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**“FLIPPED CLASSROOM” TO DEVELOP STUDENTS’  
READINESS FOR INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES**

Lubozheva Lionella Nikolaevna (a)\*, Batenova Julia Valeryevna (b), Almetev Yury Valeryevich (c)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russia, lionella.lubozheva@mail.ru

(b) South Ural State University, Chelyabinsk, Russia, juliabatenova@gmail.ru

(c) Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russia, yu71@list.ru

***Abstract***

High rates of development of modern society oblige the future professional to be ready for a quick change of activity, constant self-education and an adequate response to unexpected problems, which undoubtedly affects the education process. Universities, following this concept, are introducing different methods to train a highly qualified specialist. The “Flipped class” technique is able to solve this problem. In this paper, an attempt was made to introduce the “Flipped Class” methodology in the educational process in English classes in the discipline “Business Communication in Intercultural Interaction” among undergraduates of the faculty of psychology and pedagogy of CSU. This technique is characterized by its interdisciplinarity and, above all, is aimed at the development of such competencies as the ability to self-development and self-improvement and the ability to apply modern communication technologies, including in foreign language (s) for academic and professional interaction. In the course of the work, the optimal model for students of this faculty was determined – combined model, as it includes both independent work and work together with the teacher. We have developed the stages of work: stage 1 - self-study of the topic, stage 2 - discussion of the problem using either role-play or discussion, stage 3 - control. Moreover, the advantages and difficulties of this process were identified.

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## 1. Introduction

The developing modern society, the labor market, and meanwhile the uncertainty of the future makes the modern person be ready for a quick change of activity, new problems and unexpected circumstances, which, of course, cannot be reflected in education. The high requirements of employers set a new task for the University-to prepare a well-educated, morally educated, professionally savvy, initiative specialist who will be able to solve urgent professional problems and competently implement professional activities and at the same time flexible, resourceful and open to innovation in modern society. The final stage of professional education is always closely connected with the preparation of students for independent activities. In this regard, it is very important to develop their willingness to use constructive methods in the presentation of their professional competence and readiness for practical self-realization. It is absolutely necessary that students have styles of self-realization to match their professional activities, which will contribute to a greater percentage of employment in accordance with their education.

## 2. Problem Statement

Training such a professional, of course, is associated with the ability to self-improve throughout life. The complexity of the tasks set for educational institutions leads to the search, mastering and active application of new educational technologies and techniques by Universities, with the help of which we could form such a competence in the student as "readiness of the student for independent work".

The solution to the above problems can be the educational technology " Flipped class ". This is an approach to the organization of training, in which classroom and extracurricular work are reversed. This technology is not new. Elements of this model were used long before the term appeared. The term first appeared in the works of American educators Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams in 2007. They used this model as one of the ways to optimally deliver educational content and save time in classroom sessions (as cited in Bergmann & Sams, 2012). The studied technology was considered by scientists in different aspects. It is of considerable interest to both Russian and foreign scientists as an element of media education, which is reflected in the works of Minin and Shyakina (2018), Kulikova and Soroka (2017) Kozelkov (2017), Bergmann and Sams (2012), Adams and Gingras (2017), Hua (2018), Taguchi and Kim (2018), Talbert (2017) and others.

Researcher Kalachinskaya (2017), studying the "Flipped classroom" model, presents it as factor of transformation the educational process from passive way of studying to active one. In turn, Zhdanova (2017) defines the concept of "inverted class" as a kind of reverse learning, where the teacher acts as a moderator of the educational process. Dumont and Berthiaume (2016) consider inverted learning not just an educational model, but a new way of thinking, which aims to optimize classroom work with students through extracurricular activities aimed at in-depth study of the subject. No matter how this model is broadcast, its essence is the ability of the student to work independently with the proposed material or problem situation.

In our work, we consider this method as a systematic approach to the development of readiness to work independently, acquiring the necessary skills and further improving them, which is the purpose of this research.

Investigating the inverted class model, Tikhonova (2018) emphasizes the existence of several forms of inverted learning at the present time. The classical model of inverted learning involves first familiarizing the student with the theoretical material of the upcoming lesson. Materials for preparation can be given in the form of a reference summary of lectures or a paragraph of a textbook, as well as in the form of slides, video and audio documents. In the classroom, the teacher organizes a discussion of the studied material, explains difficult points, answers questions, and uses interactive teaching methods. The next model of inverted learning, conventionally called "advanced", also includes two stages- extracurricular and classroom, and involves a gradual complication of the level of tasks and expansion of activities. During the preliminary training, students independently search for information on a given topic, read articles, watch videos, in mini-groups or individually prepare abstracts that they will present in the audience, questions for debates or round tables. The third model, the system or combined model of the inverted class, implies a combination of the first two models. The essence of this model is not to change the place of performance of a certain type of activity, but to rearrange the key components of the educational process (Tikhonova, 2018).

### **3. Research Questions**

The literature review shows that the scientists pay much attention to the organization of the educational process due to the "Flipped classroom" model, trying to answer various questions. In our investigation the questions we are to answer are linked to the formation of readiness of students of the master's program to conduct independent professional activity.

#### **3.1. What is the peculiarity of the "Flipped classroom" model in the process of training in the master's program?**

Introducing the mentioned above model in the Master's program, we were sure that there must be peculiarities connected to the development of professional competency. Moreover, the Master's level is the very suitable time to give learners work independently more than in the auditory to develop readiness of students of the master's program to conduct independent professional activity?

#### **3.2. How many and what steps are involved in the educational process in the implementation of the model of "Flipped classroom"?**

Practice reveals that, applying "Flipped classroom" model in the educational process on Master's level, there are three steps. The first and the third steps are for independent work while the second one is for the auditory activity.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The aim of our work is to share our combined experiences of implementing the Flipped Classroom model within the framework of teaching such Master's level courses as "Foreign Languages in Psychological Research", "Foreign Languages in Special Education", and "Practical Course of the English Language" at Psychology and Pedagogy Department and Linguistics and Translation Department of the Chelyabinsk State University and also to identify the need to implement this model in the learning process and to determine the stages and features of this model when use it in classes with undergraduates.

#### **5. Research Methods**

In this study we used a variety of methods and combinations, that were adapted to different steps of the educational process. Among them there are modern and traditional, active, interactive and passive ones: video course, on-line study, discussions, role-plays, case-studies and tests. Besides, previously, studying the blog as a source of getting information by students, we found out that blog can be used like one of the interactive methods, which possibly not only supply the learners with the news, but gives opportunity to communicate with other participants of the same blog. The received information can be used to discuss in the class as the most "fresh" and "reliable" one (Bykova & Lubozheva, 2019).

#### **6. Findings**

Implementing this model in the learning process, we followed the classical version, the participants of this process were students of the 1st year of the 1st semester. We divided the whole process into 3 stages: 1. familiarity with the topic (extracurricular work); 2. discussion of the studied material: elimination of difficulties, unclear points, expressing an opinion (classroom work); 3. control of knowledge: testing job (field work).

##### **6.1. The first stage of the implemented model**

This stage includes studying the topic with the help of video tutorials, audio resources and texts offered by the teacher on the Moodle electronic platform. The advantage of this stage that it helps to improve learning, increase access to education, ensuring harmonious development of personality, is able to freely navigate in the information space, introduction to information and communication possibilities of modern technology and with the information culture (Vulfovich, 2017). Moreover, the student can use it at a convenient time and work with this content an unlimited number of times until it is fully understood. When students encounter unfamiliar words in the text they are studying, they can use online dictionaries. In addition, working with the Glossary, which is also offered at this stage, students perform different types of tasks with the help of which the use of vocabulary is brought to automatism. Grammatical material that needs to be studied on the topic is also presented by the video resource. The "Flipped class model" model is an active learning model, so even at the first stage, the process must be interactive. It must be mentioned that the average English proficiency level of students in this Master's program is very high, ranging from "advanced" to "native-like". Therefore, the main teaching goal for

this class is to hone students' academic speaking skills and their independent research skills. In terms of its theoretical foundations, the teaching approach applied in this class draws on M. Bakhtin's theory of Dialogic Teaching (Bakhtin, 1997), as well as Content-Based Language Instruction (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989). That is why the course instructor offers a vast variety of topics for class discussions, covering a large range of scholarly subjects – history and archeology, biology, psychology, linguistics, literature, physics, sociology, and anthropology.

Bakhtin (1997) stated that the truth can be born only during the dialogic interaction between people in searching process for it. The learning in this course is based on the process of dialogic interaction. First, it is the dialogic interaction between the course designer and students during the process of students' independent preparation for a particular discussion. At this stage, which corresponds to the first stage of the Flipped Class model, students receive the topic of their next class discussion, as well as internet links to video- and reading materials and the instructor's assignments, questions and prompts, via email one week prior to the actual discussion.

## **6.2. The main part of the educational process due to the “Flipped classroom” model**

The second stage, classroom work, offers a problem situation on the topic and additional material if necessary. Students are grouped into groups of 3-4 people, get acquainted with the situation that is presented on the screen and additional material that is given to each group. You are given 25 minutes to solve a problem situation and 5 minutes to submit a solution. The problem is considered solved if the solution proposed by the guys exactly matches the real answer or is close to it. During the lesson, you can work out 3 problem situations. The alternative way to the case-study at the second stage, when students actually discuss as a group the topic they have investigated on their own, following the instructor's prompts and questions, is presented by the polyphonic interaction (Bakhtin, 1997). Each student can ask his or her own questions to the instructor or other students, reiterate and regurgitate the various facts and facets of the discussed phenomena, and share their personal opinions on the analyzed issues. Such group discussions based on dialogic interactions, eventually lead students to often unforeseen collective conclusions and discoveries. Finally, usually in the end of each class meeting, students get a chance to hone their presentation skills and share their own findings in the research area by delivering their brief PowerPoint presentations on the related topics or acting out a situation discussed in the learning materials.

### *Example 1. Topic 1: OETZI THE ICEMAN*

*Do you like to study history? What historical period is your favorite? Have you been to any history museums? Have you seen mummies, in museums, movies, or elsewhere? How old do you think are the oldest existing human remains? What do you know about humans who lived during the Ice Age? Look at Figure 01 (below) – have you seen this person before? Who do you think it is?*



**Figure 01. OETZI THE ICEMAN**

1. Watch the following video about Oetzi the Iceman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nk261CZaCKg> and answer the following questions:

1. Who was Oetzi and when did he live?
2. What was Oetzi's approximate height, age, possible occupation, and social status?
3. Where was his body found?
4. How did he die? How did the researchers determine that?
5. What weapons did he have on him? What other items were found on or next to his body?
6. Why did the researchers have only 9 hours to investigate his body in a lab?
7. What method was used to determine the age of the remains?
8. What detail of the forensic analysis pointed out to the researchers that Oetzi had been chased by

some enemies of his before he died?

2. What do these words refer to and in what connection are they used in the video? Einkorn, Ibex, Smelting, Hornbeam, Conifer, Bolzano

3. Come up with 10 more questions of your own that you would like to discuss in class (you'll submit them in class as part of your grade – so type them up and print them out).

4. Speak on the topic of "Oetzi the Iceman" for 3-5 minutes as if you were one of
  - a) an archeologist presenting at a scientific conference,
  - b) a history teacher in your high school history class,
  - c) a tour guide at the Bolzano Museum of Archaeology,
  - d) a TV reporter announcing the discovery of the Iceman.

As can be seen in Example 1, students receive their new discussion topic with the assignment to view a You-Tube video on the archeological discovery of a prehistoric human body. The instructor provides a few pre-viewing questions to introduce the students into the discussed field, in this case archeology. The instructor also provides post-viewing questions geared towards students' more thorough understanding of the video materials and their preparation for the ensuing class discussion. At this stage, students acquire the necessary technical vocabulary for the discussion and get an opportunity to practice speaking on the subject. The instructor also prompts them to come up with more questions of their own about the particulars of the topic, which urges the students to study the topic more in-depth and makes the following class discussion more lively and interactive. Finally, students are prompted to assume one of the suggested roles and prepare their monologue about the discussed phenomenon. Now they have a chance to practice their monologic speaking skills and try out various discourse types. The instructor

evaluates students' oral contributions to the discussion, as well as their written questions. The written questions allow the instructor to note possible gaps in students' grammar or vocabulary development. Following is another example of an assignment for students' individual preparation.

*Example 2. Topic 2: CHRIS MCCANDLESS' JOURNEY INTO THE WILD*

*Look at Figure 02 (below) – what do you think about this man? How old is he, in your opinion? Why do you think he is so gaunt and emaciated?*



**Figure 02. CHRIS MCCANDLESS**

1. Watch the short video about Chris McCandless (attached) and copy down the narrated text (type it up, print out, and submit the transcript in class for a grade). Retell the text of the video as if you were speaking about Chris to your friends.

2. Read the following internet article: <http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/how-chris-mccandless-died> and answer the following questions:

- a) What was the main reason of McCandless' death, according to Jon Krakauer's research?
- b) What particular evidence suggested to Krakauer that the reason of Chris' death could be the wild potato seeds?
- c) Why did he eat them? Does the fact that he ate them imply ignorance on Chris' part?
- d) Why was the idea that he had been poisoned by wild potato seeds discarded by the researcher at first and what made him return to that idea later?

3. Do your own internet research and find out more about Chris McCandless. Where was he born and where did he grow up? Did he have a college degree? Did he have any family problems that might have caused his vagabond propensity? Was that Alaska trip his first and only hiking trip? Did he make any other "forays" into the wild? What was his nickname?

4. Share your own hiking, camping, or survivalist experiences with your classmates.

In Example 2, students are required to watch a short video on the tragic fate of Christopher McCandless and read a substantial article on the probable causes of his death, written by a famous journalist John Krakauer. They are also encouraged to "dig deeper" and research McCandless' background on their own. The questions provided by the instructor are designed in such a way, so as to prompt students' critical and independent thinking. Again, the Flipped Class model provides a space for students' independent research activities, while they familiarize themselves with the subject matter, with the subsequent group discussion of the topic in class, when students can share their thoughts and compare

their understanding of the motives that led Chris McCandless to his untimely death. At the final stage of the class, students are again provided the space for sharing their personal experiences and honing their monologic and dialogic speaking skills.

As opposed to more detailed assignments presented in the examples above, the two following examples show that assignments can be more concise and provide more space for students' individual learning.

*Example 3. Topic 3: D.B. COOPER – THE UNSOLVED MYSTERY*

*Have you ever tried parachuting? Would you like to try? Look at Figure 03 (below) – how do you think the person in the identikit is connected to airplanes? Have you heard about D.B. Cooper? What famous cases of hijacked planes do you know? What do you think it takes for a person to become a hijacker? Can you think of possible reasons and motives?*



**Figure 03.** D.B.Cooper

1. Watch this video and come up with the questions for our discussion:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TLL05KCgUvE>

Do you think the individual who called himself Dan Cooper survived the jump? If he did, how would it be possible for him to have avoided the capture for so many years?

Do your research and describe the hijacking and its perpetrator in detail. Do you think the man was an experienced pilot, parachutist, criminal?

Do you think he did what he did only for the ransom money?

Look through this list of possible suspects [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D.\\_B.\\_Cooper#Suspects](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D._B._Cooper#Suspects) do your own investigation, choose the most probable suspect, and explain your choice.

2. Choose an unusual crime or unsolved mystery and share the story with your classmates in a mini-presentation (2-3 minutes).

*Example 4. Topic 4: WWII JAPANESE HOLDOUTS – HIROO ONODA*

*Have you ever heard of the WWII Japanese holdouts in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands? How can you explain their refusal to surrender even after the war was over? Look at Figure 04 (below) – have you heard about this particular Japanese holdout? What do you think he is famous for?*



**Figure 04.** Japanese soldiers

Watch the following videos and do your own research about Hiroo Onoda, the most famous World War II Japanese holdout: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3FHeBnTnVs>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivAuQRrNevA>

1. Be ready to discuss his guerrilla warfare and his life after the war was finally over for him and come up with 5 questions you would like to ask your classmates.

2. Prepare a mini-presentation (3 minutes) about a famous (or not so famous) war hero (any historical period or country of origin would do) without explicitly mentioning his or her name, while the rest of the class will try to guess the person's name.

As can be seen in the last two examples, students are not provided with many questions aimed at preparing them for the discussion. Instead, they are encouraged to study the subject with the help of the internet sources and prompted to come up with their own questions. In both cases students are also mandated to prepare mini-presentations on similar or related cases. This gives students the freedom to choose the topics for their presentations and provides an opportunity to conduct independent research and share findings with their peers in class. This model allows students to hone their academic research and presentation skills and foster their communicative abilities.

The tasks are offered in this stage deserves special attention as they are structured to give learners more active in problem solving tasks.

### **6.3. Test as the final step of the educational process by the investigating model**

The third stage, the final one-extracurricular work, is presented in the form of a test of three tasks: working with text, working with an audio resource, and working with a video resource on a topic. Fulfilling the diagnostic function, test finds out the level of knowledge and skills very fast, surpassing all forms of control.

Extracurricular work is focused on greater independence of the student in the study of theoretical material, consolidation of the studied and control. During classroom sessions, the student is given more opportunities for active learning to practice practical skills: discussing the content of the problem, based on the material studied independently, finding solutions to problem situations in the group, exchanging opinions, expressing and defending their point of view, thereby also showing independence.

## **7. Conclusion**

As a result, working process with students using the implemented model proves the following:

the level of understanding of the importance of teamwork was risen among students; the possibility of learning independently over the extracurricular period has increased too; the ability to work with a large amount of information is developed; students are more responsible for completing tasks; learners demonstrate interest in the discipline more; students help each other in the studying as they understand the importance of teamwork. In addition, the peculiarity of “Flipped classroom” learning is interdisciplinarity. Any competence is evolved within the framework of several courses simultaneously, it is enriched and developed through various activities offered by different teachers. Tasks for students offered by a traditional school are mostly theoretical, as they were formed within the same discipline, so the tasks for this course were selected taking into account the theoretical disciplines of the master's program and the recommendations of teachers of the faculty, where program is conducted.

Thus, in order to provide quality education that is in demand in real life, the teacher needs to know what is included in other courses of the program, and together with teachers of other disciplines who are participants in the same educational program, develop problem situations of an interdisciplinary nature, the solution of which offers the use of knowledge of different sciences. The modern professional community also expects a professional with a comprehensive vision of the problem.

Based on the above, the characteristics, identified by us during the implementation of this method in the educational process at the faculty where program is conducted, definitely, prove the timeliness of its use in the classroom at the University. Moreover, it should be noted that with regard to the educational standards in Russia with a greater number of hours allocated to independent work, but lack of training of students to work independently like doing homework constantly, looking for and working with the necessary literature, this approach is like no other promotes the development of readiness of future professional to work independently, as well as provide its high mobility and with the integration in different social groups.

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