



THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM MODEL IN GENERAL ENGLISH CLASSES: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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<https://doi.org/10.51453/2354-1431/2024/1087>

Article info

Received: 13/3/2024

Revised: 25/4/2024

Accepted: 26/6/2024

Keywords:

English Teaching and Learning; Education; Flipped Classrooms Model; Challenges and Opportunities

Abstract:

The integration of the flipped classroom model into general English classes represents a transformative shift in contemporary language education. This study explores the myriad opportunities and challenges inherent in adopting the flipped classroom approach for English language instruction. Opportunities include fostering student engagement, encouraging active participation, and leveraging technology for enhanced learning experiences. The challenges, on the other hand, encompass issues such as content creation, technological implementation, and potential resistance to change. Through a comprehensive review of literature and practical insights, this research sheds light on the multifaceted dynamics of the flipped classroom model in the context of general English education. By examining both the positive aspects and obstacles, this study aims to provide valuable insights for educators, administrators, and researchers navigating the landscape of language instruction.



MÔ HÌNH LỚP HỌC ĐẢO CHIỀU TRONG CÁC LỚP TIẾNG ANH TỔNG QUÁT: CƠ HỘI VÀ THÁCH THỨC

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<https://doi.org/10.51453/2354-1431/2024/1087>

Thông tin bài viết

Ngày nhận bài: 13/3/2024

Ngày sửa bài: 25/4/2024

Ngày duyệt đăng: 26/6/2024

Từ khóa:

Dạy và học tiếng Anh, giáo dục, mô hình lớp học đảo ngược, thách thức và cơ hội

Tóm tắt

Việc tích hợp mô hình lớp học đảo ngược vào các lớp học tiếng Anh tổng quát thể hiện sự chuyển dịch mang tính chuyển đổi trong giáo dục ngôn ngữ đương đại. Nghiên cứu này khám phá hàng loạt cơ hội và thách thức vốn có trong việc áp dụng phương pháp lớp học đảo ngược để giảng dạy tiếng Anh. Những lợi ích mà hình thức lớp học đảo chiều mang lại bao gồm thúc đẩy sự tham gia của người học, khuyến khích sự tham gia tích cực và tận dụng công nghệ để nâng cao trải nghiệm học tập. Mặt khác, cũng có những thách thức không hề nhỏ về các vấn đề như sáng tạo nội dung, triển khai công nghệ và tính ngại thay đổi của cả người học lẫn người dạy. Thông qua việc xem xét toàn diện tài liệu và hiểu biết thực tiễn, nghiên cứu này làm sáng tỏ nhiều mặt của mô hình lớp học đảo ngược trong bối cảnh giáo dục tiếng Anh tổng quát. Thông qua việc xem xét cả những khía cạnh tích cực và trở ngại, nghiên cứu này nhằm mục đích cung cấp những hiểu biết có giá trị cho các nhà giáo dục, nhà quản lý và nhà nghiên cứu trong việc định hướng bối cảnh giảng dạy ngôn ngữ.

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of language education, innovative teaching models continually reshape traditional paradigms to better meet the evolving needs of students. One such model that has gained prominence in recent years is the flipped classroom approach, a pedagogical strategy redefining the dynamics of instruction. This article examines the implications of applying

the flipped classroom model in general English classes, contributing to the ongoing discourse on effective language education methodologies.

According to C. Nwosisi, F. Alexa, R. Warren, and W. Kelly (Aydin.B and Veysel, 2016), the flipped classroom model shifts the conventional teaching paradigm by encouraging students to engage to instructional materials independently outside the classroom, thereby utilizing in-class

time for collaborative activities and practical applications. In the context of general English instruction, this approach holds promise for enhancing student engagement.

As we explore the opportunities and challenges associated with integrating the flipped classroom model into general English classes, it is crucial to understand the transformative potential of this pedagogical shift. The notion of student-centered learning, as supported by J. Bergmann and A. Sams (Baepler, P., Walker, J.D. & Driessen, M, 2014), becomes increasingly prominent, offering educators the chance to create a more interactive and personalized learning experience.

However, with every innovation comes its set of challenges. Creating tailored content that aligns with curriculum objectives and effectively harnessing technology for educational purposes pose intricate challenges, as noted by B. Aydin and V. Demirer (Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. 2012). Additionally, navigating potential resistance to change among both educators and students requires thoughtful consideration, as highlighted by recent studies by F. Ozdamli and G. Asiksoy (Foldnes. N, 2016).

1.1. Rationale of the study

This article aims to provide a comprehensive examination of the opportunities and challenges arising from the implementation of the flipped classroom model in general English classes. By incorporating insights from notable researchers and educators, we seek to contribute to the growing body of knowledge surrounding effective language instruction, offering educators practical insights to inform their pedagogical decisions. Join us on this exploration of the transformative potential and nuanced complexities embedded in the flipped classroom model within the context of general English education.

1.2. Research questions

This article is intended to find the answers for the following question: What opportunities and challenges does the flipped classroom model offer?

1.3. Participants

There were 30 participants who were learning general English in the first term of school year 2023 – 2024 at Dong Nai Technology University. They were non – English majored freshmen.

2. Literature review

2.1. What is the flipped classroom model?

The flipped classroom model is an instructional strategy that reverses the traditional approach to teaching and learning. According to J. Bergmann and A. Sams [2], the typical sequence of in-class and homework activities is inverted in a flipped classroom. Instead of the teacher delivering direct instruction during class time and assigning practice or reinforcement as homework, students are exposed to new content outside of class, usually through pre-recorded videos, readings, or other online resources. Class time is then utilized for interactive and applied learning activities. F. J. Strayer (Halili, H. S. and Zamzami. Z, 2015). also defined that a flipped classroom is an instructional strategy and a type of blended learning that reverses the traditional educational arrangement by delivering instructional content, often online, outside of the classroom. It moves activities, including those that may have traditionally been considered homework, into the classroom.

These definitions highlight the common themes of inverting the traditional teaching model, using technology for content delivery outside of class, and promoting active, engaged learning during class time. The flipped classroom model aims to enhance students' understanding and application of concepts through a more interactive and student-centered approach.

In summary, the key features of the flipped classroom model include:

- Pre-class instruction: students explore instructional materials independently before class.
- In-class activities: class time is used for active learning, discussions, problem-solving, and other hands-on activities.
- Technology integration: the use of technology, such as online platforms and video lectures, is fundamental for delivering pre-class content.
- Teacher facilitation: the role of the teacher shifts from a lecturer to a facilitator, guiding students through the learning process.

2.2. Inversion of the traditional teaching method

According to F. J. Strayer (Halili, H. S. and Zamzami, Z, 2015), the inversion of traditional teaching methods, exemplified by models like the flipped classroom, represents a paradigm shift in education. Departing from the conventional approach of in-class lectures followed by homework, this inversion places greater emphasis on self-directed learning outside the classroom and interactive, application-oriented activities within. By leveraging technology and encouraging students to engage to instructional content independently, educators can optimize precious in-class time for collaborative discussions, problem-solving, and personalized guidance. This inversion not only promotes a deeper understanding of subjects but also cultivates critical thinking and teamwork skills. As education continues to evolve, exploring and embracing these innovative teaching methodologies can redefine the learning experience for students and educators alike.

2.3. Role of technology in facilitating the model

The role of technology is central to the success of the flipped classroom model. P. Baepler, J. D. Walker and M. Driessen, 2016 stated that technology plays a key role in facilitating various

aspects of the flipped classroom, from content delivery to communication and collaboration. Here are some key roles that technology plays in the flipped classroom model:

2.3.1. Content delivery

Technology allows educators to create and share pre-recorded video lectures, which students can access outside of class. This provides flexibility for students to review the material at their own pace and as many times as needed. H. S. Halili and Z. Zamzami also supported that beyond video lectures, technology enables the delivery of diverse online resources such as interactive simulations, e-books, and multimedia presentations, enriching the learning experience.

2.3.2. Accessibility and Flexibility

B. Aydın and V. Demirer [3] emphasized that learning management systems (LMS) and other online platforms provide a centralized space for hosting and organizing course materials. Students can access these platforms anytime, anywhere, promoting flexibility in their learning schedules. The use of mobile devices further enhances accessibility, allowing students to engage to learning materials using smartphones or tablets, making learning more portable.

2.3.3. Interactivity and engagement

Technology tools, such as quizzes, polls, and discussion forums, facilitate interactive pre-class assessments and post-class discussions. According to F. Ozdamli and G. Asiksoy. This enhances student engagement and provides real-time feedback to both students and instructors. Online collaboration tools enable students to work together on projects, participate in group discussions, and share resources. This collaborative aspect is crucial for the interactive in-class activities promoted by the flipped model.

2.3.4. Assessment and feedback

H. S. Halili and Z. Zamzami found out that technology allows for the creation of online

quizzes and assessments, providing immediate feedback to students. Formative assessments can be integrated into pre-class materials to gauge understanding. Email, discussion forums, and messaging apps facilitate communication between students and instructors. This open line of communication is essential for clarifying doubts and addressing concerns related to pre-class content. Educational technology can also generate data on students' interactions with online materials, helping instructors identify areas of strength and weakness. This data-driven approach supports personalized learning and informs instructional decisions.

2.3.5. Teacher – student interaction

Technology enables virtual office hours through video conferencing, allowing students to seek clarification and guidance from instructors outside of traditional class hours. According to Foldnes (Strayer, F. J. 2012) online tools make it easier for instructors to provide timely feedback on assignments, fostering a supportive learning environment.

In summary, technology is a fundamental enabler of the flipped classroom model. It supports the asynchronous delivery of content, promotes interactive learning, facilitates collaboration, and provides valuable data for instructors to adapt their teaching strategies. The effective integration of technology enhances the overall learning experience and helps achieve the goals of the flipped classroom model.

3. Methodology

3.1. The research setting

The study was conducted at Dong Nai Technology University in Dong Nai Province. The participants of this study were first-year students whose major is not English. They were studying English with the flipped classroom model during the first semester of the school year 2023-2024.

3.2. Research design

This study was designed as a case study to explore the in-depth information within a short period of time and it was suitable for a small group of participants.

3.3. Data collection

The data was collected by interviews and observations. Moreover, there were also analysis of primary and secondary sources to gain an understanding as thorough as possible.

4. Finding and discussion

4.1. The opportunities of implementing the flipped classroom model in general English classes

The flipped classroom model is an innovative approach to teaching that reverses the traditional roles of class time and homework. When flipped classroom was used for the group of participants, they engaged to the instructional content outside of class, often through videos or readings, and then use class time for collaborative activities, discussions, and problem-solving. Implementing the flipped classroom model in General English Classes can offer various opportunities for both students and educators.

Table 1. Students' answers about the opportunities of the flipped classroom model

Q: What benefits does the flipped classroom model bring you?	Numbers of students
1. Suitable learning pace	28
2. Classroom engagement	27
3. Critical thinking	25
4. Communication	30
5. Collaboration	30

4.1.1. Individualized learning

Most of the students agree that the flipped classroom model is well-suited for individualizing learning as it allows students to progress through instructional materials at their own pace and tailor

their learning experience to their individual needs. It often involves providing various learning resources, such as videos, articles, and online quizzes. Students can choose the format that suits their learning style, making the learning experience more personalized. This also accommodates varied learning speeds and allows students to spend more time on challenging concepts while moving quickly through material, they already understand. It often involves providing various learning resources, such as videos, articles, and online quizzes. Students can choose the format that best suits their learning style, making the learning experience more personalized.

4.1.2. Enhanced classroom engagement

The students also think that the flipped classroom model has the potential to enhance classroom engagement by shifting the traditional learning dynamic and promoting active participation during class time. Class time in a flipped model is dedicated to interactive and collaborative activities rather than passive lectures. Engaging activities such as discussions, group projects, problem-solving exercises, and hands-on experiments, capture students' attention and involve them actively in the learning process. These activities not only engage students but also help them apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations.

4.1.3. Development of critical thinking skills

The students engage to pre-class materials (videos, readings, etc.) independently, allowing them to grapple with new concepts and ideas before coming to class. This pre-class preparation sets the stage for critical thinking by prompting students to analyze and question the content on their own. Class time is dedicated to discussions, debates, and collaborative activities. These interactions provide opportunities for students to express their thoughts, challenge ideas, and engage in meaningful dialogues. Discussing concepts with peers fosters critical thinking by exposing students to diverse perspectives and

encouraging them to defend and refine their own viewpoints. The flipped model emphasizes the application of knowledge through problem-solving activities during class. Students are presented with real-world scenarios that require them to analyze information, make decisions, and propose solutions. This practical application of knowledge promotes critical thinking skills. Teachers can employ Socratic questioning techniques during class discussions to prompt critical thinking. By asking open-ended questions that encourage analysis, evaluation, and the synthesis of information, students are guided to think deeply about the material.

4.1.4. Improved communication and collaboration

All of the students agree that the flipped classroom model can enhance communication and collaboration among students and between students and teachers in several ways. Peer-to-peer interaction is often encouraged during in-person sessions. Students can work together on problem-solving exercises, share ideas, and discuss concepts, leading to improved communication and collaboration. Collaborative learning becomes a central part of the educational experience, promoting a sense of community among students. With traditional lectures moved outside of class time, teachers have more opportunities to interact with individual students during in-person sessions. This one-on-one or small-group interaction fosters stronger teacher-student relationships and provides a supportive environment for students to express their thoughts and concerns.

4.2. The challenges in implementing the flipped classroom model in general classes

While the flipped classroom model has proven to be beneficial in many cases, there are also challenges associated with its implementation.

Table 2. Students’ answers about the challenges of the flipped classroom model

Q: What problems do you have when studying with the flipped classroom model?	Numbers of students
1. Technical problems	19
2. Preparation	27
3. Student accountability	11
4. Not ready to change	14

4.2.1. Access to technology

It can be seen from Table 2 that not all students may have equal access to technology resources at home, including high-speed internet, computers, or devices. This can create disparities in how students engage to pre-recorded materials.

4.2.2. Student accountability and preparation

Most of the students have problem with the preparation for the new lessons at home. They said that it took them a lot of effort and time. Some students struggle with self-discipline and time management. Without direct supervision during at-home learning, there is a risk that some students may not adequately prepare for in-class activities.

4.2.3. Resistance to change

We can see that there are 14 students (nearly 50%) are not ready to change. This may happen with some educators too. Both students and educators may be resistant to a shift in the traditional classroom model. Resistance to change can impact the successful adoption and implementation of the flipped classroom approach.

4.2.4. Teacher training and preparation

Through the observation and experience of the teacher, implementing a flipped classroom model requires creating high-quality, engaging pre-recorded content for students to review independently. This can be time-consuming, especially when teachers are already balancing other responsibilities. Moreover, problems with internet connectivity, access to required software, or issues with devices can disrupt the learning experience for both students and teachers.

Overcoming these challenges requires careful planning, ongoing professional development for teachers, and a supportive infrastructure. Flexibility, communication, and a willingness to adapt are key factors in successfully applying the flipped classroom model in an educational setting.

4.3. The best practices for successful implementation

There are some practical tips and advices when educators apply this new educational methodology.

4.3.1. Start small

Begin by flipping a single lesson or unit before transitioning to an entire course. This allows you and your students to gradually adjust to the new model.

4.3.2. Set clear expectation

Clearly communicate expectations for pre-class activities and in-class sessions. provide detailed instructions on how students should engage to the materials and participate during face-to-face time.

4.3.3. Create engaging content

Invest time in creating engaging and high-quality pre-recorded content. Use a mix of multimedia elements, such as videos, interactive quizzes, or readings, to cater to different learning preferences.

4.3.4. Use existing resources

Leverage existing educational resources and platforms. You don’t need to create everything from scratch. Curate or modify existing materials to suit your objectives.

4.3.5. Provide support for technology

Be aware of potential technological challenges your students may face. Provide resources and support for accessing and navigating the technology required for the flipped model.

4.3.6. *Foster a collaborative environment*

Design in-class activities that encourage collaboration and peer-to-peer learning. Use the face-to-face time for discussions, group work, and problem-solving exercises.

4.3.7. *Encourage student reflection*

Incorporate reflection activities into the learning process. Encourage students to reflect on what they've learned, how they've applied knowledge, and any challenges they encountered.

4.3.8. *Offer flexibility*

Recognize that students may have different learning preferences and schedules. Provide flexibility in how they engage to pre-class materials and complete assignments.

4.3.9. *Evaluate and adjust regularly*

Regularly assess the effectiveness of the flipped model. Collect feedback from both students and yourself, and be willing to make adjustment based on insights and outcomes.

4.3.10. *Emphasize active learning*

Prioritize active learning in both pre-class and in-class activities. Encourage students to apply knowledge, solve problems, and engage in meaningful discussions rather than passively consuming information.

Because the flipped classroom model is not a one-size-fits-all approach, it may take time for both educators and students to fully adapt. Be patient, open to feedback, and willing to iterate on your approach to make the flipped model work effectively for your unique classroom context.

5. Conclusion

The flipped classroom model presents opportunities for enhanced student engagement, active learning, and collaborative experiences. By shifting traditional lectures outside of class, educators can utilize in-person time for interactive discussions, group activities, and personalized support. This approach fosters a student-centered

environment, encourages critical thinking, and accommodates diverse learning styles. However, challenges include potential technological barriers, the need for high-quality content creation, and the importance of ensuring equal access to resources. Student accountability, resistance to change, and the careful management of classroom dynamics are also considerations. Overcoming these challenges requires thoughtful planning, ongoing support for both teachers and students, and a commitment to flexibility and adaptability in the learning process.

Moreover, the flipped classroom model offers substantial benefits for both teachers and students. For educators, it provides opportunities to personalize instruction, focus on facilitating discussions and collaboration, and offer targeted support to individual students. Teachers can better gauge students' understanding in real-time, tailor lessons to address specific needs, and create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment. Students benefit from increased flexibility in their learning, as they can review materials at their own pace, participate in interactive activities during class, and receive immediate feedback. The model fosters critical thinking skills, encourages active participation, and cultivates a sense of ownership over the learning process, ultimately enhancing the overall educational experience.

Given the transformative potential of the flipped classroom model, educators in the field of English education are encouraged to explore and consider its implementation. This innovative approach not only empowers teachers to create more engaging and personalized learning experiences, but also provides students with the opportunity for active participation and critical thinking. By flipping the traditional classroom structure, English educators can foster a dynamic and collaborative environment that enhances language acquisition and communication skills. We encourage a thoughtful exploration and adaptation of the flipped classroom model to unleash its full potential in elevating the English education experience.

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