Practices and Challenges in a Flipped EFL Writing Classroom

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Despite the widespread use of flipped teaching across educational disciplines, there is limited understanding on its use in the teaching and learning of English as a second language (ESL) writing in intensive English (IE) programmes for pre-university students. Such programmes face at least three constraints: the students' low English proficiency, the shortage of time to bridge the English gap, and the necessity for academic English. This paper aims to explore practices and challenges of a flipped EFL writing classroom. In total, 38 students were given flipped writing classroom training. The participants watched video lectures on academic writing designed for the purpose of this study before the class, and then participated in interactive in-class learning activities. The study results revealed that the students performed the writing tasks significantly better in the post-test. The interviews with students showed that students favoured the greater time preparation, the immediate feedback, the increased opportunity to practise and interact, as well as the higher level of motivation and self-efficacy.

Keywords: Flipped classroom, English as a second language, writing, blending

Introduction

The global population of international students continues to rise, reaching almost 5 million in 2014 - more than double from the 2.1 million internationally mobile students in 2000 (Benson, 2015) and expected to hit 8 million by 2025 (Quacquarelli Symonds, 2018). With the surge in the number of students and the significant changes in the diversity of student population as well as the modes of curriculum delivery (Coffin et al., 2005), student academic writing continues to be at the centre of teaching and learning in higher education. Writing is one of the most difficult skills that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners are expected to acquire, partly due to the first language interference (Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2013). Although most EFL students studying in post-secondary institutions have a good grasp of the writing skills, their way of expressing their thoughts in English may not meet the expectation of western academic communities that they are entering (Myles, 2002). Moreover, Kern (2000) suggests that the abstract mental structures representing our knowledge of things, events, and situations can lead to difficulties when students write texts in a foreign language. Knowing how to write a discussion essay in Mandarin does not mean that EFL students will be able to do so in English proficiently.

Most importantly, writing is a demanding task for Second Language (L2) learners as their linguistic knowledge and lexical resources, for examples, may be limited. This limitation reduces their possibilities for expressing their ideas. To be able to write in a foreign language effectively, students need to "learn the orthography, morphology, lexicon, syntax, as well as the discourse and rhetorical conventions of the L2" (Barkaoui, 2007, p.35). L2 learners not only need to have vocabulary knowledge, but also need to have the grammatical knowledge at their disposal to be able to connect the words into proper clauses and sentences (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). In addition to this language-related knowledge, L2 writers also need to have metacognitive knowledge of what makes a good text and be able to employ writing strategies suitable for each text.

According to Schoonen and Glopper (1996), high proficiency and low proficiency L2 writers could be distinguished by their metacognitive knowledge which includes task knowledge and strategy knowledge. Low proficiency learners spend a lot of time in accessing the low-level (linguistic) knowledge resources and subsequently have less time participating in high level processes of writing such as text structuring. However, if low proficiency learners have more fluent access to grammatical structures in memory, their cognitive processing load might be lower and therefore they can spend more time in enhancing the writing process as well as the quality of written text (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Cumming, 2001; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). In other words, when low proficiency learners need more time to deal with 'low order' problems of word finding and grammatical structures, they have little or no working memory free to attend to higher level or strategic aspects of writing, such as organizing the text properly or trying to convince the reader of their view.

As such, flipped classroom method may be useful for L2 learners, as class time is used to explore and apply ideas and practise language with their peers. All the lecture videos, grammar points and writing structures or revision can be done at home. Flipping the content allows learners to pause and rewind their lectures, and help them understand and learn the important concepts before class. When they come to class, they can participate in higher level aspects of writing. The flipped classroom is a teaching model where students do traditional classroom activities, such as listening to lectures, outside of the classroom, resulting in having more time for engaging practice activities in class. Students can study lesson materials and set whatever pace they are comfortable with. For example, students with low level of English language proficiency can view materials multiple times, while their peers with high level of language proficiency can breeze through everything more quickly. In a traditional classroom, students of various English proficiency levels all have to follow the same pace set by the teacher, and this is less than ideal for many students. In flipped classrooms, teachers are more involved in practice activities which are done in class, rather than given for homework. This allows teachers to see exactly where students struggle and adjust their teaching accordingly. For ESL/EFL classes, the flipped classroom approach is effective because it maximizes the amount of time students speak English in class and minimizes the amount of teacher talk time.

As pre-university intensive English courses tend to be short in duration; hence, teachers need to condense as much learning time as possible and flipped teaching might create more learning time and better use of classroom time. Research has reported that flipped classroom may enhance students' learning performance (Davies, Dean, & Ball, 2013; Fautch, 2015; Freeman et al., 2014; Han, 2015; Jungić, Kaur, Mulholland, & Xin, 2015; Marrs & Novak, 2004; Smith, Brown, Purnell, & Martin, 2015) but previous studies on flipped classroom seldom focused on EFL, especially the low proficiency learners. Therefore, the project reported in this paper aims to investigate the influence of flipped classroom on low proficiency EFL students' academic writing performance by identifying the benefits and the challenges of flipped classroom. It also aims to give insights into the ways the flipped writing approach can be utilised effectively in the ESL classroom at Higher Education (HE) level; particularly for low proficiency second language writers.

Background

Challenges facing EFL writing students

An EFL classroom usually consists of students who share the same language and culture in the same country; thus, this environment gives them exposure to English language only in the classroom. Outside of the classroom, students have limited opportunities to use the language, so English has no specific practical need for them (Souriyavongsa, Rany, Abidin, & Mei, 2013). Learners tend to acquire the language more slowly in an input-poor environment or language learning contexts, where they have little opportunity to hear or read the language outside or even inside the classroom (Kouraogo, 1993). This context is also found in EFL teaching environment in Malaysia.

Besides the different learning contexts which could either hasten or hinder the learners' acquisition of English, there are specific challenges that are pertinent in pre-university intensive English programs. These include:

(a) A widening gap between pre-university student levels of English and the minimum level of English required to cope with university studies. The wider the gap, the more difficult it is to bridge it.
(b) The time that pre-university students are willing to spend on Intensive English is often limited to a semester or two. The students are often in a hurry to get into their university course of choice as quickly as possible, and they overlook counting the cost of failing in terms of time and money when they are not sufficiently prepared to study in English.
(c) The problem of acquiring English as used in academia in contrast to learning English for general purposes. Most pre-university students have not been taught the former. All these impede their language learning.

First of all, many non English-speaking background (NESB) students who have gained the requisite proficiency IELTS scores of Band 6 or Band 6.5 appear to be linguistically under-prepared for academic study (Coley, 1999; McDowall & Merrylees, 1998). Complaints have been directed in particular at NESB students' inadequate academic writing skills (Kam & Meinema, 2005). Thus, if there is a gap between the first year NESB students who scored the minimal level of English and the level of proficiency required for successful academic pursuits, the gap between the pre-university NESB students and the minimum level of English is even greater. Another challenge of Intensive English Program is time. Elder and O'Loughlin (2003) suggested that three months of full-time intensive study in an English-speaking country were required for students to progress half of an IELTS overall proficiency band. According to Cummins (2000), the time required to achieve Cognitive Academic

Language Proficiency (CALP) for non English-speaking background (NESB) students takes at least five years' of study and the time for NESB low-level English proficiency learning an intensive program in a non-English-speaking country will even be longer. However, many low proficiency NESB students are not willing to spend too much time learning English. Johns (1998) and Leki (2007) report that NESB students avoided taking compulsory writing classes and perceived them as yet another unnecessary hurdle to jump through before they are allowed to progress into the mainstream courses. The third challenge facing the Intensive English Program is the disparity between the demand of 'academic literacy' and English for general purposes. While 'literacy' refers to the basic ability to read and write for daily functional and social activities and purposes, 'academic literacy' refers to the ability to use written sources critically to read texts with understanding of their discursive role in society as well as to write appropriate texts in order to learn and succeed in higher education (Weideman, 2003).

Intensive English programs for pre-university students thus face at least these three constraints: the students' low English proficiency, the shortage of time to bridge the English gap, and the necessity for academic English. For ease of reference, these may be labelled the gap constraint, the time constraint and the appropriacy constraint. For this reason, any Intensive English program should take into account these three variables - low proficiency, time constraint and academic English - in trying to raise the level and variety of students' English which will enable them to cope with their undergraduate studies. In order to address the problems and help the EFL low proficiency learners to raise their level of English language proficiency, this study used the flipped approach to increase the three dimensions of the writing process in Chenoweth and Hayes (2003) model as shown in Figure 1 below.
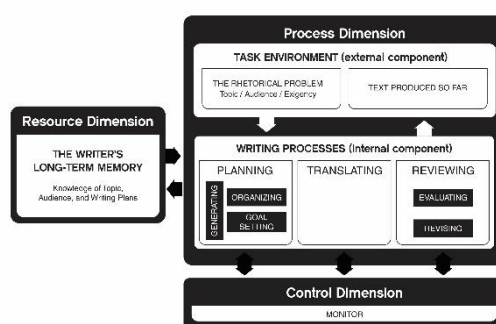
Figure 1: Chenoweth and Hayes Model of cognitive processes

In the Chenoweth-Hayes model, the resource level includes the long-term memory, the working memory, and other general purpose processes (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001). The metacognitive knowledge and linguistic resources are also stored at the resource level. At the process level, writers translate their ideas into written language by accessing and revising the knowledge. The control level includes "the task goals and a set of productions that govern the interactions among the processes'' (p.87). The difference in writing proficiency, fluency or quality between the higher and low proficiency L2 writers depends on the availability and accessibility of their working memory at each level (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 2013; Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Kellogg, 1996).

Statement of the problem

In second language (L2) writing, L2 writers differ in terms of their degree of fluency, due to the three dimensions of the writing process – the resource, the process and the control (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001, 2003) (see Figure 1). As mentioned in the earlier discussion, pre-university intensive English courses tend to be short in duration. The teachers need to condense as much learning time as possible, and flipped teaching might create more learning time and better use of classroom time. In a flipped classroom, teachers give students direct and explicit instruction or resources outside of the class time (Strayer, 2007) to allow students to spend more time on inquiry-based and experiential learning (Berrett, 2012). After accessing the information and resources at home, students can explore texts and interact with classmates and teachers. Instead of just spending the whole time sitting and listening to long instructions in class, students might now learn concepts and complete homework using lecture videos and other learning materials provided by the instructor outside of the classroom (Davies et al., 2013). Class time then is freed up for both the student and the teacher to attend to problem-solving, high-level thinking and writing activities. The purpose of using flipping is to give EFL low proficiency students more practice and more time to achieve a high level of academic English. The teachers teach the academic genre using flipping instruction method and help students build their resources such as academic terms and academic style. In class, they can guide the students into learning to think and write clearly, as clarity is an essential feature of academic writing.

According to Hung (2015), one of the benefits often cited for flipped teaching is that students are given ample chances to develop higher order thinking in Bloom's Taxonomy (Forehand, 2010) during in-class interaction with their instructors or peers, while low order thinking skills in out-of-class lectures are replaced with instructional videos without sacrificing learning content (Berrett, 2012). When well executed, this flipped classroom approach frees up the classroom time to give EFL learners the opportunities to interact in discussions that encourage critical thinking and writing. The flipped classroom gives teachers more time to teach students how to control the writing by monitoring the standard features of academic writing; clarity of thinking and writing, grammatical correctness, factual correctness, conciseness, and good argument. In this study, low proficiency learners can focus on the development of their high order thinking and work on the ideas and vocabulary needed for their writing in class instead of spending the class time on their low order thinking skills, such as learning the grammar needed for the writing or learning how to structure a particular kind of writing.

Method

Thirty-eight EFL students participated in the flipped classroom training. All participants were undertaking Intensive English Programme which is a post-secondary course at an offshore campus of an Australian University. They came from non-English speaking backgrounds and included students from China, Indonesia, Korea and Malaysia. Intensive English is a programme which aims at improving students' academic English skills. Those who did not meet the university language entry requirement are placed in the programme. Students whose Entrance Placement Test (EPT) or Versant English Placement Test (Versant EPT) scores are below 50% or if their International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scores are below Band 5.5 are required to take the Intensive English programme. Intensive English Level 4 is for students who score between 40-50% in the EPT or Band 4.5-5 in the IELTS. Therefore, all the students at IE Level 4 were at the same level. The Intensive English programme runs for 4 terms covering 5 components in each one. Students learn listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar. Students who pass IE Level 4 are eligible to enrol in Foundation or degree courses at the university.

The sample of 38 low proficiency students came from 3 Intensive English (IE) Program level 4 groups in 3 terms. There were 13 in Group 1 (Term1), 15 in Group 2 (Term 2) and 10 in Group 3 (Term 3) respectively. The number of participants in each group was beyond the control of the researcher as it was based on the enrolment each term. However, the overall design, layout and learning materials of each group were identical. The details of participants in each group are elaborated below (see Table 1). All 38 students participated in the post-test while 6 participants from each group volunteered to participate in the interviews after the training. It was hypothesized that flipped writing training would have a significant impact on the writing performance of these low proficiency EFL students.

To maximize the opportunities for interaction and dispel passive learning, two-thirds of the course content was converted into 115 minutes of video lectures and the writing topics were recorded using Camtasia Studio 8. The screencasts were almost identical to how the topics would have been taught in the tradition classroom. Most videos were kept within 8 to 16 minutes, with only one being 20 minutes and 55 seconds as it was necessary to combine two writing lecture topics in the last video for the last training session. Videos were uploaded to Blackboard, a Learning Management System, for students' easy access to watch at their preferred time and place. For each video, the instructor also prepared corresponding handouts and exercises, which they could answer if they had a good understanding of the video lectures.

Results

There were three experimental sub-groups in total as the number of participants was in this study was beyond the control of the researcher. Table 1 shows the samples of participants in the experimental groups. There were 13 students in Group 1 (34.2%), 15 students in Group 2 (39.5%) and 10 students in Group 3 (26.3%).

Table 1: Samples of the study based on groups

|	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Group 1	13	34.2	34.2	34.2
Group 2	15	39.5	39.5	73.7
Group 3	10	26.3	26.3	100
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

The means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis of the writing scores for both essays in the two experimental groups are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Experimental Group

|	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Discussion Essay Pre-test	38	5.0	10.0	7.816	1.0869	-0.680	0.383	0.328	0.750
Discussion Essay Post-test	38	10.0	17.0	12.987	2.2132	0.421	0.383	-0.951	0.750
Process Essay Pre-test	38	5.0	10.0	7.776	1.1951	-0.238	0.383	0.410	0.750
Process Essay Post-test	38	11.0	19.0	15.447	1.9686	-0.447	0.383	-0.564	0.750
Valid N (listwise)	38								

The first two rows of Table 2 illustrate the descriptive statistics' results of participants who completed the discussion essay, in the pre- and post-tests. In the pre-test, the mean of discussion writing scores is 7.816, SD=1.0869 with the lowest score being 5 and the highest score being 10. As can be seen in Table 2, 50% of participants had 7.0 to 9.0 points in the pre-test for discussion writing. However, in the post-test, the mean of discussion writing scores was 12.987, SD=2.2132 with the lowest score being 10 points, and the highest score being 17 points. It can be clearly seen that participants have made remarkable improvement in their discussion writing after the training using the flipped learning approach.

The last two rows of Table 2 show the descriptive statistics' results of participants who completed the process essay, in the pre- and post-tests. In the pre-test, the mean of process writing scores is 7.776, SD=1.1951 with the lowest score being 5 and the highest score being 10. As can be seen in the table, about 19 participants had 7.0 to 9.5 points in the pre-test for process writing. However, in the post-test, the mean of process writing scores increased to 15.447, SD=1.9686 with the lowest score being 11 points and the highest score being 19 points.   In other words, participants who have undergone the flipped writing training have improved in their process writing greatly.
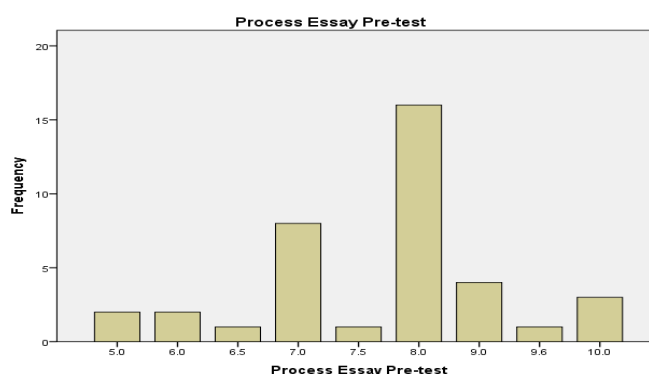
Figure 2: Graph of process essay pre-test results in the experimental group

There was a difference in the results of their post-test as shown in Figure 3 below. A majority of the students in the experimental group obtained 17 marks (23.7%) in the process essay post-test. This was followed by students obtaining 14 marks (15.8%); 15 marks (13.2%); 16 marks (10.5%); 12 marks and 18 marks (7.9%); 13 marks and 15.6 marks (5.3%); 11 marks, 14.5 marks, 17.5 marks and 19 marks (2.6%). These scores have shown that many students have achieved significant improvement in their process writing after undergoing the flipped writing training.
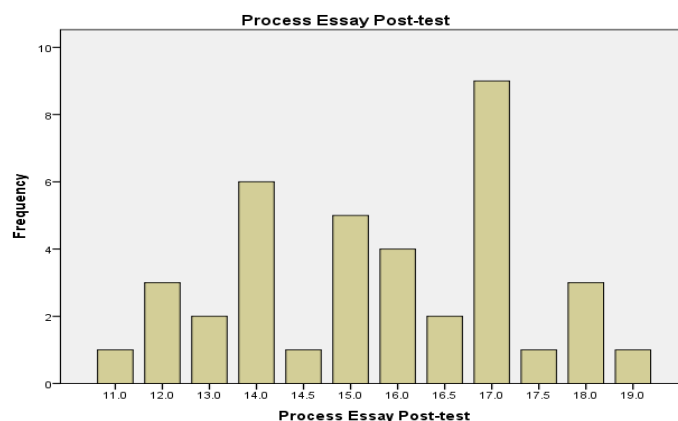
Figure 3: Graph of process essay post-test results in the experimental group

The performance of the participants in the experimental groups before and after completing the training was measured using the paired sample t-test and the differences were analysed. The result shows that there is a significant difference between the mean for process essay pre-test and post-test in experimental group (t(37): -21.062, p < 0.05). The students in the process essay post-test (Mean = 15.447, SD = 1.9686) had better results compared to the process essay pre-test (Mean = 7.779, SD = 1.1991).

To measure the discussion writing performance of a flipped writing training and structure in the experimental groups, the paired sample t-test was also used. They analysis shows that there is a significant difference between the mean for discussion essay pre-test and post-test in the experimental group (t(37): -14.099, p < 0.05). The students in the discussion essay post-test (Mean = 12.987, SD = 2.2132) had better results compared to the discussion essay pre-test (Mean = 7.816 SD = 1.0869).

In the present study, it was hypothesized that there would be a significant influence of flipped writing training on low proficiency EFL students' writing performance as well as the interaction between the essay types (discussion and process) and the experimental stages (the pre-test and the post-test). It was predicted that the low proficiency EFL students' writing skills would improve if they were taught writing using the flipped classroom approach. In order to test the hypothesis, a 2(stages) x 2(essays) analysis of variance (ANOVA) with an interaction plot was carried out on data. The main effect was significant, F(1, 150) = 455.733, p< 0.000, and it indicates that the participants' writing performance of both the discussion essay and process essay in the post-test was significantly different from their writing performance in the pre-test. Figure 3 shows the interaction between the stages and the essays in the research.
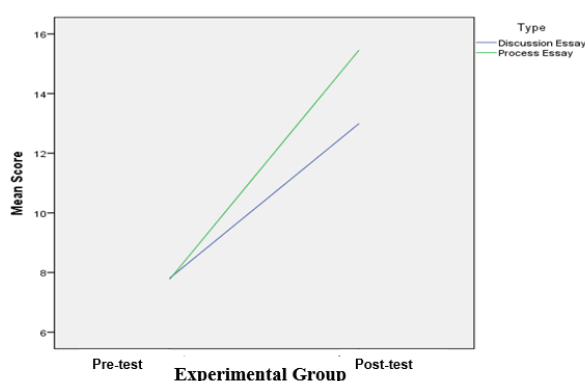
Figure 3: The interaction between discussion essay and process essay in experimental groups

As can be seen in Figure 3, the lines representing the two essays in the experimental groups show an upward trend. It indicates that the participants' writing in both discussion essay and process essays improved significantly after receiving the flipped writing training. As such, the relationship between the flipped writing training and writing performance is confirmed and the hypothesis was fully supported by the results. In other words, the writing performance of Low Proficiency (LP) EFL participants was significantly enhanced when they were provided with the flipped writing training in both types of essays. It is also found that the LP EFL participants improved more in the process essay (post-test) than they did in the discussion essay.

Upon the completion of the flipped writing sessions, an anonymous questionnaire was administered to them to gather information about the participants' perceptions of the flipped learning (see Table 3). The focus of the questionnaire was on the participants' perceptions of the flipped classroom. A 4-point Likert Scale allowed the participants to indicate if each statement was 1-False, 2-Mostly False, 3-Mostly true and 4-True.

Table 3: Students' perceptions of the flipped classroom learning

Students' Perceptions of the Flipped Classroom					
Item No.	Statements	False	Mostly False	Mostly True	True
1.	I have a positive attitude towards flipped classroom	2 5.26%	0	18 94.74%	18
2.	I feel more alone when watching the video	12 68.42%	14	6 31.58%	6
3.	I feel an increased workload that is stressful	14 65.79%	11	7 34.21%	6
4.	I experience strong peer-collaboration	6 26.32%	4	7 73.68%	21
5.	It feels like a distance course	14 73.68%	14	3 26.32%	7
6.	I appreciate learning from the video	2 7.89%	1	16 92.11%	19
7.	I am more motivated to learn writing in the flipped classroom	1 13.16%	4	17 86.84%	16
8.	I am satisfied with flipped classroom learning	1 5.26%	1	20 94.74%	16
9.	I feel that I have made good progress in learning writing in a flipped classroom	2 10.53%	2	22 89.47%	12
10.	I do not benefit from the flipped classroom	10 97.37%	27	0 2.63%	1

In response to the general perception of flipped classroom, most participants had strong positive opinions in relation to 6 statements which were Item 1, Item 6, Item 7, Item 8, Item 9 and Item 10 respectively. Thirty-six out of thirty-eight participants had "a positive attitude towards flipped classroom" (Item 1), were "satisfied with flipped classroom learning" (Item 8) and "appreciate learning from the video" (Item 6). Out of 38 participants, 34 of them felt that they "have made good progress in learning writing in a flipped classroom" (Item 9) and that 33 of them were "more motivated to learn writing in the flipped classroom" (Item 7). Thirty-seven of the students disagreed that they "do not benefit from the flipped classroom". While a majority of the participants also disagreed that they were "more alone" (Item 2) or that felt "an increased workload that is stressful" (Item 3), only a minority of them felt stressed due to the increase workload (34% in Item 3) and "more alone when watching the video (32% in Item 2).

Discussion

Based on the feedback from lower proficiency EFL students and their writing results collected before and after the experiment, it is evident that they responded positively to the flipped writing classroom approach. The overwhelming positive feedback points to the advantages and success of the flipped elements in the writing approach. Not only does the flipped writing classroom approach empower lower proficiency EFL learners, but also does it increase their confidence, contributing to a lowered cognitive load for the learners and potentially increasing their learning and performance. Thus, the results of this study are in line with previous findings. Farah (2014) examined the impact of using a Flipped Classroom Instructional Method on the writing performance of the twelfth grade Emirati female students and found that there were significant differences in the participants' writing performance. Leis, Cooke, and Tohei (2015) studied 22 students in an EFL environment and confirmed the results that using a flipped method in an English composition class was more effective in increasing the students' proficiency than in a traditional classroom. The same reasons for the successful learning of writing in an EFL environment were shared by Bouchefra (2017) whose study involved 54 students in an experimental group and found that the introduction of the Flipped Classroom approach helped the EFL students grasp the writing structure and concepts better. The findings in the present study also supports the previous studies on the effect of

flipped writing classrooms on the EFL learners' writing proficiency (Afrilyasanti, Cahyono, & Astuti, 2016; Ahmed, 2016; Ekmekci, 2017; Soltanpour & Valizadeh, 2018).

The flipped writing approach used in this study allowed lower proficiency EFL learners to experience greater flexibility and greater autonomy over their own learning. Learner autonomy should be an essential goal for all learning as it resulted in an exceptional level of motivation (Cotterall, 2000). When students, especially lower proficiency learners, have a sense of ownership and the ability to take charge of their own learning, they will be driven by the motivation and power to improve their writing performance. There were increased opportunities for the students to prepare prior to coming to the classroom. Besides, they had more processing time between lessons to comprehend the learning materials, more interaction with the classmates and received more immediate feedback from the instructor so that they could complete the learning tasks with greater understanding in class. The classroom was the place where instructor could interact with students, scaffold their learning and give them more practice, enhance their critical thinking and engage in deep discussions with them. It was no longer a place of initial exchange of information but a place where learners, especially lower proficiency learners with limited understanding of the language, can explore new concepts and ideas beyond the superficial introductory of learning materials. Students can exercise more control over the depth, the direction and speed of their learning, which subsequently boost their self-confidence that is one of the most important elements for success in learning. Another advantage of the flipped writing classroom approach is that it is relevant to the contemporary students' learning needs and practices. Learners today are believed to be "Digital Natives" who expect fast-paced learning environment with shorter traditional instruction time in the classroom. Therefore, teachers or instructors ought to re-invent their teaching strategies and use technology creatively and effectively in enhancing their learning (Huang & Hong, 2016; Logan, 2015; Roehl, Reddy, & Shannon, 2013). Therefore, the hypothesis that flipped writing training could positively influenced writing performance of the EFL low proficiency was fully supported.

Although the majority of the participants were positive about the flipped writing approach; nevertheless, there were also some challenges associated with the flipped writing approach. One unexpected challenge was technology. Not all participants had a computer at home. Not all millennium learners are tech-savvy. They did not know how to access the videos via their mobile phones even though they all have a mobile phone. Some participants mentioned that they had to share the computer with their family members and it made their preparation before class difficult. To deal with this challenge, the lecturer could give the participants a briefing on how to access the videos via their mobile phones before the training in the future and overcome this limitation. Another challenge was the feeling of learning in isolation. One third of the participants mentioned that they felt more alone going through the lecture videos by themselves outside of the classroom. They also voiced their concerns of increased workload and stress as they had to deal with the materials unguided. They usually had to spend a lot of time trying to understand the content of the videos with their limited language ability. One way to ease their workload and stress is to spread out the training sessions from 2 sessions a week to once a week in the future. Another way is that the instructor could perhaps discuss with the students on how to divide their tasks, study in chunks, and improve their time management and study skills. Flipped writing approach requires both the students and the instructor to take the pedagogical shift, which takes time, before low proficiency students can fully engage in.

Other challenges were in-class related. More than half of the learners were shy in expressing their views and participating in a group discussion. Apart from having the language barrier, they were culturally different. Students from the Asian countries tended to be more passive and were afraid to make mistakes. They might also lack the vocabulary and knowledge in a particular writing topic. In view of this, the instructor could make the learning environment more relaxed and non-threatening and use various ways or strategies to get the students to speak up and express their own thoughts.

Conclusion

The study has confirmed that flipped writing approach is beneficial to low proficiency learners in improving their writing skills. Students have shown better writing performance due to the increased scaffolding, motivation and autonomy in their learning. The flipped writing approach enhances not only their learning and performance, but also the overall learning experience. Running a control group in the next phrase of the study will give us a deeper insight into how much these learners have actually progressed in comparison with learners who have not been given the flipped elements in the writing programme.

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