

The Changing Roles of Teacher in the Flipped Class

Zhisong Fu¹, Peng Liu², Jie Yang³

Hainan Tropical Ocean University Hainna, Sanya 572022, China

Abstract: The main role of a teacher in the traditional classroom is supposed to dominate the whole process of knowledge teaching and practicing. Yet in a flipped classroom, teacher would work as the developer and innovator of the course, the instructor and promoter of the learning process, the coordinator and cooperator of the educational partnership as well as the learner and researcher of modern teaching theories. Teachers should hold a student-centered view of teaching principle to achieve such goals.

Keywords: Flipped classroom; Teacher's roles; Change of roles

Fund Project:

1.2021 School funded research project of education and teaching reform for Hainan Tropical Oceanology University: Construction of Flipped Classroom Model for Comprehensive English-3 on "Super Star Learning Platform" (RHYjg2021kt02).

2.2022 School funded research project of education and teaching reform for Hainan Tropical Oceanology University: The Development and Construction of College Oral English Curriculum in the Perspective of Multi-modal Discourse Analysis Theory (RHYjg2022-10).

Introduction

When it comes to the roles of a teacher, most Chinese people agree with the notion that teacher is a person who can be relied on to deliver truths, teach knowledge and clear doubts. In the early martial arts institutes of the Western Zhou Dynasty, senior officers taught basic military skills such as archery and riding. Later, such teachings were extended to cultural learning, and the learners were mostly children of the nobility. With more and more civil teachers and learners involved, the teaching practise eventually became a profession. The consensus on the roles of teacher in China is often summed up now as "teaching and educating". Such agreement was reached in a long historical process, determined by teachers' special social status and expertise, conforming with the basic behavior patterns of educational practitioners expected by the whole society.

The essence of flipped class

Traditional teaching process usually includes two stages: knowledge imparting and knowledge internalization. Knowledge imparting is mainly accomplished by teachers in the classroom, which has always been regarded as an efficient and controllable approach. Knowledge internalization requires teachers to assign oral, written homework after class. Evaluation of the internalization requires time in next class after teachers summarize students' homework and then decisions are made to improve students' performance. In the flipped class, teacher and his students exchange their roles. The teacher can shoot short video of lecturing for students to learn the required knowledge, or provide available high-quality digital or online resources of the same subject. Students are then require to do the watching and learning before class meeting time. Knowledge internalization is realized in tasks of thinking, acting, and even collaborating. In classroom time, teacher is to help students solve their personal or common problems that he observes from the online reported feedback. In terms of action sequence, flipped class moves the traditional actions a step forward with the aid of information technology. Yet in this new process the ruling power of education has shifted from the teacher to students. Teacher-centered instructing gives way to student-centered learning.

Roles of teachers in a flipped class

It is generally accepted that teacher-centered teaching process ignores or restrains the personalized demand of learning of students

to a large extent, characterizing the instructing of knowledge and guidance and shaping of ideas from teachers, which ignores the initiative of students themselves. The flipped class emphasizes students' subjectivity, which means that teacher's approach should be "learning-oriented" rather than "teaching-oriented". Therefore, teacher's roles in a flipped class model should realize the following transformation.

1. Teachers as the developer and innovator of the course

One of the features of flipped classroom is the pre-class imparting of knowledge, which enables students to complete learning tasks with the aids of educational videos and other forms of content originally taught in class to gain necessary knowledge for classroom activities. This requires teachers to play the role of resource developer to complete basic processes. The technologies involved seem revolutionary for many traditional teachers. After constructions of online courses in recent years, quite a few courses have been developed and their online operation on various teaching platforms are well operating. It is probably a new basic requirement for teachers to be able to integrating and reconstructing available curriculum resources as innovators, in accordance with the learning characteristics and academic level of students in respective schools.

2. Teachers as the instructor and promoter of the learning process

Traditionally, the teaching design mainly focuses on classroom teaching. In flipped class, design of pre-class tasks and their effective connection with classroom activities is very important. Once the flipped class design is materialized, the task of teachers shift from "teaching" to "guiding". Chen (2004) believes that such guidance includes the guidance of learning objectives, the learning strategies, the teaching situations, the knowledge information and the development of personality qualities. It is especially challenging for teachers to guide students with poor meta-cognitive ability to refresh their understandings of study and make a new attitude of "follow my own steps" instead of "follow your construction". In this new mode, the main task and purpose of teachers are no longer to impart knowledge, but to monitor the implementation of students' learning tasks and their mastery of knowledge, and guarantee the internalization of knowledge through planned follow-up drills. Therefore, one distinctive characteristics of flipped teaching is to ensure the flow of a systematic learning process that include monitoring of learning tasks with academic assessment, and efficient completion of pre-class tasks, classroom practice, after-class tests and other activities in the whole learning process.

3. Teachers as the coordinator and cooperator of the educational partnership

In the traditional teaching model, students, parents and schools all believe that teachers are the leading organizers of education. Their teaching methods, teaching organizations, personal charm and even emotional fluctuations have huge impacts on students' learning efficiency, which reflects a kind of professional absolutism. The obvious disadvantage of this kind of cognition is that students get used to and rely too much on teachers' teaching arrangements. It is not uncommon to find that many university students seem to be at a loss when it comes to the matter of learner autonomy. Due to the lack of self-discipline and the ambiguity and confusion of learning content, learning objectives, academic positioning and career planning, they may waste their time running aimlessly from class to class, which gradually foster a sense of uselessness of higher education. In flipped teaching model, learner autonomy is in the most important position. The whole teaching design is centered on how to help students "learn", and students become the ruler of learning. This learning mode relies on learners' self-discipline, emphasizing cooperation, and the fulfillment of the learning process by acquiring knowledge before class, sufficient discussion and practice in class, and reinforcement after class. This change has huge impacts and will reshape ideas for students, parents, teachers and teaching administrators. In the early stage of practice, due to the unsystematic design and poor execution, teachers are often mistakenly regarded as being lazy and that teaching is just a simple work of watching videos. So it is of great importance for teachers to explain new teaching ideas and their behavioral intentions to students and their parents. It helps also if teachers can receive cooperation of colleagues and support of school management as well. Only in this way can flipped classroom teachers create a more complete and coordinating educational environment and achieve the ultimate success of flipped education.

4. Teachers as the learner and researcher of modern theories and techniques

Teaching should keep up with current development, and target the future trend. In the age of digital information, knowledge itself and educational technology have been rapidly updating. For teachers, lifelong learning is especially a must to conduct. Teachers should be the active learners of relevant content of the same curriculum. The construction boom

of online courses, many basic compulsory courses have actually been developed and put into use by experienced teachers at all levels. Teachers of the same or similar courses can easily obtain teaching resources and inspiration from these open platforms or even commercial website like Bilibili to facilitate the teaching. Teachers are also learners of practical teaching methods. No matter what approaches to use, problems-based learning method, project-based learning method, output-based education method, question-based teaching or discussion-based teaching, theoretical supports and practical references are all readily available for research.

In view of students' academic level, it is also a very common demand for teachers to build school-based online courses by themselves. This requires teachers to learn basic shooting techniques and editing techniques as well. There is no end to learning in the career of teachers. In this learning process, the teacher actually becomes an educational researcher. Their research findings will prove valuable for peer reference.

5 Conclusion

It is generally agreed that the roles of teachers in the model of flipped class are changing and teacher should refresh their understanding of education. It requires a long-term practice and reflection of the approach. The first challenge may be of teachers themselves. Authority preference and lack of the curiosity and passion to learn new ideas are obstacles for further success. Flipped classroom teachers need to establish and adapt to a new teacher-student relationship: the traditional sense of teaching and learning will gradually give way to the teacher-student "learning community", the ultimate goal is not to teach, but to guide, so that students become the real master of the learning process.

References:

- [1] Bo Cunxu. Thoughts on the Role of Teachers and Its Transformation [J]. Journal of Tianjin Academy of Education, 2004(5):38-41.
- [2] Chen Qinghua. New Thinking on the Connotation of Teachers' Role in the Network Era [J]. Journal of Anhui Education College, 2004(04):98-100
- [3] Dai Zhaohui. Research on MOOC Hot Topics -- Inspiration from the first MOOC Advanced Foreign Language Teaching Seminar in China [J]. Foreign Language audio-visual teaching, 2015(1):73-78.
- [4] Li Kedong, Zhao Jianhua. The principle and application model of Blended Learning [J]. Research on Electronic Education, 2004(7):1-6. (in Chinese)
- [5] Wang Changjiang, Hu Weiping, Li Weidong. "Flipped" Classroom: Technology-Facilitated Teaching [J]. Electronic Education Research, 2013 (8) :73-79, 97.)
- [6] John McIntyre, Mary John O'Hare. The Reflective Roles of the Classroom Teacher [M]. Ding Yi, Ma Ling, translated. Beijing: China Light Industry Press, 2002(7).

About the author:

Zhisong Fu (1978-), Associate professor, research focus: English education and modern technology;

Peng Liu (1986-), lecturer, research focus: English Language and Literature (mainly Western countries social culture);

Jie Yang (1989-), lecturer, research focus: English Language and Literature.