting of 37 students from Japan first-year agriculture and engineering program, he found that participants tend to express their opinion more and start to develop critical thinking skills throughout the period of study.

Helps teachers better match lessons to students' needs.

A flipped classroom module is also known to help teachers better match their classes with the requirements of students. According to Bergmann and Sams (2012), flipping a classroom can build a framework that satisfies students' individual needs. For example, in Hung (2014)'s experiment with 75 English-learning students in Taiwanese Universities, a

students claimed the flipped classroom approach met her personal needs; she noted: “I often feel anxious in English classes, particularly when we are going to watch some videos and immediately have a discussion on them, but in this course I feel more comfortable and confident to interact with others, because I can watch the videos before class as many times as I need to until I gain full comprehension” (p. 92). Este, Ingram and Liu (2014) concluded that the emergence of a flipped classroom combines class activities and online materials to help teachers learn gain a deeper understanding about the needs of their students and make relevant lessons that are better aligned with students’ requirements. According to Tao, Huang and Tsai (2016), flipped classrooms reveal the innate needs of students during their learning and also highlight their learning aims in the study.

According to Fulton (2012), when teachers are making or revising their digital materials, they can share their suggestions or exchange new ideas with other teachers and get accurate assessments from both teachers and students to make their video or audio materials rich and meaningful. Another benefit for students is the ability to catch up with knowledge they may have missed (Roach, 2014). For example, a student could miss lectures because of illness or fall short of grasping the higher levels of learning from the lecture; however, he or she can still catch up with the learning content by watching video lectures online (Bergmann et al. 2012, Roach, 2014).

The Adjustment to Flipped Classrooms

In order to put the approach to work, some adjustment is needed. In a flipped learning

environment, before teachers and students begin the class, each of them is assigned a specific role to complete their work effectively (Estes, Ingram and Liu, 2014). Students and instructors also need to be prepared to transform their role at any stage during the learning process (Chilingaryan & Zvereva, 2017; Evseeva & Solozhenko, 2015).

Changes in being a student.

Even though a teacher is a vital part of the working process in terms of changing their role from a lecture deliverer into a classroom helper, it is students who are required to make the real transitions. More specifically, students are required to transfer their role from a listener to a presenter in class. To help students enhance their self-learning ability and shoulder the responsibility of self-study, instructors need to focus explicitly on the quality of a flipped classroom (Arnold-Garza, 2014). Clark (2015) observed that students like to use the word ‘active’ to describe their role in the flipped classroom. Similarly, Francl (2014) argued that flipped learning inspires students to take charge of their learning. Once the students take charge of their own learning, they will be more active than in the traditional classroom.

Strayer (2012) concurred that students tended to make adjustments all the time in a flipped classroom. It is prudent for a student to make these adjustments when they are learning because they can then use different skills and make changes in their way of thinking to solve problems and assimilate new facts. It is also an effective way for teachers to observe and monitor their students’ performance in the class, ascertain their ability to

control a new piece of knowledge and give them instant feedback as per their requirements (Fulton, 2012; Kim, Kim, Khera & Getman, 2014). The positive aspect is that all students can be included in the learning process, including those who find it difficult to understand what is being taught in the class. Lee (2014) mentioned that students who have traditionally been marginalized in the learning process are eager and pleased to participate in a flipped classroom because they will be able to interact and engage more during the lectures in the flipped classroom model than with a traditional model.

Changes in teaching practice.

One major difference between traditional classrooms and a flipped classroom is the manner in which teachers facilitate the learning content and how students attain knowledge concepts. It appears that instructors are also making number of changes on the surface, from supporting knowledge as a model of homework to structuring the model of pre-work (Jensen, Kummer & Godoy, 2015). According to Keefe (2007), personalized instruction help students meet their own needs in their learning process. Furthermore, teachers can absorb and integrate additional instructions with further materials to facilitate students' learning (Post, Deal & Hermanns, 2015). Flipped classrooms can also provide personalized teaching instructions that identify an individual learner's ability, give students a flexible learning environment and maximize the utilization of a flipped classroom (Davies, Dean & Ball, 2013).

According to Gilboy, Heinerichs and Pazzaglia (2015), a flipped classroom satisfies

the instructional theory of “guide on the side” (King, 1993, p.30); it also enables instructors to be more critical in planning their lesson and choosing a diverse teaching strategy. Eric Mazur, a professor from Harvard University who adopted the flipped classroom approach earlier than other instructors, spoke about a theory that may be difficult for others to believe: that an environment of pandemonium is surprisingly good for students to actively and effectively focus on their study as opposed to merely receiving a professor’s lecture and taking notes without putting any thought into it (Findlay Thompson & Mombourquette, 2014).

In addition to making changes in instruction, one fundamental requirement to make flipped classroom into a success is to change the teaching practice itself (Reidsema, Kavanagh, Hadgraft & Smith, 2017). The model of a flipped classroom is diverse, but all models need a teacher to share the pre-work with their students to allow them to extend their learning outcomes to the next class (Hao & Lee, 2016). As in the case of all teachers, once they choose to use a flipped classroom or any new approach to teaching, they would do well to re-examine their ways of thinking and pedagogy (Reidsema, Kavanagh, Hadgraft & Smith, 2017). Yilmaz (2017) conducted a research on students’ e-learning readiness satisfaction and motivation in a flipped classroom. Approximately 236 undergraduate students, which is more than half of the size of classroom, in a state university computing I class took part in this teaching model during the academic year 2015-16. According to their findings, learner-content interactions were more effective than learner-learner interactions and learner-instructor interactions.

According to Lan and Kao (2015), technology gives students more freedom to share their ideas about the working topics using their own language and individual way of thinking. In a digital collaborative learning environment, students are more willing to ask questions and discuss them with their peers or an instructor (Chew, Cheng & Chen, 2018). Vaughan (2014) observed that the combination of flipped classroom and new technologies provides an active and collaborative learning environment for learners that improved their engagement levels. A combination of in-class activities and out-of-class online materials forms an integral aspect of the flipped classroom, connecting homework and class content logically, which has helped educators decide the effectiveness of using the approach (Evseeva & Solozhenko, 2015). The quality and usability of online learning materials has an important effect on students' learning motivation and satisfaction levels during the learning process. According to Houston and Lin (2012), one of the biggest benefits of online materials is that students can re-work on these materials based on their learning arrangements. In a flipped classroom, it is convenient for students to review and gain access to the digital materials multiple times until they understand them (Egbert, Herman & Lee, 2015). Students can thus gain a deeper understanding of a new concept and find it easier to attain their learning goals by interacting with teachers and other students that they have worked with individually (Baker, 2000; Post, Deal & Hermanns, 2015). In addition, students are happy to watch their homework videos many times during the out-of-class section thus have more meaningful interactions while attending the in-class section. Most students believe that the additional time to understand a new concept and join active class

activities could be helpful in cultivating their learning abilities (Lage et al., 2000; Post, Deal & Hermanns, 2015; Seery, 2015; Zappe, Leicht, Messner, Litzinger & Lee, 2009).

To play the role of a facilitator, teachers need to share information with students during the entire learning process. When the learning happens in a group, teachers and students generally have more time to engage in one-on-one interactions (Loucky, 2017). However, the flipped classroom is not a teaching method that gives teachers 'freedom' in their teaching process; teachers still need to prepare for their classes. Francé (2014) suggests that the benefit the teachers get is being able to forego class lectures, but they do have more challenges and a higher workload before class. The one-on-one time that students require, designing in-class activities and the deeper questions asked in relation to the session are the most important parts of the in-class lesson that teachers need to plan.

Flipped classroom can provide opportunities for team teaching. According to Chen, Cheng & Chew (2016), team teaching is a teaching strategy that can meet the requirements of different learning contexts with different individual needs, and sharing the responsibilities is a benefit of using the flipped classroom model. During the lecture, a teacher will have at least one assistant teacher who helps with teaching in and out of class. Each of the assistant teachers can have a different working goal when help designing and developing the course. Some assistant teachers can record their class and prepare video materials; some can focus on observing their students in-class and giving instant feedback out of class, others can assist with preparing the activities or other digital materials. In this

team environment, every teacher plays a significant role in designing the class and making the student's learning more efficient.

Challenges and Limitations of Using the Flipped Classroom Approach

The review of the literature showed that a number of students and instructors believe that the flipped classroom is a good teaching strategy, able to cultivate students' learning habits and inspire them in their learning process. However, this teaching approach still faces challenges that need to be considered before implementation. The major problems will be categorized under the following headings: students' perspective, teachers' perspective and technology issues.

Students' perspectives.

Out-of class working session.

Flipped classroom are not always successful; resistance to this model can occur as well. One of the biggest challenges that teachers face when using the flipped classroom is the uncontrollable potential disengagement of students during the out-of-class session (Lo & Hew, 2017). Some students may find that flipped classroom is not suitable for them and are unreceptive (Giannakos, Krogstie & Chrisochoides, 2014; Lo & Hew, 2017). According to McNally et al. (2017), a number of students resisted the flipped classroom-learning environment because they prefer learning in-class to doing pre-class activities. According to Hao (2016), there are some students who do not want to do the pre-work in their study.

Some students mentioned that when they did the preview and did not understand the content they would rather have had their instructor deliver a lecture to them than take the extra time to learn the content by him or herself. Some students mentioned that difficult pre-work reduced their motivation to learn and imposed more pressure on them. There are also some students who simply do not like to do the preview. Some literature has pointed out that since students are not familiar with the flipped classroom structure, they do not have the habit of reading their instructions before the class ingrained in them (Egbert, Herman & Lee, 2015) and therefore instructors could not guarantee that their students would complete the pre-work activities.

Different characteristics of different students (Hao, 2016) are an uncertainty that teachers cannot control and predict. According to Hao (2016), some students are “free riders” (p. 86) in the group. These students do not like to join the teamwork or group discussion; they may also skip the preview work. Some students will skip an entire section of their learning in the flipped classroom (Han, 2015; Lo & Hew, 2017). Students are also not able to ask questions during the time they learn online materials during out-of-class sessions (Bhagat et al., 2016; Lo & Hew, 2017; Schultz et al, 2014). However, when they are required to post a question to their instructors or team members, they find that sometimes they do not know what to ask and often feel that the questions are merely busy work for them (Egbert, Herman & Lee, 2015).

Students also have negative feelings because of the long preparation time before

the class (Betihavas, Bridgman, Kornhaber & Cross, 2016; Lo & Hew, 2017). They can become resistant as flipped classroom instructions can increase their learning responsibility (See & Conry, 2014). When students do the preview or out-of-class work, they sometimes feel confused about what to do and where to find the specific learning materials that the teachers ask for (Egbert, Herman & Lee, 2015).

In-class sessions.

Learning activities are the most important part for the flipped classroom in-class session. However, students may resist the in-class activities of a flipped classroom. Feeling 'lost' is a phenomenon that students may experience in this environment. According to Park & Howell (2015), students who have never experienced the flipped classroom model before find it difficult to switch their goals and expectations during the in class time. It is also challenging for them to adjust to a new format of classroom learning (Kim, Park, Jang & Nam, 2017). Meanwhile, students are also likely to have doubts about the quality and quantity of their in-class learning outcomes (Park & Howell, 2015). As the course of instruction becomes more and more difficult, students may struggle to stay in the course (Strayer, 2012). Some students still prefer the traditional classroom mode to an e-learning environment activities; they prefer face-to-face classes, as they worry about the possibility of 'losing the connection' with their instructor and workmates (Evseeva & Solozhenko, 2015).

Team work is significant in a flipped classroom; however, Egbert, Herman & Lee

(2015) found that possible dissidence with team members is an element that keeps students away from teamwork and this affects the effectiveness of a flipped classroom. As showed in Strayer (2007)'s study that was conducted with a Thinkwell pre-calculus class and Introduction to Statistics in her own school, Strayer found out that students might just want to withdraw from the collaboration task to do it on their own if they have disagreement with each other, which in turn, affect the efficiency of studying.

Technology issues.

As Talbert (2014) mentioned in his article, problems of access, technology and media creation will arise when a flipped classroom is adopted. According to Lo & Hew, (2017), not all the students who participated in the K-12 flipped classrooms found that this approach worked for them because some of them did not have the required Internet access like other students did. Wang (2016) also reported his concerns when studying the flipping classroom. He mentions that even though most of the students had the mobile devices to enjoy the online sources of flipped classroom, many were prevented from enjoying the online resources due to limited access to the Internet. Participants of flipped classroom also experienced difficulties of technology access; for example, some participants lacked the microphone that was required for the class (Egbert, Herman & Lee, 2015).

On the other hand, according to Chen (2016), even for students who did have Internet access faced technical problems that they were not able to solve on their own, such as not being able to load and play the required video. The educational institutions, especially

universities, also tend to face problems in terms of supporting the technologies that are required to begin a flipped classroom (Egbert, Herman & Lee, 2015).

Besides technology, some students may not be very comfortable using the all the technologies (See & Conry, 2014). As Estes, Ingram & Liu (2015) mentioned in their study, post-secondary students generally use computing resources in public labs when studying, but most of them did have limitations. For example, students are not allowed to play audio on these devices, and cannot download applications they need to study because of restrictions imposed on these devices. Estes, Ingram & Liu (2015) also observed that the limited space in public labs may also be a problem for students. In a study conducted by Egbert, Herman & Lee (2015), the authors found that the method of creating Wiki pages, which is a website containing all learning resources, for students to learn from in a flipped classroom was problematic; students revealed that the Wiki website did not contain enough links to guide them adequately to find content they were looking for because the WiKi website's design was not clear enough for students to navigate by themselves. As a result, students were not happy. They also found that the sound quality of the teachers' creations could vary on different devices, the quizzes crashed quite often, and students complained that the Screencast site, which is a video on computer screen output with audio narration, was very inconsistent. Evseeva & Solozhenko (2015) also expressed their concern about the integrity of both students and the electronic elements of a flipped classroom.

Video issues.

As Kettle (2013) mentioned in his study, some students who participate in a flipped classroom's video lectures said that watching videos was much less effective and enjoyable than attending normal courses, because these students felt more engaged by taking notes and solving problems during a normal lecture with teachers and classmates. Scheultz et al. (2014) also pointed toward a similar attitude about video lectures by stating that students could not generally stay focused throughout the long instruction videos, and Snyder et al. (2014) opined that students may feel bored and disengaged with the learning process by simply watching the lecture videos. Students would also be unable to ask questions and get answers instantly during a video lecture like they would during the course of an in-class lecture (Bhagat et al., 2016; Schultz et al. 2014). As a result, videos are often unhelpful when it comes to teaching some students (DeSantis, Van Curen, Putsch & Metzger, 2015).

There are also several other very problematic issues when teachers try to introduce instruction videos in their teaching; the initial set up cost of instructional videos is very high (Betihavas et al. 2016; Giannakos, Krogstie & Chrisochoides, 2014; O'Flaherty and Phillips 2015). Kettle (2013) and Chen (2016) expressed their concerns when it comes to preparation for the video lectures; in particular, Chen (2016) mentioned that there are few resources of instructional videos that are ideally suitable for particular lectures; as a result, finding perfect videos that the teachers may wish to use also poses a major challenge. Meanwhile it is also very unlikely for teachers to create their own instructional videos because it will take up too much time. Syder, Paska & Besozzi (2014) added that even just a ten minute video can take hours to create, which means that long periods of undisturbed

time will be needed by teachers in order to create pedagogically sound and engaging instructional videos.

Teachers' perspectives.

By playing a significant role in the flipped classroom, instructors and faculty are also likely to experience new pressures and will need to deal with some additional problems as well. First, flipped classroom increases the workload and preparation time for instructors. Teachers need to use this extra time to create or find specific media learning materials for their students and this imposes more pressure on teachers (Evseeva & Solozhenko, 2015; Lo & Hew, 2017). Faculty also needs to spend more time on preparation for teaching this new method (See & Conry, 2014). See and Corney (2014) stated in their article that faculty members not familiar with a flipped classroom need to do a lot of pre-study in order to adapt their teaching to a flipped classroom approach. This pre-study can involve considerable time and commitment. For example, the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) requires pharmacy faculty in different education institutions to adapt this new method. In this case, faculty need to watch a YouTube video related to the course material and also watch a Prezi presentation on the approach of flipped-classroom in order to adapt their lessons. However, teachers generally do not have enough course resources to meet every specific need; as a result, they may not be fully prepared for their classes or to fully implement a flipped classroom approach (Han, 2015). Second, sufficient training for the instructors is necessary (Lo & Hew, 2017; Zuber, 2016). As a facilitator in a flipped

classroom, instructors need to make sure that their students know how to use the media equipment or new technology tools that are supplied as part of the learning materials for the entire course (Park & Howell, 2015) and provide sufficient instructions to make sure that their students know what specifically must be done for their course (Estes, Ingram & Liu, 2015). However, being unfamiliar with this teaching methodology is a big problem for instructors and hinders their ability to implement the flipped classroom model (Park & Howell, 2015). Third, instructors can find it difficult to control the out-of-class session (Lo & Hew, 2017) and also must respond to questions that students ask after their pre-class activities (Berrett, 2012; Estes, Ingram & Liu, 2015; Zhang, Wang & Zhang, 2012). Another problem is that when teachers spend a lot of their out of school time helping students, they will spend less time with their families, recreation or planning for the next lecture.

Implications

Teachers in second language classrooms always face challenges. They need to consider the age of their students, their second language-learning background, their second language proficiency, and their learning habits. These elements decide which teaching strategy to use in the classroom. During the second year of my graduate study, I taught English to Chinese students at an English training school. My class concentrated on oral English and vocabulary practice. I had nine students, most of them from South China.

Although their ages were between 20 and 30, they did not have a strong background in learning English. Most of them could not express themselves well using English, and they possessed simple and limited vocabularies.

I did not use the flipped teaching approach in my first lesson. Instead, I used a traditional teaching approach with no required preparation work for students before the class. Usually the students knew the topic of their next class but most of them did not do any preview work and materials were generally obtained from a website, such as Ted and YouTube. There are many useful second language instructional videos available on YouTube using idiomatic English that are concentrated on the use of oral English in everyday life. I downloaded these videos to use as my digital teaching materials and decided that my lesson plan would be the summary that I made based on the video contents. The assignments were monotonous and simple: word sheets and reading materials. I asked my students to memorize the word sheets and told them I would quiz them on word usage, using the method of multiple choice questions and fill-in-the-blank types of worksheets. I also asked them to read the accompanying materials, most of which were passages from published magazines or English journals. Students were then asked to prepare a short monologue describing the contents of their reading, and what they had learned.

The in-class sessions were simple. I would give the students a handout related to the topic they were given before class. I would then write useful sentences on the blackboard and teach the students to read each word out loud. I asked them to repeat after me and make

notes as well. Sometimes I would play a 20 to 30 minute English learning video in class and lead a discussion after the video was over. By the end of the class the students should have learned the basic grammatical structure, some slang words and simple sentences regarding the topic. I use this approach because I was taught this way and felt this learning approach is very effective.

After five lessons I found that students were not active in the class and most students were not happy with this teaching method. Some students complained that they learned almost nothing and they were feeling negative toward their future studies. According to the quiz results I found that most students did not improve their grades and that they still could not express themselves and they did not know how to use their new vocabulary words correctly.

During the sixth class I switched my classroom type to a flipped classroom approach. Before the class, I asked my students to do some pre-class work: watching a specific video on YouTube from the same YouTube channel I used in the past five lessons. I also asked them to download two applications onto their mobile phones. One of these was Fun Dubbing, an app created by a Chinese technology company that has videos evaluated and classified to different English-learner levels. Users can choose any video and dub their own voice over it to practice their oral English and help their pronunciation. It also allows them to practice using new words idiomatically. Users can choose to upload their records and share with others, where they can receive encouragement and helpful comments. Moreover,

learners can build their confidence by working and sharing with others. The other application I required my students to download was a vocabulary-learning app created by the Hujiang Education & Technology Corporation Limited in Shanghai, China. The app's name is Hujiang Happy Word Field. This application categorizes English words into different levels, such as IELTS, GRE and GMAT, and makes the player's progress in remembering vocabulary feel like playing a game. Users can compete with their friends or strangers, and they can join in a vocabulary study team within the app and encourage other users to study every day.

I made the in-class sessions substantial and interesting, encouraging students to have a group discussion at the beginning of each class. I asked each group to give a summary of what they learned when they did the pre-work, and come up with their own questions to share with other groups. After 20 minutes' discussion, I asked the students to make a dialogue based on the video topic. I also changed the daily vocabulary quiz to a word-guessing game. The words I prepared came from the Hujiang vocabulary study application: In the game the students would describe a word one-by-one and the last students were responsible for guessing the word. Each student would have a chance to guess the word.

After five lessons using the flipped classroom methodology teaching English, students gave me notably positive feedback in comparison to the feedback from our time in the traditional classroom. Most students reflected that they gained interest in learning English and the class was helping them a lot. They stated that they wanted to continue their English

learning using this method and they felt more confident speaking English than ever before.

After a whole semester teaching English in the English training school, I noticed that although students enjoyed the flipped classroom approach more than the traditional classroom approach that they had in China, they still saw the benefits of a traditional classroom they experienced previously. Since most Chinese people are accustomed to the traditional language classroom, it is difficult for them to adapt to a new way of thinking in a very short time. From my experiences, traditional teaching methods do not require students to do extra preparation work, and it is also not necessary to have group work or discussion during the class, so most students in my class did not want to take extra time to do the work before class time. Some students were shy and usually refused to say anything in class.

Most students reflected that they liked the applications they downloaded onto their phones, because it allowed them to work or study anytime and anywhere. The competition was their favourite part, because they could work with their friends and families to remember the vocabulary. Some students reflected that they wanted to recommend this learning method to their friends. The students also enjoyed the vocabulary guessing game and found it interesting. Their confidence started to build and they believed that they could speak to strangers in English. However, because of their lower English proficiency, classes taught completely in English were difficult for them to understand and they sometimes misunderstood the concepts.

As a second language teacher, I found that it was difficult for a student to learn a new language that comes from a different culture. As a non-native English speaker myself, I have to continuously learn English every day to ensure that I am learning the right language instead Chinese-English (which Chinese people call ‘Chinglish’). After I graduated from school, I found that the flipped classroom could give me more time on practicing compared to the traditional classroom that I have experienced in China. I believe that the flipped classroom is a useful teaching pedagogy and can definitely help students with their learning a foreign language. In order to create a highly efficient flipped classroom, teachers and faculties should always think about what students truly need during the time these students are studying a new language. The following paper will outline the best approach to prepare both teachers and students for a flipped classroom and how to most effectively create the flipped classroom.

Well-Educated Instructors Are Necessary In The Flipped Classroom

Increasing numbers of teachers have shifted their focus to using the flipped classroom. However, insufficient preparation and an oversimplified understanding of the flipped classroom approach may cause failure in using the flipped classroom methodology. In order to fit into the new era and environment of teaching English or any other languages as a foreign language using this methodology, instructors need to be well educated, highly professional and skilful. In this section, I will outline the necessary conditions and skills that instructors should have when using the flipped classroom approach and how to prepare

flipped classroom effectively.

The Background Skills of Instructors

Strong language background is required.

According to Chen Hsieh, Wu and Marek (2017), instructors should have specific knowledge to be better able to observe, understand and interact with their students and help with their studies. Any instructor who wants to integrate the flipped classroom into the language class should have a high knowledge background in the second language being taught. For example, as Freeman and Johnson (1998) mentioned in their study, a Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other languages (MATESOL) program required participants to study specific methods. In addition to this, participants also needed to learn phonology, morphology, syntax and other theories that are related to the second language acquisition. However, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), a program that focuses on teaching the second language, requires more field teaching experiences and the participants who join in the TESOL program need to pay more attention to their teaching content, teaching pedagogies and strategies. These two examples show that a good language instructor is the person that is well-educated in not only the basic knowledge of a second language but also in the teaching pedagogies, teaching theories and teaching methods of second language learning.

Professional language instructors are more helpful when giving professional ideas to their students in comparison to teachers who have a lower knowledge background. Their

teaching experiences can also help them predict what kind of questions their students may have, which will help them in preparing the learning materials and exercises for their students. Walker (2008) believes that an effective teacher should always be prepared, be positive and can display their personal touch to students. They can easily connect with their students and take control of the classes; meanwhile, they can also use time effectively and teach students with their own experiences. They should also be a good communicator to make sure that students are in a favourable learning progress.

Although flipped classroom give students more flexible time on their study, not everything can be taught through the digital materials. Sometimes when students have difficulties in understanding the meaning of the new language, in such cases well-educated instructors are necessary to help the students who have problems learning material during the process of using the flipped classroom. For instance, the English language is very complicated and depending on where and when a phrase is constructed, the phrase can have a variety of meanings. “I will eat my hat” is a phrase saying that someone is in extreme doubt about something. However, just by judging what the phrase literally means, it means someone will eat his or her hat! When explaining this phrase to the students, a teacher with a well-educated background will know that this phrase first appeared in the literature work of Thomas Brydges’ *Homer Travestie*:

For though we tumble down the wall,

And fire their rotten boats and all,

I'll eat my hat, if Jove don't drop us,

Then the student will understand this phrase very easily and study in an interesting way by knowing the origin of the phrase. Since the students should have more responsibility on planning their studies in flipped classrooms, it is very naturally that they will ask a lot of question on newly learned languages. Therefore a very educated instructor will be needed to answer the questions soundly and clearly.

Education institutions and school faculties need to understand and realize what extended knowledge a second language teacher needs to know beyond the subject matter itself. Language learning is not just learning a new language but a culture and a history. So language teaching should not be inanimate but active and creative. For example, In China, more and more English native speakers have been recruited in the university or college to teach Chinese students' English. Although these teachers can create a language-learning environment for students, most of them never have been educated in the language-teaching field and they do not know a lot about their students and their students' goals. So most of these teachers' class are disorganized and unplanned. From my personal experiences, I have had more than 5 English teachers that came from English speaking countries when I was a undergraduate student, some of them preferred to teach English pronunciation and some of them preferred group talking practice. There were also some teachers who had no lesson plans for their classes. Most of them did not let students to do introductions about themselves at the first class and did not have a lot of communications with students after

the class. Students did not want to join in the class and did assignments after the class because they thought that they did not been motivated well in the class. Teaching a new language to students needs a lot more than just knowing the language to better educate students. Instructors for foreign language teaching should be equipped in all the qualities that are discussed above.

Able to use new technology.

One of the key elements in the flipped classroom is the ability to use the most up to date technology as part of the education of students, because the flipped classroom requires students to work at home, hence, they need to be able to access resources digitally while they are away from the school. Another reason for using the most up to date technologies is that younger generations are more interested in using new technology to study. So it is also very important for the teacher to know and understand what is the newest technology and how to utilize it. In order to help the instructor to achieve that, the education institution can create a website that has the introductions of the newest technology and arrange the instructor to check the website regularly. The website can present the new technology with the ways of video, context or PowerPoint. The aim of this website is not just introducing the new technology to instructors but also teaching them how to integrate the new technologies with their teaching. Meanwhile, the education institution can set up a sub-website that is related to the main website, which talks about the newest technology. The main purpose of the sub-website (forum) is for instructors to discuss and share their ideas

about the newest technology. Instructors can get some good flipped classroom ideas by checking the flipped classroom related websites. For instance, flippedlearning.org is a good flipped classroom related website that contains many teachers' teaching experiences and suggestions, the newest reports of flipped classroom using and opportunities for instructors to exchange their teaching ideas.

One big problem is that the instructors who are working in the rural school may do not have enough technology choices if they want to use flipped teaching approach. In fact, based on the research that China.org (2017) conducted in 2013, the rural schools in China were closing at a shocking rate: 63 primary schools, 30 learning centers and 3 middle schools per day. The main reason for them closing was lacking of resources. Schools cannot even afford printed text, not let alone the newest technologies. So for these schools that do not have good conditions of using the flipped classroom approach, school faculties should help with these instructors to use the technologies that they have in school, and provide opportunities for instructors to go to other schools and exchange their flipped classroom experiences and to see the technologies other teachers are using.

Excluding the instructors' personal and professional abilities, their capacity for learning new technologies can also determine whether they can use the flipped classroom well. New technologies appear throughout history, and so did the way that second language teachers incorporate these technologies into their teaching. For example, in the era of 1950s and 1960s, the newest technology at that time was Audio-lingual Method, so when second-

language teachers at that time taught the class, they would always use this new technology for teaching vocabulary and grammar to students. In order to do that, teachers would have to learn how the new technology actually works and develop an understanding of how the students would accept this new technology.

Another more recent example could be increasing numbers of students preferring to use chatting software such as We-chat, QQ, Twitter or Facebook to record and share their learning outcomes and questions with other students. Based on the data that the Zephoria (2018) Site provides, there are over 2.27 billion monthly Facebook users for Quarter 3 2018, and on average, the Like and Share Button are viewed across 10 million websites per day. However, some professional instructors may not be familiar with these applications and struggle to use these applications in their life and in their teaching. According to a nationwide survey released by Samsung Electronic America and Growth from Knowledge (2015), although 90 percent of teachers believe that technology can help student study successfully, 60 percent of teachers still not ready to use technology in their class. In the survey, 37 percent of teachers would love to use the technology in their classroom but unfortunately they do not know how to use these up-to-date technologies. Sixty-three percent of teachers who are over the age of 43 agree that they need more training on using the new technology. Not knowing how to use the new technology has become one of the main reasons that teachers refuse or at least hesitate to use technology in their classroom and could be a major barrier for teachers adopting a flipped classroom approach.

Understanding and Introducing the Idea of the Flipped Classroom Approach

As stated in the literature review, flipped classrooms can help students build their own learning structure and cultivate their critical thinking. However, one condition that needs to be met by every instructor who wants to use flipped teaching approach is that instructors need to know what is a flipped classroom approach so that they can teach their students using this approach. Although the flipped classroom approach can be understood as an opposite teaching method to that of the traditional classroom, it is actually more concentrated on creating a learning environment for the individualized guidance to each student in the class. On the other hand, instructors need to know that every material and technology that they choose to use in the flipped classroom should be attractive, interesting, knowledgeable and straightforward to the topic. Giving students a large number of learning materials to study is not a smart way to use the flipped classroom. In the second language classroom, it is better to give students some intelligible learning materials and encourage them to do more practices and critical thinking at the out-of-class session, thus the instructor will have a better engagement of students during the in-class session.

Introducing the flipped classroom to the students is also a very necessary step to start of using the flipped classroom. As mentioned in the literature review, students may feel that it is difficult to find their goals and their expectations during the time they study in the flipped classroom (Kim, Park, Jang & Nam, 2017; Park & Howell, 2015). Therefore, they may have some concerns about their learning outcomes since they do not know what is

expected out of them in a flipped classroom. Being unfamiliar with the flipped classroom model is one cause of students' anxiety about using the flipped classroom.

Many researchers (Egbert, Herman & Lee, 2015; Jensen, Kummer & Godoy, 2015) point out that introducing the model of the flipped classroom to students before the course starts is essential for students to understand what they are going to do in the class. In the model of the flipped classroom, students are required take a lot more responsibility for their learning compared to the traditional model, so in order to make the flipped classroom approach successful students need to understand what the approach actually is, what they need to do and what the teacher expects them to accomplish in this model. For example, in the flipped classroom model, students should be learning things by themselves and remain caught up with the learning process. If students do not understand why they have so much more assignments to do, they will be unhappy, thus the efficiency of their learning may drop. It is even more so for foreign language learning courses, because the best way to learn a language is to practice it all the time. With the flipped classroom approach, the instructors can set up more practice topics and opportunities among the students so that they can practice their newly learned language in the out-of-class session. As we discussed in the literature review, the out-of-classroom session serves as a big part of flipped classroom method, and students need to understand that they are taking the responsibilities for their own study instead of teachers. So it is necessary for students to know and realize why they will receive more work to do outside classroom hours.

Adjusting roles in the classroom.

As stated in the literature review, an adjustment period to the classroom role is normal for both students and instructors. Doman and Webb (2017) have done research on teaching Chinese university students English. In their study, the teacher began using as a traditional role in the first week. After week one, the students would go through the process of feeling uncomfortable and trying to adjust their learning model into the flipped classroom model. After 15 weeks of flipped classroom learning, the students started to understand what the flipped classroom was and became use to this new teaching method in their class. By then, the instructor's role had changed to that of class facilitator. This study shows the necessity for instructors to make a plan for their course design so they can ensure students, while in the process of learning with the flipped classroom, can have sufficient time to adapt to this teaching methodology and get adequate learning assistance from their instructors.

Instructors also need to tell their students what benefits they will get from using the flipped classroom, the earlier the better, so that using the flipped classroom is rooted among every student (Chen Hsieh, Wu & Marek, 2017). Instructors should keep in mind that they must help students realize that they are the center of the class and in control of their own learning, and they need time to learn to be flexible in their learning environment and get used to their new role.

However, it will be a hard task for anybody to adapt to different roles that they are not familiar with. In order to help the instructors to successfully adapt to the new role that the

flipped classroom requires, the education institution can set up a weekly or monthly seminar with the instructors. The seminar is for the instructors to share teaching experiences in order to find out and solve the teaching problems that they have encountered during the time they use the flipped classroom. It is also important for instructors to share their future expectations of the flipped classroom and how they going to plan for their class in the new lessons, because after sharing the envision of the future flipped classroom, instructors can work together to present the best flipped classroom experience towards students and elevate their method of using flipped classroom approach to better meet the future needs.

Planning activities.

Although out-of-class sessions are very important in the flipped classroom, in-class activities are essential for students to practice learning and develop their thinking. Not every student enjoys learning outside the classroom. Getting students used to the flipped classroom model is the key component to completing the progression of the flipped classroom. A professional instructor should know how to get students to want to join in the out-of-class session and how to engage students during the lively in-class activities. Instructors also need to observe and take notes on what their students like to do during activities so they can make positive changes to help students learn better.

Knowing students' interests.

Knowing students' interests is a significant preparation work that instructors need to

do. From my teaching experiences, I find that students will contribute their time in language study if they are interested in the topics. I had a student who has just arrived in Canada from China a half a year ago and has failed the ESL (English as a Second Language) test more than twice. His parents were worried about his English study so he went to the training school. Before the class, I let him do an English test so that I could know what he needs to learn in his future study. He had a low English proficiency and he seemed not interested in learning English at all. Although he did not do the test with a serious attitude, his writing attracted me. The topic was to write a short paragraph on school life. He wrote that school life was boring, he had to join in the class every day and there was no class telling them how to put theories in to life. He did not want to learn what teachers taught in class, he was more interested in history and wildlife.

After reading his short paragraph, I decided to choose learning materials for his study of English based on wildlife and field survival. During the class, he seemed active and happy. He also joined in the teamwork and group discussion on his own initiative.

Doing a survey on students' interests could be an effective method for instructors to better know their students. It is also a good way for instructors to choose learning materials and for doing their lesson plans. Furthermore, in the flipped classroom, the survey should not only focus only on students' interests, but also include students' learning habits, their favourite learning technologies, their learning goals, and their time schedules. The more teachers gets to know their students, the better a teacher can prepare their lessons.

Building A Framework Before Using The Flipped Classroom Approach

According to Lin & Hwang (2018), using a flipped classroom is a way to create a community in which students can enjoy their language learning. They suggested that in order to make the flipped classroom approach successful, it is important for teachers to construct an effective basis for the flipped classroom approach. Understanding the interactions between four aspects of a flipped classroom is necessary as instructors build their own effective framework. These aspects are the Performance Aspect, the Participation Aspect, the Perception Aspect and the Interactive Aspect. Figure One shows how these four aspects work with each other, as well as what elements would be needed to help to build a learning community using the flipped classroom in second language study:

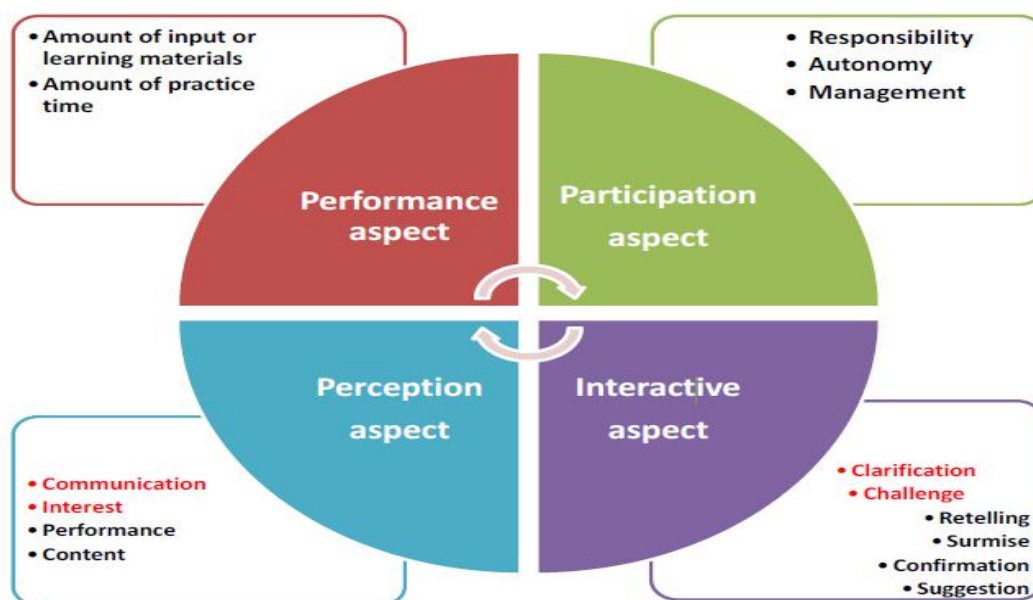


Figure 1. The Four Aspects' of Second Language Teaching Interaction from Lin & Hwang (p. 216, 2018)

By knowing and building the four aspects of the framework, instructors can easily balance out their effort preparing for the flipped classroom and make sure how to achieve the expectations of a flipped classroom approach. For example, during the time preparing for the flipped classroom, instructors should make a clear timetable for the whole flipped classroom process. They should always know how long they will spend gathering the learning materials and how much knowledge they want their students to accept for one class. Gathering feedback from each student is also important so that instructors can make decisions about how to teach the new class. For example, before the very first class session, the instructor can do a course survey on what are the students' expectations of the course and students' areas of interest; the instructor can then make better decisions on planning out the new class for this specific group of students. Meanwhile, instructors should always be aware of the approach that students are taking towards their own ability on their learning; in a flipped classroom approach centre of study shifts from teacher to student to students' preparing for the upcoming class. So instructors should take more time on planning for the out-of-class activities to help students to be more involved in the flipped classroom teaching approach.

As for students, Lin & Hwang (2018) suggests that there should be four dimensions to

students' study methods. The first dimension is called the 'content dimension,' where students learn how the flipped classroom approach will enrich their learning experience and how the flipped classroom approach will help them to connect theory with real life. The second dimension is the 'communication dimension.' This dimension will help students to figure out how to effectively cooperate with their classmates and how to facilitate more interactions between the teacher and the students. The third dimension is the 'performance dimension.' This dimension should help students manage their learning skills or develop problem-solving skills. The final dimension is the 'interest dimension,' wherein students feel that the flipped classroom approach is enjoyable.

With these four dimensions considered as the framework for students, the instructor can get to know which area the student is good at and which area the student needs improve upon, then the instructor is able to help students to choose the best approach to their learning. Under this framework, students should have a clear goal in their study and thus should hopefully perform much better in both the in-class session and out-of-class session. On the other hand, students will likely enjoy the course overall based on their own interests and be more critical about the topics, because the students will engage in discussion and critical thinking more actively on topics that they are interested in. Students are no longer the knowledge receivers in the flipped classroom, they need to 'digest' the knowledge as their own and draw some inferences based on what they have learned in order to be prepared for class the following day.

Choosing Appropriate Learning Materials in the Flipped Classroom

Using a flipped classroom requires instructors to pay attention to the demands and goals of students, especially when instructors are choosing the learning materials for their students. The following elements can be considered when choosing materials to be used in a flipped classroom approach to teaching a second language.

Principles of choosing the learning materials.

Input section and output section of language learning.

According to Lee and Wallace (2018), instructors who want to use the flipped classroom should continually refer to their original curriculum when choosing materials. I suggest that in a language class, the four significant factors (listening, speaking, writing and reading) should be separated and taught in two distinct areas: the input section (listening and reading) and the output section (speaking and writing). This method is very useful and important because if there is no “in” then there is no “out”: input section focuses on learners’ receiving the knowledge information and the output section is how learner use their input knowledge and express them out. By separating the four factors, the instructor can more easily prepare the course material focusing on the area where the student need to improve on. For example, the input section focuses on students receiving information from the outside environment. In this section, students gather information from external sources to help them cultivate their sense of the new language. Instructors can expand their range of learning materials so that students can have multiple sources and remain motivated on the

basis of their interests. For instance, if the class topic has been set as pyramid, then teachers can choose their class materials as pyramid's history, the architecture structure of pyramid, the legend of pyramid or the comparison of different pyramids in the world. These materials can be choose from different online resources such as documentaries, audio books, online readings and so on. In the output section, instructors should help the students go deeper into a topic or a specific language point to help them cultivate their critical thinking and to let them understand the language better, thus the materials should be chosen more specifically around the language topic. For example, consider the same class topic: pyramids. In the output section class, instructors can make a question list or a paragraph with some blanks to help students speak out or write down the pyramid knowledge that they have learned in the out-of class session. The questions should be set more in detail, e.g., What is the pyramid's name? Which country does this pyramid come from? What do you want to introduce to others about this pyramid? Students will answer the questions and then easily to make the answers as a short paragraph so that they will learn how to use and organize the language structure gradually.

Video making and video choosing.

Video choosing.

Many researchers (Chen, 2016; Egbert, Herman & Lee, 2015) have suggested that instructors should consider websites such as YouTube and TED.com as a source of curriculum materials. However, few of them introduce how to filter the videos on these

websites. As we have introduced in the literature review, finding a video for the flipped classroom through the platform is not the most important part in the flipped classroom, instructors should not spend a large amount of time finding learning materials without paying attention to how the learning materials are used to engage students in the out-of-class sessions. Choosing a video is not easy. First, the background of the video maker needs to be considered. Though the language class is mainly focused on language teaching and language learning, the academic background of the video maker and the purpose of the video determine the quality of the video. Good digital materials can provide good language resources, which are professional and localized. Second, a realistic view of the students' ability to understand the video should be considered by instructors, because when students are watching the video, materials that are too complicated may cause misunderstandings from students. Third, for the language classroom, teaching the mainstream of one language is important, with dialects seen as the secondary consideration. For instance, there are seven dialectal regions in China, and although these dialects all belong to the modern Chinese language, sometimes people from different regions cannot understand each other. Mandarin is the only official language and therefore instructors of a Chinese language class that teaches Chinese to students as their second language from other countries should always consider choosing Mandarin materials instead of other dialects from China. Similarly, if a teacher is teaching in an English class, they should choose standard English as their teaching materials.

Video making.

For the instructors who want to make their own class videos, there are some conditions that need to be considered first.

The first condition is the content of the video. The video that used in class should be concise, clear, easy to understand and organized. For the flipped classroom, the video should not be too long; 15 to 20 minutes would be good enough, if the video is too long students may not be able to stay focused. Instructors should always prepare thoroughly for the video shooting: before make the video, instructors should have an outline of their teaching content and practice what they want to say in the video until is fluently and logically. In the traditional classroom, most teachers would like to deliver a lecture in their class. It is not necessary for the instructors who want to use the flipped classroom to avoid making a lecture video, however, instructors should have aware that deliver a lecture is boring to students compare to the other creative learning materials, such as movie or music video. So teachers should always highlight the important knowledge points in their video to make sure that students could be engaged by the video in the out-of class session.

The second consideration is the video making equipment. To ensure that students can receive a good quality video, instructors should have good video making equipment, such as a high definition camera, lighting equipment, noise reduction equipment, computer and so on. Video editing is very important as well. Instructors should also know or have someone help with using good video editing software to edit their videos.

The third consideration is how to share the video. As what we have mentioned above,

easy access for students to get the learning materials are important. On the one hand, instructors should always consider easy access of their video, on the other hand, they need to think about if that if they upload the video online.

In addition to this, students should be encouraged to do their own videos as well. According to Bakla (2018), students were familiar with using the digital video-making tools and enjoyed making videos for their class.

Language proficiency of students.

In the language classroom, the students' learning background is important to the instructor as well. Some studies show that students with a higher language proficiency are more motivated in a flipped classroom and are more likely to study than the students who have a lower proficiency and are unmotivated (Chuang, Weng and Chen, 2018; Lee & Wallace, 2018). If students have lower language proficiency, then the instructor should consider designing their class to first help these students meet their goals, and then take them to the next level (Lee & Wallace, 2018). Scaffolding the lesson is more suitable for students who are struggling to learn a second language or students who have just started learning a new language (Lee & Wallace, 2018). Scaffolding is like a bridge that serves as support for students and that can help students easily learn knowledge through a step-by-step process. For example, before students watch the video during the class session, instructor can hand out vocabulary sheets for students to use so that students can better understand the video and the meaning of the vocabulary. Scaffolding requires modeling and

practice. The instructor gives step-by-step instructions and then allows the students to practice what has been modeled in class (Khalil, Rania & Fahim, 2017). With lower level language students, imitation of instructor is important because the students at that level have very little knowledge about the new language. Instructors can also choose learning materials that relate to the students' lives and encourage them to use the new language daily. For example, the ESL instructor can teach some newest and most popular song lyrics to students, since a lot of students do listen to many English songs on the daily basis and can practice the language frequently. The students could be assigned to choose an English song that they like but do not understand the meaning of the lyrics, and then the instructor can help students to understand what the song is about, as a result, students will be more engaged with the lecture since they are learning what they are interested in. Materials using the students' mother-tongue is allowed so that students can better understand the language points that they receive during the time they are not in class.

More choices of digital tools.

As discussed in the literature review, technology problems can sometimes be the reason that students cannot cooperate with instructors to complete the flipped classroom. Technology problems include using new technology that both students and instructors are not familiar with, students' difficulty in finding access to the new technology, limited online resources and a limited equipment supply for both students and instructors. Before switching to a flipped classroom, instructors should always research what kind of

technology is acceptable and available for students. If students do not have real-time technology equipment like a mobile phone or iPad, then real-time study during the out-of-class sessions would not be suitable for these students and instructors should find another way to support them in joining in the flipped classroom. Making use of the school's resources can help students who do not have the online access to study in the flipped classroom. For example, for students who do not have the Internet or a computer at home can chose to study in the school's library and use the computers that are provided by the school. It is always good to give students choices according to their own learning habits and interests. Although the teacher would spend more time finding and making the materials or giving feedback to their students, students would be motivated in their learning and gradually start to understand how to work with the student-centered learning approach of a flipped classroom.

A lot of software developers notice that the market requiring great online learning tools or platforms has been growing and growing over the past decades; as a result, it is not surprising that there are lots of flipped classroom Apps for smartphones and flipped classroom websites for computers. All these resources range from interactive lessons, instructional videos to whiteboard Apps. For example, 'Spiral' is a great learning app for the flipped classroom. This app stands out because it helps instructors to better engage students in the out-of-class activities. This app supplies four types of activities: Quickfire, Clip, Team up and Discuss. Students will be pair up easily when doing the activities and instructors can give responses and feedback on time. A very attractive part of using this app

is that both students and instructors can stop the learning videos and have some discussion or check understandings at any time they want no matter during the in-class session or out-of-class session. The basic account of this app is free, so it is affordable for instructors and students. Instructors can choose to upload the assignments through Google Drive, create standard-based assignments or draw learning materials from other cooperating websites, such as Listenwise, TedEd.com and Khan Academy. Another great feature for this website is that it provides clear direction, instructions and exemplars for students to learn how to upload videos, PDFs or use the online resources.

With that being mentioned, the instructor should also be more cautious in planning out the assignments. With all these new websites and apps providing convenient platforms for instructors to create the assignments, instructors should know what type and how much of the assignment can best help the students to practice the knowledge they just learned from the class session. For example, if the class session is about teaching a historical event of that language's background, then the best homework for the students after this particular class session will be watching a movie talking about the historical event in that language with the subtitles on. Students could then be assigned to write a short essay to discuss their thoughts about the topic of the video, so that they can not only practice the vocabulary they learned by watching the video but also practice critical thinking and writing skill. On the other hand, the instructors should not solely rely on the websites and apps and do not add their own tastes, which may best suit the lecture, on how to use the websites and apps, no matter how flexible and individualized that the platforms claims to be. The best way for an

instructor to use these platforms within his or her teaching is to employ his or her own thoughts on how to map out the assignments. For instance, instructors can arrange students work in different groups and allow different assignment styles based on students' interests and working capacity. Instead of doing exercises and writing papers, instructors can encourage their students to write a poem or write a drama and play in class, students can also choose to sing a song in second language as well.

Accessibility of the learning material.

One of the most important aspects of the flipped classroom is to try to use the newest technology into the education system. However, when we consider how to incorporate the newest technology with the flipped classroom, we should also consider the students' accessibility of whatever the newest technology might be. Students need easy-to-access learning materials, because if the students cannot access the learning materials, then the whole point of having learning materials online is not met.

For example, nowadays, a very popular newest technology is Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtue Reality (VR). AR, augmented reality, is a technology can link the real-world environment with computer information. In AR, all the objects that reside in the real world are "augmented" by the computer to present information, incorporating sensory information such as visual, auditory, olfactory, etc. When learning the new language, the AR system can obviously help the students to better understand the language and associate what they just learned from the classroom with the real-life materials. However, the

equipment for this technology is very expensive, as a result, it is very unlikely for students to access at whatever the learning resources that are based on AR at home.

Another accessibility problem the instructor should consider is not only choosing the affordable platform but also how easily can the students access the learning material. For instance, the instructor puts assignments on one website, however, the websites require the students to log in to access the resources, and there is a sign-up limit on the websites, which in turn can prevent students' ability to access the assignments. In addition to the login issue, the instructor should also consider the minimum requirements of the material. One example could be that the instructor creates a great video for students to watch, however, the video's resolution is set to a very high standard, so when students browsing the video online, it will take a long time to buffer, especially true for the students with a not-so-good internet connection. As a result, even if the course material is great, the student may not be able to enjoy it.

Students' Involvement In A Flipped Classroom Approach

Every student has his or her own learning habits. Even though in the flipped classroom students no longer need to have a lecture in the classroom, having only one type of video or one type of digital material can still be too boring and simple for students throughout their learning process. As Chuang, Weng and Chen (2018) have suggested in their research, the out-of-class activities should always be adjusted and arranged into multiple strategies so that students can study differently based on their own traits to achieve their goals.

In the following paragraphs I will suggest some methods instructors can use when preparing the pre-work assignments for students:

Student Accountability

As stated in the literature review, disengagement of students is the most commonly and troubling challenge facing all instructors who want to use the flipped classroom. So it is always significant for the instructors to think about how to manage their out-of class activities and get to know their students' learning status. I will give some suggestions from my experiences.

Suggestions to engage students on out-of class assignments.

First, instructors should prepare multiple types of learning materials for students to choose for their out-of class sessions. By that, I am not only talking about the learning topics but also the digital learning tool. Instructors need to make sure that every student in the class has enough learning resources to support their study. Secondly, some form of competition is a good way to motivate students' study in the out-of class session.

Instructors who use the flipped classroom can build a form of competition in the out-of class session; for example, students who can finish extra work in their study can get some prizes. Instructor can also use the digital tools or computer to make an analytical statement to record students' out-of class working process and show to students to let them know the quantity and quality of work they have done in the out-of class session. However, it is not necessary for instructor to give a grade for their work, because the purpose of out-of class

session is to encourage students enjoy their own learning process and try to have some understandings by themselves. Thirdly, instructor should do spot checks irregularly. Students may have feeling that they can always skip pre-work and if lucky enough to not be found by teachers these students can join a group and let their workmate finish the majority of work in class. So instructors could prepare some quizzes or questionnaires and give their students a short time test irregularly right at the start of the class to encourage an awareness that they need to always be prepared for the class so that they can work effectively.

Suggestions on engage marginalized students in the flipped classroom.

Marginalized students are easy to be ignored, especially in the flipped classroom. Some instructors may be busy working on give students feedback or answering their questions, other teachers may want to focus on students' analysis process in the activities instead of having a communication with every student in the class. So marginalized students might not get timely help from instructors and may lose their confidence in their studies. For this group of students, I suggest that instructors have some communications with them in order to know what are their interests, what is their favorite teaching instruction, what is their learning goal and where they need help mostly in their learning process. Instructors should also build a good relationship with these students by paying more attention on their work and encouraging them so that they will gradually build confidence on their study and thus try to learn as much knowledge as they can. Helping

marginalized students find a good workmate is another good way to encourage them on their study. Some marginalized students may feel uncomfortable or shy to speak with their instructor, but may like communicating with their friends, so instructors can help marginalized students to work in a team setting with their friends in order to make them more comfortable in their study.

Working as a Group or Working Individually

Respecting individual characteristics is important in the flipped classroom (Chuang, Weng and Chen, 2018). Some students like to do the work by themselves but some people prefer discussions with a team. In the flipped classroom, teamwork is a good way to help instructors to engage their students in doing the in-class discussions and in-class activities. However, I suggest that students can do group work during the out-of-class sessions as well. Students can share what they have learned from the materials and come up with questions for the upcoming class. In the language flipped classroom, if instructors support their students in doing pre-work as a team, then a leader is necessary in each team. Since language learning is a process of accumulation, leaders should have a higher language level than the other team members so they can help with other students' learning. They can also help themselves find their own problems during the group sharing time.

Another important reason that I suggest students to work in a group is that learning a new language can never be achieved fully if one does not use it to communicate with others. The main purpose to learn a new language is to make the individual connect with the new

culture, new people and new community, as a result, the best way for the students to practice what they just learned in the classroom is using it right away in their daily life. So my suggestion for the teacher is to set up the group assignment by making students only communicate in this new language throughout the meeting; another suggestion is that the instructor can make the students create scenarios that contain the knowledge they just learned from the classroom, and then the instructor can let the students practice and perform these scenarios during the class time. Meanwhile, the instructor could also set up connections with some English-speaking education institutions. For instance, an English-teacher in China can make his or her English class setup online meetings with Mandarin class in an English-speaking country, so the students in both classes will mutually benefit from such meetings.

Using a Message Board to Help Students Study and Save Instructors In-Class Time

In the literature review, we noted that studies show that the interactions that happen between the instructor and student are very important in the flipped classroom. However, in the out-of-class sessions, real-time interactions between instructors and students cannot always be guaranteed. An on-line message board is a good way for instructors to gather information and questions from students when they are not in class. Instructors can prepare the answers according to the questions that are asked on the message board. Especially for the language classroom, real-time correction for students can save in-class time. Instructors do not have to use extra time in class to correct their students' pronunciation and grammar,

and can therefore concentrate on the topic development. For example, in China, We-chat is a very popular application used on mobile phones, iPad and even computers that connect people. I was fortunate enough to be able to join in a flipped English class in a university in China. After the class, the instructor added me into their We-chat group, which is like a public message board where every group member can share and see other people's messages, so that I could get the latest information from the class. I was not surprised to find that students enjoyed sending messages in this platform. Students asked their questions whenever they liked, and once someone asked a question, everyone in the group could answer, including the instructor. When students were asking and answering questions, the instructor could give them advice on developing their thinking and suggestions on learning English. Students were encouraged to post good learning materials and sources that they thought were good for their studies. After just a few classes, almost all the students believed that the teacher really helped them with their English learning and they also felt that other students in the class were nice and easy to get along with, which led them to feel more positive in their learning. Using a message board in the flipped classroom could thus help instructors know their students better, save more in-class time to answer the questions and help their students to improve their second language learning.

Recording Students' Voices

Reading and talking are efficient ways for students to learn a new language. As we have mentioned above, along with making videos, voice recordings can also help teachers

to better know the problems that students are having when they're learning a new language. When learning a new language, one of the biggest challenges that most of the students will face is pronunciation, and when the language course is taught in colleges and universities, there could be at most hundreds of students in one classroom, so it will present an almost impossible task for the instructor to check each student's pronunciation during the class time. Thus it is very important for the instructor to find a way to test the students' pronunciation outside the classroom, as a result it is very important for instructors to leave assignments to students to record their voices through video taping or voice recording so that the instructor can check the pronunciation of each individual student.

Another benefit for making the students to record their voices is that it also encourages student to connect their hobbies with their language learning. Recordings can come in many forms. Students can dub a piece of movie, sing a song or record a paragraph according to their interests. They can use videotaping on the smartphone to record their voices and upload the record onto the classroom forum that the instructor creates.

On the other hand, the instructor can also introduce some Apps on the phones to help the students to practice and improve their pronunciation. In this day-and-age, smartphone use has become a lifestyle for most of us and having an App on the smartphone to practice the pronunciation any time and anywhere is very handy for students. One of the notable App that stands out is called "Duolingo." This App is recording the learner's voice and the pronunciation; the learner can only pass the question if the App can identify the

pronunciation of the student. Many teachers and students around the world have used this app in their language teaching and language learning, so this type of popular app can be considered for use in the flipped classroom.

Summary

As we have discussed above, a flipped classroom approach to second language teaching has many advantages. It presents a newer and more modernized teaching approach for instructors. Compared to traditional teaching methods, the new approach has a lot more advantages, such as a personalized learning environment, interesting course materials, and better interactions between instructor and students. In addition the flipped classroom approach is generally incorporated with up-to-date technologies, as the technology innovates through time, the teaching model should automatically evolve with the innovation of technology and thus always present the best teaching strategies to instructors.

However, this approach still faces many challenges, especially in regards to the use of technology. Besides supplying good learning materials to students, in-class activities for students and some training programs for instructors are necessary to ensure the success of a flipped classroom teaching pedagogy. Further research could focus on how to introduce and integrate the new technologies for both teachers and students. There are some students who always been marginalized in the flipped classroom. For example, some students are shy to speak in class or do not want to join in the teamwork. So further research should also pay attention to this group of students and study ways to help them adapt to the new teaching

structure.

Using a flipped classroom approach in the second language classroom will experience a cycle: awareness of using the flipped classroom teaching approach, understanding instruction in the flipped classroom, gathering suitable learning materials and technologies for students and then helping students get used to the flipped classroom. Students, for their part, have to gain awareness of their responsibility for their own study and learn to see instructors as facilitators. Instructors should always pay attention to mixing new technology or new learning elements into their courses and help students to be active in the classes. Using the flipped classroom approach takes a long time to make it effective, but it does not mean that the teaching structures are always the same in the flipped classroom. Here are some suggestions and advice for instructors that may still be confused or uncertain about using the flipped classroom approach into their second language classroom:

1. Instructors should gradually adjust the classroom structure from the traditional classroom to the flipped classroom. Although there are many teaching applications and teaching materials that can be chosen for the flipped classroom approach, it is not necessary for instructors to choose as much learning materials as they can to give to their students and ask them to learn in the out-of class session. Both instructor and student need time to adjust their role in the whole teaching process. A partial flipped classroom can be implemented for the first time. For example, teacher could give students only a 10 minutes video or a piece of music to learn at the out-of class session and the in-class session would be half language

teaching and half class activities. Once students get used to the flipped classroom approach, instructors can ask them to do more out-of class work and guide them to use more technologies to finish their work.

2. It is not a good thing to use flipped classroom all the time in a second language classroom. Although instructors should encourage students to join in the student-centered learning environment, students still need face-to-face teaching. Communication is beneficial for students to learn a new language and it also beneficial for teachers to get to know their students better. So instructors can change their classroom into different teaching structures to help students keeping active in the class.

3. Information sharing is a good way for instructors to prepare for their class. It will take a long time for a teacher to prepare all the materials for just one class, but it is more effective to gather teachers together and prepare for the similar class content. Every teacher can have a chance to share their class thinking and give some suggestions to make sure that the learning materials are more creative, interesting and acceptable for students. For instructors, they can save more time to prepare for the class and take more time giving feedback to students and have good communications with students.

All in all, even though the flipped classroom approach has some flaws, it still presents one of the best teaching approaches to instructors in the second-language learning context. As time goes on, the areas that are under-developed today will be improved, and I predict that a flipped classroom approach will eventually be accepted and used by more and more

instructors.

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