Inside out or Outside In: Flip Chinese Conversation Classrooms to Improve Students' Learning, Interaction and Cooperation
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With the help of recent technological developments, a new concept of teaching—blended learning classrooms comes into teachers’ views. Among many types of blended learning, flipped classroom, which requires students to read, watch and study various study materials online, yet practice and participate in diverse learning activities in the classrooms, exerts special influence on foreign language learning. The purpose of this presentation is to introduce two quality flipped Chinese conversation courses I designed. In the presentation, I will describe the design and development process through demonstrating these two courses, introduce some best practices for flipped language classrooms, discuss the challenges I faced and finally share the future plans of improving these courses and designing more flipped courses to ensure students improve language learning, interaction and cooperation and have smooth and vivid learning experiences.

These two flipped Chinese language courses were designed based on students’ different learning needs and requirements.

Chin 000 is designed as a twelve-week short Chinese language course, which teaches Chinese fundamentals such as hanyu pinyin, character writing, listening and basic Chinese conversations to students majored in Engineering who wanted to study or conduct research in China. Because of the learning needs of the intended audience, different learning technologies and face-to-face component are integrated in the flipped course. Students in this course participate in face-to-face lecture once a week to practice Chinese conversation. After the lecture, they use the Blackboard Learn Learning System to review the lecture, read and watch additional learning materials and practice different types of exercises.

WLC 490 is designed specially for students who just came back from China or finished their Chinese minor studies to continue practice and learn advanced Chinese conversation. Students in this course are considered advanced Chinese learners who can benefit from self-learning before class lectures and activities. Before coming to classrooms, they read textbook, review words and expressions, practice designated exercises and do activities online. Class lecture and activities are offered weekly with students’ completion of the online study. After the face-to-face component, students study with teaching assistants using textbook and online materials. Additional asynchronous materials that would not take away time from the face-to-face lectures and one-on-one study with teaching assistants are provided in order to provide opportunities for students to explore further.