

Teacher Research Programme- report

Universidad Europea de Madrid (UEM)

- Evidence of understanding of current research in the field

The active teaching methodology of “flipping the classroom” has become increasingly popular in a variety of educational contexts over the last few years, despite questions remaining about its applicability, effectiveness, and even its definition in some academic and professional circles. In *A Review of Flipped Learning*, Hamdan, McKnight, McKnight, & Arfstrom explain that flipping the classroom may not necessarily lead to flipped learning, which they define 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 (2014).

In the same work, Hamdan et al. list “four pillars of F-L-I-P” which educators should include in order to promote flipped learning: flexible environment, learning culture, intentional content, and professional educator (FLN, 2014). With these in place, they explain that empirical evidence suggests that flipped learning methodology is associated with “increased student learning and positive perceptions of unique elements” (FLN, 2014). However, they also warn that more research is required to identify appropriate learning contexts to flip, which forms part of the basis for our particular research project.

After reviewing the literature, most of our research group opted for producing interactive video content as the base for their flipped lessons, as there was some evidence that video could help students retain learned content and contextualize learning in tertiary ESL environments (Kaur et al, 2013).

## References

Kaur, D., Yong, E., Zin, N. M., & DeWitt, D. The Use of Videos as a Cognitive Stimulator and Instructional Tool in Tertiary ESL Classroom. *The Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 32. <http://www.mojet.net/pdf/v02i03/v02-i03-04.pdf> . Retrieved: 20 July 2014.

Yarbro, J., McKnight, P., Arfstrom, K. M., Director, P. D. E., & Network, F. L. FLIPPED LEARNING (2014). <http://www.flippedlearning.org/cms/lib07/VA01923112/Centricity/Domain/41/Extension%20of%20Flipped%20Learning%20Lit%20Review%20June%202014.pdf> Retrieved: 20 July 2014.

- The stated objectives of the project and how the research aims to inform understanding of emerging digital pedagogies

The primary objectives of the project were to increase active student participation and improve student motivation and learning outcomes through the use of the flipped learning method. As we already use a 50/50 blended system (based on the Cambridge Touchstone and Viewpoint materials), we wanted to identify areas and topics where we could offer complementary activities based on this method.

- The research methodology

After the project proposal was submitted to CUP for inclusion in the 2014 Teacher Research Programme (TRP), the lead researcher (LR) and the Director of the UEM Language Center (DLC) asked several teachers to volunteer for the project based on their professional goals and annual training objectives identified during the yearly performance objectives meetings held with the DLC. Participation in the project offered teachers the opportunity to engage in collaborative educational research, a relatively new area for much of the department, and would be counted towards the required hours of pedagogical training. Nine teachers in addition to the LR joined the project, with varying amounts of experience teaching EFL (3-30 years). The project began in March 2014 upon acceptance to the TRP, just before the start of our third trimester of the academic year.

Project members chose to review literature on flipped learning, assess the learning environment at the university, and devise a systematic approach to flipped learning and assessment as one group, but then divide up into sub-groups by CEFR levels based on teaching schedules and familiarity with the course material for each level. We felt that this approach would add rigor and uniformity to the research project while taking into consideration teachers' schedules, knowledge areas, and time constraints for participating in the project.

We adapted an action-research model proposed by Susman (1983), which defines 5 phases in a research cycle: diagnosing, action planning, taking action, evaluating, and specifying learning. At this point in the research project, most of the sub-groups by CEFR level are between phases 3 and 4.

**Phase 1 (diagnosing):** a survey was sent out to students and teachers with questions about learning goals, perception of material, classroom interaction, and other relevant topics identified by researchers. Interviews were also carried out with individual students and teachers not participating in the research project. [PREVIEW THE SURVEY HERE](#)

**Phase 2 (action planning):** the research team met twice a month to share resources, plan lessons, and establish a framework for flipped learning at UEM. Researchers were divided into sub-groups by CEFR levels: once the group as a whole reviewed the survey data and collaborated on a lesson planning framework, sub-groups were left to create material and implement lesson plans in the classroom. All of the material and lesson plans were shared with the whole group using Google Drive.

**Phase 3 (taking action):** some groups were able to implement their flipped lesson into 1 or more classes in the third trimester of the 2013-14 academic year. Others, for reasons including lack of students and lack of prep time, were unable to carry out one or more steps of their action plan.

#### SUB-GROUP REFLECTIONS

[A2](#)

[B1](#)

[B2.1](#)

**Phase 4 (evaluating):** currently taking place. Proposals for next year are mentioned in the sub-group reflections.

**Phase 5 (specifying learning):** planned for trimesters 1 and 2 of the 2014-15 academic year.

- Analysis of the research data and discussion

Students indicated that the two things they thought were most relevant to their learning objectives were listening skills and video. The sections on reading and writing were by far the least popular parts of the book among students across all levels, despite the fact that students pointed out that these skills were also relevant to their goals. This led us to look for ways of using the flipped model to make these sections more interesting while not relegating them entirely to homework. Student and teacher feedback after the flipped lessons was generally positive, although absenteeism and lack of prep work prior to the face to face classes remain problematic when attempting to implement flipped learning in the trimester-long courses. Those students who participated in all of the activities were interested in repeating the experience, although they voiced concerns over the perceived workload. Teachers discussed the possibility of incorporating alternative research design methods (quasi-experimental) in order to better measure and compare the flipped classroom methodology results to those of other blended and face to face lessons.

## Annex I- A2

Danny E  
José LL  
Arancha AO

Action	Yes/No
Identify “flippable” lesson (Unit and Lesson)	yes
Design lesson plan	yes
Use lesson plan in class	no
Collect data (qualitative and/or quantitative)	no
Prepare group midterm report (include actions for T1 next term)	yes

### Intro:

José, Arancha and Danny are all instructors in the Language Center with between roughly 5-20 years of experience in EFL instruction. Members of our group use technology quite extensively in the classroom.

### Identifying a lesson to flip:

Based on surveys of both students and teachers, Unit 10 of Touchstone 3 was identified as good material to flip. The differences in use of the present perfect and present perfect continuous seemed to be problematic for some learners, and at our meetings, teachers expressed that these tenses and narrative tenses in general presented a greater degree of difficulty for our students to grasp. Furthermore, some teachers expressed the need for more communicative activities and resources in which learners could practice these tenses more naturally and spontaneously.

### Lesson Plan

#### Objectives:

Use the present perfect and **present perfect continuous** to talk about recent activities. (section A)

Learn vocabulary to talk about **movies** and their **genres**. (section B)

Read and write a **movie summary and review**. (section D)

### At home:

- **Grammar Explanation and Voiceover with Prezi/Screencast-O-Matic:** Students watch a Prezi with voice-over showing the use of the present perfect continuous (ongoing or repeated activity continuing into the present), and the contrasts with the present perfect (used to show the results of an activity or how many times it happened.) The Prezi should be "interactive" in the sense that it will include exercises and a brief pause while students say or think of the answer.
- **Online Quiz:** We could also make an online quiz in Moodle to check understanding of these two tenses.
- **Book homework:** Sections B and D, about movies, are fairly simple and can be assigned for homework directly from the book, but can also be turned into a Prezi/online interactive quiz.

### In class:

- **Warmer/Review:** Concepts and vocabulary are reviewed with controlled practice: Pairwork (Student A asks Student B questions using the present perfect continuous from prompts on cards: What do you study? Oh, how long / you / study \_\_\_\_\_). Teacher takes opportunity to do error correction. Teacher could also review students' answers to page 100 section C to generate more vocabulary related to movies.
- **Main activity, based on section D:** Section D has students read a movie summary and review and then asks them to write one themselves.

Students will be shown a trailer (or scene) of a movie with the sound turned off. On the first viewing, students write down the action they see happening. Teacher writes down important vocabulary on the board. Then, before the second viewing, students are told that they are going to invent the plot of the movie and write a summary and review of that movie in groups.

Students are shown a trailer/clip that has a character in an odd or ambiguous situation at the beginning. Students would have to come up with a few explanations for why this person is in this situation using the present perfect/perfect continuous. Example: *Clip starts with a woman in an alley and out of breath. Students discuss in groups. "Maybe she has been running from the police. Yeah, maybe she's committed a crime. Maybe she's been training for a marathon."*

Students then decide on the best theory and proceed to invent the plot and write the movie summary and review with the text in section D as an example and incorporating, if possible vocabulary from section B.

As a class, students present their ideas.

**Reflection and plan for T1 of 2014-15**

Because this lesson plan wasn't carried out, our plan is to do so in the next trimester.

**Process**

We did testing on using Screencast-o-matic with Prezi and recording in a studio and the software worked quite well. Videos can be easily uploaded to YouTube or Moodle.

**Content**

The video is to contain explanation and examples of the present perfect versus the present perfect continuous.

**Was it used in class?**

No, the lesson will be used in T1 of 2014-15.

Action	Yes/No
<b>Identify “flippable” lesson (Unit and Lesson)</b>	yes
<b>Design lesson plan</b>	yes
<b>Use lesson plan in class</b>	yes
<b>Collect data (qualitative and/or quantitative)</b>	yes
<b>Prepare group midterm report (include actions for T1 next term)</b>	yes

**Intro-** We are English teachers working at the Language Center (UEM), specialized in blended learning, and currently making the transition into 100% Online teaching also. Although we all have experience in English language teaching, we come from different academic backgrounds.

**Identifying a lesson to flip-** We flipped Unit 10 Lesson A (Touchstone B1) which is about talking hypothetically about the future/3<sup>rd</sup> conditional. We chose this Unit because we have found that students find it particularly difficult to learn the form and meaning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> conditional.

A wide range of tools were used:

- Moodle: Where the activities were uploaded, and where students posted in the Forum.
- Prezi: Public domain video tutorial adapted to student’s needs.
- Youtube: Where we uploaded the video tutorial.
- Screencast-o-matic: Software used to synchronize both voice + Prezi video tutorial.
- Windows Movie Maker: Software used to synchronize both voice recorded at UEM’s radio station + Prezi video tutorial.
- We transfer: Software used to send audio document recorded at the radio station.
- Free online survey: Software used to test students on the 3<sup>rd</sup> conditional.
- Radio station: Record the audio later synchronized with the Prezi presentation.

We have also flipped Unit 4 lesson A (Touchstone 4) The aim of the activity was to prepare students for their class in advance so they can interact and use what they have previously learnt.

Tools used for this activity:

- Moodle: Where the activities were uploaded.
- Prezi: Public domain presentation adapted to student’s needs.
- A Quiz uploaded on Moodle where students can get immediate feedback about their performance. Teacher can also get results about their students’ performance.
- A role-play activity in class.

We flipped Unit 10 in two different B1 groups the week from the 12th to the 16th of May. Unit 4 Flipped activity was carried out on June 10th in one group only (T3 M48).

## Lesson plan

ONLINE HOMEWORK **3<sup>rd</sup> conditional** Flipped classroom:

Online homework consisted of

- Online activities:
  1. Watching a 2:40 minutes Youtube Prezi Tutorial about the 3<sup>rd</sup> conditional.
  2. Publishing in the Forum (Moodle):
  3. Doing a Third Conditional Test

ONLINE HOMEWORK **"be supposed to.../was-were going to..."** Flipped classroom:

Online homework consisted of

- Online activities:
  1. Students Watch a Prezi presentation about the grammar topic "be supposed to../was-were going to...".
  2. An online Quiz (Moodle):

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES **3<sup>rd</sup> conditional** Flipped classroom :

We adapted a Lesson plan called "The sinking of the Third Conditional" written by Chris Trickett from British Council Egypt. We found this Lesson plan to be very useful to consolidate the form and meaning of the third conditional, previously worked online by the students.

The Lesson included:

Use of mobile phones to do some research about the sinking of the Titanic (engaging students).

Watching a short video about the Titanic (developing listening skill).

Reading comprehension activity (developing reading).

Speaking activity and role play based on the third conditional.

Put words in order activity (3<sup>rd</sup> conditional) (developing writing).

Third conditional game (wrap up). Touchstone B1 homework.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES **"be supposed to.../was-were going to..."** Flipped classroom:

We focused on the grammar topic, "be supposed to..../was-were going to...". First, we introduce students to the main grammar topic through a Prezi presentation uploaded on our virtual campus. Then, they take an online quiz and get immediate feedback. Finally, they put in

practice what they have previously learnt in class by working in pairs and then in groups of 8 students.

We used a Prezi presentation because we thought it was visually attractive and interactive for students. We also created an online quiz on the virtual campus so that the students can get immediate feedback on their performance as well as the teacher can keep track of their results.

## Reflection-

**3<sup>rd</sup> conditional** Flipped classroom reflection:

In order to encourage and motivate the students to actually do the online homework we told them that they would get participation points for doing them. This technique worked with some students. We also set a deadline for completing online activities which made them do at least part of the work. We made it compulsory to take notes of any relevant points learned while watching the video tutorial to later take them to class for revision.

Unfortunately, few students posted in the Forum. We believe this happened because we wrongly assumed that they knew how to use it. Next time we'll make sure that they really know how to use it.

The free online survey we used to test the students on the third conditional wasn't useful because you could not access it anymore after the first 15 days, unless you paid for it. We are planning on using TED next time which is free.

The video tutorial attained 117 views, and after finishing the flipped experience we sent the students an email asking them if it had been of interest, and if they would repeat it. The majority of them considered the flipped classroom to be a very enriching experience.

Some students did say that the activities on Moodle were too similar to the ones in Cambridge LMS, so next time online activities will have to differ to the ones in Cambridge LMS in some way.

**"be supposed to.../was-were going to..."** Flipped classroom reflection:

We decided to use a Prezi presentation because it was visually more attractive and interactive than any other resource. In order to encourage students to complete the online tasks and participate in class on this activity the teachers told students they will get credits for their final grade on the course. However, some students did not complete the online tasks before coming to class so we need to make them understand the importance of doing the online activities so they can use class time to participate.

A survey was conducted on the B1 students about the **"be supposed to.../was-were going to..."** Flipped Classroom, and this is a summary of the results:

67% of the students invest between 2 to 3 hours a week studying English at home during our course in Trimester 3. 33% of them think that resources like an online Prezi presentation helped them to better understand grammar explanations. They've also pointed out that resources like these are accessible anytime and very useful in case they missed a face to face class (17%). Also, the majority of students (67%) show a very good level of comfort with new technology applied to language learning.

80% of the students think that participating in this Flipped Classroom was useful to their language learning experience. Regarding the level of agreement about the easy access and participation in the flipped activity, 60% of students agree on this statement, 20% totally agree and another 20% neither agree nor disagree. 83% of students totally agree on using other flipped activities in their future language classes. However, 67% of the students consider that the flipped classroom Prezi presentation did not motivate them to participate in class. Also, 67% of the students neither agree nor disagree when they are asked if the flipped classroom allowed them to participate more in class.

It was interesting to notice that 67% of the students prefer a traditional approach for their language learning. At the same time, 33% totally agree on using a blend of digital and traditional approach in their classroom, 17% agree on the same statement, 33% neither agree nor disagree and 17% disagree.

Students seem to be more confident when they participate in class with a flipped activity methodology. 33% totally agree on this statement, another 33% of students totally agree, 17% neither agree nor disagree and just 17% disagree. 50% of students totally agree that the flipped classroom activity was fun and the other 50% agree on the same statement. Finally, 67% of students totally agree that the flipped activity helped them to consolidate on the grammar/vocabulary topic the teacher focused on, 17% totally agree on this statement and just 17% disagree.

**Plan for T1 of 2014-15-** Our plan for T1 2014/15 consists of adapting some of the conversation strategies on the Touchstone 4 book using interactive resources online (video, Prezi presentations, etc...) so that students can be prepared to put in practice and interact in class.

Action	Yes/No
Identify “flippable” lesson (Unit and Lesson)	yes
Design lesson plan	yes
Use lesson plan in class	yes
Collect data (qualitative and/or quantitative)	yes
Prepare group midterm report (include actions for T1 next term)	yes

### Intro-

Rod, Mitchell and Martin are all instructors in the Language Center with experience ranging from 6 years to 20 years. All use technology in the classroom to varying degrees.

### Identifying a lesson to flip-

The first step towards the creation of a “flipped classroom” involved our own students in the decision-making process. Students were surveyed on the class material that they had found either difficult, boring or confusing in some way.

The results were varied - there are students that like or dislike the same units, but most importantly, they like having fun.

We chose ‘Unit 3 Stories’ because it covers the most complex grammatical area in the first six units. This unit covers telling stories and using the past tenses, present perfect, past perfect and past perfect continuous. The students that dislike this unit are the ones that find it most challenging – the weaker students. On the other hand, the stronger students say it’s the most useful one!

We felt that flipping this unit would engage and assist the weaker students in the class.

### Lesson plan-

Miriam has posted some sample lesson plans and procedure sheets in the [Resources section](#) of the Metacurso group Moodle page.

The lesson plan for this flipped classroom was carried out by a group of three teachers (Rod, Mitch and Martin) and the material was structured as follows:

1. Students watched a 5-minute video - a dialogue between two teachers that are illustrating the past tenses using examples. Text and pictures were put together with a

'voiceover' dialogue and there were stages during the video when students could pause the sequence to allow them to write examples from pictures.

2. Students write example sentences after each explanation.
3. Students were provided with a series of resources about past tenses.
4. Finally, students had to bring an object such as a souvenir to class and tell everybody where and how they they got it and why they chose it. This was to produce extended practice of past tenses through personal experience.

### **Reflection-**

There were technical issues that impaired the desired response from the students - mostly that many literally didn't receive the link or used this excuse! However, from class discussions, most were motivated and did the activity well using the target tenses in their descriptions.

The flipped concept is one that we believe will work effectively as soon as students become aware that these activities are 'built-in' to the graded work they have to do. When an obligatory activity is perceived as entertaining, the satisfaction scales will swing from 'chore' to 'fun.'

### **Plan for T1 of 2014-15-**

The teachers involved with the video agreed that it probably covered too much material in five minutes. A future version would split it into two or possibly three videos that covered a limited number of different verb tenses.

Distribution of the video was also complicated, as the TedEd platform was new to students and teachers. In the future, instructors should try at least one "dry run" to avoid these problems.

Finally, student participation was somewhat uneven. We attribute this to the students not understanding that these activities are graded. Communicating more clearly to the students either through course requirements or other means will likely improve student participation.

### **Process**

The video was created using a screen recorder, Prezi, and a recording studio for the audio. They were then combined using a video editing software suite.

The final product was then placed into TedEd for distribution to the students. The final video can be seen here: <http://ed.ted.com/on/kAABo3hq>

### **Content**

The video covered formation and usage of: Past Simple, Past Perfect, Past Continuous, Present Perfect Simple, Present Perfect Continuous.

**Was it used in a class?**

Yes, it was used in class and distributed in different ways., some more successful than others. When the link to the task was sent to the students directly from the TedEd platform, there were some difficulties reaching the students. Many claimed they hadn't seen it or received it. The most successful method was using the 'Moodle' platform and copying the link from the TedEd page into an e-mail sent to all the participants in the class.