

Chapter 104

Is Flipped Classroom a Tendency or a Fad? The Point of View of Future Teachers in the Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents an overview of the challenges facing teachers and education students with regard to the growing interest in the flipped classroom, and the results of an exploratory study, conducted in the Philippines, about the intention to adopt this pedagogy by students training to be teachers. After a brief definition and a description of this pedagogical approach, a review of recent research explores the relevance and effectiveness of this method. The chapter questions if it is to be a fad or a revolution and presents the pro and cons of its implementation. A survey has been conducted with 153 fourth year education students of to determine their knowledge of this pedagogical approach, portraying their perception of the flipped classroom and associated concepts as well as their future behavior intention.

INTRODUCTION

The buzzword “flipped classroom” has been the center of great interest in the past few years in academic and other media (Estes, 2014; Atteberry, 2013) and is also proposed for training purposes in industry (Goodman, 2013). It is sometimes referred to as “reverse teaching”, “flipped learning”, “backwards classroom” or “reverse instruction” (Sunguro, 2014; Hoffman, 2014). This popularity is not only evident in the USA, but also in the Philippines (Azucena, 2014; Esperanza & Toto, 2014), which is the context of this particular study.

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Is Flipped Classroom a Tendency or a Fad?

Yarbro, McKnight and Arfstrom (2014) recall that in a recent joint survey of the Flipped Learning Network (FLN) and Sophia Learning, 96% of 2,358 teachers recognized the term “Flipped Classroom” and 78% among them indicated they had flipped, at least partially, one or more of their lessons, which represents an increase of respectively 22% and 30% in regards to a similar survey conducted two years before. This is reported to be the case in all subjects, all grades, but more in high school; they flip 5.4% every day, 20% 3 to 4 times a week and 24% less than once a week; 89% of those who did not flip yet wish to know more about this pedagogy.

This chapter adopts the FLN (2014) definition of flipped learning which is a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter. The flipped classroom strategy finds its origins in the work of pioneers, namely

- Alison King (1993) who suggested the necessity to better use the class-time to produce learning through meaning instead of being used only for information transmission.
- Eric Mazur (1997) who initiated the discussion about “peer instruction.”
- Lage et al (2000), credited for having coined the term “inverting the classroom”, based on their own experience at college level, as a method to create a learning environment.
- Khan (2004), creator of Khan Academy, who based his teaching on videos as a method to skip what was understood and watch again what was not clear.

After reviewing a wide range of research on the flipped classroom, Bishop and Verleger (2013) concluded that flipping was perceived as positive, despite questioning the fact that a majority of studies are based on one single group design and student perceptions. Only a few are experimental researches aimed at assessing the real outcomes of this approach. Indeed there appears to be a lack of controlled experiments to assess the real value of flipped learning with rigor, as the implementations are often anecdotal and reported in blogs instead of peer-reviewed conferences or journals (Goodwin and Miller, 2013). Despite the fact that many question its real effectiveness, many others seem to advocate this revolutionary approach (Lape, Levy & Yong, 2014), and favor towards this approach is still strong (Straumsheim, 2013).

Apart from the academic importance of the flipped classroom, there is a question regarding the readiness of the Philippines to implement this pedagogy. The fear that some could be left behind is a concern shared by Butrymowicz (2012) for the poorest students who may not be able to afford the technology costs. This opposite position is seen as inevitable according to one of the eleven teachers of a \$300,000 flip project at CATCH Academy: “If students don’t have access at home, they’re already at a disadvantage” (Phillips, 2013). Horn (2013) also mentions this discrepancy between rich and poor districts and that the flipped classrooms are not so different from the traditional setting.

This study intends to present the pros and cons of the flipped classroom, before presenting the results of a survey attempting to assess the perception of Filipinos (working or studying in the education field) toward this new pedagogical approach.

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