

Flipping the Classroom in ELT Context

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ABSTRACT: *The Flipped Classroom is a teaching pedagogy that involves reversing the centuries-old classroom teaching and homework. Students will now study in their home using the modern technology such as listening to screen-casts of the teacher and they will do practical assignments such as debates and problem-solving in the classroom. In this research article, I hypothesise that Verbal Ability Skills teaching and exercises can be flipped for better results. As a case study two groups of students are given screen-casts for preparation and given problem solving exercises in the classes and data has been collected and analysed.*

Key Words: flipped classroom, Verbal Ability, Screencast.

INTRODUCTION

“The classroom should be an entrance into the world, not an escape from it”, famously quipped John Ciardi, a famous American poet and etymologist. Teaching should spur not only some activity but also creativity. In today’s world, perspectives of English teaching are changing fast along with emerging acronyms such as TESR (Teaching English for Social Responsibilities and CLT2 (Communicative Language Teaching, Contextualized Language Teaching). Goals of ELT have shifted from mimicking native speakers to wielding English to express the voice of the ‘subaltern’.

In 21st century, English teachers desire to combine various approaches and methodologies and to apply them to reap the goals of the course. Though this Eclectic approach largely depends on the nature of the lesson and the ability of the students, this charms the students and simplifies the work of the teachers. Flipping the classroom is one such approach that inspires the students, encourages them to self-learn and thus shortens the work of the teacher. Flipping the classroom is popularly used in Engineering and Business schools of several foreign countries. In this article, I hypothesize that, by flipping the classroom in ELT context, a teacher can successfully ingrain difficult concepts such as active voice or indirect speech into slow bloomers.

WHAT IS FLIPPED CLASSROOM?

Flipped Classroom is a pedagogical model in which professing concepts in classroom and doing exercises at home are interchanged. A teacher can give video lessons in forms of podcasts or screen casts before students come to class. After learning from these supplement materials, students will come to class with beforehand knowledge of the subject and will employ his knowledge in practical exercises, discussions and assignments. Against the traditional method, the source of information shifts from teacher to student via video lessons. This will inculcate the learning culture among students.

EXPERIMENT

The entire experiment is split into three phases: Preparation for Flipping Classroom, Flipping the Classroom, Post-Flipped Activities. Flipping the classroom should be meticulously pre-planned and executed. In the **first phase**, whether a chapter of a lesson is being flipped or the entire course is being flipped should be determined initially. One can curate or create materials based on the time availability and topic chosen. Intimating students via lecture, notices or social media about the flipped classroom plans will create an awareness for preparation and self-study among students. In the **second phase**, when students come to the classes with some knowledge

of the concept, their knowledge should be tested and stretched via exercises, discussions and collaborative assignments. A teacher can choose to be a facilitator or trainer here rather than a lecturer. Clearing doubts as well as grading students for their works will happen in this stage. In the *third and final stage*, a feedback should be collected from students to determine the success of the experiment as well as to incorporate new, desired elements in material preparation and implementation.

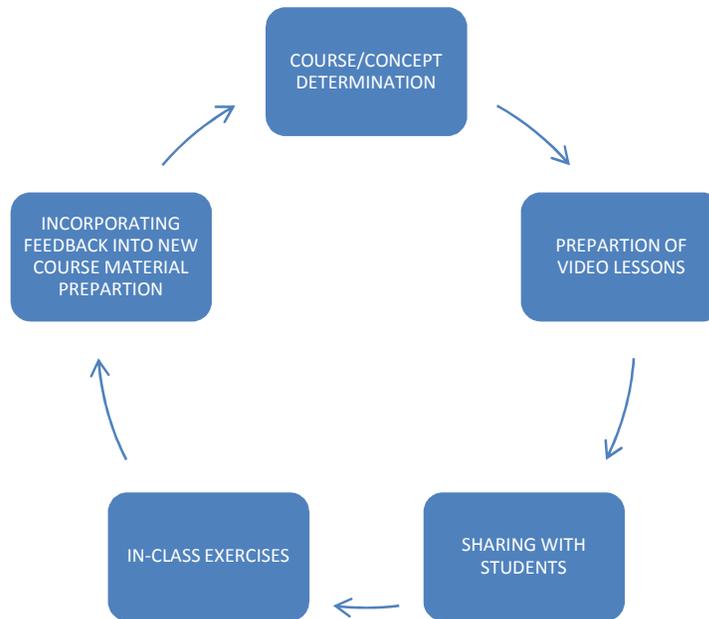


Fig.1 Process of Flipping the Classroom

Phase1: Preparation for Flipping the Classroom

A teacher should first finalise the concept or the chapter to be flipped. Then using modern technologies the teacher should create video lessons on the concept. For instance, if a teacher chooses to teach Active and Passive Voice in a flipped classroom environment he or she should prepare primary video lessons based on the basic concepts of Active and Passive Voice such as twelve types of tenses, basics of Sentence Pattern etc. Further, videos on rules of interchanging voices and examples of how a sentence of Active voice is changed into passive voice should be given as video lessons. Thus, a carefully prepared video lesson replaces the concept of lecture in classroom is irreversibly replaced to home.

A teacher can borrow existing materials from YouTube and use them as video lessons or create own video lessons as podcasts (episodic series of digital media files) or screen casts (digital recording of computer screen output such as PPTs with audio narration). Sites such as Screencast-o-Matic, Jing, Or Screenr can be used for creating own screen casts.

Phase 2: (While) Flipping the Classroom

Once students come to the classroom with the knowledge of the concept, a teacher can give exercises on the topic and test their knowledge. While testing, a teacher explains the concept briefly. However, it should be a one-on-one session with a student who has doubts rather than an outright lecture. Apart from this, a teacher can have an interactive discussion on the topic. For instance, while dealing with different types of writing how to differentiate an argumentative writing from persuasive writing could be discussed or a debate on which is important being argumentative or persuasive can be conducted.

A teacher can further stretch the knowledge of the student by adding more examples and exercises on the topic. While teaching Active and Passive Voice, explaining how to interchange a sentence with two objects

(SVIODO) or impersonal passive will stretch the knowledge of the student. Spending class time in applying the concept rather than lecturing will help the teacher to detect where students are lagging.

Phase 3: Post Flipping the Classroom

After implementing the flipped classroom, a teacher should devote his or her time to collect feedback from students. Feedback should focus on how the study materials and student experience can further be improved. Suggestions on new sites for screen casts or video lessons should be entertained. Incorporating the feedback in the new course materials preparation will result in successful teaching-learning environment creation.

The goal of higher education is not only widening the horizons of the knowledge of a person but also inspiring one to invent and discover. To put it in Walt Disney's words "*We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.*" Flipping the classroom in ELT is one such attempt to rediscover the pleasure in inspiring students, reinventing course materials and reinvigorating students as well as teachers in the process of creating teaching and learning classrooms.

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