

## Students' Perceptions about a Flipped Online Chinese Language Course (学生对于网络中文翻转课堂的感知)

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**Abstract:** The flipped-classroom model provides students with “a dynamic and interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter” (Flipped Learning Network, 2014). Flipped instruction can be especially beneficial for second-language teaching, since classroom time can be applied to more interactive tasks. However, little research can be found focusing on flipped-classroom instruction in online environments. This paper fills the gap by presenting students’ perceptions about a flipped classroom model adopted in an online Chinese language course offered by an institution associated with an American university. Specifically, the flipped course format is “2+1+2”, referring to two preview assignments, one 50-minute online synchronous session, and two review assignments. Survey results from a total of 31 students enrolled in Chinese Level 1 (beginning level) indicate that students had positive perceptions towards the use of the flipped classroom format in online language class.

**摘要:** 翻转课堂的模式为学生们提供了“一个活跃的互动环境,从而使教育者能够引导学生在某一学科领域对应用所学概念并有创造性地参与到学习中”(翻转学习网络,2014)。因为课堂时间可以被用来完成更多的互动性任务,所以翻转教学法对于二语习得有特殊的帮助。但是,目前对于在网络环境下的翻转课堂教学和模式的研究寥寥无几。本文旨在弥补上述研究的空白,从学生的感知角度来研究由美国一所大学提供的网络中文翻转教学。具体而言,本文中提到的翻转课堂采取“2+1+2”的模式,即两个预习的作业、一堂50分钟的实时网络课和两个复习作业的模式。通过对第一级别31位学生(零基础)的问卷调查,我们发现学生们对于网络中文课程中的翻转模式及教学持有非常积极的态度。

**Keywords:** Flipped-classroom, online language class, online Chinese teaching, student perceptions

**关键词:** 翻转课堂, 网络语言课程, 网络中文教学, 学生的感知

## 1. Introduction

Amid the rise of educational technology, teachers have been taking innovative steps to modify their teaching methods to meet learners' changing needs. Online learning, having displaced the traditional face-to-face model of learning to an extent, has also raised a claim on designing an effective model to maximize learning outcomes. However, while there are a wealth of resources aimed at making online language learning enjoyable and effective (Wang, 2016), scholars have long recognized that there is insufficient support for interaction and collaboration in language learning by distance (Kennedy & Tim, 2004). The flipped classroom, a concept that has been gaining attention in recent years, has been widely seen as a solution for increasing content-related interactions and encouraging a collaborative learning environment (Egbert, Herman, & Lee, 2015).

Traditionally, in-class time is spent passively receiving concepts via listening to lectures and taking notes on them, and out-of-class time is devoted to the unassisted completion of homework assignments. However, an active learning process requires that teachers perceive instruction as useful, stimulating, and the best use of classroom time. Lage, Platt, and Treglia (2000) provide a simple definition of the flipped-classroom concept: "events that have traditionally taken place inside the classroom now take place outside the classroom and vice versa" (p. 32). Put another way, a flipped classroom is a setting where everything "traditionally done in class is now done at home, and that which is traditionally done as homework is now completed in class" (Bergmann & Sams, 2012, p. 13). Though such explanations are useful up to a point, they inadequately present the core of the flipped process. Bishop and Verleger (2013) noted that the flipped classroom should consist of interactive group-learning activities and computer-based individual instruction outside it. In other words, a flipped classroom should convert the physical classroom into a place where active learning processes occur: e.g., discussing concepts, collaborating with peers, and investigating questions related to learning content (Basal, 2015). The flipped classroom has also been described as a process for guiding students to achieve higher-order thinking, as per Bloom's taxonomy (Sarawagi, 2014); and as changing the role of the teacher from a "sage on the stage" to a "guide on the side" (King, 1993).

The current study is inspired by the importance of interaction and collaboration in language acquisition (Wang & Chen, 2007). Since language learning requires constant synchronous interaction in the target language, it is crucial to design a language course that is supportive for both oral and visual interaction. However, research is needed in understanding what students' perceptions are about the effectiveness of an online flipped language course.

## 2. Theoretical Perspectives

In this session, we introduce three theoretical perspectives that guided this study, namely active learning, Bloom's taxonomy, communicative language teaching. Each theoretical perspective is discussed in connection with flipped model in an online language course.

## 2.1 Active Learning

Designing an instructional strategy that can effectively engage online learners is challenging. Active learning strategies may involve students both doing things and thinking about the things they are doing (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). Such strategies can help students to think critically and creatively, to become or remain more involved in communication with others in their group or in the class as a whole, and/or to further express their ideas and reflect upon their own learning process. Considered from the perspective of teaching, active learning environments place “less emphasis ... on transmitting information (teacher-centered) and more on developing students’ skills (student-centered)” (Bonwell & Eison, 1991, p. 2).

Online teaching strategy should foster students’ active and constructive learning (Hanover Research Council, 2009). Active learning is an effective instructional strategy for both the traditional brick-and-mortar classroom and the online environment. However, Moore and Kearsley (2011) have noted that active learning may not occur in online environments if interaction is not deliberately planned and encouraged by the instructor. Teachers can apply the student-centered approach to engage students in actively constructing knowledge (Syam, 2014), for example, by creating interactive videos instead of merely showing lecture videos. Therefore, exploring the integration of flipped model and online language course is important to support students’ active learning from designing and pedagogical perspectives.

## 2.2 Bloom’s Taxonomy

Flipped learning is rooted in social constructivism, which holds that students engaged in communication and interactive activities will learn more effectively. Students construct their views of new knowledge based on their existing knowledge; and Bloom’s revised taxonomy (2000) helpfully classifies the cognitive process of learning, from basic remembering of facts to applying, evaluating, and creating. Figure 1 presents Bloom’s taxonomy as revised by Anderson and Krathwohl (2000).

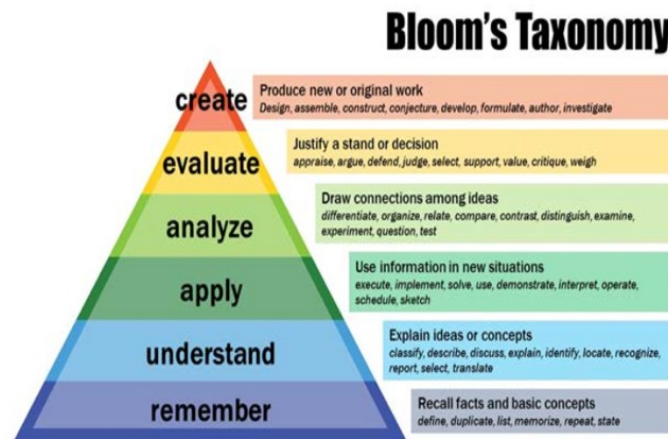


Figure 1. A revised version of Bloom’s taxonomy of cognitive learning.

In the flipped classroom, students will do the lower level of work (in Bloom's terms, understand and remember) in the self-study stage: learning basic facts with the ability to pause, rewind and repeat the learning content at their own pace until they remember and understand. Later, when joining their classmates for a synchronous lab session, they will develop their higher-level thinking (apply, analyze, evaluate, create) with the help of the instructor through peer interactions, collaborative tasks, and group problem-solving activities.

### **2.3 Communicative Language Teaching**

As a paradigm for teaching foreign languages, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) believes that "second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication" (Richards, 2006, p.22). CLT is based on the ideas that the primary function of language use is communication, and that success in language learning comes through communicating real meaning. Cowan (2008) further explained that the key factor of CLT is the shift in the roles of teachers and students as the class activities are not directed by teacher. Instead, students work together to communicate through interaction and collaboration. However, before they are able to produce language and exchange meaning with others, they need to receive "meaningful and comprehensible input" (Spino & Trego, 2015), and students may achieve better learning results if instruction and feedback are provided during the input procedures, according to Spada & Lightbown (1993). Wang and Chen (2007) argued that the core principles of CLT are equally important for successful online language learning as it enhances the peer interaction and teacher-student interaction, which is the key factor for online learning. Hammond (2000) investigated the value of the communicative approach in online learning environment and found that its task-centered characteristic not only offer a powerful environment for engaging online learners, but also bridge the personal experience and learning circumstances.

### **3. Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to investigate students' online learning experience and their perceptions towards our online 2+1+2 flipped classroom model. The following questions guided this research:

- 1) Does 2+1+2 flipped model promote the interaction and enhance students' active learning experience in an online environment?
- 2) Do students perceive that they have sufficient opportunity to practice oral skills in this flipped classroom model?
- 3) Do students perceive that 2+1+2 flipped classroom model supports their online Chinese study?

## **4. Methods**

### **4.1 Overview of the Flipped Online Chinese Model**

No single dominant model of flipped learning has been established (Basal, 2015). Multiple approaches could be used to arrive at an effective one. In this study, we define the flipped classroom as a student-centered learning model in which students preview teacher-created learning content outside of the class in a self-directed learning mode. Later, students collaborate in a teacher-guided interactive activity, which is followed by self-directed review assignments. Guided by the theoretical framework set forth above, our course design is inspired by the desire to 1) promote the interaction and enhance active learning experience in web environment, and 2) increase the opportunities for online language output practice.

The implementation of a flipped-classroom model commenced in 2016. Our online Chinese flipped classroom was established based on a 2+1+2 course format. Each session's 2-day preview assignment comprised one or two videos focusing on vocabulary and grammar. In the lab session, there was usually a 5-10 minute review period, 5-minute question-and-answer section, and 25-30 minutes of task-based activities, followed by a short recap. Among the 2-day review assignments, there were interpretive activities and presentational activities.

#### **4.1.1 Preview Assignments (Asynchronous Stage)**

In preview stage, instructors upload lecture videos and pre-lab assignments to Blackboard. The goal of the preview assignments is to provide students with fundamental understanding of the new vocabulary and sentence structures in the coming lesson. Ensuring students have sufficient input is "integral to a communicative language class" (Spino & Trego, 2015, p.3). Quizlet, an increasingly popular flash-card games website, has provided students with an amusing way of studying vocabulary. We adopted VoiceThread (VT) as our primary tool for producing interactive videos, which is a web tool integrating multimedia and teaching content. Learners or teachers can add comments on the VT page via microphone, telephone, camera, keyboard text, and doodling. Along with the embedded lecturing videos, teachers can also add interaction activities in VT to increase student's engagement and provide feedback in asynchronous study. With the help of VT, students will not have to do the self-study alone, instead, they were guided through the lecture material and also had their understanding checked via exercises. In VT, teachers not only provide videos, but also design an interactive activity for students to practice right after lecturing on a new language point. At the end of the VT presentation, instructor may provide a simple question for students to reflect on their learning of new language contents. Instructors also encourage students to post their questions on VT or in Blackboard discussion board before the synchronous lab session.

#### **4.1.2 Lab Session (Synchronous Stage)**

Our synchronous sessions are designed as an alternative to typical in-class activities. The lab session, which is conducted in Adobe Connect, has been redesigned to

reschedule the time for learning activities, aiming to create more opportunities for students to apply the knowledge into meaningful language tasks and to collaborate with peers.

#### **4.1.3 Review Assignments (Asynchronous Stage)**

After the lab session, students need to complete a 2-day assignment in LMS for reviewing the learning contents. The assignments provide opportunity for students to practice their reading, speaking, and writing skills in three modes of communication, namely interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational modes. Various online tools including Flipgrid (students can post video comments together for discussion) and Padlet (an interactive digital wall that students can post their project and leave comments to others' works). At the end of the assignment, a can-do checklist is provided to give students chances to self-reflect on what they've learnt, realize their strength and weakness and motivate themselves to set a goal for the next study circle.

#### **4.2 Participants**

An anonymous final course survey was conducted at the end of 2016 Fall semester (at the end of January 2017). The study participants were students enrolled in the 20-week online Chinese course (Level 1). A total of 31 students aged between 13 and 18 participated in the survey voluntarily. 11 (35%) are male while 20 (65%) are female students. 12 (39%) participants have taken online courses before while 19 (61%) participants indicated that it's their first time to join an online course.

#### **4.3 Data Collection and Analysis**

The final course survey was administered to all participants via Qualtrics (an online survey tool). Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected.

Quantitative data was collected from the closed questions in the survey. The closed question part of survey was divided into four sections to investigate students' learning experience in each learning procedures: Pre-class video, Assignment, Lab Session and Overall Evaluation. Single-answer questions and 5-point Likert scale (ranging from a score of 1, "strongly disagree with the statement" to 5, "strongly agree with the statement") questions were adopted to supply the quantitative data. The data received were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

In addition to quantitative data, qualitative data was collected through the open-ended questions at the end of the survey. It includes 6 open-ended written questions providing students the opportunity to describe their perceptions in their own words. Students' responses were analyzed using thematic categorization. Each student's response was coded and grouped into common themes. The common themes were drawn from the significant and similar responses. Two researchers worked independently on determine the categorization first and reach an agreement on the common themes after discussion.

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Quantitative Results

The quantitative questions are divided into four sections according to the learning procedure. The results are presented in this article under four themes: Time & Amount, Language Study, Interaction and Overall Rating.

**Time & amount.** When answering the question of how much time students used VT to study per week, a majority (83%) of the participants report that they spent less than 1 hour studying in VT while over 63% of the participants only used less than 30 minutes every week. When asking how much time students prefer to spend in VT per week, all participants reported that they prefer spending on VT is less than or equal to 1 hour while nearly 83% of the participants report that they prefer less than or equal to 30 minutes on VT. When students were asked to indicate their agreements on 5-point Likert scale “I think the general duration of VT in this semester is reasonable”, more than half of the participants (52%) agreed with the statement.

Students also stated their opinions on the amount of the preview assignments and review assignments. In answering the question “I find the amount of the pre-lab assignments is appropriate”, 56% of the students either agree or strongly agree with this statement and about half of the students (52%) find the amount of the review assignments is appropriate as indicated in the responses.

The responses of “I prefer at least one lab session per week” showed that students have a positive attitude toward the amount of the lab session ( $M=3.89$ ). 68% of students either agreed or strongly disagreed that there should be at least one lab session per week.

**Language study.** In preview stage, students use VT to watch videos and learn new content. The responses demonstrate highly positive attitudes toward the facilitation of VT in pre-lab language study. Students find the content in the VT, which is designed and uploaded by our instructor is clear to understand ( $M=3.66$ ) and VT is helpful for learning both vocabulary ( $M=3.82$ ) and grammar ( $M=3.79$ ). The purpose of the adoption of VT is to help students to be more familiar with new learning content and have themselves well prepared for the lab session communicative practices. A majority of students indicate that they understand most of the new content with the help of VT before class ( $M=3.75$ ) and have prepared themselves for the lab practice ( $M=3.68$ ). Though the instructors do not ask students to take notes, nearly 54% of the participants still taking notes in their learning process ( $M=3.54$ ).

Preview assignments and review assignments are designed to enhance students' language skills. Students responded that preview assignments help them improve the Chinese speaking skills ( $M=3.78$ ), Chinese listening skills ( $M=3.48$ ), Chinese reading skills ( $M=3.52$ ) and Chinese writing skills ( $M=3.37$ ). It is worth noticing that only 1 participant selected strongly disagree on all the usefulness of VT in improving speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.

Students also find review assignment helpful for improving their speaking skills (M=3.63), listening skills (M=3.48), reading skills (M=3.67) and writing skills (M=3.39). The mean of the reading skills in the questions of review assignments is higher than it in the preview assignment (M=3.52). 67% of the participants felt that review assignments assist them in the improvement of reading skills.

With regard to the impact of lab session in language study, students gave a significantly high rating on the items relates to the language study in the lab session. When asking the question “I had enough opportunities to practice Chinese language during the lab sessions” (M=4.04), students also think “the lab session is helpful for Chinese language learning”, with a mean of 3.93. The results from these items were overwhelmingly positive. Only 1 student selected strongly disagree with all the questions associated with lab session.

**Interaction.** Two dimensions are explored to investigate the interactions: teacher support and peer interactions.

**Teacher support.** Participants report that the “instructor always presents a model example before they were asked to post a comment on VT” (M=3.71). Students also indicate that “I always watch the instructor’s example first before I create my own” (M=4.11). Participants who agree or strongly agree with this statement take up a percentage of 86%.

In respect of the teacher support in lab session, students find “the instructions in the lab session are clear to understand”, with a mean of 3.89. They also satisfy with the “numerous interactions with the instructor in the lab session” (M=4.07) and speak highly of the “enough feedback received from the instructor” (M=4.07).

**Peer interaction.** 75% of the participants “would like to see how other students present their answers” in VT, with a general mean of 3.96, because they think they can learn from others in this way. Nearly 64% of them believe the interactions with instructors and peers in VT are helpful for self-study (M=3.64). They also view the lab session as a great chance to interact and collaborate with their classmates (M=3.78).

Regarding the question of whether students prefer reading materials than interacting with instructors/peers in VT, 43% disagree with this statement and the general mean of the responses is 2.82. When students were asked whether they prefer watching videos only without any interactions or not. Over half (54%) of the participants disagree and the mean is 2.46, which is relatively low. Therefore, in accordance with the findings in most of the items in this dimension, it’s clear that students value interactions in online learning environment.

**Overall Evaluation.** Generally speaking, students feel both “practicing with VT (M=3.52)” and “the lab session (M=3.93)” are engaging. As for the 2+1+2 course format, more than half of them agree that it’s appropriate for learning Chinese online (M=3.37) and they would like to recommend this course to other students (M=3.48). Moreover, the learning experience in this semester also encourages them to participate in future online language courses as well (M=3.7). Admittedly, students still feel technology is challenging.



In answering the question “I think technology is not a challenge”, 60% agree or strongly agree with the statement and 26% of them disagree or strongly disagree.

## 5.2 Qualitative Results

There are six open-ended questions providing qualitative data. Common themes were coded and identified. The questions are as follows:

1. What do you like best about the online course this semester?
2. Do you have any challenges when studying Chinese online? What are they?
3. What is the biggest advantage of this course comparing to face-to-face learning?
4. What is the biggest disadvantage of this course comparing to face-to-face learning?
5. Can you describe one learning activity you find most engaging during this semester?
6. What part of the online learning would you like to see different if you were to take this next time?

The results of the questions fall into three categories: strength, challenges and future improvements.

### 5.2.1 Strength

59% of the participants respond that self-pacing is the biggest advantage comparing to face-to-face class. Students mention that they can “spend as much or as little time as needed” and the learning tasks “can be done at any time of the day”. The due dates make it possible for them to “complete the tasks anytime” according to their own study pace and schedule. Some students appreciate being able to work ahead faster if they can while others pointed out that they can also catch up easily. Some students mention that they could “access the video lessons whenever they needed” and it is “convenient” as they can rewind or pause the video on their own.

A majority of students enjoy the lab sessions. 31% of the participants indicate that lab session is what they like best this semester and they like the in-class activities. Some students find that lab session provide them opportunities to practice and receive feedback from teachers. 19% of them find lab session is the most engaging activity in the online flipped classroom.

**Interactions.** 15.38% of the participants like the interactions best. One student states that the course is very interactive and hands on while another student points out she has “a lot of interactions with her peers and instructors via lab sessions”. Interactions in assignment is also mentioned by one student, she said “I liked the interactions we got to do in many of the assignments”.

**Helpful for language skills practice.** Some students point out that the course enable them to be more fluent and practice speaking by applying what they learnt in the class. One student thinks it’s helpful for grammar learning and he find he “get a better understanding of the grammar now”, which is something he struggled with in the past.

Another student stated that he learnt much more in this online course than he did at school in face-to-face class.

**Teacher support.** 12% of the students find the support of the instructor is the biggest advantage of the online course. Most of them mention that the instructors were “helpful and supportive”.

**Technology tools.** 15.3% of the students like the tools adopted in the course best. 59% of the students find the learning activity with web-tools most engaging, among which there are 36% of the participants like VT while 23% of them enjoy playing Quizlet. Students perceive the game feature of Quizlet as important. As students state, “I liked Quizlet the best because I can learn the material, test myself and then continue to practice”, “Quizlet helped me memorize” and “very easy to use and learn material”. As for the VT, students favor the interaction features and like the way instructor designed to present grammar rules and vocabulary. One student says that “I appreciate how VT describe grammar rules, new words and sentence structures. I also like how they give you a chance to practice”. Some students like the recording features in VT as it helps them with the pronunciation and teacher can provide audio feedback on VT of how they can improve the pronunciation. Another student favor the use of VT because VT helps her to “see the teacher”.

### 5.2.2 Challenges

While two students perceive that they do not encounter any challenges when studying Chinese online, other students express their views on the disadvantages of the online flipped classroom.

**Lack physical presence and face-to-face interaction.** Though VT and Lab session has helped students to interact with the instructor, students still feel that the lack of physical presence and face-to-face interaction is the biggest disadvantage of the course. Students complained about the difficulty of getting feedback from instructors, such as “I can’t ask questions as easily” and “I can’t ask questions and get a response right away”. Because “it is much more difficult without having everything naturally explained in person and without being able to immediately ask questions and get answers.”, students often feel being left alone when facing difficulty in learning the language.

**Technology problems.** In the open-ended questions, students still express concern with the technology problem. Nearly half of the responses reported that technology is the challenge they have when learning Chinese online. They technology “struggles” and is hard to navigate. Specially, it’s “confusing for new students” and it “takes some time getting used to”. Sometimes, the internet is not working in some areas and “getting set up for this class was challenging for school’s computers.”

### 5.2.3 Future Improvement

There are two students state that the course is great and there is no need to change anything about the course. But others provide their suggestions for the future improvements. A majority of students suggest to increase the amount of lab session so that

they have more opportunities to practice language skills. Just like this student mention, “there could maybe be two scheduled lab sessions or just an extra one that could be attended.” Besides lab session, students also recommend that improvements could be made on making instructions more clear. For instance, one student explains that “better directions for discussion board projects” while another student emphasizes that “more instruction should be provided”.

## 6. Discussion

In this session, both quantitative and qualitative results are discussed in response to the three research questions of the present study. The three questions are: 1) Does 2+1+2 flipped model promote the interaction and enhance students’ active learning experience in an online environment? (RQ 1); 2) RQ 2: Do students perceive that they have sufficient opportunity to practice oral skills in this flipped classroom model? (RQ 2); and 3) Do students perceive that 2+1+2 flipped classroom model supports their online Chinese study? (RQ 3).

For RQ 1, the majority of students respond positively to their interaction with instructors and the peer interactions. They appreciate the timely and useful feedback from their instructors and the instructors’ modeling for practice is important for their study. Students are satisfied with the collaborative and communicative environment created by the instructor. They take the lab session as a great chance to interact with students on meaningful and communicative tasks. What’s more, the adoption of the web tools (VT and Quizlet) has been found supportive to engage online students. Most of the students start to take ownership of their learning as they believe that they have prepared themselves for the lab session practice and even taking note during the learning process. The design of preview activities contributes to the increase in participation and pre-lab practice. Instead of sitting and receiving the preview information passively, they learn the new contents through doing and reflect their learning process. The community feature of VT, through which students can view other’s comments on VT, has found to be beneficial to help students learning from others.

For RQ 2, the results show a significantly high agreement on the improvement of oral skills with the help of the flipped classroom model. Most students responded positively that the pre-lab VT practice, the assignments and the lab session are supportive to their improvement on language skills, including speaking, listening, reading and writing. It is worth noticing that speaking (oral skill) is the highest rating among all four skills in both preview and review stage when students are asked to answer the question whether preview and review assignments are helpful to improve their four skills. Although students think writing skills are less supported by the preview and review assignments, it is not surprising considering the participants are all at the beginning stage of learning Chinese language. Moreover, students believe that the assignments are of great help in improving oral skills in both quantitative and qualitative results. They also see the value of the in-class activities in the lab session and indicated that the opportunity to practice is sufficient in the synchronous stage.

For RQ 3, the results of the survey suggest that students enjoyed their online Chinese learning. There is a strong consensus that the design of the 2+1+2 online flipped classroom model assists student's study in the aspect of language skills improvement, interactions, and engagement. Most students like the fact that they can study at their own pace. More than a half of the students agree that the amount of the assignments are appropriate, but it's worth noticing that some students recommend a change in the amount of the assignments. Despite the fact that students still perceive some challenges, including technology (poor internet connection, unsupportive school computer, difficulties in getting familiar with technology as a new online student), students demonstrate a positive attitude toward the interactions in the flipped online Chinese course. In general, more than a half of the participants find 2+1+2 model appropriate for learning Chinese online and will recommend the course to other students. The learning experience in this online course motivates them in future online study.

## 7. Conclusion

This paper has introduced the implementation of a flipped-learning approach in an online Chinese course. The theoretical basis of this flipped model involves active learning theory, Blooms' taxonomy, and communicative approach in language learning. By adopting the 2+1+2 model in an online Chinese course, this study investigated how Chinese language beginners experience the flipped online language course. Based on both quantitative and qualitative survey data, student's perception on the implement of the flipped classroom model is quite positive in regard with online interactions, improvement of Chinese language skills and the active engagement in the learning process. In terms of challenges, students feel that technological difficulty is still a barrier that hinders them from successful learning, which includes internet connection problems, technology support issues, and insufficient instructions on how to use certain technology tools. From students' perspectives, offering more lab sessions, providing clearer instructions, and adjusting the amount of assignments could be done to improve the current flipped online Chinese course.

Based on the survey that Flipped Learning Network and Sophia (2014) conducted, 78% of the teachers who participated reported they have flipped a lesson, which increased 30% comparing to the percentage in 2012. More importantly, about 9 out of 10 teachers in the survey noticed a positive change in student engagement and 71% of teachers reported improved grade since flipping their class. All these numbers indicate that flipped learning is becoming more and more beneficial to support students' learning.

The current study provided empirical evidence regarding students' perceptions about an online flipped language course. The results have not only coincided with previous studies in demonstrating the benefits of flipped learning, but also provided a unique perspective to explore in an online language course. Theoretically, the study proves that it is beneficial to prepare students with guided practices and individualized learning and tasks as the flipped content in order to actively engage students in the online language learning. Practically, the study sets up a design model for online flipped language courses with many useful technology tools and instructional strategies. For

future research, more studies are needed to investigate the effectiveness of the online flipped model using students' learning outcomes as measurement. Teachers' feedback and assessing students learning progress are also important areas that warrant further exploration.

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