

## The Role of Video in the Flipped Language Classroom

### Le rôle de la vidéo dans la classe de langue inversée

*Angelika Verch, Grenoble Alpes University, France*

*Elke Nissen, Grenoble Alpes University, France*

#### Abstract

Flipped classrooms have become a widespread form of pedagogical setting, yet there is no consensus on how to define flipped language learning. Several authors consider the use of videos that prepares in-class activities as an essential component. The study presented in this article examined the actual roles of videos in a corpus of 52 second language teachers' descriptions of flipped language class settings; and analysed using Willis' 1983 framework for video use in the ELT classroom. In the corpus, videos were central in before-class activities, where a large number of videos were used. The type of roles these videos played at a before-class stage showed little overlap with Willis' framework, mainly because many videos played the role of direct instruction. It was found that teachers did not share the same definition of a flipped setting, since in a quarter of the descriptions, not all the criteria applied. Video was not found to be a mandatory component of flipped language classes.

*Keywords:* Flipped classroom, Blended learning design, Video, Language learning and teaching

#### Résumé

Si la classe inversée est aujourd'hui devenue une forme d'enseignement largement répandue, la définition de ce qu'est une classe inversée en langues ne fait pour autant pas consensus. Plusieurs auteurs considèrent le recours à la vidéo lors de la phase préparatoire à distance comme une composante indispensable. Cet article présente l'analyse des rôles joués par les vidéos, au sein d'un corpus de 52 descriptions de classes de langue, faites par des enseignants du secondaire; analyse adoptant le cadre élaboré par Willis (1983) pour le recours à la vidéo dans l'enseignement de l'anglais. Dans notre corpus, les vidéos sont au centre des activités préparatoires au présentiel, et le recours à la vidéo est fréquent dans cette phase. Le recoupement entre les types de rôles de ces vidéos et ceux identifiés par Willis s'avère être minime, principalement parce que de nombreuses vidéos jouent un rôle d'instruction directe. Au niveau de la définition, notre étude permet de voir que tous les enseignants ne partagent pas la même

définition de ce qu'est une classe de langue inversée : dans un quart des descriptions, au moins l'un des critères définitoires ne s'applique pas. La vidéo n'apparaît ici pas comme une composante indispensable de la classe de langue inversée.

*Mots-clés* : Classe inversée, conception d'une formation hybride, vidéo, apprentissage et enseignement des langues.

## Introduction

A steadily growing number of teachers in diverse contexts use blended learning settings (Würffel, 2014), and more particularly, flipped classrooms. Identifying a definition that embraces the specific context of language teaching and learning calls for the need to adapt the broad definitions elaborated for any discipline. The question is, then, whether existing flipped language classroom designs actually meet this definition. In this view, the presence and roles of videos are of major interest, since they are a frequently-used type of media in flipped language classrooms. However, there seems to be a lack of recent research on their use in this context. This study addresses these questions and thus seeks to contribute to enhancing teachers' and researchers' understanding of the roles that videos play and the definition of a flipped language classroom itself.

### Definition of the Flipped Classroom

Not long ago the term *flipped classroom* was considered as merely a buzzword (Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Brame, 2013), but today it is widely used, and relates to a general strategy in education in all subjects and at all levels of education (Lebrun & Lecoq, 2017). It is considered as a "specific type of blended learning design" (Strayer, 2012, p. 171) as its design combines moments of distance and moments of face-to-face learning. The spread of flipped classrooms can be explained by the easy access to and the ubiquitous presence of technological tools in the past decade such as video cameras, video-making tools, screencast technology, video streaming platforms and digital learning environments (Keengwe et al., 2014).

In a flipped classroom in general education, video in particular has a special status. Some authors consider the viewing of an instructional video before class as a constitutive element of the definition of a flipped classroom (Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Gruba et al., 2016) while others adopt a broader view with manifold possible activities and types of materials during the out-of-class phase (Baker, 2000; Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Brame, 2013; Lage et al., 2000; Lebrun & Lecoq, 2015; Schäfer, 2012). According to the findings of Akçayır & Akçayır (2018) teachers rely mainly on information transmission through videos for out-of-class activity when implementing flipped learning and teaching design.

Some of the prominent ambassadors for flipped or inverted teaching and learning have claimed that a formal definition cannot be outlined for the concept (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Lebrun & Lecoq, 2017). On the contrary, other researchers have emphasised the need to "work [...] toward a common high definition" (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015, p. 21). The first broad academic work on the model,

Strayer's 2007 PhD dissertation, relied on earlier works for the definition of *flip*: “[i]nverting the classroom means that events that have traditionally taken place inside the classroom now take place outside the classroom and vice versa. The use of learning technologies, particularly multimedia, provides new opportunities for students to learn” (Lage et al., 2000, p. 32; quoted by Strayer, 2007, p. 2). The aim from the beginning was to be “freed from the ‘tyranny of the lecture’” during class time in order to plan and practice activities promoting active learning (Baker, 2000, p. 13). These principles were widely adopted by research in the following years (Bishop & Verleger, 2013). Abeysekera and Dawson introduced an interesting precision: on the basis of an analysis of “common themes (...) identified from existing definitions,” they put forward a “lowest common denominator definition” of the flipped classroom as a set of pedagogical approaches that:

- move most information-transmission teaching out of class;
- use class time for learning activities that are active and social; and
- require students to complete pre- and/or post-class activities to fully benefit from in class work. (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015, p. 6)

These authors thereby underlined that the design of before-class and in-class activities in the flipped classroom needed a necessary accomplishment of the before-class activity by the learner for the in-class activity to be successful. For our study, we relied on this definition, but adapted the first component of *information transmission teaching* to the context of second language teaching (i.e., the teaching of languages that are learnt after a native language) by changing it to *preparation*. The change was necessary since information-transmission is not the focus either of a communicative approach to second language teaching or of an action-oriented approach.

### **Flipped Language Classroom – A Literature Review**

In 2014, Egbert et al. pointed out the scarcity of work exploring flipped instruction in the field of language learning, but research in other fields of application has not been abundant either, even though the implementation of its design had been described and discussed since 2000. For example, in 2000, Bishop and Verleger identified 24 publications of flipped instruction, but not one existed in the field of language teaching and learning. Since then, the number of published articles overall, but particularly in the field of language teaching and learning, has increased tremendously. The majority of publications in second language learning concern English as a second language (Turan & Akdag-Cimen, 2019). These studies are mostly based on the analysis of students’ (and/or teachers’) perceptions of the flipped language classroom (i.e., Basal, 2015; Chen, 2018; Mehring, 2015; Webb & Doman, 2016). Students’ perceptions of the flipped language class were found to be positive (Bell, 2015; Hung, 2015; Webb et al., 2014), because of the possibility of preparing topics before class, of interacting in small groups and of using the target language in class (Basal, 2015).

Several researchers have criticized the use of this type of data and see the need for “scholarly research of [the] effectiveness” of the flipped classroom (Bishop & Verleger, 2013, p. 4) through the investigation of students’ learning outcomes. The number of studies addressing this gap has been increasing. Leis (2016) and Vaezi et al. (2019) for instance used quasi experimental designs with pre-

and post-tests. Other researchers questioned the rigour of the design of research undertaken in the past (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015; Perselli, 2016). For example, in the case of Leis' study on listening comprehension in flipped settings, the lack of a control group made conclusions about the effectiveness of the flipped classroom setting questionable. Although Vaezi et al. did include a control group in their study, it seems that they did not account for the time spent by each group on the actual task of listening comprehension. Consequently, it was uncertain whether the effectiveness of the flipped class setting with authentic materials was due to the flipped setting or simply the increased amount of time spent on listening.

### **Use of Video for Language Teaching and Learning**

Research on video in the educational field was linked at its start to the use of television for educational purposes in the 1960s with the first research published in the 1970s (Lesser, 1974). The main attention in the field of educational TV for children and adults, then, and during the next decade, was drawn to the role moving images could play in the learning process. The idea was that they would facilitate the access to information and end the dominance of a verbal requirement.

Today, the technical possibilities of accessing, creating and transforming video documents have increased exponentially, and there are new video genres because every user can become a producer of content: web series, explanatory videos of all kinds, the products of vloggers (video bloggers) and You-tubers. This has attracted the attention of educational research (Rummler & Wolf, 2012; Wolf, 2015).

In language teaching and learning, video technology was met with immediate interest. During the mid 1980s and the 90s, a significant number of studies dedicated to video use in the language classroom were published (e.g., Brandi, 1996; Lancien, 1986; Lonergan, 1984; Schwerdtfeger, 1989). In the 80s, as soon as the technological evolution made it possible, the possibility of creating video in the classroom was discussed by Willis (1983), among others.

When Willis published her 1983 article entitled "101 Ways to Use Video," she explicitly reacted to the seemingly already strong popularity of video in the language classroom, while pointing out the "danger of lapsing into the anecdotal" (Willis, 1983, p. 43). In order to overcome that danger, she undertook a tentative framework for the use of video in the language classroom with the introduction of roles in which videos could be used for language learning. To our knowledge, there is no recent model offering such an integration of pedagogical, practical, and linguistic criteria for video use in the language classroom. A more recent framework, proposed by Goldstein and Driver (2015) is, in turn, based on Willis' framework.

### **Research Questions**

Our study aimed at identifying the roles that videos play in the design of flipped language classrooms. In so doing, it addressed a gap in the research, as to our knowledge no recent study has investigated their presence and status in these contexts. More precisely, it sought to do the following:

1. gain deeper understanding of the videos' status within flipped language classes, through determining (a) quantitatively, the number of video(s) used, their occurrence within the learning sequence and (b) qualitatively, their role;
2. verify whether or not flipped language class settings correspond to the definition we elaborated on for the basis of our literature review, since this would provide evidence for a commonly-shared understanding of what a flipped language classroom is;
3. verify whether videos are a constitutive element of these flipped classrooms.

### **Methodology**

To address these questions, we examined language teachers' pedagogical design practices with Willis' framework as the theoretical frame for analysing video use and roles in flipped language classes. We paid close attention to the choice of video, in particular to those which did not fit into the uses in Willis' framework. Furthermore, we checked in each case whether or not the teachers adopted the defining principles of a flipped classroom.

The analysis carried out in this research is based on an online corpus of 52 written descriptions of second language (L2) teachers' planned projects and existing practices of their teaching in a flipped language classroom.

One part of the corpus was sourced through attending a MOOC (*Classe inversée à l'ère numérique*) on flipping one's classroom, designed and run by Canopé, a French public institution for learning and teaching materials, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education in France. Canopé granted us permission to use the descriptions for the purpose of this study. During the five weeks of the MOOC, participating teachers had to design, either individually or in a group, a setting related to a specific subject and level. They had to provide clear learning objectives, evaluation criteria (in order to evaluate the impact of the flipped teaching and learning), and the material to be used in class and outside of class. The participants submitted their work to be peer-assessed, using a common evaluation grid. Fifteen out of the 76 posted in 2015, and 26 out of the 181 settings in 2016 belonged to the field of L2 teaching and learning.

The other part of the corpus was sourced from the language portal (*Portail Langues vivantes*), a webspace dedicated to language teaching available on *Eduscol*, a pedagogical website provided by the French Ministry of Education.

In total, the corpus (N = 52) consisted of four sets of learning setting descriptions for flipped language classroom lessons or sequences. All of these descriptions were written and posted by the L2 teachers themselves. The first three sets (containing 39 descriptions of settings) were retrieved from the final productions of the participants in two sessions of the MOOC, one of these sessions providing two different levels of training.

The fourth set of descriptions (N = 13) was composed of examples of teaching sequences shown as flipped classes on the language portal. These could be considered as good practices presented by the

pedagogical authorities for foreign language teaching in schools in France, as publications on the portal are under the control of the national inspectors of foreign languages. The descriptions were posted in 2015, and in 2019 were still available online on *Eduscol*, in a specific space dedicated to the flipped classroom in language teaching. The structure of the descriptions, originating from (and coordinated in) different French regional academic councils, ranged from detailed scenarios, where the materials used were enclosed or accessible online, to very general accounts of practices. All the descriptions in this fourth set had been tested and corresponded to actual teaching practice, whereas only one of the sets of the 2016 MOOC session had been tested. This was because the organisers had decided to create a second level (*parcours 2*) to allow the teachers who had been attending the MOOC in 2015 to further their training. The data available on the websites do not enable us to identify the teachers' actual degree of experience in designing flipped language classes. It can nevertheless be assumed that a number of those following the MOOC in 2015 and level 1 in 2016 were novices. In the second level, the attending teachers were asked to individually submit two reports on two classes or sequences of classes where they had been practicing flipped teaching and learning.

Out of the original 65 descriptions, we retained 52. We discarded duplicates, descriptions that targeted L1 and L2 skills at the same time (as in CLIL-classes or in international schools with mixed L1 and L2 students) and settings that could not be analysed due to lack of detail (see Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Sources and Nature of Flipped language Classroom Settings in Corpus*

		Original N	Final N in corpus	Nature of settings	
MOOC sessions	2015	15	15	untested	Planned settings
	2016, level 1	21	18	untested	
	2016, level 2	10 (in 5 documents)	6 (in 3 documents)	Tested	Reported settings
Language Portal		19	13	Tested	
Total		65	52		

To analyse the flipped settings that the teachers had described, and particularly the functions of the videos in the planned learning process as they appeared in the descriptions, we relied on Willis' criteria (1983). An overview of her proposition is presented in Table 2; her six roles will be presented in more detail in the next section. Willis herself underlined that the "categories suggested are not intended to be hard and fast," that roles can "overlap," or may be "embedded within another" (Willis, p. 49) as she intended the categories to be of practical use.

**Table 2***Willis' (1983) Roles of Video in Language Class*

Role	Elements of the role's description
Model & cue	Presentation of new language items, well contextualized situations, illustrating meaning and use
Target	Show 'target' situations; students re-enact using their own words Introduce a wider variety of settings and interactions related to those used previously, but less predictable
Transfer & reinforcement	Illustrate target language in a far wider variety of relevant situations, stimulate simulations Provide material for simple transcoding, under guidance (note-taking with matrix)
Illustrator of message & discourse structure	Expose students to larger chunks of language that they may not initially understand; which illustrate typical text structures
Source of information	Provide material where the content is relevant to students needs and interests, for the purpose of information retrieval (activities in real life); resource and material for related written/oral task
Stimulus	Provide material to act as a stimulus for freer classroom activities (such as problem solving) not necessarily based on the intended message of the video

In addition to the roles of the videos in the flipped classroom settings, our study focused on the characterisation of the classes as flipped classrooms based on the following three defining components of a flipped classroom:

- out-of-class preparation before in-class session,
- with the objective to make students more active in class, and
- in-class-session benefiting from out-of-class preparation

Taking Willis' roles and the retained definition of a flipped classroom, a grid to analyse the video use was outlined while analysing a first description with specific regard to the research questions. This grid was then tested separately by each of the two researchers on two additional descriptions. The results were compared, differences were discussed, the grid modified accordingly and applied to all the 52 descriptions. The final version of the grid can be found in the appendix.

In order to answer our research questions, the data were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analyses consisted in counting the number of learning sequences including videos (third research question), and the respective occurrence of videos at the different stages of these sequences (first research question). We furthermore checked, for each of the sequences, whether it met the three defining components of a flipped language class (second research question). Qualitative

analyses were carried out through identifying the respective videos' roles with the help of our grid and with reference to Willis' framework (first research question).

## Results

### Status of Videos in Flipped Language Classroom Settings

In response to our first research question which addressed the quantitative status of videos, Table 3 indicates the number of videos and their occurrence within the flipped class sequence.

**Table 3**

#### *Use of Videos and Occurrence in Learning Sequence*

	Total N of settings	N of settings with video-centred-activity before class	Total N of videos used before class	N of settings with additional video in in-class-activity	Total N of additional videos used in class
MOOC 2015 planned settings	15	15	25	2	4
MOOC 2016 planned settings level 1	18	16	23	4	6
MOOC 2016 reported settings level 2	6	2	3	0	0
Language Portal reported settings	13	8	14	1	3
Total	52	41	65	7	13

In 41 out of the 52 flipped classroom settings, video was used before class. In addition to those used before class, seven settings contained video in in-class activities as well (with a total of 13 additional videos). There was often more than one video for the students to watch, with a maximum number of three in one out-of-class period.

In addition, there was a notable difference between the planned and the reported settings. While in 31 out of 33 planned settings video was used before class, this was the case in only 10 out of 19 reported settings. In relation to the total number of descriptions, more videos were used in the planned settings (58 videos in 31 settings, almost 1.9 videos per sequence on average) than in the reported settings (20 videos in 19 settings).

In response to the second part of our first research question, the qualitative status of videos within a flipped language class setting is detailed in Table 4, and this is based on Willis' framework. The

three most frequently attributed roles are greyed out, and the highest number appears in bold print. In-class activities in the descriptions were based not only on the video students had to view before class, but also on additional videos shown in class. We attributed one or more roles to every video that was used (maximum of three roles per video), for the before-class phase on the one hand, and for the in-class activity on the other.

**Table 4***Roles of Videos in Flipped Classroom Settings*

	Untested / planned settings				Tested / reported settings				
	Before-class Activity		In-class activity		Before-class activity		In-class activity		
N of videos	48		10 (additional)		<b>N of videos</b>	17		3 (additional)	
Roles attributed	N	% of Videos	N	% of Videos	<b>Roles attributed</b>	N	% of Videos	N	% of Videos
Model & cue	9	18.75	12	20.68	Model & cue	8	<b>47.05</b>	6	30
Target	2	4.16	1	1.72	Target	0	0	0	0
Transfer & reinforcement	1	2.08	1	1.72	Transfer & reinforcement	0	0	0	0
Illustrator of message & discourse structure	3	6.25	3	5.17	Illustrator of message & discourse structure	3	17.65	4	20
Source of information	15	26.31	15	25.86	Source of information	4	23.53	3	15
Stimulus	2	4.16	7	12.06	Stimulus	4	23.53	6	30
Other	24	<b>50</b>	25	<b>43.1</b>	Other	4	23.53	7	<b>35</b>
Total	56		62		Total	23		28	

For the planned settings, the findings for the video roles were comparable in the before-class and in the in-class activities. For both, the most frequently identified of Willis' roles were *source of information* (representing one quarter of both before class and in-class video use) and *model & cue* (one fifth of overall use). However, a significant number of videos could not be attributed to any of Willis's

roles. They were consequently grouped in the category *other* which will be expanded below. This was the most frequently-attributed category overall for video use in the planned settings (almost half of the overall video use).

In the reported settings, the role of *model & cue* was the most frequent (in almost 50% of the before-class activities and in almost a third of the in-class activities). This proportion was higher than in the planned settings. *Stimulus* was one of the most important roles identified for videos in the before-class activities and in-class activities in the reported settings. As for in-class activities, these two roles represented the same percentage of use (30%) second to *other* (35%).

Whereas in both planned and reported settings, source of information and model and cue were the two roles relatively frequently attributed; however, the roles of target and transfer and reinforcement were largely underrepresented. Videos played the role of stimulus more often in class than out of class.

Our results show that Willis' framework did not cover the whole range of video roles in the corpus. After comparing the 28 videos figuring in the category *other* we identified four new types of videos as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Types of Video Used Outside Willis' Framework*

Video types	Descriptions of examples					
	Total N	N in L1	N in L2	N in L2 and L1	N not sure if in L1 or L2	N in L3
Grammar explanations	12	6	3		3	
Vocabulary presentations	6		1	1	4	
Tips on how to do an activity	6	3	2			1

Video types	Descriptions of examples						
	Total N	N in L1	N in L2	N in L2 and L1	N not sure if in L1 or L2	N in L3	
<i>Leçon</i>	4	1	2	1			Telling the time in Spanish: Instruction in L1; two expressions in L2; equivalents of “past,” “before,” “half,” “quarter” (written and spoken); training examples How to say <i>pour</i> in English: Equivalents of <i>pour</i> (L1) in L2; examples; indication of regularities and instruction about when to use which

The term *leçon* in France refers to the main learning content that students are supposed to know by heart for the next session after attending a class in school. The term appears in the definition of a flipped approach on the language portal: Traditionally, the classroom is where the *leçon* takes place, and home is where practical exercises are done. Flipping a class consists of inverting this traditional concept of teaching (*Portail Langues vivantes*, 2015).

### Flipped Language Classroom Settings and Correspondence to Defining Criteria

Our second research question asks whether all the settings actually qualified as flipped learning. For most of the descriptions (39 out of 52), the three criteria defining a flipped classroom applied (see Table 6), but there were differences between the planned and the reported settings: 28 out of the 33 planned settings (84.8%) corresponded to all the criteria, while this was the case for only 11 out of the 19 reports (57.9%).

As far as the reports were concerned, there was a noticeable difference between reported settings posted by trained teachers (submitted during the 2016 MOOC) and the reported settings from the language portal. While all MOOC level 2 descriptions corresponded to the three criteria of a flipped classroom, this was the case for only five of the 13 reported settings published under the control of the educational and pedagogical authorities. Three reported settings of classroom practices on the language portal did not even include an out-of-class phase at all.

**Table 6***Correspondence of Settings with Definition of Flipped Classroom*

	Planned settings				Reported settings			
	MOOC 2015 N = 15		MOOC 2016 N = 18		MOOC 2016 N = 6		Language Portal N = 13	
	Video before class	No video before class	Video before class	No video before class	Video before class	No video before class	Video before class	No video before class
All three criteria apply	14 (93.3%)		13 (72.2%)	1 (5.5%)	2 (33.3%)	4 (66.7%)	4 (30.8%)	1 (7.7%)
Two criteria apply, but no presumable gain in terms of increased learner activity	1 (6.7%)		2 (11.1%)				1 (7.7%)	1 (7.7%)
Two criteria apply, but no (minimal) link or benefit between out-of-class preparation and in-class activity							2 (15.4%)	
Only out-of-class preparation, without the other 2 criteria			1 (5.5%)					1 (7.7%)
No out-of-class preparation, no criteria apply				1 (5.5%)				3 (21.1%)

**Video as a Compulsory Element in Flipped Language Classrooms**

Regarding our third research question whether video is a necessary constituent of a flipped language classroom setting, our findings illustrate that this is not the case. Six out of the 52 settings in our corpus met all three criteria, even though they did not use video in the out-of-class phase. This was more often the case in the reported (five out of 19) than in the planned settings (one out of 33).

Our results can be summarized as follows: In answer to our first research question, we observed that a large number of videos was used. The types of roles that these videos played at a before-class stage showed little overlap with Willis' framework mainly because many videos played the role of direct instruction. Regarding our second research question, we found that not all teachers shared a common definition of what constitutes a flipped language setting. Concerning our third research question, video was found not to be a compulsory component of flipped language classrooms.

## Discussion

Our initial objective was to observe video use in flipped language classroom settings both quantitatively and qualitatively, the latter by analysing the video uses based on Willis' roles. An additional objective was to determine whether there is a shared understanding among language teachers of what a flipped classroom is. We sought to find out whether the settings of our corpus, which are all referred to as flipped classrooms, could unanimously be considered as such. Furthermore, our study aimed at gaining evidence of the constitutional status that video has for the implementation of flipped learning in language classes. The following paragraphs will elaborate on the results presented above.

Our results confirmed that video was widely used in the flipped language classroom settings of our corpus. An extraordinarily high number of videos were integrated into the settings, and the videos were largely used before class. Distinctions have to be made regarding quantitative use between the untested and the tested settings: in the planned settings, more than twice as many videos were used than in the reported ones (see Table 3).

Our results showed a tendency within the settings in our corpus to use several types of videos with a role that did not correspond to the adopted framework. In fact, 50% of the videos in the before-class activities of the planned settings could not be attributed to any of the roles described by Willis. More precisely, the four types of videos this related to are grammar explanations, vocabulary explanations, tips about how to do an activity and leçon. All four played above all the role of direct instruction. This is more typical of a teacher-centred approach and resembles Ellis' description of "traditional form-focused pedagogy" (2003, p. 252). This observed video use appears to be in contradiction with the official guidelines which promote an action-oriented approach and task-based learning as outlined in the Common European Framework (Council of Europe, 2001; 2018). The content of these videos did not focus on learners' needs in terms of specific communicative goals required during the following in-class activities. Those findings confirm, for the field of language teaching and learning, one of the challenges of the flipped or inverted classroom, i.e., the pedagogical quality of videos (Akçayir & Akçayir 2018).

Our results showed that the settings of our corpus did predominantly adopt a flipped teaching and learning approach with regards to the three components of the definition adopted (see Table 6).

The results confirmed that the three components of the definition also applied when there was no viewing of videos before class (see Table 6). In other words, video was not necessarily constitutive of flipped classrooms in our corpus.

### Questions Raised

The differences in the use of video between planned and reported settings raise a number of questions. They appear with regard to three aspects of our research questions: the qualitative status of video in flipped language class settings, their correspondence to the criteria of our definition and the constitutional status of video for flipped language learning and teaching.

Videos playing the role of direct instruction in before-class activities were found more frequently in the planned (50%) than in the reported settings (23.5 %). One possible explanation for such a result might be the impact of the training received. In the beginner level of both MOOC sessions, the enrolled teachers had been trained how to make videos (*capsules pédagogiques*) as part of the course. However, the videos they created were not necessarily intended to be used for the setting submitted at the end of the training. The participants had been informed that videos before class were not mandatory. Language teachers could therefore have used any resource for the outside-of-class activity.

In addition to the influence of being trained in instructional video-making during the MOOC, the fact that the MOOC's vocational training addressed teachers of all subjects likely played a role in the frequent use of instructional videos by the language teachers. During the first week, the participants watched testimonials of teachers, pupils, heads of schools, inspectors and a researcher. Even if the general definition given at the beginning avoided a reference to explicit instruction, video in its form of *capsules pédagogiques* occupied a large place in the testimonials, particularly those of pupils, teachers and heads of schools. None of these testimonies, however, applied to language teaching and learning.

The difference between planned and reported settings concerning the correspondence of the settings to the criteria we previously determined is illustrated by the fact that only 57.9% of the reported settings can be considered as flipped classrooms in regard to the three elements of definition, as opposed to 84.8% of the planned settings. As for the reported settings on the language portal, they paradoxically presented the fewest characteristics belonging to our definition of flipped language classes. In fact, here the proportion of settings that correspond to all three components of the definition is the lowest overall (see Table 6), yet the settings posted on the language portal can be assumed to have the most important impact on other language teachers, as this portal is part of the open access pedagogical website of the Ministry of Education. However, the reports submitted during the advanced second path of the 2016 MOOC are only accessible to enrolled participants. In the field of language teaching and learning, the lack of a clear contour for the flipped classroom was confirmed by our corpus.

As regards the constitutive status of video for flipped language classes, our corpus did show a strong link between video and the flipped language settings, but more so in the conception teachers have of it (as appeared in the planned settings) than in actual practice (as described in the reported settings). This was likely another indirect result of the MOOC training.

### **Definition of Flipped Language Teaching and Learning: Issues in Practice and Theory**

The way language teachers implement or plan to implement flipped classroom teaching and learning, in practice, seems to be influenced by the definition of flipped classrooms for all subjects and raises the issue of adapting the general definition to language teaching and learning. Neither practitioners nor researchers in the field of applied linguistics and language didactics seem to adapt their definition to this specific context. For example, when researchers refer to the before-class activity, they either call it direct instruction or lectures and textbook explanations or they directly mention “watching online video tutorials similar to those made for math and science” (Bell, 2015, p. 18). The definition for all subjects cannot be applied because in language teaching and learning contexts, language skills are

developed through complex processes. Learners need to be exposed to language and must use the language they are trying to learn in order to learn it.

This specificity of language learning and teaching in blended learning was recently addressed by Nissen (2019) in her model of blended language learning. Based on the impact of interaction on language learning, one of the pillars of a blended language learning setting, according to this model, is that students have the possibility, or sometimes the obligation, to interact outside class. However, the design of the settings in our corpus relied on communication only during the face-to-face phase. Out of class and online communication before class (either with peers or with the tutor/teacher) are usually not part of flipped classroom practices.

Our study has important limitations, as our corpus consisted of descriptions and not observations of actual flipped language classes. Further research is necessary to make conclusions based on actual practice and particularly how learners act and react in those settings, as well as whether decisions about their design have an impact on learners' activity. What is more, a further analysis of the corpus of this study could focus on how the use of video before class and the corresponding in-class activity contributed to the accomplishment of the final task. There is a need in research to investigate these questions, and even if recent research has looked into flipped language learning with an emphasis on types of videos (Chen, 2018; Ullmann, 2018; Vaezi et al., 2019), these pedagogical questions were not addressed.

### **Conclusion**

In the literature and in practice, video is used frequently in flipped settings for all subjects at all levels of education. Our findings confirmed this frequent use within our corpus of flipped language settings. Not only did the findings show that video use was not a necessary condition for a flipped setting, they also showed that video use was influenced by the all-subjects training teachers had received.

On the basis of these findings, instructional design of flipped classes using video meets specific challenges. The fact that today teachers can quite easily make videos themselves and make them easily accessible does not make those challenges easier to master. Training in the use of video in language flipped classes needs to be implemented for teachers to apprehend the need or not for the use of video. This implies raising awareness during initial training of the specific characteristics of language teaching and learning and their consequences for instructional design. In terms of the necessary articulation of activities within the design, this becomes particularly important. As other studies have pointed out, language teachers need professional development and support in order to master this articulation effectively when integrating blended teaching approaches (Pellerin & Soler Montes, 2012). If video is to be used, teachers need to be trained not to lose sight of the learning goal that students are supposed to achieve with this use and make informed decisions about how they can achieve them through the designed activities. For example, the use of instructional grammar or vocabulary videos before class and consequently before learner activity in L2 raises the question of the proceduralization of declarative

knowledge in the language learning process with the additional question of at what point in the learning process language learners should be presented with declarative knowledge (see [Schneider et al., 2013](#)). On the other hand, if the choice is the use of videos allowing access to actual language in use within the instructional design, this raises the question of the kind of activities to put in place to provide support out of class to foster students' comprehension, to develop comprehension strategies, and above all to develop the learners' language competence from their understanding the target language in use in the video.

In addition to understanding the purpose of the use of video in relation to given language learning objectives, another crucial question which arises when focus is placed on video use in flipped language settings is about understanding what a flipped language class is and its criteria. A further question lies in the difference between flipped settings relying on material other than video and more traditional preparative homework.

## References

- Abeyssekera, L., & Dawson, P. (2015). Motivation and cognitive load in the flipped classroom: Definition, rationale and a call for research. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 34(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2014.934336>
- Akçayır, G., & Akçayır, M. (2018). The flipped classroom: A review of its advantages and challenges. *Computers & Education*, 126, 334-345. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2018.07.021>
- Baker, J. W. (2000). The “classroom flip:” Using web course management tools to become the guide by the side. In J. A. Chambers (Ed.), *Selected Papers from the 11th International Conference on College Teaching and Learning* (pp. 9-17).
- Basal, A. (2015). The implementation of a flipped classroom in foreign language teaching. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 16(4), 28-37. <https://doi.org/10.17718/tojde.72185>
- Bell, T. R. (2015). The flipped German classroom. In A. J. Moeller (Dir.), *Proceedings of central states conference on the teaching of foreign languages* (pp. 17-38).
- Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. (2012). *Flip your classroom: Reach every student in every class every day*. International Society for Technology in Education.
- Bishop, J. L., & Verleger, M. A. (2013). The flipped classroom: A survey of the research. *ASEE National Conference Proceedings*, 30, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.18260/1-2--22585>
- Brame, C. J. (2013). Flipping the classroom. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. <http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/flipping-the-classroom/>
- Brandi, M.-L. (1996). *Video im Deutschunterricht: eine Übungstypologie zur Arbeit mit Fiktionalen und Dokumentarischen Filmsequenzen [Video in German Language Teaching and Learning: Typology of Activities for Working with Fictional and Documentary Film Sequences]*. Langenscheidt.
- Chen, Z. (2018). Video resources in a flipped language classroom: An experience of using videos to flip a Mandarin teaching module. In F. Rosell-Aguilar, T. Beaven, & M. Fuertes Gutierrez (Ed.), *Innovative language teaching and learning at university: Integrating informal learning into formal language education* (pp. 67-78). Researchpublishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2018.22.777>
- Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press.
- Council of Europe. (2018). *CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors*. <https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989>
- Egbert, J., Herman, D., & Chang, A. (2014). To flip or not to flip? That’s not the question: Exploring flipped instruction in technology supported language learning environments. *International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching*, 4(2), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.4018/ijcallt.2014040101>

- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Goldstein, B., & Driver, P. (2015). *Language learning with digital video*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gruba, P., Hinkelman, D., & Cárdenas-Claros, M. S. (2016). New technologies, blended learning and the 'flipped classroom' in ELT. *The Routledge handbook of English language teaching*, (pp. 135-149).
- Hung, H.-T. (2015). Flipping the classroom for English language learners to foster active learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 28(1), 81-96.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2014.967701>
- Keengwe, J., Onchwari, G., & Oigara, J. N. (Eds.). (2014). *Promoting active learning through the flipped classroom model*. Information Science Reference.
- Lage, M. J., Platt, G. J., & Treglia, M. (2000). Inverting the classroom: A gateway to creating an inclusive learning environment. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 31(1), 30.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1183338>
- Lancien, T. (1986). *Le document vidéo dans la classe de langues [Videos in the foreign language class]*. CLE International.
- Lebrun, M., & Lecoq, J. (2015). *Classes inversées, enseigner et apprendre à l'endroit! [Flipped Classrooms, Back to front Teaching and Learning]*. Canopé éditions.
- Lebrun, M., & Lecoq, J. (2017). *La classe à l'envers pour apprendre à l'endroit: guide pratique pour débiter en classe inverse [The flipped Classroom is the right way forward: A Practical Guide to Start a Flipped Classroom]*. Les cahiers du Louvain Learning Lab.
- Leis, A., Cooke, S., & Tohei, A. (2015). The effects of flipped classrooms on English composition writing in an EFL environment. *International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching (IJCALLT)*, 5(4), 37-51.
- Leis, A. (2016). Flipped learning and EFL proficiency: An empirical study. *Journal of the Tohoku English Language Education Society*, (36), 77-90.
- Lesser, G. S. (1974). *Children and Television: Lessons from Sesame Street*. Random House, Incorporated.
- Lonergan, J. (1984). *Video in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mehring, J. G. (2015). *An exploratory study of the lived experiences of Japanese undergraduate EFL students in the flipped classroom* [Doctoral dissertation, Pepperdine University].  
<https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/etd/526>
- Nissen (2019). *Formation hybride en langues: articuler présentiel et distanciel [Hybrid Language Courses: Articulation of Face-to-face and Distance Mode]*. Les Éditions Didier.

- Pellerin, M., & Soler Montes, C. (2012). Using the Spanish online resource Aula Virtual de Español (AVE) to promote a blended teaching approach in high school Spanish language classrooms. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology*, 38(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.21432/t2gw22>
- Perselli, V. (2016). *Flipped Classroom im Fremdsprachenunterricht [Flipped Classroom in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning]*. [Master Dissertation, Linköpings Universitet, Institutionen för kultur och kommunikation].
- Portail Langues vivantes. (2015). *La classe inversée [The Flipped Classroom]*. Ministère de l'Éducation nationale - Direction générale de l'enseignement scolaire / Direction du numérique pour l'éducation, Réseau Canopé. <https://eduscol.education.fr/langues-vivantes/enseigner/ressources-et-usages-numeriques/outils-et-pratiques-numeriques/la-classe-inversee.html>
- Rummler, K., & Wolf, K. (2012). Lernen mit geteilten Videos: aktuelle Ergebnisse zur Nutzung, Produktion und Publikation von online-Videos durch Jugendliche [Learning with shared Video Content: Current Findings on Adolescents' Use, Production and Publication of Online-Videos]. In W. Sützl, F. Stadler, R. Maier, & T. Hug (Eds.), *Media, knowledge and education: Cultures and ethics of sharing* (pp. 253-266). Innsbruck University Press.
- Schäfer, A. (2012). Das Inverted Classroom Model. In *Das Inverted Classroom Model. Begleitband zur ersten deutschen ICM-Konferenz [The Inverted Classroom Model. Companion Volume to the First German ICM-Conference]* (pp. 3-11). Oldenbourg. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783486716641-004>
- Schneider, B., Wallace, J., Blikstein, P., & Pea, R. (2013). Preparing for Future Learning with a Tangible User Interface: The Case of Neuroscience. *IEEE Transactions on Learning Technologies*, 6(2), 117-129. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TLT.2013.15>
- Schwerdtfeger, I. C. (1989). *Sehen und verstehen: Arbeit mit Filmen im Unterricht Deutsch als Fremdsprache [Seeing and Understanding: Working with Film in Teaching and Learning German as a Foreign Language]*. Langenscheidt.
- Strayer, J. (2007). *The effects of the classroom flip on the learning environment: A comparison of learning activity in a traditional classroom and a flip classroom that used an intelligent tutoring system* [Doctoral Dissertation, The Ohio State University].
- Strayer, J. F. (2012). How learning in an inverted classroom influences cooperation, innovation and task orientation. *Learning Environments Research*, 15(2), 171-193. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-012-9108-4>
- Turan, Z., & Akdag-Cimen, B. (2019). Flipped classroom in English language teaching: A systematic review. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1584117>
- Ullmann, J. (2018). *Entwicklung von Erklärvideos für einen Englisch Selbstlernkurs im Rahmen des 'Flipped Classroom' Prinzips [Development of Explanatory Videos for a Self-study Course Applying the Flipped Classroom Principle]*. [Doctoral Dissertation, LMU München: Faculty for Languages and Literatures].

- Vaezi, R., Afghari, A., & Lotfi, A. (2019). Investigating listening comprehension through flipped classroom approach: Does authenticity matter? *CALL-EJ*, 20(1), 178-208.
- Webb, M., & Doman, E. (2016). Does the flipped classroom lead to increased gains on learning outcomes in ESL/EFL contexts? *CATESOL Journal*, 28(1), 39-67.
- Webb, M., Doman, E., & Pusey, K. (2014). Flipping a Chinese university EFL course: What students and teachers think of the model. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 11(4), 53-87.
- Willis, J. (1983). 101 Ways to Use Video. In J. McGovern (Ed.), *Video applications in English language teaching* (pp. 43-55). Pergamon Press.
- Wolf, K. D. (2015). Video-Tutorials und Erklärvideos als Gegenstand, Methode und Ziel der Medien- und Filmbildung [Video-Tutorials and Explanatory Videos as Object, Method and Aim of Media Education]. In A. Hartung-Griemberg, T. Ballhausen, C. Trültzsch-Wijnen, A. Barberi, & K. Kaiser-Müller (Eds.), *Filmbildung im Wandel* (pp.121-131).
- Würffel, N. (2014). Auf dem Weg zu einer Theorie des Blended Learning. Kritische Einschätzung von Modellen [Towards a Theory of Blended Learning. A Critical Assessment of Models]. In K. Rummler (Ed.), *Lernräume gestalten – Bildungskontexte vielfältig denken* (pp. 150-162). Waxmann.

## Appendix

### Analysis Grid

**Analysis of a flipped language classroom setting** – A. Verch and E. Nissen 2017, 2018

Setting No.:            Language & proficiency level:            URL of the video (if indicated) (& duration):

Title:

Learning goal of the sequence (if explicitly indicated):

Origin:             MOOC 2015             MOOC 2016             *Eduscol / Portail Langues vivantes*

Grid filled in by:             A. Verch             E. Nissen

<b>Short video description</b>							
<b>When is a video or videos in the declared flipped class setting?</b>	D *	F2F*	D	F2F	D	F2F	<p>-&gt; <i>grey out to indicate the length of the sequence</i></p> <p>-&gt; <i>mark use of (each) video in the second line</i></p> <p><i>V1= video 1, V2=video 2, etc.</i></p> <p><i>V1A = First viewing of video 1, V1B Second viewing of video 1, etc.</i></p>
<b>Role(s) of the video when viewed during before-class activity (D) as per Willis (1983)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Model and cue <input type="checkbox"/> Target <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer & reinforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Illustrator of message and discourse structure <input type="checkbox"/> Source of information <input type="checkbox"/> Stimulus (for freer classroom activity)			<b>Activity type(s)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> information transmission / work on content <input type="checkbox"/> work on form <input type="checkbox"/> lexical activity <input type="checkbox"/> other: ____ <input type="checkbox"/> discovering		Does video use and linked activity support the planned activities in the following F2F stage?	

	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____	<input type="checkbox"/> finding elements already known <input type="checkbox"/> analysis	
<b>Role(s) of the video when viewed during in-class activity (F2F) as per Willis (1983)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Model and cue <input type="checkbox"/> Target <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer & reinforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Illustrator of message and discourse structure <input type="checkbox"/> Source of information <input type="checkbox"/> Stimulus <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____	<b>Activity type(s)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> information transmission / work on content <input type="checkbox"/> work on form <input type="checkbox"/> lexical activity <input type="checkbox"/> other: ____	<input type="checkbox"/> discovering <input type="checkbox"/> finding elements already known <input type="checkbox"/> analysis <input type="checkbox"/> individual activity <input type="checkbox"/> (small) group activity <input type="checkbox"/> whole class activity
<b>Is it a flipped classroom?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> before-class preparation <input type="checkbox"/> aims at students' active role during class time <input type="checkbox"/> stage in F2F setting benefits from before-class preparation (i.e. video content / activities based on video before class are reinvested in F2F stage)		Further comments:

\*D = distance setting stage; F2F = face-to-face setting stage

**Author**

Angelika Verch is presently a German lecturer at University Lyon 2 (France). She is a certified teacher at secondary school level in German and French and has taught in Germany, France, and USA. She is currently preparing a doctoral thesis on online tasks with video in blended L2 classes.

[angelika.verch@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr](mailto:angelika.verch@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr)

Elke Nissen is Full Professor at University Grenoble Alpes (France). Her research interests focus on blended and online learning, specifically regarding course design, online communication, telecollaboration and tuition within CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning).

[elke.nissen@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr](mailto:elke.nissen@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr)



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial CC-BY-NC 4.0 International license.