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## **USING THE “FLIPPED CLASSROOM” TECHNOLOGY IN ENGLISH CLASS IN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS OF BSU**

*The authors research a flipped classroom as a new educational technology aimed at increasing students' motivation, encouraging interaction and creating a student-centered environment. The authors show how the new educational technology takes the heuristic approach to a different level. The article describes the ways a flipped classroom is used in the School of Business of BSU and outlines its main advantages and disadvantages for both teachers and students.*

**Keywords:** *heuristic approach, student-centered environment, flipped classroom, motivation, interaction, learning portal, technical issues*

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## **ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ ТЕХНОЛОГИИ «ПЕРЕВЕРНУТЫЙ КЛАСС» НА ЗАНЯТИЯХ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В ИНСТИТУТЕ БИЗНЕСА БГУ**

*В статье обсуждается «перевернутый класс» как новая образовательная технология, направленная на повышение мотивации студентов, на обучение взаимодействию и создание учебной среды, ориентированной на студента. Также описываются способы использования «перевернутого класса» в Институте бизнеса БГУ и его основные преимущества и недостатки как для преподавателей, так и для студентов.*

**Ключевые слова:** *эвристический подход, среда, ориентированная на студента, перевернутый класс, мотивация, взаимодействие, учебный портал, технические проблемы*

Working as instructors with students in the School of Business of BSU makes us constantly think of the best, the most efficient and effective way of teaching English to students from different backgrounds, at different levels. We all can recall situations when we find some of our students idly sitting in a classroom, eyes dimmed, half listening to the instructor in front of them.

We all realize that gone are the days of a teacher-centered classroom when instructors could simply focus on passing on the information to the student, assigning homework and leaving it to them to recycle the material, and then just asking the information back awarding them a grade. Though effective for some students, this type of a classroom compels others to be passive recipients of information, rather than participants in their own learning process.

We realize more than ever now we need to make the most of a classroom as much as we can with the right tools, techniques and a different attitude to the classroom itself.

As the massive flow of information now seems to be beyond a student's capacity to acquire knowledge at the required speed, the full amount, particularly in a classroom, the heuristic approach, which is "a method of teaching allowing students to learn by discovering things themselves and learning from their own experiences rather than by telling them things" [1], is rapidly gaining popularity. Consequently, the idea of a classroom has changed. A new educational technology has developed that moves away from a teacher-centered space and onto a more collaborative, student-oriented learning environment and makes learning more personal.

The flipped classroom is a form of blended learning that brings advances in education and technology together and moves 'homework' into the classroom. It is a teaching method in which students first learn about a new subject at home, review lecture materials, especially online, and then have discussions on it in class. "In short, they preview at home and practice in class. In class, time is dedicated to discussions, interactive exercises, and independent work that would have previously been completed at home – all under the guidance of the teacher who is present and available to respond to any questions that may arise" [2].

The materials reviewed prior to class can take the form:

- of a recorded lecture;
- an educational video;
- a video broadcast;
- a podcast (a radio programme that is stored in a digital form that you can download from the internet and play on a computer or on an MP3 player);
- a vodcast (video-on-demand – a video stored in a digital form that you can download from the internet and play on a computer or on an MP3 player);
- a reading assignment;
- any material that the instructor assigns as relevant to the topic.

Students can rewind the podcast or rewatch the video as many times as they need to fully grasp the idea, and then they turn up in class with their questions to the educator. So, keeping up with the class is no longer an issue, and it gives them the ability to learn more independently. Instead of passively sitting and listening, students can apply their knowledge in a more practical way, and instructors are free to spend their time working with students and giving them individual support and attention. This way, students feel more valued and appreciated which helps to translate extrinsic motivation into intrinsic.

One might ask why flip the classroom. Interaction is a key factor when it comes to a flipped classroom. Students have prepared their homework and already have some basic knowledge about the subject. In class, it is possible for them to delve deeper into the learning material and to clarify any points that are still unclear. As an instructor, you can see what kind of difficulties your students are running into and where the main emphasis should be placed. Besides, the educator can pose more challenges for those who sail through the learning material, and vice versa, more help if students scrape through the task.

The end result is a customized, engrossing learning experience for every student, regardless of their learning style, pace, or ability.

The way we use the flipped classroom in our university is quite varied. We do not restrict it to video content only. Most flipped classrooms derive from our university's Learning Portal. Both instructors and students have their own input in the creation of this new teaching and learning model. Here are some forms of the technology we use in addition to educational videos.

S. I. Ostapuk delivers video instructions for students before their projects or exams. Students just love the videos because they can turn to them any time and make sure they are moving in the right direction.

I. A. Yaroshevich encourages students to use such platforms as [www.playbuzz.com](http://www.playbuzz.com) and [learningapps.org](http://learningapps.org) in order to focus on some specific vocabulary, create their own content and share it with the rest of the groupmates for educational purposes. In her course on the Portal students can

find vocabulary podcasts created with the help of screencast-o-matic.com. These are usually given as a home assignment for self-study in order to be able to use the vocabulary later in class.

We, instructors, all have our own courses there on the Portal, with lots of learning exercises, collaborative projects and even discussions. As instructors we are able to track the progress of the students and view their results. This makes it possible for us to have a clear idea of what our students struggle with and what to pay extra attention to in class. Our tools are quite user-friendly and have a lot of options to make learning as tailored as possible.

To sum up, here are a number of advantages to this learning style based on the authors findings.

1. The biggest advantage is that students have more control of what, when and how they learn. They realise more that they learn for and by themselves.

2. A flipped classroom promotes student-centered learning and collaboration. Students prove better able to own the knowledge they have acquired which, in turn, builds up confidence. They also achieve more success through effective teamwork.

3. Classes and content are more accessible (provided there is tech access). By making video lectures available online at all times, students who are forced to miss class due to emergencies, illness, vacations or sport can catch up quickly. This also gives educators more flexibility when they themselves are sick or have to be away for some time.

4. Transparency for parents. It makes it easier for parents to see what their students are doing. As it is supposed to be online, parents can have access to their student's learning material 24/7.

5. A flipped classroom can help both parties save their time. Since watching an online lecture or a podcast, or whatever comes down to usually less than 15 minutes, it gives students and instructors more time outside class to focus on other interests like families, friends, hobbies, etc. The good news is that it is easy to use your lectures again and again.

However, there are some obvious disadvantages to this new model of teaching and learning.

Technical issues:

1. No access to the Internet means no homework. Once students do not do their homework, they get easily distracted by other things.

2. Another big issue is the necessity for students to spend so much time in front of the computer screen. If every instructor starts flipping their classroom, students will have to spend hours watching the lectures. Should we help them keep the balance and reduce the amount of time spent in front of the 'blue-eyed monster' or not?

3. Not everyone may be that adept at learning through a computer.

4. Equipment keeps breaking down or lagging.

5. Lack of appropriate equipment. Video plays a major role in the majority of flipped classrooms, and universities must consider the platform used to record and stream video content to their students.

Lack of motivation

The main thing is that students have to play an active role in preparing their homework. They always have to be motivated to do their homework and be prepared for class. If they do not, they will not be able to benefit from the new technology. The flipped classroom requires a lot of self-discipline. Students have to know how to learn. They must realise that when they do not have the basic knowledge, it will be hard for them to dive deeper into the subject. This may come with time, and educators should really motivate students to do their homework, otherwise there is no flipped classroom.

Organization

The first time you implement the flipped classroom, it will have to be a lot of organization. Teachers have to introduce the students to the whole different concept. This can take some time, because they go from a more passive learning style to an active learning style.

Additionally, there is a concern that implementing a flipped classroom adds extra workload on teachers, as there are several elements that must be integrated carefully to allow the class to

flourish. Responsibilities include recording and uploading the lectures, which take time and skill, and introducing activities in the classroom that will enhance the subject matter as well as motivate students to participate and prepare for class. Though teachers can gradually integrate flipped elements into their classrooms, it will still require additional time and effort from educators.

Despite these issues, the flipped classroom can still be an effective, hands-on approach to improving student achievement and involving them in their own education. The flipped classroom has already made a difference to students and teachers worldwide. You will never know unless you try. Remember, you can always give it up or rather modify it to enjoy it to the full.

### **References**

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