



Erasmus+ Programme 2014-2020
KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
KA203 - Strategic Partnerships for higher education
Project No. 2020-1-HU01-KA203-078844
Project Title: Developing Flipped Methods for Teaching (DFM)
02 Report: Initiatives of teaching social science with flipped classroom
strategy



Co-funded by
the European Union

NATIONAL REPORT ON FLIPPED CLASSROOM TRENDS BULGARIA

Prepared by:

Burgas Free University

Research Team:

Prof. Mariya Aleksieva, PhD

Prof. Tatyana Kotzeva, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Krasimira Mineva, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Veselina Zhecheva, PhD

Assist. Prof. Gergana Kirova

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Executive Summary

The present report is based on the results of the survey conducted by the research team of Burgas Free University, Bulgaria in the period April-June 2021. The aim of this first-of-its-kind survey was to investigate the experiences and opinions regarding the use of the Flipped Classroom methods in Higher Education in Bulgaria as part of Intellectual Output 2 under the Erasmus+ programme KA2 funded project “Developing Flipped Methods for Teaching (DFM)”.

The results of this survey gave us a greater insight into how to promote the implementation of flipped classroom in higher education.

The conclusion that can be drawn, based on the answers of the respondents, is that the majority of the teachers approve of flipping and use the flipped-classroom approach in their lessons. The results obtained indicate that when organizing interactions with the students, the teacher/lecturer personalizes the training. For example, students can watch the video lecture prepared by the teacher many times, then stop it, reflect on what they have seen / heard, learn at their own pace, regardless of the time or the place. They can replay the parts of the video lecture that are difficult to comprehend.

Flipping is related to effective time management. From the point of view of the competence-based approach, learners are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning and become more independent, as the teacher does not provide them with the information in advance.

Applying the flipped-classroom approach is a challenge for the traditional teaching practice, because in traditional 'classrooms / lecture halls', much of the time spent face-to-face is actually wasted in presenting information. Applying flipping, the teacher plays a new role - a moderator. This role should be geared towards enhancing learning by organizing, facilitating and providing feedback on structured learning activities.

Defining the Flipped Classroom

Although the interpretations and descriptions of the term ‘flipped’ submitted in the survey range from theoretical definitions to one or two-word descriptions in more technical terms (i.e. ‘video’, ‘tools’, ‘applications’), they could be centered around three main themes: student-centered learning, where the accent is on the new, active role of the student, collaborative learning - the accent is on the teacher-student interaction and higher-level learning – the accent is on the fact that the flipped-classroom approach is a new method.

Key Findings

The results are based on the responses of the 97 faculty members who completed the survey.

Highlights include:

- More than half of the respondents, 60.8%, have tried flipping an activity, class period, or course and are planning to do it again. Only one respondent (1%) has tried flipping and does not intend to do it again.



- One in four teachers (27.4%) reported that they started using the flipped classes within the past year, whilst the largest proportion (41.9 %) of the respondents started using the flipped-classroom approach more than three years ago.
- The vast majority of the teachers who have tried flipping assessed their experience as positive for themselves (85.5%) and for their students (83.9%).
- The top three reasons for flipping are: the desire to increase students' engagement (80.6%) and shift away from lectures and become more learner-centered (64.5%), as well as to improve student learning (46.8%).
- As regards to the benefits, more than four-fifths of the respondents identified the increase in student engagement (83.90%) as the most important benefit of flipping, while, equally, more than half indicated that the learning outcomes, as well as the learning environment have improved (54.8%).
- The vast majority of the university teachers, more than 90%, believe that flipping stimulates students to be more collaborative and more than 80% said they ask more questions, while approximately one-third of the teachers shared the opinion that students are somewhat resistant.
- The pressure on teachers to be creative and develop new strategies and ideas seems to be the most common barrier to the flipped-classroom approach. Almost a quarter (23.44%) identified it as a very significant barrier and another 28.12% as significant and frequent.
- Only 5 respondents are not interested in flipping – 80% of them said they lack enough knowledge about flipping and the other 20% considered it as a fad.

Methods/Methodology

The survey was conducted by the Burgas Free University team in the period April -June 2021 among representatives/teaching staff members of Higher Education Institutions in Bulgaria. It was created in English by the DFM project Coordinator (the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary), using Google Forms, and was translated into Bulgarian by the Burgas Free University project team prior to being sent to the respondents. The survey was anonymous and included 21 questions in both qualitative and quantitative formats – multiple-choice and open-ended questions. An e-mail with a link to the Google Forms questionnaire was sent to more than 300 faculty members from 34 universities in Bulgaria inviting them to complete the survey. The mailing list consisted of faculty members at all levels - lecturers/teaching staff in different subject areas (including 9 faculties of Pedagogy, 6 faculties of Psychology and 8 faculties of Social Sciences), faculty management and administrators, as well as faculty developers and instructional designers.

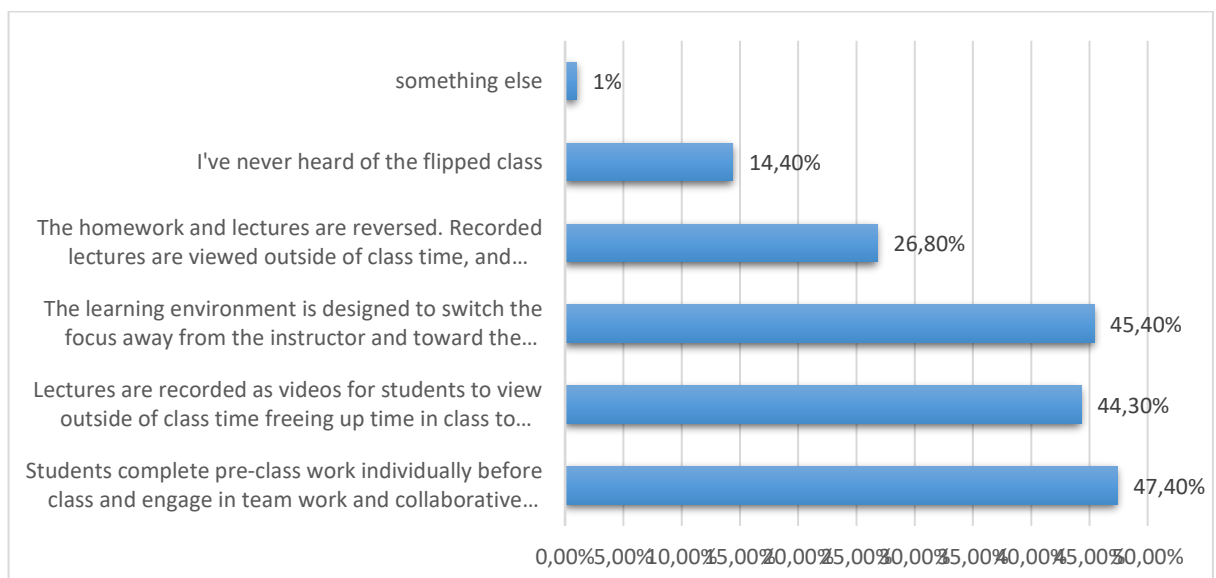
The survey was completed by 97 respondents from 27 Universities.



Question 1. Which of these definitions aligns with your interpretation of the flipped class? (Select all that apply. – Total: 97 answers)

The first question of the survey was designed to research how the respondents interpret and understand the flipped-class approach. A total of 97 respondents submitted their answers to this multiple-choice question with six possible answers. The total number of the responses exceeds 100%, since the respondents could choose more than one answer. This, however, made the analysis (in terms of a specific choice of definition) more complicated. For greater clarity, the results are presented in Figure 1.

1. Interpretation / Understanding of the nature of the flipped- classroom approach



Almost half of the respondents, 47.4%, defined the flipped classroom as follows: “*Students complete pre-class work individually before class and engage in team work and collaborative learning activities during class*”.

The second in order of importance was the definition which presents the flipped classroom as a “*learning environment designed to switch the focus away from the instructor and toward the students*” – 45.4% .

Another interpretation submitted by almost half of the respondents, 44.3%, is also interesting. According to them “*lectures are recorded as videos for students to view outside of class time, freeing up time in class to engage in discussions and problem solving*”.

According to more than a quarter of the respondents (26,8%), during pedagogical interactions based on the flipped-class approach, “*the homework and lectures are reversed. Recorded lectures are viewed outside of class time, and homework is completed during class time*”.

The option “*I've never heard of the flipped class*” was chosen by 14.4% .

1% of the respondents (1 person) chose the field “other”. According to that respondent “*in different situations, the interpretation of the concept is appropriate*”.



The conclusion that can be drawn from the results obtained refers to the following aspects of the question:

More than 50% of the respondents are well aware of the concept of the flipped classroom.

The choice of more than one answer is probably due to the fact that no agreement has been reached yet regarding the nature of the flipped-class approach. Various authors provide their own definitions of the flipped class, based on research derived from their own experience with the approach.

Question 2. In your own words, briefly describe some of the characteristics of flipped classes. (Total:80 answers)

Subsequent to the set of definitions in Question 1, this open-ended question aimed to assess in more depth the knowledge and perception of the respondents about the flipped classroom approach.

A total of 80 respondents (82%) out of the 97 participants in the survey submitted their answers.

The vast majority of the respondents ,95%, are acquainted with the flipped class, only 4 of them stated that they had no idea of the flipped-classroom approach.

Not surprisingly, the definitions and descriptions they submitted vary, depending on their knowledge and practical experience of flipping.

An assistant professor in English language and literature from a four-year public institution submitted his own genuine definition of the flipped-classroom approach: *“It is more accurate to call it the ‘outschool classroom’, not the ‘flipped classroom’. Although the term in English is the ‘flipped classroom’, the classroom itself is not flipped, what happens in it is reversed. Video-lectures and the tasks set by the teacher are the most important. The goal is to get students come to class prepared on the certain topic, not just to be taught the lesson”*.

Some provided definitions and explanations that tend to be more theoretical: *“This is a modern pedagogical approach where the typical class lesson and homework are reversed. Students learn their lessons at home, in class they discuss and comprehend them, collaborate in discussions and group assignments, work on assignments with the support and instruction of the teacher. The flipped class is one of the ways to improve the knowledge and skills acquired in different subjects”*, while at the same time many answers are more concise and suggest they are derived from the respondents’ own experience: *“Dialogue, discussions, independent tasks”*, *“Active learning, learning through digital resources, group work – in small and large groups”*, *“Preparation at home in advance, discussions, problem and case solving and practical examples in class”*. Another respondent, a foreign language assistant professor from a four-year public institution emphasized on: *“Students are in the role of tutors, they explain”*.

On the other hand, the answers can also be grouped around three main themes:

- student-centered learning - the accent is on the new, active role of the student: *“Students are acquainted with the new content outside the lecture hall, they carry on and discuss independent assignments in the lecture hall, learning becomes an active process, the dynamics and efficiency of the learning process increase, as well as the students’ interest and commitment to learning.”*(an associate professor from a four-year public institution); *“Shifting*



the focus of learning, stimulating the active participation of students, stimulating critical and independent thinking, functional literacy.”(an assistant professor from a four-year public institution). Another respondent – an adjunct from a four-year public institution said: “This is a learner-centered model, which makes it possible to explore topics in more depth and creates more meaningful learning opportunities during classroom training.”

- collaborative learning - the accent is on the teacher-student interaction: *“Shared responsibility for the learning process among the teacher and the students.”(an assistant professor from a four-year public institution); “Learners demonstrate individual activity in acquiring knowledge and the teacher puts a lot of effort into stimulating their skills and creative thinking, instead of passive teaching”.*(a full professor from a four-year public institution).
- higher-level learning – the accent is on the fact that the flipped-classroom approach is a new method, with new means and tools, etc. : *“A new model for assimilation of information“; “1) Wider use of the educational technology to present the learning content outside the classroom; 2) Active learning in class.”(an associate professor from a private four-year institution); “Interactivity, constructivism, critical thinking“; “A pedagogical model, focused on the learner, flexible learning environment, efficiency, multisensory instruction, synergy”* (an assistant professor from a four-year public institution).

Several responses emphasized on the motivation of the students: *“More active attitude of students towards learning; more independence”* (an assistant professor in Law from a public four-year institution).

Other descriptions and definitions of the flipped classroom included:

“Better understanding of the subject matter taught”. (an adjunct in Informatics and Computer science)

“Autonomy, difficult to implement in real-life conditions, high learning potential is required from students/learners.” (an assistant professor in Education)

“An interactive technology for knowledge transfer and competence and value building”. (a full professor in Social Sciences)

“According to me in the ‘flipped class’ students research the topic by themselves. The topic is presented in a suitable form – a YouTube video or a combination of various interesting instruments and applications/ Powtoon, Moovly, EdPuzzle, PlayPosit, Google Expeditions, augmented reality, etc./ and then they apply the knowledge in solving problems and working on the practical aspects of the topic in class.”. (an instructor/lecturer in Informatics and Computer science)

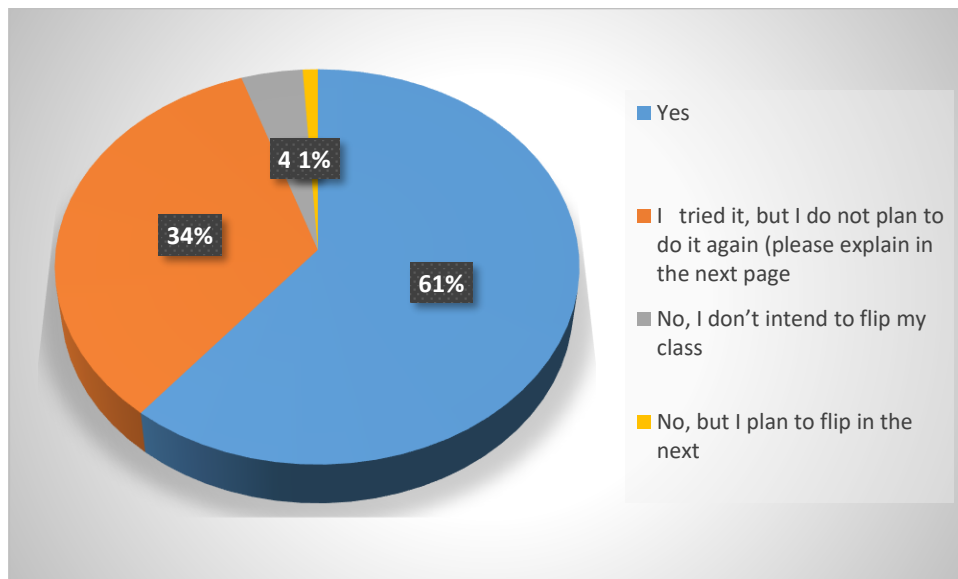
Question 3. Have you tried flipping an activity, class period, or course? (Total: 97 answers)

The purpose of this question was to induce the respondents to share their hands-on experience or lack of experience in applying the flipped-classroom approach, since being only aware of the technical parameters is not enough. In order to apply flipping in practice you need time and additional resources prepared (instructions, video resources, a choice of topics, suitable to apply the



approach, etc). This was a multiple-choice question with four possible answers. All the 97 respondents submitted their answers.

3. Have you tried flipping an activity, class period, or course?



More than half of the respondents, 60.8%, definitely stated that they had tried flipping. This most probably is related to the results of the 1st question of the survey because you need to be well acquainted with the theory and technological aspects of the approach to apply it in practice.

A little over one-third, 34%, said they had not tried flipping but intended to do so in the next year.

Less than 5 percent (4.1% or 4 respondents) declared that they did not intend to flip their classes. This was not surprising because the use of the flipped-classroom depends on the attitude of the respondents towards the introduction of innovations, their style of teaching and the qualities of the learners they work with.

Only one respondent (1%) said that he had tried flipping but was not planning to do it again, i.e., he did not like the approach.

The conclusion that can be drawn, based on the answers of the respondents, is that the majority of the teachers approve of flipping and use the flipped-classroom approach in their lessons. The results obtained indicate that when organizing interactions with the students, the teacher/lecturer personalizes the training. For example, students can watch the video lecture prepared by the teacher many times, then stop it, reflect on what they have seen / heard, learn at their own pace, regardless of the time or the place. They can replay the parts of the video lecture that are difficult to comprehend.

Flipping is related to effective time management. From the point of view of the competence-based approach, learners are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning and become more independent, as the teacher does not provide them with the information in advance.

Applying the flipped-classroom approach is a challenge for the traditional teaching practice, because in traditional 'classrooms / lecture halls', much of the time spent face-to-face is actually



wasted in presenting information. Applying flipping, the teacher plays a new role - a moderator. This role should be geared towards enhancing learning by organizing, facilitating and providing feedback on structured learning activities.

Question 4. Would you give a more detailed reason for not using flipped methods again?

Among the 97 respondents who completed the survey, only one respondent replied to this question. The explanation that this respondent from a four-year public institution has given is that *“Learners’ strongly object to being ‘engaged’. Their passive behaviour makes all efforts meaningless”*.

Question 5. We’d like to know more information about why you are not interested in flipping your class or what prevents you from flipping. Select the statement(s) that best explains your decision. (Check all that apply); (Total:5 answers)

The question aimed to examine the opinions of the respondents regarding the reasons that prevent them from flipping the classroom / lecture hall. It was a multiple-choice question with 8 possible answers.

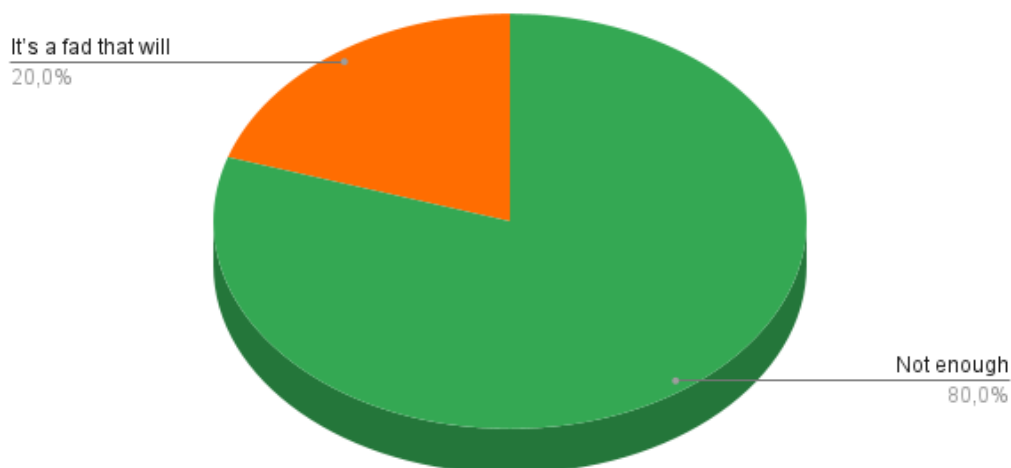
The number of respondents is surprising – only 5. Accordingly, their responses are differentiated as follows:

80% of the respondents, who submitted answers to this question chose the first possible answer: *“Not enough knowledge about flipping”*. Taking into account the submitted answers to the previous questions, this seems surprising. The remaining 20% chose the second possible answer, respectively: *“It’s a fad that will soon be replaced by the next new thing”*.

The remaining possible answers: *“Too time consuming”*; *“Uncomfortable with the approach”*; *“Limited experience with and/or knowledge about technology”*; *“Lack of recognition and/or support”*; *“This type of work is not part of my position/role”*; *“Too expensive”*; *“Other”* were not chosen.

The insufficient number of respondents does not allow for any conclusions to be drawn.

5. We’d like to know more information about why you are not interested in flipping your class or what prevents you from flipping. Select the statement(s) that best explains your decision. (Check all that apply)



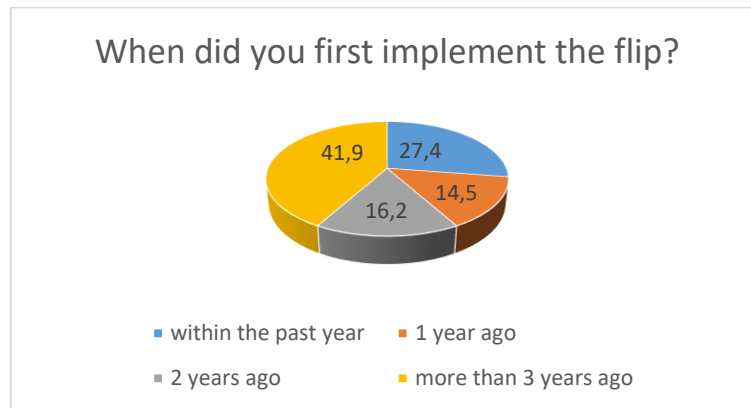
Regardless of the answers submitted by the participants in the survey, it should be noted that the crisis following the COVID-19 pandemic prompted educational institutions to orient towards online learning and students around the world were redirected to virtual classrooms.

There, they can interact with their teachers and peers to continue their education and develop new skills (and a whole new vocabulary).

The organization of learning in a digital environment allows the flipped-class approach to gain popularity and put learners in a more responsible position in relation to their learning. To encourage their critical thinking, to create preconditions for creativity and freedom of interaction.

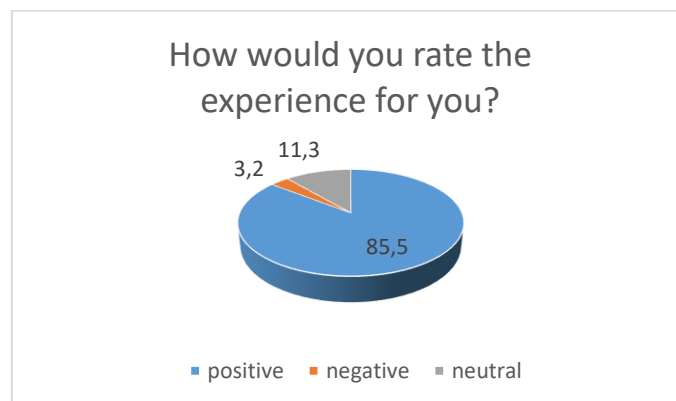
Question 6. When did you first implement the flip?(Total: 62 answers)

The largest proportion of the respondents said that they started using the flipped approach more than three years ago (41.9%). This indicates that long before the new name of the flipped approach it had been used by part of the university teachers in their practice with the students. One in four teachers (27.4%) reported that they started using the flipped classes within the past year. Probably, the shift to distance education during the pandemic has motivated university teachers to use new non-traditional methods of teaching. 14.5% reported the start of using the flipped approach 1 year ago and 16.1% - 2 years ago.



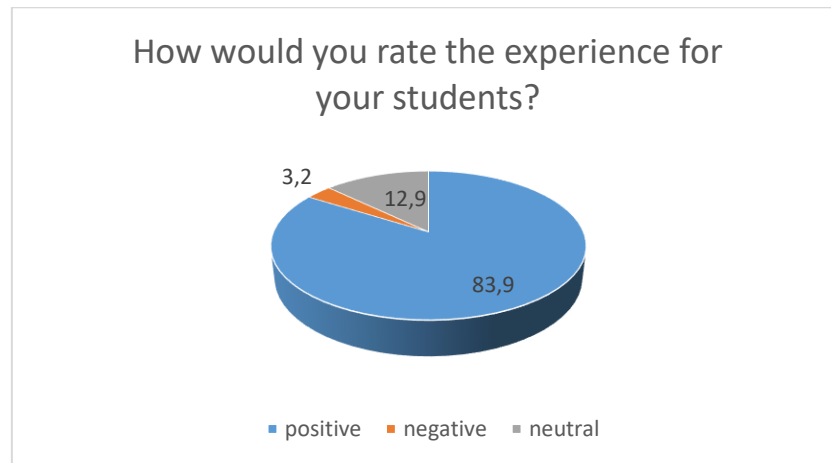
Question 7. How would you rate the experience for you?(Total: 62 answers)

The predominant proportion of the respondents assessed their experience with the flipped approach in a positive way – 85.5%. Only for 3.2% of them it had a negative meaning and 11.3% of the faculty called their experience ‘neutral’.

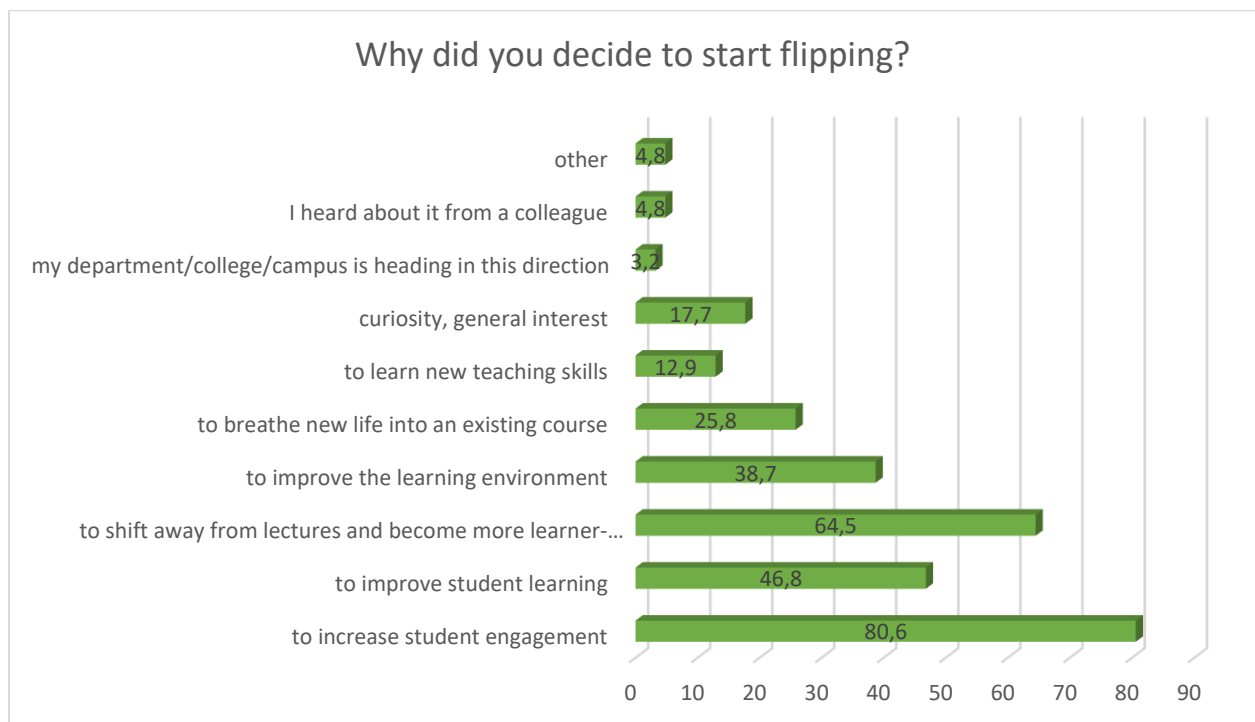


Question 8. How would you rate the experience for your students?(Total:62 answers)

Similarly to the teachers’ experience in the previous question, the predominant proportion of the faculty thought that the flipping had positive implications for their students – 83.9%. Only 3.2% of the teachers assessed the flipped classroom approach in a negative terms for their students. 12.9% of the faculty rated the students’ experience with the flipped classes in a neutral way.



Question 9. Why did you decide to start flipping? (Total:62 answers)

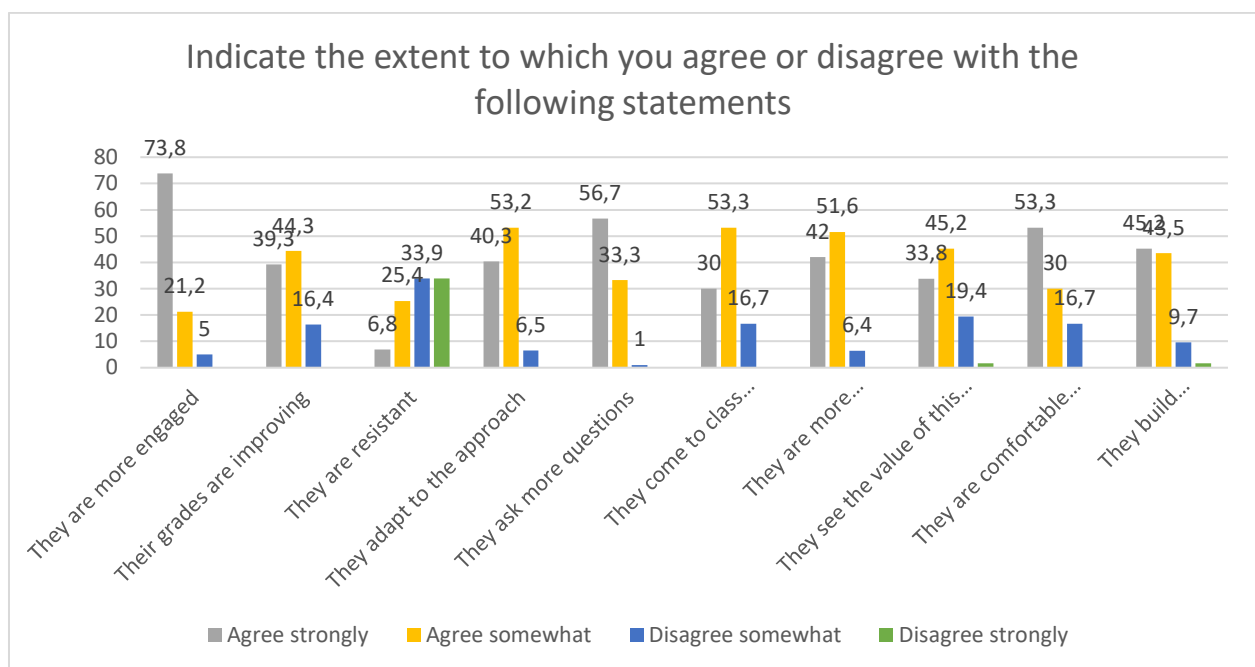


The respondents were asked to identify the reasons for the flipping and to choose more than one answer. The most preferred answer by the university teaching staff was “to increase student engagement” (80.6%). The next answer chosen by nearly two-thirds of the respondents (64.5%) was “to shift away from lectures and become more learner-centered”. These two options demonstrate the faculty motivation to move away from a traditional didactic way of teaching and to move to more interactive and student-engaged methods of learning using the flipped classroom approach. Very close to the idea about improving the learning and teaching environment are the options “to improve student learning”, chosen by 46.8%, “to improve the learning environment”, chosen by 38.7% and “to



breathe new life into an existing course”, chosen by 25.8% of the respondents. A few university teachers used the flipped classes motivated by “curiosity, general interest” (17.7%) and “to learn new teaching skills” (12.9%). The least popular answers were: “my department/college/campus is heading in this direction” (3.2%), “I heard about it from a colleague” (4.8%) and other like “I have used this method in my PhD thesis”, “online teaching stimulates using this method” (4.8%).

Question 10. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements related to students in your flipped course



They are more engaged

The vast majority of the respondents (73.8%) strongly agreed with the statement that students became more engaged in the flipped classrooms. The rest (21.2%) agreed somewhat and only 5% disagreed somewhat with the statement.

Their grades are improving

The majority of the university teachers viewed the flipping approach as way to improve students' achievements. 39.4% of them strongly agreed and respectively 44.3% agreed somewhat with this statement. 16.4% of the respondents were skeptical and did not see a relationship between the flipped method and students' grades.

They are resistant

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Two-thirds of the university staff did not approve of the statement that students were resistant. The equal proportion of the teachers either disagreed somewhat (33.9%) or disagreed strongly (33.9%) with the statement. On the other hand, approximately one third of the teachers shared the opinion that students were resistant – 25,4% of them agreed somewhat and 6.8% agreed strongly with the statement.

They adapt to the approach

Almost all respondents agreed with the statement that students could adapt to the flipped classes – 53.2% agreed somewhat and 40.3% agreed strongly. Only 6.5% of the university staff do not believe in the students' abilities to adapt to the new learning method – 6.5% of them disagreed with the statement.

They ask more questions

Almost all university staff stated that a flipped classroom could encourage more active student participation. More than half of the teachers (56.7%) agreed strongly and 33.3% agreed somewhat that students asked more questions in a flipped learning environment. Only 1% of the teachers disagreed with the statement.

They come to class more prepared

Most of the university teachers also thought that students were better prepared for their flipped classes – 53.3% agreed somewhat and 30% agreed strongly with this statement. Only 16.7% of the university staff do not believe in the students' abilities to be preliminary prepared for their classes and disagreed somewhat with the statement.

They are more collaborative

The vast majority of the university teachers believed that the flipping stimulates students to be more collaborative. 51.6% of them agreed somewhat and 42% agreed strongly with the statement. Only 6.4% of the teachers disbelieved. These answers demonstrate the idea that the flipping approach is an effective way to increase student participation and motivation in obtaining new knowledge.

They see the value of this type of experience

Nearly 90% of the teachers were confident in the values of a flipped-class experience. 45.2% of them somewhat agreed and 33.8% strongly agreed with the statement. On the other hand, one in five university teachers (20%) did not recognize the values of a flipped classroom.

They are comfortable using the technology

Most of the university teachers thought that students felt comfortable with the new technology. More than half of them (53.3%) agreed strongly and 30% agreed somewhat with this statement. Only one in six teachers (16.7%) somewhat disagreed with the idea of student comfortability with a flipped class, probably with a concern of limited access to computers and tablets for some of the students.

They build relationships/community

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Building community and intensive relationships has been recognized as another benefit of the flipped classroom. 45.3% of the teachers strongly agreed and 43.5% of them somewhat agreed with this advantage. Only 10.7% of them somewhat disagreed and 1.6 % strongly disagreed.

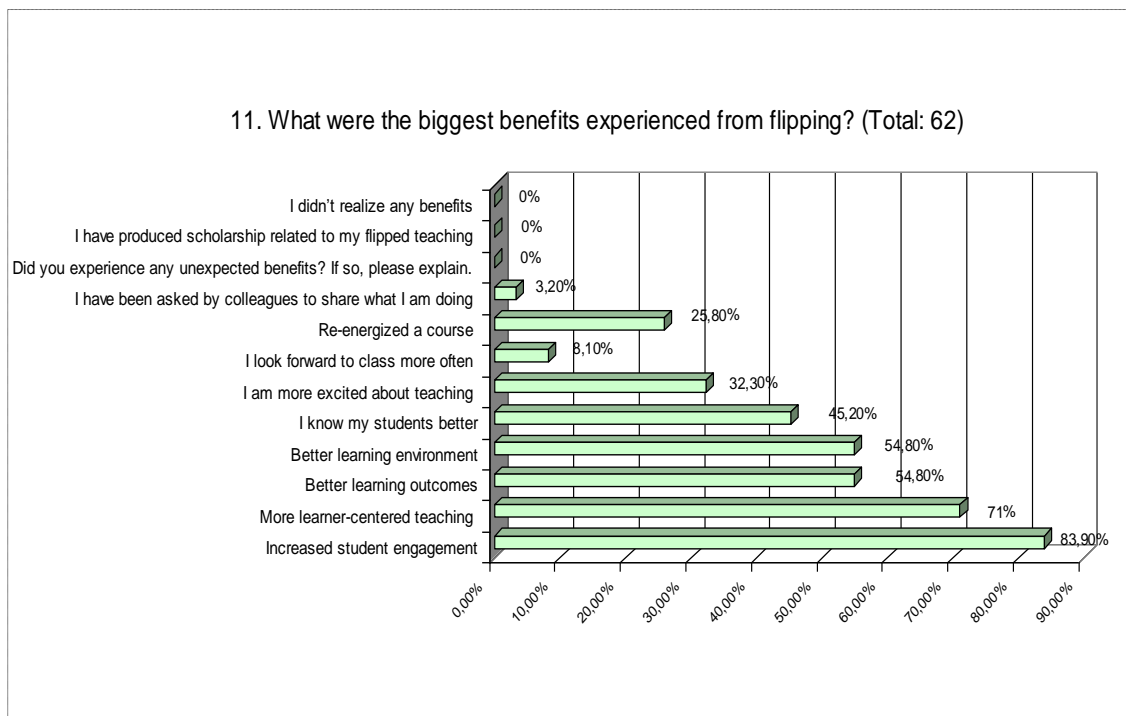
Question 11. What were the biggest benefits experienced from flipping? (Total:62 answers)

The survey offered the respondents the opportunity to choose from a list of 12 possible positive effects of applying the flipped-classroom approach those that they have observed in their own teaching practice.

The highest percentage of participants indicated that the benefit of flipping is an increase in student engagement (83.90%). The second most common benefit of applying the innovative approach is that teaching is more focused on the learning needs of students - 71% of those who completed the survey confirm this effect.

More than half of the respondents (54.8%) indicated that the learning outcomes have improved, as well as the learning environment (54.8%).

In addition to the improved learning environment, learning success, and student engagement, the respondents also registered some positive personal effects. More than a third of them pointed out such personal benefits as the opportunity to get to know their students better (45.2%) and high inspiration by their work (32.3%). Some of them concluded that they invested more energy in the course they teach (25.8%) and more often look forward to entering the class (8.1%). The effectiveness of the flipping does not go unnoticed: 3.2% of respondents confirm the increased interest of their colleagues in the new method of the “flipped classroom”.





Question 12. What challenges do you face when thinking about flipping your class? (Total: 64 answers)

The application of innovative approaches in education often faces various obstacles. Some of them are related to the work environment (lack of understanding, support, and resources), others - to the individual abilities of teachers (lack of time to develop new learning materials, insufficiently well-developed technological skills).

The participants in the survey had the opportunity to assess each of the identified barriers to the flipped classroom approach through a four-point rating scale ranging from "very significant/ always a challenge" to "insignificant/ rarely a challenge".

The percentage distribution of the answers defines as the most significant barrier to the flipped-classroom approach the pressure on teachers to be creative and develop new strategies and ideas. Some of them (23.44%) identified it as a very significant barrier and always happening, another part (28.12%) - as significant and frequent, and a third (21.88%) - as a moderate challenge, which only sometimes is a barrier to the flipping of the courses. About one-third of the participants (31.25%) defined it as an insignificant barrier and rarely a challenge.

Participants identify the time required to prepare for the flipped classroom as the second most significant barrier to applying the innovative approach. Less than one-third of the respondents (20.31%) consider time to be very significant/ always a challenge, 26.56% of them recognize it as significant / often a challenge, and 21.88% consider it a moderate obstacle that sometimes becomes a challenge.

In the third place of importance is the lack of interest of students and lack of motivation. A total of 45.32% of the teachers believe that this is a very significant (15, 63%) or significant challenge (29.69%), which always or often happens. Another 31.25% of the participants in the survey consider this factor to be moderately significant and only occasionally has a negative impact, and 23.44% of all the respondents do not consider it a challenge.

The technological experience and skills of teachers are a source of concern in the use of new educational approaches: for 14.06% of the respondents this is a very significant barrier and a constant challenge, for 25% it is a significant and often present barrier, 30.31% identify it as a moderate and sometimes emerging challenge. For 40.62% of the participants, this is not something significant or they think it rarely happens.

Over two-thirds of the respondents (67.19%) believe that the lack of institutional support (resources, funding, and place of implementation) is a barrier to flipping the classroom. More than one-third (32.81%) rate this as a moderate challenge, sometimes hindering them. Every fifth teacher (20.31%) defines it as significant and often present in their daily lives, and 14.06% agree that this is a very significant and constant challenge. The percentage share of respondents (32.81%), for whom the lack of institutional support is insignificant and is rarely a challenge, is also not small.

Competition between departments/ colleges/ faculties does not bother the majority of participants - 62.5% noted that for them this is insignificant and is rarely a challenge. The rest of them consider it a challenge, but with varying degrees of severity: for 9.38% it is very significant and permanent; for



12.5% it is significant, often a challenge; and for 15.63% it is a challenge to a moderate degree and only sometimes.

Other responsibilities of the teachers that their position implies make it difficult for more than half of the respondents (54.69%) to varying degrees, and the remaining 45.31% indicate that this is something insignificant and is rarely a challenge.

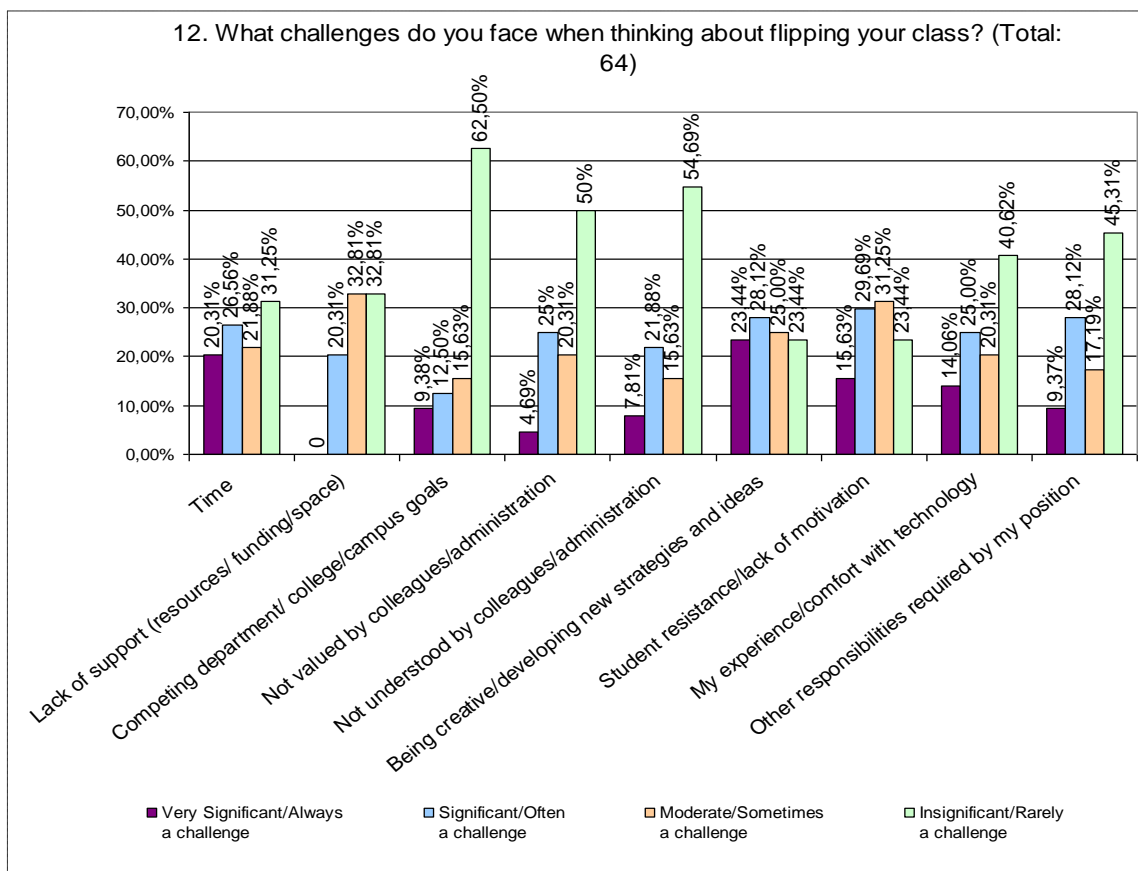
The participants who identified the other responsibilities of teachers as an obstacle, consider the obstacles are very significant and always happening (9,37%); frequent are significant challenge (28.12%), and 17.9% sometimes are moderate challenge.

Over 50% of the respondents noted they do not worry about not being valued (50%) and the lack of understanding (54.69%) by their colleagues and the administration when applying the flipped classroom approach.

More than one-quarter of the teachers have identified as a significant and often troubling challenge the fact that they do not receive the necessary understanding (21.88%), and the others do not value their efforts at work (25%).

Other 15.63% of the respondents rate the lack of understanding as a sometimes emerging moderate challenge, and 20.31% of the participants think the same about not being valued.

The lowest percentage of participants in the survey identify as a very significant and permanent challenge the lack of understanding (7.81%) and the underestimation of their efforts (4.69%) in the work environment.



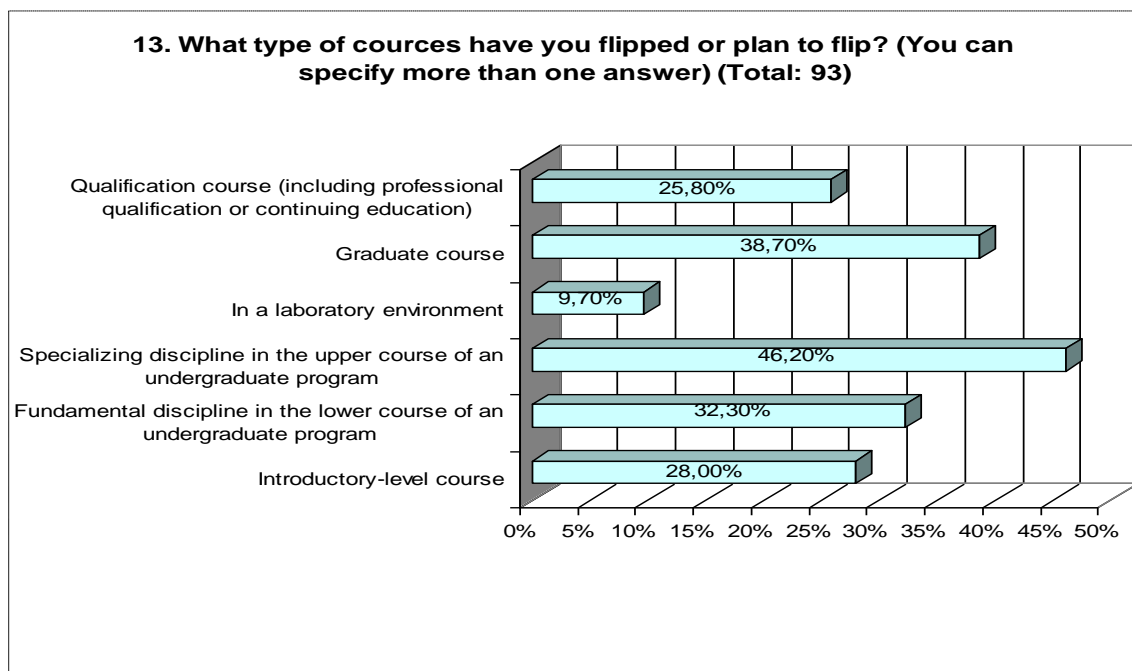


Question 13. What type of courses have you flipped or plan to flip? (Total: 93 answers)

More than two-thirds of the participants in the study focused on applying the approach in the disciplines of the bachelor's programs (78.50%). Approximately half of the total number of respondents (46.2%) have flipped or plan to flip a specialised discipline in the upper course, and 32.3% have chosen a fundamental discipline in the lower course of the bachelor's program.

More than one-third of the respondents (38.7%) have chosen to apply this innovative approach in a master's course.

Less than one-third focused on flipping an introductory course (28%) and a qualification course (25.8%). The lowest percentage of teachers reported that they flipped or plan to flip a course in a laboratory environment (9.7%).

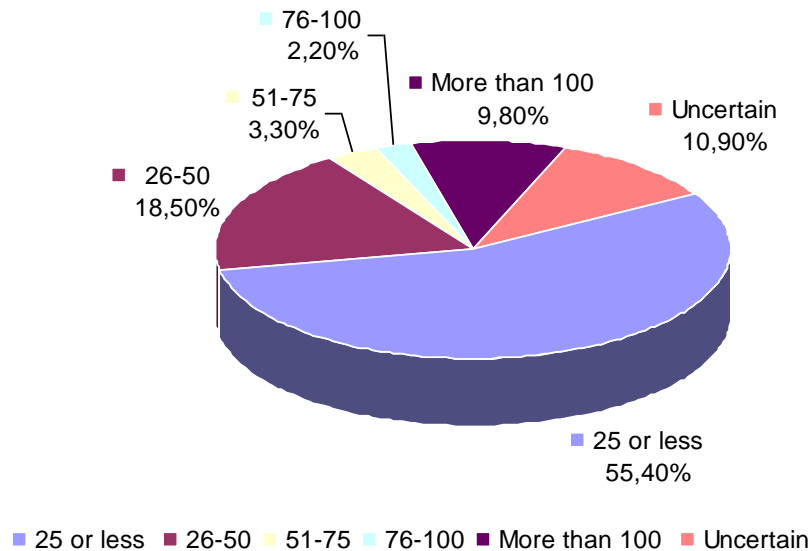


Question 14. How many students were in the course(s) you flipped or plan to flip? (Total: 92 answers)

More than half of the participants in the survey (56, 4%) have already applied the flipped classroom approach or plan to implement it in their course involving 25 or fewer students. There is a smaller group of teachers (18.5%) who have committed or would commit to apply the innovative approach in a group of 25 to 50 students. One-tenth of the respondents (10.9%) are not sure about the number of students in the flipped classroom. Other 5.5% of respondents had or would like to have between 50 and 100 participants, and 9.8% indicated over 100 students in the course they have flipped or plan to flip.



14. How many students were in the course(s) you flipped or plan to flip?
(Total: 92)



Question 15. What additional support would you need to continue flipping or begin flipping, if any? (Total: 68 answers)

Not surprisingly, since this was an open-ended question, it inevitably provoked a variety of responses.

Almost one-fourth (16.2%) of the teaching staff, comprising 11 out of all the 68 respondents who submitted their answers to this question stated (in some form or other) that they did not need support, answers varying from “I don’t need support”, “I, personally, don’t” to “I do not need any. I am the class lecturer, I deliver the lectures and exercises and I have complete freedom to conduct them as I see fit” (an associate professor from a four-year public institution) and as a full professor from a four-year public institution said “Personal initiative and good knowledge of the qualities of students are the decisive factors for me. I do not feel the need for additional support”.

A large group of the respondents echoed the challenges set in the multiple-choice questions earlier in the survey - an important factor for almost 15 percent of the teachers is the students’ motivation: “It all depends on the students”, “Active and motivated students”. An assistant professor in Social Sciences from a four-year public institution said: “Motivating students to prepare for the topic at home is the most difficult task. I need their support.” Another assistant professor from a four-year private institution called for: “Better preparation of students for independent reading and thinking in the previous stage of study (secondary education)”.

The largest group of respondents (16 out of 68) identified the need for suitable training and resources: “specialized methodological resources”, “specialized scientific and applied literature”. Many teachers



would like access to a suitable online platform with shared digital resources and specialized literature, shared experience with colleagues, practical advice and ideas, useful tips and sharing good practices of the application of the flipped-classroom approach.

Several respondents noted the need for adequate financial resources and one of the respondents, an associate professor from a four-year public institution, was very specific: "More resources-e.g. financial, for tickets to visit museums, where to be able to organise flipped classrooms".

Many of the respondents would also like to have access to better equipment, technical support for designing their flipped courses as well as a variety of interactive tools and applications.

Several respondents identified the need to improve their digital skills.

Surprisingly only 4 respondents indicated the factors time and the need to reduce the heavy teaching load.

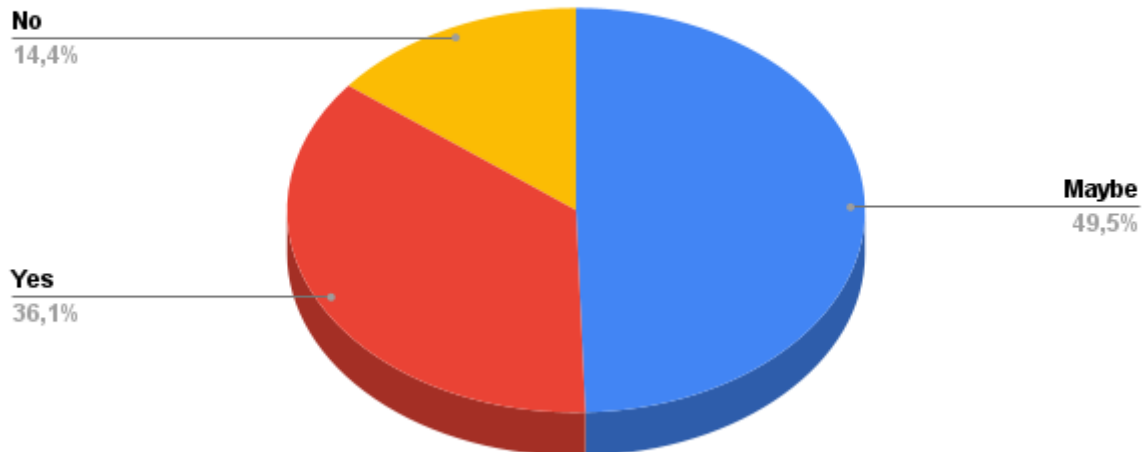
Last but not least, some respondents reiterated another challenge stated in the earlier questions of the survey, demanding more moral support and incentives from the university managing bodies and faculty chairs regarding the use of the flipped-classroom approach. "*The application of the flipped-classroom should be valued more from the university administration and considered as teaching workload*", said an associate professor in Legal studies at a public four-year institution.

Question 16. Are you willing to share your experience in using flipped methods for a purpose of a case study? (Total: 97 answers)

Almost half of the respondents (49.5%) were not certain whether they are willing to share their experience. A little under 15 percent of the respondents (14.4%) did not wish to share their experience and submitted a negative answer and more than two-thirds of the respondents (36.1%) submitted a positive response.



16. Are you willing to share your experience in using flipped methods for a purpose of a case study?



Question 17. If yes, please give us any contact detail (e.g. e-mail) for establishing a 20 min. Interview.

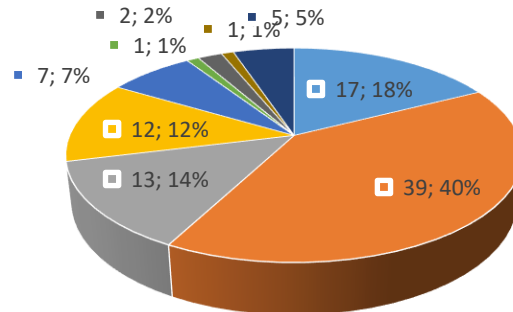
Subsequent to the responses to the previous question, 35 respondents willingly submitted their e-mail contact details.

Question 18. Select the title that most closely fits your current position in higher education (Total 97 answers):

Since the respondents were selected among the university teaching staff, it is no surprise that nearly all respondents chose a job position that suggested some teaching responsibility. Associate professors made up the largest group, with 39 individuals, or 40% of the total number of survey respondents. Right behind, with 18% of the respondents, are the full professors, followed by assistant professors, who consist 14%, or 13 individuals, and instructors/lecturers, with 12 individuals or 12% of the respondents. Less than 10% of all respondents hold job titles that either do not include a full-time job in the university, or are related to instruction but do not appear to involve teaching, such as dean/department head, instructional designer, or senior administrator. Therefore, we could see the respondents comprise a representative sample of the target group in Bulgaria and the survey results can be extrapolated to the university teaching staff in general.



Select the title that most closely fits your current position
in higher education:



- Full Professor
- Associate Professor
- Assistant Professor
- Instructor/Lecturer
- Adjunct
- Instructional Designer
- Faculty Developer
- Program Director
- Dean/Department Head/Chair
- Senior Administrator/Provost
- Other

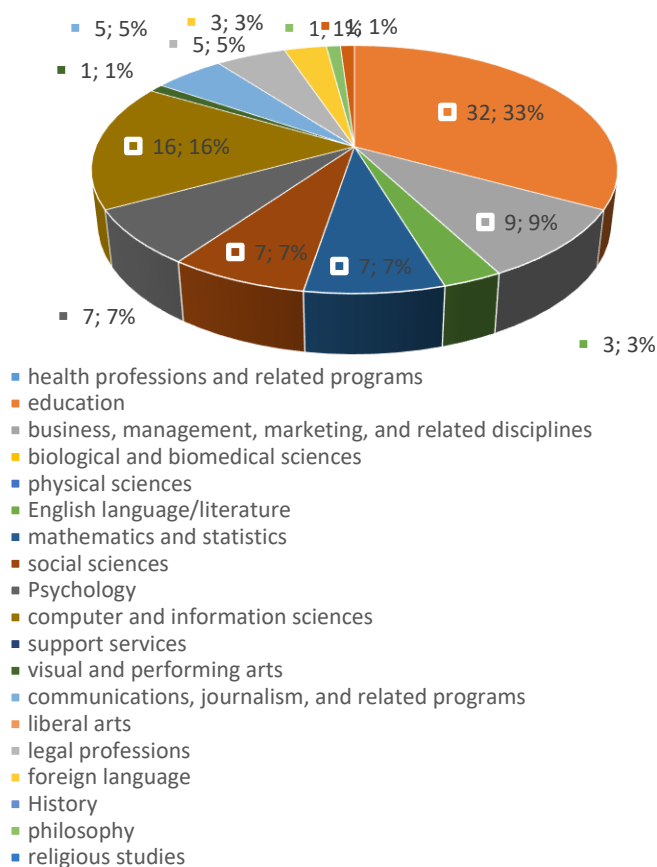
Question 19. Which of these best fits your field or discipline? (Total: 97 answers)

As could be observed in the results, no academic field comprised a majority of respondents, although some occurred more often than others did. The most selected answer, not surprisingly, is Education with 32 respondents, or 33% of the total sample. The next largest group, with 16% of respondents or 16 individuals, represents Computer and Information Sciences. About 9% or 9 respondents represent Business, Management, Marketing, and related disciplines. Equal results of 7% or 7 individuals get Psychology, Social Sciences and Mathematics and Statistics. After that, the numbers are equal or below 5% of the total respondents with Legal Studies, English language/literature, Visual and Performing arts, Engineering technologies, etc.

Again, it can be clearly observed that the respondents cover the vast majority of academic fields and there is no prevailing answer.

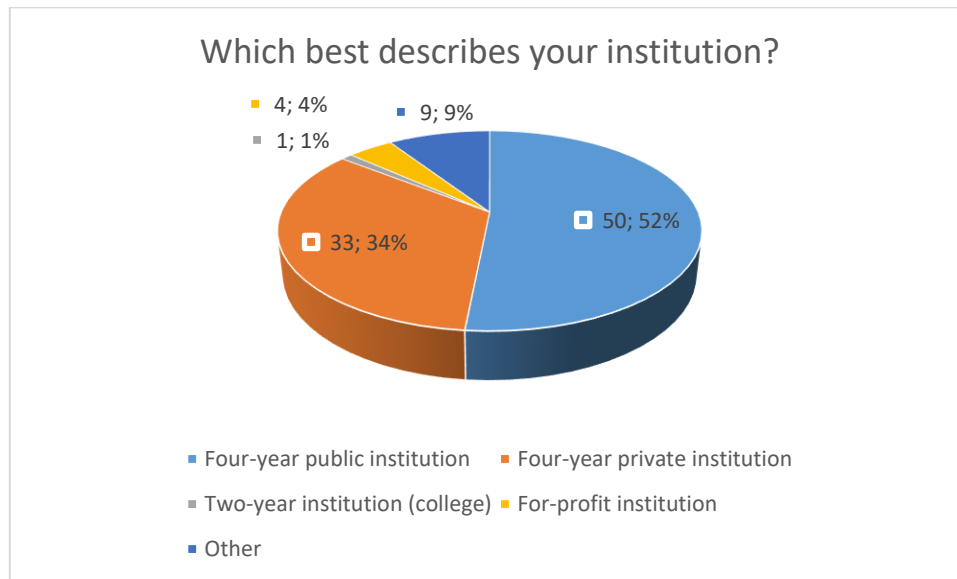


Which of these best fits your field or discipline?



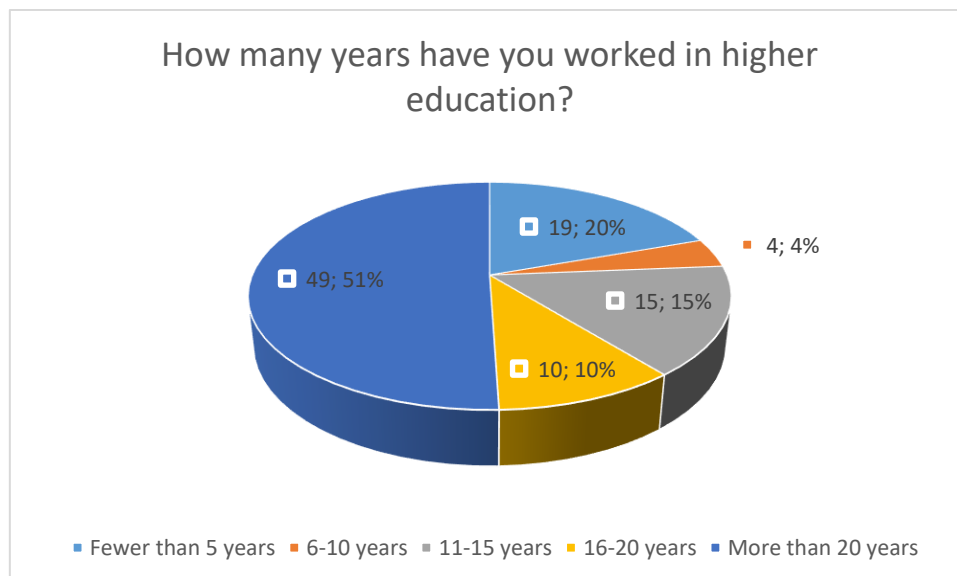
Question 20. Which best describes your institution? (Total: 97 answers)

The survey respondents represent the wide range of institutions that make up the higher education industry in Bulgaria. The diversity among the respondents suggests that classroom flipping is an increasingly pervasive teaching method that transcends institutions and disciplines. The largest group of survey respondents (52%) or 50 individuals are from public, four-year colleges and universities. This is not a surprise, since public universities comprise the vast majority of the universities in Bulgaria. The second largest group (34%) or 33 individuals represent four-year private institutions, followed by other (9% or 9 answers). The rest of the answers are below 4% and represent colleges and for-profit institutions, which are relatively rare in Bulgaria.



Question 21. How many years have you worked in higher education? (Total 97 answers)

This survey had a highly experienced group of respondents. 51% of the respondents or 49 individuals have more than 20 years teaching experience in higher education institutions. The second largest group (20%) consists of 19 respondents, who have less than 5 years' experience. This group is followed by the groups of respondents who selected 11-15 years' experience (15%) and 16-20 years of experience (10%). The group with 6-10 working years is the least represented with 4% of all the answers.





Erasmus+ Programme 2014-2020
KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
KA203 - Strategic Partnerships for higher education
Project No. 2020-1-HU01-KA203-078844
Project Title: Developing Flipped Methods for Teaching (DFM)
02 Report: Initiatives of teaching social science with flipped classroom
strategy



Co-funded by
the European Union

CASE STUDY 1

INTERVIEW ON FLIPPED CLASSROOM TRENDS

BULGARIA

Prepared by:

Burgas Free University

Research Team:

Prof. Mariya Aleksieva, PhD

Prof. Tatyana Kotzeva, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Krasimira Mineva, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Veselina Zhecheva, PhD

Assist. Prof. Gergana Kirova



Summary

The present case study is based on the interview conducted by the research team of Burgas Free University, Bulgaria in June 2021 with Assoc. Prof. Emil Buzov, PhD.

Assoc. Prof. Emil Buzov, PhD was one of the first respondents who completed the survey on Flipped classroom trends. He enthusiastically responded to our invitation to give an interview on the topic online, using the platform *Microsoft Teams*.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emil Buzov is the director of the Pedagogical College in Pleven of the University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. St. Cyril and Methodius". The college prepares pre-school (kindergarten) and primary school teachers. The main discipline he teaches is a Course in Methodology of Training in Design, Technology and Entrepreneurship. Besides, he also teaches academic courses in Social Work with Children and Families, Counseling Practices in School. He is a member of an expert group at the Ministry of Education and Science, which develops the methodology for applying the competence-based approach in education.

When asked about the **motives to use the flipped-classroom in his courses** – whether he was driven by personal motivation or rather as a part of an institutional project or strategy, he explained that the motives for using the flipped classroom approach were personal. For him that was another opportunity to turn the educational environment into a learning educational environment.

"I think that flipping the classroom is an appropriate combination and solution - students watch and listen to lectures in advance and then use the study time to ask questions, organise and hold discussions, work in groups, research, collaborate."

In his opinion, this approach is suitable for teaching adults such as our students, as they can decide when to study and how to allocate their time. At the same time, we as teachers are given the opportunity to adapt our time to the individual needs of each student - focusing on basic theoretical statements for a particular group of learners and providing more additional challenging activities for others. This encourages and promotes the use of ICT, enriched with the support and guidance of a teacher. Personal contact is combined with sufficient autonomy, space and freedom for learners to design their own way of learning.

He considers the flipped classroom approach an intensive, effective and creative way of learning.

To the question about the **challenges that the teacher encounters in applying the flipped classroom**, Assoc. Prof. Buzov, PhD replied that if one wants to follow the innovations, the challenges are almost non-existent. It is only necessary to strictly follow one's own methodological model, combined with the technology of organizing pedagogical interactions in the context of the flipped classroom approach.

Assoc. Prof. Buzov, PhD definitely stated that technology is not an end in itself in this type of methodology but a tool that leads to an important end: **LEARNING**. The student plays an active role in



this learning process. He is both the protagonist of this scenario and the creator of new opportunities. This methodology enhances the autonomy of each individual learner who spends time at home to delve into new goals. And, in turn, this space is complemented by a class / lecture hall that invites cooperation and communication with others. The teacher already "accompanies" the learners / students in this experience.

The space in the "classroom" is complemented by a virtual environment that offers audiovisual resources – with their help the teacher shares quality content with the students. The video is one of the most used formats in this scenario. Flipping, therefore, refers to a procedure where technology supports the creation of the infrastructure needed to achieve this new context.

The answer of Assoc. Prof. Buzov, PhD regarding **the reactions of the students when applying the flipped classroom approach** is also interesting. Our interlocutor used the term ' **initial astonishment**' to describe these reactions : "*How will we learn on our own?*" Then comes the time to experience and empathize with this kind of self-learning: "*Will I succeed?*", "*How shall I handle the questions?*". According to Assoc. Prof. Buzov, PhD the students accept these new moments in the organization and management of the educational environment as a challenge to their willingness to learn independently and , on the other hand, important for their methodological competence as future teachers.

When asked if he would use the flipped classroom again and why (or why not), Assoc. Prof. Buzov responded with a smile. He explained that he is an ardent supporter of the idea of implementing innovations in education and, therefore, uses extensively the flipped classroom approach, as long as the curriculum allows its students to cope with "flipping".

The answer to the question whether he **would recommend for other scholars to use the flipped methods for teaching Social sciences** comes naturally as a continuation of our conversation about the flipped classroom approach.

Assoc. Prof. Buzov pointed out that this is a special kind of methodological point of view that teachers of the so-called social sciences should have, since the approach practically implements what has been proclaimed for years as good intentions for the development of education. The teacher leaves the role of a mere lecturer, and the students - the role of passive listeners. The teacher is the one who directs, corrects, builds up on what the learners learn, and they, in turn, learn to look for information, share it with others, discuss, persuade or accept other, different points of view. And what is more, it is not necessary to apply flipping in every lesson for the complete functionality of the approach.

When asked what he **considered the biggest impediment for a large-scale use of FC methods in higher education**, the interviewee replied that in his opinion, it is not necessary to apply the flipped classroom approach on a large scale since it has a certain significant role to play and its potential must be used there.



COLLECTING PERSONAL DATA:

- Institutional affiliation – please provide the name of your institution, faculty, department and your academic title and position:
Veliko Tarnovo University "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" - Pedagogical College in Pleven , Bulgaria ; Associate Professor, PhD.
- The course(s) taught :Methodology of Training in Design, Technology and Entrepreneurship; Social Work with Children and Families; Counseling Practices in School.
- Can you be contacted again (by mail) – if yes, please write your e-mail address:
emilbuzov@hotmail.com
- -Do you speak English at conversational level? Yes, I do.



Erasmus+ Programme 2014-2020
KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
KA203 - Strategic Partnerships for higher education
Project No. 2020-1-HU01-KA203-078844
Project Title: Developing Flipped Methods for Teaching (DFM)
02 Report: Initiatives of teaching social science with flipped classroom
strategy



Co-funded by
the European Union

CASE STUDY 2

INTERVIEW ON FLIPPED CLASSROOM TRENDS

BULGARIA

Prepared by:

Burgas Free University

Research Team:

Prof. Mariya Aleksieva, PhD

Prof. Tatyana Kotzeva, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Krasimira Mineva, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Veselina Zhecheva, PhD

Assist. Prof. Gergana Kirova



Summary

This case study is based on the interview conducted by the research team of Burgas Free University, Bulgaria in June 2021 with Professor D. Sc. Natalia Vitanova.

Professor D. Sc. Vitanova was one of the respondents who completed the survey on Flipped classroom trends. She accepted the invitation sent by the BFU research team to give an interview on the topic. The questions for the interview were sent to the interviewee in advance by e-mail and both parties agreed to conduct it online through the *Microsoft Teams* platform.

Prof. Natalia Vitanova holds the scientific degree "Doctor of Science". She is a lecturer at Shumen University "Episkop Konstantin Preslavski", Bulgaria. The university prepares pre-school (kindergarten) and primary school teachers, comprehensive and secondary school teachers, social pedagogues, specialists in the field of social work and similar professional fields. The main discipline that she teaches is Pedagogy. In addition, she leads academic courses in Social Pedagogy, Social Counseling for Children at Risk, Conflict Resolution, etc. She is the author of more than 150 publications in the field of the Pedagogical and Social Sciences.

When asked about the **motives to use the use the flipped classroom methods in her courses and whether she was driven by personal motivation or rather as a part of an institutional project or strategy**, she explained that it was not a part of an institutional project. The motivation was personal. *"The pedagogical realities today are very different. The age of industrialization is already in the past, today is the age of informatization. Compared to the last century, conditions have changed dramatically. In today's world, the amount of information is growing exponentially and as a result, knowledge is rapidly becoming obsolete. For successful personal and professional functioning in modern society, learners must learn to handle quickly the flow of diverse information, to react flexibly to significant changes and systematically improve their skills."* According to her, postmodern education faces many challenges. One of them is related to the diversification of the learning process so that it meets the growing needs of the students. Faced with these future realities, education must seek technologies to meet the needs of the generation studying at educational institutions at present. One possible technology is the flipped classroom. The "new" classroom will allow each student to study at their own pace, in accordance with their personal curriculum. "Strong" students will be able to move forward on their own, while "weak" students will receive more attention and support, thanks to the quick feedback within the programs and the time allocated specifically for them by the teacher.

When asked **what challenges she encountered when using the flipped classroom** Prof. D.Sc. Vitanova said that there are two main challenges. The first challenge is time - more time is spent on the preparation of materials/resources and the second challenge is related to the quality of electronic materials (they are not always of sufficient quality, quality materials sometimes require higher training in the field of IT).



Prof. Vitanova's answer regarding **the students' reactions** when applying the flipped classroom approach was that working in the conditions of technology delivers pleasure, a creative atmosphere, it charges students with optimism, activates students' thinking and imagination and creates a pleasant emotional environment.

When asked if she **would use the flipped classroom again and why (or why not)**, Prof. Vitanova was adamant: "*Yes, I will definitely use the flipped class again*". She pointed out the following reasons: in the flipped environment the student can learn at his own pace; flipping strengthens personal responsibility; it diversifies the learning process because it changes the role of the learner from a passive to an active participant in the learning process; the learner is not dependent, "pressed" by the time factor; the learners have the opportunity to watch videos several times without worries, at a time convenient for them. In the Pandemic situation, the flipped classroom is very appropriate because the student can get acquainted with the learning content that will be studied at home and during the online learning to interpret and discuss this learning content.

The answer to the question whether she **would recommend for other scholars to use the flipped methods for teaching Social sciences** is also positive and is in the context of the whole conversation related to the application of the approach. Prof. Vitanova likes it and recommends using the flipped classroom, at least because it will diversify the traditional learning process.

When asked what she **considered the biggest impediment for a large-scale use of the flipped-class methods in higher education**, the interviewee specified her answer in the following aspects:

- for students who do not have access to a computer (there are still some) outside the educational environment, there is a problem with preparation (watching educational videos, online texts, etc.);
- it is possible for learners to oppose flipping since it increases their personal responsibility, there is a risk in the process of independent learning - learners can significantly lag behind their fellow students;
- the flipped classroom leads to the excessive use of ICTs, which is unacceptable for some people (the flipped-classroom model, which relies mainly on instructional videos, especially if they are very long, is an argument for this statement);
- In the flipped classroom, which relies on instructional videos, as in the traditional classroom, students may not understand the material they are listening to or watching.
- the preparation and creation of quality videos and online texts takes more time and efforts from the teachers, additional funding might be needed for teacher training;
- The main problem in the introduction of the flipped-classroom approach is the significant increase in the workload of the teacher during the transition period and the need to master the tools needed to develop online content.
- (outside of university education, teachers who use this technology may have problems with their peers, especially if the average performance in the flipped classes is significantly improved).



COLLECTING PERSONAL DATA:

- Institutional affiliation – please provide the name of your institution, faculty, department and your academic title and position:
Shumen University "Episkop Konstantin Preslavski", Bulgaria;
Professor, Doctor of Science.
- The course(s) taught : Pedagogy; Social Pedagogy, Social Counseling for Children at Risk, Conflict Resolution.
- Can you be contacted again (by mail) – if yes, please write your e-mail address: Yes
n.vitanova@shu.bg
- Do you speak English at conversational level? insufficiently