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Flipping the Classroom to Develop Shaqra University Students' EFL Argumentative Writing and Reduce their Apprehension.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of the flipped classroom approach (henceforth FCA) on developing Shaqra University students' EFL Argumentative Writing and reducing their Apprehension. The researcher used qualitative and quantitative modes of investigation. One group pre-posttest design was used. The participants of the study included a group of seventh level students (no =50) enrolled in college of Human Sciences, department of English, Shaqra University, KSA. The study group was pretested to measure their level in argumentative writing. The same test was administered again (as a posttest) at the end of intervention to determine whether there are any significant differences between the pre- post testing. Two other instruments were also used including a writing apprehension scale and an unstructured interview. Data were collected and analyzed statistically. The FCA had a positive effect on enhancing the argumentative writing skills of the study participants. An analysis of the writing apprehension scale and the unstructured interview showed relatively decrease in student's apprehension towards writing.
Key Words: flipped classroom, writing apprehension, argumentative writing

INTRODUCTION

Student centered instruction is the main focus of teaching methods nowadays. Students are responsible of their own learning and developing their critical and solving problems. The flipped classroom approach has been widely used with most studies conducted in the United States (O'Flaherty and Phillips, 2015).Dickenson (2014) reports that the flipped classroom approach started in 2006 and depended on the use of screen casting that makes instruction accessed at any time and place. It is a blended environment where students are engaged in the learning process (Cross and Board, 2014).On the other hand Wanner and Palmer (2016) criticized the flipped classroom for being a waste of time for students and lack of skills required to prepare before class.

There are various benefits of flipped classroom . According to Bennett et al. (2012) these benefits are as follows:

1. It is student-centered.

2. I develops higher order and critical thinking skills .

3. It Encourages students' collaborative work depending on their needs.

4. The Content is given in real world context.

5. Students use their background knowledge to lead one another without teacher help.

6. Students explore the material by themselves.

7. Students are engaged in problem solving and critical thinking activities.

8. Students become active learners instead of being mere recipients.

Theories behind the flipped classroom

Alsowat (2016) suggested that better implementation of flipped classroom requires deeper understanding of theoretical background. According to him, the theories behind the flipped classroom are as follows:

1. Cognitive Taxonomy (CT) Theory
Where the lower levels of CT are practiced outside classroom, whereas the higher levels are practiced outside.
2. Blended Learning (BL) Theory
Where face-to-face, computer mediated activities and online learning take place. There is organic combination of many different teaching methods media teaching media and teaching elements.
3. Project-Based Learning (PBL) Theory
Where students (in groups or individually) have a project to work on .they are involved and engaged all the time in solving problem and learning. The teacher , on the other hand is is often viewed as a facilitator who works side-by side with students.

4. Constructivist active learning (CTL)
The students are engaged all the time in active learning and sense-making activities. Such students' engagement helps them create and control their own learning before and after class session.

5. Social interdependence theory (SIT)
   The learners' objectives were procedurally identified in order to fit the interaction pattern predetermined.

The phases of the flipped classroom:
 Flipped classroom passes by organized phases beginning from activities done by the students , then the process follows inside the classroom until it reaches the phase of summative assessment. Figure (1) shows the sequence of these phases According to Hung (2017) .

Figure 1 : The phases of the flipped classroom model
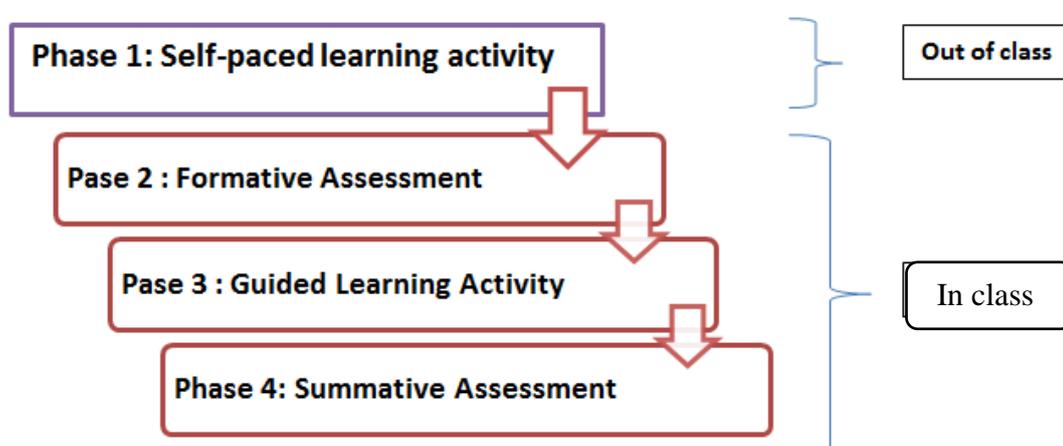
   Source: Hung (2017)
In figure (1), Hung's (2017) model begins with the outside class activities where students are given a video assignment per week and they are required to try a lesson worksheet in order to be ready for participating in classroom activities. At the beginning of each face-to-face class meeting, the students participate in classroom activities (formative assessment) that are based on the video content .
In the guided learning phase, the students conduct a peer review on the worksheet that they completed prior to the class. Finally, each lesson concluded with short quiz on the question items already done in the warm-up activity.

Studies related to the flipped classroom:
 In order to investigate the relationship between flipped learning (FL) and achievement and attitudes, Al Rowais (2014) conducted his study on students at Salman bin Abdul-Aziz University in some courses. His study proved the effectiveness of FL on his study participants' achievement and attitudes towards those courses concerned.

In Macau, China, Webb, et.al. (2014) had a study on intermediate EFL university classes. Live observations and surveys constituted the instruments of the study. Having finished the experimentation using a flipped model in a fifteen week course and analyzed data, the results obtained showed no matching between the model used and the teacher's roles expected by students to be performed in EFL classrooms. However, students expressed their comfort towards the model and they, therefore, were eager to have more flipped materials.

In 2014, Engin studied how far academic writing skills and ESL learning as a whole could be positively affected by students' interests – as a psychological factor, their experience – as a personal factor, and multimodal environments – a situational factor. For this, Engin proposed a flipped model through which students were required to follow it, step by step, to write a topic of their interest, and then produce a digital video tutorial focusing on academic writing.

In teacher education programs, Köroğlu and Cakir (2017) studied how far flipped instruction (FI) had effects on some language aspects of prospective EFL teachers. They concluded that FL can enhance accuracy and fluency skills in addition to grammar, coherence, lexical resource and pronunciation.

Little research is believed to be still there on the flipped classroom in general, and the role played by the FCA in ELT in particular. Various variables were examined under the impact of flipped classrooms such as: students' achievement, students' motivation, students' engagement, and students' interaction. More specifically, very few empirical studies have been done tackling writing skills. Moreover, no one single study – to the best knowledge of the researcher, has investigated the effect of FCA on argumentative writing skills.

In the same vein, Al-Harbi1 and Alshumaimeri(2016) used Edmodo as a platform as an FC strategy exploring how far FC affected secondary Schoolers' grammar, performance, language perceptions and attitudes towards EFL learning. Throughout the study, the outside activities were uploaded into Edmodo as platform for practicing activities and to provide opportunities for active learning interactions. In order to achieve the study aims, the researchers used three instruments: a grammar performance test , a questionnaire and some semi-structured interviews. The results

showed that the participants' grammar performance had been developed, and their attitudes towards Edmodo-based EFL learning improved.

Table1 shows other aspects of research examined using flipped classroom:

Table (1) Aspects of research examined using flipped classroom

Studies	Variables
Engin, 2014; Farah, 2014	English language writing
ObariandLambacher (2015)	English language achievement
Moran (2014)	Engagement
Alsowat (2016)	higher-order thinking skills , engagement and satisfaction
Grabau (2015)	Motivation and academic performance
Dressler, and Rachfall (2016)	learning performance
Hung (2017)	English language learners' speaking skills, willingness to communicate, and satisfaction
Huang and Hong (2016)	reading ability
Leis and Cooke (2015)	English Composition Writing
Köroğlu and Cakir (2017)	speaking skills
Zainuddin1 and Halili, S. (2016)	Flipped Classroom Research and Trends from Different Fields of Study

Surveying research as shown in table (1) , it is noticed that most researchers examined psychological factors like attitudes , engagement and satisfaction. Few researches dealt with EFL skills such as writing. Thus, to fill this gap in literature, the present study aimed at examining the effect of flipped classroom on developing argumentative writing and reducing writing apprehension among College Students measuring at the same time students' attitudes towards using Edmodo as a platform for the pre-class activities phase.

Argumentative writing

Argumentation is defined by Toulmin (2006) as the skillfulness of using informal reasoning to support one's claims. Thus, making a claim must be supported by explanations or confirmation from numerous sources related to the claim. An argument necessitates reasoning, justification, rationalization, giving facts , evidence, or explanation to support the side being argued, use facts to convince the other side. According to Razaghi,

and Zamanian (2014) , argumentative writing refers to a type of writing which includes arguments, supported by refutations that make the writer's view seem undeniable. Bowell and Kemp (2002) define arguments as an attempt to persuade by giving good reasons . Students are required to process information deeply and find relationships between ideas (**Razaghi** and Zamanian , 2014).

Argumentative writing skills

According to Toulmin (1958), argumentation is composed of the following elements: a) claim, which is an assertion presented in response to a problems, b) data, which includes the evidence or grounds on which claims are made, c) warrant, which supports the link between the claim and data, d) backing, known as support of the warrant, e) qualifier, which is a term indicating the probable nature of the claim, and f) a reservation, which refers to the conditions under which the warrant will not hold and cannot support the claim .These elements represent the basis of argumentative discourse and an organizational framework for argumentative essay writing.

So, main skills of argumentation depend on reasoning. Argumentative writing depends on reasoning in claiming the problem and supporting this claim by giving background knowledge about the topic and data for supporting or refuting counterarguments presented. Warrant and backing are also known as support of that connects the claim and data and gives elaboration for the given reasons.

For the importance of Toulmin's work in argumentation, Verheij (2005) enumerated some points for which Toulmin should be appreciated:

- The warrants with their backings used in inferencing should focus on a specific issue and should differ from one field to another.
- Claims can be rebutted with few exceptions according to certain conditions.
- Sound conclusions stem from sound claims.
- Arguers need to analyze different types of arguments rather than those featured by logical quantifiers and connectives.
- Not only do substantive judgments decide the soundness of an argument, but formal ones can do this as well.

Varied studies have been conducted to develop argumentative writing as follows ;

Buchman and Jitendra (2006) aimed at helping five disabled fourth graders to improve their argumentative writing skills via writing planning and writing interaction. Some writing areas were identified: writing focus, writing content and writing organization. Some quantitative criteria were set: the ideas that students gather during the prewriting stage, the quantity of the words students write, in the actual writing stage, and how often students carry out writing performance in the editing stage. Besides, writing performance levels were set: below basic, basic and proficient. The study results showed writing performance improvement quantatively.

Fahim and Hashtroodi's (2012) study examined using some teaching techniques of critical thinking to develop writing argumentative essays among Iranian English students at university level .The students were required to write two argumentative essays of two paragraphs each separated by 6 teaching sessions. After treatment and data analysis, the findings revealed that positive improvement in students" argumentative writing skills did not prove to be significant.

The Toulmin's model had to be presented in an explicit teaching-based context, students' awareness of the model with its basic elements had to be raised in thoroughly- selected readings. Explicit instruction had as a significant effect on students' argumentative writing for it had a rich context full of varied opposing views/counterarguments and refutations in different argument structures.

Another study of Al-Kathiri (2015) examined the use of Edmodo in EFL education among Saudi females in a comparative manner. The study explored the effect of integrating EFL students' perceptions and use of Edmodo on their attitudes towards English as a Foreign language learning. Al-Kathiri appointed two groups for her study: an experimental group and a control one. Edmodo was used for six weeks by the experimental group within their regular education, while the control group received no intervention. Findings revealed that the experimental group had positive attitudes towards Edmodo and learning the target language, English.

Irajiet (2016) examined how argumentative writing performance (AWP) was affected by self-assessment and peer assessment. The EFL learners at the intermediate level in Iran constituted the study participants. Having

administered the pre-post AWP test , data were statistically analyzed. Results showed that both self-assessment and peer-assessment significantly affected the AWP.

Abdollahzadehet (2017) analyzed the argumentative essay writings of Iranian graduate students of English as Foreign Language. Number of essays analyzed was 150 essays of different sound and relevant arguments in terms of the raised claims, data provided, counterarguments given, and rebuttals generated. Results showed that though the study participants were advanced EFL learners, they could not even display well-structured logical arguments at the surface level.

Writing apprehension

Being one of the most important EFL skills, writing determines the academic success during the university study as well as future careers. However, this difficulty requires more effort from both the teacher and the learner to be mastered. In order to be able to communicate in writing, the learner needs to have knowledge of vocabulary, structure and organization.

According to Daly and Miller (1975), Writing Apprehension [WA] is "the measure of anxiety about writing that outweighs the projected gain from the situation". It can also be defined by the researcher as the reluctance or avoidance acted by students in EFL classes to express themselves in writing. This may be due to some factors: psychological, social and cognitive. Those students may be shy, or afraid of making mistakes . According to Clark (2005), students might have negative self-perceptions, or might be afraid of being criticized by others: mates or teacher, or negatively assessed. Besides, the difficulty or the ambiguity of writing activities or even novelty can cause writing apprehension

Writing apprehension is not only a critical problem that is limited to foreign language learners , but also native learners of the language. For this reason, many studies were conducted to focus on this problem.

In 2007, Salem had a study on 50 English undergraduate majors at AL-Azhar University. That study explored the participants' writing problems: (1) finding difficulty in choosing a writing topic, (2) lacking the skills of what should be done in the three stages of writing, and (3) lacking the

technicalities of writing including grammar, punctuation, and the use of varied relevant ideas.

Lin and Ho (2009) also conducted a study exploring the causes of writing anxiety. They were categorized into five different challenges:. (1) time limit of teaching as well as testing, (2) negative teacher feedback on students' writings, (3) negative assessment and attitudes when peer competition, (4) novelty and/or difficulty of writing topics, and (5) the choice of the writing format required. Kara (2013) explored the causes of writing apprehension on the countries in the Middle East and it has discovered writing apprehension among postgraduate students. Causes of writing apprehension in EFL classes were also investigated by Latif (2007) at the university level in Egypt. He could identify 6 causes. Five of them were related to students while only one was related to the teacher: (1) lack of foreign language knowledge, (2) lack of foreign language skills, (3) poor past writing experience, (4) low self-efficacy for English writing (5) fear of being criticized by others, and (6) poor instructional practice in English writing classes.

Al-Shboul and Huwari (2015) shed light on Jordanian EFL writing apprehenders (n=21) when performing academic Ph.D. theses. The study instrument was an interview that was administrated to the study participants. That interview revolved around four themes that were closely related to writing apprehension: English structure, negative writing attitudes, negative writing experiences and lack of academic writing knowledge. Findings revealed that writing apprehension among the study participants is a phenomenon that has internal and external factors.

Pedagogical rules about the implementation of flipped classrooms as a successful technology based method must be understood first. It is urgent to integrate the element off the curriculum such as content, learning objectives , methods , students' needs and learning strategies , assessment and evaluation with the technology used.

Integrating technology into the flipped language classroom
A society moves toward blended learning, online learning, and the rocket use of technology in education meeting the needs of today's students. Therefore, it is believed by Hung (2017) that learning can have more opportunities for EFL learning inside and outside the classroom. But the flipped classroom is associated with both student-centered pedagogy and the use of technology and media. EFL literature supported active

learning as an effective and engaging learning environment that promotes students' motivation, and achievement.

Recently, the concept of flipped classroom has emerged as an important development in the field off teaching methods, especially in higher education .Assigning students a specific course content to be done on their own whatever the way is a key feature of flipped classroom learning. It is carried out through a recorded lecture already done by their teacher, and students are required to complete a guided writing task (Saitta, et.al. 2016) . Moreover, it is perfectly done by the help of technology-based tools available to the educational institute. (AlSowat , 2016).

Flipped classroom approach is known to have blending face-to-face interaction and online learning. Flipped classrooms are based on reversing the traditional method of delivering lectures in the classroom and doing homework outside school. Activities, students responsible for outside the classroom, are not necessary to be video – based but they can be paper based or power -point presentations.
Students begin studying outside classroom depending on online presentations or videos, and then what has been learned outside classroom is discussed inside classroom. So it becomes learner-centered rather than teacher centered. Tutoring students replaced lecturing .In the FM model, the teacher is a knowledge provider or a source, but a guide or a tutor who helps his students find knowledge on their own; his role is not delimited to to being a facilitator or an organizer, but extends to be a motivator and feedback giver to students' performance (Basal, 2015 ; Sams and Bergmann, 2012).To provide a technology platform in the flipped classroom , we can make use LMS such as Edmodo .

Edmodo as an e-learning platform
Involving learners in the learning process through flipped classrooms needs an effective platform that helps them arrange their ideas and interact positively with peers and teacher. The advancement of technology provided many electronic environment that help and facilitate learning. The most recent platform for learning is Edmodo. Edmodo is a blended learning platform created by O'Hara and Borg in 2008. Purnawarman et al. (2016) argued that Edmodo as a learning platform offers a solution in the teaching of English, particularly for writing.It's a consensus that writing difficulty results from classroom-bound activities.

Edmodo is one of social platforms designed for online learning, and hosted by a web service. It is seen as "Facebook for school" since it has the same features of Facebook: layout, design, and interface (MaguthandHarshman, 2013).Main goal of Edmodo is to connect teachers and students online together in a safe educational environment. Collins (2016) calls it "the largest social networking site for education" (p 40).

Because Edmodo has certain characteristics such as socializing and media sharing, it can replace what is known as course management system(CMS). Consequently, it can be applied by instructors in order to blend two different EFL skills-based learning environments.   .Its effectiveness arises from being a source , active participation and collaboration (Witherspoon, 2011). Since students as well as teachers are claimed to be well acquainted with Facebook, Edmodo can be easily applied in different subjects. A large number of studies showed positive results on the attitude toward the use of Edmodo and motivation in learning.

Using Edmodo in teaching writing, as a free and safe platform for learning which is free of advertisements, games and other distractors , has some advantages as follows: (1) it offers direct access to writing materials and assignments, (2) when integrated with particular approach or method such as the flipped classroom, Edmodo helps students to get better skills in writing, (3) Edmodo facilitates either teacher to give feedback on students' shared writing, or students to receive feedback on their writing from their peers and the teacher to make it as considerations in revising and editing their writing, and (4) Edmodo makes students more interested in and engaged with writing (Stroud, 2010; Balasubramanian, et. al. 2014 ;Sundayana, et al. 2016; Shams-Abadi, et al , 2015). According to the Edmodo homepage, teachers as well as students find it a safe place for collaboration, sharing content, teaching and discussing specific points or issues, or receiving notifications as for testing and receiving feedbacks (Sanders, 2012).

Studies

A body of research investigated the use of Edmodo and its effects on engagement, perceptions , and attitudes.

Sanders (2012) examined the impact of using the Edmodo LMS on high school students' engagement and self-learning. For achieving the purpose of the study, three instruments were used: open-ended questions, closed-ended questions and document analysis, and thus data were collected

quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings of the study showed that integrating Edmodo encourages both student engagement and self-learning.

Uzun's (2015) study aimed at examining college students' attitude towards Edmodo and determining its accomplishment in an "Introduction to Computer" course. The author collected data through interviews and document analysis. The results revealed that students had a positive attitude towards Edmodo, and active participation and communication increased students learning opportunities in addition to being active in the classroom.

Purnawarman and Sundayana's (2016) study aimed to investigate how Edmodo as a blended learning platform, was effective in teaching writing and facilitating students' engagement, and increasing students perceptions towards the use of Edmodo in teaching and learning .Four instruments were applied: document analysis, questionnaires, interviews and observations. Edmodo, when integrated with GBA writing cycles, was significantly found to facilitate the participants' cognitive engagement.
Wichadee (2017) examined the effectiveness of a developed blended learning model using Edmodo in an English course regarding oral proficiency, motivation, and attitude using the PPP model. Two groups (experimental and control) were drawn from 2ⁿᵈ year learners in an intermediate English course. The study results showed that the oral proficiency as well as motivation of the experimental group was significantly improved. Besides, the experimental group members showed positive attitude towards Edmodo. The study, therefore, stressed the effectiveness of blended learning in English classes.

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY:
Out of the researcher's experience in TEFL , she observed that EFL learners in Saudi Arabia in general, and at Shaqra university in particular suffer from insufficient argumentative writing abilities, and they suffer apprehension. Second, related studies proved such weakness (Alahmed ,2003 : Fahim and Hashtroodi,2012 : Abdallah zadeht, 2017) . To document this , the researcher conducted a pilot study . She tested using an argumentative writing test and a writing apprehension scale (Appendix A) . The findings revealed that students have difficulty writing argumentatively. They also have writing apprehension.

Statement of the problem

Given the shortcoming of argumentative writing and writing apprehension among students , the present study attempted to use FC to help develop their argumentative writing and reduce their writing apprehension

Research questions

To fulfill the aim of the present study , the following study questions are raised :

1. What is the effect of FC on developing EFL Argumentative Writing skills among College Students at Shaqra University?
2. What is the effect of FC on reducing writing apprehension among college students at Shaqra University?

HYPOTHESES:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between the mean score of the study group on the argumentative writing skills pre and post test.
2. There is no statistically significant difference between the mean score of the study group on the pre and post administration of writing apprehension scale.

METHOD

Design

A quasi-experimental research design was used. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect the data. One sample experimental group was Pre-post tested.

Participants

The present study was conducted through the second semester of the academic year 2017 / 2018. The Participants of the study included one sample group of seventh level students (no =50) enrolled in college of Human Sciences , department of English, Shaqra University , KSA. The group was pretested.

Instruments

In order to collect data, the researcher used three instruments;

1. Writing apprehension questionnaire .For the sake of reliability, the scale was applied to a group of students (n=20) and reliability was measured using Alpha Cronbach coefficient and it was (.77) which means it was reliable.

2.Pre-post argumentative writing test

The researcher prepared an argumentative writing test to be used as pre-post -test. The test was validated before administration. The test consisted of one main question which asked students to choose to write an argumentative essay among three given (see appendix 2). An argumentative writing rubric was prepared by the researcher to be used in scoring the test (see appendix 3) .The rubric consisted of four main criteria ;thesis, argumentation, language and vocabulary and organization and Writing. Levels of each criteria ranged from 5 to the highest level to 1 for the lowest level. The test was given to a group of professionals in TEFL and it was used after modification according to the jury members comments. Test items reliability was measured using Guttman split half coefficient. It was (.798) which means that the test is reliable.

3. Semi-structured interview

In order to collect information about students writing apprehension the researcher prepared a semi structured interview (see appendix 3).

Based on the aim of the study, students responded to many interview questions (n=10) developed by the researcher. Questions of the interview included:

1. Tell me about the writing obstacles that may face you while writing an essay.
2. Do you practice writing? In which way?
3. Do you think you are a good writer in English? Why and why not?
4. Do you get your essays evaluated by your peers? Why?
5. What is the most writing skill that are problematic to you (e.g. thesis statement, spelling, vocabulary, ideas,)?
6. How can you compare your own essays to your peers'?
7. How do you feel after flipping the classroom?
8. What about the writing activities you have done at home?
9. What are activities you admired most in preparing for writing class in advance?
10. How do you like what takes place in the classroom?

TREATMENT:

1. Before intervention, students were given instructions about the flipped classroom and how it is implemented. Objectives were made clear for them.
2. A web page was built by the instructor on the LMS 'Edmodo' and a group was previously created by the instructor with the title

"Argumentative writing group". A code was given to students of the experimental group in order to be able to join the group after giving them the link of the site.

3. The content of each lesson was designed through PowerPoint presentations, short videos, websites and pdf files .The content was delivered to students via Edmodo.

4. Before class students were advised to browse the group for questions and assignments. They ought to read the attachment and search for information required to answer the questions given and to be ready for class discussion.

5. In class, the instructor involved students in peer and group discussion . They were given written activities about the stages of argumentation and how to begin writing argumentatively.

6. Students were asked to browse the online group again to deliver the assignment given.

7. Feedback was given after each assignment delivered.

8. The treatment lasted for about ten weeks. The FC was implemented.

9. At the end of treatment the researcher administered the pretest which was scored by two scorers. The mean of scores was   calculated to get the final score.

10. The writing apprehension questionnaire was presented to students after the end of the treatment to obtain their responses about writing apprehension.

11. Students were interviewed to get information about their views about flipping the classroom in learning argumentative writing and whether it was effective or not in developing argumentative writing skills .

12. Results of the pre-post test and the writing apprehension questionnaire were analyzed statistically . Besides, the interview responses were analyzed   qualitatively.

Marking scheme:

An argumentative writing rubric was prepared by the researcher to be used in scoring the test (see appendix 3) .The rubric consisted of four main criteria ;thesis, argumentation, language and vocabulary and organization and Writing. Levels of each criteria ranged from 5 to the highest level to 1 for the lowest level. When the answer is excellent it is given the mark 5 . When it is proficient, its given the mark 4. When it is fair, it is given 3, and when it is inadequate it is given 2. Finally, when the student exhibits no ability to write an argumentative essay, he is given 1. The final mark given to the student is the mean off the scores of two scorers who participated in the scoring of the test, the researcher was one of them.

RESULTS

Research question 1:

What is the effect of FC on developing EFL Argumentative Writing skills among College Students at Shaqra University?

Hypothesis 1. 1. There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the study the study group on the argumentative writing skills test. Table (2) shows the means, standard deviation , and T-value of the argumentative writing skills test.

Table (2) "t" value, standard deviations and Means of scores for the pre and post test scores in argumentative writing skills test

test	test	N	Mean	SD	T-value	DF	Sig
Argumentative Writing skills	pre	50	6.90	3.710	16.402	49	0.000
	post	50	16.38	3.288			

Table (2) shows that the mean scores of the posttest (16.38) is higher than that of the means of pre test scores (6.90). T-value is (16.402) which is significant at the level of (.000).This reflects the result that the mean scores of the study group on argumentative skills test were significantly different from those of the post test for the latter one. Thus hypothesis one is rejected. This result also may be attributed to the effect of flipping the classroom in developing the argumentative writing skills among students.

This result agrees with many study results such as: Engin, 2014; Farah, 2014; Leis and Cooke (2015).This means that hypothesis one is rejected.

Research question 2:

What is the effect of FC on reducing writing apprehension among college students at Shaqra University?

Hypothesis 2. here is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the the study group on the pre and post administration of writing apprehension scale. Table (3) shows the means , standard deviation , and T-value of the writing apprehension test .

Table (3): "t" value, standard deviations and Means of scores for the writing apprehension test

test	test	N	Mean	SD	T-value	DF	Sig
Writing apprehension	pre	50	49.74	8.11	3.730	49	.000
	post	50	43.20	10.33			

Table (3) shows that the pre assessment of writing apprehension scores (49.74) is higher than the post assessment (43.20) which is significant at the level of (.000). Before implementing the flipped classroom, students were anxious and expressed no ability to write . this problem was due to lack of major skills such as vocabulary used in writing as well as main skills of organizing the argumentation. But, after the implementation of the flipped classroom students felt confident in writing because they were given the opportunity to think in their pace , generate ideas , arrange them , discuss them with their peers through using online platform ,Edmodo, then sharing discussion again in class. This means that hypothesis 2 is rejected.

Findings of the Qualitative Analysis
Analyzing students' responses to the interview that was conducted throughout the intervention and at the end, we find that they vary from student to student but there was consensus on many points. They agreed that writing is the most difficult skill in English language. Besides , finding new ideas in the prewriting stage is a main obstacle that prevents students from Moving to other stages accurately. Moreover, finding new vocabulary is also one of the most important problems that face students in all stages of writing. Most students agree that they fear of being evaluated from instructors and this causes apprehension of sharing their ideas with their peers. They don't practice writing very often except in the form of short tweets on social media. Concerning flipping the classroom especially with using the Edmodo Platform, students expressed great confidence because this opportunity gave them the chance to read and review writings of peers and to compare their writings with others. Flipping the classroom helped students also to decrease their apprehension towards writing as they could think about vocabulary and ideas. Flipping the classroom helped them to benefit from instructor's comments on different writings of students.

DISCUSSION

Results show that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the study group before and after the treatment in favor of the post treatment. This result indicates that flipping the classroom as an approach to teaching and learning has a considerable positive effect on improving students' performance in argumentative writing as well as on reducing their writing apprehension.

It is noticed that setting goals for students before outclass activities as well as following them through one interactive the online platform "Edmodo" helped greatly in supporting students and sharing their work and ideas with their peers . Also, Edmodo formed an effective platform that decreased students' apprehension from writing because they shared their ideas and got feedback from the teacher and their peers. Thus, they came to class with great confidence with their work. Each student worked individually, then in groups on an online platform. Flipping the classroom in this way helped students motivate their learning and choose the suitable place and time of learning. At the same time , they communicated with teacher and their peers online through Edmodo thereby, supporting their writing through providing them with different types of feedback feedbacks from teacher and peers.

The current study results are very important especially for the Saudi context because the Saudi classes used to learn in a teacher-centered class not a student –centered one. So, altering their attitudes and dependence on the teacher to another different attitude that focus on self- learning i.e. beginning the learning process by themselves is regarded as a great change that develops their EFL skills. During applying the flipped classroom approach , students were active, engaged , motivated and enthusiastic not only because of monitoring of their learning but also because they felt they work within a creative environment that supports their learning and gives them continuous feedback on their work .

These results were supported by students' views, taken from their responses to the questionnaire and the interviews. Both tools assured that students enjoyed the experience and found it effective in developing their argumentative writing skills and promoting opportunities for self-learning. Students were provided also with activities that included videos and PowerPoint presentations that helped them with samples of argumentative essays with different parts. They enjoyed watching videos inside and outside of the classroom . Such findings were considered with

Han (2015), Hsieh et el. (2016) and Kang (2015) which stress that students' motivation as well as their participation can be improved by varied activities taking place in the flipped classroom.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed at developing EFL argumentative writing skills as well as overcoming EFL writing apprehension among 7th level English language majors of Shaqra University, Saudi Arabia through flipping the classroom. In order to follow students outside the classroom, the it helped the teacher to monitor students' work . It also helped students confer and receive feedback about their writings. The online platform worked twofold; to encourage students write and modify their writings as well as develop their skills in writing and differentiate between the arguable and non-arguable topics.

Findings proved the effectiveness of the flipped classroom approach in developing EFL argumentative writing skills as well as decreasing their writing apprehension. Hence, it is recommended that :

- Student-centered learning is more effective than teacher-centered learning.
- Online platforms should be used to enhance communication outside of the classrooms
- There should be new approaches and strategies that help encourage students control their learning and motivate them to learn.

SUGGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the results of the current study , it's suggested that:

1. Further research is conducted using the flipped classroom to develop other EFL skills such as reading , speaking and vocabulary.
2. Measuring the students attitudes towards using Edmodo as a learning platform .
3. Investigating other learner- centered methods that develop EFL skills .

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