Chapter 3

Teachers’ Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Flipped Classrooms in ELA and Non–ELA Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

As teachers and institutions continue to incorporate the flipped learning model for delivering curricula to students, more needs to be known about its efficacy in the classroom, especially in secondary classrooms, as the majority of published literature focuses on higher education settings. The goal of this research study was to identify teachers’ perceptions regarding the use of the flipped learning model in various content areas, including English Language Arts (ELA). This research study took place in a progressive public high school in Manhattan where surveys were administered to the majority of the faculty, and follow-up interviews were conducted to determine teachers’ perceptions of implementing the flipped learning model in their classrooms. Data showed many teacher-identified advantages and disadvantages of incorporating the flipped learning model into secondary classrooms.

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INTRODUCTION

As schools continue to focus on 21st century learning techniques, and the push for more technology integration in schools continues, educators are looking for ways to improve their teaching practice and to increase students’ college readiness. In an effort to divert from traditional lecture formats, some educators are using various technological tools to create “flipped classrooms.” However, there is little empirical research specifically addressing the flipped learning model. Pedagogical techniques can be passing fads that may even be the focus of published research studies, but what happens when a teaching technique gets global attention without substantial research support? The flipped learning model has taken the teaching community by storm since 2007, when Bergmann and Sams (2012) were among several educators simultaneously creating the model.

This chapter will focus on the outcomes of a research study that was conducted in a progressive, problem-based and inquiry-based public high school in New York City, where teachers from various content areas answered survey questions and interview questions regarding the perceived positive and negative implications of using the flipped learning model. Since there are few published research studies on the effectiveness of the flipped learning model in schools, I did not intend on setting a methodological precedent for how to study flipped classrooms, but instead, wanted to talk with teachers and identify firsthand what they are seeing in their classrooms when this method is employed.

Personally, I was drawn to studying educators’ perceptions of flipped learning through my own insecurities of implementing this model into my English language arts (ELA) classroom. I first encountered the flipped learning model while co-teaching a 10th grade English course titled, “American Masters.” My co-teacher and I were getting ready to use Arthur Miller’s *The Crucible* to teach various ELA skills when she told me she made a flipped video lesson on a software program called Juno for students to learn the historical background on the Salem witch trials. The lesson required students to read passages, view video clips, and answer questions at home to prepare for an activity the following day. Initially, I was impressed with the interactive nature of the home portion of the lesson and thought that this approach was revolutionary for student engagement and cognitive growth. As I observed future flipped lessons, however, I noted that students neglected to view the videos the previous evening and seemed to be going through the motions. I became more skeptical regarding the effectiveness of flipping classrooms. This naturally led me to seek what other teachers were seeing, thinking about, and doing with the flipped model.
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