

Effective Strategies for Teaching Argumentative Essays in EFL Tertiary Level Writing Classes in Bangladesh

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Abstract

An EFL teacher faces a lot of challenges in essay writing instruction. This paper investigates the appropriate strategies for teaching argumentative essays in an EFL writing class at the tertiary level. In order to conduct the study, students studying in MA in ELT in two different intakes at Bangladesh University of Business and Technology (BUBT) were explored. One intake was treated as an experimental and another as a control group. The experimental group was instructed to write argumentative essays using different strategies, and the control group was taught through the traditional way. From the results of the pretest and post test study, and classroom observation, it was found that a teacher can make the learners write a good argumentative essay by showing them the structure of an argumentative essay, employing appropriate prewriting tasks and guiding them in planning and developing the arguments at the writing stage.

Keywords: argumentative essays, teaching writing, strategies in EFL writing, the tertiary level

Introduction

The students at the tertiary level have to write academic essays. They are taught essay writing so that they could be equipped with the necessary skills for writing the academic papers. Although students receive essay writing instruction at the secondary and higher secondary levels, when they enter the tertiary level, it is found that most of them do not know how to write a good essay.

Teaching writing in EFL classrooms is a challenging task. There have been many researches on EFL writing which provides some insights into EFL/ESL contexts. However, "L2 writing is taught following "current-traditional approach," (Matsuda, 2003; Silva, 1990, p. 13) in which form is the most important criterion rather than thoughts" (quoted). In Bhowmik, 2009). According to Miao, Badger, and Zhen (2006), although teachers are believed to be teaching a process approach to composing, in practice, they are more concerned about students' written products and most student writings are completed in a single draft. Although process approach to feedback is preached, it is hardly practiced and too much of emphasis on examinations takes the focus off the process-based writing instructions. In fact, examination pressure is such that often "writing is tested rather than taught" (Lee, 2004, p. 288). Saha (2017, p. 59) identifies that teachers'

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inappropriate judgment and decision making while designing and delivering lessons many of the students at the university level display apathy toward writing lessons.

In teaching argumentative essay in EFL contexts, the teacher faces similar kinds of challenges as are prevalent in most EFL settings. Composing argumentative texts presents specific difficulties for writers with respect to content, structure, textual organization as well as linguistic coding (Applebee, Langer, Jenkins, Mullis & Foerscht, 1990; Hays, Brandt & Chantry, 1988; Marchand, Coirier & Dellerman, 1996). In constructing instructional strategies for writing argumentative essay, the teacher has to keep these difficulties in mind. Saha (2017, p. 59) suggests that teachers can consider planning and designing multilayered but mutually connected writing classes. This would allow learners to self-assess their progress after completion of every stage of writing and set personal target for the next stage to keep pace with the overall lesson objective. According to Wingate (2012), the teaching of argumentative writing mostly emphasized rhetorical and linguistic structures but paid less attention to the organization of argumentation. Fan, C. Y., Lee, C. Y., Wang, J.Y., Huang, Y. L., and Chen, G. D. held, organization of argumentation is very important in an argumentative essay. Koh (2004) indicated that one of the reasons for students to fail to perform well in argumentative writing is their lack of knowledge about good argumentation; therefore, they cannot integrate related evidence, results, and opinions, and thus, they cannot eventually form an argumentative essay.

The researcher also faced some difficulties in argumentative essay instruction with the students of Bangladesh University of Business and Technology (BUBT). She found that the students could not maintain a good organization in their essay. It was because they did not know that they could outline their thoughts about a topic prior to writing. They could somehow write the introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion, but the content in them, in many cases, did not go with the criteria of a good essay. They had great difficulties in forming appropriate thesis, statement supporting the claim with sufficient arguments and providing evidence, finding counterarguments and refuting them. Hence, it was necessary to teach the students the appropriate strategies of writing a good argumentative essay.

In order to investigate effective strategies in EFL argumentative essay writing instruction, she selected the students of MA in ELT of the university. Then, she explored the writing process, different approaches to writing, and studies concerning strategies of teaching writing effectively. After that, she formed a lesson model containing different strategies to teach argumentative essays following “writing strategies” and exploiting different approaches and strategies other

researchers used in their writing classes. The strategies in the lesson model included starting the class with appropriate pre-writing activity, clarifying the concept and structure of argumentative essay through modeling and exemplars, using graphic organizers at different stages of writing, providing sufficient feedback at different phases, letting the students know the qualities of good writing and assessment rubric for argumentative essay, and assigning them to keep and submit portfolio of their writing done in the classroom. At last, she applied these instructional strategies in her class and compared the success of the students with that of another. The researcher had three research questions:

- 1) What strategies do the teachers employ to teach argumentative essays in the tertiary level classes?
- 2) What is the impact of different instructional strategies on students' performance in writing argumentative essays? and
- 3) What are the appropriate strategies to help learners at the tertiary level to write a good argumentative essay?

Literature Review

The writing process and approaches

Hayes and Flower (1980) proposed a model of the nature and the architecture of processes and representations underlying text writing activity. Later, Van Dijk & Kintsch (1983), Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987), Hayes (1996), Galbraith (1999) also worked on the models of text production activity. Most of the models include (at least) the following components:

- Conceptual or referential planning which comprises the three subprocesses of (1) idea generation, (2) selection and evaluation of the retrieved ideas, and (3) organization of ideas
- Translating during which the plan is translated into a grammatically correct and pragmatically adequate linear text
- Revising during which the writer may modify his/her text, evaluate its adequacy to the assignments (addressee, goal...).

There have been many studies in approaches to L2 writing in the last twenty years. According to Munoz, Gaviria, and Palacio (2006, pp. 4-6), Traditionally there are three approaches to writing: product, process (1970s) and genre (1980s) approach. It is better to apply all the approaches combined. This combined approach involves the following steps:

1. Selecting a topic
2. Generating ideas
3. Revising
4. Editing

5. Scoring

All the steps contemplated in the combined approach to writing can be clearly reflected in a writing portfolio. A portfolio is a purposeful collection of students' writing, containing drafts, revisions, and the final written work. This method allows teachers to observe students' gradual improvement as well as encourage them to see their writing as something they have done by themselves. It also enables students to look back and reflect on their development as language learners.

According to Ur (2003, pp. 168-169), writing is a messy business. Most people progress through a number of untidy drafts before reaching a final version. Although good writers think about content first and form later, this order is not consistently observed. Actual content may be altered at quite late stages in the drafting, and changes to sentence or paragraph organization relatively early. Learners should not worry too much about spelling and grammar at the beginning, and get down their ideas first. However, teachers must not try to impose this as a rigid rule. Learners should be encouraged to work through a number of revisions to accept messy drafts as a positive and essential stage in writing.

Instructional Writing Strategies

Research on strategy instruction is not a new phenomenon. It started to attract researchers' attention with the work of Dornyei & Csizer (1998) and Guilleaume & Dornyei (2008) where they provided the language teachers with the effective teaching strategies for motivating learners.

Research on different strategies of prewriting is abundant. Prewriting means generating and developing ideas about a topic (2018, "Graphic Organizers for Prewriting", para. 2). All ability levels can use prewriting strategies successfully (Horton, Lovitt, & Bergerud, 2001). Sarabi & Tootkaboni (2012) in a study addressed the effectiveness of picture, music, and topic tools in facilitating ideas in pre-writing stage. Results of the study demonstrated that the employment of music as a guided writing environment was a spring boards for EFL learners to jumpstart their writing with more expanded ideas.

Moghaddas & Zakariazadeh (2011) studied on the use of videos and reading comprehension texts in the prewriting phase to improve composition writing skills at the advance levels. The results showed that using videos as a pre-writing task has positive effects and help second language learners be better writers.

“Visual organizers (also called thinking tools, graphic organizers, or key visuals) are formats for organizing information and ideas graphically. They use words, pictures, and graphic cues to help students to generate ideas, record and reorganize information, and see relationships” (Walker & Schmidt, 2004. p. 39). Teaching students how to prewrite using graphic organizers helps them organize their thoughts and ideas so that they can prepare for the writing process (2018, Graphic Organizers for Prewriting, para. 3).

Another research was conducted by Mahmudah & Jamilah with IX grade students of SMPN 9 Yogyakarta in the academic year of 2014/2015. The study showed that there was improvement on IX grade students’ writing skill in five aspects of writing, namely content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics of writing after the implementation of graphic organizer that was supported by other actions. In addition, the use of graphic organizers was also able to improve students’ motivation in writing.

Using the graphic organizers as a closing activity has also been proven effective by Dexter & Hughes (2011) in their study on graphic organizers and their relationship to content learning within the elementary classroom. Their claim is that the use of graphic organizers not only improves factual recall (basic thinking) of information but also inferencing, or higher order thinking skills (quoted in Servati, 2012, p.19).

In case of essay writing, the most common graphic organizers are outline, webs, mind maps, concept maps, compare and contrast map, and persuasion map (“Using Graphic Organizers for Writing essays, Summaries and Research”, para. 4 & “Using Graphic Organizers”). Different types of essays can be taught using different graphic organizers. Brown (2011) in a study determined the effectiveness of using technology and graphic organizers to teach the pre-writing process. In his study he showed how students used graphic organizers to write a persuasive essay based on a short novel.

Scaffolding is also necessary in EFL writing classes. Campbell (2018, p. 3) held,

Teachers should also provide sufficient instructional scaffolding. Instructional scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1986 & Bruner, 1986) refers to types of support provided by teachers (or peers) to help students accomplish a specific task that they are unable to accomplish on their own. As students gain knowledge, the teacher gradually withdraws the scaffolding so that students transition from social interaction to working independently.

Providing appropriate feedback on students’ writing has also proven as an essential strategy in writing instruction. According to Baghzou (2014, p.72), if the teacher wants to respond to written work as an assistant or a guide, a focus on only

lexical and grammatical mistakes will not be appropriate. Responding to students' work means reacting to their ideas and to how they put them across.

Argumentation and Strategies for Teaching Argumentative Essay

Argumentation is defined as a natural, or informal, reasoning process; examples, analogies, or arguments of authority can support a point of view as firmly as pure deductive rules (Apotheloz & Mieville, 1989). Argumentative writing is a challenging communication task that requires complex cognitive and linguistic skills (Nippold & Ward-Lonergan, 2010). Toulmin (1958) has proposed a prototypical schema of argumentation, which includes five components:

- Claim: taking a stance in a discussion
- Evidence, data: reason, proof, facts
- Warrant: inference (linking) rules
- Backing: support of the warrant
- Rebuttal: restrictions or specifications and counter-arguments

There are only a few research studies that emphasised instructional strategies designed to help improve students' argumentative writing (Varghese & Abraham, 1998). The strategies for teaching argumentative essays, according to "writing strategies" are:

Step 1 (Crafting a Thesis and Organizing Ideas): The strategies include- Taking a Stand on Controversial Issues, Building Arguments through Mini-debates, Linking Claims and Evidence with Analysis, Thesis Sorting, Tug for Truth, and Refuting Counterarguments

Step 2 (Proving the Point through Logical Reasoning in Body Paragraphs): The strategies are- Claims, Data, and Analysis in body paragraphs, Using Exemplars, Using Graphic Organizers to Organize Writing, and Sentence-Strip Paragraphs

Step 3 (Framing and Connecting Ideas in Introductions and Conclusions): The strategies include- Introductions: Inverted Pyramid, Conclusions: Text-To-Text, Text-To-Self, and Text-To-World, and Fishbowl

Step 4 (Revising and Editing to Impact the Audience): The strategies are- 3-2-1, Adding transitions, Backwards Outline, Conferencing, and Read-alouds

Step 5 (Publishing/Sharing/Reflecting): The strategies are- Reflecting on the Process, and Online Publishing

To teach argumentative essay writing effectively the writing teacher also should have a sound knowledge about the essential qualities of a good piece of writing. "The 6+1 Trait Writing model (Culham 2003) emphasizes writing instruction in which teachers and students analyze writing using a set of characteristics, or "traits," of written work: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency,

conventions, and presentation.” (quoted in Coe, Hanita, Nishioka, & Smiley, 2011) Turkovitz (2003) in a study “The Power of the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing on Second Graders” investigated the impacts of 6+1 traits of writing on second graders. The researcher showed that the participants’ narrative essay writing ability clearly improved after receiving instruction in 6+1 traits of Writing Framework.

During argumentative essay writing instruction, the teacher also should know about the aspects of a good writing test. If the teacher has clear knowledge about how he is going to measure the learners’ writing performance in the test, he would be more focused in the classroom. According to Hughes (2003, p. 83), the problem of testing learners’ writing ability involves three parts:

- a) The writing tasks should be representative of the population of tasks that we expect the students to be able to perform.
- b) The tasks should elicit valid samples of writing (i.e. which truly represent the students’ ability).
- c) The samples of writing should be scored validly and reliably.

Method

Participants

For collecting data, the researcher selected students of two different intakes who were studying MA in ELT in the first semester at Bangladesh University of Business and technology. The students of one intake were taken as control group (15 students) and those of another as experimental group (15 students). All of them completed graduation in English. Each week they attended a three-hour class for every course. They were doing three courses in their first semester. The researcher taught essay writing in the course, ELT 503 (Technical Writing in English). Other than essay they also learnt about writing paragraph, different kinds of business letters, basics of research paper, and report.

Instrumentation

The writing pretest and posttest

The researcher had made the students of both the classes write an argumentative essay on the same essay prompt “Using Technology in Daily Life” in order to measure their performance level in writing argumentative essays before they received any instruction on writing argumentative essays. After having the instruction on writing argumentative essays, the students wrote another argumentative essay on “Using Cellphone” which the researcher used as posttest. In preparing the test items, the researcher followed Hughes (2003, p. 46-93)’ concepts of valid and reliable writing tests. She chose such essay topics in pretest and posttest that those could ‘test only writing ability and nothing else’. In the tests, the researcher also

provided the students the necessary points on the topic in order to 'restrict candidate' and not let them 'go too far astray' while writing. In this way the tests elicited 'a valid sample' of students' writing ability. As the topics were also chosen from everyday life, they were not ambiguous to the students; instead, they were reliable to them.

The essays in the pretest and posttest were scored using an assessment rubric for argumentative essays (Appendix D) based on six traits of writing (content, ideas, voice, word choice, sentence fluency and conventions) and modified from the Argumentative Essay Rubric (https://www.uen.org/core/languagearts/writing/downloads/Argumentative_Essay_Rubric.pdf). The students' essays were scored on the basis of 8 criteria (Appendix E) and out of 40 points. All the essays were scored by two raters and the average of the scores were taken into consideration. This is how the inter-rater reliability of scoring was maintained in the study.

Classroom observation

All the argumentative essay writing lessons of the control class were observed to identify the instructional strategies the teacher used. The observations were semi-structured. The following factors were observed:

- Selection of topic of the essay
- Pre-writing activity
- Instructional strategies on writing different aspects of argumentative essay: claim, opposing claim, evidence, refutation.
- Instructional strategies on writing different parts of the essay: Introduction (hook, explanation of issue, thesis) supporting paragraphs, refutations, conclusion (concluding statement)
- Instructional materials
- Occasional sufficient feedback
- Role of the teacher in the writing process
- Essential traits of writing
- Assessment Rubric
- Post-writing activity

Procedures

The control class

A faculty member in the department of English at Bangladesh University of Business and Technology (BUBT) taught the control class writing argumentative essay in the traditional way (Appendix F). She completed it in 2 lessons (5 hours). The steps he followed in the class are stated below briefly:

- Brief discussion: Teacher(T) talked about argumentative essay briefly.
- Prompt: T give students (ss) a prompt "Facebook" to write an argumentative essay.

- Clarification: T briefly answers the questions that the ss asked while they were writing.
- Single draft: Ss completed their writing in a single draft.
- Brief feedback: After the students completed their essays, T overviewed them and provided them with brief feedback.

The experimental class

The researcher herself instructed the experimental class to write an argumentative essay applying a lesson model (Appendix G) which she prepared based on "writing strategies". It took the researcher 3 lessons (9 hours) to teach writing argumentative essays in the experimental class. The strategies she followed in the class are briefly given below:

- a) Selection of prompt: Teacher (T) at first selected the argumentative essay prompt through discussion with the students (ss).
- b) Mini debate:
 - T divided the class into two sides- pro and con.
 - Ss wrote down their arguments and evidence individually for or against the proposition- "Facebook is good for people". Then, they shared the arguments within own group and compiled them.
 - Each group presented their arguments and evidence. While one group presented, the other group presented counter arguments. Each group compiled the counter arguments and wrote down the refutations.
- c) Graphic organizer: Students filled up part of a graphic organizer to enlist their arguments, evidence, counterarguments and refutation.
- d) Inverted Pyramid: T provided ss with an inverted pyramid graphic organizer that represent the introduction of an essay. T used the organizer to explain the different parts of introduction.
- e) Forming Thesis: T made the ss practice writing good thesis statement through some exercises.
- f) Writing Introduction: Ss wrote the introduction of their essays.
- g) Exemplar Essay: T provided the ss with exemplar argumentative essay to show different parts of the essay.
- h) Supporting Paragraphs and Refutation: Ss wrote the supporting paragraphs with argument, evidence/analysis, counterargument and refutation.
- i) Transition Words: T provided ss with transition words to use in the essay. They also practiced using transition words in an exemplar essay. They also used transition words in the supporting paragraphs of their individual essays.
- j) Writing Conclusion: T showed the ways to write a conclusion and ss wrote the conclusion.
- k) Completing Graphic Organizer: Ss completed the rest of the graphic organizer.
- l) 6+1 Traits of Writing: T talked about the 6+1 trait of writing
- m) Portfolio Assignment: Ss submitted the complete portfolio of the essay writing lesson with the final version the following class.

Apart from these strategies, the teacher provided the students with effective feedback at different stages of their writing.

Results and Discussion

From students’ scores in the pretest it is seen that both the classes contain students of mixed level of proficiency in writing. The results in pre and posttests show that both the groups of students improved in writing in 6 criteria. They hardly improved in two criteria; they were (a) words, phrases, clauses, and sentences and (b) conventions. The improvement in these two criteria needs more time that the teachers could not find in teaching argumentative essays. This is why the students could not improve in the criteria.

To investigate the impact of different instructional strategies on the students’ performance in writing argumentative essays, the researcher computed the results in the pretests and posttests quantitatively through SPSS. At first, descriptive statistics for the students’ performances on the pre and posttests writing tests were calculated. Then the scores were put in a one way ANOVA.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics of the results of the pretests of the two groups

Groups	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Control	15	21	5.07
Experimental	15	21.66	4.88

The results in the above table shows that the mean scores of the two groups in the pretests are quite similar.

A one-way ANOVA was run to find out if there was any difference between the subjects of the control and experimental groups.

Table 2
One-way ANOVA: Results of the pretest scores of the two groups

	Sum of scores	df	Mean squares	F	Sig. (p)
Between groups	3.267	1	3.267	0.132	0.719
Within groups	693.270	28	24.760		
Total	696.537	29			

Table 2 shows that there is no subject difference between the two groups (F=0.132, p= .719>0.05). So, the two groups of students were at the same level of proficiency in writing argumentative essays.

Table 3
Descriptive statistics of the results of the posttests of the two groups

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Control	15	25.67	2.58
Experimental	14	33.67	3.52

From table 3 it is seen that mean score of the experimental group is higher than that of the control group.

To find out whether the differences between the two groups in the post tests were significant or not, a one-way ANOVA was run.

Table 4
One-way ANOVA: Results of the posttest scores of the two groups

	Sum of scores	df	Mean squares	F	Sig.(p)
Between groups	480.000	1	480.000	50.402	0.000
Within groups	266.655	28	9.523		
Total	746.655	29			

It is found from the above table that there is a significant difference between the two groups in the posttests, F (50.402), $p=.000<.05$.

To sum up, the students in the experimental class outperformed that of the control class because of the strategies the researcher used in her class. And it can be said that the strategies the researcher used in the experimental class were more appropriate than those in the control class.

From the classroom observation it was seen that the students in the experimental class were much engaged in the entire lesson of writing the argumentative essay. The mini-debate session created real excitement among the students. They participated in the pre-writing phase, such as compiling arguments, sharing arguments, listening to the arguments, making counter arguments, and making refutations, etc. very actively. They also asked different questions to the instructor. They seemed motivated in the writing task for the entire period of the classes on argumentative essay. On the other hand, the students in the control class asked the teacher few questions about the task. The problems found in the control class were:

1. Not all the students understood the basic concept and structure of an argument essay.
2. There was not any prewriting task.
3. Students started to write the essay without planning the organization.
4. The instructions on writing argumentative essays were not enough for the students.

5. The teacher followed holistic scoring which made him ignore some important aspects of the students' writing, for example, claim, opposing claim, refutation, etc.
6. The students did not get any idea about the traits of good writing and assessment rubric for argumentative essays.
7. The students needed more feedback on different aspects and at different phases of writing.

The strategies that teachers should apply in argumentative essay writing classes are:

1. The instructor should choose an essay topic of students' interest. In the web page Essay Shark, this idea is supported, "your essay is more likely to be brilliant if you are really interested in the subject you write about". The teacher may select the prompt of the essay after discussing with the students.
2. The teacher should start the class with appropriate prewriting task which activate students' schemata as well as make them find scope to generate ideas and outline the arguments. According to Shannon O'Mealia (2011, p. 2), "strategy instruction in the prewriting stage improves student writing in terms of content, organization, and voice, and also improves student's motivation and creativity towards writing."
3. Teachers should demonstrate that they themselves enjoy writing and choose such strategies that make writing a fun for the learners. Cohen & Cowen (2010) supported this concept. They stated, "Teachers need to model a love for writing and embrace writing as a fun activity."
4. He could start the class with mini-debate because through debate students can brainstorm on the topic as well as understand the basic concept of an argumentative essay. This prewriting strategy also presents writing as an exciting activity.
5. He should make students fill up graphic organizers at different stages of writing to make them understand the concept and structure of an argumentative essay better and write the essay appropriately.
6. To clarify the basic concept and structure of argumentative essay he could use exemplar essay.
7. The instructor should give the students the basic idea about the traits of good writing as well as assessment rubric for argumentative essay.
8. He should provide each of the students with appropriate feedback at different phases of writing and on different aspects of argument essays.
9. He should provide feedback more on content than on accuracy.
10. The teacher could ask students to maintain writing portfolio assignment so that they can keep record of the process they have gone through while writing the essay.

So, the students in control class were not able to write good argumentative essays because the instructor in the class did not consider using appropriate strate

gies to teach them writing the essay. On the other hand, the students in the experimental class were able to produce a good piece of essay after several drafts. The teacher in that class employed different strategies in order to make writing enjoyable to them and make them follow the essential aspects of a good argumentative essay in their writing.

Conclusion

It is found from the results of the study that appropriate teaching strategies impact positively on students' writing in EFL settings. The writing teachers should, at first, have good knowledge about different approaches to writing and different aspects of argumentative essays, testing and assessing argumentative essay, and then design instructional strategies considering students' level of proficiency, their background, interests, needs, and attitude about writing. The strategies that the instructor could follow are- start the class selecting appropriate topic of the essay, have them do brainstorming through appropriate strategy, scaffold through graphic organizer and exemplar to make them practice writing all the parts of the essay maintaining the essential aspects, and using necessary phrases and transitional words, act as guide while giving feedback at different stages, and at last assign them keep the writing portfolio. Above all, the teacher should demonstrate that he himself love writing. In order to bring all these into reality, the EFL writing teachers need to be motivated in the instructions and may undergo effective training on argumentative essay instruction. Through making students participate in the writing classes actively and understand different aspects of writing, and the entire process of writing, the EFL instructor can help them write a cohesive argumentative essay.

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Appendices

Appendix A:

Worksheet 1 (Graphic organizer for outlining an argumentative essay)

Sample Outline for an Argumentative Writing

Beginning (Introduction)

Hook -

Explanation of Issue -

Thesis/Position -

Argument 1

State argument -
Explanation -
Evidence/Analysis

Argument 2

State argument -
Explanation -
Evidence/Analysis-

Argument 3
(optional)

State argument -
Explanation -
Evidence/Analysis

Argument 4
(optional)

State argument -
Explanation -
Evidence/Analysis

Refutation

State opposing argument -
Explanation -
Refutation -

Ending (Conclusion) Restate thesis in a new way

Bring things to a solid
close/Give your reader
something to think about -

Appendix B:

Exercise-Thesis statement

Exercise 1: Thesis statement

Read the statements below. Put a tick (✓) beside each statement if it is clear thesis statement. If not, find the problem and correct it with your partner.

e.g.: This essay will be about the crime rate in Konya. Announcement.

Correct: The crime rate in Konya has increased a lot recently for three main reasons.

- i. My best friend was our neighbor in our summer house. _____
- ii. My roommate and I get on well in most ways and we have interesting families. _____
- iii. Capital punishment should be abolished for several reasons. _____
- iv. I am going to write about the problems of university students. _____
- v. Football is an important part of life. _____
- vi. Milk is rich in calcium. _____
- vii. The kinds of clothes people wear reflect their personalities. _____
- viii. Music is important to many people in the world because it can help you relax, express yourself or work better. _____

Exercise 2: weak and strong thesis

Question: Identify weak and strong thesis.

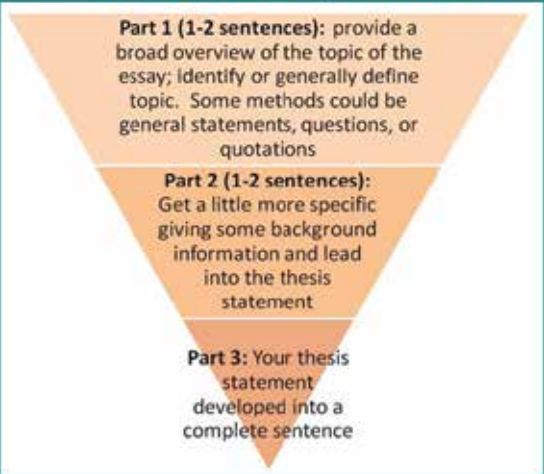
- i. (a) There are some negative and positive aspects to the Banana Herb Tea Supplement.
(b) Banana Herb Tea Supplement promotes rapid weight loss that results in the loss of muscle and lean body mass, posing a potential danger to consumers.
- ii. (a) While most Americans would view marriage among relatives to be a threat to the nuclear family structure, many Iranian families, like my own, believe that these arranged marriages help reinforce kinship ties in an extended family.
(b) My family is an extended family.
- iii. (a) Companies need to exploit the marketing potential of the Internet, and Web pages can provide both advertising and customer support.
(b) The Internet is filled with tremendous marketing potential which companies should exploit through Web pages that offer both advertising and customer support.
- iv. (a) Strong: Hunger persists in Glandelinia because jobs are scarce and farming in the infertile soil is rarely profitable.
(b) World hunger has many causes and effects.

Appendix C:

Inverted Pyramid



Introductory Paragraph –
Inverted Pyramid



Appendix D:

Assessment Rubric for Argumentative Essay

(6 - Traits)	5 Mastery	4 Proficient	3 Basic	2 Standard Not Met	1 Standard Not Met
Claim (Ideas & Org.)	Introduces a well thought out claim at the beginning of the essay	Introduces a claim later in the essay	Claim is not as clear as it should be	Hard to find the claim	No claim
Opposing Claim (Org.)	Acknowledges alternate or opposing claims	Opposing claims are not strong or relevant to the claim	Opposing claims are unclear	Hard to find opposing claims	Opposing claims not addressed
Evidence (Ideas & Org.)	Supports the claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, demonstrating a complete understanding of the topic	Supports the claim with reasoning and evidence, and demonstrates some understanding of the topic	Evidence is not relevant or not completely thought out	Lacks evidence and relevance	No evidence to support claims
Refutation ((Ideas & Org.)	Refute the opposing claim well	Refute the opposing claim	Refutation is not as clear as it should be.	Hard to find the refutation No refutation	
Words, Phrases, clauses and sentences (Word Choice & Sent. Fluency)	Uses variety words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among the claim, reasons, and evidence	One or two errors with some variety in word usage, clauses but not enough to cause misunderstandings or harm the relationships of the claims, reasons, and evidence	More than 3 errors with little variety in word choice and clause or phrase usage. Cohesion is harder to follow as a result	More than 3 errors with little variety in word choice and clause or phrase usage. Cohesion is harder to follow as a result	No cohesion and clarity
Style (Voice & Sent. Fluency)	Establishes and maintains a formal style	Mostly follows formal style	Few informal sections of writing	Casual style and jargon	No formal style looks like a text message
Concluding statement (Ideas & Org.)	Provides a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument presented.	Provides a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument presented.	Concluding statement mentions the argument presented	Concluding statement is incomplete and or doesn't mention argument	No concluding statement
Conventions /Grammar, Usage and Mechanics (GUM)	Demonstrates exceptional command of	Demonstrates strong command of the conventions of standard	Demonstrates proficient command of the	Demonstrates marginal command of the	Demonstrates poor command of the conventions

Appendix E:

The criteria to score students’ essays

- 1. Claim (Ideas & Organization): 5 points
- 2. Opposing Claim (Organization) : 5 points
- 3. Evidence (Ideas & Organization) : 5 points
- 4. Refutation ((Ideas & Organization) : 5 points
- 5. Words, Phrases, clauses and sentences (Word Choice & Sentence Fluency) : 5 points
- 6. Style (Voice & Sentence Fluency) : 5 points
- 7. Concluding statement (Ideas & Organization) : 5 points
- 8. Conventions /Grammar, Usage and Mechanics (GUM): 5 points

Appendix: F

The lesson in the control class

Lesson no.	Strategy	Teacher activity	Student activity
Lesson 1(3 hours)			
		The teacher (T) introduced the topic to the students (ss).	
	Brief discussion	T talked about argumentative essay briefly.	
	Prompt	T gave ss a prompt “ Facebook” to write an argumentative essay.	
		T remained sitting on his chair.	Ss started writing the essay.
	Clarification	T briefly answered the questions.	Sometimes ss asked different questions to the t when they faced any problem in writing the essay.
	Brief Feedback	T overviewed some of the ss’ essays and provided them with brief feedback.	
Lesson 2(2 hours)			
	Brief Feedback	T overviewed rest of the ss’ essays and provided them with brief feedback.	

Appendix G:

The lessons in the experimental class

Lesson no.	Strategy	Teacher activity	Student activity
Lesson 1(3 hours)			
		T introduced the topic.	
	Strategy 1: Selection of Prompt	Through discussion the t selected the prompt that the ss would write an argumentative essay on.	
Strategy 2: Mini Debate		T divided the class in half. He assigned one side to be the pro position and the other side to be the con position. Then he made the ss move their desks so the ss in the pro position were sitting together and the ss in the con position were all together. After that he wrote a debatable proposition – “Facebook is good for people” on the board.	
		T facilitated.	Ss wrote down their arguments and evidence individually for or against the proposition. Then they shared the arguments within own group and compiled them.
		T mediated the procedure.	Each group presented their arguments and evidence. While group ‘x’ was presenting, the other group ‘y’ can presented counter arguments, and ss of group ‘x’ noted down the counterarguments. Again, while group ‘y’ was presenting, the other group ‘x’ presented counter arguments, and ss of group ‘y’ noted down the counterarguments.
Lesson 2(3 hours)			
		T facilitated.	Each group compiled the counterarguments and wrote down the refutations.
	Strategy 3: Graphic Organizer	T facilitated.	Students filled up part of a graphic organizer (worksheet 1_Outline_ Argumentative Writing) to enlist their arguments, evidence, counterargument and refutation.

	Strategy 4: Inverted Pyramid	T provided ss with an 'Inverted Pyramid' graphic organizer. T told ss that this pyramid represented the introduction to their paper. He gave them the terms, hook, background and thesis, and their definitions and asked them to label where on the pyramid they thought it made sense to place this information.	Ss placed the terms in the graphic organizer. T gave feedback and explained the parts of introduction.
	Strategy 5: Forming Thesis	The teacher modelled a thesis brainstorm using a different prompt. The teacher made ss do exercises on thesis statement (a. Identifying clear thesis statement and, b. Identifying weak and strong thesis statement).	
	Strategy 6: Writing Introduction	He asked the students to write an introduction of their essay. T gave feedback.	Ss wrote the introduction.
Lesson 3 (3 hours)			
	Strategy 7: Exemplar essay	T provided the ss with exemplar argumentative essay and showed different parts of the essay.	
		T provided ss with (a) necessary phrases to mention counterargument(s) in the essay	
	Strategy 8: Feedback	While the ss were writing, T was giving feedback especially on content rather than accuracy.	Ss wrote the supporting paragraphs with argument, evidence/analysis, counterargument and refutation.
	Strategy 9: Transition words	T provided ss with transition words to use in the essay.	ii. They added transition words to the paragraphs.
	Strategy 10: Writing Conclusion	T showed the ways to write a conclusion and asked the ss to write their own conclusion. T ve feedback while ss were writing and when they completed.	Ss wrote the conclusion.

	Strategy 11: Completing Graphic Organizer	T asked ss to complete the rest of the graphic organizer (worksheet 1).	Ss did accordingly.
	Strategy 12: 6+1 Traits of Writing& Assessment Rubric	T talked about the 6+1 traits of writing and assessment rubric for argumentative essay.	
	Strategy 13: Portfolio Assignment	T asked ss to submit the complete portfolio of the essay writing lesson with the final version the following week.	

Appendix H:

Students' scores in the prewriting tests in 6 traits of writing in the control class

Score possible	No of students Earned score in Claim (Ideas & Org.)		No of students Earned score in Opposing Claim (Org.)		No of students Earned score in Evidence (Ideas & Org.)		No of students Earned score in Refutation (Ideas & Org.)		No of students Earned score in Words, Phrases, clauses and sentences (Word Choice & Sent. Fluency)		No of students Earned score in Style (Voice & Sent. Fluency)		No of students Earned score in Concluding Statement (Ideas & Org.)		No of students Earned score in Conventions	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0
4	0	6	0	2	0	6	0	1	7	7	5	8	1	7	10	10
3	6	9	2	7	7	8	1	7	7	7	7	5	7	7	3	3
2	9	0	6	6	7	1	2	7	0	0	3	0	7	1	2	2
1	0	0	7	0	1	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix I:

Students’ scores in the prewriting tests in 6 traits of writing in the experimental class

Score possible	No of students Earned score in Claim (Ideas & Org.)		No of students Earned score in Opposing Claim (Org.)		No of students Earned score in Evidence (Ideas & Org.)		No of students Earned score in Refutation (Ideas & Org.)		No of students Earned score in Words, Phrases, clauses and sentences (Word Choice & Sent. Fluency)		No of students Earned score in Style (Voice & Sent. Fluency)		No of students Earned score in Concluding Statement (Ideas & Org.)		No of students Earned score in Conventions	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
5	0	11	0	10	0	10	0	8	1	2	1	9	0	6	0	0
4	0	4	0	4	4	4	0	5	8	9	7	5	4	6	10	11
3	11	0	3	1	7	1	4	2	4	4	3	1	6	3	3	3
2	4	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	5	0	1	1
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

Appendix J:

Total scores of the students of the control and experimental classes in pretest and posttest:

Control class			Experimental class		
Student	Pretest score	Post test score	Student	Pretest score	Post test score
Student A	20	25	Student a	16	31
Student B	17	22	Student b	25	39
Student C	22	27	Student c	17	31
Student D	19	26	Student d	19	35
Student E	22	28	Student e	23	34
Student F	22	28	Student f	26	36
Student G	23	29	Student g	27	36
Student H	17	29	Student h	13	24
Student I	22	32	Student i	25	38
Student J	16	22	Student j	18	29
Student K	23	28	Student k	26	38
Student L	23	29	Student l	22	38
Student M	21	25	Student m	23	38
Student N	23	26	Student n	25	38
Student O	19	26	Student o	25	35