Guest Editorial Preface

Develop Higher Order Thinking Skills Through In-Depth Reflective Learning in Flipped Classroom Teaching

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First of all, I would like to welcome all the readers to this special issue of International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design 2020. This issue revolves around the theme of flipped classroom teaching and consists of five articles, which all went through a rigorous review and revision process before being accepted for publication. These articles touch upon vital issues concerning flipped classroom teaching, addressing self-regulation, social interactions, collaborative learning, critical thinking ability, and learner creativity. In addition to the importance of these various topics, this issue includes authors from diverse geographic regions, spanning Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, and Africa, indicating the diversity of the journal. This demonstrates the vitality of the online pedagogy community, as well as the continued positive response to this journal.

Given that higher order thinking skills have been long regarded as one of the most essential core competences required by the 21 century learners, innovative instructors often seek new pedagogies/instructional approaches to develop and enhance this import skill among their students. Among these new approaches, flipped classrooms, emerging as a unique approach which reverses the role of homework and in-class activities, have received significant attention in recent years from both researchers and teachers. Most of the literature review has already proven it to be a more efficient and effective instructional approach compared to the more traditional lectured-based method. Flipped classroom teaching is more than just a revolution of teaching strategy. It truly provides an opportunity for teachers to reflect on the nature of teaching from the learner’s perspective. In view of this, this special issue focuses on the theme of developing higher order thinking skills through in-depth reflective learning in flipped classroom teaching. The accepted articles are as follows.

The first research paper is entitled with “Can Self-Regulated Learning Intervention Improve Students’ Reading Performance in Flipped Classrooms?” Developed by Professor Ogata and his research team from Kyoto University, an e-book reading system named BookRoll was adopted by the researchers to monitor and record the pre-reading behaviors and patterns of the learners in the flipped classroom, which is regarded as an indispensable as well as a vital element to the success in the flipped classroom instruction. Therefore, this study focuses on how self-regulated learning and learning strategies can be employed to improve learning outcomes in flipped classrooms. The results indicate that the integration of self-regulated learning and flipped classroom is helpful for students to improve their learning performance.
The second research paper talks about “Student Teachers’ Lived Experiences of an ODeL Flipped Instructional Design.” This research study, employing an explanatory mixed methods design, examined how flipped instructional design can enhance student teachers’ experience in learning in the teaching methodology of economics. It addresses enhancing social interaction in flipped classroom, and the results reveals that it is helpful for student teachers in learning how to teach economics.

The third research paper deals with “Learning Performance of Teaching Practice of Friendly Senior Care Space Design.” The authors focus on applying two teaching methods, which are the participatory operation learning method and the cooperative learning rooted in problem-based learning, and the results have shown that approximately 70% of the works earned design awards.

The fourth research paper is “Handling Massive Enrollment for Achieving Result: A Flipped Classroom Approach.” To resolve the issue arisen as a result of massive enrollment (in this case, 750 students), such as shortage of qualified instructors and limited availability of learning researches, the authors adopted Social Learning Theory in flipped classroom. And the results indicated that students are able to enhance their collaborative learning experience and apply their creative and critical thinking in their learning.

The fifth research paper is “The Effect of Flipped Education on Undergraduate Student Critical Thinking Ability.” While critical thinking skills have been widely recognized by researchers and instructors as one of the essential core competences for today’s learners to embrace, this study distinguishes itself from other studies by scrutinizing the role of the critical thinker, and the author proposed a reversed system in conjunction with the established norm of teaching methods.

According to the results of these five outstanding research papers, we can see that substantial innovative strategies have been utilized in improving flipped classroom teaching, and the results also indicate that these innovative revolutions in flipped classroom teaching are helpful in improving either the learners’ higher order thinking skills or core competencies required for 21st century learners. We firmly believe that there is still room for improving flipped classroom teaching, and how to benefit the learners significantly should be the core research goal in the future.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our greatest appreciation to the editor of the journal, Professor Chia-Wen Tsai for granting us this chance to serve as guest editors of this special issue. Our special thanks also go to the reviewers of this special issue for their constructive comments and insightful feedback to ensure overall quality of the accepted articles. We sincerely acknowledge their investment of considerable time and effort into reviewing the papers included in this issue. Finally, our sincere expressions of thanks are also extended to the excellent contributors who have made this issue possible and successful. Their quality scholarly, partnered with careful peer review, is vital to the success of this special issue.

We hope you find the articles in this special issue to be informative, inspiring, and enjoyable to read. We also hope that this issue will help provide new insights into the formulation of future research and innovations for flipped classrooms teaching practitioners, so as to contribute to continuous improvements to online instruction around the world.

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