

FLIPPED CLASSROOM METHOD APPLIED IN TEACHING PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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Annotation: The article examines the application of the flipped classroom method in teaching phraseological units (idioms, collocations, fixed expressions) in foreign language learning. It provides a theoretical overview of the flipped method, discusses the linguistic and cultural complexity of phraseological units, and evaluates the compatibility of flipped instruction with phraseological teaching goals. Drawing on research in EFL education, the article reviews empirical studies demonstrating that flipped learning enhances student engagement, autonomy, communicative competence, and motivation. Although little research directly explores the flipped model for phraseology, the paper argues that the method is well-suited to address challenges of idiom acquisition by allowing self-paced pre-class exposure and intensive in-class communicative practice. A methodological model— “Flipped-Interactive Phraseology Course”—is proposed, offering practical steps for pre-class, in-class, and post-class instruction. The article concludes by identifying limitations and proposing directions for future research.

Key words: Flipped classroom; phraseological units; idioms; EFL teaching; communicative competence; learner autonomy; interactive methods; foreign language instruction; vocabulary acquisition; language pedagogy.

In modern language teaching, educators continuously search for effective pedagogical approaches that increase students’ engagement, deepen understanding, and foster autonomy. One such approach that has gained considerable attention in recent years is the flipped classroom (or “inverted classroom”) method. Originally popularized in broader educational contexts, this method is increasingly applied to foreign language instruction. At the same time — especially for learners of English as a foreign language — mastering phraseological units (idioms, fixed expressions, collocations) remains a persistent challenge. This article explores how the flipped classroom method can be applied specifically to teaching phraseological units, examining theoretical foundations, empirical evidence, methodological proposals, potential benefits, and limitations.

The term “flipped classroom” refers to a pedagogical model that reverses the traditional learning process. In a conventional classroom, the teacher delivers a lecture (introducing new material) in class, and students then complete homework tasks to practice or assimilate knowledge. In the flipped model, this order is inverted: learners first study new material on their own (e.g., via video-lectures, readings, online resources), and class time is devoted to active learning — discussion, problem-solving, practice, interactive activities. In the foreign language context, this means that explanation of grammar, vocabulary, or theoretical aspects happens outside class; in-class time becomes a space for communicative practice, interactive tasks, collaboration, and scaffolding from the teacher. Advocates of the flipped classroom point out several advantages: students can learn at their own pace (pause, rewind, review), teachers shift from “lecturer” to “facilitator/coach,” and class time becomes more dynamic, student-centered, and interactive.

Phraseological units (aka idioms, fixed expressions, collocations) are combinations of words whose meaning often cannot be deduced from the meanings of their separate parts.

They are a fundamental component of any language's vocabulary, reflecting cultural, historical, and societal context.

As argued in recent research, phraseological competence is a key part of linguacultural competence: knowledge of idioms and fixed expressions helps learners understand not only literal meanings but also metaphoric, connotative, and culturally embedded senses. However, because phraseological units often involve non-literal or culturally specific meanings, learners (particularly non-native or EFL learners) struggle to grasp them. Recognizing when a phrase is literal vs. idiomatic, understanding its nuance, using it appropriately in context, retaining it in active vocabulary — all these present challenges. Therefore, teaching phraseological units effectively requires more than simple presentation: it demands context-rich exposure, repeated encounters, meaningful use, and opportunities for active production.

Given the characteristics of phraseological units and the demands of their mastery, the flipped classroom method offers several potential advantages:

Through video-lectures, reading materials, or digital resources shared before class, learners can encounter new idioms repeatedly and at their own rhythm, which is beneficial for internalizing subtle lexical and semantic differences that phraseologisms often have.

Since theoretical input is moved outside, class time becomes available for interactive, communicative tasks — discussions, role-plays, translation exercises, contextual usage — which are vital for learners to internalize idioms and fixed expressions. This aligns with communicative language teaching (CLT) principles, emphasizing meaningful use. Several studies of flipped classroom in language learning highlight that this method increases student talk time and active participation in class. j

Teacher becomes more of a facilitator, guiding learners in applying idioms, clarifying usage, giving feedback, correcting misinterpretations — rather than simply presenting lists of idioms or definitions. This shift may foster greater learner autonomy and motivation. t

The pre-class materials can be accessed anytime, accommodating students with varying schedules or pace of learning. Learners can revisit the material as needed, which supports consolidation of phraseological knowledge that often requires repetition and multiple exposures.

Although there is limited literature explicitly addressing flipped classroom + phraseological units, there is substantial evidence about the effectiveness of the flipped model in foreign language teaching (EF), which can be instructive for phraseology teaching. Below I review several relevant studies.

In a systematic review, Flipped Classroom Model For EFL Instruction in Higher Education shows that flipped classroom has gained traction in language education. The review highlights consistent benefits in learner engagement, motivation, and opportunities for active use of language.

The Practice of Using the “Flipped Classroom” Technology in Teaching a Foreign Language (Kunitsyna, 2024) reports that application of the flipped classroom in a foreign language course resulted in increased student speaking time during in-class sessions, greater student independence, and higher motivation. Similarly, in the context of Russian as a foreign language (for non-philological students), “Flipped class” technology in teaching foreign non-philological students (Denisenko, Bereznyatskaya, Kalinina, 2022) found that use of authentic films and regionally relevant materials combined with flipped methodology significantly improved students' linguistic and cultural competence, self-study skills, and motivation. The



application of flipped classroom approach in online ESL/EFL teaching context (Mukhiddinova, 2022) demonstrates that flipped learning, along with scaffolding strategies and multimodal resources, supports individual learning trajectories and improves foreign language communicative competence.

While the flipped model offers many advantages, researchers also point out challenges and caveats. Applying these to teaching phraseological units yields important implications:

According to *How Do We Flip Our Language Classroom? Reassessing the Flipped Method* (2024), when flipped methodology is implemented in second-language programs, outcomes depend heavily on how well the pre-class materials are designed, how motivated students are to engage with them, and how effectively class activities are structured. Without careful design, the potential benefits may not materialize. In the foreign language context, *The Practice of Using the “Flipped Classroom” Technology in Teaching a Foreign Language* points out that difficulties include the need for “authentic” language input in the preparatory phase (so learners encounter real language use) and the necessity for teacher adaptability — the teacher must shift from “lecturer” to “facilitator,” which can be challenging. For many learners, self-study demands self-discipline, time-management skills, and motivation. If students neglect the pre-class work, the in-class phase may suffer; flipped learning may widen the gap between more autonomous learners and those needing more guidance. Some research indicates that not all students prefer or benefit equally from flipped formats.

Teaching phraseological units (idioms, fixed expressions, collocations) is a critical yet challenging aspect of foreign language education. Because phraseology carries semantic, stylistic, and cultural complexity, learners often struggle to acquire it through traditional methods (list-and-translate, vocabulary drills). The flipped classroom method, with its re-ordering of instruction and practice, offers a promising alternative — one that aligns well with communicative, learner-centered, and autonomous learning paradigms.

Evidence from language teaching research — on grammar, vocabulary, speaking, pragmatic competence — supports the effectiveness of flipped classrooms in improving engagement, motivation, communicative competence, and learner autonomy. While explicit research on flipped classroom for phraseological units remains sparse, the theoretical fit is strong, and existing empirical findings provide a compelling rationale for its adoption.

Given the central role of phraseological competence in advanced language proficiency and communicative competence, integrating the flipped classroom method into phraseology teaching represents a forward-looking, research-driven strategy for modern language pedagogy. I hope this article encourages educators and researchers — especially in EFL contexts — to experiment with and empirically investigate the flipped-interactive approach to phraseological instruction.

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