

# Flipped Learning and Language Learning: An FAQ-styled Discussion Piece

Tan Yuh Huann

## 1. What is Flipped Learning? What are the similarities and differences with Flipped Classroom?

Flipped learning is a term coined by scholars of the Flipped Learning Network (FLN) as a refinement to their original idea of *flipped classroom* (Bergmann & Sams, 2014).

Flipped classroom, in a nutshell, is “direct instruction delivered to the individual outside of class, and more strategic use of in-class time for group work and individualised attention” (Bergmann & Sams, 2014, p. xi).

Flipped learning is defined as “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.” (FLN, 2014).

As a refined conception of flipped classroom, flipped learning shares similarities and differences with its predecessor term as seen in Table 1.

Table 1

*Similarities and differences between flipped learning and flipped classroom (adapted from Bergmann & Sams, 2014)*

	Flipped Learning	Flipped Classroom
<b>Similarities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct instruction moves from in-class to outside of class</li><li>• Video or other media are used by students individually prior to coming to class</li></ul>	
<b>Differences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demarcation of learning in terms of <i>learning spaces</i> — individual, and group</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demarcation of learning in terms of <i>time</i> — in-class, and outside of class</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Student</i>-centric — Focus is on engaging students in deeper and further thinking</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Teacher</i>-centric — Focus in on delivering content efficiently</li></ul>

The history of flipped classroom may be traced to an American army training camp in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, followed by a Harvard physics course in the 1990s, and later to the often named Chemistry high school teachers’ — Jon Bergmann and Aaron Sams’ — classrooms some 10 years ago (see Teoh (2015) for an extended trace of history).

## 2. What is NOT flipped learning?

In the definition of flipped learning, there are a few keywords — *transformed, dynamic, interactive, and engage creatively* — used to describe the resultant group learning space. As such, in the group learning space, often the classroom, students should not be seen doing more practice papers or

listening to more transmission of knowledge based on teacher-centred instructions (Bergmann & Sams, 2014).

### **3. Does flipped learning entail the use of information and communication technologies (ICT)?**

There are two parts to a flipped learning design to be considered, namely (1) the individual learning space, and (2) the group learning space. Based on the definition, direct instructions take place in the individual learning space. For such purposes, some teachers have produced and uploaded instructional videos online for students to view after curriculum hours. While videos, as a delivery format are not compulsory, the use of ICT, in this case, *affords* teachers to provide students with multimodal instructions. Dependent on the instructional objectives, prints (e.g. textbooks, workbooks, worksheets) may work for *pre-group learning* preparations; alternatively, students may also be creating learning artefacts instead of receiving direct instructions.

Next, the group learning space. A teacher can design interaction activities to engage students without ICT. However, the use of ICT may afford transformation of the group learning space into a more dynamic and engaging space. For example, online sticky notes (e.g., Linoit) afford every student a voice in a large class when ideas are exchanged in real-time. Online response systems (e.g., Socrative) afford teachers to engage students in dynamic discussions where every person's input is valued. While students can unleash their creativity through pen-and-paper means, ICT affords students to view and exchange their creations, within and beyond the group learning space. Very importantly, ICT reifies the artefacts of learning which afford both students and teachers to engage in assessment for learning.

### **4. Is flipped learning only suitable for “high ability” students?**

The focus on transforming the group learning space to become more dynamic, engaging, and creative does not differentiate students based on abilities per se. Transformation, however, entails changing existing learning processes and practices *by the teacher*. Hence, **teachers' readiness** to guide and facilitate students to learn new practices and develop new habits is the key to engaging in flipped learning successfully. In fact, within the individual learning space, a language teacher can incorporate different sets of instruction to cater to the different language proficiencies of his/her students (see next FAQ).

### **5. How can flipped learning be adopted for L2 language learning?**

Literature suggests that L2 language learning is founded upon various theories including the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1982/2009), and the output hypothesis (Swain 1985). The input and output hypotheses, when put together, highlight the importance of providing learners with the opportunities to receive language inputs and to produce language outputs that are comprehensible to them. The applicability of flipped learning for L2 language learning can be examined in the light of these theories.

Firstly, the individual learning space. A teacher could design activities that provide students with comprehensible language inputs. For example, if a teacher were to choose video as the mode to deliver direct instruction, the teacher can produce a multi-segmented video to cater to the diversity of his/her students. The first segment of the video could be pitched at a baseline level such that the contents would serve as comprehensible inputs for most of the class. The next part of the video could be pitched using simpler language to help the lower proficiency students in the class to understand the key ideas covered in the first segment. A third segment of the video targets the

higher proficiency group where the teacher could provide additional instructions to engage these students. Separately, another teacher may decide to use the individual learning space for students to generate dialogue (linguistic output) based on a piece of written assignment completed earlier. Following Swain (2000)'s argument for the importance of dialogue to generate comprehensible output for learners, the dialogue facilitated by ICT online could be centred over peer critique of students' written work.

Next, the group learning space. With direct instructions shifted to the individual learning space, the group learning space offers a great opportunity for a teacher to facilitate students to construct linguistic knowledge through collaborative dialogues (Swain, 2000).

## 6. What are the preparations needed for flipped learning to take place for L2 learning?

In the four pillars of flipped learning — Flexible Environment, Learning Culture, Intentional Content, and Professional Educator (FLN, 2014) — the last pillar points towards the critical importance of the teacher to develop dispositions and skills beyond those required in traditional teaching. In other words, **teacher's readiness** is the key. The specific areas that a language teacher need to work on may be found in Table 2.

Table 2

*Language Teacher's Readiness based on Pillars of Flipped Learning*

Pillars of Flipped Learning	Language Teacher's Readiness
Flexible Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willing to be flexible in terms of designing or rearranging learning activities among the two learning spaces to meet <b>students' learning needs</b></li> <li>• Flexibility in terms of expectations of timeline for learning, and the assessment of <b>students' learning</b></li> </ul>
Learner-centred Learning Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Shift away</b> from an <i>instructionist</i> approach to learning, where learning is primarily believed as standardised, and focused on memorisation and rote learning (Sawyer, 2014)</li> <li>• <b>Students are given</b> as many opportunities as possible to create linguistic knowledge, facilitated by comprehensible inputs and outputs, within the two learning spaces</li> <li>• <b>Harness the affordances</b> of ICT in monitoring students' learning and providing feedback; hence, the need to acquire the respective technological knowledge before he/she can design the desired learning activities in the learning spaces</li> </ul>
Intentional Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pick up analytical and facilitation skills to conduct the <b>assessment for learning</b> of students' language performances and scaffold their learning <b>in-between the two learning spaces</b> with the intention to develop students' conceptual</li> </ul>

	understanding and procedural fluency reflected in the choice of contents
--	--

From the student perspective, for students to access the intentional content designed by their teachers in the individual learning space, they may require access to the internet and computing devices. In addition, a shift in beliefs of learning is also necessary. Facilitated by the teacher, students will experience a change from a *peer-to-peer competitive* mode of learning, often fostered by the traditional learning culture, to an *open and collaborative view* of learning, where every classmate contributes to the overall learning and advancement of the class.

## References

- Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. (2014). *Flipped learning: Gateway to student engagement*. Washington, DC: International Society for Technology in Education.
- Flipped Learning Network (2014). *Definition of Flipped Learning*. Retrieved from <http://flippedlearning.org/definition-of-flipped-learning/>
- Krashen, S. D. (1982/2009). *Principles and practice* [online edition]. Retrieved from [http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/books/principles\\_and\\_practice.pdf](http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/books/principles_and_practice.pdf)
- Sawyer, R. K. (Ed.) (2014). *The Cambridge handbook of the learning sciences* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Swain, M. (1985) Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass, & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 235-256). New York: Newbury House.
- Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning* (pp. 97-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Teoh, H. S. (2015). An instructional design and teaching of a flipped classroom-based H2CLL poetry lesson. *Journal of the South Seas Society*, 69, 191-206.

## Acknowledgement

I would like to gratefully thank Dr Wen Yun for taking time to provide and discuss insightful feedback to a draft of this brief. Special mention also goes to Mdm Teoh Hee San for sharing insights of her personal experience with flipped learning. Lastly, I also would like to thank Dr Fan Jinghua, Mr Chong Leong Chin, Mdm Gong Cheng, Dr Yan Jing, and Mdm Zheng Yingjiang for sharing their thoughts after reading this discussion piece 😊

# 翻转学习与语言学习之间与答

## ——抛砖引玉篇

陈育焕

### 1. 何谓翻转学习？它和翻转教室有什么不同？

“翻转学习 (flipped learning)” 一词是由 Flipped Learning Network (FLN) 的一组学者倡议的。翻转学习是翻转教室(flipped classroom) 一词的改良版 (Bergmann & Sams, 2014)。

按定义**翻转教室**原指将教师主讲的内容移至课下，并重点利用课上的时间进行小组活动和为学生给予个别的指导 (Bergmann & Sams, 2014, p. xi)。翻转教室是基于教师的教学效率作为出发点的。

**翻转学习**的侧重点则是学生的学习素质，即希望通过将教师主讲的内容从群体学习空间 (group learning space) 转移至个人学习空间(individual learning space)让学生学习。群体学习空间则蜕变成充满活跃互动的动态学习空间；在这个空间里，教师引导学生将科目中的概念运用开来，并与之进行富创意的互动 (FLN, 2014)。

由于翻转学习是改良自翻转教室，因此这两个名词既存在共同的地方也存在相异之处（表一）。

表一

翻转学习和翻转教室之异同 (改编自 Bergmann & Sams, 2014)

	翻转学习	翻转教室
共同处	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>教师主讲的内容从课上移至课下</li><li>学生在上课前通过录像或其它媒介获取主讲内容</li></ul>	
相异处	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>学习的概念以<b>学习空间</b>作区分，即个人和小组空间</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>学习的概念以<b>时间</b>作区分，即课上和课下</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>以<b>学生</b>为中心——旨在引导学生进行更深入的<b>思考</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>以<b>教师</b>为中心——旨在最<b>有效率</b>地传输内容</li></ul>

有关翻转教室的历史可回溯到十九世纪初美军军训中的运用以及后来二十世纪 90 年代哈佛大学的教授将其运用于物理课上。翻转教室的概念得到推广可归功于十年前左右美国两位高中化学教师的成功运用（详细历史追溯请参考张曦珊 (2015)）。

## 2. 什么不是翻转学习？

着眼翻转学习的定义，其中形容**群体学习空间**的有几个关键词：蜕变(transformed)、活跃动态的(dynamic)、互动(interactive)、富创意地从事(engage creatively)。按这些关键词的意思理解，群体学习空间内（一般是课室）不应见到学生个别地做更多的作业或接受更多的教师知识灌输 (Bergmann & Sams, 2014)。

## 3. 翻转学习非得介入资讯科技不可吗？

翻转学习有**两个环节**需要照顾：一、个人学习空间；二、小组学习空间。按照其定义，教师主讲的内容会在个人学习空间内进行。为此，有些教师会摄制录像短片并上载到线上让学生课后个别观看。应注意的是录像不是唯一可用的媒介，但不少教师选择录像是因为科技的运用为教师提供了通过多媒体进行指导的可能性。没有使用资讯科技，传统纸张的能供性(affordance)就相对有限了。当然，教师依旧能够通过传统印刷载体（例如：课本、活动本、活动纸）让学生进行个人学习来为小组空间内的学习作准备。除了接受教师指导以外，学生也能进行活动并产出相关的作业成品，又作学习产物(learning artefact)。

## 4. 翻转学习是否只适用于能力强(HA)的学生？

翻转学习的焦点在于将小组学习空间蜕变成更活跃、富动态并具创意性，其实施**并非**以学生的能力作为出发点。学习空间性质的蜕变其实是**需要教师去改变**学生原有的学习过程与方式的。因此，**教师的准备与引导**才是关键。教师是否具备能力带领和引导学生去学习新的学习方式和培养新的习惯是至关重要的。其实，针对个人学习空间活动的设计，教师可以配合班级学生的不同程度准备相应的指示以达到因材施教（请见问题 5 中的举例）。

## 5. 翻转学习如何应用到二语学习上？

二语习得有不少的理论，其中包括了输入假说(Krashen, 1982/2009)和输出假说(Swain, 1985)。这两个假说强调教师应为学生提供可理解的语言输入，并同时让他们进行可理解的语言输出。这两个假说可作为思考翻转学习如何应用到二语学习上的依据。

首先着眼于个人学习空间。教师可以通过不同的活动为学生提供可理解的语言输入。例如，一名教师在选定录像作为指导媒介后，他可以将该录像内容**分作三段**。第一段的内容为大部分学生提供可理解的语言输入。第二段的内容则重点为班内语言能力较弱的少数学生提供适宜他们的语言输入。最后一段是针对班内程度较高的一群布置一些有深广意义的语言输入。再举另外一名教师为例，他在个人学习空间布置了学生进行对话的功课，提供了学生作语言输出的机会。对话的内容刻意地选用了学生先前完成的作文。对语言学习者而言，在对话过程中作有意义的语言输出是重要的(Swain, 2000)。这一类在个人学习空间展开的对话一般需仰赖资讯科技的能供性(affordance)来进行的。

其次是小组学习空间。当教师主讲的语言输出移至个人学习空间后，小组学习空间便腾出了许多让教师引导学生通过协作对话(Swain, 2000)并建构语言知识的契机了。在教师的设计安排下，这过程中学生将有机会同时得到有意义的语言输出和输入。

## 6. 要在二语学习中进行翻转学习需作哪些准备？

按 FLN(2014)的定义，翻转学习的开展由**四大柱子**为基奠——灵活的环境(Flexible Environment)、学习氛围(Learning Culture)、刻意的内容(Intentional Content)以及专业的教育工作者(Professional Educator)。其中，最后一根柱子可谓至关重要。它提醒了我们教师在进行翻转学习前有必要培养相关的信念以及和学习相关的技能。**教师的准备度**是翻转学习的成败关键所在。具体一名语文教师要作哪些准备可参考表二。

表二

语文教师与翻转学习三大柱下的相关准备

翻转学习的大柱	教师的相关准备
灵活的环境	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 愿意灵活设计或调整两个学习空间之间的学习活动以切合<b>学生的学习需要</b></li><li>• 由于学生在学习过程中所需的时间不一，教师需以灵活的态度对待他们的学习进度。同时评价学生的学习也要求态度灵活，以切合<b>学生的学习</b></li></ul>
以学生为中心的学习氛围	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>减少</b>指导型(instructionist)的教学方式，即不应将学习视作划一的，并强调记忆和机械式的学习 (Sawyer, 2014)</li><li>• <b>为学生</b>在两个学习空间制造机会以通过可理解的输出和输入来创造语言知识</li><li>• 利用资讯科技的<b>能供性</b>来侦察学生的学习并给予反馈。因此教师须要掌握相关的科技知识以设计相应的学习活动</li></ul>
刻意的内容	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 掌握分析与引导的能力以对学生的语言产物进行<b>形成性评价</b>，同时为<b>两个学习空间之间的学习</b>搭鹰架，以刻意地培养学生的概念理解以及程序性知识的流畅度</li></ul>

至于学生需作的准备，当学生要在个人学习空间学习教师刻意为之准备的内容时，他们或许需要登录互联网。这么一来相关的科技硬件和软件就不可少了。除此之外，教师也会引导学生改变对学习的信念与思维。他们的学习将从以往互相竞争比高低的学习过渡到协作共进的学习。班级里大家的进步是班上每一名学生贡献的成果。

## 参考书目

- Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. (2014). *Flipped learning: Gateway to student engagement*. Washington, DC: International Society for Technology in Education.
- Flipped Learning Network (2014). *Definition of Flipped Learning*. Retrieved from <http://flippedlearning.org/definition-of-flipped-learning/>
- Krashen, S. D. (1982/2009). *Principles and practice* [online edition]. Retrieved from [http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/books/principles\\_and\\_practice.pdf](http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/books/principles_and_practice.pdf)
- Sawyer, R. K. (Ed.) (2014). *The Cambridge handbook of the learning sciences* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Swain, M. (1985) Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass, & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 235-256). New York: Newbury House.
- Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning* (pp. 97-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press
- 张曦姗 (2015). 翻转课堂在高中文学教学的应用：以新加坡教材为例. *南洋学报*, 69, 191-206.

## 鸣谢

感谢温韞博士拨出宝贵的时间为初稿提出意见并一同进行了课题的讨论与知识共创。同时也要感谢张曦姗老师和我分享了她个人对于翻转教室的实际经验。最后，我也要感谢范静哗博士、张龙晋先生、龚成女士、延晶博士和郑迎江女士和我们分享了他们读后的所思所想 ☺