

THE EFFECTS OF THE MOOC-BASED FLIPPED CLASSROOM WITH COLLABORATIVE WRITING ON CHINESE

EFL LEARNERS' ARGUMENTATIVE
WRITING ABILITIES

BY LUO YUANZHENG

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There is no end to learning, and the road to the future is bright.

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Abstract

The study was designed with two primary objectives:1)to examine the effects of an instructional approach integrating MOOC-based flipped classroom and collaborative writing on the argumentative writing abilities of university students, and 2)to explore the students' opinions toward this instructional method. The participants in the study comprised 30 English majors from a university in China, and the research spanned a period of eight weeks. The research instruments employed in this study included pre-and post-tests, instructional materials and lesson plans, as well as a questionnaire. The results from the pre-test (M=5.367;SD=0.49) and post-test (M=6.74; SD=1.11)indicated that the instructional approach involving MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing led to a significant improvement in students' argumentative writing (t=-9.687, p>0.05). Students expressed positive opinions about the instruction, as reflected in the close-ended section of the questionnaire (M=4.17,SD=1.23). Notably, 70% of the students raised individual concerns in the open-ended questionnaire, addressing issues such as essay initiation, organization, and language use. These findings underscore the importance of integrating innovative teaching methods and establishing a supportive online environment for enhancing students' learning of argumentative writing, suggesting valuable insights for writing instructors.

(Total 112 pages)

Key Words: The MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing Instruction, Argumentative Writing Ability, Chinese EFL Learners

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
ACKNOWLE	CDGEMENTS	i
ABSTRACTS	1	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS LIST OF TABLES		iii
		vi
LIST OF FIG	URES	vii
CHAPTER 1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Background of the Study	1
	1.2 Statement of the Problem	2
	1.3 Significance of the Study	4
	1.4 Scope of the Study	5
	1.5 Objectives of the Study	7
	1.6 Research Questions	7
	1.7 Definition of Terms	7
CHAPTER 2	LITERATURE REVIEW	11
	2.1 Flipped Classroom (FC)	11
	2.2 MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom	14
	2.3 English Writing Instruction	17
	2.4 Writing Tasks	20
	2.5 Writing Assessment	23
	2.6 Collaborative Writing (CW)	26
	2.7 Argumentative Writing	29
	2.8 Relevant Studies	33
	2.9 Chapter Summary	35

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)

		Page
CHAPTER 3	METHDOLOGY	37
	3.1 Research Design	37
	3.2 Population and Participants	38
	3.3 Instruments	38
	3.4 Validity and Reliability of Instruments	45
	3.5 Data Collection Procedure	48
	3.6 Data Analysis	49
CHAPTER 4	FINDINGS	51
	4.1 Research Question 1	52
	4.2 Research Question 2	53
CHAPTER 5	DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION	59
	5.1 Summary of the study	59
	5.2 Summary of the findings	60
	5.3 Discussion	60
	5.4 Conclusion 5.5 Limitations 5.6 Pedagogical Implications	68
	5.5 Limitations	68
	5.6 Pedagogical Implications	69
	5.7 Suggestions for Future Research	70
REFERENCE	CS .	71
APPENDICES	S	86

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)

		Page
Appendix A	Certificate of Approval by Ethics Review Board of	87
	Rangsit University	
Appendix B	Pre-Test	89
Appendix C	Post-Test	91
Appendix D	Collaborative Writing Tasks	93
Appendix E	Scoring Rubric for EFL Argumentative Writing	95
Appendix F	The MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative	97
	writing instruction (MFCCWI) questionnaire	
Appendix G	Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Form for Writing	99
	Tests	
Appendix H	Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Form for Lesson	101
	Plan	
Appendix I	Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Form for	104
	Questionnaire	
	W. W.	
BIOGRAPHY	2	112
	33°	
	Par Rangsit United	
	*VE/SVAR Rangs	

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table		
3.1	The MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing	43
3.2	Summary of Data Analysis	50
4.1	Comparing Means within Group Before and After Treatment	52
4.2	Students' opinions towards the argumentative instruction	54
	combining MOOC-based flipped classroom and collaborative	
	writing	
4.3	Students' opinions regarding their mastery of the techniques to	55
	write argumentative essays	
4.4	Students' opinions regarding their unsolved difficulties in writing	56
	argumentative essays	
4.5	Students' opinions regarding whether the instruction helps improve	57
	their writing abilities	
4.6	Students' opinions regarding obstacles to follow the instruction	57
	'गधरेशति Rany'	

LIST OF FIGURES

		Page
Figure		
1.1	Conceptual framework of the MOOC-based flipped classroom	10
	model with collaborative argumentative writing employed in this	
	research.	
3.1	Essay writing framework	43
5.1	Pre-test (Student 24, Score=6.0)	61
5.2	Post-test (Student 24, Score=9.0)	61
5.3	Pre-test (Student 17, Score=6)	63
5.4	Post-test (Student 17, Score=6.5)	63
5.5	Pre-test (Student 11, Score=5.5)	65
5.6	Post-test (Student 11, Score=6.0)	65
	3º Mail	
	ราวกะาลัยรังสิต Rangsit Uritie	
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the 21st century, education has become a subject of intense interest among academics. Numerous studies are conducted each year in an effort to improve education and pedagogy. Particularly as a result of technological advancements, pedagogies must adapt to satisfy the changing requirements of students and varying classroom expectations. Likewise, the purposes and objectives of contemporary teaching practice have evolved in comparison to those of the past. Participating in interactive, real-world learning situations, as opposed to remaining passive observers, allows students to contribute more to their education today. In order to continue addressing the requirements of students with various learning styles, instructors should consider updating their instructional strategies in order to provide students with a supportive and inventive learning environment.

Siemens (2004) proposed connectivism as a theory of learning facilitated by technological and social networks. He argued that learning should be interconnected within networks to involve various target groups and social partners. Connectivism is considered a descendant of behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism. Siemens (2004) criticized traditional approaches to learning for their limited focus on individuals, failure to address learning within technology and organizations, and lack of contribution to value judgments in knowledge-rich environments.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) embody connectivist principles by enabling individuals to become active learners through collaborative relationships and shared resources. MOOCs offer accessibility, affordability, openness, and convenience, fostering global participation and interaction (Cormier, 2008). Similarly,

the Flipped Classroom (FC) model combines behavioristic and constructivist learning theories by incorporating online network learning, often through a MOOC, into face-to-face classroom instruction. This integration promotes social integration and interpersonal communication (Network, 2014).

The MOOC-based FC model in the current study aligns with connectivism, extending learning beyond the classroom through online communities, social networks, and interactions with peers and instructors. It enriches traditional classes, enhances learner interaction, and fosters active learning consistent with connectivist principles.

Writing is an integral component of many students' professional and social pursuits. It enables students to express themselves, complete important assignments, cultivate essential critical thinking skills, and improve their cognitive functioning (Fan & Chen, 2021). In light of this, argumentative writing is crucial for students, especially second/foreign language (L2) learners. It enables and requires them to articulate their own ideas in academically appropriate patterns and to provide convincing evidence to persuade readers of their positions (Awada & Diab, 2021). Mastering the argumentative essay is crucial to achieving writing success. However, many L2 learners in non-native contexts struggle with the use of complex syntactic structures and argumentation when crafting argumentative essays (Xu & Ding, 2014).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In typical classroom English instruction, students are often found to be distracted by their cell phones, gossiping with other students, or even daydreaming rather than concentrate on the lecture (Zhang, 2020). However, online education alone is not the answer to the aforementioned issue. Due to the relative exclusivity of online learning, students are prone to feel isolated (Kaufmann & Vallade, 2020). In addition, online education has other disadvantages, such as a lack of academic atmosphere and a strong dependence on technology and surroundings.

In the digital era, however, instructors are not the sole source of information, and their responsibilities have shifted from knowledge distributors to learning facilitators who are actively engaged in the teaching and learning process by giving learners the required help (Kopp, Rohlfing, Stanford, & Kendall, 2004).

On the other hand, in terms of teaching method, traditional classroom teaching is considered to have drawbacks such as dogmatization, unification, stasis, isolation, and disconnection from students' actual lives (Gong & Zhou, 2022). Moreover, In the traditional classroom, a lower level of information, such as remembering and comprehending, comes first. In contrast, learners are often given assignments requiring a greater degree of learning outside of the classroom (Nazara, 2019). To address the above issues, it may be advantageous to use a teaching strategy that features combination of online and offline components as well as active engagement of students.

In spite of the role in which writing has played in education, Chinese students are still struggling to become proficient writers despite their best efforts and extensive writing practice (Qin, 2009). Nunan (1999) states that even native speakers may have difficulty mastering writing due to issues relating to cohesion and structure. Moreover, Alsamadani (2010) states that writing as a difficult process involves a variety of skills, such as composing supporting details, revising, and editing. The author should be aware of several elements that contribute to a successful piece of writing, including structure, purpose, content, audience, vocabulary, mechanism, punctuation, grammar, and paragraphing, according to Rass (2001).

It is widely agreed that student-centered learning theories such as active learning and collaborative learning can be effectively incorporated into flipped classrooms (Lin & Hwang, 2019). Student-centered learning, according to Bishop and Verleger (2013), incorporates several learning theories, including active learning, peer-assisted learning, and collaborative learning. These ideas provide fragments of evidence that the reversed classroom animates the teaching and learning process by

emphasizing the students' independent and collaborative learning. As a result, it might be beneficial for instructors to incorporate peer interaction in their teaching practices.

However, despite the extensive studies on flipped classroom in the EFL writing context (Abedi, Keshmirshekan,& Namaziandost 2019; Afrilyasanti, Cahyono, & Astuti 2016; Fathi & Rahimi, 2022), there is little empirical research on peer interaction in MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing contexts.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The theoretical and pedagogical contributions made by this research—which engage all stakeholders—are noteworthy.

The research, which aims to enhance the writing abilities of Chinese college students, first addresses a theoretical vacuum in educational theory by presenting an instructional model that blends collaborative writing and a MOOC-based flipped classroom. Although collaborative writing and the flipped classroom have been the subject of growing learning theories, and the relationships between learning outcomes and each of these two approaches have been thoroughly investigated in a variety of contexts, little research has been done on the combined effects of the two approaches. However, because of how closely related the two theories are, this is particularly significant. On the one hand, each theory has flaws of its own, but when combined, they may strengthen one another. On the other hand, as human behavior is a complex process influenced by several circumstances, theories that attempt to explain such actions should not be utilized in isolation but rather in conjunction with one another. As a result, such a proposal would be a novel effort in the field of educational research, and it is meant to open up fresh research directions for the future investigation of how collaborative writing and flipped classrooms affect students' writing abilities in various educational, geographic, and cultural contexts.

Second, the findings of this study could have pedagogical implications for the efficient use of collaborative writing as a method of teaching in MOOC-based flipped classrooms. It could not only help teachers appreciate the worth of the two approaches, but it might also provide them useful pointers for developing their teaching skills. The research may also be helpful to institutional decision-makers since it may provide light on the usage of collaborative writing and MOOC-based flipped classrooms to support students' information acquisition while also enhancing their writing abilities in EFL contexts. The results of this study may provide normative guidelines for future policy at many academic institutions that have largely ignored the effectiveness of the two tactics.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted at a university in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China. English majoring students are placed in different classes in accordance with their scores in the English test in Gaokao (College entrance exam in China). Each week of the total 6 weeks plus two weeks for pre-and post-test, a class of around 30 students met onsite for one session of English Academic Writing with each session lasting 90 minutes. In addition, students were required to independently watch and learn from a MOOC course on argumentative writing, with each session lasting from 45 minutes to 90 minutes.

1.4.1 Research Design

The present study adopted a single group pre-test and post-test research design, a type of experimental design used in research studies to evaluate the effectiveness or impact of an intervention or treatment on a single group of participants. This design involved measuring a dependent variable both before and after the intervention to determine whether any changes occurred.

1.4.2 Population

The population of the study were 300 second-year English majors at a university located at the northeastern part of China.

To firmly control independent variables, the participants in the study all come from one English course with similar Gaokao scores. To be more specific, 30 students were possessively selected as participants.

1.4.3 Variables

There were two kinds of variables in the study: dependent variable and independent variable. The dependent variable is participants' writing abilities and the independent variable is the treatment, i.e., the MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing instruction.

1.4.4 Instructional Content

The instructional content of the course was the principles, techniques, and practices about argumentative English writing. The current study employed the MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing instruction. For flipped classroom, students were required to learn by themselves a MOOC course provided by Chinese University MOOC platform prior to on-site classes. When the participants met offline, the instructor would first give lectures concerning the MOOC lesson which focus on the principles and the illustrations of model samples of argumentative writing in English. In face-to-face meeting in class, the participants were divided into groups and asked to collaboratively practice writing on the given topic. During the 8-week experiment, the participants were asked to write on two topics in total (See more details in chapter 3).

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- 1.5.1 To investigate the effect of the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing on Chinese EFL undergraduate learners' writing abilities.
- 1.5.2 To explore students' opinions toward using the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing instruction to improve their writing abilities.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Question 1: What are the effects of implementing the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing on Chinese EFL undergraduate learners' writing abilities?

Research Question 2: What are the students' opinions toward using the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing instruction to improve their writing abilities?

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing Instruction (MFCCWI)

MOOC-based flipped classroom: Under the umbrella term flipped classroom, MOOC-based flipped classroom refers to a teaching method that requires students to learn from MOOC courses before class and thus allow them to have more discussion

and less lecture in the classroom.

Collaborative writing: A process of producing a written work where all team members contributed to the content and the decisions about how the group will function.

The MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing Instruction (MFCCWI), as the name suggests, is a teaching approach where students are required to learn from a MOOC course before class and then write on certain topics collaboratively in class. The MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing Instruction in this study will be offered via the Chinese University MOOC platform (https://www.icourse163.org/) and face-to-face meeting in class sessions.

The instruction would equip students with the knowledge from constructing an argument to compose a complete argumentative essay without fallacies.

Argumentative Writing ability

Argumentative writing is a form of academic writing that requires students to investigate a topic by acquiring, generating, and evaluating evidence, and then establish a concise position on the topic. The argumentative writing ability in this study was measured by a scoring rubric developed by McDonough et al. (2018).

Opinions toward using the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing instruction

It refer to the attitudes of Chinese EFL learners about the writing instruction, which were elicited by a questionnaire. In this study, the questionnaire adapted from the questionnaire by Cañabate, Nogué, Serra, & Colomer (2019) and translated into Chinese to avoid possible misunderstanding will be used to measure the opinions of the students after they have studied the course (Appendix D).

Chinese EFL Learners

Chinese EFL Learners refer to individuals who are native speakers of Chinese and are learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). These learners typically reside in China or other Chinese-speaking regions and are engaged in the process of acquiring English language skills for various purposes, such as academic, professional, or personal development. Chinese EFL Learners face specific challenges related to language transfer, cultural differences, and the distinct features of English compared to their native language. They may receive English instruction in formal educational settings, such as schools or language institutes, or pursue self-directed learning through various resources and methods. The EFL students who participate in this research are second year undergraduate EFL Chinese English major students at a university located in the northeastern part of China who enroll in the academic writing course English Writing III.

The current research has been developed based on the following conceptual framework.

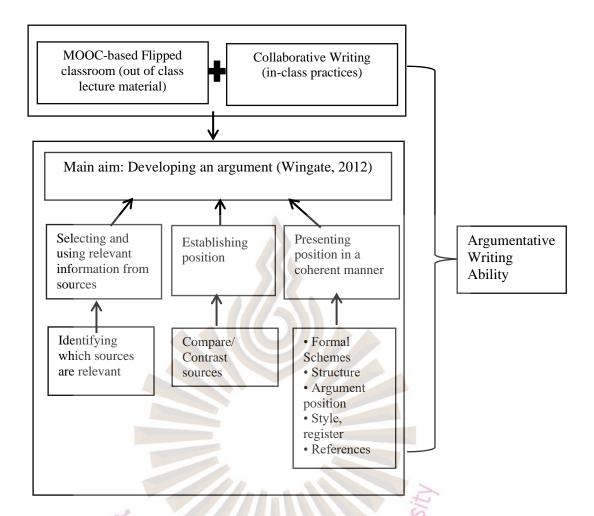


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework of the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing employed in this research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

For this part, eight topics closely related to the current study are reviewed, i.e., Flipped Classroom, MOOC-based Flipped Classroom, Collaborative Writing, English Writing Instruction, Writing Tasks, Writing Performance, Writing Assessment, and Relevant Studies.

2.1 FLIPPED CLASSROOM (FC)

The concept of the "flipped classroom" was initially described by Baker in 1997 (Talbert, 2017) and later referred to as "classroom flip" (Baker, 2000). It was further coined as "the inverted classroom" by Lage, Platt, & Tregli, (2000), providing a formal framework for flipped learning (Talbert, 2017). The flipped classroom (FC) is a student-centered approach that aims to enhance in-class learning quality, promote active learning, and foster student engagement and interaction with teachers, peers, and learning materials (Nolan, Brady, Rienties, & Héliot, 2021; Strelan, Osborn, & Palmer, 2020). It also has the potential to develop students' critical thinking skills and prepare them for lifelong learning in their future careers (O'Flaherty, Phillips, Karanicolas, Snelling, & Winning, 2015).

The FC model requires students' active participation in learning activities before and during class, often facilitated by the use of information technology (Aprianto & Purwati, 2020; He, Zhang, Ren, & Sun, 2016). It offers scalability and adaptability, allowing for the flipping of specific units, parts, or the entire course to meet students' learning needs. Typically, students access multimedia lectures or self-paced learning materials before class, while the in-class time is devoted to student-centered activities and deeper understanding of the subject matter (O'Flaherty & Phillips, 2015).

In the FC, students are encouraged to engage actively, inquire, and take ownership of their learning. They have the opportunity to regulate their own learning and focus on higher-order cognitive tasks, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, during class time with the support of teachers and peers (Brame, 2013; He et al., 2016). The engagement of students is crucial in the FC, and it can be fostered by establishing a personable learning environment, setting high expectations, and promoting higher-order thinking (Bryson & Hand, 2007).

Various methods can be used for pre-class preparation in the FC, including pre-recorded lectures, annotated notes, and interactive videos (O'Flaherty & Phillips, 2015). These resources have shown to improve learning outcomes, especially for lower-order cognitive skills, enhance class preparation, increase interactivity, and improve academic performance (Prunuske, Batzli, Howell, & Miller, 2012).

To successfully implement the FC, instructors need to redesign their curriculum, integrate pre-class activities with active learning strategies, and establish clear connections between pre-class and in-class sessions (Tucker, 2012). While there is no single model for the FC, key elements include providing content in advance, assessing students' understanding, and promoting higher-order learning during face-to-face sessions.

Recent research has demonstrated the positive impact of using flipped classrooms in the English Language Teaching (ELT) context across various language skills and aspects. These include English grammar (Bezzazi, 2019; Zakaria & Yunus, 2020), English writing skills (Aydemir Altaş & Mede, 2021; Fathi & Rahimi, 2020), English speaking (Abdullah, Hussin, & Ismail, 2019) and vocabulary (Kirmizi & Kömeç, 2019), among others. Moreover, FC has been found to enhance students' learning motivation and engagement (Afzali & Izadpanah, 2021).

Aydemir Altaş and Mede (2021) conducted a study and found that EFL preservice teachers experienced a notable improvement in various aspects of writing, such as the introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion, coherence and cohesion, and

vocabulary, except for writing mechanics. Similarly, Fathi and Rahimi (2020) reported a significant enhancement in students' writing performance and fluency as a result of the FC approach. The pre-class learning component provided students with essential language input, while the in-class activities facilitated output-based writing practices. Moreover, FC facilitated feedback and interaction with peers and teachers, contributing to the overall improvement in writing skills.

Despite the advantages of using the FC approach in ELT, there are challenges that need to be addressed. Arslan's (2020) systematic review on the application of FC in ELT revealed that ESL and EFL learners encountered various barriers to learning. These included inadequate internet access, overwhelming tasks, and the need for time to adapt to the new learning method. English instructors also faced challenges in terms of preparing instructional materials, which added to their workload. Similarly, Turan and Akdag-Cimen's (2020) systematic review on the use of FC in ELT highlighted additional challenges faced by both teachers and students. These included increased workload, technological issues, and writing anxiety among students. Husnawadi (2021) found that students experienced difficulties in adjusting to online learning platforms, had limited internet access, faced issues related to cheating, and dealt with increased workload. Instructors also required time to familiarize themselves with the learning platform to effectively deliver instruction.

The majority of the aforementioned studies were empirical in nature, focusing on examining the impact of the FC on language skills among English learners. The review of these studies indicates that FC has the potential to substantially improve students' mastery of the English language, as well as their engagement and motivation, by providing flexible and effective learning opportunities. However, there is a dearth of research documenting the implementation of FC within the context of collaborative writing approach. Hence, the purpose of this study was to address this research gap and contribute to the existing literature on this topic.

2.2 MOOC-BASED FLIPPED CLASSROOM

Considering the notion of blended learning, which involves the integration of face-to-face instruction with online learning practices, researchers and educators worldwide have begun to offer recommendations for instructors on how to incorporate Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) content into traditional classroom teaching. This approach has gained attention as a new model for structuring educational programs, particularly in higher education institutions (Jong, 2020). MOOCs embody the principles of connectivism theory and promote active learning by facilitating relationships and networks among individuals through the effective utilization of shared resources, open files, and connected users (Cormier, 2008). The accessibility, affordability, openness, and convenience of MOOCs enable messages to circulate globally and elicit responses and comments from numerous participants across borders (Yaşar, 2020).

Likewise, the Flipped Classroom (FC) model aligns with connectivist principles as it combines behavioristic (mostly teacher-centered) and constructivist (mostly student-centered) learning theories. FC involves pre-prepared out-of-class lectures and in-class sessions where direct instruction shifts from the group learning space to the individual learning space. This transformation results in a dynamic and interactive learning environment where educators guide students in the application of concepts and creative engagement with the subject matter.

By combining the FC model, which emphasizes learner-centered environments and active learning processes, with digitally-enhanced MOOCs, the MOOC-based FC model integrates key aspects of online and face-to-face learning (Jitpaisarnwattana, Reinders, & Darasawang, 2019). This model is rooted in the principles of connectivism, as it recognizes that in the digital age, learning primarily occurs through learners connecting with diverse sources of knowledge on the internet and engaging in interactions within communities or social networks (Yin, 2016).

The MOOC integration in traditional courses has emerged as an alternative option within the realm of blended learning programs, attracting attention in recent scientific discussions and research. Several studies have investigated different facets of integrating MOOCs into flipped classroom courses to assess the advantages and challenges associated with this instructional approach. The following examples highlight some of the studies conducted in this area.

Yousef, Chatti, Schroeder, & Wosnitza (2015) identified various limitations of MOOCs, including a teacher-centered and centralized learning model, inadequate assessment and feedback mechanisms, limited interactivity between learners and video content, the diverse backgrounds of MOOC participants, and the absence of face-to-face interaction. However, their research study focused on designing, implementing, and evaluating a MOOC-integrated flipped classroom course on "Teaching Methodologies" at Fayoum University in Egypt. The findings of their study indicated a widespread agreement among participants that integrating MOOCs into traditionally taught courses can effectively address the aforementioned limitations of MOOCs.

Bruff, Fisher, McEwen, & Smith (2013) conducted an experiment in which they blended a Coursera Machine Learning MOOC from Stanford University into a graduate-level machine learning course. Students responded positively to the blended approach, appreciating the flexibility and accessibility of the MOOC, particularly through its concise video format that facilitated self-paced learning. While students valued the instructional design offered by the MOOC and rated the blended approach higher in satisfaction compared to the traditional course, they acknowledged the need for motivation and determination to stay focused and achieve their learning goals.

Another study by Ghadiri, Qayoumi, Junn, Hsu, & Sujitparapitaya (2013) piloted the concept of blending a MOOC at San José State University (SJSU) using the edX platform, specifically the "Circuits and Electronics" course. The results indicated a high success rate, with 90% of participants passing the final exam, compared to 55% in the previous year's traditional course. This outcome demonstrated a significant level of academic achievement. However, there were still some challenges to address, including

limited interaction between learners and the video content, as well as inadequate integration between the MOOC platform and the campus Learning Management System (LMS).

A study conducted by Song, M., Song, Y., & Wei (2015) implemented a MOOC-based flipped classroom model for English teaching in a college setting in China. The findings of the study indicated that the integration of a flipped classroom with a MOOC resulted in improvements in students' problem-solving skills, innovative thinking skills, independent study abilities, and team cooperation. However, the study also highlighted the importance of implementing an effective and rigorous monitoring method by instructors to ensure the success of the course.

Xinying (2017) conducted a research study at Shenzhen University, involving 800 students enrolled in a Level-A college English Reading and Writing course. The study aimed to explore the participants' perceptions of a MOOC-embedded FC teaching model through analysis of survey results after a one-year experiment. The findings of the study presented compelling evidence supporting the use of the flipped model. Participants expressed high appreciation for the MOOC-embedded flipped approach and believed that they were making substantial progress in enhancing their overall English proficiency.

The current study employs a MOOC-based FC instructional model, which integrates online and face-to-face learning approaches. This instructional model aligns with the principles of connectivist theory, as it extends learning and content delivery beyond the confines of the physical classroom. It encompasses various modes of learning, including interconnected online communities on the MOOC platform, social networks on the internet, traditional face-to-face classroom instruction, and online/offline interaction with peers and instructors. By leveraging online learning resources and fostering an active online community, the MOOC-based FC approach effectively combines in-class, online, and hybrid delivery formats. It also enhances learner interaction and cooperation, enabling students to become active participants in their learning process, in accordance with connectivist principles. Consequently, the

integration of high-quality online content and interactive e-learning modules as supplements to or replacements for certain in-class components has emerged as a crucial consideration.

2.3 ENGLISH WRITING INSTRUCTION

Traditionally, the focus on writing has been oriented towards treating it as a finished product, emphasizing the accurate use of vocabulary, syntax, and cohesive devices (Lee & Wong, 2014). This product-oriented teaching approach is rooted in behaviorism, viewing writing primarily as a manifestation of linguistic knowledge and positing that writing development is predominantly a result of imitating texts provided by the teacher (Badger & White, 2000). According to this instructional method, the teaching of writing involves four stages: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing. In the familiarization stage, teachers introduce students to specific features of a particular text. Subsequently, students are guided through writing exercises with increasing autonomy until they are deemed ready for independent writing. The ultimate goal is for students to produce essays in one single draft (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland & Hyland, 2019).

The emergence of process theory in L2 writing has led to the development of a process-oriented approach, wherein students are actively involved in a recursive process that includes brainstorming, mind-mapping, drafting and redrafting, editing, and finally, publishing their essays (Sasaki, 2000). In this approach, the role of teachers shifts from being mere input-providers to facilitators of the writing process. Moreover, influenced by Vygotskian theories, peers also play a crucial role in providing feedback that supports and enhances student writing (Yu, Jiang, & Zhou, 2020).

From the late 1980s onwards, there has been a notable shift towards explicit instruction of genre in L2 writing. Hyland (2007, p.149) defines genre as "abstract, socially recognized ways of using language". Grounded in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (1985), genre-based writing instruction centers on teaching students the conventions specific to particular text types, aiming to enhance their

understanding of the purpose, audience, and organizational aspects of writing (Chen & Su, 2012). A genre-based approach to teaching and learning typically encompasses five main stages: first, setting the context, which involves exploring the purpose and setting of a given genre; second, modeling, where key features of a sample genre text are analyzed; third, joint construction, which entails teacher and peer scaffolding; fourth, independent construction, wherein students engage in writing independently; and finally, comparing, where genres are compared to identify their social purposes (Hyland, 2007).

In recent decades, there has been a notable increase in scholarly interest concerning the comparison of the effectiveness and weaknesses of different approaches, such as product-oriented, process-oriented, and genre-oriented, in L2 writing instruction (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2007; Lee & Wong, 2014). Various studies on L2 writing (e.g., Ferris & Hedgcock, 2023; Hyland, K., & Hyland, F., 2019) suggest that L2 writing instruction should integrate textual/linguistic, cognitive, and social dimensions, and avoid oversimplifying the teaching process into rigid categories of "product" or "process" (Wette, 2014). Consequently, researchers have advocated for a "process genre" approach that combines principles from product-oriented, processoriented, and genre-oriented pedagogies (Badger & White, 2000). A case study by Wette (2014) focusing on seven experienced writing instructors in New Zealand found that L2 writing teachers did not strictly adhere to a single approach but rather drew from a mix of process-oriented and product-oriented principles based on the specific needs of their students. This finding indicates that distinctions between product/genre-oriented and process-oriented approaches may not be straightforward in practice and might not be entirely separate from each other. Despite the promotion of process/genre-oriented writing for many years, research in various EFL contexts, like Hong Kong and Mainland China, reveals that writing is predominantly approached as a product. Although these approaches have been advocated for, they have not been widely adopted by the majority of teachers (Lee & Wong, 2014; Shi, Baker, & Chen, 2019). However, these conclusions mainly stem from the perspectives of teachers or researchers, with little consideration of students' perceptions. Thus, it remains unclear how different forms of L2 writing instructional approaches have been combined in students' actual learning experiences.

There is still a lack of adequate research in the area of teachers' actual instructional practices for L2 writing, indicating that this aspect remains somewhat overlooked in the literature (Wette, 2014).

Prior studies on L2 writing instruction have predominantly utilized variable-based approaches, focusing on investigating the connections between instructional approaches and students' English achievement at a group level (Han & Hiver, 2018). However, such variable-based approaches fail to consider the unobserved diversity in students' experiences with instructional approaches (Chen, Nassaji, & Liu, 2016). Notably, due to the interrelated nature of various writing instructional approaches, they may be configured in distinct and meaningful patterns within writing classrooms, leading to unique implications for students' writing development that cannot be fully captured by any single instructional approach.

In terms of teaching medium, there are basically three means involved in teaching writing, namely offline, online, and hybrid / blended. Before the coronavirus pandemic, the conventional brick and mortar schools predominantly conducted classes through entirely face-to-face instruction. This teaching approach offers numerous advantages, as it enables direct, real-time interaction between faculty and students, as well as among students themselves, fostering innovative discussions and inquiries. Moreover, students have the opportunity to seek immediate clarifications or responses to their questions within the physical classroom setting (Paul & Jefferson, 2019). For those students who value in-person class discussions, organic connections with faculty, and the overall experience of face-to-face instruction, transitioning to online learning may be challenging (Rovai & Jordan, 2004). Having to shift to computer-based work can be less appealing for these individuals. Extensive evidence indicates that in-person learning motivates students, fosters a sense of community, and provides crucial encouragement. Additionally, it allows instructors to observe nonverbal cues and make necessary adjustments in content delivery and teaching methods (Kemp & Grieve, 2014; Paul & Jefferson, 2019).

Despite the numerous advantages associated with onsite classes, it is essential to acknowledge the swift transition that educational institutions, including universities and K-12 schools, underwent to adopt online learning during the COVID-19 crisis (Singh, Matthees, & Odetund, 2021; Singh & Matthees, 2021). Online learning has been widely recognized for its flexibility, allowing students to work at their own pace and schedule, fostering an engaging learning experience, promoting self-directed learning, proving cost-effective, and facilitating in-depth discussions (Kemp & Grieve, 2014; Singh & Matthees, 2021). Additionally, efforts have been made to incorporate flipped classroom approaches, which involve active learning for students and a shift in the role of instructors to that of facilitators providing extra support and guidance (Kemp & Grieve, 2014; Singh & Matthees, 2021).

An emerging form of teaching writing, hybrid / blended instruction offers students the opportunity to engage in both face-to-face and online learning, combining scheduled class sessions with self-paced coursework (Singh, 2017). This instructional approach has the potential to become the new norm, enabling instructors to redesign and adapt content, particularly in disciplines where providing engaging learning experiences in an online format has been challenging (Rodriguez, 2020). However, the implementation of such changes inevitably raises questions. There is a clear necessity for conducting studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of hybrid instruction and provide guidance to instructors on designing their classes to make this approach a viable option in the current context and as we transition to teaching in a post-vaccine and post-pandemic world.

2.4 WRITING TASKS

Traditionally, there are 4 kinds of writing tasks, i.e., expository, descriptive, narrative, and persuasive essays, each serving a specific purpose and employing unique techniques to convey information or elicit specific responses from the audience. The expository essay is a form of academic writing that aims to inform, clarify, and explain a specific topic or concept to the reader. It presents a balanced and objective analysis of the subject matter, drawing on credible evidence, data, and examples to support its

claims. The primary purpose of an expository essay is to enhance the reader's understanding of a complex topic by breaking it down into manageable and coherent segments. This essay type does not involve personal opinions or emotions; instead, it focuses on providing a comprehensive and unbiased exploration of the subject matter. Expository essays commonly utilize explanatory structures such as cause and effect, compare and contrast, definition, and process analysis to elucidate the chosen topic.

The descriptive essay is a form of writing that employs vivid and sensory language to create a detailed and evocative portrayal of a person, place, object, or experience. This genre aims to immerse the reader in a rich sensory experience, enabling them to visualize and empathize with the depicted scenario. Descriptive essays rely on powerful imagery, figurative language, and sensory details to evoke emotional responses and leave a lasting impression on the reader. By skillfully utilizing precise and vivid language, the writer can effectively convey their observations and impressions, allowing the reader to forge a personal connection with the subject matter.

The narrative essay is a storytelling genre in which the writer recounts a personal experience, anecdote, or event using a chronological sequence of events. The primary objective of the narrative essay is to captivate the reader's attention and immerse them in the storyteller's world. Through a well-structured plot, engaging characters, and vivid descriptions, the narrative essay aims to evoke emotions and convey a moral or lesson learned from the experience. Unlike other essay genres, the narrative essay allows the writer to inject their personality and emotions into the storytelling, creating a compelling and authentic narrative that resonates with the reader.

The persuasive essay is a genre of writing that seeks to convince the reader to adopt a specific viewpoint or take a particular course of action. It presents well-reasoned arguments and evidence to support the writer's position, aiming to sway the reader's opinion or inspire them to act in alignment with the author's stance. Persuasive essays employ rhetorical techniques such as ethos, pathos, and logos to appeal to the reader's sense of ethics, emotions, and logical reasoning. Additionally, the persuasive essay anticipates and addresses potential counterarguments to strengthen its persuasive power.

The ultimate goal of a persuasive essay is to stimulate critical thinking and compel the reader to align with the writer's perspective.

Another way to distinguish between different writing tasks is based on whether the tasks require any integration of information from a source text. If the task stands alone, it is called an independent writing task. On the other hand, Integrated writing tasks, which involve integrating information from print and/or audio source texts, have become increasingly prevalent in L2 writing contexts. Cumming et al. (2005) conducted a study and discovered significant differences between texts written for integrated tasks and those written for independent tasks in terms of absolute syntactic complexity measures, such as the number of words per T-unit and the number of clauses per T-unit. Specifically, the integrated essays exhibited a broader vocabulary range and longer clauses compared to the independent essays (Cumming et al., 2005). These differences are likely attributed to the increased attention demanded by integrated tasks from L2 learners (Plakans, 2010).

Plakans (2008) further investigated integrated tasks and found that they involve a more interactive writing process, while independent writing tasks entail less online planning but more initial planning. Additionally, Plakans (2009) demonstrated that in integrated writing, L2 writers engage in discourse synthesis processes, which entail selecting content from source texts, organizing the content, and connecting related ideas. The use of such discourse synthesis strategies may aid L2 writers in enhancing the quality of their writing and reducing the reliance on directly copying phrases from source texts (Yang & Plakans, 2012).

Nevertheless, Plakans' (2009) study also identified challenges faced by L2 writers in terms of writing style and vocabulary during the discourse synthesis processes. Gebril and Plakans (2009) further argued that lower-level writers with limited L2 proficiency in fluency and grammatical accuracy might be particularly affected in their use of source texts in integrated writing. Conversely, higher level writers are likely to exhibit greater proficiency in integrated writing tasks due to their enhanced comprehension of source materials (Gebril & Plakans, 2009).

2.5 WRITING ASSESSMENT

Language assessment can be classified based on its purposes, intention, interpretation, and comparisons between traditional and alternative assessment methods.

For instance, assessments can serve formative and summative purposes. Formative assessment is designed to provide learners and instructors with insights into present performance to enhance future learning (Andrade & Cizek, 2010). Brown and Abeywickrama (2004) stresses the significance of immediate and appropriate feedback in this context, as it fosters ongoing language development for learners. On the other hand, summative assessment is fundamentally different from formative assessment as it aims to measure and summarize a student's achievement at the end of a course or instructional unit (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004).

Regarding intention, assessment can be either spontaneous or planned. Spontaneous occurrences are known as informal assessments, where a teacher embeds assessment in classroom tasks, such as providing marginal comments on papers or essay drafts, or offering suggestions for improvement without directly affecting final grades (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004). Conversely, formal assessment is systematic and intentional, with the goal of appraising student achievement, typically accompanied by numerical scores.

The interpretation of assessment results may be norm-referenced or criterion-referenced. Norm-referenced assessment involves ranking learners in comparison to their peers (Brindley, 2001), facilitating comparative decision-making for educators. Conversely, criterion-referenced assessment describes learner performance in relation to explicitly stated standards or objectives that students are expected to achieve (Brindley, 2001). This approach evaluates students' mastery of course objectives, typically involves students within a class, and aligns with the curriculum, necessitating teachers to provide valuable feedback to address knowledge gaps (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004).

In recent decades, traditional testing has been criticized for its limitations, including its focus primarily on basic skills, mismatch with instructional content, and an excessive emphasis on discrete skills (Herman, 1992). In response to these shortcomings, the concept of alternative assessment has emerged. Alternative assessment is defined as an ongoing process that involves students and teachers in making judgments about students' progress using nonconventional strategies (Hancock, 1994). The main purpose of alternative assessment is to gather data on how students approach and complete authentic tasks in the target language (Coombe, Purmensky, & Davidson, 2012). The key characteristics of alternative assessment can be summarized as follows: (1) it documents students' growth over time; (2) it emphasizes students' strengths; (3) it considers students' learning styles, language proficiency, cultural and educational backgrounds, and grade levels; and (4) it ensures authenticity by reflecting tasks typical of real-life settings (Coombe et al., 2012). Therefore, alternative assessment takes a fundamentally different approach from traditional assessment. Some popular forms of alternative assessment include self-/peer-assessment, portfolios, and journals.

In the realm of teaching and evaluating writing, the product and process approaches offer distinct perspectives. The product approach centers on the learner's final written output, emphasizing the attainment of an error-free and coherent text, showcasing appropriate use of vocabulary, grammar, and language devices (Nunan, 1999). This approach places paramount importance on achieving grammatical accuracy and linguistic precision in the end product. Conversely, the process approach places greater emphasis on the dynamic process by which students develop and formulate their ideas into effective written works. The process approach to writing views the writing process as a non-linear sequence, involving iterative stages such as planning, drafting, editing, revising, and publishing, with particular attention given to audience awareness and interaction with peers and instructors (Hyland, 2019). In contrast, the product approach often portrays students as passive recipients of information. However, the process approach positions students as active participants in the learning process, facilitating the development of their knowledge under the guidance of teachers and peers, and fostering learning through the assimilation of mistakes, ultimately leading to

sustained improvement. Despite the distinct nature of these approaches, it is important to acknowledge that a successful written product is contingent upon a well-executed writing process. The emphasis should shift from solely focusing on the final written piece to recognizing the significance of the process involved in creating that final product.

In the context of writing assessment, an organized procedure and a written rubric that delineates the grading criteria play a crucial role. Crusan (2010) underscores the importance of presenting the assessment criteria in language that students can comprehend. One well-known scoring framework, developed by Jacobs (1981), encompasses a range of criteria for evaluating compositions, encompassing content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. A model proposed by Mackenzie, Scull, & Munsie (2013) and further explored by Scull, Mackenzie, & Bowles (2020) presents a six-factor structure that assists teachers in assessing student writing. This model distinguishes authorial skills, including text structure, sentence structure, and vocabulary, from secretarial skills, encompassing spelling, punctuation, and handwriting. Another illustrative framework is Culham's (2003) Six +1 Traits Framework, which identifies six key skills or "traits" of writing, namely voice, ideas, organization, sentence fluency, word choice, and conventions, with presentation listed as an additional aspect. The "conventions" trait incorporates aspects such as spelling, paragraphing, grammar, punctuation, and the use of capitals.

Over the course of many years, scholars and educators in the field of education have actively advocated for the implementation of assessment rubrics, rating criteria, and grade descriptors to benefit students (Hawe, Dixon, Murray, & Chandler, 2021; Zhang, Schunn, Li, & Long, 2020). These rubrics may take the form of holistic or analytical approaches, or sometimes a combination of both (Rezaei & Lovorn, 2010). In a holistic scoring rubric, a single score is assigned to a written text, while an analytic rubric provides separate scores for various aspects of a task, such as grammatical accuracy, organization, and coherence. The latter, often based on the former, offers targeted diagnostic information and has been shown to positively impact writing instruction and assessment (Chan, Inoue, & Taylor, 2015).

However, the selection and weighting of criteria for assessing written products should be tailored to the specific writing task's construct or the aspects that teachers aim to evaluate in their students (Phan, 2008). Therefore, it is imperative to identify the underlying construct and establish a suitable set of criteria before undertaking the assessment process. Moreover, in the context of classroom assessment, to ensure positive washback, it is essential to communicate clear scoring criteria to both teachers and learners (Phan, 2008).

Several prior research studies have focused on different aspects related to teachers' perceptions and practices of EFL writing assessment. In a comprehensive survey conducted by Crusan, Plakans, & Gebril (2016) across 41 EFL/ESL countries, it was found that teachers had limited training in alternative assessment and faced challenges in effectively using rubrics in writing classes. Lee and Coniam (2013) also conducted a study in which teachers showed commitment and enthusiasm towards assessment for learning (AfL) in writing instruction, but they were constrained by conventional practices. This was particularly evident in the context of Hong Kong's test-oriented system, where an emphasis on summative scores hindered the implementation of AfL in writing at secondary schools.

Furthermore, a more recent research conducted by Guadu and Boersma (2018) in the Ethiopian context revealed that instructors held positive beliefs about formative assessment, but there was a disconnect between their beliefs and actual practices. Similarly, alternative assessments have garnered interest among researchers (Eridafithri, 2015; Kobra & Hossein, 2018; Vangah, Jafarpour, & Mohammadi, 2016). These studies indicated that alternative assessments had a significant impact on students' writing abilities; however, challenges in their effective implementation were identified.

2.6 COLLABORATIVE WRITING (CW)

Collaborative writing can be defined as a process in which multiple individuals engage in a collective decision-making and production endeavor to create a unified written piece, resulting in a shared understanding of language acquisition (Storch,

2013). This approach to learning is rooted in Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the significance of social interaction as the starting point for the learning process.

Collaborative writing fosters an environment where students actively participate in social interactions to collectively develop knowledge and generate a shared output (Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012). Within the context of collaborative second language (L2) writing, learners are required to make joint determinations regarding both the substance and linguistic aspects of their written compositions (Storch, 2005). The process of collaboration involves the construction of shared understandings through the application of constructive and creative efforts by the learners (Wells, 2000).

Collaborative writing facilitates the interaction and exchange of knowledge and ideas among individuals, enabling learners to identify knowledge gaps and learn from one another (Elola & Oskoz, 2017). Through negotiation of meaning, learners strive to collectively construct a written text (Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012). This collaborative learning environment, which promotes joint efforts in knowledge construction, surpasses individual work (Elola & Oskoz, 2010). Within such a collaborative process, instructors no longer solely serve as knowledge providers, imparting information to passive language learners. Instead, learners actively engage in the construction of new knowledge through processes of negotiation, sharing, discussion, and the utilization of language as a mediating tool (Swain, 2000).

Collaborative writing has gained significant attention and popularity in language teaching and learning as a learner-centered pedagogical activity (Zhai, 2021). This shift towards collaborative approaches has sparked extensive research examining its impact on the development of L2 writing, particularly from a sociocultural perspective that highlights the role of peer interaction and feedback (Zhai, 2021). According to a recent review conducted by Lei and Liu (2019), the level of interest among applied linguists in collaborative writing experienced a substantial increase of more than sevenfold between the years 2005 and 2016.

Shehadeh (2011) conducted a study investigating the effectiveness and student perceptions of collaborative writing in two writing classes at a university in the United Arab Emirates. The study analyzed various writing tasks, including quizzes, exams, and assignments, and found that collaborative writing significantly influenced aspects of students' writing, such as content, organization, and vocabulary. Students reported finding the experience enjoyable and believed it contributed to their overall learning, despite it being a novel approach for them. They recognized the potential for improvement in their writing and other skills, particularly communication, as they actively provided feedback to each other throughout the writing process.

Dobao (2012) also examined the benefits of collaborative writing tasks through a sociocultural lens, emphasizing the importance of peer collaboration and feedback. The results of the study confirmed that peer interaction, whether in pairs or small groups, provided opportunities for growth and co-construction of knowledge. In terms of writing quality, the assignments demonstrated greater linguistic accuracy as students assisted each other in paying closer attention to language and effectively addressing language-related issues.

In a more recent study, Zhai (2021) investigated students' perceptions and attitudes towards collaborative writing using a mixed-methods approach. The researcher collected multiple data sources to explore how third-year students at a university in the United States learned to write and co-constructed relationships during collaborative activities. The findings indicated fluctuations in students' perceptions of writing collaboration and personal collaborative behaviors. Initially, students exhibited positive motivation and enthusiasm for task completion. However, as the project progressed, factors such as time constraints, group dynamics, and linguistic challenges led to demotivation. With instructor support, effective communication among group members, and a sense of achievement throughout the project, students regained motivation and became more prepared to engage in future collaborative writing activities.

However, it is important to note that collaboration can have a detrimental impact on the quality of students' work if there is a lack of effective dynamics and

communication within the group. When there is an imbalance in the sharing of tasks, certain members may encounter difficulties in managing their workload (Shehadeh, 2011; Wang, 2022).

The literature review reveals that previous studies on collaborative L2 writing have consistently demonstrated a positive impact on the enhancement of writing skills. While teachers and students generally hold favorable attitudes towards collaborative writing tasks, previous research predominantly focused on examining the effects and efficacy of collaborative writing in face-to-face settings. However, there remains a significant gap in investigating the implementation of this instructional approach within the context of flipped classroom learning. Consequently, this study aims to investigate the extent to which collaborative writing tasks conducted with flipped classroom contribute to the improvement of students' writing skills.

2.7 ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

Argumentative writing represents a genre of written expression in which authors take a specific stance on an issue or topic and provide substantiated evidence to support their position (Allen, Likens, & McNamara, 2019). At the university level, argumentative writing serves as a prevalent writing genre, where students endeavor to persuade their audience while presenting logical justifications for their beliefs or ideas (Wolfe, Britt, & Butler, 2009). This genre requires the employment of critical thinking skills and organizational abilities to effectively construct the argument (Vögelin, Jansen, Keller, Machts, & Möller, 2019). For L2 learners, argumentative writing poses considerable difficulty, especially given their limited experience in composing academic texts in their first language (L1) (Zhao, 2017).

The skill of constructing coherent arguments constitutes a fundamental prerequisite within the realm of essay composition, a prevalent form of written expression assigned to students. However, there exists a notable deficiency in the comprehensive comprehension of how argumentation is effectively executed within the context of discipline-specific writing. This lack of understanding is particularly

pronounced among academic instructors, leading to inadequate pedagogical guidance in this regard. Students frequently possess either partial or erroneous understandings of argumentation. The hurdles they confront often stem from an insufficient grasp of the requisites intrinsic to constructing an argumentative essay, particularly in relation to the imperative of delineating their own standpoint within an academic discourse. Notably, the guidance they receive lacks explicit elucidation of these requirements, exhibiting inconsistency and vagueness in its references to argumentation (Wingate, 2012).

In the context of composing argumentative writings, various methods of organizing the text exist. (Mitchell & Riddle, 2000) contend that argument cannot be easily transferred between contexts, as the nature of argumentation and the "argumentative essay" genre are discipline-specific. (Davies, 2008), on the other hand, suggests teaching argument through syllogisms based on the Toulmin model, which encompasses six constituents: claim, data, warrant, backing, rebuttal, and qualifier. The initial three constituents constitute the fundamental components, while the subsequent ones represent secondary elements, comprising an expanded argumentative structure that remains discretionary. The use of the Toulmin model appears more suitable for analyzing and constructing individual claims rather than addressing the larger structural aspects of essays. Mitchell and Riddle (2000) propose a four-stage procedure for overall text organization, while (Bacha, 2010) combines the Toulmin model with organizational plans. Davies (2008) offers a six-step procedure for essay planning and development, with the syllogistic argument form playing a role in step 5. Conventional academic literacy support methods such as textbooks, writing guidelines, and lecturer feedback often lack explicit treatment of argumentation. The available advice mostly centers on linguistic aspects and neglects the rhetorical function of argument in disciplinary knowledge construction. Feedback comments are crucial for writing development (Hyland, K., & Hyland, F., 2006), yet they often yield no results due to students' misunderstanding or the use of imperative and categorical language (Lea & Street, 1998).

In practicality, (Reid, 1982) proposed three fundamental organizational plans for argumentative writing, one of which is the eight-paragraph essay. However,

considering the time constraints during argumentative writing instruction and the students' proficiency level, the five-paragraph essay has been adopted as the preferred organizational structure for students' writing (Baker & Brizee, 2015). The fiveparagraph essay represents a prevalent format utilized in classroom settings, featuring an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion (Baker & Brizee, 2015). The introduction of the five-paragraph essay typically commences with general background information, culminating in the inclusion of a thesis statement that articulates the writer's stance on the topic (Endy, 2011). Each of the three body paragraphs initiates with a claim closely linked to the thesis statement. Subsequently, the writer furnishes supporting details or evidence to substantiate the claim, while incorporating warrants to illustrate the connection between the claim and the evidence. The third body paragraph incorporates a counterargument or rebuttal to present a stronger argument. Finally, the conclusion paragraph provides a summary of the key points covered in the text or a recapitulation of the thesis statement (Endy, 2011). In practice, however, three body paragraphs are usually reduced to one or two paragraphs according to the requirements of word count in TEM-4.

In terms of assessing argumentative essays, three prevalent methods are Absolute Holistic Rating, Comparative Holistic Rating (Pairwise Comparisons), and Absolute Analytic Rating (Landrieu et al. 2022). Absolute Holistic Rating involves using a holistic rubric with predefined criteria, enabling raters to assess texts holistically based on their overall impressions (Penny, Johnson, & Gordon, 2000). General impression marking, a variation of this method, assigns scores based on an overall perception of text quality (Charney, 1984). Despite its efficiency, challenges arise from rater variance and lack of detailed feedback, stemming from varying interpretations of standards and the absence of insights into students' strengths and weaknesses (Lee, Gentile, & Kantor, 2010; Weigle, 2002). Comparative Holistic Rating (Pairwise Comparisons) involves holistically comparing texts to assess their quality, often using pairwise comparison (Daal, 2019). Raters compare pairs of texts and select the better one, creating a reliable ranking order based on multiple raters' expertise (McMahon & Jones, 2015). Despite its reliability, implementing this method in education can be challenging due to complexity and the need for multiple raters. Absolute Analytic

Rating evaluates texts based on specific features, offering advantages like identifying strengths and weaknesses and providing precise feedback (Lee et al., 2010). However, ongoing debates about its reliability compared to holistic rating exist. Analytic rating, often achieved using rubrics, can be time-consuming and limit raters' freedom (Harsch & Martin, 2013). While it provides detailed insights, careful setup is required, considering potential influence from raters' varying interpretations of criteria. In conclusion, these scoring methods have unique benefits and challenges. Selection depends on factors such as desired detail level, available raters, and practicality within the educational context.

In Wingate's (2012) study, a total of 117 undergraduates completed a questionnaire concerning students' struggle with argumentative writing. The study found that many students arrive at university with incomplete or inaccurate understandings of argument and possess formal structures that do not support effective writing in the expected genre. The instruction they receive at the university lacks consistency and adequacy in addressing argumentation. The significance of argumentation as a crucial requirement for essay writing is often obscured due to the use of vague language and an emphasis on surface-level features. As a result, it is argued that writing instruction should prioritize the development of argument as its primary and central focus. The researcher then proposed the essay writing framework (see Figure 3.2) helps convey this concept to students. In this framework, the bold text in the middle box underscores that the essence of essay writing argumentation lies in establishing one's own position, which is synonymous with argument development. Furthermore, the figure demonstrates that this central element of essay writing is intricately connected to and reliant upon the other two components in the framework.

In Zhu's study (2001) investigated the challenges, writing processes, and strategies employed by a group of 14 Mexican graduate students working on an argumentative writing assignment in English. The findings from the data analysis revealed that, from the participants' perspective, addressing rhetorical concerns (e.g., organizing and developing arguments) presented a major challenge, although linguistic aspects (e.g., vocabulary) also posed difficulties. The participants utilized a variety of

strategies to cope with these challenges. However, it is essential to approach the results with caution due to the relatively small number of participants and the homogeneous nature of the group (ESL teachers from the same language background). Nonetheless, the results offer valuable insights into the difficulties, processes, and strategies employed by second-language writers when learning to write argumentatively in English.

Liu and Stapleton (2014) conducted a study to investigate the impact of students' neglect of counter-arguments in their writing. The participants comprised 125 Chinese university students, who were divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. In the experimental group, argumentative instruction included the incorporation of counter-arguing and refutation, while the control group received instruction without counter-argumentation. The findings indicated a significant positive correlation between the inclusion of counter-arguments and rebuttals and the scores achieved in the argumentative essays. Hence, it is advisable to incorporate counter-argumentation in teaching argumentation.

2.8 RELEVANT STUDIES

Numerous studies have demonstrated positive results towards the flipped method in teaching writing (Ghufron & Nurdianingsih, 2019; Mirzaei, Shafiee, & Rahimi, 2022; Rad, 2021; Wu, Yang, Hsieh, & Yamamoto, 2020; Zou & Xie, 2019). For example, Ghufron and Nurdianingsih (2019) explored the use of the flipped method combined with Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in teaching EFL writing in the Indonesian context. The study involved five EFL writing teachers and 150 students from five universities in East Java. The findings indicated that the flipped classroom environment facilitated improved communication among students and had a positive impact on their attitudes and motivation.

Similarly, Zou and Xie (2018) proposed a flipped learning model that incorporated technology-enhanced just-in-time teaching and peer instruction, and examined its effectiveness in English writing learning. The study involved two groups

of upper-intermediate EFL learners who were exposed to different flipped learning modes: the proposed approach and the standard flipped learning approach. The results demonstrated that the proposed model outperformed the conventional model in enhancing learners' writing skills and motivation.

Ping (2019) investigated a structured flipped writing program with EFL students in a foreign university branch in Malaysia and reported positive experiences among Malaysian EFL students with the flipped method. Similarly, Shafiee, Roohani, & Rahimi (2021) explored the effectiveness of two models of the flipped method (discussion-oriented and rule-reversal) on the writing skills of Iranian EFL learners. The findings confirmed that the flipped method had a greater positive impact on EFL learners' writing skills compared to traditional teacher-fronted and face-to-face teaching methods.

However, there are only limited number of literatures on the effects of the combination of FC and collaborative writing. In their study, Florence and Kolski (2021) set out to evaluate the implementation of the flipped classroom model in a high school English classroom. The study focused on examining the effects of implementing the flipped classroom and collaborative writing model on students' writing quality, engagement, and perceptions. The instructional model has demonstrated benefits such as increased student achievement, narrowing the achievement gap, and promoting student engagement and critical thinking as well as gains in students' writing achievement.

Consequently, due to the dearth of studies on the effects of instructional approach of FC with collaborative writing on students' argumentative writing performance, this study sets out to fill the gap by exploring the following two research questions:

Research Question 1: What are the effects of implementing the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing on Chinese EFL undergraduate learners' writing abilities?

Research Question 2: What are the learners' opinions toward using the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing on their writing abilities?

2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The traditional approach to writing instruction focuses on treating writing as a finished product, emphasizing linguistic accuracy and imitation of teacher-provided texts. Process-oriented approaches emerged, emphasizing students' active involvement in the recursive writing process, with teachers as facilitators and peers providing feedback. Genre-based instruction further developed, teaching students conventions specific to particular text types. Recent research has compared the effectiveness of product-oriented, process-oriented, and genre-oriented approaches, leading to the advocacy for a "process genre" approach that combines principles from different pedagogies. However, these approaches have not been widely adopted by teachers, and more research is needed to understand students' perceptions and experiences. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a swift shift to online learning, and hybrid/blended instruction, combining face-to-face and online components, has emerged as a potential new norm. The effectiveness of hybrid instruction and its design in a post-pandemic world require further investigation.

Research has shown positive impacts of the FC approach in English Language Teaching (ELT) across various language skills, including grammar, writing, speaking, and vocabulary. Despite its advantages, challenges such as inadequate internet access, workload, and technical issues need to be addressed. The current study seeks to explore the implementation of FC in the context of collaborative writing approach, which is an area with limited research.

The concept of blended learning, which combines face-to-face instruction with online learning, has led to the integration of Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) content into traditional classrooms. MOOCs embody the principles of connectivism, promoting active learning through shared resources and networks. The Flipped

Classroom (FC) model also aligns with connectivist principles, as it shifts direct instruction to pre-class activities and emphasizes active learning during in-class sessions. The MOOC-based FC model combines these approaches, integrating online and face-to-face learning to create a dynamic and interactive educational environment. Several studies have explored the advantages and challenges of integrating MOOCs into FC courses, with positive findings regarding the effectiveness of this approach. The MOOC-based FC model fosters learner interaction, cooperation, and active participation, supporting the principles of connectivism in the digital age.

Collaborative writing is a process where multiple individuals collectively engage in decision-making and creation to produce a unified written piece, rooted in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Learners actively participate in social interactions to develop knowledge and generate shared output, making joint determinations on substance and linguistic aspects of their compositions. This approach facilitates knowledge exchange, idea sharing, and negotiation of meaning among learners, surpassing individual work and promoting joint efforts in knowledge construction. Collaborative writing has gained popularity in language teaching as a learner-centered activity, and research shows its positive impact on L2 writing development from a sociocultural perspective. Studies have indicated improved writing quality, content, organization, and vocabulary, and students generally hold favorable attitudes towards collaborative writing tasks. However, challenges can arise in group dynamics and task sharing. While previous research has focused on face-to-face settings, this study aims to investigate the impact of collaborative writing tasks within the context of flipped classroom learning.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of a MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing instruction in improving EFL learners' argumentative writing abilities. Argumentative writing is an essential skill for EFL learners, but it is often challenging to teach. Therefore, this study aims to examine whether a MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing instruction can enhance students' argumentative writing skills.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The investigation opted for a research design known as a single group pre-test and post-test design, which falls under the category of experimental designs frequently employed in research studies to assess the efficacy or impact of a treatment on a singular group of participants. This research design offers a structured approach to evaluating the potential effects of an instruction by measuring students' writing abilities at two distinct points in time: before the treatment (pre-test) and after the treatment (post-test). By comparing the pre-test and post-test scores, the researcher can discern and analyze any observable changes or variations in the dependent variable, thereby providing valuable insights into the effects of the MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing instruction on the targeted group of participants. This approach allows researchers to establish causal relationships and draw meaningful conclusions regarding the outcomes of the treatment, contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the respective field of study.

3.2 POPULATION AND PARTICIPANTS

The study aimed at second-year English majors (300 students) at a university located at the northeastern part of China. These Chinese natives have been studying English for 8-9 years. Those students chose the English language as their major at their own will and were selected based on their Gaokao scores. The students were considered similar in terms of their English learning history, interest in English, and Gaokao scores.

The participants of this study were 30 EFL learners in one class, aged between 18-25 years, enrolled in an undergraduate English Academic Writing course. The selection of the research institute and participants was based on convenience sampling (Mackey & Gass, 2015). Notably, argumentative writing holds significance for students with advanced language proficiency levels, as emphasized by Cheong, Zhu, & Xu (2021). This genre demands higher-order cognitive skills and critical thinking, necessitating learners to carefully consider how to appropriately employ the L2 language to support their viewpoints and challenge opposing perspectives.

3.3 INSTRUMENTS

There were two types of instruments involved in the study, namely instructional instruments and research instruments.

3.3.1 Instructional Instruments

The MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing Instruction: This study explored the implementation and effects of the MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing Instruction as a comprehensive instructional strategy. Serving as both the treatment and instructional instrument, this approach involved a two-phase learning process, wherein participants engaged in MOOC-based flipped classroom activities followed by collaborative writing tasks. Specifically, participants were required to autonomously study a MOOC course online (The Chinese

University MOOC, 2024) before attending class, where they received teacher-led lectures and participated in collaborative writing activities.

Chapters 13-20 of the MOOC course were dedicated to argumentative writing and thus were employed as learning materials for the research. Students started by distinguishing facts, opinions, and arguments, which was essential for clear and rational writing. Learning to identify deductive and inductive reasoning further enhanced their understanding of how arguments were structured. The course also covered the important aspects of essay writing, such as creating strong thesis statements and clear topic sentences. Students worked on making their essays coherent and cohesive, ensuring their ideas were well-connected and flowed logically. An important part of the course was understanding and using different types of evidence to support arguments. Students also learned to recognize and avoid common logical fallacies, improving their critical thinking skills. The use of logical links in establishing cause-and-effect in arguments was another key focus area. Towards the end of the course, students learned advanced techniques like effective comparison methods, using cohesive devices for better argument flow, handling rebuttals, and using specific language patterns for stronger rebuttals. These skills equipped students with a well-rounded approach to crafting persuasive and compelling argumentative essays.

This innovative pedagogical model aimed to enhance students' learning experience by incorporating elements of self-directed learning, technology integration, and collaborative knowledge construction.

The teacher and students assumed different roles during the instruction. The teacher had a five-fold role. First and foremost, the teacher acted as a facilitator, guiding students through the process of collaborative writing and helping them solve difficulties encountered in MOOC learning. Second, the teacher worked as a teamwork promoter, creating activities that required students to work in pairs or small groups so as to promote discussion, idea sharing, and mutual support. This included brainstorming sessions, peer review, and group editing. Third, the teacher worked as a critical thinking and research skills coach, guiding students to evaluate sources, understand differing

perspectives, and build a strong, evidence-based argument. Fourth, the teacher worked as a conflict resolution advisor, guiding students in resolving disagreements constructively. Finally, the teacher worked as a feedback provider, giving feedback on both the writing itself and the interpersonal dynamics of working in a group.

The students adopted two roles: active learners and collaborators. First, students self-learned the assigned MOOC chapters before class and then participated teacher's lectures where they consolidated what they had learned and sorted out what they failed to understand. Second, the students worked in teams to writing argumentative essays on given topics. Open and respectful communicate were encouraged so that every team member's opinion was valued and considered. Specific roles such as researcher, writer, editor, etc., were agreed to ensure that everyone contributed. Regular meetings were held to discuss progress, share research, and refine their arguments. Members of each group reviewed each other's work so as to foster a sense of collective responsibility and improve the quality of writing. To do so, online collaborative tools like Tencent Docs for real-time editing and feedback were employed.

3.3.2 Teaching Plan

The 8-week study was divided into two phases: pre-treatment and treatment. The pre-treatment phase included the 1st week when students took a timed-argumentative writing test as pre-test and then were informed of the current study.

The treatment phase included three parts, i.e., MOOC-based flipped classroom, in-class lecture, and collaborative writing. These three parts were combined to ensure that the students had the knowledge and practical skills required to write argumentative essays, which involved various techniques about how to start, organize, draft an argumentative writing as well as avoid fallacies. Each week, the participants were asked to first have access to an online course developed by the Chinese University MOOC platform before the in-class sessions. Students were required to self-study the assigned chapter(s) and took notes accordingly. If any questions or difficulties arose, the students were given opportunities to discuss with the teacher at in-class sessions. For the in-class

lecture part, the researcher would spend one session checking if the students understood the MOOC lessons and providing additional materials concerning those lessons. Then, the students engaged in collaborative argumentative writing.

To illustrate this instructional plan for the first two parts, in the 2nd week, students were required to study Chapters 13 and 14 of the MOOC course prior to classroom learning. After learning those two chapters, students were assigned to distinguish facts, opinions, and arguments; distinguish deductive and inductive arguments; manage introduction, main body, and conclusion; use different ways to start and end an argumentative essay. Accordingly, the researcher's lecture was also in line with the contents mentioned above (see the teaching sample in Appendix H). The main purpose of classroom lecture was to help students review what they have learned and addressed their difficulties in learning. On the 3rd week, after learning Chapters 15 and 16 of the MOOC course and teacher's lecture, students were expected to shape a thesis statement well; shape a topic sentence well; use coherence and cohesion; know how to support the topic sentence 1) by expansion and explanation; how to support the topic sentence 2) by illustration. On the 4th week, students learned to use 7 types of evidence. On the 5th week, students studied how to distinguish 10 types of fallacies. On the 6th week, students focused their learning to use logical links in cause-effect relationship. On the 7th week, students learned to use two types of comparison, cohesive devices, different ways to do the rebuttal, and the language patterns for rebuttals.

In addition, for the third part of the MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing, the students had one session to engage in collaborative writing each week. They were asked to write Topic 1 collaboratively in two class sessions on the 2nd and 3rd weeks, Topic 2 in two class sessions on the 4th and 5th weeks, and Topic 3 in two class sessions on the 6th and 7th weeks. Thirty students were divided into 6 groups on a voluntary basis, which would ensure the efficiency and compatibility among group members. For each topic, students in each group first brainstormed and then worked on writing up the essay. Specifically, following the essay writing framework proposed by Wingate (2012) (see Figure 3.1), the students started by brainstorming and mapping out how each part of the essay would lead to a clear

presentation of their stance; then for the essay's body, students worked together to explore and articulate a range of perspectives and compare and contrast these viewpoints, engaging in a group discussion to decide on the most compelling arguments that supported their joint position; finally, they concluded their collaborative effort by summarizing the key points they had discussed. Each member should contribute to restating their shared position distinctly, ensuring it reflected the group's consensus and understanding. After this, 5 members in each group discussed and agreed on the following 5 individual tasks before writing on each topic. Three students would be initially drafting each section (introduction, body paragraph, and conclusion); one student would be revising and editing these sections; one student would be responsible for confirming that all group members complete their jobs, and submitting the finished project. Students may change their tasks for other topics after group discussion. However, individual tasks did not mean that students worked separately. On the contrary, apart from individual tasks, students in a group were required to proofread different drafts and make suggestions accordingly, provide assistance if asked. After the first draft was completed, the group would review the essay collectively. This involved checking for logical flow, consistency, argument strength, and addressing counterarguments. Collaborative editing tools like Tencent Docs were used to do the task. Then feedback received from both group members and the teacher was incorporated. This would enhance the essay's quality and ensure that it effectively communicated the intended argument. Once revisions were made, the group finalized the essay. After the writing, group members reflected on the collaborative process, which helped in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the group dynamics. This reflection was crucial for improving future collaborative efforts. Writings produced by each group was assessed with the same scoring rubric used in pre- and post-tests and the scores were collected as part of students' final scores.

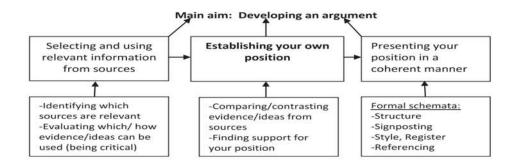


Figure 3.1 Essay writing framework

Source: Wingate, 2012

On the 8th week, students were engaged in another timed argumentative writing test as post-test. This aimed to investigate if the students made progress in their writing abilities.

Table 3.1 The MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing

Week	Part 1: Out of class	Part 2: Teacher's	Part 3: Students'
	self-study from the	instructional role in class	collaborative writing in
	MOOC platform	The Indian	class
1	Pre-test		
2	Chapter 13:	Discussion and wrap-	Collaborative writing
	Presentation of the	up the content from	(Task 1 in Appendix E)
	idea	chapters of the MOOC	• In a group work, the
	Chapter14: Organize	• Demonstrating the	students helped each
	a point of view in	writing model and have	other to brainstorm the
	argumentative	the students practice	ideas, discuss the
	English writing	before assigning the	compelling arguments to
3	Chapter 15: Highlight	students to collaborate	be used in writing,
	an argument	writing argumentation	searching, drafting, and
	Chapter16: Close the	Facilitating and	editing their writing
	argumentation	monitoring the students'	before submitting the
		group work.	work and reflecting their
			learning of

Table 3.1 The MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing (Cont.)

Week	Part 1: Out of class	Part 2: Teacher's	Part 3: Students'
	self-study from the	instructional role in class	collaborative writing in
	MOOC platform		class
4	Chapter 17: Use		argumentation writing in
	evidence part 1		the session.
			Collaborative writing
5	Chapter 17: Use		(Task 2 in Appendix E)
	evidence part 2		• The activities were the
		555	same as those mentioned
			in weeks 2 and 3.
6	Chapter 18: Cause-		Collaborative writing
	effect relationship		(Task 3 in Appendix E)
7	Chapter 18:		• The activities were the
	Comparison and		same as those mentioned
	contrast; rebuttal		in weeks 2 and 3.
8	Post-test		

3.3.3 Research Instruments

Pre-test and post-test assessment: Two timed argumentative writing tasks were used as a pre-test and post-test assessment to measure the participants' argumentative writing skills. The participants took pre- and post-tests in the first week prior to the treatment and in the 8th week after the treatment respectively. "Should Mobile Phone Be Used in Class?" as pre-test topic (see Appendix C) and "What are the benefits and drawbacks of studying abroad?" as post-test topic (see Appendix D). The topics are chosen because of its similarity in terms of close relevance to students as well as the appropriate difficulty.

Three collaborative writing tasks: Students were required to write on three topics collaboratively during class sessions on the 2nd and 3rd weeks, 4th and 5th weeks, and 6th and 7th weeks respectively. The topics for the three writing tasks are "Should

schools require their students to wear school uniforms? ", "Should violent video games be illegal?", and "Should homework be banned? " (see Appendix E). The writing tasks, including pre-/post-tests on individual basis and collaborative writing tasks, were measured in terms of content, organization and language use by the scoring rubric developed by McDonough et al. (2018) (see Appendix F).

The MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing instruction (MFCCWI) questionnaire: A questionnaire, adapted from the questionnaire by Cañabate et al. (2019) and translated into Chinese to avoid possible misunderstanding, were administered to the participants on the 8th week to gather their opinions about the effects of the MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing instruction (see Appendix G). The five-point Likert scale questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part comprises 9 items which were divided into 3 clusters, namely perception of MOOC-based flipped classroom, perception of collaborative writing, perception of the instruction. The second part includes four open-ended questions.

3.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF INSTRUMENTS

3.4.1 Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which the gathered data effectively encompasses the authentic scope of the research inquiry (Ghauri, Grønhaug, & Strange, 2020). Content validity refers to "the degree to which items in an instrument reflect the content universe to which the instrument will be generalized" (Straub, Boudreau, & Gefen, 2004). It is highly recommended to employ content validity during the development of a new instrument. In essence, content validity entails assessing a novel survey instrument to ensure its inclusion of all essential items while eliminating undesirable ones within a specific construct domain (Boudreau, Gefen, & Straub, 2001). The judgmental approach to establishing content validity involves conducting literature reviews and subsequently seeking evaluation from expert judges or panels.

In the current study, the content validity of the instructional instrument (lesson plan) and two research instruments (pre-test/post-test argumentative writing and the questionnaire) were checked. Three experts were invited to evaluate and provide comments for content validity in the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) forms. The invitation of the experts is based on the following criteria: 1) all three experts hold certificates or degrees in teaching English as a second language; 2) all three experts have been teaching writing in college for more than 5 years in China.

Three evaluation forms were completed by the three experts: writing tasks, lesson plan, and questionnaire. For writing tasks, the experts evaluated and commented on the appropriateness of writing tests (pre-test, post-test) (see Appendix H). For the lesson plan, the experts were requested to evaluate on its effectiveness which includes the learning outcomes, teaching steps, materials, activities, and time allocation (see Appendix I). For the questionnaire, the experts were asked to evaluate the usefulness of its statements and questions (see Appendix J).

The evaluation forms comprised a tripartite rating system for evaluating each facet of the research instruments, along with a designated section for expert respondents to provide written remarks. The tripartite rating scale was delineated as follows:

+1 = Appropriate

0 = Not sure

-1 = Inappropriate

IOC = R/N

IOC = Index of Congruence

R =The total score given by the experts

N =The number of experts

The formula mentioned above was employed to compute the IOC value derived from the experts' evaluations. A research instrument is considered acceptable when the overall IOC value surpasses 0.50. Conversely, if the overall IOC value falls below 0.50,

it indicates that the research instrument necessitates editing and revision in accordance with the recommendations provided by the experts.

For the pre- and post-test tasks, since both topics were from past TEM-4, all experts agreed on their appropriate and no further revisions were needed. For the lesson plan, Expert 1 commented that due to limited class time, onsite practices could be reduced in amount. Expert 2 commented that a summary part should be included in the teaching plan. Expert 3 commented that to save time, materials could be offered to students before class. The researcher adopted these comments and made changes to the teaching plan accordingly. For the questionnaire, Expert 2 suggested that some statements should be revised in terms of clarity. The researcher revised those statements in accordance with the suggestion.

3.4.2 Reliability

Reliability pertains to the degree to which a measurement of a specific phenomenon yields consistent and stable outcomes (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). It also encompasses the concept of repeatability, whereby a scale or test is considered reliable if it yields the same result when measured repeatedly under constant conditions (Moser & Kalton, 2017).

In the current study, the researcher conducted reliability test with the pilot group consisting of 15 students who came from another university. In order to ensure the reliability of pre- and post-tests, lesson plan, and questionnaire, those students in the pilot group share similar demographic features in similar learning situations as the study participants. The pre- and post-tests, a sample lesson (see Appendix K), and the questionnaire were used in the pilot study. The findings suggested that the test instructions and the allocation of time were found to be sufficient and fitting. Furthermore, the time devoted to each lesson was deemed appropriate for the curriculum content. The material delivered during class sessions was clear and well-matched to the student's capabilities, facilitating their ability to adhere to the instructional guidelines, partake in class activities, and absorb the lessons provided.

To assess the reliability of the pre- and post-tests, the Intercoding Correlation Coefficient (ICC) analysis was conducted. The scores for these tests were assigned by three raters: the researcher and two additional evaluators who had been trained in using the argumentative writing scoring rubric. These scores were then evaluated and compared as part of the ICC analysis. The ICC value was 0.984, greater than 0.75, thus indicating a great reliability (Portney & Watkins, 2009).

To calculate the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha was employed to measure internal consistency and the value (0.981) showed that the questionnaire was highly reliable.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

To test the effects of the proposed instruction, scores from the pre-test and posttest were collected as quantitative data while results from the MFCCWI questionnaire was collected as qualitative data. The following steps were performed:

Week 1 Pre-test: The participants completed the pre-test assessment in 45 minutes before the treatment began. The pre-test assessment consists of an argumentative writing task. In order to select appropriate participants, the pre-test was administered to all the classes the researcher teaches (at least 30 students in each class). After the test, students in the experimental group were informed of the study as well as the writing rubric.

Week 2-7 MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative Writing Instruction: The instruction of argumentative writing in English will be conducted via MOOC platform and face-to-face classroom lecture. The students will collaboratively practice writing argumentative writing in three topics.

Week 8 Post-test and students' opinions: The participants will complete the post-test assessment in 45 minutes after the treatment ends. The post-test assessment will consist of an argumentative writing task.

Scoring rubric: To assess participants' writings, a rubric developed by McDonough et al. (2018) was employed (see Appendix F). The 10-scale rubric involves content, organization, and language use.

Student questionnaire: The participants will complete a student questionnaire after the post-test assessment to gather their opinions about the effects of the instruction of the MOOC-based flipped classroom and collaborative writing activities.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The research employs both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods. Quantitative data analysis will be utilized to address the first research question, which aims to measure the effects of argumentative writing instruction. It will be also used for the second research question to explore students' opinions about the argumentative writing instruction through descriptive statistics. On the other hand, qualitative data analysis will be employed to address the second research question, specifically to elicit students' opinions about the instruction through content analysis.

The quantitative data will be collected by comparing students' pretest and posttest writing scores before and after the argumentative writing instruction treatment. Additionally, a questionnaire will be administered to the students after the treatment to gather further quantitative data about their opinions. The paired-sample t-test will be applied to analyze the pretest and posttest scores, if it satisfies the four assumptions necessary for its use in this research. Qualitatively, students' opinions from the openended questions in the questionnaire were subjected to content analysis to gain insights into their perspectives regarding the instruction.

Table 3.2 Summary of Data Analysis

Research question	Research	Data	Data analysis
	instrument		
1. To investigate	Instructional	Learning tasks	Comparison of the
the effect of the	intervention.	Scores of pre-test	pre-test and post-
MOOC-based	Pre-test of	and post-test	test after the
flipped classroom	argumentative		writing
model with	writing		instructional
collaborative	Post-test of		treatment
argumentative	argumentative		
writing on Chinese	writing		
EFL undergraduate			
learners' writing			
abilities.			
2. To explore	questionnaire	Students' opinions	Descriptive
students' opinions		towards the course	analysis from the
toward using the			close-ended part of
MOOC-based	11/1/11	3	the questionnaire
flipped classroom		5	Content analysis
model with		Irille	from the open-
collaborative	78/200	asit).	ended part of the
argumentative	ายาลัยรังสิต	Kauda	questionnaire
writing on their			
writing abilities			

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter details the study investigating the effects of argumentative writing instruction, utilizing a MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative framework, on the argumentative writing abilities of students at a university in China during the second semester of 2022. The section reports both quantitative and qualitative findings of the study, each addressing distinct research objectives.

The first research objective was to investigate the effect of the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing on Chinese EFL undergraduate learners' writing abilities. This was assessed quantitatively by comparing students' pre-test and post-test abilities in argumentative writing. The second research objective explored students' opinions toward using the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing instruction to improve their writing abilities. This was analyzed through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, including mean scores, standard deviations, and content analysis.

In alignment with the two research objectives of the study, the data was organized into two distinct segments corresponding to each research question. The initial segment was dedicated to addressing the first research question, while the subsequent segment focused on the second research question. This structured approach ensures that the findings related to each objective are clearly presented and easily distinguishable, facilitating a coherent understanding of the outcomes as they pertain to each specific area of inquiry.

4.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1:

What are the effects of implementing the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing on Chinese EFL undergraduate learners' writing abilities?

The first research question sought to determine the differences in students' argumentative writing abilities by comparing their performance before (pretest) and after (posttest) receiving instruction. The objective was to ascertain whether the instruction led to a statistically significant improvement in their writing, as indicated by an increase in the mean scores from the pre-test to the post-test, with statistical significance set at the 0.05 level. Paired-sample t-tests, along with calculations of mean scores and standard deviations, were used for this analysis. To ensure the reliability of the scoring for the students' argumentative writing tests, inter-coder reliability was utilized and the value (0.984) indicated that the scores given by different scorers were reliable. The tests, scored out of a total of 10 points, were on different topics for the pre-test and post-test respectively. The evaluation criteria were based on the rubric developed by McDonough et al. (2018), detailed in Appendix F.

Table 4.1 provides a detailed comparison of the students' argumentative writing pre-test and post-test results, including mean scores, standard deviations, t-values, and statistical significance.

Table 4.1 Comparing Means within Group Before and After Treatment

Pre-test	Post-test	T-Test Value
Mean	Mean	
(SD)	(SD)	(p value)
5.367	6.737	-9.687
(0.4901)	(1.1115)	(0.000)

The statistical examination of the treatment's efficacy revealed that the mean score increased from a pre-test value of 5.367 (SD = 0.4901) to a post-test mean of 6.737 (SD = 1.1115). This improvement was statistically significant, as evidenced by the t-test result of -9.687 and a corresponding p-value of less than 0.001. In addition, the effect size (0.77 or round up to 0.8) suggests a large effect size. According to Cohen (2013), a Cohen's d value around 0.2 is typically considered a small effect size. This suggests that there is a slight but potentially insignificant difference between the two groups. A Cohen's d value around 0.5 is considered a medium effect size. This is often seen as a moderate, noticeable difference between the groups. A Cohen's d value of 0.8 or higher indicates a large effect size. This suggests a substantial difference between the groups. Thus, the treatment not only resulted in a statistically significant improvement, but the magnitude of the change was also robust.

Given the strength of the statistical results and the magnitude of the effect size, it can be concluded that the instruction had a significant and practical impact on the measured outcomes. To be more specific, students' argumentative writing ability has greatly improved after receiving the instruction of MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing.

4.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2:

What are the students' opinions toward using the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing instruction to improve their writing performance?

To investigate the opinions of university students on argumentative writing instruction incorporating MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing, a questionnaire was utilized. This questionnaire was distributed to all students following the completion of the post-test. The 2-part questionnaire was to explore students' opinion towards the instruction and sought for possible explanations. This study analyzed the data derived from 9 specific statements and 4

open-ended questions. The analysis of the responses to the 9 statements was conducted using descriptive statistical methods, namely mean and standard deviation calculations. Meanwhile, the open-ended questions were examined through content analysis.

Table 4.2 Students' opinions towards the argumentative instruction combining MOOC-based flipped classroom and collaborative writing

	Questionnaire items	Mean	SD
1	I like learning from the MOOC-based flipped classroom.	4.17	1.262
2	I think the MOOC-based flipped classroom helped me to improve	4.27	1.258
	my writing.		
3	The MOOC-based flipped classroom is a useful supplement to the	4.27	1.202
	teacher's lectures.		
4	I enjoyed writing collaboratively with my partners.	3.93	1.388
5	I think the communication and discussion between my partners	4.17	1.177
	and me was informative and useful.		
6	I think working with partners produces better writing than I work	4.07	1.285
	on my own.		
7	I think the instruction is useful for improving peer learning.	4.27	1.230
8	I think the instruction has improved my motivation for writing.	4.23	1.104
9	I think that the instruction has improved my relationships with my	4.17	1.177
	partners.		
	Average	4.17	1.23

The results from the 5-point Likert scale questionnaire reveal that students predominantly possess affirmative attitudes towards the instruction of argumentative writing that integrates MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing. Each item in the questionnaire consistently scored above 3.93, with an aggregate average of 4.17, highlighting the students' positive disposition towards this instruction.

In descending order based on the mean scores derived from student feedback, the outcomes are as follows: 2) I think the MOOC-based flipped classroom helped me to improve my writing (mean=4.27); 3) The MOOC-based flipped classroom is a useful

supplement to the teacher's lectures (mean=4.27); 7) I think the instruction is useful for improving peer learning (mean=4.27); 8) I think the instruction has improved my motivation for writing (mean=4.23); 1) I like learning from the MOOC-based flipped classroom (mean=4.17); 5) I think the communication and discussion between my partners and me was informative and useful (mean=4.17); 9) I think that the instruction has improved my relationships with my partners(mean=4.17); 6) I think working with partners produces better writing than I work on my own (mean=4.07); 4) I enjoyed writing collaboratively with my partners (mean=3.93).

The research employed four open-ended questions to ascertain students' views on the effectiveness of argumentative writing instruction in enhancing their skills and the perceived difficulty of the instruction. The questionnaire was translated into Chinese, with the back-translation method employed to ensure content validity. The frequencies of key phrases in the students' responses were analyzed to reflect their opinions on the instruction, as elicited by the four questions.

The first open-ended question was "Do you think that you have mastered the techniques to write argumentative essays?" The results from this question are seen below in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Students' opinions regarding their mastery of the techniques to write argumentative essays

Students' opinions	Frequencies of key phrases in	Percentage
	the response	
1. have mastered them	19	63.33%
2. have fairly good command of them	7	23.33%
3. challenging to master them all	4	13.33%

Table 4.3 reports students' opinions about whether they have mastered the techniques to write argumentative essays. Most students expressed positive opinions. The highest frequencies of students' opinions was "have mastered them" (f = 19), followed by "have fairly good command of them" (f = 7). Some students believed it was

"challenging to master them all" (f = 4), saying that there was still room for improvement.

The second open-ended question was "Do have any unsolved difficulties regarding writing argumentative essays?" The results from this question are seen below in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Students' opinions regarding their unsolved difficulties in writing argumentative essays

Students' opinions	Frequencies of key phrases	Percentage
	in the response	
no unsolved difficulties	16	53.33%
choosing and deciding on a topic	2	6.67%
insufficient arguments and proof	2	6.67%
other individual difficulties	10	33.33%

Table 4.4 reports students' opinions about whether they have unsolved difficulties when it comes to writing argumentative essays. The highest frequencies of students' opinions was "no solved diffculties" (f = 16), followed by "choosing and deciding on a topic" (f = 2) and "insufficient arguments and proof" (f = 2). The rest 10 students expressed their individual difficulties, including difficulties in determining the major elements, collecting and selecting arguments, grasping logical relationships in argumentation, corresponding discussion to thesis, polishing the contents, ensuring clarity and logicality in writing, and determining the writing direction and unfolding the writing, etc.

The third open-ended question was "Do you think this argumentative writing instruction help you improve your writing abilities? Explain." The results from this question are seen below in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Students' opinions regarding whether the instruction helps improve their writing abilities

Students' opinions	Frequencies of key	Percentage
	phrases in the response	
helps to improve writing abilities	25	83.33%
provides moderate improvement	1	3.33%
provides some improvement	1	3.33%
provides expanded thinking and inspiration	1	3.33%
helps to improve logical thinking	1	3.33%
no improvement	1	3.33%

Table 4.5 reports students' opinions about whether the instruction helps them to improve their writing abilities. Most students were positive about the effectiveness of the instruction. The highest frequencies of students' opinions was "helps to improve writing abilities" (f = 25), followed by "provides moderate improvement" (f = 1), "provides some improvement" (f = 1), "provides expanded thinking and inspiration" (f = 1), "helps to improve logical thinking" (f = 1), and "no improvement" (f = 1).

The fourth open-ended question was "What seems to be the obstacle(s) for you to follow this argumentative writing instruction? Please explain." The results from this question are seen below in Table 4.6

Table 4.6 Students' opinions regarding obstacles to follow the instruction

Students' opinions	Frequencies of key phrases	Percentage
	in the response	
no obstacles	9	30.00%
individual obstacles	21	70.00%

Table 4.6 reports students' opinions as regards their obstacles in argumentative writing. The highest frequencies of students' opinions was "no obstacles" (f = 9). The rest 21 students talked about their individual obstacles, including starting the essay

(such as selection of appropriate argument or stance), organizing the essay (such as finding the appropriate evidence, employing the right format), using proper language (such as choosing the right word and grammar), and lack of motivation, etc.

In conclusion, the results from the 9 questionnaire items and 4 open-ended questions reveal that the students had positive opinions towards the argumentative writing instruction. The students reported that they found the MOOC-based flipped classroom and collaborative writing useful, informative, and constructive in promoting motivation for writing. The instruction demonstrated its success by aiding students in enhancing their abilities in argumentative writing. The following chapter will present a summary of the research findings, discussions, limitations, and suggestions for future research.



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter addresses the discussion of the study focused on the effects of implementing the MOOC-based flipped classroom model with collaborative argumentative writing instruction on the argumentative writing abilities of Chinese EFL undergraduate learners. It encapsulates a summary of the study, outlines the research findings, delves into a discussion of these findings, and presents a conclusion. Additionally, it acknowledges the limitations of the study, explores pedagogical implications, and offers suggestions for future research endeavors.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study was twofold: firstly, to assess the effects of a MOOC-based flipped-classroom combined with collaborative writing instruction on the argumentative writing abilities of university students; secondly, to explore the students' opinions on this instruction. Conducted at a Chinese university, the study involved 30 students over a 8-week period in the second semester of 2022. This quasi-experimental research utilized a one-group pre-test and post-test design.

The methodology comprised two key components: instructional instruments, which included lesson plans integrating the MOOC-based flipped-classroom with collaborative writing instruction, and research instruments which consisted of pre-test and post-test writing tasks as well as a student questionnaire. The initial phase involved a pre-test to find out the students' baseline argumentative writing skills. Following the treatment, students completed a post-test and the questionnaire to analyze the effects of the instruction and gather their feedback.

The evaluation of the students' argumentative writings was conducted through the use of a specific scoring rubric tailored for argumentative essays. The effects of the instruction were quantitatively assessed using the paired-sample t-test. This analysis produced descriptive statistics including mean scores, standard deviations, t-values, and level of statistical significance. Additionally, the responses from the questionnaire were examined, with the analysis focusing on mean values, standard deviations, and a thorough content analysis to interpret the data.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The study addressed two research questions. The first question explored the extent to which this instruction enhanced the students' argumentative writing abilities. The data revealed a significant improvement, with the post-test mean score increasing markedly from the pre-test. The second question sought to understand the students' opinions of the instruction. The feedback was predominantly positive, indicating that the instruction was beneficial in enhancing their argumentative writing abilities, understanding of argument structure, and knowledge of appropriate language use.

5.3 DISCUSSION

This research aimed to examine the effects of implementing a MOOC-based flipped classroom along with collaborative writing instruction, and to gather insights into university students' opinions of this instruction. The outcomes of the study revealed several noteworthy points for discussion, as detailed below.

After the MOOC-based classroom and three collaborative writing tasks, students showed a significant enhancement in their writing abilities. The pre-test highlighted initial difficulties in structuring and articulating arguments correctly and in using appropriate language. However, there was a notable improvement in their ability to effectively apply what they had learned and construct comprehensive essays. In-depth analysis of writings from three students, representing most, medium and least

improvement (in terms of gained scores) respectively, further validated the effectiveness of the instruction in refining students' argumentative writing abilities.

As a student,I believe that we should not use mobile phone in the classroom. This is mainly because using mobile phones during class can affect student's focus and attention. Although mobile phone can provide us with a lot of information and help us solve problems, they can als make us easily distracted and unable to focus on learning.

Using mobile phone in the classroom can also creat a negative impact on the learning environment. When student are using mobile phone, they are more likely to chat with friends or play games, which can affect other student's learning. In addition, if student are constantly using mobile phone during class, they may not be able to fully understand the teacher's instructions or example, which can lead to a lack of understanding and confusion later on.

Moreover, the use of mobile phones can also lead to a lack of engagement and participation i classroom activities. When student are busy with their phones, they are not activity talking part in class discussion or contributing to group work. This can have a negative impact on their learning experience and their overall acade. This distraction can draw student's focus away fror the martial being taught, which can result in loss of knowledge and comprehension.

In conclusion, I believe that we student should not use mobile phones in the classroom. We should focus on learning and understand the knowledge that we need to know in order to succeed in our studies. So I think student should not use mobile phone in the classroom.

Figure 5.1 Pre-test (Student 24, Score=6.0)

Over the last several years, with the development of the economy, an increasing number of parents are sending their children to study abroad. Most people believe that studying abroad brings many benefits to students, but others believe that students should complete their university studies in their home country. It is very natural for people from different backgrounds to hold different attitudes towards this matter.

The first advantage of studying abroad is that it can broaden one's horizons and broaden one's horizons. You can see different cultures abroad, delve deep into the local living environment, and experience local living habits and ways of thinking. Broaden the horizons of international students, absorb diverse cultures, and enrich their spiritual world. The second benefit is to exercise self independence and personal potential, because you want to live alone in another country, handle everything independently, and handle various procedures. In addition, studying abroad will bring better development prospects and more job opportunities. Many foreign universities do have strong advantages in teaching and employment, and there are more options for both returning to China and staying abroad for employment.

Besides its advantages, going abroad also has many drawbacks. Studying abroad means staying away from your relatives and friends. When you are alone in a strange environment, there are significant differences in customs and habits, and you may feel that you are not used to everything in life. Moreover, the high cost of studying abroad can put significant pressure on families. There are also language barriers and cultural differences that lead to poor communication.

So when we have the idea of studying abroad, we also need to consider the above comprehensive factors.

According to Figures 5.1 and 5.2, the significant advancement from 6.0 to 9.0 reflects substantial improvement in the student's writing abilities. The pre-test writing focuses on the disadvantages of using mobile phones in the classroom. It offers a clear stance against their use, citing distraction and a negative impact on learning and student engagement. The writing is relatively straightforward, presenting a single perspective with supporting arguments. However, there is room for development in the depth of analysis and the breadth of discussion on the topic. The post-test writing on the benefits and drawbacks of studying abroad is a far more developed piece. It presents a complex, multifaceted view of the subject, acknowledging both the positive and negative aspects of studying abroad. The writing exhibits greater maturity, with the student providing a detailed discussion that encompasses cultural exposure, personal growth, and the practical considerations of overseas education, such as cost and employment opportunities. This is indicative of higher-level critical thinking and a deeper understanding of the topic. In terms of organization, the post-test writing demonstrates a well-structured argument. There is a clear introduction, a body that addresses both sides of the issue, and a conclusion that offers a personal reflection on the topic. This is a marked improvement over the pre-test writing with a more simplistic structure. The language use has also enhanced significantly. The post-test writing uses a broader vocabulary and more varied sentence structures, moving beyond the simpler expressions found in the pre-test writing. Clarity and coherence are evident in both samples, but the post-test writing provides a more logical and persuasive argument. The ideas flow smoothly from one to the next, and the overall narrative is compelling and wellsupported by relevant examples.

The jump in scores from 6.0 to 9.0 demonstrates the student's substantial growth in writing proficiency. The post-test writing shows not only a better grasp of essay structure and language but also a more sophisticated approach to analyzing and discussing complex issues. This improvement is consistent with the criteria for a high-scoring essay and showcases the student's development as a critical thinker and proficient writer.

The use of cell phones in the classroom is a controversial topic. Some believe that cell phones interfere with learning because they distract students. In addition, cell phones can be a source of distraction in the classroom and interfere with other students' learning.

However, others believe that cell phones can be a tool for learning. For example, students can use their cell phones to find information or use educational apps to help with learning. In addition, cell phones can facilitate students' communication with teachers and classmates.

In my opinion, cell phones can be used in the classroom, but there should be restrictions. For example, students can use their cell phones when they need to look for information or use educational applications, but they should mute or turn off their cell phones at other times. Additionally, teachers can set specific rules for using cell phones in the classroom to ensure that they do not become a source of distraction.

In conclusion, cell phones can be used in the classroom, but only in moderation and following rules. By limiting the use of cell phones, you can ensure that students are able to focus on their studies while not disrupting other students.

Figure 5.3 Pre-test (Student 17, Score=6)

The Benefits and Drawbacks of Studying Abroad

With the rapid development of economy and the improvement of living standards, there are many people choose to study abroad. This trend of studying abroad does bring both benefits and drawbacks.

On the one hand, studying abroad does have many advantages. Firstly, it can broaden the students horizons. They get a chance to live with the local family and experience the different cultures deeply. This is a valuable experience that allows them to get in touch with different cultures and enjoy the collision of thoughts. Secondly, this is a good opportunity to exercise independence and personal potential. Any difficulties encountered during studying abroad need to be solved by yourself. Last but not least, foreign countries may offer better courses, and students can learn advanced technology and science. Moreover, this makes them more promising in future job hunting.

On the other hand, studying abroad also has some disadvantages. First of all, the cost of studying abroad is too high. Not only the tuition is high, but also the living expenses are not cheap. This puts a burden on some families. Subsequently, living far away from home for several years, students have to bear the pain of loneliness and homesickness. This is a challenge for them. Additionally, some students choose to work locally after completing their studies instead of returning to their native country. Because most of them want to seek a more comfortable life and a brighter future. This has led to the brain drain in our country.

People from different backgrounds have different views on this. In my opinion, studying abroad has more advantages than disadvantages. This kind of experience is rare and precious.

Figure 5.4 Post-test (Student 17, Score=6.5)

Figures 5.3 and 5.4 show the writings by Student 3, who had moderate score gain. In the realm of content, the pre-test writing on cell phone usage in classrooms, though clear, remains rudimentary in its exploration of the topic. It presents a straightforward argument with a balanced perspective but lacks depth. The post-test writing, in contrast, reflects a more sophisticated engagement with the subject of studying abroad, integrating nuanced views and personal reflection, likely contributing to the score improvement. The content is not only broader in scope but also demonstrates

a greater awareness of the complexities involved in the topic, signaling a qualitative leap that would resonate with the criteria for a higher score. Structurally, the organization of ideas in both writings adheres to a coherent format. The improvement in the post-test essay came from the more developed body paragraphs. The writer elaborated on each point with explanations and examples, such as "They get a chance to live with the local family and experience the different cultures deeply," which provided specific details about how studying abroad broadens horizons. Additionally, the writer acknowledged the complexity of the issue with the statement, "Any difficulties encountered during studying abroad need to be solved by yourself," which adds depth to the discussion on independence. In addition, the post-test composition exhibited a more advanced organizational skill. Ideas are segmented and explored with greater clarity, each point was developed more fully, and the overall argument was presented in a logically structured manner. This progression in organizational ability was a significant factor in the student's moderate score gain, as it reflected a more precise and effective arrangement of their thoughts. The use of language between the two tests also displayed notable development. The pre-test was characterized by functional language that served the purpose but lacked variety. The post-test, however, was marked by richer vocabulary and more complex sentence structures, indicating an enhanced command of language. This increased linguistic range and the ability to express ideas more dynamically was consistent with the increase in score, underscoring the student's improved proficiency in writing. Lastly, the clarity and coherence of the student's writing have evolved. While the pre-test writing was coherent and understandable, the post-test writing was distinguished by its improved transitions, clearer development of ideas, and a more persuasive narrative. This improvement in crafting a coherent flow of ideas from introduction to conclusion was essential for achieving a higher writing score and is evidently realized in the student's post-test work.

In summary, the student's advancement from a score of 5 to 6.5 was reflected through the maturation of content complexity, organizational structure, linguistic range, and the overall coherence of their essays. The moderate score gain encapsulated the student's meaningful progress in writing proficiency, with the post-test sample

illustrating her capacity to construct more logically developed and eloquently expressed arguments.

First, some people believe that using cell phones in the classroom can help improve student learning. They believe that cell phones can provide more learning resources, such as online courses, e-books, and academic papers. In addition, cell phones can make it easy to find information and answer questions, as well as help students better understand course content in the classroom.

However, others believe that using cell phones in the classroom distracts students and affects their learning. They believe that cell phones distract students from focusing on the content in the classroom. In addition, cell phone use may interfere with other students' learning.

Personally, I think there should be conditions for using cell phones in class. First, students should put their cell phones on silent mode so as not to disturb other students' learning. Secondly, teachers should stipulate the specific time and manner of using cell phones in class to ensure that students' learning is not affected. Finally, schools should strengthen publicity and education to make students realize the pros and cons of using cell phones in class and encourage them to make better use of them to improve their learning efficiency.

In conclusion, I think the use of cell phones in the classroom is controversial. Although cell phones can provide more learning resources, they can also distract students' attention and affect their learning effectiveness. Therefore, we should allow students to use cell phones in the classroom within a reasonable range, and at the same time strengthen publicity and education so that students can make better use of cell phones to improve their learning efficiency

Figure 5.5 Pre-test (Student 11, Score=5.5)

Studying abroad have both benefits and drawbacks. It is a popular choice for many students around the world. Going to a foreign country to study can provide an opportunity to experience a different culture. This cultural immersion can help students to understand different customs, traditions, and values. It can also help them to improve their language skills, since they need to speak the local language to engage with the community and make friends.

Another advantage of studying abroad is the enhanced academic experience. Students can explore different educational systems and courses that may not be available in their home country. Being exposed to new teaching methods and academic styles can help them gain a more well-rounded education.

However, there are also downsides to studying abroad. One of the main drawbacks is the financial cost. Tuition fees, accommodation, living expenses, and other related costs can be significant. This can be a daunting prospect for many students, especially those who are not able to afford such expenses.

Another disadvantage is the emotional toll of being away from home. Being in a foreign country can often be lonely, especially when facing culture shock or language barriers. This can lead to feelings of homesickness, isolation, and sometimes even anxiety or depression.

In conclusion, studying abroad offers an opportunity to experience a different culture, an enhanced academic experience, and valuable life skills. However, it also comes with its share of drawbacks, such as the financial cost and emotional toll of being away from home. Therefore, if you are considering studying abroad, it is essential to careful consider all the pros and cons to ensure that this experience is right for you.

Figure 5.6 Post-test (Student 11, Score=6.0)

Figures 5.5 and 5.6 show the writing pieces by the student who had the lowest score gain. For the pre-test writing, the student outlined both sides of the debate, recognizing cell phones as potential learning tools while also acknowledging distractions cell phones could cause. The writing showed an understanding of the topic

but was somewhat limited in depth and complexity. In the post-test writing, the essay provided a more detailed exploration of the topic, recognizing the cultural and academic benefits of studying abroad as well as the financial and emotional challenges it can present. The writing was structured and clear, and it included a variety of ideas that were relevant to the topic. The post-test writing showed a slight improvement in the development of ideas, transitioning from presenting both sides of an argument to providing a more thorough analysis with specific examples. The language in both samples was appropriate for academic writing, but the post-test writing showed a slight advancement in the ability to articulate complex ideas.

Overall, the modest increase from 5.5 to 6.0 indicated a slight improvement in the student's writing abilities. The post-test writing demonstrated growth in the student's ability to analyze a topic and present a clear, structured argument, which were key components of higher-scoring essays.

Improvement in students' argumentative writing can also be observed across three critical dimensions stipulated by the scoring rubric: content, organization, and language use. These improvements manifested as a result of focused instruction and practice, and they are essential for students to effectively express their ideas, engage in academic discourse, and participate in broader communicative contexts.

Students showed a marked improvement in the content of their argumentative writing by demonstrating a deeper understanding of the topic at hand. They began to integrate a wider range of reliable sources, incorporating evidence and examples that were more relevant and persuasive. This is indicative of their ability to conduct thorough research and critically analyze different viewpoints. Moreover, students developed the skill to present balanced arguments, acknowledging counterarguments while effectively defending their stance. This evolution in content not only reflected their growing subject matter expertise but also showed an enhanced ability to think critically.

Organizationally, students' progress was evident in the clearer structure of their essays. Initially, the students might struggle with the standard format of argumentative

writing. Over time, however, they learned to construct well-organized essays with logical progression. Each paragraph began to serve a distinct purpose, with clear topic sentences and coherent development of ideas. The use of transitional phrases also improved, providing smoother connections between points. This organizational development was crucial for readers to follow and be persuaded by the argument presented.

In terms of language use, students exhibited a significant enhancement in their command of the language. This is seen in their use of a more sophisticated and varied vocabulary, appropriate to academic discourse. Grammatical accuracy also improved with fewer instances of errors that might obscure meaning. Furthermore, students started to adopt a more formal and academic tone, which is essential in argumentative writing. The use of rhetorical devices, such as analogy, metaphor, and rhetorical questions, became more frequent and effective in adding persuasive power to their writing. This mastery of language not only aids in clearly articulating their arguments but also in engaging the reader more effectively.

To sum up, the improvement in students' argumentative writing abilities is a comprehensive process. It involves not just the acquisition of language skills, but also the development of critical thinking, research capabilities, and an understanding of academic conventions. From the writing pieces above, students made the greatest improvement in their essay structure and language use. Through dedicated practice and guided instruction, students gradually transformed their writing, making it more compelling, coherent, and academically rigorous. However, there was still room for improvement on the logical flow and reasoning.

The positive effects of integrating flipped classroom and collaborative writing on students' writing abilities were consistent with the findings of earlier studies (Florence & Kolski, 2021; Shafiee, Roohani, & Rahimi, 2021; Su, Verezub, Adi, & Chen, 2020; Zou & Xie, 2019).

5.4 CONCLUSION

The study utilized a MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing instruction to teach argumentative writing to university students. This approach proved to be an effective method for enhancing the students' abilities in writing argumentative essays, as a comparison of pre- and post-test writings suggest a significant improvement. Additionally, the students expressed favorable views about this instruction. The integration of MOOC-based flipped classroom with collaborative writing enabled students to systematically organize their knowledge and effectively construct well-reasoned argumentative essays.

5.5 LIMITATIONS

One of the primary constraints of the current study was the time limitation inherent in the academic structure. The research was conducted over the course of a single semester, which significantly restricted the amount of comprehensive feedback that could be provided. In the pedagogical context of argumentative writing, nuanced and detailed feedback is essential for student development. However, due to the brevity of the semester, the instructor faced challenges in offering in-depth commentary on each student's writing exercises. This limitation potentially impacted the quality and extent of students' improvement in writing, as comprehensive feedback is known to be instrumental in refining and honing writing skills. The temporal boundary thus imposed a ceiling on the depth of instruction and the subsequent assimilation of critical writing competencies.

Additionally, the scope of writing practice was notably narrow, with students not being exposed to a variety of broader and more complex topics, such as environmental protection or politics, which demand a higher order of critical thinking and argumentation skills. The absence of these topics in writing exercises may have resulted in a missed opportunity to challenge students' abilities to engage with and write about multifaceted issues that are prevalent in real-world discourse. This limitation in the diversity of practice topics could have implications for the students' readiness to

tackle argumentative writing in a wider context outside the classroom. The constrained range of topics, therefore, represents a significant limitation of the study. Therefore, future research could incorporate a broader spectrum of subjects to better equip students with the skills necessary for the complex arguments they will undoubtedly encounter in academic and professional settings.

Finally, convenience sampling often leads to a sample that is not representative of the population. Because participants were chosen based on their availability rather than random selection, the sample may be biased towards certain characteristics that do not reflect the wider population. As a result, the results from the convenience sample cannot be confidently generalized to the broader population. This limits the scope and applicability of the research findings. Future study could include a comparison or control group within the convenience sample to provide a reference point against which to measure the effects observed in the study group, thereby enhancing the study's internal validity.

5.6 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

At the pedagogical level, the findings provide further empirical evidence on the effectiveness of combining MOOC-based flipped classrooms with collaborative writing in enhancing L2 students' argumentative writing abilities.

First, writing instructors should focus on creating dynamic, interactive online content for the flipped classroom, ensuring that students are well-prepared for the collaborative writing sessions. This approach should be integrated with the writing instruction, fostering a supportive and interactive learning environment that maximizes students' potential for learning.

Second, this study underscores the need for university administrators to recognize the value of innovative teaching methods like MOOC-based flipped classrooms combined with collaborative writing. These strategies, along with other pedagogical innovations, should be considered in teacher evaluation criteria.

Third, teacher educators should emphasize to novice teachers the importance of integrating technology and collaboration in writing instruction. Training should include strategies for effectively managing MOOC-based flipped classrooms and facilitating collaborative writing, preparing them to address challenges in teaching L2 argumentative writing.

5.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Given the limitations mentioned above, the researcher provides some possible suggestions for future research as follows.

Initially, this research was carried out among university students. Future studies could broaden the participant base to include students from other school levels, which might yield different outcomes due to their different exposures to English.

Furthermore, the current study was limited to a single group's pre-test and posttest comparison. Including more groups in future research could provide a broader range of results.

Lastly, to gain a deeper understanding of students' opinions on the instruction, future researchers should consider using diverse methods such as interviews and journal entries. These tools could offer more profound insights into the students' views and experiences.

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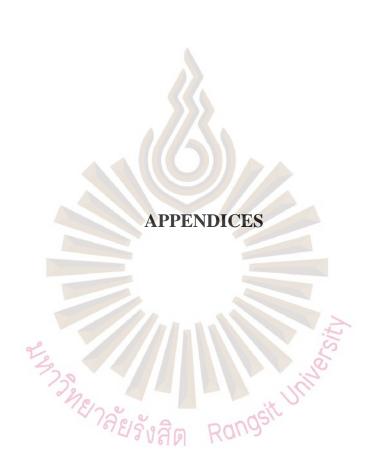
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APPENDIX A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL BY ETHICS REVIEW BOARD OF RANGSIT UNIVERSITY





COA. No. RSUERB2023-167

Certificate of Approval By Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University

COA. No.

COA. No. RSUERB2023-167

Protocol Title

The Effects of the MOOC-Based Flipped Classroom with Collaborative

Writing on Chinese EFL Learners' Argumentative Writing Ability

Principle Investigator

Luo Yuanzheng

Principle Investigator

Associate Professor Dr. Sumalee Chinokul

Affiliation

Suryadhep Teachers College, Rangsit University

How to review

Expedited Review

Approval includes

- 1. Project proposal
- 2. Information sheet
- 3. Informed consent form
- 4. Data collection form/Program or Activity plan

Date of Approval:

25 October 2023

Date of Expiration:

25 October 2025

The prior mentioned documents have been reviewed and approved by Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University based Declaration of Helsinki, The Belmont Report, CIOMS Guideline and International Conference on Harmonization in Good Clinical Practice or ICH-GCP

Signature...

(Associate Professor Dr. Panan Kanchanaphum)

Chairman, Ethics Review Board for Human Research

Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University, 5th floor, Arthit Ourairat Building (Bldg.1) Rangsit University

Tel. 0-2791-5728 Email: rsuethics@rsu.ac.th



Pre-test

Instructions: Write an argumentative essay with no less than 250 words.

Time Allocation: 45minutes

With the development of the times, people are getting more and more inseparable from their cell phones, in the university, should students' cell phones be used in class?





Post-test

Instructions: Write an argumentative essay with no less than 250 words.

Time Allocation: 45minutes

In recent years, many young people decide to further their study abroad. What are the benefits and drawbacks of studying abroad?



APPENDIX D COLLABORATIVE WRITING TASKS



Task 1

Instructions: Write an argumentative essay with no less than 250 words.

Time Allocation: 2 sessions (90 minutes)

School uniforms are considered representation of the school culture and should be worn on campus unconditionally. However, some people believe wearing school uniforms would hurt students' personalities. Do you think schools should require their students to wear school uniforms?

Task 2

Instructions: Write an argumentative essay with no less than 250 words.

Time Allocation: 2 sessions (90 minutes)

Some claim that violent video games will bring about crime while others believe such games are a good way to relax. Do you think violent video games should be illegal?

Task 3

Instructions: Write an argumentative essay with no less than 250 words.

Time Allocation: 90 minutes

Nowadays, students are constantly complaining about heavy learning load. As a result, some people call for a ban on homework, saying that students would use the time for leisure activities which could promote students' mental and physical health. Do you think that homework should be banned?

APPENDIX E SCORING RUBRIC FOR EFL ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING



Scoring Rubric for EFL Argumentative Writing (McDonough et al., 2018)

		Content	Organization	Language use
10-9	Above standard	 Problem is clearly stated Solution 1 is supported with logical, relevant, and sufficient supporting details Solution 2 is supported with logical, relevant, and sufficient supporting details Conclusion is an accurate restatement of the topic sentence. 	Problem/solution paragraph contains all three parts Topic sentence that clearly states the problem Two solutions with supporting details An effective concluding sentence	Almost no errors in grammar and/or mechanics Errors do not interfere with meaning
8-7	Standard	Problem isn't clearly stated, but can be inferred from the title or solutions One of the solutions is not clearly stated or lacks logical, relevant, and sufficient supporting details Conclusion attempts to restate the topic sentence, but it is too narrow or broad	 Problem/solution paragraph is missing one of the three parts. 	 Few errors in grammar and/ or mechanics Some errors interfere with meaning
6-5	Approaching standard	Problem isn't clearly stated, but can be inferred from the title or solutions Both of the solutions are not clearly stated or lacks logical, relevant, and sufficient supporting details Conclusion is a verbatim copy of the topic sentence.	Problem/solution paragraph is missing two of the three parts.	 Many errors in grammar and/ or mechanics Most errors interfere with meaning
4-0	Below standard	Problem isn't stated and is difficult to infer Solutions aren't stated or lack supporting details Conclusion is completely missing or incorrect Not enough language produced to evaluate	Problem/solution paragraph is missing all three parts Not enough language produced to evaluate	Extensive errors Meaning is unclear Not enough language produced to evaluate

Langsit University

APPENDIX F THE MOOC-BASED FLIPPED CLASSROOM WITH COLLABORATIVE WRITING INSTRUCTION (MFCCWI) QUESTIONNAIRE



MFCCWI Questionnaire Clusters and Statements

Perception of the MOOC-based flipped classroom

- 1.I like learning from the MOOC-based flipped classroom.
- 2.I think the MOOC-based flipped classroom helped me to improve my writing.
- 3.The MOOC-based flipped classroom is a useful supplement to the teacher's lectures.

Perception of collaborative writing

- 4.I enjoyed writing collaboratively with my partners.
- 5.I think the communication and discussion between my partners and me was informative and useful.
- 6.I think working with partners produces better writing than I work on my own.

Perception of the instruction

- 7.I think the instruction is useful for improving peer learning.
- 8.I think the instruction has improved my motivation for writing.
- 9.I think that the instruction has improved my relationships with my partners.

- 10.Do you think that you have mastered the techniques to write argumentative essays?
- 11.Do have any unsolved difficulties regarding writing argumentative essays?
- 12.Do you think this argumentative writing instruction help you improve your writing abilities? Explain.
- 13. What seems to be the obstacle(s) for you to follow this argumentative writing instruction? Please explain.

^{*}Scaled on a 5-point Likert scale (1=disagree, 5=strongly agree)

APPENDIX G INDEX OF ITEM OBJECTIVE CONGRUENCE (IOC) FORM FOR WRITING TESTS



		Reserve /		
Statements	(+1)	(0)	(-1)	Revise
Statements	Appropriate	Not	Inappropriate	(comments)
		Sure		
1. The test instructions are				
comprehensible.				
2. The allocated time for				
students to complete the test is				
suitable.				
3. The scoring rubric is	333			
appropriate for the test.	1//50			

Result

Item		IOC		
Item	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	100
1	1	1	1	1
2	2° 1	1	1/5/1	1
3	127	1	Unit 1	1
IOC	रिंग ने हा दे	ังสิต Rangsi		

APPENDIX H INDEX OF ITEM OBJECTIVE CONGRUENCE (IOC) FORM FOR LESSON PLAN



		Evaluatio	n	Reserve /
Statements	(+1)	(0)	(-1)	Revise
Statements	Appropriate	Not	Inappropriate	(comments)
		Sure		
1. The learning objectives				
outlined in the lesson plans				
are suitable.				
2. The level of content				
complexity aligns				
appropriately with the target	555			
group of students.	1//50			
3. The language proficiency				
level is appropriate for the				
target student cohort.				
4. The language employed				
within the lesson plans is				
lucid and easily				
comprehensible.	MILLE		ity	
5. The materials and activities			0	
incorporated in the lesson		4	cit ²	
plans are well-suited for the	2 4	nasit	,	
intended student audience.	ivan Ro	1119		
6. The task instructions are				
clear and straightforward to				
follow.				
7. The allotted time for each				
lesson is appropriate.				

Result

Item		IOC		
Item	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	
1	1	1	1	1
2	1	1	1	1
3	1	1	0	0.67
4	1	1	1	1
5	1	1	1	1
6	1	0	1	0.67
7	1	1	1	1
IOC		0.91		•



APPENDIX I INDEX OF ITEM OBJECTIVE CONGRUENCE (IOC) FORM FOR QUESTIONNAIRE



Statements (+1) (0) (-1) Inappropriate (comments) Revise (comments) 1. I like learning from the MOOC course. 2. I think the MOOC course helped me to improve my writing. 3. The MOOC course is a useful supplement to the teacher's lectures. 4. I enjoyed writing collaboratively with my partners. 5. I think the communication and discussion between my partners and me was informative and useful. 6. I think working with partners produces better writing than I work on my own. 7. I think the instruction is useful for improving peer learning. 8. I think the instruction has improved my motivation for writing. 9. I think that the instruction has improved my			Evaluatio	n	Reserve /
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relationships with my		
partners.		

Result

Item		IOC			
Item	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3		
1	1	1	1	1	
2	1	1	1	1	
3	1	1	1	1	
4	1	1	1	1	
5	0	1	1	0.67	
6	1	1	1	1	
7	1	1	1	1	
8	1	1	1	1	
9	1	0	1	0.67	
IOC	0.93				

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Lesson Information

Lesson	2		
Lesson calendar	2 nd week		
Lesson topic	Understand argumentative writing		
	Online: MOOC Chapters 13 and 14		
Lesson venue	Onsite: teacher's lecture (Session 1)		
	Collaborative writing (Topic 1)		
<u> </u>	Students are able to		
//	1)distinguish facts, opinions, and		
	arguments;		
1///2	2)distinguish deductive and inductive		
Lesson objectives	arguments;		
	3)manage introduction, main body, and		
	conclusion;		
	4)employ different ways to start and end		
	an argumentative essay		



Instruction procedures

Venue	Instruction	Teacher	Student task(s)	Material(s)	Time
	phase	task			
online	Flipped	N/A	Watch and learn	MOOC	Before
	classroom		MOOC Chapters 13		class
			and 14		
onsite	Teacher's	Lecture on	Engage in the	handouts	45
	lecture	the	teaching activity		mins
		assigned			
		topic			
onsite	Collaborative	Facilitate	Write in groups	Writing	45
	writing	students'		topic	mins
		writing			

Detailed onsite instruction

Phase 1 Teacher's lecture (45 mins)

Step 1 warm-up (5 mins)

- Greetings.
- Discuss and wrap-up to help students conceptualize what the students learned from their self-study for the content of chapters 13 and 14 on MOOC platform.
- Lead-in questions:
 - What are some differences between facts and opinions?
 - How many parts are there in a complete argumentative essay?

Step 2 presentation and practice (40 mins)

- Presentation 1
 - Show 4 statements and ask students to judge if they are facts or opinions.
 - 1. I have a husband and two children. (fact)
 - 2. Pit bulls are the most dangerous dogs alive. (opinion)
 - 3. Ostriches do not hide their head in the sand. (fact)
 - 4. There is nothing like an ice-cold bottle of Coke to satisfy a thirst! (opinion)

- Elicit the definitions of facts and opinions based on students' responses.
 - ◆ Fact: A fact is a statement that can be verified. It can be proven to be true or false through objective evidence.
 - ◆ Opinion: a statement that expresses a feeling, an attitude, a value judgment, or a belief. It is a statement that is neither true nor false. Or it may feel true for some, but false for others.
- Provide two paragraphs and ask students to elaborate on the different ways the paragraphs present ideas.
 - ◆ Statement 1: All raccoons are omnivores. This animal is a raccoon.

 Therefore, this animal is an omnivore. (deductive)
 - ◆ Statement 2: On Friday, two weeks ago, all the clerks in the store were wearing football jerseys. Again, last Friday, the clerks wore their football jerseys. Today, also a Friday, they're wearing them again. From just these observations, you can conclude that on all Fridays, these supermarket employees will wear football jerseys to support their local team. (inductive)
- Elicit the definitions of deductive and inductive arguments based on students' responses.
 - ◆ Deductive reasoning: A logical thinking process that uses the top-down approach to go from the more general to the more specific.
 - ◆ Inductive reasoning: A logical thinking process in which specific observations that are believed to be true are combined to draw a conclusion to create broader generalizations and theories.
- Practice 1 Judge if the following paragraphs are deductive or inductive.

Paragraph 1

A teacher observes that her students retain more information from her lessons when they include participatory elements, so she creates a lesson plan where students take part in a role-playing game. She reasons that her students can better retain the information. (Answer: inductive)

■ Paragraph 2

To get a Bachelor's degree at a college, a student must have 120 credits. Sally has more than 130 credits. Therefore, Sally has a bachelor's degree. (Answer:

deductive)

Presentation 2

■ Provide hand-outs of a complete essay and ask students to name different parts of an argumentative essay.

♦ Sample essay

Prompt: *Is campus politics a good or bad thing for college students?*

Campus politics has improved the quality of students' life on campus and is playing an important role in college life. While we may advocate it because of the benefits, we cannot ignore its problems.

On the positive side, college students will grow mature and develop their abilities from participation in campus politics. For one thing, by attending campus political activities, students will learn how to handle relationships with all sides in a more mature way, which will better prepare them for life after graduation. For another, they can develop their sense of responsibility as well as practical capabilities, especially management and coordination capacity, because the campus political activities provide students with a stage to show themselves and bring their abilities into full play.

On the negative side, campus politics might bring some problems. Too much participation in campus politics might influence study. Besides, some students' being keen on campus politics is for fame and gain, which is harmful to the healthy development of mentality. Therefore, schools and teachers should give necessary instructions to students on their participation in campus politics.

All in all, we cannot deny the benefits campus politics brings to college students, but we should also be aware of the potential danger it may hold for them as well. With necessary guidance, campus politics can be a good stage for students to grow.

Provide a list of different ways to start and end an argumentative essay and elaborate on each one of them.

Phase 2 Collaborative writing (45 mins)

• Students write on the following topic in groups.

Instructions: Write an argumentative essay with no less than 250 words.

Time Allocation: 2 sessions (90 minutes)

School uniforms are considered representation of the school culture and should be worn on campus unconditionally. However, some people believe wearing school uniforms would hurt students' personalities. Do you think schools should require their students to wear school uniforms?

- Students are to collaborate in writing argumentation from the start to the end process: brainstorm the idea, search the information, discuss the points of argumentation, draft the writing, edit the writing, and reflect on what they learn how to write argumentation as a team.
- During the time of collaborative writing, the teacher helps facilitate and monitor the students to complete their writing task.
- The feedback will be provided to students as a group.



BIOGRAPHY

Name Luo Yuanzheng

Date of birth February 8, 1993

Place of birth Heilongjiang, China

Education background Heilongjiang International University, China

Bachelor of Literature in English

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