

# Evaluating the Technology-Enhanced Flipped Classroom through the Students' Eye: A Case Study

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## Abstract

Emergency remote teaching (ERT) during the unprecedented global pandemic, COVID-19, identified the pressing need for innovative teaching methods that support and foster technology-enhanced active learning through the distance education paradigm. Distance education is not a new phenomenon, while the flipped classroom concept is also a well-researched method. However, there have been rather few studies about the flipped classroom (FC) approach in higher education with the support of technology. This study contributes by critically exploring how full-time distance students perceived the usefulness of the Technology-enhanced Flipped Classroom (TEFC) approach to support their graduate studies. A series of semi-structured interviews (n=7) collected the empirical data for this qualitative method of inquiry. Moreover, teaching materials were used for the data collection, while the interviews were preceded by a preliminary observational study in a TEFC in a STEM graduate-level course. Through thematic analysis, three major themes were identified that offered a broader insight into the students' perspectives concerning the benefits and challenges of the TEFC concept. The themes were sentimental involvement, technical FC design, and peer-communication. The primary finding revealed that the students perceived the discussion-based sessions in the TEFC to have enabled them to foster their knowledge transfer. It was also perceived as particularly positive in its ability to contribute to and influence the discussion flow. These validated earlier claims concerning a positive perception of the TEFC concept in the formal learning process. This research discovered that TEFC is a viable tool to support learning in a pandemic situation by empowering students and facilitating active learning through information and communication technologies (ICT).

**Keywords:** Technology-enhanced Learning (TeL), Connectivism, Active Learning, Flipped Learning