

Flipped Learning in Interpreter Training: Technologies, Activities and Student Perceptions

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Abstract : Technological innovations have stimulated flipped learning in many disciplines, including language teaching. It is a specific type of blended learning, which combines onsite (i.e. face-to-face) with online experiences to produce effective, efficient and flexible learning. Flipped learning literally 'flips' conventional teaching and learning activities upside down: it leverages technologies to deliver a lecture and direct instruction—other asynchronous activities as well—outside the classroom to reserve onsite time for interaction and activities in the upper cognitive realms: applying, analysing, evaluating and creating. Unlike the conventional flipped approaches, which focused on video lecture, followed by face-to-face or on-site session, new innovative methods incorporate various means and structures to serve the needs of different academic disciplines and classrooms. In the light of such innovations, this study adopted 'student-engaged' approaches to interpreter training and contrasts them with traditional classrooms. To this end, students were also encouraged to engage in asynchronous activities online, and innovative technologies, such as Telepresence, were employed. Based on the class implementation, a thorough examination was conducted to examine how we can structure and implement flipped classrooms for language and interpreting training while actively engaging learners. This study adopted a quantitative research method, while complementing it with a qualitative one. The key findings suggest that the significance of the instructor's role does not dwindle, but his/her role changes to a moderator and a facilitator. Second, we can apply flipped learning to both theory- and practice-oriented modules. Third, students' integration into the community of inquiry is of significant importance to foster active and higher-order learning. Fourth, cognitive presence and competence can be enhanced through strengthened and integrated teaching and social presences. Well-orchestrated teaching presence stimulates students to find out the problems and voices the convergences and divergences, while fluid social presence facilitates the exchanges of knowledge and the adjustment of solutions, which eventually contributes to consolidating cognitive presence—a key ingredient that enables the application and testing of the solutions and reflection thereon.

Keywords : blended learning, Community of Inquiry, flipped learning, interpreter training, student-centred learning

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