APPLYING FLIPPED APPROACH IN AN ENGLISH – VIETNAMESE TRANSLATION CLASSROOM AT HO CHI MINH CITY INDUSTRY AND TRADE COLLEGE

Nguyen Thi Phuong Nga¹, Nguyen Thi Kieu Thu²
¹Ho Chi Minh Industry and Trade College
²HUTECH University

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 20/4/2022
Revised: 30/4/2022
Published: 30/4/2022

ABSTRACT

Translation competence is seen as one of the essential language skills in learning English. However, traditional methods of lecture-based teaching are still pervasive in many translation courses in Vietnamese universities and colleges, which allegedly leads to ineffective learning and practicing. This study presented the characteristics and classroom operation of flipped approach, which is considered as alternative, practical and efficacious way to facilitate learners in developing basic translation skills, namely reading comprehension, researching, analyzing, and composing. It also aimed at exploring how the use of flipped approach affected the translation skills and the perceptions of 60 third year English majors in a flipped translation classroom at Ho Chi Minh City Industry and Trade College. The results from the pretest, post-test, and a questionnaire revealed that the participants in the experimental group performed better than those in the control group in the post-test, and the participants in the experimental group expressed positive perceptions toward motivation, effectiveness, engagement, and satisfaction in the flipped translation classroom. The study also indicated that flipped approach enabled the students to perceive the importance of self-study, cooperative participating in the group, and active learning in the classroom in order to achieve better outcomes.

keywords

Flipped approach
Perceptions
Translation skills
Flipped translation classroom
English majors

APplied phUngh phÁp dÁo ngviquc cho mót lÓp dÍch anh vÉt tÀi tRÚNg caó dÍng cÓNg thÁnh pHób hÓ chÍ mÍnh

Nguyên Thị Phương Nga¹, Nguyễn Thị Kiều Thu²
¹Trường Cáo đẳng Công thương TP. Hồ Chí Minh
²Trường Đại học Công nghệ TP. Hồ Chí Minh

THÔNG TIN BÀI BÁO

Ngày nhận bài: 20/4/2022
Ngày hoàn thiện: 30/4/2022
Ngày đăng: 30/4/2022

TÓM TẮT

Năng lực dịch thuật được coi là một trong những kỹ năng ngôn ngữ thiết yếu trong việc học tiếng Anh. Tuy nhiên, phương pháp giảng dạy truyền thống vẫn còn phổ biến trong nhiều học phần dịch thuật ở các trường đại học và cao đẳng tại Việt Nam, khiến việc học và thực hành không hiệu quả. Nghiên cứu này trình bày các đề đề và hoạt động học của phương pháp tiếp cận đào tạo được coi là cách thay thế, thúc đẩy và hiệu quả để tạo điều kiện cho người học phát triển các kỹ năng dịch cơ bản, cụ thể là đọc hiểu, nghiên cứu, phân tích và dịch lại. Mục đích nghiên cứu này tìm hiểu về sự dụng phương pháp đào tạo người anh ngữ như thế nào để nâng cao tiếng Anh trong lớp học dịch đào tạo người tại Trường Cáo đẳng Công thương Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh. Kết quả phần tích số liệu từ hai kiểm tra và 1 bảng khảo sát cho thấy những bạn tham gia trong nhóm thử nghiệm hoạt động tốt hơn những người trong nhóm học truyền thống và thể hiện nhận thức tích cực về động lực, hiệu quả, sự tham gia và sự hài lòng trong lớp học đào tạo. Nghiên cứu cũng chỉ ra rằng phương pháp đào tạo giúp sinh viên nhận thức được tầm quan trọng của việc tự học, tham gia hợp tác trong nhóm và học tập tích cực trong lớp học để đạt được kết quả tốt hơn.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.34238/tnu-jst.5886

* Corresponding author. Email: nissei9850@yahoo.com.vn

http://jst.tnu.edu.vn 103 Email: jst@tnu.edu.vn
1. Introduction

Educating language has witnessed great changes in many ways from the development of computer technology on digital computer tools that have been applied widely in the educational system. At the present time, a combination of the computer and the Internet is compulsory in daily life activities and widely used in every field [1]. Flipped teaching focuses on learner-center instruction that can be considered as an innovative pedagogical method to ‘merged learning’ in which the typical classroom activities are reversed in order, and regularly united and equipped with instructional clips [2]. A simple definition of Flipped classroom approach is “what is done at school done at home, homework done at home completed in classroom” [3]. The main idea with the flipped classroom is that the students come to class prepared because they have already watched online lectures that are pre-recorded, take notes about the sections that they may not comprehend and watch theoretical lessons via multiple equipment such as learning management systems, online and offline clips [4]. There are benefits and challenges in adopting the flipped classroom model in education. Benefits to implementing the flipped classroom model include narrowing teacher – student relations [5], [6], maximizing class time and learning effects [7], [8], and encouraging self-study habit [9]. On the other hand, there are some challenges for the implementation of the flipped classroom model such as students preferring to “learn in class” [10], [11], time consuming [12], and the workload quantity because it demands keeping up with not only the class requirements but also maintaining the balance between the flipped course and other courses [13]. Another challenge is that teachers lack knowledge of information technology and programming knowledge which hinders teachers from making high-quality and attractive micro lectures to interest and inspire their students [14].

The flipped classroom approach has spread all over the world. Al-Harbi and Alshumaimeri [15] have adopted the model in teaching grammar. Their study also implied that flipped classrooms can solve the teaching English grammar problems because students are allowed to learn collaboratively and practice the language individually. Moreover, in a study by Lou et al., [16] a one-term flipped experiment was conducted in a class teaching translation skill for 124 first-year non-English-majors, who were divided into control group and treatment group. The results of pretest and post-test showed that the flipped translation instruction for treatment group enhanced students’ translation skills than the control group. In another study conducted by Irianti and Sulastri [17], how flipped classroom was implemented in listening class in order to develop students’ literacy in digital era with Whatsapp (WA) application was portrayed. In this study, the data from 21 students were verified by observation, questionnaire and interview; the results showed that the flipped classroom model enhanced the participants’ idiomatic knowledge and oral ability, encouraged the participants to learn English idioms for the improvement of oral ability, and engaged them in the learning tasks. Besides, the impact of inverted classrooms on promoting EFL learners’ extensive and intensive reading comprehension was also revealed in a study by Neisi et al. [18]. The above researches have delved into the application of the flipped method in English language classrooms.

In the Vietnamese context, there were studies on the flipped classroom model. The results in the study of Nguyen and Le [19] showed that the application of the flipped classroom model could increase creativeness for students’ speaking performance. In another study conducted by Tran and Nguyen [20], results from the pre- and post- speaking tests, semi structured interviews, and a questionnaire revealed that the students’ speaking skills were improved thanks to the flipped method, and the participants showed positive perception about the flipped model. In 2021, a case study of the flipped translation classroom approach in a public university in Ho Chi Minh City was conducted by Nguyen [21]. The case study examined 79 junior students’ perceptions towards the educational benefits of this approach on their translation improvement. The collected findings from the semi-structured interviews revealed that this approach not only could help learners improve various aspects in translation studies, but also could bridge the gaps in the literature of flipped method.
From the above studies, it could be noticed that the flipped classroom model applied in the field of English language skill has drawn scholars’ intentions and yet it has not been fully investigated; especially research on the implementation of the flipped classroom model on translation teaching and learning is scarce. This study is an exploration of the flipped approach’s effects on HITC third year English students’ translation skills and their perceptions on motivation, effectiveness, engagement, and satisfaction.

Motivation in an academic context refers to an interest resource that assists students to persist and to attend with positive attitudes in learning activities [22]. It also contains students’ beliefs about their ability of task performance by being responsible for their own performance.

Effectiveness is understood as the ability to produce a desired result or the capability of producing desired output. In the current study, the term refers to the impact of the flipped method which hopefully could promote the students’ ability to produce a good translation text. In the scope of the study, the focus is on translation from Vietnamese into English and vice versa. So as to increase the effectiveness of the translation courses, both cognitive and physical tools are recommended to teachers. Besides, the use of these tools is believed to help learners adapt to specific educational levels [23].

As for engagement, it is a main contributor of quality learning, including behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement which are involved in a multifaceted construct. The students’ participation is involved in behavioral engagement while positive and negative reactions influence one’s willingness to do the work and both are encompassed in emotional engagement. Willingness or investment to exert the necessary effort, and to achieve mastery is referred to in cognitive engagement [24], [25].

Another important issue is learner satisfaction, which is affective responses or aggregate feelings while interacting with the learning system. In higher education institutions, satisfaction is a crucial element contributing to the quality and acceptance [26]. The capability of applying knowledge to achieve the intended learning outcomes also has an impact on the quality of learning experience and learner satisfaction [27]. If learners are satisfied with their flipped progress, they will continue the same approach in other courses [28].

In summary, many researchers have explored the beneficial impacts of flipped learning on learners’ attitudes in various subjects [15]-[21]. In the same way, this article was also aimed at exploring learners’ perceptions toward the suggested approach. The research was guided by the following questions study:

1. How does the use of flipped approach affect English-major students’ translation skills at HITC?
2. What are English majors’ perceptions toward the use of flipped approach in translation classrooms at HITC?

2. Methodology and Data Collection

2.1. Research design

This experimental study included two quantitative components (two tests related to translation skills) to provide the information on English-major students’ translation skills before and after trained by the flipped classroom model, and a qualitative component (open-ended interview) to provide the perceptions of English-major students towards the use of flipped classroom model.

2.2. Participants

120 third year English majors at HITC were divided conveniently into two groups: 60 participants as the Control Group (CG) with the traditional translation method and 60 participants as the Treatment Group (TG) the flipped classroom model. Both CG and TG were homogeneous, having similar level of educational background and English proficiency, equal overall learning and cognitive abilities.
2.3. The experimental teaching: Flipped classroom model in translation teaching and learning

The textbook entitled 'Basic Translation between English and Vietnamese' [29] was used as the main material to teach translation for students in control group and treatment group at the research site. In the experiment, the treatment participants were instructed in the flipped classroom model. However, the control participants were instructed in the traditional translation model (i.e. students listen to the teacher’s explanation of translation skills, practice translation individually, and review the lesson). The flipped translation classroom in this study was separated into three stages with the involvement of both the instructor and students. The first stage was pre-flipped translation classroom; the second stage was in-flipped translation classroom; and the third stage was post-flipped translation classroom.

In the first stage, the pre-flipped translation classroom, the instructor analyzed and designed translation teaching with video production and prepared in-class teaching. During the first part, after selecting the translation teaching content, the instructor produced a short translation teaching content video in 20 - 30 minutes which concurred with the translation theory referred in the translation teaching curriculum. Then the video was uploaded on the Zalo group of the experimental group 3 days before the next translation class. The students’ activities included translation learning tasks comprehension, watching translation teaching, completing translation learning tasks, summarizing translation learning through watching translation teaching video and self-testing the translation knowledge before class. Each group was assigned to prepare a specific topic passage which was to be translated from English into Vietnamese one day before the next translation class. The students communicated with the instructor about translation learning via the Zalo application.

In the second stage, in-flipped translation classroom, the instructor created the translation teaching and learning environment, organized and guided the whole class to learn through independent or collaborative study, accomplishment interchange and reports. The students divided themselves into groups of 4 and each group was assigned with cooperative activities such as practising, discussing or solving translation problem. Then the representative of each group reported the group’s translation learning achievement by an assignment of translation. In the flipped translation classroom, the instructor organized and guided the students’ translation learning activities and participated in discussions to support students’ translation learning.

In the third stage, post-flipped translation classroom, the students wrote the summary of the learnt lesson which included the new vocabularies, grammar points, important notices and evaluated their translation learning in class, submitted them to the instructor, and then received the teacher’s comprehensive evaluation and feedback of the assignment, homework, and their contribution in the process of translation learning.

2.4. Instruments

The instruments used in this study were pre-test and post-test on translation and a questionnaire for students from TG on flipped classroom model.

Pre-test of English – Vietnamese translation: The topics of the pretest were related to Education, Economics, Transportation, Health, Culture, Career, Technology, etc...The pretest included 2 parts: Part A “English - Vietnamese”, Part B “Vietnamese - English”. Each part had 2 similar sections, the first section of part A and B was translating 10 sentences with 3 marks. The design of section 1 focused on basic grammar such as tenses and the agreement of English subjects and verbs. The second section of part A and B was translating a 100 - 120 word passage, equal to 8 simple sentences with 2 marks. These passages were related to practical topics; vocabulary and grammar structure were not the main points to marking but it was the meaning from the source passage to target passage that counted more. The test lasted for 90 minutes.

Post-test of English – Vietnamese translation: The post-test had the same format, topics, rubrics as in the pretest. Besides, the level of difficulty of the source text was in alignment with the instructions in the syllabus released by the administrators.
Questionnaire relates to perception in flipped English – Vietnamese translation class: The questionnaire was aimed at exploring the students’ perceptions toward flipped translation classroom. After the experiment, all 60 participants in TG did an online survey on www.liveworksheet.com to help the researchers collect information to find the answers for the second question concerning their perceptions toward the use of flipped approach in translation classroom at HITC. The researchers adapted Likert-scale questionnaires to explore the comprehensive perceptions of participants in the flipped translation learning. The questionnaire was adapted from two studies on the same topic [30], [31] because these questions were suitable to explore the learner’s perceptions in the use of flipped context. The questionnaire included twenty questions divided into 4 groups. The first group included 5 statements which asked the participants about their motivation while practicing translation. The next 5 statements in the second group were their perception toward the effectiveness of flipped approach. In the next 5 statements in the third group, the participants were asked about their engagement during the flipped translation classroom. Finally, in the last 5 statements about learners’ satisfaction, participants expressed their feelings about the performance in the classroom.

2.5. Data Collection and Analysis

The data from the two tests and questionnaire were analyzed by Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 20.0). Descriptive Statistics were used for examining learners’ skills in translation before and after the treatment from the data of pre-test and post-test. At the same time, the Independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores and deviation of the two groups in pre-test and post-test. The data from the questionnaire was computed by Cronbach’s Alpha in SPSS to check for reliability.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Effects of the Flipped Classroom Model on English-Majors’ Translation Skills

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the mean scores of the control and experimental group in the post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.(2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>8.60</td>
<td>5.7767</td>
<td>1.15382</td>
<td>-10.758</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>7.8217</td>
<td>0.91468</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the results shown in Table 1, after the treatment, the total mean score of the translation test of the experimental group (M=7.8217) was much greater than that of the control group (M=5.7767) with the mean difference between two groups (MD=2.04500). In addition, an Independent Samples T-test was also conducted to evaluate whether there was a significant difference between two groups in translation test after the treatment. The results also signified that the Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances was statistically significant. The Sig. (2-tailed) value was .000 which indicated that after the treatment, the participants’ skills of translation between two groups were significantly different: the translation skills of the experimental group was greater than that of the control group.

3.2. Learners’ Perceptions toward Flipped Approach

Table 2. The Overall Statistics Results of Learner’s Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Learners’ Perceptions</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>St. Deviation (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Participant’s motivation in learning and practicing translation</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Participant’s perceptions toward the effectiveness on flipped approach</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Participant’s engagement during the flipped translation classroom</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Participant’s feeling of satisfaction during performance in classroom</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M: mean; SD: Standard deviation
Table 2 showed the data about the perceptions of English majors in the flipped classroom. It could be seen that the mean was 3.77 and the standard deviation (SD) was 0.62 which was by far higher than scale 3 on the five-point scale of the questionnaire. This result meant those students had relatively positive perceptions towards the flipped model. Besides, it also revealed the information on their perception toward the flipped method. Among the categories, satisfaction seemed to be the most positive with the mean of 3.87 and standard deviation (SD) of 0.62, which meant that the participants were satisfied with the flipped learning. Other categories were also perceived relatively positive, with mean scores are equal to one another, motivation (M = 3.77; SD = 0.66) and engagement (M = 3.76; SD = 0.61) respectively. On the other hand, effectiveness tended to be the least positive to the students because its mean was 3.68 and its standard deviation (SD) was 0.57, which meant the students thought that the flipped approach might be not as effective as the other elements in their learning, even though M = 3.68 was considered higher than the average. Those findings could be interpreted that most students had positive perceptions of the flipped approach.

3.3. Discussions

Through the results in Table 1, it could be argued that after the treatment, the participants’ translation scores of the treatment group were improved, which means that the flipped classroom model could improve the students’ translation skills. It is obvious that the flipped classroom model encouraged students to acquire the knowledge by themselves and the cooperation with other learners yield benefits. The results of two separate translation tests (pre-test and post-test) of the two groups indicated the achievement of the treatment group in terms of translation competence. In short, the improvement of the participants’ translation skills in the treatment group showed the important role that the flipped classroom model played in the process of their translation learning.

As the second purpose of this study was to investigate and report the students’ perceptions in flipped translation classroom, the results are showed in table 2. Regarding the treatment group’s motivation, the majority of students perceived that they enjoyed the flipped classroom teaching approach and became more motivated in the flipped translation process. In this study, the participants became more active learners because they found most new topics interesting and often spent time obtaining more information. This is because they solved their translation assignment by teamwork. In the group of four, they could discuss the problems, find solutions, report their assignments to the group leader or ask for help from group members. Regarding engagement in the learning process, most of the respondents answered that they felt more engaged and confident in their learning with this new teaching method, and they claimed that they worked harder in their study thanks to the interesting materials, lessons, and class activities. The cooperative experiential learning created opportunities for them to share their thoughts on different translation samples, to exchange ideas, thoughts, and translation techniques, enabling them to reconstruct their translations. Many participants perceived that they were happy and totally satisfied with the flipped translation learning experience. They were satisfied not only with the freedom of choosing the learning method but also the integration of technology and multimedia resources because they actively prepared for the next assignments in the next sessions individually or with their team; they could find the information with multipurpose tools on the internet which is up to date and suitable for their levels.

4. Conclusion

This was an experimental study of flipped approach in teaching and learning translation skills of English-majors at Ho Chi Minh City Industry and Trade College. The results showed that the flipped classroom model for the treatment group worked well in enhancing students’ translation skills, and the participants held positive responses for the new translation teaching and learning
method. This study was expected to raise awareness of the implementation of the flipped classroom model in translation teaching and learning, and consequently could provide the information as well as evidence for future research on the effectiveness of the approach in translation teaching and learning. The study, however, had some limitations. First, the researchers could not choose suitable translation classes to clarify the proficiency level of the participants because of the institutional constraints at the research site. Second, the limited time might have hindered the researchers from gaining deep insights in the study fields; therefore, the effect of flipped approach and positive perceptions could not reach a maximum reliability. Finally, the number of collected data as well as the quality of the data was limited because there were only two research instruments, namely tests and questionnaire for the results of the study.

REFERENCES