# Chapter 11
# The "Flip" Side of Online Course Redevelopment:
## A Case Study of Flipping a Translation Course

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## ABSTRACT

*The COVID pandemic has highlighted the need for universities to be innovative and inclusive in their response to changing circumstances and to develop high quality courses in a completely online environment. In Semester 1, 2020, the team redeveloped a large undergraduate English and Chinese translation course at an Australian university in flipped mode while shifting the course to fully online delivery. The authors found that although student attitudes towards online flipped learning were initially mixed, levels of student engagement were similar to previous semesters. By the second semester of implementation, student evaluations of the course were significantly higher than in pre-flipped, pre-online semesters. This experience demonstrates that it is possible to develop a flipped university translation course that is interactive and engaging and challenges students academically. With appropriate scaffolding and the judicious use of technology, flipped learning offers a very positive learning experience and can be a key element of effective course design in fully online mode.*

## INTRODUCTION

The need for universities to be innovative and inclusive in their responses to changing circumstances and to develop high quality courses in a completely online environment was thrown into stark relief by the COVID pandemic. It is true that blended and online course delivery has been a trend in higher education for some time. Prior to the pandemic, however, the vast majority of courses were still delivered primarily or entirely in face-to-face mode. During lockdown, institutions of higher learning were forced to redevelop their courses very quickly in the massive shift to online delivery. Some courses were adapted only slightly in the process. Others, including the course in this case study, underwent significant modifications to course structure and instruction style to ensure pedagogical efficacy and a high quality educational experience for students in the new fully online mode, with course designers taking the opportunity to update course content with more authentic materials and assessment.

In the Australian context, it quickly became obvious that it will be important for the foreseeable future to enable students based in another jurisdiction to enrol and fully participate in courses even when borders are closed; to ensure a valuable and interactive learning experience within the constraints of social distancing requirements; and to preclude discrimination against students who are unable to attend on-campus classes (e.g. because they are immunocompromised). Incorporating flipped learning activities supports these goals, although there is a slight cost in that it adds an element of complexity to course redevelopment.

The current case study describes how an undergraduate English > Chinese translation course at an Australian university was converted for online delivery by building flipped learning into the new course design. This chapter examines some strategies and approaches that can assist in promoting high levels of student engagement and ensuring a positive and effective learning experience for students when a course is both online and flipped. In the process, it sheds some light on the benefits of flipped learning for higher education language courses. These are all issues that are of heightened research and pedagogical interest in the new age of online course delivery.

## BACKGROUND

### Flipped Learning in Language Courses

A significant focus of research into education in recent years has been a shift away from teacher-centred approaches towards more active learning approaches, based on the underlying belief that it is important for students to exercise more autonomy in their learning. Flipped class or flipped learning has emerged as an innovative learner-centred approach which researchers and practitioners alike believe can achieve this goal.

Within the existing literature, several slightly different terms are used for the same concept: "flipped classroom" (Reidsema et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2020), "flipped learning" (Deng, 2018; Francl, 2014), "flipped teaching" and "flipped instruction" (He et al. 2019; Jiang et al., 2021) all refer to a pedagogical approach that involves the re-scheduling of content delivery and hands-on practice. In the traditional mode of learning, students absorb new knowledge *during class time* from didactic instruction and then cement their learning through homework exercises *after class*. In this new approach, however, the bulk of new lesson materials is delivered to students *prior to the lecture* through digital technology, so that

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